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Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness and its effect on online shopping customer loyalty

Srishti Sumani

804511

A research proposal submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Strategic Marketing.

Supervisor: Dr Yvonne K Saini
Johannesburg, 2022

Wits Business School

Abstract

Research Problem:

The main research problem is examining the influence of Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness and its effect on online shopping customer loyalty.

Research Methodology:

This research will use the method of deriving data and analysing the data through the Quantitative method of study. There are many research designs, however this study uses the cross-sectional research design method (Bryman, 2012). Surveys form a part of cross-sectional designs. This research will use the method of deriving data and analysing the data through the Quantitative method of study. This research uses a non – probability method of sampling. Cross sectional research design is a type of statistical technique where information is gathered through many cases at a time, to gather quantitative data and show a sense of alliance within the different case variables (Bryman, 2016g). There are many quantitative methods in relation to data analysis, however this study will use the Descriptive Statistics, Structural Equation Model (SEM) as well as the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to study the responses and consolidate the conclusion (Bryman, 2012). **Research Results:**

A detailed study was conducted to study the concept of customers, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction as well as customer relationship management strategies with reference to brand referrals. The survey was distributed to the customers of Sixty60. This survey was insightful because the questions outlined various questions that were in sync with the influence of social media. The survey determined that social media indeed has an influence on brand awareness; social media brand awareness through Facebook and Instagram leads to customer loyalty and whether this loyalty leads to brand referrals. The managerial and policy implications states that this research can be used by companies to understand Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness and its effect on online shopping customer loyalty. The results can be used by companies in order to understand how they can use social media for their business as well as whether social media affects their business type. The theoretical implication of this theory is the fact that social media influences brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector, thus the results are aligned with these implications.

Keywords: Brand awareness, brand equity, brand image, brand knowledge, customers, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, customer relationship management, E-commerce.

DECLARATION

I, Srishti Sumani, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Strategic Marketing at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Srishti Sumani

Signed at Johannesburg, South Africa

On the 1st day of April 2022

Dedication and Acknowledgements

I would like to thank God for being my pillar of strength. I would like to also thank my parents for always supporting me through this journey, for encouraging me and being my strength.

I would especially thank Dr. Yvonne Saini for her relentless effort for guiding me throughout this journey.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The internet currently has become one of the most fundamental pillars of the society and the way individual engage and conduct their daily activities (Wellman and Haythornthwaite, 2008). The gap that was identified was that online shopping, also known as E-commerce, is a new phenomenon in South Africa, and there is little research constructed around this concept. This research dives into exploring the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector also known as the E-commerce sector. This study also touches on the topic of brand referrals in relation to customer loyalty. The Checkers Sixty60 is used as a case study in this study because it fits in well with the fundamentals of online shopping, which are crucial to the topic of the study at hand. It's also vital to note that the Checkers Sixty60 mobile application was introduced in a few communities, primarily in the Western Cape and Gauteng, in the late months of 2019. Checkers has now rapidly maximised its reach and traction. It is now expanded as the popular Sixty60 app throughout South Africa and the services provided by Sixty60 are now available in more than 150 stores nationwide. Therefore, it is a new and growing online shopping platform that has little to no research pertaining to the application. The purpose of this study is to measure the influence of social media through the lenses of brand awareness and customer loyalty in the E-commerce sector by conducting the quantitative method of research known as surveys. Therefore, this study will fill the knowledge gap in the E-commerce industry in South Africa in relation to Social Media marketing that is in line with brand awareness and customer loyalty, with reference to brand referrals. The role of the case study comes into play by forming the research audience around avert Checkers Sixty60 users. It is thus vital to understand the concept of the internet, online shopping as well as social media in relation to the study at hand.

The internet as a whole has a significant impact on people's daily communication, marketing, and shopping habits. Individuals shop online on e-commerce sites, communicate on a daily on social media platforms, and administer their marketing through digital marketing tools like Google Ads and Facebook Business Manager, among many other digital marketing platforms (Teo, 2002). Since there is a growing influence of the internet as well as smartphone utilisation in South Africa, it is evident that most of the customers of different brands are present on these platforms, as these platforms play a huge role in the lives of the customers (GSMA, 2020). Hence, this justifies the great opportunity that is present for brands,

especially in the online shopping space who specialise in Business to Customer (B2C) relationships, as these brands have the opportunity to use digital marketing platforms to build awareness through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and Tiktok currently (Saura, Palos-Sanchez and Correia, 2019). Social media marketing helps brands generate awareness to a large number of people that helps brands gain a huge amount of exposure and awareness in the sphere (Kilgour, Sasser and Larke, 2015). This awareness through social media also helps brands build relationships with customers through social media platforms by directly liaising with the target audience. This assists in the Customer Relationships Strategies of the brands that aids customer loyalty (Nyatlo, 2018). This chapter discusses and covers the significant areas of the research paradigm. This chapter essentially discusses the purpose of the study, the context, the main problem as well as the objectives, delimitations of the study, definitions of the terms as well as the assumptions in the context of the study.

1.1 Purpose and Context of the study

The purpose of this study was established by examining the gap that was found in the online shopping industry, social media marketing, brand awareness, and customer loyalty. Since online shopping is a growing concept in South Africa, it is vital to cover the gap that lies in exploring the relationship of social media marketing and brand awareness as well as the effect it has on customer loyalty in the online shopping sector, with reference to brand referrals. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between social media advertising and brand awareness, with an aim to understand whether brand awareness created by social media leads to customer loyalty in the long run, and if this loyalty leads to the construct of brand referrals. This gap, identified as customer loyalty, is the eventual goal for a brand, therefore it is vital to test whether the powerful tool known as social media marketing that builds brand awareness, leads to eventual customer loyalty, and whether this customer loyalty leads to the essence of brand referrals as a touch point. It is important to note that brand referral is not the main construct such as brand awareness and customer loyalty, however brand referral will give this study a holistic sense of perception. This study will aim to fill the gap by exploring the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness and its effect on online shopping customer loyalty.

There are a few recent studies conducted on the niche online shopping space in relation to the fundamentals of this study, namely social media marketing and brand awareness and its effect on customer loyalty in the online shopping sector. Online shopping that is also known as E-commerce is a concept that is growing exponentially in South Africa in the recent years. Due to the rise in the South African audience becoming digitally advanced, online shopping simultaneously saw a steep incline. The gap was identified by exploring the research area in the online shopping field in South Africa. It was discovered that there is limited research conceptualised around the concept of online shopping. The purpose of this research, therefore, is to explore the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector. The study aims to examine the influence of social media in the online shopping sector by using Checkers Sixty60 as the case study. Sixty60 is a well-known online shopping app that was introduced in 2021, therefore there has been limited research on it. As a result, the originality quotient is high, and there is a significant gap that can be filled by using the modern Checkers Sixty60 app. Checkers Sixty60 will define the research audience for the quantitative purpose of this study that takes the form of surveys. Understanding the fundamentals of the internet and digital marketing in general is essential to understanding the purpose of the study.

The internet as well as the usage of social media with the aid of smartphones is relatively a new phenomenon that entails numerous areas to uncover (GSMA, 2020). There are currently 36 million smartphone users in South Africa, and it is predicted that the smartphone usage in South Africa will extend its reach to 42 million in 2026 (Statista, 2021a). On the other hand, currently 30 million individuals use social media platforms in South Africa and the usage of social media is predicted to spike up to 40 million in 2026 (Statista, 2021b). These statistics show that there is a large scope of research areas that one can uncover, as there are many smart phone and social media users in South Africa, and the number is predicted to increase in the years to come.

There are many layers in the space of digital marketing such as Google Ads also known as Search Engine Marketing and Search Engine Optimisation (Piñeiro-Otero and Martínez-Rolán, 2016). However, the purpose of this research is to uncover the ways in which social media as well as Social Media Marketing have an influence on online shopping brands such as Checkers Sixty60 (Lourie, 2021). This research will aim to study the ways in which social media influences brands to create brand awareness on a large scale through popular and big

data social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Tiktok and LinkedIn. This study will focus on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter as the social media platforms that will be tested.

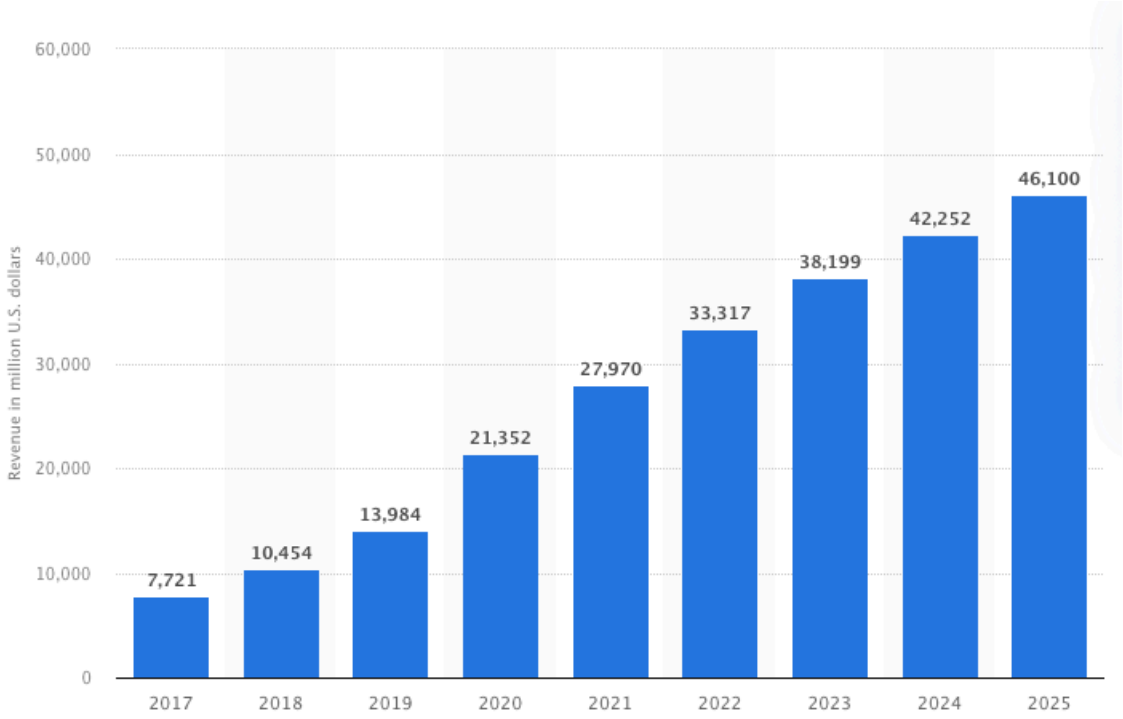
The research will also explore how large-scale social media awareness aids online retailers in building customer loyalty through direct interactions with consumers via efficient customer relationship strategies on social media platforms(Yadav and Rahman, 2018). Direct communication on social media is initiated in two ways; Brand initiated communication as well as customer-initiated communication (Nyatlo, 2018). Both methods help brands gain insights into the customers perception about the brand and build relationships with the customer (Nyatlo, 2018). Direct communication initiations on social media helps brands to gain a sense of feedback about the brand as well as the product and services that are offered, while also helping customers with solutions to their needs immediately (Nyatlo, 2018). This interaction leads to a sense of loyalty that further has the potential to lead to customers referring brands to one another. Brands can also study the buying pattern and customer behaviour through social media interactions with the customer. Lastly, social media helps brands gain a customer centric perspective as new offerings can be offered by the brands that are in line with the needs of the customers (Hudson, Huang, Roth, and Madden, 2016). The research study will evaluate the brand equity model by Keller (1993), where the essence of brand image, brand knowledge, brand equity and brand awareness will be discussed.

The ways in which brand awareness and customer loyalty is interlinked on social media will be studied further in relation to Sixty60 with reference to brand referrals, therefore the online shopping platform, Checkers Sixty60, will form the case study of the research (Lourie, 2021). This study will conduct survey research and the population of the survey will be formed from the users of Sixty60. This will help one understand the influence social media has on brand awareness and customer loyalty within online shopping platforms, with touch points on brand referrals. The questionnaire will be centric towards brand awareness and customer loyalty in relation to social media. It is also vital to understand the context of the study in relation to the world that is rapidly evolving in this day and age, in order to gain a better understanding of the study at hand.

The world today is rapidly evolving especially in the digital and technological sphere (Hudson et al., 2016). The context of the study is set in South Africa, a vital country in the

economy of Africa, has seen a steep incline in the sphere of online shopping in the early 2000s, where customers showed an inclination to use various digital media platforms to interact with different online shopping also known as E-commerce brands, to gain information about the brand that they are interested in and also share their unique experiences with the brand and fellow customers through reviews (Hudson et al., 2016). Brands, on the other hand, started to use digital marketing platforms to interact with the customers to understand their needs through reviews and feedback while also using various digital marketing platforms and tools to advertise their products to the customers (Hudson et al., 2016). The graph below shows the steep incline in online shopping in South Africa.

Figure 1: Incline in Online Shopping Habits in South Africa



Source: Statista (2022)

South Africa has adapted to online shopping along the years; however it is important to note the impact that the Sixty60 application has had on the South African online shopping sphere. It was first launched in 2019 to only a few provinces in South Africa, however, due to the receptiveness of the audience in the selected provinces as well as due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the application was launched nationwide. It was embraced by many customers across South Africa and now has over 1.2 million downloads with more than 15000 products to choose from (Business Tech, 2021). Sixty60 is the fastest as well as the cheapest online

grocery shopping application in South Africa; it is widely advertised on digital marketing platforms. Digital marketing is a large field however, this study will focus on the aspect of social media in relation to online shopping brands (Ponzoa and Erdmann, 2021). When the study mentions 'brands', online shopping brands are the focal point, and E-commerce is specifically under discussion.

Social media has a large influence over customers and brands due to the interactive and versatile nature of communication that it entails (Mari, 2016). Social media influences the ways customers make decisions to purchase a product; as there is a large number of competitions on social media platforms that customers can choose from, and the extent of brand awareness and communication on social media with customers determines the buying behaviour of the audience (Yogesh and Yesha, 2014). It is, therefore, imperative for brands to create a distinction between themselves and the competitors to gain the attention of the customers and in turn influence their purchasing behaviour (Yaro and Asmar, 2013). This can be achieved through the promotion of a positive brand image and brand knowledge that strengthens brand equity and brand awareness.

Brands can use social media to market themselves with a unique proposition by using social media tools that allows brands to target the right customers through studying customer behaviour that can be placed in line with the brand knowledge (Noureddine and ZeinEddine, 2018). Social media allows brands to target their audience through various parameters such as the customer interests, age, contact details and location (Sterne, 2010). Therefore, the better the brand understands their target customers, the more efficiently the online shopping brands can use social media to market their services to create brand awareness (Camilleri, 2018). Online shopping brands can also understand customer wants and tailor their interactions with customers to meet those needs to foster customer loyalty to a particular online retailer shopping brand (Camilleri, 2018). Customer interaction with a brand can also be tracked on social media to understand customer sentiments (Mari, 2016). This sense of customer loyalty gives brands an upper hand as if a customer is inclined towards a product as there are higher chances that referrals will be made.

The context of this study is, therefore, to understand the influence that social media has on brand awareness in the field of E-commerce (online shopping). E-commerce is essentially the process of buying and selling goods on the internet.; the goods are processed, and

transactions are actioned predominantly on the internet (Reynolds, 2000). There are several E-commerce brands in the world that have online stores and physical stores. E-commerce brands also known as online shopping brands use social media to popularise their brand and to build customer loyalty through continuous interactions with the customers and audience via various CRM techniques (Valerio, William and Noémier, 2019).

As aforementioned, E-commerce is a fast-growing phenomenon in South Africa as many individuals prefer to shop their needs online due to the sheer convenience that it entails (Watling, McCabe and Seedat, 2019). This study the aims to bridge the gap between the interlinked relationship that social media marketing and communication on social media has on brand awareness, as well as the influence that social media has especially on the online shopping brands and how online shopping brands can use social media to build awareness (Valerio, William and Noémier, 2019).

The study also seeks to bridge the gap between the influence the social media interaction between online shopping brands and customers has on customer loyalty, and whether CRM strategies on social media have an influence on customer decisions and sway a customer to action transactions with a particular brand, based on customer interaction that eventually has the potential to lead to customer loyalty. This study also aims to understand whether this sense of loyalty leads to brand referrals to give this study a holistic perception. Additionally, this study seeks to understand the connection between customer loyalty and brand awareness on social media platforms with reference to brand referrals. This research will fill in the gap between the perceived value of social media in terms of brand awareness and how social media affects consumer loyalty. The gap will be clarified using Checkers Sixty60 as a case study. The reason this online shopping platform is relevant and is a good fit for this study is because it is a new platform that was officially launched in 2021 and gained immense traction (Vorster, 2021).

Checkers is a brand of physical stores all over South Africa that specialise in selling groceries to consumers (Vorster, 2021). However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic that erupted world-wide, many Checkers customers were not comfortable with venturing out of their homes; therefore, the Checkers Sixty60 online shopping platform gained immense momentum (Vorster, 2021). Due to the availability of all Checkers products on the Sixty60 mobile application platform, where customers may purchase these products and their groceries

online, these daily needs will be delivered to their home within 60 minutes (Myeni, 2021). This, therefore, helped customers shop and receive their goods on their doorstep (Myeni, 2021). Sixty60 is one of the most popular and growing online shopping platforms in South Africa (Lourie, 2021) and is also extremely active on social media, interacting with their audience, and promote their services through the main Checkers page (Wagner, 2021). Therefore, Sixty60 will help one understand and uncover the gap in relation to the influence that social media has on spreading brand awareness and customer loyalty with reference to brand referrals in the online shopping sector through the research method known as surveys.

1.2 Problem Statement

Digital marketing is a vital part of the marketing sphere in this day and age and brands such as online shopping brands use social media marketing ideally to gain brand awareness that has the potential to form customer loyalty through extensive marketing practices. The research gap is identified by studying the South African sphere in the online shopping space in relation to Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness and its effect on online shopping customer loyalty. According to a study by Malanda (2020), social media marketing has a significant impact on brand awareness, engagement, and consumer value in South Africa. This is because the country has recently seen a growth in online shopping. Although online shopping has been present in the South African ecosystem, it has recently shown an exponential growth. Online shopping brands use social media to grow their brand awareness, customer value and engagement. This study highlights that there should be more research conducted in this area as there is a certain gap that will be uncovered through extensive research that highlights contemporary concepts that are ever changing and evolving in the online shopping and social media, brand awareness and customer value and loyalty sphere (Mandala, 2020).

Social media marketing is a growing tool that is used by various brands to gain brand awareness, through which customer loyalty is built. This is a unique combination of the marketing funnel that will be studied in the South African context. Though South Africa is a growing economy that has seen a recent growth in the digital sphere together with the E-commerce and online shopping sphere, there is little information available about online shopping due toe-commerce being a growing phenomenon. Checkers Sixty60 is a new mobile application that is new in South Africa, thus there hasn't been any research done on it, so the originality quotient is high. As a result, this study explores the online shopping sector

using Checkers Sixty60 as a case study. Digital marketing, on the other hand, has become one of the most important aspects of marketing. Social media marketing is one of the most important fundamentals of the digital marketing realm. Therefore, the problem statement is to explore the gap of digital marketing together with the concept of online shopping in South Africa and the gap identified in this research is to study the influence of social media in the E-commerce sector through the usage of Checkers Sixty60 as a case study. This research also aims to study the influence of social media through the lenses of brand awareness and customer loyalty with reference to brand referrals in the realm on E-commerce in South Africa.

1.2.1 Main Problem

The main research problem is examining the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector (Mandala, 2020). This study focuses on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter because Sixty60 is widely advertised on these platforms. This study focuses on the relationship between social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and brand awareness that translates into customer loyalty with reference to brand referrals (Afolabi, 2015). This study also touches on the ways in which social media advertising can influence brand referrals as a whole. The gap comes into play when online shopping is researched in the South African space. Due to the occurrence that online shopping is still a growing phenomenon in South Africa and is being adopted by South African consumers in a gradual but effective way, as stated by Deloitte in the Digital Commerce Acceleration Report conducted in 2021, little study has been done in this area (Deloitte, 2021). The report also states that South African consumers have begun to accept online purchasing in recent years because they now value the convenience and safety that it provides. Despite the recent increase in online purchasing, little study has been conducted in this field. This study is made unique by taking into consideration the relationship between social media advertising and brand awareness that translates into customer loyalty through immense social media brand awareness. This study is unique and tries to investigate these constructs through the lenses of online shopping in South Africa because customer loyalty also has the potential to result in brand referrals (Ahmad, 2020).

Social Media plays a vital role in the world of marketing, as social media marketing is one of the most used and relevant marketing concepts in this day and age that builds brand awareness as well a relationship between the brand and the customer (Mandala, 2020).

Therefore, to understand the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector, it is vital to uncover the concept of both social media and online shopping together with reference to brand referrals to give this study a holistic appeal (Ahmad, 2020). Since there is minimal research on E-commerce, when the aspect of the influence of social media is combined with the online shopping sphere, this research topic is extremely rare (Mthembu, 2016). However, the concept of E-commerce (online shopping) and the influence of social media is highly relevant today especially in a growing economy like South Africa. This study, thus, aims to fill this research gap by imparting knowledge regarding the influence of social media on the main constructs of this study, namely brand awareness and customer loyalty (Mthembu, 2016).

The primary case study for this study is Checkers Sixty60, which was chosen because it is a modern mobile phone online shopping application created by the South African tycoon behind Checkers Grocery. Sixty60 is an extremely new and popular online grocery shopping application in South Africa that gained brand awareness and customer acquisition by many marketing tactics including social media marketing; therefore, Sixty60 is the best fitting case study for the topic at hand. It is also important to note that there is no research done in relation to the Checkers Sixty60 application, therefore this study is a first of its kind, and aims to fill the gap regarding the lack of research outputs in the online shopping sector in relation to social media marketing in South Africa. Hence, choosing a South African online shopping app in relation to the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty with references made to brand referrals, helps the study entail a South African approach. To understand the main problem discussed, it is vital to briefly uncover the main aspects of the study, namely social media and online shopping.

Social media is a fairly new phenomena that has taken the world by storm; nowadays, people engage with one another through social media platforms (Baruah, 2012). Social media is not only used to network with one and other, but brands also use it to communicate with their audience, loyal customers as well as potential customers (Voorveld, 2019). This is because the functionality of the social media sphere is large with many fundamental tools that allows brands to use the sphere to market their products and services to a larger audience (Paquette, 2013). Facebook Business Manager is one of the most popular and important softwares that are used by brands to reach out to a large set of audience, due to the objectives that the software entails (Zarrella and Zarrella, 2010). Brands can choose to generate traffic on their

website, accumulate customer engagement, track conversions through Facebook Pixels, and target specific audiences through interests and custom audience that allows brands to reach out to the exact customer through their numbers and email addresses (Curran, Graham and Temple, 2011). E-commerce is an essential part of the daily life in the digitally advanced world (Reynolds, 2000). Selling and shopping online has become the norm, due to the sheer convenience that is provides while also gaining access to multiple products and services with one click of a button (Reynolds, 2000).

Social media and online shopping are the main aspects of the research at hand; however, the problem statement comes into play while discussing the research done in these fundamental areas (Deloitte, 2021). Although social media and online shopping is vital presently, South Africa has recently gained a surplus of exposure in this field (Deloitte, 2021). South Africa has been a moderately digitally advanced economy, where the audience are familiar with the concept of social media; however, the growth of E-commerce (online shopping) is fairly new. This is owing to the perception that although South Africa has E-commerce potential and there are online shopping brands available, many South Africans have not dabbled in this market. However, due to Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, they started to venture into e-commerce shopping (Deloitte, 2021). There have been many brands that were developed due to the need for E-commerce online shopping in the recent years, while other already-established online shopping portals have only recently experienced a surge in sales (Deloitte, 2021). Sixty60 will play the role of the case study for the research at hand, and Sixty60 itself gained popularity and momentum recently in the year 2020 while the project was conceived in 2019 (Vorster, 2021).

Many brands therefore are now using social media to reach out to a variety of audience to gain brand awareness and increase the customer loyalty (Facebook, 2021). It is also important to note that although social media tools have been popular in South Africa and there are many audiences sets that use social media platforms, the concept of having access to E-commerce online shopping brands on social media is new. Due to the recent popularity and online shopping outburst, there are many E-commerce online shopping brands that have emerged on social media, to gain customer and market share digitally (Deloitte, 2021). Because of the significance of E-commerce and online shopping in South Africa, it is important to investigate how these brands use and benefit from social media. In particular, it is important to look at how social media adds the essence of bringing about brand awareness and customer

loyalty with links to brand referrals to E-commerce online shopping brands, like Sixty60 (Deloitte, 2021).

There are many areas that are still unexplored because South Africa's online shopping market has revived and is becoming more popular in recent years (Deloitte, 2021). It is important to understand the relationship between social media and online shopping, and how online shopping brands use social media to gain brand awareness and customer loyalty. According to Lourie (2021), it is critical to comprehend Sixty60's function in South Africa because Checkers Sixty60 is a brand-new, online grocery purchasing application for e-commerce. This case study will therefore help one understand the ways in which social media helps online shopping brands like Sixty60 gain brand awareness, how customer loyalty is achieved through social media for online shopping brands such as Sixty60 and lastly the relationship between brand awareness and customer loyalty and how customer loyalty has the potential to lead to brand referrals (Akbar and Parvez, 2009). Although the construct of brand referrals will be a touch point, this study will understand the main construct and discuss in detail, the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty through the lenses of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

1.2.2. Sub-problems

- **Sub-Problem 1:** The first sub problem is to study the relationship between Facebook Advertising and Brand awareness.
- **Sub-Problem 2:** The second sub problem is to study the relationship between Facebook Brand Awareness and Customer Loyalty.
- **Sub-Problem 3:** The third sub problem is to study the relationship between Instagram Advertising and Brand Awareness.
- **Sub-Problem 4:** The fourth sub problem is to study the relationship between Instagram brand awareness and Customer Loyalty.
- **Sub-Problem 5:** The fifth sub problem is to study the relationship between Twitter Advertising and Brand Awareness.
- **Sub-Problem 6:** The sixth sub problem is to study the relationship between Twitter brand awareness and Customer Loyalty.
- **Sub-Problem 7:** The seventh sub problem is to study the relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and brand referrals.

- **Sub-Problem 8:** The eighth sub problem is to study the relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and brand referrals**.**
- **Sub-Problem 9:** The seventh sub problem is to study the relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and brand referrals.

1.3 Research Purpose and Aims of the Study

The aim of this study is to uncover the important aspects of marketing, such as brand awareness and customer loyalty as well as the concept of brand referrals. This study aims to understand these concepts through the influence of social media mainly through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, in relation to the space of online shopping through the contemporary Checkers Sixty60 as a case study. To understand the concepts in this research, it is vital to explore the main research questions at hand. The **main research question** is conceptualised as follows:

- **Is there a relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand Awareness?**
- **Is there a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and Customer Loyalty?**
- **Is there a relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness?**
- **Is there a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and Customer Loyalty?**
- **Is there a relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand Awareness?**
- **Is there a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and Customer Loyalty?**
- **Is there a relationship between Facebook customer loyalty and brand referrals?**
- **Is there a relationship between Instagram customer loyalty and brand referrals?**
- **Is there a relationship between Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals?**

It is essential to briefly discuss the theories and concepts involved in the study in order to comprehend the research questions raised above. Doing so will enable one to establish and understand the objectives of the study.

Brand awareness is the process of helping product and service centric companies gain reach and access to multiple customers and clients in order to build profitable traction onto their company and market share (Latif, Islam and Noor, 2014). Marketing using the brand equity model is vital as it allows brands to understand the essence of brand image, brand knowledge,

and brand awareness. Nowadays, digital marketing is one of the most important tools and mechanisms that are used to help companies build awareness that translate into profitable customers that help companies gain transactions (Moisescu, 2009). On the other hand, customer loyalty is the stance that organisations strive for because it gives them access to lucrative customers and clients through brand awareness, and it develops through interactions with customers and clients who have interacted with the organisations repeatedly (Pawar and Raut, 2019). Customer loyalty has the ability to result in brand referrals since the more a customer likes a brand, the more likely they are to tell other people about their preferred brand (Chatterjee, 2011).

Therefore, to build customer loyalty, it is vital for companies to create brand awareness using consumer behaviour theories, and once access is gained to the customers, it is vital to employ CRM strategies in order to have relevant interactions with the audience that build customer loyalty (Wang and & Prompanyo, 2020). This is where social media and social media marketing comes into play. Today, social media, a subset of digital marketing, is extremely important (Bilgin, 2018).

Social media helps brands directly spread awareness through marketing techniques, positive brand image and brand awareness creation. Social media also helps companies to directly interact with existing as well as potential customers in order build customer relationships that can lead to brand referrals (Nyatlo, 2018). Customers may recommend the brand to other customers through this type of social media marketing. Therefore, when customer behaviour is studied, relevant conversations can be created through CRM strategiesto interact and build a relationship with the customers (Yadav and Rahman, 2018). Lastly, because of how handy and effective it is now, online shopping is developing and expanding quickly. As a result, online shopping businesses are technologically savvy and heavily rely on digital marketing because they operate in the digital circuit (Valerio, William and Noémier, 2019).

The insight above helps one gain an important perspective about the research topic at hand, as well as the important concepts and theories that will be discussed. These concepts and theories discussed will draw up the main objectives of the study at hand. The **main objectives** that will be covered are as follows:

- **To examine the relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness.**

- **To assess the relationship between Facebook brand awareness and Customer Loyalty.**
- **To inspect the relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness.**
- **To examine the relationship between Instagram brand awareness and Customer Loyalty.**
- **To inspect the relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand Awareness.**
- **To examine the relationship between Twitter brand awareness and Customer Loyalty.**
- **To inspect the relationship between Facebook customer loyalty and brand referrals.**
- **To assess the relationship between Instagram customer loyalty and brand referrals.**
- **To examine the relationship between Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals.**

1.4 Significance/contribution of the study

In the recent times, digital marketing has been an area of discussion in many past papers written by established authors such as Nyatlo (2018), Yadav and Rahman (2018), Wildfeuer (2018), Valerio, William and Noémier (2019) and Bilgin (2018). There are a few papers that relate to the brand awareness and customer loyalty sphere in relation to digital marketing. However, there has not been a focus on the space of the online shopping also known as E-commerce sector in South Africa, with special attention to a live case study such as Checkers Sixty60. It is important to understand the work done by past authors in relation to the topic at hand to understand the gap that exists in this space. The five effective past papers about this study at hand are as follows:

- Nyatlo, M. R. (2018). The influence of social media on purchase intention, brand awareness, and brand loyalty: a focus on customers' engagement with brands on the platforms.
- Yadav, M., & Rahman, Z. (2018). The influence of social media marketing activities on customer loyalty: A study of e-commerce industry. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*.

- Wildfeuer, J. (2018). Branding and customer satisfaction: A research about the Adidas Group.
- Valerio, C., William, L., & Noémier, Q. (2019). The Impact of Social Media on E-Commerce Decision Making Process. *International Journal of Technology for Business (IJTB)*, *1*(1), 1-9.
- Bilgin, Y. (2018). The effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, *6*(1), 128-148.

The research at hand differs from the past research done by commendable authors in many different ways. Firstly, the past papers mentioned above as well as many other papers that are available, are constructed around the influence of social media in relation to brand awareness and customer loyalty in a broad manner. The past papers are not centric towards online shopping and do not make references to brand referrals to gain a holistic perspective (Nyatlo, 2018). Secondly, the past papers do not take into consideration relevant case studies such as Checkers Sixty60, that is new yet a widely popular E-commerce online shopping app in South Africa (Nyatlo, 2018).

Thirdly, the population and sample in this study will be clearly defined and concise, by taking into consideration only South Africans who are Sixty60 users. This population size will be used to gain a perspective about the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty with reference to brand referrals in relation to online shopping. The reason Checkers Sixty60 was chosen is because there are many users of this app, therefore, the answers that one will gain from this sample size will be precise, diverse and relevant (Deloitte, 2021).

Fourthly, in the past papers, scholars have researched on customer satisfaction in relation to customer loyalty and brand awareness in terms of brand image (Wildfeuer, 2018). However, the study at hand will predominantly focus on the intricate subjects of brand awareness and customer loyalty that has a large scope of research while also reflecting on brand referrals as a topic of interest. Therefore, the gap that was identified in this study was that brand awareness and customer loyalty are not widely researched, especially with the concept of E-commerce online shopping as the main topic (Yadav and Rahman, 2018). This research also

takes Checkers Sixty60 as a case study since there has been little to no research constructed around this application, as it is extremely new into the South African market (Lourie, 2021). Therefore, there are many gaps that will be discussed, studied and researched in the research at hand, and this study can help online shopping companies and future scholars understand the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in relation to online shopping (Lourie, 2021). Although this study uses Checkers Sixty60 as a case study, scholars can build on the study at hand through various case studies as the research topic is relevant, and concise.

This study therefore will help one understand social media marketing and its effects on brand awareness as a whole, with references to the understanding of the concept of brand holistically as well as brand knowledge, that will further be linked to the ways in which this contributes to customer loyalty. The contribution will be significant in terms of the South African sphere in relation to online shopping, as there is limited research as described above, in the South African sphere in relation to online shopping and the ways in which social media marketing has effects on brand awareness that further has effects on customer loyalty. This study therefore will help one understand the effects of social media on brand awareness as well as customer loyalty through the case study Checkers Sixty60 that brings about a new perspective to the study together with the understanding of specifically taking the South African Sphere into account.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

The research at hand has the delimitations that are described in detail below:

- **Location:** This study takes into consideration only the customers who are based in South Africa.
- **Customers:** Only the customers of Checkers Sixty60 will be taken into consideration while conducting the survey and analysis.
- **Platform:** Only the Checkers Sixty60 customers who have social media accounts will be considered for the research.
- **Research Method:** This study will use Qualtrics to create the survey, and these surveys will be passed on to the participants to fill on email as well as on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

1.6 Definitions of the Study

The terms below will be used constantly for the purpose of the study, these terms will be defined in detail, as the terms below form the basis of the research. Below are the definitions of the terms:

- **Brand Awareness** – is the ways in which brands are recognised and resonated with by customers and buyers as well as the attention that the brand captured in the customer's mind. This determines the recall value of a brand and how customers identify the goods, services, and image of the brand (Bilgin, 2018).
- **Brand Equity:** Brand equity is essentially the commercial value that a brand entails within its competitive market of the same or similar products. Brand value is derived from the perception and interpretation that customers have about the brand and the brand's worth.
- **Brand Knowledge:** Brand knowledge is essentially the perception that formulates the understanding about a brand in the consumer's mind through the ability of the recall value that the brand has.
- **Brand Image:** Brand Knowledge entails two fundamental concepts, namely brand image and brand awareness.
- **Online Shopping:** Online shopping is the process of customers buying goods and services online using the internet through E-commerce interphase platforms, also known as online shopping platforms.
- **E-commerce:** E-commerce is also known as online shopping, and this is the process of buying and selling goods and services on the internet online. Brands can advertise their products and services on the internet, and the customers can initiate transactions and action the buying process to possess the goods and services sold by a brand on the internet (Reynolds, 2000).
- **Customer Loyalty** – is the ways in which customers are committed to a particular brand in opposition to the competitor brands (Nyatlo, 2018). When customers choose a particular brand over the competitor brands, customer loyalty is formed. This customer loyalty builds a sense of relationship within the customers and the audience (Nyatlo, 2018).
- **Customers** – are the individuals who are the current as well as potential purchasers of the goods and services of a brand (Venkatesan, 2017).

- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** – is the process of the relationship that brands and customers have with each other and the ways in which this relationship can be enhanced to help a business grow its potential customer base (Kumar and Reinartz, 2018).
- **Social Media** - is broadly described as web and mobile based technology, that allows communication through engaging dialogues (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson and Seymour, 2011). Social networking on the other hand is a sub-category of social media. Social media is the platform whereas social networking refers to a sense of communication between two parties that encourage engagement and relationship building on the social media platform (Hartshorn, 2010).
- **Social Media Marketing** – is the ways in which brands market themselves on social media to gain awareness and reach (Anjum, More and Ghouri, 2012).
- **Digital Marketing** – is conceptualised through the marketing that is formed on electronic gadgets such as smart phones, computers and mobile phone applications that helps brands and customers interact and engage with one and other (Bala and Verma, 2018).

1.7 Assumptions

The assumptions of the research are outlined in detail below:

- The survey research participants have immense knowledge about social media and use social media platforms to have exposure to different brands and it is also assumed that the participants communicate with brands on social media.
- The participants are well versed with the concept of online shopping and use Checkers Sixty60 regularly as well as are active on the Checkers Sixty60 social media pages.
- The participants are honest about their interactions on social media as well as with Checkers Sixty60 on social media.
- Brands mentioned in the study, are online shopping brands specifically, that are similar to Checkers Sixty60 in nature.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter introduces the topic of the research at hand, as well as uncovers important sections. The context of the study was outlined in detail as well as the important theories that

will play a huge role in the study at hand was discussed in detail. This study will further unpack the following theories: Brand awareness, customer loyalty, and social media as a tool, while also understanding sub theories such as brand knowledge, brand image, brand referrals and customer relationship management. This study will conduct research about the ways in which social media influences brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping space by taking Checkers Sixty60 as a case study. Therefore, social media, the use of the internet as well as online shopping was discussed in this chapter; the use of Checkers Sixty60 was understood too. The objectives, problem statements, and the interrelation between brand awareness and brand loyalty were found to be related to the ways in which social media affects brand awareness and brand loyalty with reference to brand referrals as a whole in the online shopping space.

1.9 Research Structure

Chapter 1 – Introduction: This chapter discusses the study at hand as well as discusses the topic through the in-depth discussion of the research objectives, research questions, the purpose and context of the study, the significance of the research as well as the problem statement.

Chapter 2 - Literature review: This chapter discusses the important theories at hand, namely brand awareness, customer loyalty and social media as a tool. Important platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are vital and will be discussed in detail. This chapter will also discuss brand image and brand awareness. This chapter will also discuss the construct of brand referrals.

Chapter 3 - Research Methodology: This chapter allows one to understand the research methods used for the study at hand. The research design, data collection, population size as well as the validity and reliability of the study will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 - Results: This chapter discusses the findings of the study is shown in this chapter.

Chapter 5 – Discussions of the Findings: This chapter helps one understand the results, through in-depth analysis that is in sync with the research questions, objectives, and the hypothesis.

Chapter 6 – Conclusions: This chapter discusses the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction and background discussion of the topic

The literature review of this study will help one understand the main theories and concepts that will be discussed in detail in this research. These theories will be formed through the problems as well as the sub problems outlined in Chapter one. This will give one a clear understanding of the problem as well as the theories that will create a foundation for the analysis of the data that will be derived from the survey from the selected population. The main problem that was discussed was that E-commerce- online shopping- is a new phenomenon in South Africa that is gaining popularity and relevance rapidly. Through this rapid change, there are many applications that have been created to cater to the needs of the audience. One of these apps form an integral part of this research as a case study (Deloitte, 2021). The Checkers Sixty60 app will be used as a case study to collect data regarding the main problem as well as the sub problems at hand.

The main problem that creates a foundation for the research is that online shopping is not studied widely in South Africa, especially in relation to a relevant contemporary Ecommerce application such as Checkers Sixty60 (Deloitte, 2021). This study, therefore, uncovers three sub problems namely, the influence of social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter on brand awareness, the influence of social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter on customer loyalty and lastly, the ways in which social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter create an interlinkage between brand awareness and customer loyalty in relation to brand referrals.

Firstly, brand awareness is the way in which brands are recognised and resonated with by customers and the recall value a brand has in the customer's mind (Bilgin, 2018). Brand Awareness will be discussed in detail in relation to brand image, brand knowledge, brand awareness as well as brand equity. Brand awareness will also be discussed with definitions and discussions around how brand awareness is vital and the ways in which social media plays a role in helping brands create awareness (Bilgin, 2018).

Secondly, customer loyalty is fundamentally the concept of how committed customers are to a particular brand in opposition to the competitor brands (Nyatlo, 2018). Customer loyalty

will be defined and analysed in relation to how social media plays a role in creating an interaction with the customers, to build a relationship that will enhance the loyalty factor and customer relationship management (Nyatlo, 2018). Customer loyalty will also be discussed in relation to brand referrals, since the more loyal a customer is towards a particular brand, the higher the chances are that the loyal customer will refer the brand to potential customers (Chatterjee, 2011).

Thirdly, social media is essentially a web and mobile based technology that allows communication through engaging dialogues, whereas social media marketing refers to the ways in which brands market themselves on social media to gain awareness and customer loyalty (Edosomwan et al., 2011). Social media as a tool will be defined and discussed by taking into consideration how brands use it to build brand awareness and customer loyalty as well as the significance it has presently in the South African context (Edosomwan et al., 2011). Social media will especially be discussed in relation to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Facebook business manager will also be discussed in detail to understand the ways in which brand awareness is initiated on Facebook and Instagram and how that plays a huge role in building customer loyalty. Twitter will be discussed in relation to microblogging capabilities.

Fourth, this study will discuss the link between social media, brand awareness and customer loyalty. Social media creates brand awareness; that is the initial step that promotes a recall value that translates potential customers into paying customers, the paying customers are then converted into loyal customers, through immense customer and brand engagement and interaction on social media. Therefore, this study aims to test the link between social media, brand awareness and customer loyalty with reference to brand referrals as a touch point.

Finally, this study will also touch on the topic of brand referrals. This is a vital topic to understand as social media advertisements are widely appreciated. However, it is important to understand that social media advertisements assist brands to build relationships with customers that lead to customers referring the brand to one another.

2.2 Branding

A brand is a compilation of emotional as well as functional values that help entities to create a unique proposition for themselves, that further extends towards the ways in which the brand

is perceived by the target audience (Keller and Lane, 1998). A brand is essentially the identification asset that defines a person, product, business, and the offerings associated with the entity and gives the entity a meaning (Keller and Lane, 1998). Brands are intangible assets that belong to an organisation that sets them apart from the competitors through the logos, values, and unique offerings of the brand (Esch and Franz-Rudolf, 2008). This intangible asset, that one can refer to as a brand, shapes the perceived notion that individuals such as customers entail about brands through their experience with the brand offerings (Esch and Franz-Rudolf, 2008). The meaning of a brand is often associated with a customer's requirements and values on a psychological level (American marketing Association, 2013). This, therefore, creates a sense of need in the customers mind and in turn the decision-making process, the decision-making process being in sync with the values that the brand offers, and whether the values resonate with those of the customers (American marketing Association, 2013). Once a customer recognises a brand, there are a set of expectations that are created that must be fulfilled by the brand to gain customer loyalty. Once the customer is satisfied with the brand, a sense of likability that is translated to memorability is created (Sharp & Sharp, 1997).

The notion of a brand creating human-like features of values that represent a sense of character or a personality is the foundation of branding (Aaker, 1996). Branding, thus, creates a synchronisation between the expectation of a customer and the brand's personality (Aaker, 1996). Branding, therefore, is the process of giving a sense of meaning to a brand that instigates the procedure of generating a perceived brand image in the mind of the customer (Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence, 2008). The more the brand is built with the target audience in mind, the better the resonation value and in turn the brand loyalty; this is where the notion of branding plays a vital role (Buttle. 2009). Branding is primarily the process of through which a business or organisation sets itself apart from the competitors and is showcased to the public as a distinctive asset through idiosyncratic phrases, logos, ideas, designs, strategies, brand tone, colours, values, and unique propositions (Aaker, 1996). When these parameters are unique towards a particular brand, the process of branding had been constructed into a strong foundation that defines and gives a sense of meaning to a brand (Alhaddad, 2015).

The process of branding is vital because branding demonstrates the company as an integral part of the industry of brands that the company functions in (Alhaddad, 2015). Branding also

helps customers understand the brand within a positive perception as branding helps customers understand the purpose of the brand within the competitors. This process of understanding a brand is vital as the better the brand conveys its purpose to the target audience, the higher the changes of the target audience resonating with the brand (Alhaddad, 2015). Branding also builds awareness that helps in the retainment of customers as well as attracting potential customers (Keller, 2003). Lastly, branding also evokes a customer's memory towards the products and services of a brand that nudges the decision-making process of a customer (Keller, 2003).

Branding is seen to bring about sustainability and a competitive edge to the brand that further extends the notion of a brand being an intangible asset (Keller, 2003). Branding, therefore, can bring value to the business that creates a financial funnel that leads to capitalisation in the competitive market. This competitive edge that is created through the unique brand propositions within the process of branding brings about a long-standing brand and customer relationship (Keller, 2003).

2.3 Brand Knowledge

Brand knowledge is essentially the perception that formulates the understanding about a brand in the consumer's mind through the ability of the recall value that the brand has (Alimen and Guldem Cerit, 2010). Brand knowledge directly relates to how strong the marketing of a brand is and the effect that it has on the customers (Alimen and Guldem Cerit, 2010). It can be created through advertisements and communication that are in line with the brand story, brand values, brand partnerships as well as the products and services associated with the brand (Esch, Langner, Schmitt and Geus, 2006). This brand knowledge is further translated into customer experiences, when the customer utilises the products and services of the brand. Once the customer is aware about a brand and has interacted with the brand offerings, an interpretation is created in the customer's mind and certain feelings and perceptions are attached to the brand, and that forms the brand knowledge of a brand in the customer's minds (Esch, Langner, Schmitt and Geus, 2006).

According to Alimen and Guldem Cerit (2010), brand knowledge is created through the entity that the brand belongs to, as the marketing activities to create brand awareness and a sense of brand image shape the perception of the brand knowledge in the society and ultimately the mind of a customer. This is where the essence of brand equity comes into play.

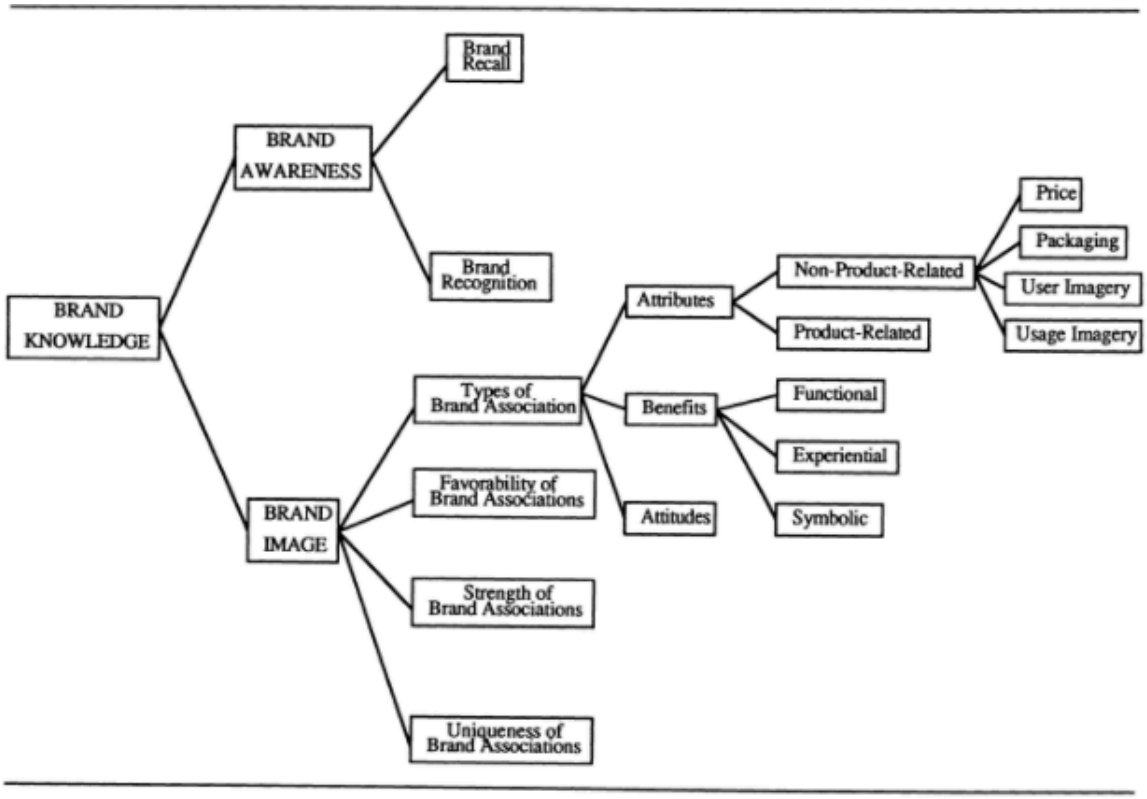
Brand equity is the connection that is created through the notion of brand knowledge. Brand knowledge is made up of brand awareness and brand image that further navigates the differential effect that brand equity is driven by (Alimen and Guldem Cerit, 2010). Brand equity relies on brand awareness and brand image that is formed through brand knowledge as the primary fundamental concept (Dew and Kwon, 2009). Brand equity is essentially the commercial value that a brand has that is comprised through the customer perceptions and customer interactions. This further helps one understand that brand knowledge has fundamentals such as brand awareness and brand image that helps create a brand perception in the minds of the customer that drives brand equity (Dew and Kwon, 2009).

Cazacu, Rotsios, and Moshonas (2014) conducted a study where it was distinguished that the role of knowledge about products and services of brands plays a vital role in the decision making and customer intent to purchase a product or service associated with the brand. It was also identified that since brand knowledge is comprised of brand awareness and brand image, consumer behaviour is influenced due to the fact that brand knowledge has an effect on customer perception of a brand that sways a customer's decision making and purchasing behaviour. To understand the concept of brand awareness, it is imperative to understand the diagram below that is formed in an efficient manner by the profound author Keller (1993). The diagram below allows one to understand that brand knowledge is an intricate yet important concept that entails brand awareness and brand image, as well as the ways in which brand awareness is constructed through multiple associations and the recall value that a brand has within the customer's mind (Keller, 1993). It is important to note that the diagram below constructs the foundation of brand equity, as brand equity is formed through brand awareness and brand image that are embedded in the concept of brand knowledge (Keller, 1993).

2.4 Brand Equity

Brand equity is essentially the commercial value that a brand entails within its competitive market of the same or similar products, while brand value is derived from the perception and interpretation that customers have about the brand and the brand's worth (Keller, 1993).

Figure 2: Keller's Model of Brand Equity



Source: Keller, 1993

Customers play a huge role in defining the multi-dimensional concept of brand equity as brand equity sways a customer's purchase intention (Keller, 1993). The higher the brand equity the more positive interactions are created with the customer of the brand (Keller, 1993). It is important to measure brand equity since it provides a sense of benchmark that brands should comply to build a successful brand with attributes that reflects a positive notion in the customer's mind (Keller, 1993). Constant measurement of brand equity leads to a better understanding about the ways in which brands can make their products and services and the brand name eligible and have a good brand value within the customers psychology (Keller, 1993). A good brand equity not only leads to a better brand image within the market, but a good brand equity also attracts investors, improves financial revenues, builds successful acquisitions, and improves the results of the marketing activities of a brand. Brand equity is, therefore, a measurement that is vital in managing a brand (Keller, 1993).

Keller (1993) helps one understand that brand equity is essentially the differential effect that springs off the notion of brand knowledge that further leads one to the direction of the customer's receptiveness of the marketing activities conducted by the brand to build brand

knowledge within the customer's mind. Aaker (1991) describes brand equity as a multidimensional cluster of assets as well as liabilities that are associated with a brand, the name of the brand, as well as the symbols attached to a brand that can add or subtract the essential value of a brand for the organisation or the customers. The value of a brand is comprised through the products or services that has a direct effect on the company as well as the customers of the company (Aaker, 1991).

Brand equity is made up of four parameters as well as two foundational frameworks that help one understand the complex concept of brand equity as developed in Keller's equity model (Keller, 1993). The four parameters of brand equity are:

Brand Awareness – Brand awareness is fundamentally the process of recognition that is received by a customer. Scholars also define brand awareness as the procedure through which brands are identified in terms of the service or product offerings. This identification is converted into a solid sense of brand awareness, when customers encounter a lasting experience with the brand that forms a certain type of recall value that is associated with the brand (Gustafson and Chabot, 2007).

Perceived Value – Perceived value is the notion of a customer's perception of the products and services associated with a particular brand; this notion helps the customer understand the desirability ratio of the brand on comparison to the competitors (Keller, 1993).

Brand Association – A brand association is predominantly the mental link and connection that customers make between a brand as well as the brand's image, logo, experience, interaction, offerings, and perception (Keller, 1993). This perceived mental notion of a brand within the customer's mind creates positive or negative associations between the brand and the customers that has a huge influence over the customers purchase intent and essentially the purchase decision. A brand association can, therefore, be seen as a bundle of associations that build up a brand image (Keller, 1993).

Brand Loyalty – Brand Loyalty is essentially the connection and resonation that customers have towards a particular brand (Akbar and Parvez, 2009). Brand loyalty is, thus, the eventual goal that brands aim to reach since brand loyalty is a stance where customers have an absolute sense of resonance with the brand; that extends the relationship between the

customer and the brand in dignified manner (Akbar and Parvez, 2009). This is because when customers are loyal to a brand, they tend to identify with the brand's persona, goods and services and are willing to be associated to the brand. This leads to customers choosing the particular brand over the competitors due to the pure feeling of resonance (Akbar and Parvez, 2009).

Although the four parameters mentioned above are vital to Keller's brand equity model, there are two frameworks that are of utmost importance and are the main frameworks, namely brand awareness and brand image. This is because brand association and perceived value stem from the process of brand awareness and brand image. Brand image is comprised of many associations that build the image of a brand, whereas brand awareness allows users to generate their brand perceptions; this perception leads of brand loyalty if the perception is positive (Keller, 1993). Brand awareness and brand image, therefore, work hand in hand to help a brand create a sense of inclination towards the brand within the mind of the customer. The more attracted a customer is towards a brand, the higher the purchase intention and decision-making process is in the favour of a brand. Brand equity, therefore, is a concept that has the potential to attract new customers and convert prospective customers, as brand equity creates a resonation between the customer and the brand in an emotional manner that builds customer relationship that instigates purchases (Keller, 1993).

A brand with a high equity is seen to have an edge over its competitors, this is because brand equity is measured through many characteristics that show one the true potential of a brand (Keller, 1993). A brand's potential is measured through the customer's resonance, experience, perceived value as well as brand knowledge that is comprised of the elements of the brand that customers have encountered through viewing, experiencing as well as the acquired knowledge about the brand through their lifecycle as a customer of the brand (Keller, 1993). This study will focus on the concept of brand equity through the lenses of brand awareness and brand image in relation to the influence of social media in the E-commerce sector in relation to brand awareness and customer loyalty that also stems from brand loyalty (Keller, 1993).

2.5 Brand Image

Brand Knowledge entails two fundamental concepts, namely brand image and brand awareness (Keller, 2011). This section will discuss the concept of brand image, which primarily, can be described as a bundle of associations by the customers. Brand image is described by many profound authors as the perceptions that customers have about brands in relation to brand associations and attributes, that have an influence of how customers recall brands (Keller, 2011). Brand image is also linked to the psychological aspects of a customer that directly resonates with the ideas of memory within the human psychology. This is because brand associations are connected to a customer's thoughts as well as feelings, therefore, the brand image is highly dependent of individual customers and their resonation with the brand offerings in relation to their feelings and thoughts (Chi, Yeh and Yang, 2009).

There are a few parameters through which customers assess brand image namely, favourability of the brand within the customer, the brand strengths and the level of uniqueness is associated with the brand (Alhaddad, 2015). These parameters play a huge role in terms of brand associations within the customers memory as the differential effect is created through favourability, uniqueness as well as the brand strengths (Alhaddad, 2015). A brand image can be created in the customers mind through tactful and strategic brand positioning It is crucial to position the brand's advantages so that they stand out from those of the competitors in the market. The advantages of the brand can be presented in a way that satisfies the audience's needs and attracts the audience's favour (Upadhyay, 2016). These parameters of brand image can be fulfilled using social media, in a way where the content portrayed about the brand on social media can outline brand knowledge fundamentals as well as brand associations and attributes to nudge the customer into viewing the brand as favourable, unique and with quality strengths. To understand the positioning of the content, it is vital to understand the fundamentals of favourability, uniqueness, and brand strengths (Upadhyay, 2016).

Favourability is essentially the process of understanding the ways in which a customer assesses the brand offerings. The offerings, therefore, are judged in terms of the effectiveness of the brand attributes fulfilling the needs of the customer, that in turn creates a positive association towards the brand (Keller and Lehmann, 2006). The brand strength relates to the ways in which a customer associates a brand's attributes in their mind; this relates to the

quality of thoughts in the mind of the customer about the brand and whether the memory of the brand leads to positive brand association as well as the number of times the customer remembers the brand within their memory about the brand attributes (Keller and Lehmann, 2006). The uniqueness of a brand is constructed through competitor brands. The comparison with the competitor brands helps the development of the notion of uniqueness of a brand (Keller, 2001). The unique selling point of a brand builds a strong value proposition for a brand within the customer (Keller, 2001). It is vital for brands to fulfil the favourability, strength, and uniqueness ratio to succeed as a brand with a differential effect, that will in turn cumulate the brand image into a profitable sale. It is vital to tap into the memory of the customer to trigger a positive brand image when the customer is posed with purchasing decisions within the brand offerings category. Therefore, it can be said that this process requires brand awareness and brand image to work simultaneously (Keller, 2001). As discussed above, social media channels can be exercised in a way where the content can be drawn up to be customer centric towards the needs of the customer with the brand image showing positive brand attributes and associations; this will lead to a positive recall value (Andreasen, 2002).

Social media, therefore, can help brands in linking the fundamental concepts of brand awareness and brand image (Hoeffler, Steve, and Keller, 2002). This is because brand awareness creates a recall value within the customer's mind through the constant bombardment of brands on the social media channels where customers engage (Hoeffler, Steve and Keller, 2002). As brand image can only be generated through brand awareness, brand image is therefore dependent on brand awareness. On the other hand, brand image can be created through the fundamentals of brand awareness (Hoeffler, Steve and Keller, 2002). When brand awareness activities are conducted, brand image activities are conducted simultaneously, whereby the brand image is portrayed through positive brand association content on social media, which in turn creates a lasting and positive brand image (Hoeffler, Steve, and Keller, 2002). Therefore, to create a good brand image, it is vital to construct large brand awareness fundamental activities (Kotler, Phillip, and Lee, 2008). This study will examine the ways in which brand awareness can be created through social media in the E-commerce, also known as the online shopping, sector that will eventually lead to customer loyalty. Therefore, to understand the effectiveness of brand awareness on social media, it is vital to understand how brand image affects brand awareness, as discussed above brand awareness and brand image fundamentals are interlinked (Kotler, Phillip, and Lee, 2008).

2.6 Brand Awareness

Scholars define brand awareness as the process through which brands are recognised and resonated with by customers and buyers (Karam and Saydam, 2015). Brand awareness falls under the concept of Brand Equity. Brand equity has two parameters, which are brand image and brand awareness. Firstly, brand image is the process of the name or logo of the brand being identified and resonated with by the customer that is based on their experience and interaction with the brand; this creates the foundation of brand equity. Second, when a brand's products and services are well received, the brand awareness process is viewed as a success since the brand is perceived to have an impact on customers' brand knowledge as well as their decision-making process (Gustafson and Chabot, 2007). Brand equity is then the value and worth that the brand has in the market that can be converted into profitable margins. This section will discuss the notion of brand awareness through the process of the concepts discussed above, namely, branding as well as brand knowledge, brand equity, brand image and brand awareness.

Brand awareness is fundamentally the process of recognition that is received by a customer through the recognition of brand logos, names, offerings, and symbols. It is vital for brands to help the customer understand the service or product offerings that the brand offers as compared to competitors (Keller, 2001). Scholars also define brand awareness as the procedure through which brands are identified in terms of the service or product offerings. This identification is converted into a solid sense of brand awareness when customers encounter a lasting experience with the brand that forms a certain type of recall value that is associated with the brand (Aaker, 1991). A recall value is the basis through which a brand and its performance is recollected in the mind of a customer, that leads to a sense of decision making that eventually leads to a purchase. For brands to have a recall value, there should always be a unique sense of attributes that attracts the customer towards a brand (Kato and Tsuda, 2017). Brand awareness is instilled into the minds of the customer through integrated marketing communication techniques such as public relations, advertising through social media, promotions, and marketing tactics. These modes of marketing increase the reach, hence increasing the awareness of a brand and helps customers understand the differentiating factor between themselves and the competitors (Keller, 2013). It is vital for companies to invest largely and focus on brand awareness using fundamentals such as customer memory marketing tactics that will instil a brand recall value within the customer’s mind.

There are two types of brand awareness that scholars have identified namely, brand awareness that occurs when a customer identifies and resonates with the offerings of the business, and brand awareness also occurs when customers identify the name or the logo of a brand (Keller, 2001). It is, therefore, vital for brands to make sure that customers are fully aware about the offerings of the brand and have a positive brand image in comparison with the competitors (Keller, 2001). When customers identify with a brand and are aware about the offerings of a business as well as have a positive notion about the brand, customers are likely to choose the brand that they are already aware about especially if the brand has the power to help customers hold a positive brand image throughout the customer lifecycle. Thus, if the customers are intrigued with a brand that they associate with a positive brand image, there are chances that customers will choose that particular brand rather than a new brand =they are not largely aware about (Moisescu. 2009). This, therefore, allows one to understand that brand awareness is the primary step towards swaying a customer's decision-making capacity towards a particular brand. It is persuasive in nature and helps the further and additional marketing activities be efficacious (Moisescu, 2009).

With technological improvements, social media has emerged as one of the most crucial pillars of product marketing and a way for customers to relate with a brand's communication and awareness efforts. Consumer behaviour is highly dependent on the environment in which they live (Yoramontri and Klieb, 2019). Since consumers are specific in their needs and demands, social media provides the consumers with a space to consume and reject products and communication from brands, therefore making the market very competitive (Palalae and Voicu, 2013). This has resulted in marketers now relying on consumer behaviour theories to refine their strategies that fit the needs of the audience to build customer relationships.

Consumers are highly receptive individuals who are actively engaging with brands in order to fulfil their needs, therefore it is vital for brands to have a sense of positive associations between the brand and the customer; as customers can be swayed in a positive or negative direction depending on their experiences or that of fellow customers through sources such as the internet or simply by engaging with other customers (Martínez and Bosque, 2013). It is likely that customers will be receptive and interact with brands that they are aware about, as the trust and customer satisfaction quotient is created through third party reviews or the experiences of the customer themselves (Ndubisi, Malhotra and Wah, 2008). Nowadays,

digital technology has created advancements such as social media platforms, where customers can write reviews to help fellow customers, brands can subsequently, interact with the customers to gain a better customer relationship; this is the reason social media marketing is vital for brands to gain a competitive edge nowadays, especially in the E-commerce sector (Ndubisi, Malhotra and Wah, 2008). Brands can use social media to gain awareness among the target audience through content creation that the audience can resonate with, that subsequently, creates brand awareness and a positive brand image (Islam and Rahman, 2016). It is, therefore, evident that to attract customers and convert the potential customers into paying customers, it is vital to engage in brand awareness activities that instigate a sense of positive brand image within the competitive market that further drives brand knowledge within the customers (Islam and Rahman, 2016).

It is important to target the right audience for the brand as consumers make decisions in relation to their emotions, personality, and behaviour; and if the brand offerings resonate with these parameters, the customer is interested (Wymer, 2011). These categories affect the way consumers consume products, services, and communication strategies, thus, vital for brands to build awareness through content strategies that build communication strategies that resonate with the target audience (McDivitt, 2003). There are different mediums through which customers can be made aware of a brand, such as social media platforms, that will further build brand equity. This study will identify the social media platforms that have a huge effect on online shopping in relation to brand awareness and customer loyalty (Wymer, 2011).

This study will mainly focus on the concept of Brand awareness since this research aims to uncover the influence of brand awareness in the online shopping sector. Therefore, brand awareness entails multiple parameters and is a concept that is in line with the fundamentals and measurements of the study at hand.

2.7 Customer Loyalty

Customer Loyalty is essentially the connection and resonation that customers have towards a particular brand (Leninkumar, 2017). The clientele in the context of this study will be referred to customers, as customers are individuals who are paying individuals of a brand who influence revenue. Customer loyalty is the end goal that brands aim to reach as loyalty brings about a notion that customers resonate with the brand and that builds a customer and

brand relationship (Bilgin, 2018). Loyal customers are willing to be associated to a brand if the brand values and offerings resonate with their values and needs. This section will discuss customers, the essence of customer satisfaction, and the important notion of customer loyalty that is essentially the final goal of a brand.

2.8 Customers

A customer is an individual or an entity that takes part in the purchasing of products and services from other businesses (Ndubisi, Malhotra and Wah, 2008). Customers are a vital part of any business as customers tend to increase the revenue of an organisation that aims to sell its product or services to customers. It is, therefore, vital for businesses to attract customers, retain customers and have a good customer retention value that increases the customer lifetime value cycle of an organisation. Businesses often compete with one another to gain a higher customer base since a higher customer base means higher profits (Chinomona and Dubihlela, 2014). Therefore, customers are a vital cog in the wheel of a business entity that relies on revenue through customer purchase. This is the reason why businesses monitor their customer relationships in an intricate manner, to build customer relationship and strengthen their customer relationship management parameter (Chu, SC, and Kim, 2011). Customer relationship building activities also help businesses understand the areas that can be improved in terms of products and services to further achieve customer satisfaction goals (Chu, SC, and Kim, 2011).

The target market for businesses is formed by customers and the customer base for every business is different (Camilleri, 2018). Customers are grouped through various parameters such as demographics, age, interests, gender, ethnicity, income level as well as the geographic areas to precisely target the right customers who would resonate with the brand knowledge and brand values (Camilleri, 2018). The precise the target market of a business who are in sync and relate to the brand knowledge, the higher the conversion rate of customers for a business. A conversion is essentially when a prospective customer becomes a buying customer (Camilleri, 2018).

It is vital for businesses to have a strong brand knowledge that customers resonate with to have an efficient recall value. A sense of recall value is created when there is a high amount of brand awareness activities and the brand image is created with values that the target

audience can interact with and create positive experiences and perceptions (Bilgin, 2018). When customers experience the product or services of a brand that creates a positive experience, the customers will likely generate into loyal customers and that builds the customer retention rate and customer loyalty, which is the end goal of brands. Scholars define customer loyalty as a notion, where the customer has a sense of emotion that relates to attachment that customers entail towards a particular brand (Bilgin, 2018). This subsequently affects the buying patterns of the customer since once a customer develops brand loyalty, there seems to be a tendency for them to favour that brand over other competitor brands and consume it repeatedly (Bilgin, 2018). Customer loyalty is the most effective stance for a brand as it results in high levels of brand resonance and identification within the customer and it increases the customer relationship between the brand and the customer (Pawar and Raut, 2019). The higher the brand awareness and positive brand image formation, the higher the brand knowledge within the customer's mind, which in turn builds customer loyalty that has an effect on brand equity (Pawar and Raut, 2019).

2.9 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is essentially a sense of measurement that determines how fulfilled and happy the customer is with a brand's offerings (Wu, 2013). Gaining customer satisfaction is the goal for brands, however it is vital to always maintain customer satisfaction to gain customer loyalty, which is the end goal (Wu, 2013). Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are concepts that go hand in hand and work simultaneously, this is because customer satisfaction leads to a positive recall value in the customer's mind and the better the brand knowledge in the memory of the customer is, the higher the chances are of customer loyalty (Veloutsou, 2015). Therefore, one can say that customer loyalty stems through maintained customer satisfaction. The next section will discuss customer loyalty in detail, therefore vital to understand the essence of customer satisfaction for this study. Customer satisfaction is the main factor for companies, and this is achieved by always placing customers and their needs first; this helps the customer realise that the brand is customer centric that leads to a sense of fulfilment within the customer (Veloutsou, 2015).

To achieve customer satisfaction, there are a few measurements that are vital. First, there should be immense communication between the brand and the customer to build customer relationships; communication full of merits leads to customer relationship management

(Terblanche and Boshoff, 2010). Second, it is important to instil commitment towards the customer's needs within the brand's core; this is because customers are inclined towards brands that are committed towards customer needs and valuable customer service (Terblanche and Boshoff, 2010). Third, it is important for brands to be receptive towards the everchanging market needs, therefore the more unique the brand is in the value proposition, the better the chances are of customers deeming the brand as resourceful towards their needs (Mouwen, 2015). It is vital for companies to then fulfil these criteria so one may gain true customer satisfaction that will create a positive brand value. It can be said that a positive brand image is constructed through customer satisfaction activities that outline the brand knowledge as valuable in the memory of the customer (Aaker, 1991).

It is important to understand the fundamentals of customer satisfaction and bear customer satisfaction as the brand's core objective (Aaker, 1991). This is because customer satisfaction leads to eventual probability and sustainability of the brand as the more customers are satisfied, the more new customers will be attracted to the brand and the customer retention rate will increase, which leads to loyal customers (Mouwen, 2015). This will, therefore, lead to a brand gaining a high customer base, which is the eventual goal for revenue growth and sustainability of a brand (Mouwen, 2015). Customer satisfaction is a gradual process because in order for customers to be loyal, customer satisfaction must be achieved in every interaction, costs must be viable, and brand perception must reflect positive brand knowledge. Once the criteria are met, the customer satisfaction process is initiated, and gradually customers are seen to be loyal to a particular brand (Veloutsou, 2015). The fulfilment of this fine line construct, customer satisfaction fundamentals, is measured by extensive comparison between customer expectations and the actual result that customers gain when they interact with the brand (Veloutsou, 2015). Customer satisfaction is highly dependent on the quality of the products and the services offered by the brand and these brand offerings are then tested through the GAP model as well as the RATER model to measure the level of customer satisfaction.

The **RATER** model helps one measure the following:
Reliability – Refers to the ways in which an organisation provides customers with services that are consistent in nature with accurate service quality standards (Javed, 2020).
Responsiveness – Refers to the ways in which organisations interact with customers and how organisations can be extremely prompt in providing customers with the superlative solution

to the challenge or problem that the customers face (Pakurár, Haddad, Nagy, Popp and Oláh, 2019).

Assurance – Refers to the employees of a company and how efficient the employees are in terms of providing customers with a sense of commitment to provide them with the best services (Czaplewski, Olson and Slater, 2002). The more assuring the employees are to the customers, the more customer relationship and trust is built (Czaplewski, Olson and Slater, 2002).

Empathy – Refers to the ways in which an organisation prioritises its customers and provides personalised advertising, solutions and services to the customers. The more personalised the service and communication methods are, the more empathy the consumers will have towards the organisation (Pakurár et al., 2019). **Tangibles** – Refers to the physical features that organisation entail and claim. This could be a representation of the organisation, therefore having noteworthy physical features is vital for an organisation (Javed, 2020).

The GAP model helps one measure customer satisfaction through immense analysis of the gap within the brand offerings and customer expectations. In a broad manner, **the knowledge gap** refers to the ability of a company to understand its customers to provide and fulfil the needs of the customers (Rao, 2019). **The customer gap** refers to the gap between the customer expectations and perceptions in relation to the quality of service received (Rao, 2019). **The communication gap** is the way in which a company fulfils the promises made while carrying out marketing efforts (Rao, 2019). **The delivery gap** is the difference between the delivery policy and the deliverables that were brought about into action, while **the policy gap** refers to the ways in which the management of a company understands and fulfils customer needs (Rao, 2019).

2.10 Customer Loyalty

Customer Loyalty is essentially the connection and resonation that customers have towards a particular brand, therefore customer loyalty and brand loyalty is interlinked (Leninkumar, 2017). Brand loyalty is an integral part of brand equity, therefore it is vital to understand the essence of customer loyalty since customer loyalty and brand loyalty are synonyms that reflect the same concept of a customer's loyalty towards a particular brand. Therefore, this study will use both the synonyms to understand customer loyalty and brand loyalty as defined by Keller (2013). The clientele in the context of this study will be referred to customers,

individuals who buy products from retailers, as this study aims to conduct research around online shopping that is essentially a form of online shopping that is conducted over the internet. Therefore, the clientele or individuals involved in the study will be referred to as customers (Yadav and Rahman, 2018). Customer loyalty is the eventual goal that brands aim to reach as customer loyalty is a stance, where customers have an absolute sense of resonance and association with the brand and that extends the relationship between the customer and the brand in a dignified manner (Bilgin, 2018). This is because when customers are loyal to a brand, they tend to identify with the brand's image which links to the brand's attributes, persona, goods and services and are willing to be associated to the brand; this leads to customers choosing the particular brand over the competitors due to the pure feeling of resonance (Akbar and Parvez, 2009).

There are essentially two forms of identification that takes place during the customer loyalty process, namely behavioural loyalty, and cognitive loyalty (Nyatlo, 2018). Behavioural loyalty is the process of customers buying items or services from a particular brand repeatedly and that results in brands gaining increased sales from a particular customer. Behavioural loyalty also means that such customers pledge to buy more products from the brand in the future too (Nyatlo, 2018). Cognitive loyalty, on the other hand, refers to the process where the brand's product and service offerings are considered as the primary and first option and solution rather than the offerings of the competitors. This type of cognitive loyalty occurs through immense brand awareness and positive brand image constructs either through social media platforms, offline marketing, or word of mouth (Nyatlo. 2018).

The aim for brands is to achieve customer loyalty since this means that there is a sense of commitment within the customers to buy the brands product and service offerings in the preceding times too, regardless of the changes that occur in the market or within the competitor's offerings of products and services (Dhurup. Van Schalkwyk and Tsautse, 2018). Because brand loyalty is deeply ingrained and is assessed by the recall value that customers have for a particular brand, it ensures that customers will choose that brand when they need a good or service that is part of that brand's offerings (Kato and Tsuda, 2017). Brand loyalty occurs through brand knowledge marketing activities that leads to high brand equity. Brand equity can be conducted through spreading brand awareness by undertaking brand awareness campaigns that further aims to builds a positive brand image.

Customer loyalty allows businesses to ignite the growth process as well as helps businesses maintain their sense of revenue and market share (Kasemsap, 2017). The more customer loyalty a brand has, the less marketing spends need to be actioned, as a brand already has multiple paying customers that instigate the growth and revenue process and in turn increases the customer lifetime value (Kasemsap, 2017). A minimal sense of marketing then should be done only to acquire new customers and gain a sense of recall value for the existing customers by making the brands ads appear on their social media pages or through other modes of media (Cupp, 2015). Customer loyalty also encourages the customers to spread positive reviews about a particular brand through social media platforms as well as word of mouth. This review is respectfully accepted since it comes from a loyal customer, who is seen as transparent and trustworthy, which improves the brand's positive image (Rootman and Cupp, 2016).

This study will discuss customer interaction and customer relationship management predominantly in terms of social media, this is because there are various ways to interact with customers presently through phone-calls, text messages etc. However, the purpose of this study is to examine the influence of social media on brand loyalty in the online shopping sector (Hudson et al., 2016). Social media plays a huge role in the essence of customer loyalty and this is because brands nowadays have the liberty to directly connect with customers through social media platforms. This allows for the process of customer relationship management strategies to be actioned to maintain customer relationships and answer any queries that they may have (Väisänen, 2018). This strengthens the customer relationship and once this relationship with the customer is built, it sets a positive ground for customers to spread positive reviews. Due to the relationship that customers have with the brand, customers would ideally invest in the product or service offerings of a particular brand. This is where the notion of customer relationship management strategies come into play.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is the process of integrating various principles, practices as well as processes that are prominently based on customer interaction (Kumar and Reinartz. 2018). Customer interactions enhance customer relationships that in tum influence the experience that the customer has with a particular brand throughout the customer lifecycle (Venkatesan and Kumar. 2004). It is important to note that in the modern day and age, the increasing influence of artificial intelligence has led to the development of many tools, such

as Google Analytics, that allow one to gather customer behaviour data and use it to interact with customers on social media in a way that is directly in line with their needs and preferences (Geru, Micu, Capatina and Micu, 2018), The critical point of CRM strategies is to understand and accumulate insights about customer preferences, behaviours, concerns as well as challenges in order to generate buyable solutions for the customers (Kumar and Reinartz, 2018).

CRM has many benefits such as:

- Building customer relationships helps business save cost and time, due to the fact that once interaction has been ignited with customers on social media, brands can contact them directly to market their offerings to instil positive brand attributes that build positive brand associations, which eventually lead to a positive brand image in the memory of the customer (Bolton and Tarasi, 2017).
- Customer interactions also helps brands to predict the needs and wants of the customers. Brands can, therefore, understand the customer market and cater to these demands. Specific customers who are the right target audience for the brand can be targeted and this will result in opulent and tactful brand awareness, sales and business growth (Ahmed, 2020).
- Positive brand interactions and prompt responses on social media lead to positive reviews and sentiments that lead to positive word of mouth activities further building a positive brand image and brand knowledge (Libai, Bolton, Bügel, De Ruyter, Götz, Risselada and Stephen, 2010).

It can therefore be said that social media allows brands to directly interact with the customers, in order to solve the customer complaints, or to create brand awareness and promote the service or product offerings in the online shopping sector (Geru et al., 2018). Customer loyalty, therefore, generates a brand equity through constructive brand knowledge activities through promotional brand awareness building campaigns. The brand awareness campaigns that entail positive brand association and highlight positive brand attributes through resourceful content leads to a positive brand image. This positive brand image nudges brand and customer engagement and interaction that has the potential to lead go customer loyalty.

2.11 Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is essentially the promotion of brands using the internet on internet based digital marketing platforms that builds awareness within customers as well as helps brands attract potential customers, while also enhancing communication with the brand and the customer to build customer satisfaction and eventually customer loyalty (Ambati, 2017). Digital marketing is, therefore, a way through which brands can promote their offerings through digital platforms and can also connect with the audience in a form that is relevant to their needs. This is cost effective due to the limited man powder required to spread brand awareness to multiple individuals at the same time and personal touches can be initiated for individual customers of a brand through digital marketing (Ambati, 2017).

It is vital for brands to include digital marketing in the strategy creation since that the internet usage is growing exponentially and customers who are present on the internet, can be converted into paying customers (Bala and Verma, 2018). Customers in the modern era rely on the internet while looking for product and service offerings that they need. This increased search on the internet can help brands to spread brand knowledge and spread information about the brand offerings to the potential customers (Bala and Verma, 2018). Digital marketing strategies, therefore, should be positioned in a way that is strategic and spreads the brand's marketing objectives through consistency in brand tone, communication, and awareness techniques (Bala and Verma, 2018). It is then vital to understand the customer target audience and the channels that they resonate with to build digital marketing consistency. Digital marketing has various channels such as Google Advertisements, Search Engine Marketing as well as Social Media marketing (Bala and Verma, 2018).

This study will focus on the aspect of social media marketing. Social media is described as web and mobile based technology that allows communication through engaging dialogues through various applications; these applications can be used by brands to digitally market their product offerings (Baruah, 2012). Since social media is a prominent marketing feature nowadays, many brands are competing with one and other on multiple platforms to gain a large customer base. However, it is important to identify the right social media channels for the target audience as well as curate the content that the audience will resonate with; this will help bring value to the customer that will build brand awareness in a way that customer will

resonate with the brand and convert into paying customers. Due to the sheer competition in the digital marketing sector, value creation for the customer is vital (Baruah, 2012).

Value can be created through spreading important brand knowledge to the audience present on the internet. This knowledge is seen as value centric if the audience can benefit from the brand information. Brand value can also be the process of being mindful about the needs of the customer and this attention to the customer reflects the brand in a positive light (Terblanche and Boshoff, 2010). Digital marketing platforms are highly progressive, where customers can communicate with each other and discuss the brand offerings on open space platforms. This form of customer communication about a brand is known as reviews. The sharing process of customer experience with a brand can lead to increased brand awareness and brand image creation (Terblanche and Boshoff, 2010).

Social Media allows brands to advertise themselves through images, creatives as well as pictures. This form of informative display of advertising leads to creating a brand story in the memory of the customer (Edosomwan et al., 2011). Customers can envision themselves using the brand offerings for their needs in an effective manner and this creates a sense of connection with the customers and the brand. It is vital to measure the reach of each social media channel to achieve effective brand awareness and customer loyalty (Wu, 2013). This study will predominantly focus on understanding digital marketing through exploring social media as a digital marketing instrument since social media marketing is a vital part of digital marketing. Social Media effectiveness can be measured through the amount of audience are reached through each social media platform. This study will measure the effectiveness of two social media platforms namely, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

2.12 Social media as a Tool

Social Media is diverse and has a variety of ways in which brands can use social media objectives to advertise themselves (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). Social media also allows brands and consumers to create posts and share their posts to communicate as well as build relationships with one another (Markos-Kujbus and Gati, 2012). Social media is a powerful tool with different functions that help brands gain awareness, spread brand knowledge, strengthen the brand image, gain customer engagement, communication, reach

customers and gain customer satisfaction, customer traffic and ultimately successful conversions, and brand loyalty (Bilgin, 2018).

Social media marketing is a vital factor for brands presently to spread awareness and reach a large number of audience as well as gain customer loyalty (Bilgin, 2018). Brands use social media to communicate with their target audience to create an increased sense of consumer relationship and satisfaction, subsequently attracting potential customers, while also increasing brand loyalty within the existing consumer base. Due to a large audience on social media, it can be tedious to detect the right channels and target the relevant audience into the marketing funnel (Markos-Kujbus and Gati, 2012). Therefore, it is important to study the effectiveness of social media platforms to curate content for the target audience that is in line with brand knowledge and that can create immense brand awareness with a positive brand image which will have an effective impact on the target audience. This curated content then creates impactful conversations with the brand and the audience. This Customer Relationship Management strategic communication leads to customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Kilgour, Sasser and Larke, 2015). This section below will outline the fundamentals of social media.

2.13 Social Media

Social media is broadly described as web and mobile based technology, that allows communication through engaging dialogues (Edosomwan et al., 2011). Social networking, on the other hand, is a subcategory of social media. Social media is the platform whereas social networking refers to a sense of communication between two parties that encourage brand awareness, engagement and relationship building on the social media platform (Hartshorn, 2010). Social Media allows the process of brand awareness activities through various objectives, depending on the customer channel preference and target audience, that allows brands to capture and reach a large target audience; while allowing brands to generate communication through engaging dialogues in order to enhance customer relationships strategies and build customer loyalty (Edosomwan et al., 2011).

Social networking is conducted on various platforms, some of which are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn (Cupp, 2015). This is where the concept of social media marketing comes into play. Social media marketing is a compilation of unique yet effective

marketing techniques using online communications, social networks, write ups such as informative blogs, social media advertisements among many other techniques (Hartshorn, 2010). This study will focus on social media platforms and networks. Social media marketing is vast, therefore, every individual who is a part of the social network becomes the customer of a brand (Wibowo, Chen, Wiangin, Ma and Ruangkanjanase, 2021). Brands, therefore, can build a sense of awareness by understanding the right social media channels for their target market. This allows brands to create content and segment their target audience so that the right individuals who can potentially be profitable customers can form a part of their marketing promotions. This leads to useful brand awareness tactics to create a positive brand image through constructive brand knowledge and processes on social media (Anjum, More and Ghouri, 2012). Social media is also a source through which customers can leave reviews about their experience with the brand for the fellow customers, the better the reviews, the better the new customer attraction.

Social media entails objectives such as reach, engagement, traffic, conversions, messages, and leads (Facebook, 2021b). The use of customer satisfaction measurements helps brands to create content that the customer base can resonate with and use these objectives to reach a large customer target audience base to derive brand awareness (Facebook, 2021b). Social Media is a tool that allows brands to display their advertisements to multiple people on their smart phones at the same time (Rootman and Cupp, 2016). Social Media also helps brands to display their advertisements to many potential customers several times in a day, making the recall value of the brand high due to the frequency of the advertisements that customers are exposed to (Kato and Tsuda, 2017). This process, therefore, leads to brand recognition through the identification of the names as well as the products and services offered (Latif, Islam, and Noor, 2014). Brand awareness is, therefore, the initial step towards converting a potential customer into a paying customer (Latif, Islam, and Noor, 2014) Once brand awareness is created through the reach and frequency of advertisements, the latter step is to create customer loyalty by creating profitable interactions with the potential and existing customers on social media (Kallier, 2016).

Social media can be used to strengthen a brand or firms existing relationships with their customers and create new relationships with new customers through online promotional exchange, communication, creating connections and improving the customer relationship customer base through tactful customer relationship management strategies (Assaad and

Gómez, 2011). Brands use social media platforms to derive many profitable advantages to their business (Kallier, 2016). There are two major benefits of social media. Firstly, social media allows marketers to track and control the number of views, reach and conversions their promotions have received, and this helps brands to understand the receptiveness of their strategies and better their future strategies (Clark and Melancon, 2013). Secondly, since social media marketing is conducted on a single device, this reduces the manpower required for this form of advertising, therefore leading to cost reduction (Clark and Melancon, 2013).

Social media marketing allows brands to promote their product and services, by sharing their brand knowledge in unique ways to a large number of audiences at the same time (Baruah, 2012). Social media also allows brands to communicate directly with their customers thus creating a better satisfaction within the customer base (Rootman and Cupp, 2016). In order to create profitable relationships with the customers, and subsequently increase the customer loyalty rate, it is vital to employ customer relationship management strategies such as constantly following up with the customers on major touch points, engaging in dialogue regarding promotions and sales that may intrigue the customer et cetera, and this will help brands create a sense of working relationship with the customers (Rootman and Cupp, 2016). Social media also allows brands to create a positive promotion that can attract new customers (Baruah, 2012).

Social media marketing has taken the world by storm by increasing revenue streams through large reach and awareness, while also initiating customer interaction that allows brands to better understand the needs of their consumers and building relationships with existing customers and attracting new customers (Clark and Melancon, 2013). These factors allow brands to better their customer loyalty status and in turn, the customer recall and retention rate, due to the pure essence of interaction and communication on social media (Clark and Melancon, 2013). Communication with brands creates a positive impact on the consumer base since customers can get more information about the product or service, learn about new products or services, gain access to reviews, and get prompt answers for the questions that they may have. These factors lead to a sense of connectivity that escalates the image of a brand and in turn the brand loyalty (Voorveld, 2019). Communication with brands leads to a sense of trust among the audience. Trust is a vital factor while building as well as strengthening relationships with the consumer base to grow the customer loyalty rates

(Voorveld, 2019). Trust, therefore, ensures that customers are reattained in a particular brand, rather than the competitor brands.

For the purpose of this study, the angle of brand awareness and customer loyalty that is created through using social media as a tool will be the focal point in relation to the Ecommerce sector. The social media tools that will be discussed are Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This is due to the fact that the case study is in line with these two social media platforms; the most amount of content sharing and customer engagement is conducted on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, therefore in order to gain effective result, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter will be used.

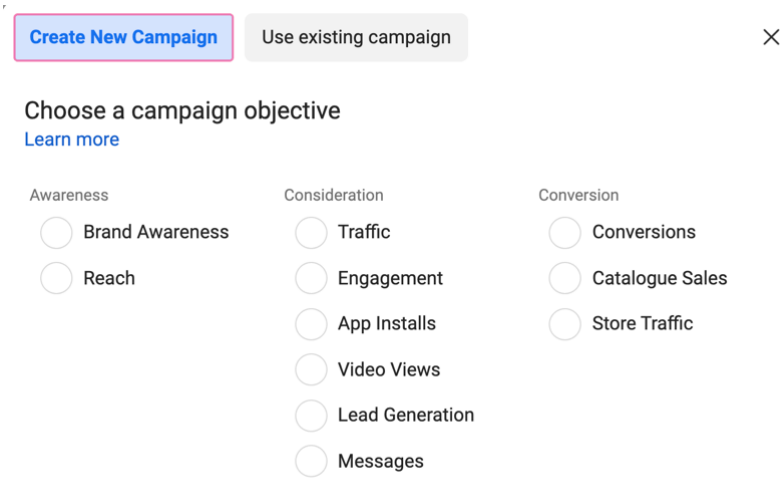
2.14 Facebook

Facebook is a social networking platform that was the first of its kind in the world in the year 2004 since then, Facebook has gained immense popularity among individuals and brands as well. Facebook had gained over 2.91 billion users over the years as a social networking platform that allows users to connect with their friends and families as well as stay up to date with the latest products and services of various brands (Khan and Saleh, 2022). Users on this platform can share various types of information about themselves such as textual format of communication, as well as pictures and videos. Users can also communicate with each other publicly or privately through the interchange of messages in the form of videos, texts, and pictures (Nadkarni and Hofmann, 2012). Many brands have also created accounts on Facebook to promote their products and services to the customers. Customers can keep up with brands on Facebook while brands can keep up with the ever changing needs of the customers through customer interaction as well as using Facebook for marketing their brand offerings to customers (Dehghani and Tumer, 2015). This process has taken the name of digital marketing over the years. Facebook plays a huge role in the process of digital marketing and is unique as it entails a feature of posting and stories. Posts last on the profile of a brand or user for more than 24 hours while Facebook stories is a feature where users can create a post that lasts only for 24 hours and have engaging and interactive features that are ever-changing (Dehghani and Tumer, 2015).

Facebook plays an integral role in the digital marketing process as it entails a feature called Facebook business manager, where brands can promote the information that they post on

their brands accounts. The act of promoting their posts creates various ads that appear on the timeline of different users on Facebook (Shen and Bissell, 2013). A timeline is essentially the information that appears on the home page of the user's profiles and this is where users can connect with the fellow users and brands. The users then transform into potential customers for the brand (Shen and Bissell, 2013). There are eleven different promotional techniques and objectives on Facebook Business Ads manager as seen below.

Figure 3: Facebook Business Ads Manager Overview



Source: Facebook, 2022

Each objective has different uses that differs in terms metrics such as reach; that is the amount of people the advert will reach, impressions; is the number of people that will view the ad, and engagement; is the number of people who will engage with the brand and have the potential to convert into a paying customer. The objective that suits the business characteristics should be selected in terms of these important metrics (Curran, Graham and Temple, 2011). The section below will demonstrate how the process of digital marketing is initiated on Facebook and the objectives through which ads can be created on Facebook in order for brands to create ads to promote their brand offerings. The objectives are:

- **Brand Awareness** - The brand awareness objective allows a business to popularize the brand and the ad is shown to individuals who are more likely to remember the advert (Facebook, 2021).

- **Reach** – The objective shows the brand's advertisements to multiple number of people many times during the duration of the campaign (Facebook, 2021).
- **Traffic** – This objective is used to gain traction on a website, the ads with this objective will redirect people onto a website or an app when clicked on (Facebook, 2021).
- **Engagement** – This objective is used to gain maximum likes, shares and comments onto the page, this objective creates interaction with the brand and the audience (Facebook, 2021).
- **App Installs** – This objective is used to show ads to individuals who are most likely to download and interact with a new application (Facebook, 2021).
- **Video Views** – This objective shows video ads to individuals who are most likely to view and complete the videos (Facebook, 2021).
- **Lead Generation** – This objective allows customers to give their contact details to the brand through a form. The advert is accompanied by a form that can be filled (Facebook, 2021).
- **Messages** – This objective contains a Call To Action (CTA) button that the customers can click on to interact with the brand on Facebook Messenger, Instagram as well as WhatsApp (Facebook, 2021).
- **Conversions** – This objective is used to gain transactions; the advert is shown to individuals who are most likely to visit a website and make a purchase or add their payment information (Facebook, 2021).
- **Catalogue Sales** – This objective is used to show shopping advertisements to individuals (Facebook, 2021).
- **Store Traffic** – This objective is used to drive traffic to the physical stores, the advert is shown to individuals who are likely to visit the physical stores (Facebook, 2021).

Facebook has many users who spend a great amount of their time on Facebook, a study showed that users spend 145 minutes per day on social media platforms, where the main social media usage was recorded on Facebook and Instagram (Huang, 2017). The study also showed that 90% of the active social media users were within the ages 18-29, 82% of the users were within the ages 30-49, 69% of the active social media users were within the ages 50-64 and 40% of the users were within the ages that is 65 and above (Huang, 2017). Due to the sheer amount of time that individuals spend on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, it is vital for brands to advertise their offerings to customers on Facebook as

brands can gain a large amount of customer share and grow their customer base by acquiring potential customers through Facebook (Huang, 2017).

Brands can use their creative assets and reach out to customers in a way that is informative and engaging to the audience, through the usage of quizzes, informative campaigns, engaging stories, competitions where the audience can win a prize, as well as interactive features where the audience can connect with the brand (Lukka and James, 2014). These types of interactions with the customers and the brand leads of awareness that creates a tremendous recall value in the memory of the customer. Brands can, therefore, create awareness by interacting with customers regularly, publicly as well as privately. It is also vital to note that since Facebook is used through the internet, the interaction is seen as live and that adds a sense of personal touch to the interaction process between the brand and the customer (Lukka and James, 2014).

This is the reason that users who are also potential customers for brands tend to believe that the information and brand offerings are credible and the audience can, therefore, trust the brands that are on Facebook, as well as trust the information that a brand creates and promotes on Facebook, due to the brand interaction that develops in real time. Therefore, the digital marketing strategy to the right target audience is seen as reliable by the potential customers (Duffett, 2015). This study will aim to explore the effectiveness and influence of Facebook on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the E-commerce sector (Duffett, 2015).

2.15 Instagram

Instagram is a social media platform that was launched in 2010 as a photo sharing platform, where users could share pictures of their personal experiences (Miles, 2013). Instagram has now grown into a platform that allows one to share pictures, videos, textual content as well as create stories that last for 24 hours with unique interactive features. Instagram has over 1 billion active users, and is growing at a fast pace (Miles, 2013). Instagram has allowed users to connect with one another as well as connect with various brands and can follow brands to get daily updates and communication. Instagram marketing has reached a position that gives brands a unique proposition, where brands can spread advertisements to users who are not following the brand (Landsverk, 2014). Since brands can target and reach out to many

potential customers, brands gain exposure and the ability to reach new and potential customers who have the chance to transform into paying customers (Landsverk, 2014).

Instagram has also cultivated an influencer culture, where individuals who have a many followers post information about a particular brand and many of their followers are influenced by their credibility and subsequently trust the brand. Brands, therefore, gain awareness through influencer marketing (Pessala, 2016). It is vital for brands to interact and market their brand offerings to the right target audience on Instagram This is done through creating Instagram advertisements, as well as influencer marketing since it is vital to grow the follower base on Instagram in order to gain brand awareness (Pessala, 2016) . It is also important to define the right target audience to grow the customer base of a brand. Brand awareness to the right target audience on social media networks such as Instagram leads to higher conversion rates by customers who are interested and have an increased relevancy in the brand offerings (Dutta and Kaushik, 2019).

The audience base on Instagram is receptive to brand advertisements, and users are highly inclined to learn new brand knowledge, brand offerings as well as draw relevance and credibility through the brand image that the brand portrays on Instagram. The more followers a brand has, the better the credibility and positive brand image ratio (Dutta and Kaushik, 2019). The content posted through Instagram is vital as this helps brands create brand image and awareness. Instagram also generates various comments from different users and these comments add to the brand image. A study by '*SendPulse*' showed that 83% of the users confessed that they discover new products and services on Instagram and users trust brands that are present on Instagram. Therefore brands that are present on Instagram gain popularity as the brands are seen as relevant and trust worthy (Dutta and Kaushik, 2019).

Instagram has also accelerated the culture of brand and customer communications where customers can interact with brands personally through the Instagram messenger. This promotes customer relationship, therefore, it is vital to create positive customer relationships on Instagram messenger and maintain a brand tone that is credible and reliable (Vanauken, 2015). It is also important to communicate with the customers in a prompt manner to convert potential customers into paying customers, and eventually maintain customer relationships in a way that will build customer loyalty. To maintain a positive brand equity, it is imperative to

conduct a positive brand image and promote useful brand knowledge that will promote brand awareness (Vanauken, 2015).

2.16 Twitter

Twitter is a popular social media tool that was launched in 2006 worldwide Since the rise of twitter, many audiences have embraced the microblogging nature of twitter (Murthy, 2018). It is a platform where one can express their message in 280 characters, this was done to help the twitter audience to keep their thoughts short and precise (Murthy, 2018). Many brands, therefore, are present on twitter to promote their brands, sales, promotions as well as brand knowledge as a whole in a short and concise manner, where the audience will be sure to read the contents of the tweet, due to its short and concise nature. The constraint of 280 characters is also known as microblogging. It is vital to note that the tweet can contain links, blogs, images, videos as well as GIFs (Cripps, Singh, Mejtof and Salo, 2020).

Twitter also contains a sense of sentiment analysis, a sentiment analysis is a data centre that allows brands to gain a sense of understanding about what is being mentioned about the brand on social media platforms especially on Twitter (Cripps et al., 2020). This allows brands to understand their customers in a better manner and align their offerings in line with the needs and demands of the customer (Murthy, 2018). Twitter provides a real time effect, where queries can be discussed urgently in a series of small and concise chats between the customer and the brand and this allows brands to create a sense of relationship with their customers, since brands build awareness through twitter advertising though a series of tweets, retweets, mentions and shares and afterwards, respond to their customers in order to build a rapport with the customers that will lead to eventual customer loyalty through twitter brad awareness (Murthy, 2018).

Microblogging has taken the world by storm on twitter and many well-known brands and personalities have adapted to this style of brand awareness mechanisms (Java, Song, Finin and Tseng, 2007). It is vital to be present on microblogging sites such as twitter since brand awareness is spread through such platforms in a series of tweets by the brand and retweets by fellow customers which eventually leads to customer satisfaction (Murthy, 2018).

2.17 Brand referrals

Brand referrals is the process through which customers who are loyal or are favourable towards a particular brand, speak about the brand to their friends, family, colleagues, and acquaintances, and refer the brand to one another through their positive experiences with the brand and encourage fellow potential customers to engage and consume the products and services that the brand has to offer (Muller, 2018). Customers can get accustomed to a particular brand through social media, word of mouth, or offline advertisements. Advertising is an important step towards building brand awareness about a particular brand. Once awareness is established, it is important to create a sense of need within the customer to try out a brand or engage with the brand (Muller, 2018). This can be done through extensive social media marketing on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other various platforms (Li, 2015).

It can be said that the more customers view a brand on their digital radar or on offline media, the more likely they are to engage with the brand and consume the products and services that the brand has to offer (Rayat, Rayat and Rayat, 2017). When a customer consumes the services and products that the brand has to offer, a sense of decision making is created regarding their perception of the brand (Li, 2015). If the consumer is dissatisfied, they will not consume the brand again, however when a positive relationship is created between the brand and the customers, customers may consume the services or products of the brand multiple times (Li, 2015). This positive interaction has the potential to lead to customers referring the brand to others. It can then be said that customer loyalty on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter has the potential to lead to brand referrals. Therefore, in the context of this study, social media advertising can influence brand awareness that can lead to customer loyalty, that can then lead to customers referring brands to others (Becerra and Badrinarayanan, 2013).

2.18 Digital Marketing and Brand awareness

Digital marketing has grown exponentially and has shown to grow further into one of the main modes of marketing and communication in the future (Çizmeci and Ercan, 2015). The internet and smart phone usage has allowed customers to share their experiences while brands on the other hand have had the chance to share their brand knowledge to gain market share and spread a positive brand image to gain a large customer base through various digital marketing tools (Çizmeci and Ercan, 2015). Digital marketing is paramount in relation to

brand awareness as brands can now share their brand knowledge through extensive content sharing through texts, images, or videos, and that creates a certain type of brand image. The more positive the content shared and the interaction by the customer, the positive the brand image is, and this positive brand image and intensive promotion on digital marketing platforms leads to brand awareness that eventually leads to brand equity (Krishnaprabha and Tarunika, 2020).

The reason brand awareness was chosen to study in relation to digital marketing, is because brands now use many digital marketing platforms to promote their brand offerings to multiple customers at the same time, hence digital marketing is seen to unite customers and brands at a large scale that can be measured (Sya'idah, Jauhari, Sugiarti and Dewandaru, 2019). Digital marketing is known to create awareness for brands within customers due to the different digital marketing channels available with multiple features that aims to grow a brand, therefore, it is critical to study the link between digital marketing and brand awareness (Sya'idah et al., 2019). One of the predominant digital marketing tools that will be covered in this study is social media. Social media is chosen as many brands are present on social media to promote their brand offerings and grow their market share, thus important to study the influence of social media on brand awareness (Sya'idah et al., 2019).

2.19 Social Media and Brand Awareness

Social Media is one of the most important tools of digital marketing and this can be said as there are multiple platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Tiktok lately. Therefore, there are multiple channels through which brands can spread brand knowledge and brand awareness by promoting their brand offerings through social media content (Bilgin, 2018). Social media plays a huge role in retargeting customers, and constantly reminds potential customers about brand offerings that eventually converts the customers through constant bombardment and notifications. Brands can share brand information through texts, pictures, or videos as well as use creative and interactive features on social media such as stories to connect with the audience personally (Bilgin, 2018). Customers also engage with one another to create brand associations and brand images in their mind. The more positive the brand image is within fellow customers, the higher the chances are of users resonating with the brand and convert from potential customers to paying customers. This is because customers firstly tend to trust brand information that is

spread through social media by the brand (Sasmita and Suki, 2015), secondly, customers tend to trust the experiences of fellow customers that are highlighted on social media (Sasmita and Suki, 2015).

Therefore, brand awareness and social media work simultaneously and hand in hand to create a positive brand image and spread brand knowledge in a manner that will magnify the brand equity (Poturak and Softic, 2019). Since social media marketing is one of the most important steps of digital marketing, it is crucial to study the influence of social media on brand awareness. The social media channels namely Facebook, Instagram and Twitter were chosen, as E-commerce online shopping brands such as Checkers Sixty60 are highly present on these social media channels, and customer interaction and brand awareness is mainly spread through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter particularly for Checkers Sixty60. It is therefore, vital to test the validity of the influence of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter on brand awareness and customer loyalty in relation to the online shopping sector in relation to Checkers Sixty60 (Poturak and Softic, 2019).

2.20 Digital marketing and Customer Loyalty

Digital marketing is a vital tool that brings about customer loyalty through different platforms such as social media, search engine optimization as well as search engine marketing (Merisavo, 2008). Digital marketing allows brands to spread information to a large number of audience as well as interact with the audience especially on social media platforms (Merisavo, 2008). Because digital marketing has multiple different channels that brands can use, brands have the chance to enhance the recall value of the brand offerings in the minds of the customer. Brands can do this through constant bombardment and notifying the customers about the brand through all the digital marketing platforms.

The usage of all the digital marketing platforms to build awareness is impactful in the psychology of the customer (Merisavo, 2006). Customer loyalty, however, is not formed only through high recall value and constant promotions; this is where social media comes into play. Creating an exorbitant brand recall value is vital to create brand awareness and generate a large customer base who have the potential to be loyal customers However, customer interaction is what builds customer loyalty eventually (Merisavo, 2006). It is then critical to explore the influence of social media on customer loyalty to understand the essence of this

study; that is the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector (Merisavo, 2006).

2.21 Social media and customer loyalty

Social Media plays an important role in relation to customer satisfaction as well as customer (Yadav and Rahman, 2018). This can be said as social media allows customers and brands to unite through communication and interactions with each other through various methods that can either be private or public on social media platforms (Yadav and Rahman, 2018). Customers have the access to ask any questions that they may have about the brand, and the brand too has the access to directly market their band offerings to the customers through a series of interactions (Senders, Govers and Neuts, 2013). Once a positive sense of connection and interaction is established, the interaction is increased that leads to customer satisfaction, and this prolongs customer satisfaction on social media through prompt and useful responses by the brand to the customer, eventually leading to customer loyalty (Gu and Ye, 2014). Customer loyalty then increases the chances of the customers spreading positive reviews about the brand to fellow customers that encourage brand awareness. The loyal customers also increase the retention rate of a brand, while also simultaneously helping grow the brand through social media through constant public and private interactions (Gu and Ye, 2014).

The reason customer loyalty was chosen in relation to social media is because social media plays a huge role in terms of brand awareness that attracts customers to a brand (Gamboa and Gonçalves, 2014). Therefore, it is vital to study the proceedings that occurs after potential customers are made aware about a brand, the journey through which potential customers transition into paying customers, and how paying customers are further converted into retained customers who generate customer satisfaction and eventually become loyal customers. Social media is a vital digital marketing tool that helps brands gain customer loyalty, therefore, in relation to the focus of this study, it is crucial to test and validate the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector, with a prominent focus on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (Gamboa and Gonçalves, 2014). In regard to Checkers Sixty60, which serves as the case study for this study, these platforms' impact on consumer loyalty in the online purchasing sector is also discussed (Gamboa and Gonçalves, 2014).

Customer loyalty and brand awareness therefore, go hand in hand and work simultaneously on social media to give brands reach and conversions within the target market (Chen and Chang, 2011).

2.22 Digital Marketing and Brand Referral

Digital plays a huge role in relation to brand referrals; this is because digital marketing is the first step towards brand awareness capabilities (Chatterjee, 2011). There are various sectors within digital marketing such as search engine optimisation that helps brands gain awareness on search engines as well as search engine marketing that helps brands gain top of mind awareness on social media platforms through extensive textual advertisements (Hayes, King & Ramirez, 2016). Social media marketing is a fundamental part of digital marketing that plays a huge role in building brand awareness (Chatterjee, 2011). Brand referrals is a concept through which satisfied customers of a particular brand recommend the brand of their choice to fellow potential customers through sharing positive experience with the brand, and this process is initiated through brand awareness (Shukla, 2017). Brand awareness leads to the customer engaging with the brand, and with constant advertising of the brand, recall can be created multiple times and that has the potential to lead to brand loyalty within the customer,. Therefore, customer loyalty created through social media marketing can lead to brand referral. This study aims to focus on social media and its influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty, and whether brand referral is a phenomenon in the online shopping sector (Rusticus, 2007).

2.23 Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Brand referral

Social media plays a vital role in terms of building brand awareness. Once constant brand awareness is created on social media through promotional advertisements that resonate with the customers, initial engagement is created that leads to the customers consuming the service and product offerings of the brand (Rusticus, 2007). Customer loyalty comes into play when customers constantly consume a brand based on their past experiences as well as by taking into consideration and engaging with promotional content on social media by the brand. Brands make use of promotional content to gain top of mind consideration so that customers are constantly exposed to the brand, and that aids recall and helps customers consume the

brand multiple times, leading to a sense of customer loyalty (Chatterjee, 2011). When a customer is satisfied with their experience with a brand, it is frequently recommended to other customers, so this customer loyalty may translate into brand referrals (Chatterjee, 2011). This study aims to understand whether social media advertising has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty, and whether this influence can lead to brand referral using Checkers Sixty60 as a case study.

2.24 Relationship between brand awareness, customer loyalty, social media and brand referrals

Social media is a fundamental pillar in this modern era in the society as well as the marketplace (Bilgin, 2018). The ways in which customers interact with one another, absorb information as well as interact with different brands is initiated through social media on most occasions (Bilgin, 2018). This is because brands create brand awareness on social media through various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube as well as TikTok lately. These social media platforms entail a variety of potential customers that brands can cater to, hence social media has widened the spectrum of awareness and the number of people who can be reached at the same time, in multiple locations (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014).

This strengthens brand awareness capabilities as brands now have the access to an array of audience that can be targeted (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). Brands can also target their specific target market to build brand awareness among the audience who have a high potential to convert into paying customers (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). When brand awareness is spread through social media marketing, potential customers have a high chance of viewing the brand offerings, through the social media marketing content (Monica and BalaÅŸ, 2014). The social media content can outline the brand knowledge and brand offerings, and reflect the brand image in a positive manner, hence spreading brand awareness through social media in a manner that can build and heighten the brand equity (Monica and BalaÅŸ, 2014). Brand equity consists of brand image and brand awareness as discussed, therefore, to build customer loyalty within a brand's target audience, it is vital to focus on elevating brand equity (Chandon, 2003). Customer loyalty is the end goal of a brand, however there are fundamentals that build brand equity. Firstly, it is vital to spread awareness

through social media to reach out to multiple customers, as well as target the specific target market that resonate with the brand offerings (Chandon, 2003).

Once the potential customers have viewed the brand offerings, it is vital to increase the frequency of the times the customers view the brand content on social media (Chandon, 2003). Secondly, when the audience resonates with the brand offerings, it is vital to interact with the audience on social media to build a sense of customer relationship (Turri, Smith and Kemp, 2013). Social media is a platform that encourages communication between brands and customers, therefore this norm has made customer and brand communication an integral part of social media marketing (Wijaya, 2013). This constant customer and brand interaction builds customer satisfaction and the customer satisfaction that is received by the customer is built through prompt responses by the brand, informative messages as well as answering any questions that the customer may have (Torres and Tribó, 2011). Thirdly, customer satisfaction that is managed through constant customer relationship management through social media, further leads to customer loyalty (Mariani and Mohammed, 2014).

When a customer is loyal to a brand, there is a potential that customers will spread a positive brand image and heighten the brand awareness process, through reviews and comments on social media about their positive experience with the brand (Gauri, Bhatnagar, and Rao, 2008). The better the positive brand experience that customers have, the better the chances of loyal customers spreading positive brand awareness for the brand; therefore, it is vital for brands to gain customer retention as well as customer loyalty (Gauri, Bhatnagar and Rao, 2008). Through the discussion above, it can be said that social media is a vital and initial part of the funnel, therefore brand awareness can be spread through various social media platforms to gain market share and awareness. This awareness spreads to various potential customers, who could turn into paying customers through brand awareness and a high recall value (Cheung, Pires and Rosenberger, 2019). This awareness and recall value also leads to customer interaction between the brand and the customer; the more helpful the interaction is, the higher the customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction can be built through communication with the brand as well as positive customer experiences, prolonged customer satisfaction and brand awareness leads to the brand gaining the ‘top of mind’ position with the customer (Cheung, Pires and Rosenberger, 2019). This customer satisfaction that lasts for a prolonged duration eventually leads to

customer loyalty (Cheung, Pires and Rosenberger, 2019). The loyalty that is created within the customers and the brand tends to create positive brand interactions, these positive sentiments can translate into customers referring the brand to their family and friends who are essentially potential customers for the product and service offerings of a particular brand, that creates the sentiment of brand referrals. It is vital for brands to create a positive sentiment within the existing audience to allow the existing customers to promote the brand to potential customers. Therefore, the synergy between brand awareness, customer loyalty, social media and brand referrals is clearly understood (Cheung, Pires and Rosenberger, 2019).

2.25 Variables of Interest

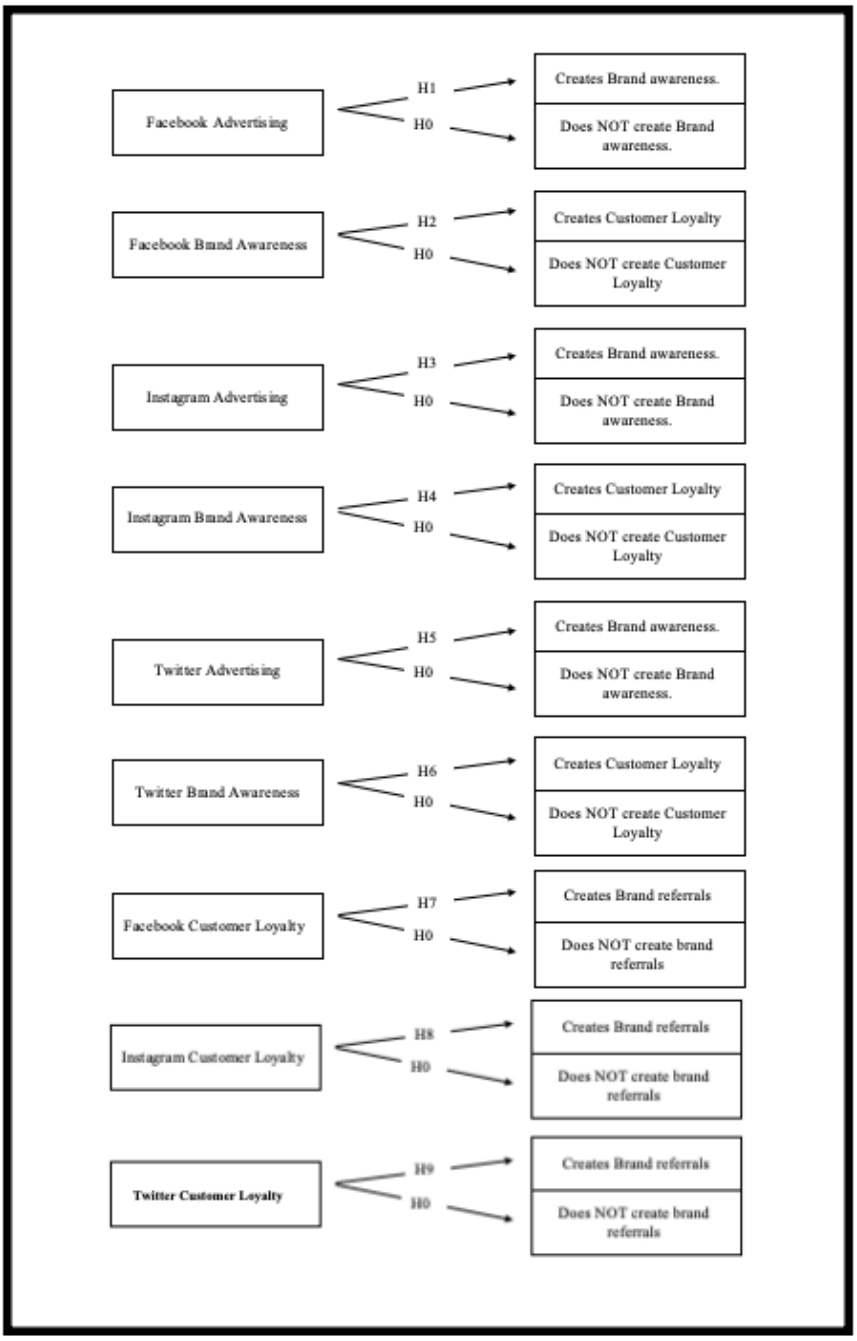
Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter will be used in this study to validate the synergy between brand awareness and social media as well as customer loyalty and social media. Therefore, the relationship between Facebook and brand awareness, Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty, Instagram, and brand awareness as well as Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty, Twitter and brand awareness as well as Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty and lastly social media and brand referrals will be studied in relation to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter Loyalty. This study will not focus on all the components of Brand equity. This study will predominantly focus on brand image and brand awareness; therefore, the synergies will be tested through this method. This study will also focus on customer loyalty by focusing on customer satisfaction and customer interaction solely focusing on the loyalty that is built through social media promotions and engagement. This study will also examine if social media advertising plays a role in relation to brand referrals. There are various social media channels currently, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and LinkedIn. However, this study will use only Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for the purpose of this study, as the majority of the marketing brand awareness communication and customer interaction takes place on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for the Checkers Sixty60 brand that forms the case study of this study.

2.26 Conceptual framework and Hypothesis development

This section outlines the conceptual framework as well as the ways in which the hypothesis was developed in detail. This model takes into consideration the brand equity model constructed by Keller (1993), while also linking social media and customer loyalty with

synergies between brand awareness and brand referrals (Keller, 1993). Therefore, this conceptual framework aims to help one understand the synergies between social media, brand awareness, customer loyalty and brand referrals (Keller, 1993). The social media networks that will be taken into consideration for this study are Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Keller, 1993). There are various social media platforms, however Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are the most relevant as Checkers Sixty60 that forms the case study of this study. Checkers Sixty60 has majority of the marketing communication on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Keller, 1993).

Table 1 : Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework above shows one the relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness, Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty as well as Instagram advertising and Brand awareness and Instagram brand awareness and Customer Loyalty and lastly Twitter advertising and brand awareness, Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty. This study aims to help one understand that social media marketing channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter advertising have a huge influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty for brands. Therefore, it is vital to understand the essence of brand awareness through the discussions of brand image, brand knowledge and brand awareness

that build up a brand equity that plays a huge role in the essence of brand awareness on social media. This study also looks at customer loyalty in relation to customer relationship management through the lenses of social media marketing that is in sync with Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter advertising. This study also aims to understand whether Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter loyalty leads to brand referrals within the customer circuit.

This study aims to test the relationship between brand awareness and social media through the three most effective social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and test the relationship between customer loyalty and social media through the social media channels namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. It can be said that brand awareness through social media marketing is the initial step that leads to a recall value that converts potential customers into paying customers, and paying customers are then translated into loyal customers through customer satisfaction through enhanced brand and customer engagement and interaction on social media platforms that further leads to the sentiment of brand referrals. This study also aims to test the relationship between Facebook, Instagram and Twitter advertising, brand awareness, customer loyalty and brand referrals.

2.26.1 Measurement of Brand Awareness, Customer Loyalty, and Brand Referrals

Aided recall will play a vital role in the measurement of brand awareness, customer loyalty and brand referrals on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Aided recall is essentially a marketing technique where the concept of brand awareness is tested through the recall memory that customers have after they view an advert. This essentially helps one in measuring the success of the marketing activities in relation to brand awareness (Zinkhan, 1982)

Aided recall also plays a role in relation to customer loyalty as the concept of aided recall will help one decipher whether customers are transformed to loyal customers when an advert is viewed by the customer multiple times (Tritama and Tarigan, 2016). This will, therefore, help one understand whether a recall value helps build customer loyalty that instigates customers to link their needs with the particular brand offerings, that is heavily marketed through advertisements on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and whether customers will create transactions with the particular brand multiple times due to aided recall (Tritama and Tarigan, 2016). If a customer is inclined towards a particular brand and invests in the brand

offerings to fulfil their needs multiple times, it can be said that customer loyalty is built. On the other hand, if a customer is inclined towards a particular brand multiple times after viewing branded advertisements on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, customer loyalty is built through social media marketing through aided recall (Veerapa and Aryani, 2013).

Aided recall also helps one measure brand referrals as the more advertisements that customers view on social media, the more they are reminded about the brand that they are inclined towards. Although brand awareness and customer loyalty are measured through aided recall, brand referrals are ignited by aided recall as well (Veerapa and Aryani, 2013). This is due to the fact that although customers know about a certain brand through brand awareness and although brand loyalty is formed through multiple aided recall systems, brand referrals only take place when customers view advertisements on social media and are aided to recall a particular advertisement of a brand. This nudge created through aided recall allows customers to refer a brand to other fellow customers by sharing the advertisements or remembering the advertisement in turn playing a role in the essence of brand referrals (Veerapa and Aryani, 2013).

The fundamentals of the concept of aided recall will, therefore, be used particularly on the research participants of this study. Brand awareness, customer loyalty and brand referrals in relation to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter advertising will be measured through the constructs of aided recall within the research participants.

2.26.2 Facebook advertising and Brand Awareness

Facebook is one of the fundamental social media platforms nowadays that plays a huge role in terms of promoting brand offerings (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt and Füller, 2013). Brands can rely on Facebook in order to gain awareness and in turn immense top of mind characteristics, as customers spend a considerable duration on social media networks such as Facebook, and advertisements on Facebook derive a recall value that is large due to the frequency of the brand ads that customers view that encourages the top of mind fundamental, where the customer is reminded of the brand when thinking of a brand category, and Facebook can therefore assist with this process (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2015). Therefore, it can be said that when positive brand knowledge is spread on Facebook in the online shopping industry about a particular online shopping brand, the more brand awareness is

created on Facebook (Hutter et al., 2013). Brand awareness on Facebook will be measured through aided recall, within the research participants. With the following understanding, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H1 – There is a relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand Awareness.
H0 – There is no relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand Awareness.

2.26.3 Facebook brand awareness and Customer Loyalty

Facebook is a social media network that allows communication between brands and customers, and this communication can take the shape of answering questions, promoting brand offerings personally to customers as well as engaging with customers about various reviews (Novotová, 2018). Facebook allows brands to build customer relationships through customer relationship management techniques that leads to customer loyalty (Novotová, 2018). When a connection is drawn between a customer and a brand, the interaction has the potential to lead in a positive direction and that is a resonation between the brand and the customer (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman and Pihlström, 2012). This positive interaction leads to customer satisfaction, that further leads to customer loyalty through constant customer relationship management (Gummerus et al., 2012). Therefore, it can be said that creating a connection and interaction between the brand and the customer on Facebook is the initial and fundamental step that eventually leads to customer loyalty (Gummerus et al., 2012). Customer Loyalty on Facebook will be measured through aided recall, within the research participants. With the following understanding, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H2 – There is a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty.
H0 – There is no relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty

2.26.4 Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness

Instagram is a fast growing platform that begun as a picture sharing platform and has not transformed into a platform that allows users to share pictures, textual content, videos as well as partake in interactive features such as stories (Dutta and Kaushik, 2019). Instagram can be used by brands to spread brand knowledge in a form that can create a desire within the

customer due to the sheer information such as the price point, existing customer reviews, the ways in which the product is meant to make the customer feel while using the product the experience and uses that customers can indulge in while using the product (Dutta and Kaushik, 2019). Customers on Instagram are receptive towards brand related advertisements, and that helps them discover new brand offerings; therefore, this content sharing on Instagram is effective in creating brand awareness within the desired target audience (Dutta and Kaushik, 2019). Brand Awareness on Instagram will be measured through aided recall, within the research participants. With the following understanding, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H3 – There is a relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness
H0 – There is no relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness

2.26.5 Instagram brand awareness and Customer Loyalty

Instagram is a platform that is widely popular among brands and customers aligned, this is because the interface is simple to use and informative at the same time. Customers and brands can interact with one and other privately as well as publicly (Kim, 2016). Instagram encourages messaging activities between customers and brands through the function of direct messaging on every post created, this allows customers to directly communicate and engage with brands. Brands hence gain an opportunity to further encourage the brand awareness process, convert brand awareness into high customer retention rates and elevate the customer loyalty development through prompt and informative interactions that encourage customer satisfaction in the long run; this has the potential to lead to customer loyalty eventually (Kim, 2016). Customer Loyalty on Instagram will be measured through aided recall, within the research participants. With the following understanding, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H4 – There is a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty.
H0 – There is no relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty.

2.26.6 Twitter advertising and Brand Awareness

Twitter is a vital tool that is used by brands in this day and age in order to create awareness about their brand offerings and brand knowledge in a microblogging manner, where the brand

offerings are conveyed to the customer in a concise manner (Kwon and Sung, 2011). When brands create awareness through a series of tweets, retweets, and mentions, customers tend to notice the brand; hence creating a sentiment within the customers, where fellow customers can share their views about the brand in real time, as well as engage with the brand (Soboleva, Burton and Khan, 2015). This engagement builds the brand awareness aspect of the brand, while also drawing in customers. Twitter allows brands to share brand knowledge such as brand values, sales, quality, price points among many other aspects that help grow a brand. Through this discussion, the following hypothesis was formed:

H5 – There is a relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness.
H0 – There is no relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness.

2.26.7 Twitter brand awareness and Customer loyalty

Twitter is a platform that is based on engagements and sentiments, therefore the more brand awareness that is built on twitter by brands by constant advertising on twitter, the more potential customers are aware about the brand, this subsequently helps interactions between potential customers, existing customers, and the brand (Li, 2015). Brand awareness on twitter, therefore, has the potential to increase the chance of building customer loyalty. Since twitter is a microblogging platform that operates in the real time aspect of social media, brands that are highly responsive gain traction and brand awareness, and that sparks a relationship between the brand and the customer (Li, 2015). Through the constructs above, the following hypothesis was formed:

H6 – There is a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.
H0 – There is no relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.

2.26.8 Facebook, Instagram, Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals

Social media is a cluster of various applications such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Brands use social media to advertise their products and services and these advertising activities on social media leads to brand awareness (Hayes, King, and Ramirez, 2016). Brand awareness allows customers to engage with brands and once a positive sense of engagement is created, there are possibilities that customers will refer the services and products of the brand to fellow potential customers (Shaari and Ahmad, 2016). Once customer loyalty is

created through multiple customer and brand interactions, it can be said that there is potential for brand referrals to be easily created through customer loyalty, because when customers are inclined towards a particular brand and favourite a particular brand, their positive experiences are then shared as brand referrals to potential customers (Shaari and Ahmad, 2016). Since brand awareness creates a sense of attraction towards the brand and customer loyalty creates a favouritism towards the brand, customer loyalty will be tested in relation to brand referrals since customer loyalty is the vital step that has the potential to lead to brand referrals. Through the construct above, the following hypothesis was constructed. Since social media is a broad term, and this study is analysing social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram specifically in relation to brand awareness, this section will be divided into three hypotheses. The hypotheses that were constructed are as follows:

H7 – There is a relationship between Facebook Customer loyalty and brand referrals.
H0 – There is no relationship between Facebook Customer loyalty and brand referrals.

H8 – There is a relationship between Instagram Customer loyalty and brand referrals.
H0 – There is no relationship between Instagram Customer loyalty and brand referrals.

H9 – There is a relationship between Twitter Customer loyalty and brand referrals.
H0 – There is no relationship between Twitter Customer loyalty and brand referrals.

2.27 Conclusion

This section conceptualised the main theories that will be used in the research. The main theories discussed were social media as a tool, brand awareness was discussed in relation to Brand Image, Brand Knowledge, Brand awareness as well as Brand equity. Customer loyalty was discussed in relation to customer relationship management. Brand referrals were discussed in relation to the loyalty that customers have towards a brand. This literature review helps one understand that there is minimal research done in terms of the influence of social media in relation to brand awareness and customer loyalty with reference to brand referrals in the online shopping sector especially in relation to Checkers Sixty60 as a case study. Therefore, there are various areas to uncover especially in the South African context. This literature review will form the basis of the research methodology, data collection and analysis section. The literature review also helped one to unpack the role and importance of

social media currently, as well as the link that social media creates between brand awareness and customer loyalty with touch points towards brand referrals. This link was discussed and framed in the conceptual framework and that helped one understand that there is a relationship between social media, brand awareness and customer loyalty with associations to brand referrals.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the influence that social media has on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector by taking Sixty60 as a case study. The data for this research will be derived by distributing surveys to the customers of Sixty60. This section will uncover the important aspects of collecting data for the research topic at hand, to analyse the data and discuss different methods that will be used to collect and examine the data that will help one derive a conclusion. This section will conceptualise the different research methods, research paradigm, the research designs that will construct the data, the population as well as the sampling method, the ways in which data will be collected, and the tools and research instruments that will be used to gather the data. The data will also be tested for validity as well as invalidity to inspect the reliability of the data. The limitations of the study will also be discussed in relation to the topic at hand, and the research ideals.

3.1 Research Paradigm

This research has used the method of deriving data and analysing the data through the Quantitative method of study. Quantitative research refers to the numerical form of data collection that helps a researcher gather significant data (Neuman, 2014). This data is expressed usually in graphs and statistics, which is gathered through many ways such as surveys, experiments, and observation (Neuman, 2014). The qualitative data is used to back up the quantitative data, which is based on different theories based on words rather than number data collection. Qualitative research methods are used to understand concepts, thoughts, and experiences, through extensive insights on a particular topic (Neuman, 2014). Quantitative data methods include surveys, interviews and observations. This study will use the quantitative research methods known as Surveys (O'Brien & Toms, 2010). Surveys consist of self-completion questions that are filled by the identified target respondents that aim to answer the research questions at hand (O'Brien & Toms, 2010).

This research topic has complemented the quantitative research at hand since this study requires extensive data from respondents to derive a conclusion, and quantitative research methods such as surveys are a great form of gaining access to a diverse set of information from multiple respondents (Ponto, 2015). This helps researchers unpack the survey data by understanding multiple views and feedback that helps the analysis derive an authentic

conclusion in line with the hypothesis (Ponto, 2015). There are a few assumptions that are entailed in the quantitative research paradigm, such as:

- The researcher should be independent and not biased of the outcome of the data found (Marion, 2007).
- The research is reasoned with logic as well as multiple theories (Marion, 2007).
- It is important for the quantitative method to draw generalised data that are in line with the theories discussed (Marion, 2007).
- This type of paradigm helps the researcher to derive a conclusive prediction, as well as understand the research question and validate the hypothesis at hand (Marion, 2007).

The reason this study was in line with the characteristics and the assumption of the paradigm is because this research will use surveys as well as the quantitative methods of translating the data such as Descriptive Statistics, Structural Equation Model (SEM) as well as the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) into a conclusive analysis (Phakiti, 2018). This is because the E-commerce is a new yet widely used form of online shopping in South Africa (Deloitte, 2021). Therefore, it was vital to understand the influence that social media has on brand awareness and customer loyalty from the point of view of the customer. To help make the research concise, the Sixty60 online grocery shopping platform was used as a case study, therefore, the active users of the Sixty60 application were surveyed, and this helped create the context of the research. The analysis of the survey helped this study conceptualise and validate the hypotheses that were along the lines of the understanding that social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty as well as how brand awareness and customer loyalty can be linked through CRM strategies as well as customer behaviour theories that can be employed on social media in order to achieve increased brand awareness and customer loyalty, with reference to brand referrals as well (Phakiti, 2018).

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the process of collecting data and analysing the data once collected (Bryman, 2012). It defines the plan that will be deployed to answer the research questions at hand. Readability, replication as well as validity are the main criteria that define the design of a research (Bryman, 2016). There are many research designs, however this study uses the cross-sectional research design method (Bryman, 2012). Cross-sectional research design is a

type of statistical technique where information is gathered through many cases at a time, in order to gather quantitative data and show a sense of alliance within the different case variables (Bryman, 2016). Surveys form a part of cross-sectional designs.

Surveys are a form of questionnaires that ask questions to various variables to gather data. The reason this study uses this cross-sectional design is to study many variables at the same time (Glasow, 2005). A survey is essentially the method of gathering and accumulating information from various people, and this will help generalise the result based on a large number of people, and help the researcher derive a conclusion that is authentic by taking into consideration a fair and diverse set of answers (Ponto, 2015). Surveys provide a vital insight to the topic at hand (Ponto, 2015). The methodological approach of a survey fits well with the study at hand, due to the fact that this study's hypothesis suggests that social media has a great influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty with reference to brand referrals in the online shopping sector by taking Sixty60 as a case study. However, it is vital to understand directly from the consumers if social media marketing has an effect on brand awareness as well as the ways in which customers resonate with a brand that is heavily advertised to create brand awareness on social media, and whether interaction based between brands and customers creates customer loyalty within a customer, with reference to brand referrals (Glasow, 2005).

This method falls under the quantitative method of research. Quantitative research method refers to the collection and analysis of numerical data that allows one to make calculated insights and eventually calculated decisions (Apuke, 2017). This type of the data formed a part of the primary data collection, as the data was collected directly from the customers, who were the main source of the study at hand (Apuke, 2017). The questions address the main question: does social media have an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector with reference to brand referrals based on the context of Sixty60? Asking this question directly to consumers with sub questions lead to the main question being answered that further helped one understand if using social media as a marketing tool has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector with reference to brand referrals as well (Akbar and Parvez, 2009).

This research design and analysis were then be linked to brand awareness, customer loyalty and predominantly social media as a Marketing tool with reference to brand referrals, as well

as sub theories such as branding, brand knowledge, brand equity, brand awareness, customer relationship management, and customer loyalty theories (Akbar and Parvez, 2009). To understand the methodological approach of quantitative research methods in the context of Surveys as a tool, it was important to understand the advantages as well as the disadvantaged of surveys. Below are the advantages as well as the disadvantages of surveys as a research instrument:

Table 2: Advantages and Disadvantages of a Survey

Advantages	**Disadvantages**
It can be administered remotely and drawn up easily (DeFranzo, 2017).	The quality of the answers is dependent on the respondents (DeFranzo, 2017).
Cost Effective – As the links can be sent through online mediums (DeFranzo, 2017)	Close ended questions can result in low validity (DeFranzo, 2017).
Many questions can be asked to get the right insights (DeFranzo, 2017).	The answers can lack clarity and honesty; therefore, the insights can be affected (DeFranzo, 2017).
A large number of data can be drawn from a huge number of audience (DeFranzo, 2017).	It can be difficult to find the right audience to spread the surveys to (DeFranzo, 2017).

3.3 Data collection, Population and Sampling

3.3.1 Population

Data collection and sampling refers to gaining insights from the population (Bryman, 2016). A population is the large number of units from which a sample audience is selected. This unit is the collection of the total units that a study will examine (Eid and Lagacé, 2007). Therefore, a population is the total number of units that a researcher wishes to examine. Since it is tedious to research a whole population, sampling is required (Eid and Lagacé, 2007).

This study aimed to target the following potential population:

- **Age:** The age of the respondents must be above 18 years old.
- **Race:** All Races will form a part of the population
- **Online Shopping Platform Usage:** The respondents should use Checkers Sixty60 at least once a month.

- **Social Media Usage:** The respondents should be active on Facebook as well as Instagram and Twitter at least once a month.

3.3.2 The Sample

A sample is essentially a segment of the population that is chosen to be researched and studied on (Bryman, 2012). The process of the way in which these segments are selected are dependent on probability as well as a non-probability method (Bryman, 2012). The sample selection for this study are individuals who live in South Africa and are avid online shoppers especially with Checkers Sixty60 in South Africa (Chu and Kim, 2011). These individuals should be followers of Sixty60 on Facebook, Instagram and/or Twitter and must be above 18, since individuals above the age of 18 have access to variety of social media platforms and tools and can conduct online shopping seamlessly (Nyatlo, 2018). The individuals are also required to use social media often or at least once a month (Nyatlo, 2018). This is because only people who use social media regularly can be reached by the online shopping platforms such as Checkers Sixty60 as when the promotional advertisements take place on social media, so it essentially drives conversation (Chu and Kim, 2011). The sample size was 200 participants.

3.3.3 The Sampling Method

Sampling methods is predominantly the notion through which a segment of people is selected from a large population (Bryman, 2012). The quantitative method has two ways of sampling, namely, probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Bryman, 2016). Probability sampling is seen as effective when a large population is involved since a random set of audience are selected to study (Babbie, 2020). However, this research requires to study a specific segment, that is not random, thus, this research uses a non-probability sampling method as this method involves the process of carefully selecting certain people, while excluding the audience who do not fulfil the audience criteria of this study (Bryman, 2012).

There are types of non-probability sampling, namely: Convenience sample, quota sample and snowball sample. Convenience sampling is comprised of individuals who have a high probability to be receptive to the researcher due to their availability and proximity (Bryman, 2012). Snowball sampling is the process of gaining access to different participants from the

current participants at hand (Bryman, 2012). The quota sampling technique is the process of selecting the audience through their traits and characteristics (Bryman, 2016).

This study used the convenience sampling technique. The reason this study used the convenience sampling method was because this study required one to gain access to individuals who have the potential to find the research question relevant and therefore they were more receptive to the questions being asked, this also helped the research due to the proximity and availability of the participants that made the context of the study relevant to the audience. For the purpose of this study, a survey was drawn on Qualtrics. The reason the method of surveys was used is because the study required the audience to have multiple answers that they could choose from in order to help get answers that were precise in nature. Surveys also allow one to send out questionnaire to a number of participants, as the sample size is 200, the method of surveys that falls under the convenience sampling technique was used. This survey was embedded into a link that was sent out to the potential audience type to fill out.

The link was sent through emails and through various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to the followers of Sixty60. Bryman and Belle (2003) suggest having a huge population size that is effective while choosing the sample size from the population to ensure that the collection of the data would be reliable, relevant, and conclusive in nature. Therefore, a large population size would help the result outcome to be transparent and coherent to the research. Garson (2009) helps one understand that a sample size that is higher than 100 is usually acceptable to gain data that is effective especially in research that entail surveys. Hair (2009) suggest the fact that a sample size less than 100 is a small sample size, while a sample size that is between 100 to 200 is a medium sample size and a sample size that is above 200 is considered to be a large sample size. This study relies on the sample size theories of Bryman and Belle (2002) who suggest that the sample size should be a large populations size to be efficient, and Hair (2009) suggest that 200 would be a large populations size. Therefore, 200 participants was selected for this study since this is a large amount of audience where diversity can play a role in gaining insightful answers.

This data collection was depended on the Qualtrics analytics. Data collection is the process of participants answering the questions asked by the researcher for the purpose of a study (Bryman, 2012). The data that is collected will then be grouped in accordance with the type

of data that is generated by the audience. This data collection takes the form of a quantitative research method, where the data is based on numbers (Sandelowski, 2000).

This study used a self-completion survey that has a number of questions through the tool called Qualtrics (Vasantha and Harinarayana, 2016). The link that entailed the survey was formulated into a URL on the internet and this link was shared on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter as well as on email to the respondents (Vasantha and Harinarayana, 2016). The sampling frame for this study was made up through the Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter page of Checkers Sixty60, thus the link was distributed among the individuals who follow the Checkers page on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Participants who did not follow Checkers were found through Wits Business School Masters Of Management network, and the link was therefore, forwarded through email. The goal of this study was a sample size of 200 respondents.

Table 3: Profile of Respondents

Age	Social Media Usage	Checkers Sixty60 usage
18-23	High	Yes
24-30	High	Yes
31-35	High	Yes
36-40	Moderate	Yes
41-45	Moderate	Yes
45+	Low	Yes

3.4 Research Instruments

The collection of data is vital for researchers while conducting a study. The process of data collection includes a set of instruments that allows one to collect information for the study at hand (Bryman, 2012). Data collection includes instruments that can take the form of two concepts, namely quantitative and qualitative research methods. This study uses the quantitative research methods known as Surveys (O'Brien & Toms, 2010). Surveys consist of self-completion questions that are filled by the identified target respondents keeping the research objectives and questions in the forefront (O'Brien & Toms, 2010). The survey for the purpose of this study will be constructed on Qualtrics and the forms will be constituted in

a link form that will be further distributed to the respondents (Vasantha and Harinarayana, 2016).

This questionnaire was unique, while also basing the main survey objectives from the research done in the past on the topic at hand (O'Brien & Toms, 2010). This survey was constructed by taking into consideration previous studies mentioned. The survey used the method of the Likert Scale, which is essentially a form of data collection where the respondents are asked to rate the question or statement posed from a scale of 1 to 5 (ranging from columns that suggest answers along the lines of strongly agree to strongly disagree). The survey was constructed and adopted from the following previous studies done in the similar areas of research:

- Nyatlo, M. R. (2018). *The influence of social media on purchase intention, brand awareness, and brand loyalty: a focus on customers' engagement with brands on the platforms*.
- Mkhwanazi, N. (2018). *Influence of Social Media on Consumer Buying Decisions: The Pharmaceutical Industry of South Africa*.

This study did not ask the names, addresses and surnames of the audience to help the study remain confidential, fair, and safe to the respondents (Connelly, 2014). The survey was limited to the focus of the online shopping characterises of the users (DeFranzo, 2017). The reason this study employs a questionnaire format is because surveys were a great way to gain answers to the research question at hand. There are a few advantaged for the survey quantitative data collection method such as:

- Surveys are convenient and the respondents who fill the survey can be regulated (O'Brien & Toms, 2010).
- Analytical tools provide a precise analysis (O'Brien & Toms, 2010).
- There is no need to set up a convenient time for the researcher and the respondent, as respondents can fill out the survey at a time that is convenient to them. Therefore, there are limited time constraints (DeFranzo, 2017).
- Diverse questions can be asked that can fulfil the research objective. The questions can be open-ended as well as multiple choice questions (DeFranzo, 2017).

Although the survey research instrument has many benefits, it is important to be mindful of the shortcomings too such as, lack of honesty and clarity that compromises the validity of the research at hand (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, it is critical to take into consideration a few research instrument objectives such as the research question objectives, the information that is needed from the respondents and constructing questions in such a way, where the researcher themselves can answer the questions at hand (Bryman, 2012).

The survey in relation to the study at hand intends to view the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector, with reference to brand referrals in relation to the case study Sixty60. The questions that were constructed in the questionnaire asked the respondents questions only about online shopping, how active they are on social media, the online shopping brands that they are inclined towards, and intricate questions such as: if they view a brand post multiple times would that essentially create brand awareness in their eyes that will lead to the customers gaining a sense of recall value for the brand that will nudge them into visiting the online shopping brand page (Kato and Tsuda, 2017).

The questions were also along the lines of: once brand awareness is created and if customer interaction is initiated with the brand and gaining prompt replies from the online shopping brands will create a relationship with the brand and would this relationship translate into customer loyalty. The questions also extend to ask the respondents whether immense brand awareness that leads to brand interaction would help them stray away from competitors due to the relationship that is formed with the particular online shopping brand such as Checkers Sixty60. The questions also referenced brand referrals and how customer loyalty affects this. The research objectives such as, whether social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty are directly asked to the audience to understand their perception. The questions are asked in a manner that helped one understand whether social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty with touch points on brand referrals in the online shopping sector through the lenses of Checkers Sixty60.

The characteristics of a survey discussed above in relation to the study at hand poses many advantages as well as disadvantages, therefore it is vital to understand the aspects of validity and reliability of the research instrument known as surveys (Taherdoost, 2018).

Validity essentially is the process of uncovering whether the data collected is accurate as well as justifiable in nature that further helped the research at hand be factually conclusive (Taherdoost, 2018). The validity aspect of the method of surveys is to understand whether the results collected advocates the research topic and theories at hand (Middleton, 2019). There are four types of validity in relation to surveys:

- Statistical Validity – This type of validity helps one understand whether the number of data collected is in sync with the claims that are made in the study. The number of data collected should be enough to justify the conclusion (Moss, 2021). The size of the data collection affects the statical validity (Moss, 2021).
- Construct Validity – This is the type of validity where the researcher has understood and judged the participants on the surface, this measure is usually used to select the audience (Moss, 2021). This type of validity is justified through the selection of the right candidates who look like they will be the perfect fit for the questions that are being asked and the research (Moss, 2021). Content validity, on the other hand, relates to the questions that are posed in the survey, and whether the questions are constructed in a way that aims to answer the research questions, problem statements and objective at hand (Moss, 2021).
- External Validity – This type of validity refers to the potential that the study has in generalizing the answers to the population that are not a part of the study (Moss, 2021). Therefore, the population size and the characteristics of the audience should be vast and diverse to gain a fair perspective on the research question. The survey should be able to account for the population that are not a part of the study and give the precise answers required (Moss, 2021).
- Internal Validity – This refers to the researcher being fair while constructing the survey questions and selecting the population (Moss, 2021).

To gain a perspective about the research method known as surveys, it is important to gain a perspective about the reliability of surveys (Middleton, 2019). The reliability of a survey depends on how consistent, accurate and dependable the result of a survey is (Middleton, 2019). There are three types of reliability tests in relation to surveys:

- Test – Retest Reliability – This refers to the potential times the answer to the questions is the same (Moss, 2021). If the results are different every time the survey is conducted, the survey is not seen as reliable (Moss, 2021).

- Internal Reliability – This refers to the ways in which the researcher applies measures to understand and construct a conclusion based on the surveys in a concise and clear manner that aims to take into consideration all the aspects of the survey, as well as the underlying analysis of the questions with multiple potential answers in the survey (Moss, 2021).
- Interrater reliability – This refers to the ability of the survey to be interpreted in the same way by multiple researchers (Moss, 2021).

This section gives one a holistic view about surveys and the use of this instrument with the study at hand, the advantages, and the disadvantages of surveys, as well as the reliability and validity factors of a survey. The cover letter for the respondents for the survey is attached in Appendix C. To better understand the instrument, the table below helps one understand the measures used in the study with the research instrument known as surveys.

Table 4: Measures Used In the Study

Construct	Literature sources	Dimensions	Comment on Instrument
The influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the E-commerce sector: Case study on Sixty60	Mothersbaugh, D. L., Hawkin, D. I., & Kleiser, S. B. (2019). *Consumer behavior: Building marketing strategy*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. Paquette, H. (2013). Social media as a marketing tool: A literature review.	1. Brand Awareness 2. Customer Loyalty 3. Quantitative Research Method - Survey 4. Consumer Behavior Theories and Customer Relationship Management 5. Social Media as a marketing tool 6. E-commerce Sector	Surveys consist of self-completion questions that are filled by the identified target respondents that aim to answer the research questions at hand (O'Brien & Toms, 2010). Surveys are convenient and reliable if conducted through the elements of reliability and validity (DeFranze, 2017). Surveys are used to test whether social media as a tool influences brand awareness and customer loyalty in the E-commerce sector (O'Brien & Toms, 2010).

Construct	Literature sources	Dimensions	Comment on Instrument
			This study used the descriptive statistics method, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), as well as the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in order to study the responses and consolidate the conclusion (Prudon, 2014).

3.5 Procedure for Data Collection

Data collection plays an extremely important role in a research study and report (Sandelowski, 2000). Data collection is essentially the process of accumulating information known as data in relation to a research report that is collected from the sample of the population of the research. This data is collected to understand the research questions at hand, from the perspective of the customers or clientele depending on the topic of the research (Sandelowski, 2000). Data can be classified within two factors namely, Quantitative data, which is collected in the structure of numbers, and qualitative data, which is collected through the formation of words as well as pictures (Neuman, 2014). The essence of this research lies in the quantitative method of study; however the data was analysed through the lenses of the theories namely, brand awareness, customer loyalty, social media as a tool, brand referrals and customer relationship management formed the sub theories of the study.

A survey that was constructed of a self-filling in questionnaire was created on an application known as Qualtrics (Vasantha Raju and Harinarayana, 2016). The reason this platform was selected is because surveys with questions can be created on Qualtrics and this survey can be constructed into a link that can be distributed to the sample size of the research (Vasantha Raju and Harinarayana, 2016). This survey was therefore, converted into a link that was shared on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to the Sxity60 followers (Vasantha Raju and Harinarayana, 2016). The link redirected the respondents to the webpage where the questionnaire was found in the form of a survey for the respondents to fill in the questions online (Vasantha Raju and Harinarayana, 2016). The link with the survey was constructed

into a URL on the internet and this link was shared on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter as well as on email to the respondents (Vasantha Raju and Harinarayana, 2016). The potential respondents were formulated through the Facebook, Instagram and Twitter page of Checkers Sixty60, therefore individuals who follow the Checkers page on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter were sent the link, as well as participants who are not following Checkers were found through the Wits Business School Master Of Management Network. The link was, therefore, forwarded through email, with the aim of this research being to gain 200 participants.

The reason an online questionnaire method of surveys was chosen was because this type of model allows the respondents to skip questions that helps them filter the questions according to their convenience, comfort, confidentiality, and safety (Mkhwanazi, 2018). The data in an online questionnaire does not require the participants to answer all the questions or save their answers, as the answers are saved automatically (Mkhwanazi, 2018). Online Surveys can also be downloaded into a filtered data base with analytical tools that helps one conceptualise the data (Mkhwanazi, 2018). A pilot study is also essential to be conducted to gain a better perspective on the main study, thus a pilot study was also conducted.

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis is the process of studying and examining the data that is received, in the case of this research, the studying of the surveys in relation to the research objectives and hypothesis formed a part of the data analysis (Frank and Todeschini, 1994). For the purpose of this study, the data analysis employs different quantitative techniques to consolidate the data that is being collected and show the relationships between the variables in the hypothesis to draw the conclusion to the study (Frank and Todeschini, 1994). There are many quantitative methods in relation to data analysis, however this study useed the Descriptive Statistics, Structural Equation Model (SEM) as well as the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to study the responses and consolidate the conclusion (Bryman, 2012).

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Descriptive Statistics analysis is the process of using graphs, tables, and numerical data to characterise and segregate the data that is being collected (Kaur, Stoltzfus and Yellapu, 2018). This type of data is useful while understanding the data collected, since it is efficient due to the visual presentation of data that is displayed (Kaur, Stoltzfus and Yellapu, 2018).

Descriptive Statistics Analysis, therefore, adds a sense of meaning to the data collected as it allows one to analyse and interpret the data in a simple manner since the analysis provides a sense of summary and visible about the measures and sample of the data (Fisher and Marshall, 2009). This form of analysis helps the researcher to view and study the emerging patters that the data may display and these patterns are then used in order to analyse the pattern in relation to the research objectives and the hypothesis at hand in a precise manner, and draw a conclusion (Fisher and Marshall, 2009). This form of analysis is useful in terms of conceptualising big data into concise comprehendible data, however it does not allow one to arrive at a conclusion; therefore, the data analysis such as Structural Equation Model and Confirmatory Factor Analysis is used to draw a conclusive analysis (Fisher and Marshall, 2009).

Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Structural Equation Model is a popular analysis in the research sphere in this day and age. This model is an all-inclusive approach of statistics that helps a researcher test the hypothesis of the study in relation to the relationships between the latent and the observed variable (Mkhwanazi, 2018). This model helps the researcher form conclusions based on the testing, predicting, and exhibiting the conceptual framework of the study to examine the relationships between the different variables in the study (Keith, 2019). This study uses two variables namely the independent variable and the dependent variable (Keith, 2019). This method has two benefits that help solve the goal of a study or research, firstly this method helps one to understand the converging patters within the data collected and the variables, then secondly, this method also helps one understand the acute and binary differences that can be derived from the different data and the variables at hand (Mkhwanazi, 2018).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is the process of factor analysis that is used while conducting social research (Prudon, 2014). This method also helps the researcher understand whether the hypothesis as well as the understanding of the constructs are aligned with the survey responses, in relation to the study (Prudon, 2014). CFA, therefore, helps one to test the research hypothesis that examines whether there is a sense of relationship and interlinking factor between the observed and the latent constructs of variables (Lewis, 2017). The researcher here is required to use the knowledge base that one has in relation to different theories as well as the observed and measured occurrence that one constructs to identify and

interpret a relationship pattern that in turn helps one to test the hypothesis in a statistic manner (Lewis, 2017). The reason this analysis was used, is because this method helped the study in terms of readability and validity while conducting the analysis (Prudon, 2014).

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equation Model (SEM), together with the descriptive statistics method helped one draw the conclusions of this study (Prudon, 2014).

This study analysed the responses from the surveys handed out to the diverse respondents. The surveys were judged through the parameters of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equation Model (SEM) and descriptive statistics such as the types of variables derived, the sample size, the missing value(s) as well as the normal distribution patters of the survey (Phakiti, 2018). The diversity was broken down within the following parameters: Age, Preferred online shopping brand, Social Media Usage and Active users of Checkers Sixty60. The answers were constituted through the descriptive statistics method to better the readability (Phakiti, 2018). This summary showed one how the audience differ in terms of social media usage and level of influence that they think social media has on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector with reference to brand referrals (Fisher and Marshall, 2009).

The summary that was conducted through the descriptive statistics analysis of the surveys then took into consideration the different observant and latent variables that were constituted through the data through the Structural Equation Model (SEM) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) methods that helped one analyse the hypothesis in relation to the data collected and the variable interpretations (Phakiti, 2018). This concluded whether social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector with reference to brand referrals through the lenses of Checkers Sixty60 as a case study. This conclusion was, therefore, drawn through the Descriptive Statistics Method, Structural Equation Model (SEM) and the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) method (Prudon, 2014).

For the purpose of this study in relation to the survey research instrument, the process of validity and reliability refers to ways in which the survey instrument helps one measure the data in an accurately credible manner and is also concerned with the consistency of the measurement (Bryman, 2012). Validity and Reliability essentially looks at the accuracy to

which this measurement can be used multiple times and attain similar answers (Neuman, 2014). Validity plays a huge role in relation to the study at hand as this refers to the ways in which the measurement is accurate and this also has a direct link with the questions that are asked (Bryman, 2012). Content validity refers to asking questions that are relatable to the subject at hand, while internal validity refers to the creation of questions that explained the outcome that one wishes to achieve, and lastly external validity refers to the ways in which the data can be generated (Bryman, 2012).

Reliability refers to the Test-retest reliability that refers to the potential number of times the answer to the questions is the same, and Internal Reliability refers to the ways in which the researcher understands the data and derives a conclusion and interrater reliability for the surveys to be interpreted in the same way by various researchers (Moss, 2021). One of the shortcomings of this instrument is that surveys are self-completion questionnaires, where the answers cannot be controlled, so this refers to the validity and reliability aspect, while the creation of the questions can be created in a way that reflected the answers that helped the study (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, if the readability aspect can be controlled through the questions asked, the validity and reliability issue can somewhat be improved (Chu and Kim, 2011).

3.7 Limitations of the Study

- The study is based on a survey that is comprised of multiple questions, therefore after the survey has been sent back with the filled in sections, it was not be possible to follow up with the respondents to further understand and unpack the important subject at hand.
- There may be a lack of transparency within the respondents, and individuals who are not regular social media users may have filled in the survey.
- The respondents may have not directly interacted with the case study Sixty60 on social media.
- It may be difficult to arrive at a generalized conclusion for every answer, as the views of every individual in relation to social media and E-commerce also known as online shopping may differ.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the research

The concept of Validity and Reliability is extremely important while examining the standard and quality of the research at hand (Moss, 2021). Validity is the process of how reliable the conclusions and analysis of a research is (Middleton, 2019). There are four ways to regulate validity, namely, External Validity, Internal Validity, Measurement Validity as well as Ecological Validity. On the other hand, reliability is the process to understanding how consistent the research is and whether the research can be carried out again in different circumstances, therefore the research analysis should be reliable in nature (Moss, 2021).

3.8.1 External Validity

External Validity is the process of understanding where the research at hand can be generalised and resonated with future additional researchers that are similar to the research topic at hand (Andrade, 2018). External Validity is predominantly the ability of the future research topic to add on or broaden the study at hand (Bo and Galiani, 2021). The study was conducted in the South African context, however due to the context of the study being large and complementary, it is possible for future research areas to build on this study to understand the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector in different surroundings and context with reference to brand referrals (Andrade, 2018).

3.8.2 Internal Validity

Internal Validity is the process of understanding whether there are any errors in the research at hand and whether there is a risk of false conclusions that can be derived from the study at hand (Andrade, 2018). In other words, internal validity is the notion of how factual the data is that is being collected by the respondents and the ways in which this data is used to arrive at a conclusion; this refers to the cause-and-effect relationship established (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). This research is based upon the method of surveys that cannot be controlled; however, the correct respondents can be chosen that fit the criteria of the study for the internal validity to be positive (McDermott, 2011). Therefore, this study requires the researchers to conduct a background test and ensure that the respondents are regular social media users and are users of the Checkers Sixty60 online grocery shopping application (McDermott, 2011). Once this has been validated, the answers filled in by the audience in the questionnaire can potentially be seen as effective and the research can be seen as successful in the internal validity criteria (Andrade, 2018).

3.8.3 Reliability

Reliability helps one to measure the consistency of the research at hand, as well as how accurate and credible the research is (Golafshani, 2003). Reliability, therefore, refers to the probability of achieving the same or similar results when the study is conducted afresh in a different context; this results in the studying being consistent and dependable (Roberts and Priest, 2006). There are three ways in which reliability can be tested, namely, Stability Reliability, Equivalence Reliability and Representative Reliability (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). Stability Reliability refers to the notion of whether the answers derived in the current period was similar to the answers derived at a later stage (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). Representative Reliability refers to whether the data derived is similar when accumulated from different groups and Equivalence Reliability refers to when the data is achieved through multiple measures (Mkhwanazi, 2018).

The study at hand is based upon the context of social media that is ever evolving; however, the interaction and awareness aspect between customers and brands has been similar across different time periods with different marketing platforms since it is vital for brands to create awareness and a relationship with the audience to gain loyalty (Thanasegaran, 2009). Therefore, this study could prove to be reliable in the future. This is because this study can be recreated for different brands and for various social media platforms in a different context. The main aspect of the study is to research the influence of brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector with reference to brand referrals (Thanasegaran, 2009).

3.9 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to refine the survey and the questions that are a part of the main survey that creates the dimensions of the main study at hand. The pilot study helped one understand the data that was received, as well as the efficiency of the questions in the survey. This pilot study was done to record whether the questions asked resonated with the respondents, and whether the selected sample of respondents could respond to the questions seamlessly with through understanding of the content. The pilot study was done to analyses the readability and validity of the content in the questions present in the survey.

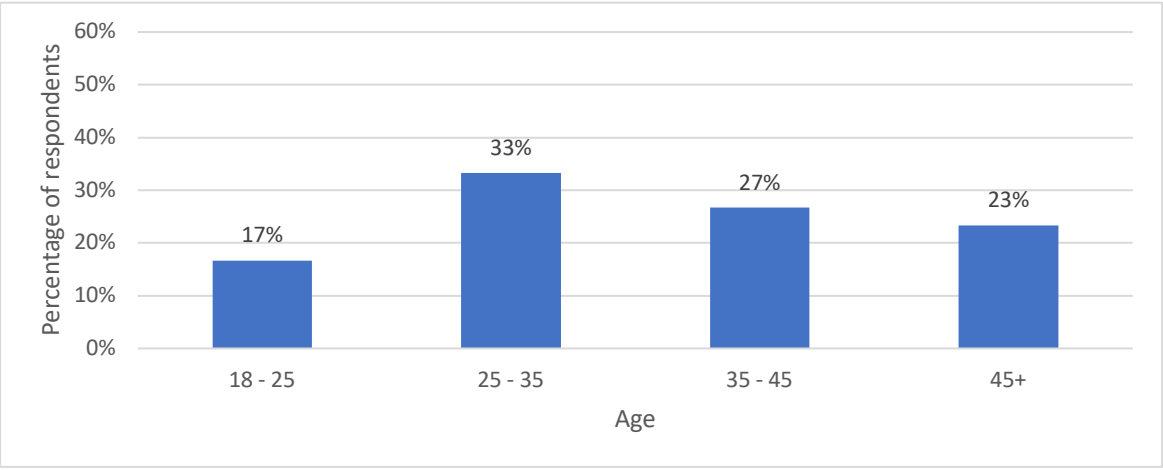
It was understood that the questions that were asked in the survey were answered precisely, with answers given to every question that was asked. Each question represented a unique view. That gave one a sense of the stance to understand the influence of social media platforms chosen such as Instagram, Twitter and Facebook have on brand awareness and customer loyalty in relation online shopping with the case study of Sixty60. This, therefore, helped one conduct the survey on the participants for the main study.

The participants were selected through the method known as the random sampling technique, through a random selection process to promote transparency of data. The Sixty60 social media pages were used, 10 participants were chosen from each alphabet from the Sixty60 social media follower list. This was done to promote absolute transparency. This resulted in the audience section process being random. The validity of the study was, therefore, aligned. A sample size of 200 respondents was chosen as the sample size of the main study. The pilot study was understood through the factor analysis, correlation, regression analysis.

Sample Characteristics

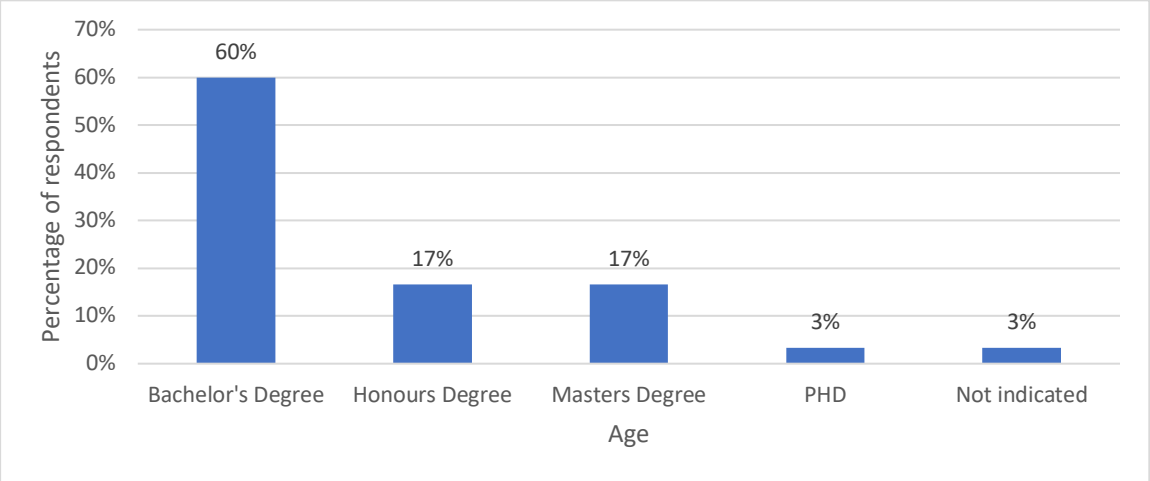
The sample was made up of 30 respondents who are active on social media. The age distribution of the respondents is presented in Figure 4. The highest proportion was in the 25 – 35 years age group (33%) followed by the 35 – 45 years (27%).

Figure 4: Respondent Age Group



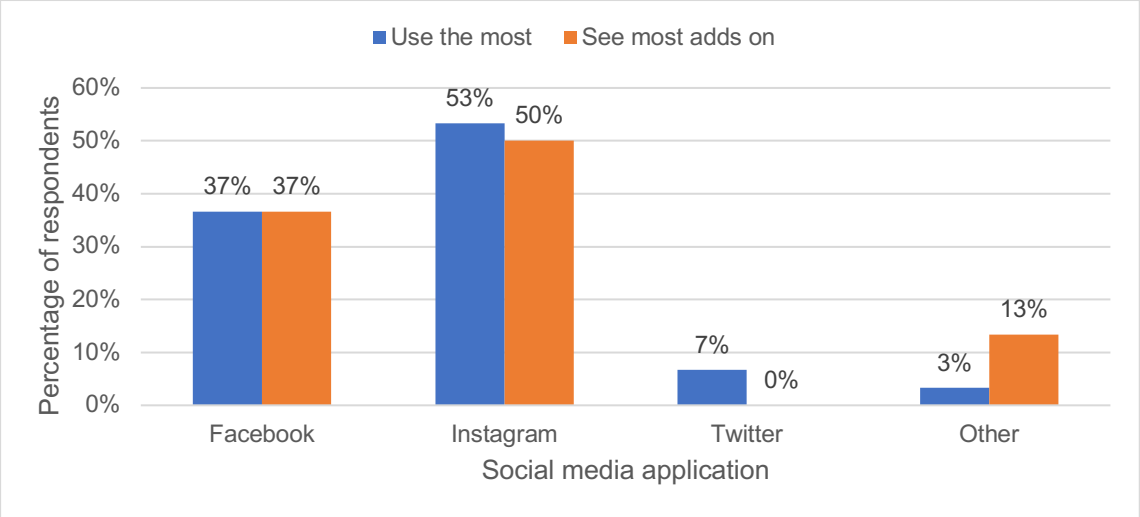
Majority of the respondents in the sample had a bachelor's degree (60%). The rest of the level of education distribution is presented in Figure 4.

Figure 5: Education level



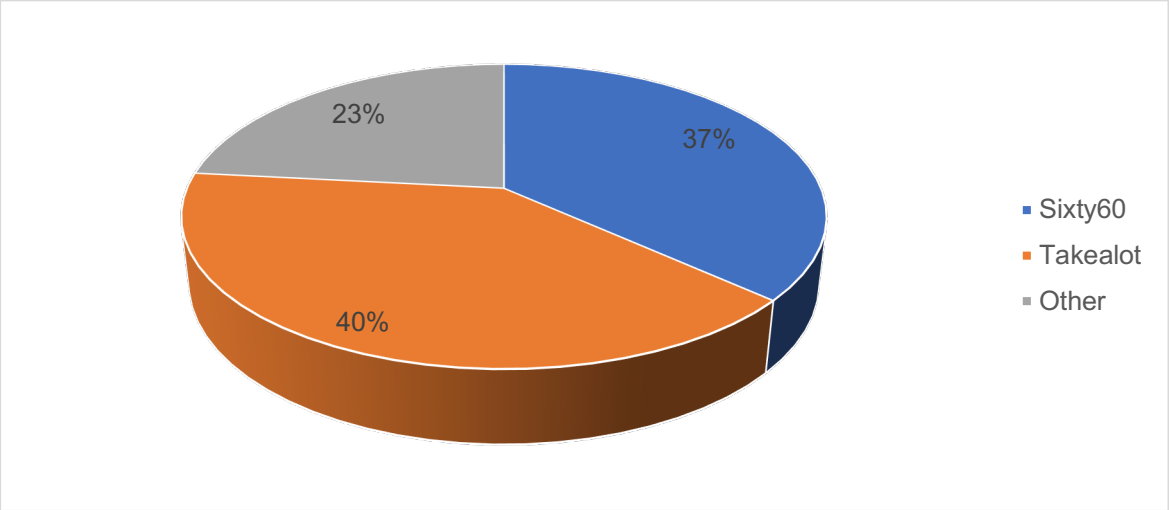
Instagram (53%) was the most used social media platform by the respondents in the pilot sample and that is also where they saw most adds (50%). This was followed by Facebook with 37% a piece for both used most often and where most adds are seen.

Figure 6: Social media Application Usage



When thinking of online grocery shopping, Takealot (40%) had the highest mention as the top of the mind brand. This was followed by Sixty60 (37%) and then other brands (23.3%).

Figure 7: Top Of Mind online grocery shopping brands



Reliability of Scale

Cronbach's Alpha was computed from each construct and the results are presented in Table 5. It can be noted that all the constructs had reliable scales as all the Cronbach's Alpha values were above the minimum acceptable level of at least 0.7.

Table 5 : Pilot Study Constructs

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Facebook Advertising	Section B - 7. Facebook is an important part of my social media routine	.852
	Section B - 8. I became aware of Sixty60 through Facebook	
	Section B - 9. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook	
	Section B - 10. I would go onto the application due to the Facebook advertisements I saw	
	Section B - 11. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Facebook	
Facebook Brand Awareness	Section B - 12. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Facebook	.918
	Section B - 13. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook from other grocery shopping applications	

	Section B - 14. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Facebook	
	Section B - 15. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see a Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook	
	Section B - 16. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Facebook when I am in need of groceries	
	Section B - 17. I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Facebook advertisements I see	
	Section B - 18. Awareness through Facebook has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	
	Section B - 19. I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Facebook	
	Section B - 20. Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Facebook	
	Section B - 21. I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Facebook advertisements I see	
Facebook Customer Loyalty	Section C - 22. I engage with brands on Facebook	.934
	Section C - 23. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Facebook	
	Section C - 24. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Facebook, the more inclined I am to use the services	
	Section C - 25. I remember the brands that engage with me on Facebook	
	Section C - 26. When my queries are answered on Facebook I am a satisfied customer	
	Section C - 27. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Facebook	
	Section C - 28. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Facebook	
	Section C - 29. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Facebook allows me to be a loyal customer	

	Section C - 30. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Facebook will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	
	Section C - 31. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Facebook due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	
Instagram Advertising	Section D - 32. Instagram is an important part of my social media routine	.918
	Section D - 33. I became aware of Sixty60 through Instagram	
	Section D - 34. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	
	Section D - 35. I would go onto the application due to the Instagram advertisements I saw	
	Section D - 36. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Instagram	
Instagram Brand Awareness	Section D - 37. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Instagram	.982
	Section D - 38. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram from other grocery shopping applications	
	Section D - 39. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Instagram	
	Section D - 40. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see a Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	
	Section D - 41. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Instagram when I am in need of groceries	
	Section D - 42. I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Instagram advertisements I see	
	Section D - 43. Awareness through Instagram has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	
	Section D - 44. I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Instagram	
	Section D - 45. Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Instagram	
	Section D - 46. I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Instagram advertisements I see	
	Section E - 47. I engage with brands on Instagram	.948

Instagram Customer Loyalty	Section E - 48. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Instagram	
	Section E - 49. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Instagram, the more inclined I am to use the services	
	Section E - 50. I remember the brands that engage with me on Instagram	
	Section E - 51. When my queries are answered on Instagram I am a satisfied customer	
	Section E - 52. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Instagram	
	Section E - 53. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Instagram	
	Section E - 54. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Instagram allows me to be a loyal customer	
	Section E - 55. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Instagram will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	
	Section E - 56. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Instagram due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	
Twitter Advertising	Section F - 57. Twitter is an important part of my social media routine	.979
	Section F - 58. I became aware of Sixty60 through Twitter	
	Section F - 59. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	
	Section F - 60. I would go onto the application due to the Twitter advertisements I saw	
	Section F - 61. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Twitter	
Twitter Brand Awareness	Section F - 62. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Twitter	.991
	Section F - 63. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter from other grocery shopping applications	
	Section F - 64. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Twitter	

	Section F - 65. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	
	Section F - 66. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Twitter when I am in need of groceries	
	Section F - 67. I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Twitter advertisements I see	
	Section F - 68. Awareness through Twitter has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	
	Section F - 69. I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Twitter	
	Section F - 70. Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Twitter	
	Section F - 70. I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Twitter advertisements I see	
Twitter Customer Loyalty	Section G - 71. I engage with brands on Twitter	.984
	Section G - 72. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Twitter	
	Section G - 73. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Twitter, the more inclined I am to use the services	
	Section G - 74. I remember the brands that engage with me on Twitter	
	Section G - 75. When my queries are answered on Twitter I am a satisfied customer	
	Section G - 76. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Twitter	
	Section G - 77. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Twitter	
	Section G - 78. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Twitter allows me to be a loyal customer	
	Section G - 79. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Twitter will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	
	Section G - 80. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Twitter due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	

Table 6 : Correlation analysis

	Descriptive Statistics		Pearson's Correlation								
Construct	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Facebook Advertising	3.15	0.93	1								
Facebook Brand Awareness	3.41	0.80	.780**	1							
Facebook Customer Loyalty	3.43	0.91	.806**	.783**	1						
Instagram Advertising	3.38	1.04	.548**	.592**	.724**	1					
Instagram Brand Awareness	3.32	1.11	.451*	.558**	.569**	.905**	1				
Instagram Customer Loyalty	3.44	1.01	.559**	.662**	.722**	.889**	.910**	1			
Twitter Brand Advertising	2.63	1.34	.170	.313	.301	.591**	.722**	.665**	1		
Twitter Brand Awareness	2.75	1.33	.123	.316	.302	.609**	.718**	.663**	.973**	1	
Twitter Customer Loyalty	2.74	1.37	.121	.334	.333	.420*	.537**	.540**	.781**	.786**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Results from the Pilot Study:

The results from the analysis above revealed:

- The results showed that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness ($r = 0.780$, p-value < 0.01). The relationship is strong since the correlation coefficient on 0.780 is greater than 0.5 and is significant because the p-value is less than 0.05. This shows that H1 is indeed supported and there is a relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness. This can be said as brand awareness is the process through which brands are recognised and resonated with by customers and buyers (Karam and Saydam, 2015). Therefore, the questions stipulated in the survey directly ask questions regarding the relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness. The correlation coefficient of 0.90 is close to 1 and the P value is lesser 0.5, this implies that H1 is supported.

- It can be noted from Table 6 on page number 97 that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty ($r = 0.78$, p-value < 0.01). The relationship is strong since the correlation coefficient on 0.78 is between 0.5 and 1 and the relationship is significant because the p-value is less than 0.05. This shows that H2 is indeed supported as there is a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty. Customer Loyalty is essentially the connection and resonation that customers have towards a particular brand, therefore customer loyalty and brand awareness is interlinked (Leninkumar, 2017). The questions in the survey asked direct questions in relation to Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty. The correlation coefficient of 0.90 is close to 1 and the P value is lesser 0.5, this implies that H2 is supported.

- The results revealed that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness ($r = 0.90$, p-value < 0.01). The relationship is very strong since the correlation coefficient of 0.90 is close to 1. The relationship is significant because the p-value is less than 0.05. This shows that H3 is indeed supported and there is a relationship between Instagram advertising and brand awareness. This can be said as brand awareness and brand knowledge is essentially

the perception that formulates the understanding about a brand in the consumer's mind through the ability of the recall value that the brand (Karam and Saydam, 2015). Therefore, the questions stipulated in the survey directly ask questions regarding the relationship between Instagram advertising and brand awareness. The correlation coefficient of 0.90 is close to 1 and the P value is lesser 0.5, this implies that H3 is supported.

- The results indicated that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty ($r = 0.91$, p-value < 0.01). The relationship is very strong since the correlation coefficient of 0.91 is close to 1. The relationship is significant because the p-value is less than 0.05. This shows that H4 is indeed supported and there is a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty. This can be said as customer loyalty directly links to customer satisfaction that is essentially a sense of measurement that determines how fulfilled and happy the customer is with a brand's offerings, the happier the customer the better the chances of loyalty (Wu, 2013). Therefore, the questions stipulated in the survey directly ask questions regarding the relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty. The correlation coefficient of 0.90 is close to 1 and the P value is lesser 0.5, this implies that H4 is supported.

- It can be noted from Table 6 that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness ($r = 0.97$, p-value < 0.01). The relationship is very strong since the correlation coefficient of 0.97 is very close to 1. The relationship is significant because the p-value is less than 0.05. This shows that H5 is indeed supported and there is a relationship between Twitter advertising and brand awareness. This can be said as brand awareness forms a part of brand equity that is essentially the commercial value that a brand entails within its competitive market of the same or similar products, brand value is derived from the perception and interpretation that customers have about the brand and the brand's worth (Karam and Saydam, 2015). Therefore, the questions stipulated in the survey directly ask questions regarding the relationship between Twitter advertising and brand awareness. The correlation coefficient of 0.90 is close to 1 and the P value is lesser 0.5, this implies that H5 is supported.

- The results showed that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty ($r = 0.78$, p-value < 0.01). The relationship is strong since the correlation coefficient on 0.78 is greater than 0.5 and is significant because the p-value is less than 0.05. This shows that H6 is indeed supported and there is a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty. The aim for brands is to achieve customer loyalty since this means that there is a sense of commitment within the customers to buy the brands product and service offerings (Dhurup, Van Schalkwyk and Tsautse, 2018). Brand loyalty together with customer loyalty therefore is deep rooted that is measured through the sense of recall value in the customers mind, that will ensure that is from a particular brands offering, the brand that the customer is loyal to will be chosen (Kato and Tsuda, 2017). Therefore, the questions stipulated in the survey directly ask questions regarding the relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty. The correlation coefficient of 0.90 is close to 1 and the P value is lesser 0.5, this implies that H6 is supported**.**

It can be said that all of the hypothesis were indeed supported. This shows one that there is a relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness and Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty; Instagram advertising and brand awareness and Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty; Twitter advertising and brand awareness and Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty. The pilot study helped one understand that it is vital to add another construct of brand referrals in order to gain a holistic perspective of the study, therefore the main study entails brand referrals as another construct that was analysed and added into the main study questionnaire. The results of the final study are presented in in depth and detailed manner in chapter 4 and 5.

3.10 Conclusion

This section helps one understand the research methods that will be used in the study at hand, as well as the various concepts of reliability and validity. This research also uncovers the research instruments as well as the methods that will be used. This section also uncovers the population of the study, how the population of the study will be selected, the ways in which the population will be sampled, and how Qualtrics will be the platform on which the survey will be conducted on. It is also important to note that the Likert Scale is the technique used in

the survey. This study, therefore, constructs the research around questions regarding the online shopping sector in relation to brand awareness, customer loyalty, with reference to brand referrals. The followers of Sixty60 are chosen as the population sample. This section helps one understand how the data will be analysed as well to gain a holistic sense of approach.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter analyses and interprets the results that were collected from the respondents from the qualitative method of research known as surveys. This chapter gives an in-depth examination of the results that were collected.

4.1 Data Screening

The respondents that were chosen are South African individuals who are above the age of 18. Sixty60 is an application that is popular all over South Africa therefore the participants were restricted to the South African Sphere. these individuals also follow Checkers Sixty60 on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. This therefore makes the audience highly relevant to the study at hand. It was important to understand the age of the respondents as audience above the age of 18 were the target respondents as, they are the ones who are present on social media platforms, their education level helped on understand their shopping behaviours. Their social media habits as well as how they interact with online shopping was essential to the study, this was because Sixty60 is an online shopping application, and participants behaviours with social media and online shopping will help one understand how they consume advertisements on social media that helps one understand the effect that social media advertisements has on brand awareness and customer loyalty as a whole.

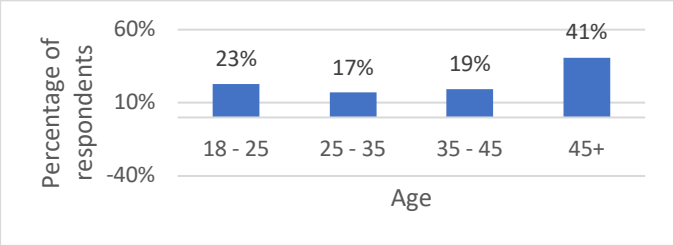
A total 351 responses were recorded and of these, 145 were incomplete and thus excluded from further analysis. Therefore, a total of 206 responses were analysed. There were no missing cases on the retained 206 responses. The data was analysed in SPSS version 25 and the model was fitted in Amos version 21.

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

4.2.1 Age

The age distribution of the respondents is presented in Figure 8. The highest proportion was in the 45+ age group (41%) followed by the 18 – 25 years (23%).

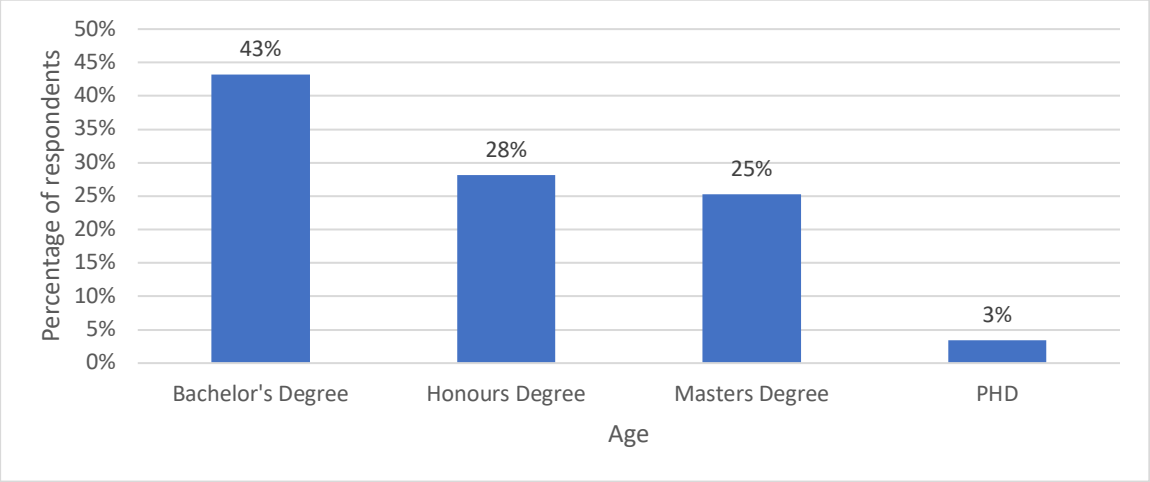
Figure 8: respondent age group



4.2.2 Education level

The results presented in Figure 9 indicates that 43% of the respondents had a bachelor's degree as their highest attained level of education. The other 23% had honours degrees, 25% had master's degrees while 3% had PhDs.

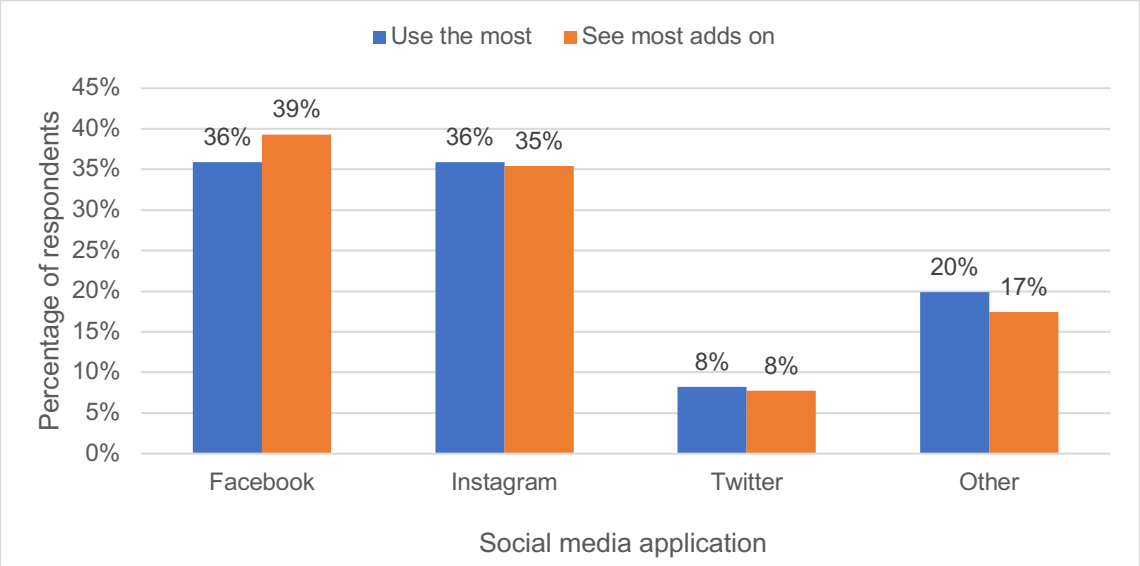
Figure 9: Education level



4.2.3 Social media applications usage

The top 2 used social media applications were Facebook and Instagram both with 36% usage apiece. Most advertisements were, however, seen on Facebook (39%) followed by Instagram (35%) and Twitter was at (8%) both usage and where most advertisements are seen. The results are presented on Figure 10.

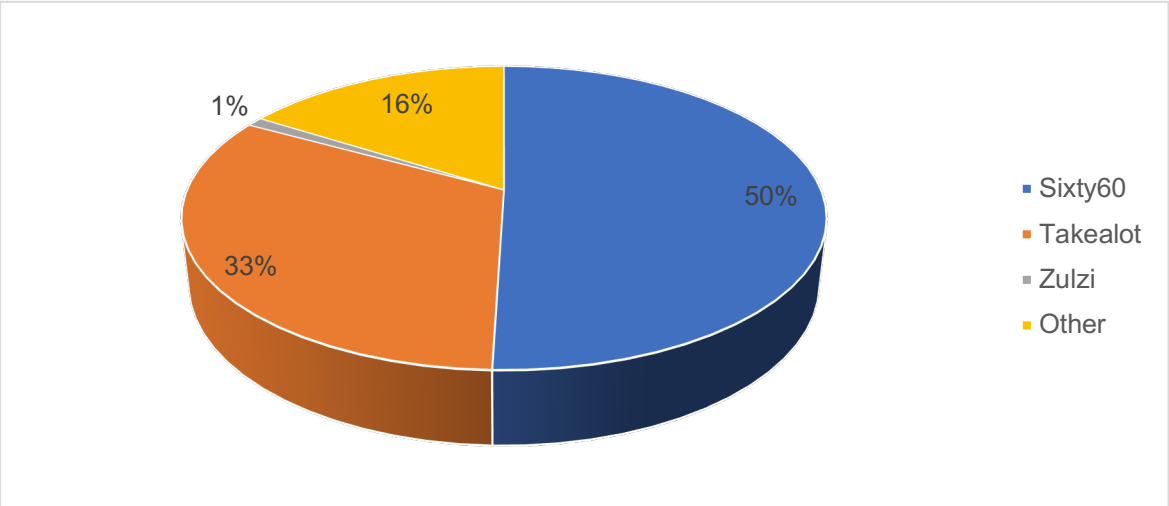
Figure 10: Social media applications usage



4.2.6 Top of mind online grocery shopping brands

When thinking of online grocery shopping, Sixty60 (50%) had the highest mention as the top of the mind brand. This was followed by Takealot (33%), Zulzi (1%) while other brands were pegged at 16%.

Figure 11: Top of mind online grocery shopping brands



4.2.7 Research Analysis Key: Full form of the acronyms used

Key: Full form of the acronyms used in the analysis below	
FA	Facebook Advertising
TA	Twitter Advertising
IA	Instagram Advertising
FBA	Facebook Brand Awareness
TBA	Twitter Brand Awareness
IBA	Instagram Brand Awareness
ICL	Instagram Customer Loyalty
TCL	Twitter Customer Loyalty
FCL	Facebook Customer Loyalty
BR	Brand Referrals

4.3. Facebook Advertising and Brand Awareness

4.3.1 Facebook Advertising

Facebook, being an important part of one's social media routine at 57%, was the attribute most associated with Facebook advertising. It was also understood that 38% of the audience became aware about Sixty60 through Facebook, 46% of the audience recalled seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook and 39% of the respondents are more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 due to the advertisements that they saw on Facebook, while 45% of the respondents agreed that they would go onto the application due to the Facebook advertisements that they saw. This data shows one that Facebook advertisements of Sixty60 are viable for the respondents. Therefore, it can be said that Facebook advertisements indeed hold weightage in terms of viewing advertisements (Hutter et al., 2013).

Figure 12: Facebook advertisement

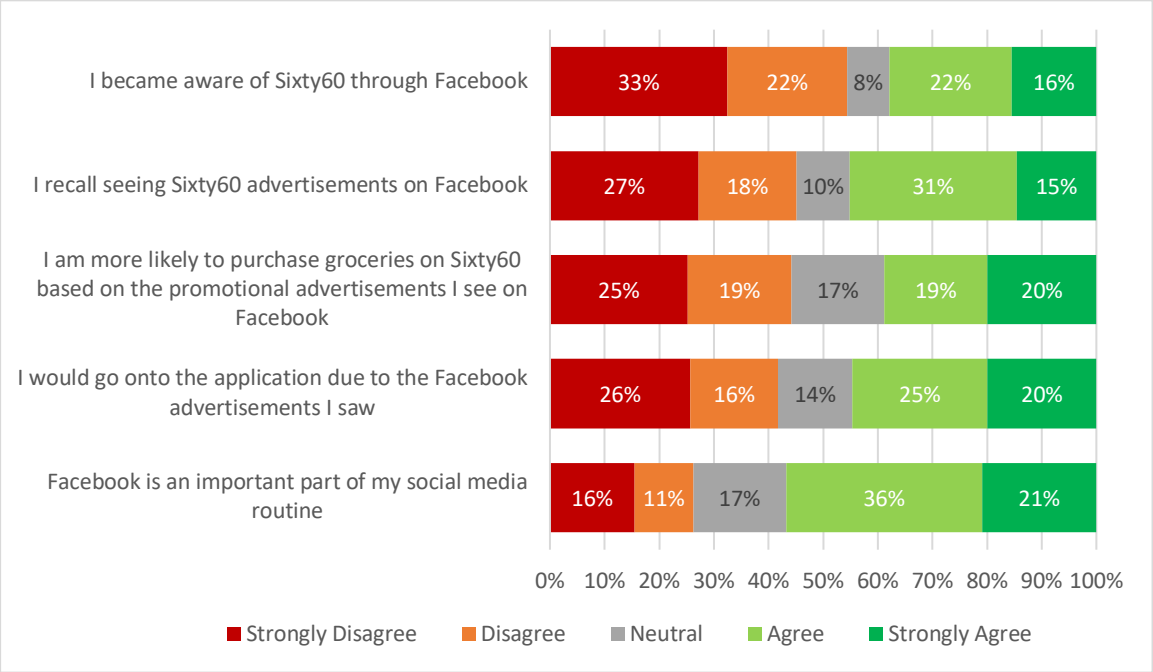


Table 7: Facebook advertisement

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Facebook Advertising								
FA1	Facebook is an important part of my social media routine	16%	11%	17%	36%	21%	3.36	1.34
FA4	I would go onto the application due to the Facebook advertisements I saw	26%	16%	14%	25%	20%	2.97	1.50
FA5	I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Facebook	25%	19%	17%	19%	20%	2.89	1.48
FA3	I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook	27%	18%	10%	31%	15%	2.87	1.47
FA2	I became aware of Sixty60 through Facebook	33%	22%	8%	22%	16%	2.67	1.50

4.3.2 Facebook Brand Awareness

The analysis below shows that 36% of the respondents associate their grocery needs with the Facebook advertisements that they see. 35% of the respondents said that Sixty60 is their favourable brand of choice due to the advertisements that they see, however 45% of the respondents also said that they do not agree with this statement. It is extremely vital to note that 53% of the audience can recall the services that are provided by Sixty60 due to the advertisements that they see on Facebook. 53% of the respondents also said that they recognise distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Facebook. 60% of the respondents also mentioned that they can recognise the Sixty60 advertisements that they see on Facebook and 60% of the respondents can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook from other grocery shopping applications. The most vital sections that link to the essence of brand awareness were highlighted above and it is visible that more than half of the audience are aware about Sixty60 as a brand due to the brand awareness that was created on Facebook, and brand knowledge and brand image was shared in a way where the respondents could recognise Sixty60 from competitors and as a brand (Hutter et al., 2013). However, a holistic analysis that will follow this study will determine the hypothesis.

Figure 13: Facebook Brand Awareness

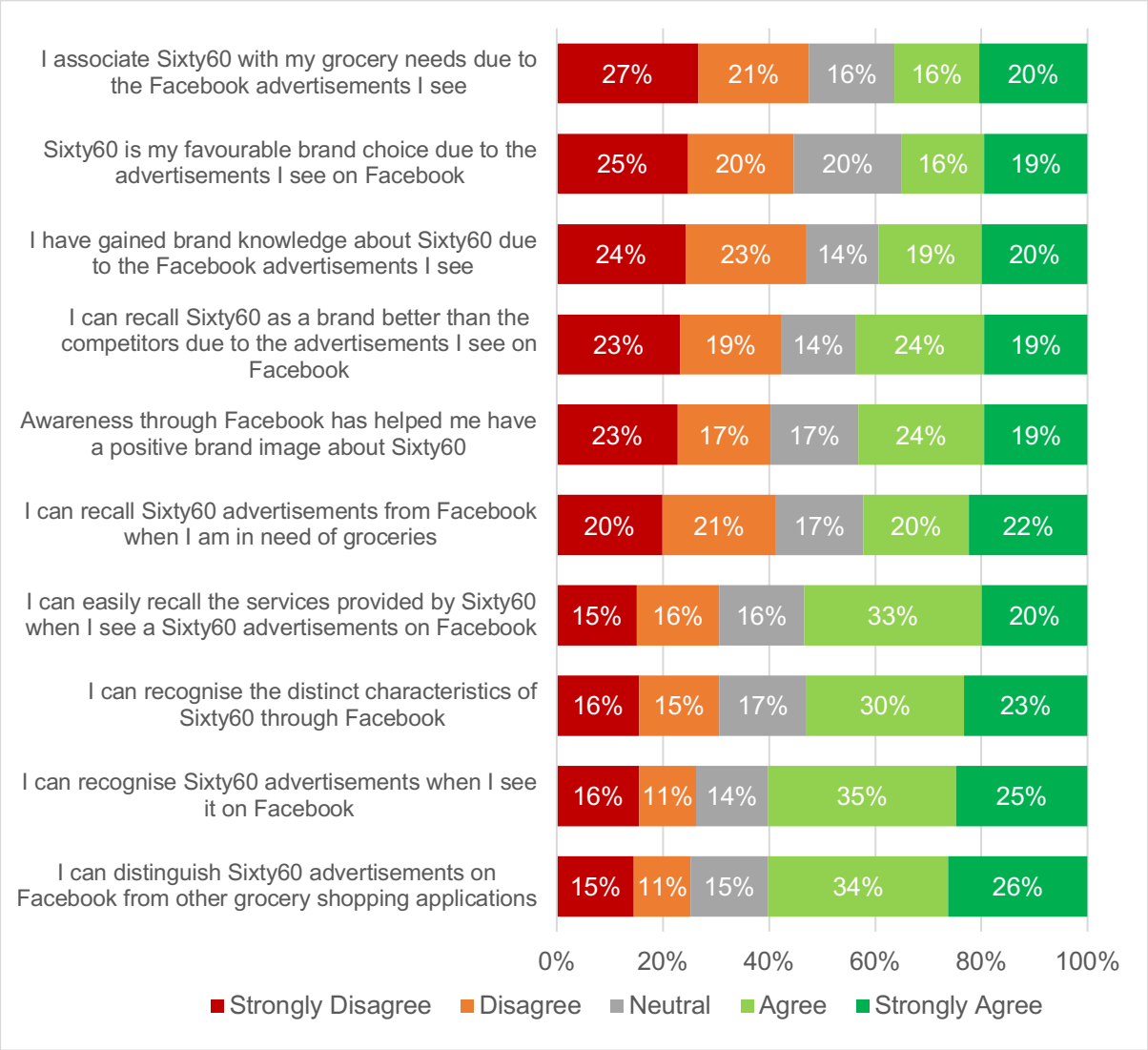


Table 8: Facebook Brand Awareness

		Strongly D...	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly ...	Mean	Std. D...
Facebook Brand Awareness								
FBA2	I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook from other grocery shopping applications	15%	11%	15%	34%	26%	3.47	1.37
FBA1	I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Facebook	16%	11%	14%	35%	25%	3.43	1.38

FBA3	I can recognize the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Facebook	16%	15%	17%	30%	23%	3.30	1.39
FBA4	I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see a Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook	15%	16%	16%	33%	20%	3.28	1.35
FBA5	I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Facebook when I am in need of groceries	20%	21%	17%	20%	22%	3.03	1.45
FBA7	Awareness through Facebook has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	23%	17%	17%	24%	19%	3.00	1.45
FBA8	I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Facebook	23%	19%	14%	24%	19%	2.98	1.47
FBA6	I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Facebook advertisements I see	24%	23%	14%	19%	20%	2.88	1.48
FBA9	Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Facebook	25%	20%	20%	16%	19%	2.85	1.45
FBA10	I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Facebook advertisements I see	27%	21%	16%	16%	20%	2.83	1.49

4.4 Facebook Brand awareness and Customer loyalty

4.4.1 Facebook Customer Loyalty

The more brand awareness that is created on Facebook through Facebook advertisements, the more customer loyalty is created. The results below help identify the respondents' engagement with brands on Facebook and the more the brands engage and interact with customers, the more loyalty they may have towards a brand. 45% of the respondents engage with brands on Facebook and 39% of the respondents said that constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 as a brand leads one to be a loyal customer. This is due to the fact that 49% of the respondents have the sentiment that when their queries are answered on Facebook by the brand, they feel heard as a customer and 52% of the respondents said that when they are heard as a customer, they are a satisfied customer and this satisfaction leads to customer loyalty (Muangmee, 2021). 47% of the respondents also remember the brands that engage with them on Facebook. This can be said as 42% of the respondents will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 offers due to the advertisements that they see on

Facebook, as their customer satisfaction and loyalty helps them be inclined towards Sixty60 as a brand (Muangmee, 2021). However, a holistic sense of analysis that will follow this study will determine the hypothesis.

Figure 14: Facebook Customer Loyalty

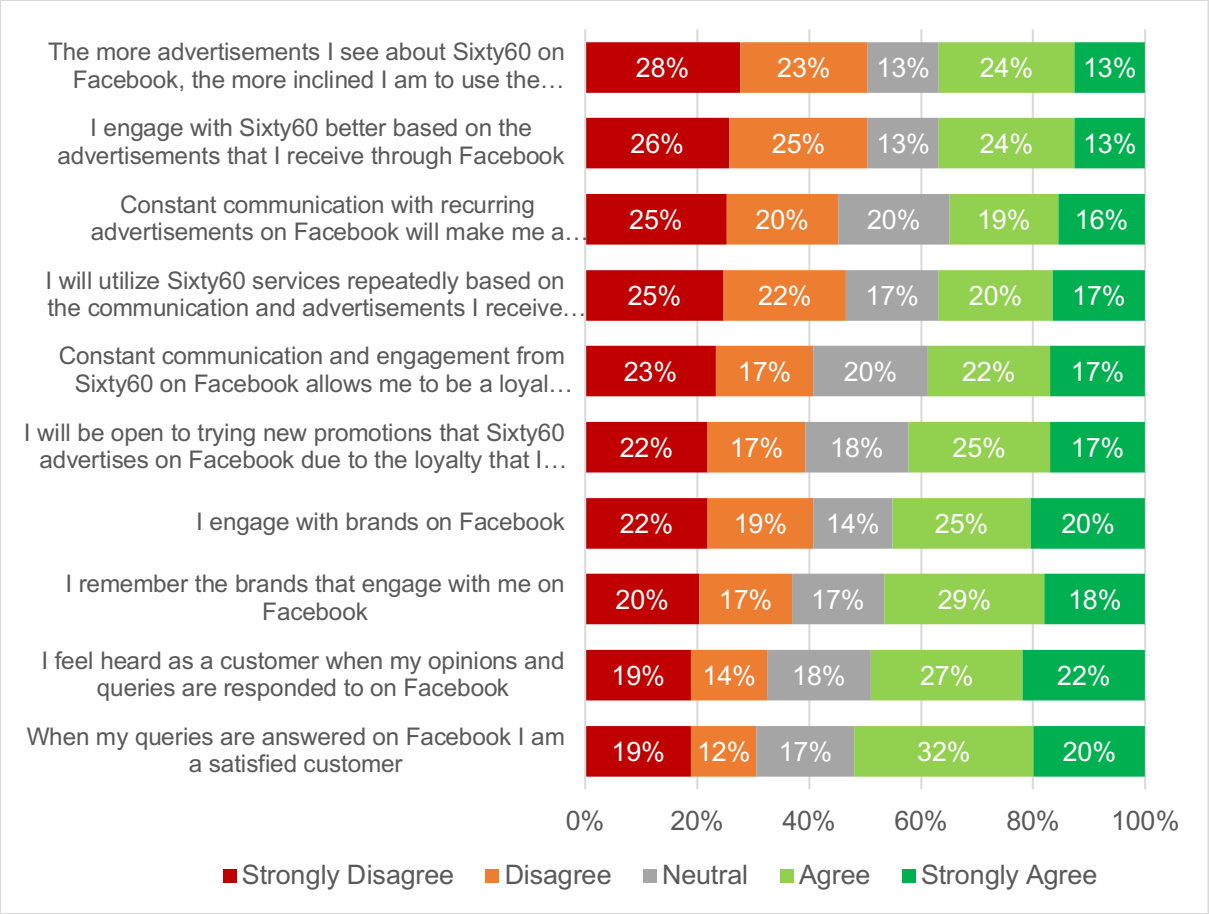


Table 9: Facebook Customer Loyalty

		Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly	Mean	Std.
Facebook Customer Loyalty								
FCL5	When my queries are answered on Facebook I am a satisfied customer	19%	12%	17%	32%	20%	3.22	1.40
FCL7	I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Facebook	19%	14%	18%	27%	22%	3.19	1.42
FCL4	I remember the brands that engage with me on Facebook	20%	17%	17%	29%	18%	3.07	1.41

FCL1	I engage with brands on Facebook	22%	19%	14%	25%	20%	3.03	1.46
FCL10	I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Facebook due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	22%	17%	18%	25%	17%	2.98	1.41
FCL8	Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Facebook allows me to be a loyal customer	23%	17%	20%	22%	17%	2.92	1.42
FCL6	I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Facebook	25%	22%	17%	20%	17%	2.82	1.43
FCL9	Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Facebook will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	25%	20%	20%	19%	16%	2.80	1.41
FCL2	I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Facebook	26%	25%	13%	24%	13%	2.73	1.40
FCL3	The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Facebook, the more inclined I am to use the services	28%	23%	13%	24%	13%	2.71	1.42

4.5 Instagram Advertising and Brand Awareness

4.5.1 Instagram Advertising

The analysis below helps one understand that 48% of the audience regard Instagram as an important part of their social media routine. 36% of the audience agreed that they would go onto the Sixty60 application due to the advertisements that they saw on Instagram (Muangmee, 2021). The advertisements of Sixty60 showed a mixed sentiment, however the brand awareness quotient below shows that the advertisements leads to brand awareness (Muangmee, 2021).

Figure 15: Instagram Advertising

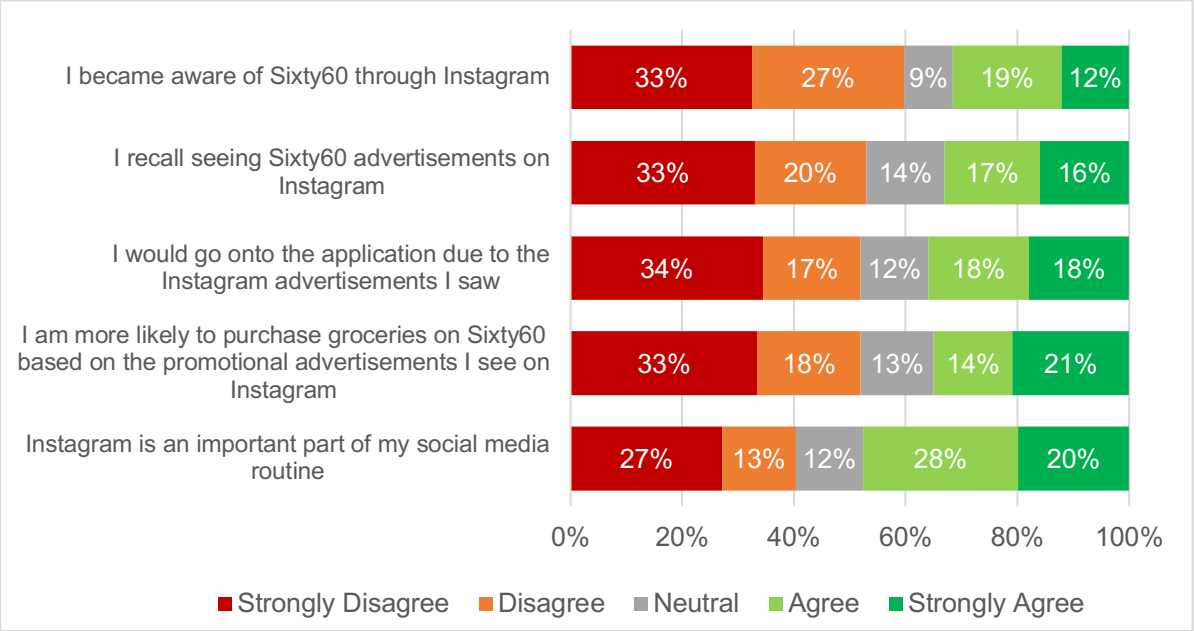


Table 10: Instagram Advertising

		Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly	Mean	Std.
Instagram Advertising								
IA1	Instagram is an important part of my social media routine	27%	13%	12%	28%	20%	3.00	1.52
IA5	I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Instagram	33%	18%	13%	14%	21%	2.70	1.56
IA4	I would go onto the application due to the Instagram advertisements I saw	34%	17%	12%	18%	18%	2.67	1.54
IA3	I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	33%	20%	14%	17%	16%	2.63	1.48
IA2	I became aware of Sixty60 through Instagram	33%	27%	9%	19%	12%	2.51	1.42

4.5.2 Instagram Brand Awareness

The analysis below was vital to understand how Instagram creates brand awareness. 39% of the respondents said that they can recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements when they need groceries; this means that the Instagram advertisements creates brand awareness in such a manner where brand knowledge is spread in a way, where needs of customers are linked to the services and products of Sixty60. This can be said as 44% of the audience recall Sixty60 services and products due to the advertisements that they see on Instagram (Datta and Kaushik, 2019). This is vital as this shows a positive brand image and the sentiment that Instagram advertisements lead to brand awareness as 38% of the audience agreed that awareness through Instagram has helped them have a positive image about Sixty60 as a brand. 47% of the respondents can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when they see it on Instagram while 47% of the audience can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram from other grocery shopping applications, and 47% of the audience can recognise distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Instagram advertising (Datta and Kaushik, 2019). This essentially goes to show that Instagram has a vital and major role in creating brand awareness for brands such as Sixty60. However, a holistic analysis that will follow this study will determine the hypothesis.

Figure 16: Instagram Brand Awareness

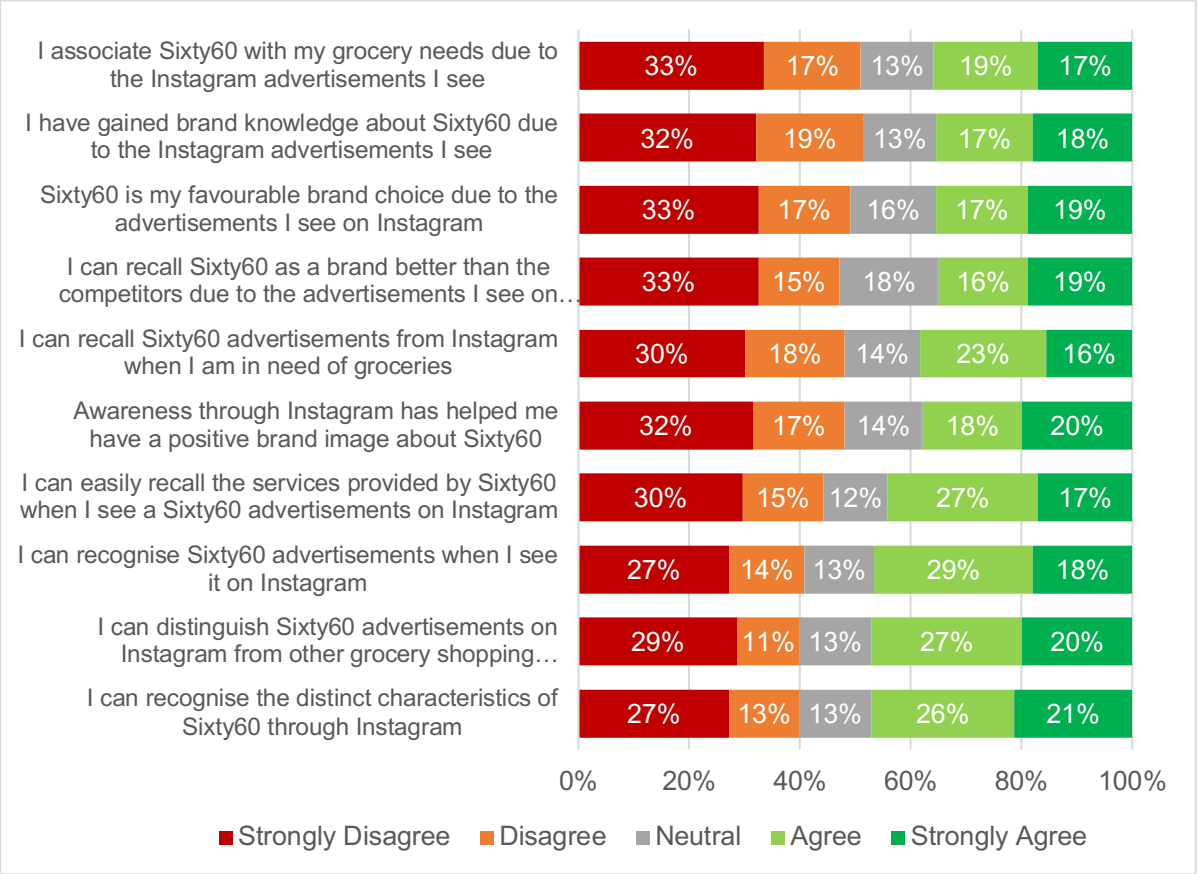


Table 11: Instagram Brand Awareness

		Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly	Mean	Std.
Instagram Brand Awareness								
IBA3	I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Instagram	27%	13%	13%	26%	21%	3.01	1.53
IBA2	I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram from other grocery shopping applications	29%	11%	13%	27%	20%	2.99	1.53
IBA1	I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Instagram	27%	14%	13%	29%	18%	2.97	1.50
IBA4	I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see a Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	30%	15%	12%	27%	17%	2.87	1.51

IBA7	Awareness through Instagram has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	32%	17%	14%	18%	20%	2.78	1.54
IBA5	I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Instagram when I am in need of groceries	30%	18%	14%	23%	16%	2.76	1.48
IBA8	I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Instagram	33%	15%	18%	16%	19%	2.74	1.52
IBA9	Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Instagram	33%	17%	16%	17%	19%	2.73	1.53
IBA6	I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Instagram advertisements I see	32%	19%	13%	17%	18%	2.70	1.51
IBA10	I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Instagram advertisements I see	33%	17%	13%	19%	17%	2.68	1.51

4.6 Instagram brand awareness and Customer loyalty

4.6.1 Instagram Customer Loyalty

The analysis below helps one understand that Instagram advertising that creates brand awareness plays a huge role in terms of customer loyalty. This is because 34% of the audience agreed with the understanding that constant communication with the aid of recurring Instagram advertisements allow customers to potentially be loyal customers. This can be said as engagement plays a huge role on determining loyalty of customers for a particular brand as 36% of the audience agreed that engagement with brands on Instagram builds customer loyalty as engagement relates to a sense of relationship, where customers feel heard. 43% of the respondents said that they feel heard as a customer when the brands build engagement with them, and 40% of the audience agreed that when their queries are answered, they are a satisfied customer (Ibrahim and Aljarah, 2021). This satisfaction leads to a sense of loyalty where 37% of the customers are open to promotions that Sixty60 offers due to the engagement and loyalty built on Instagram. 42% of the respondents engage with brands and 39% of the respondents remember the brands that engaged with them (Ibrahim and Aljarah, 2021). This, therefore, shows that Instagram advertisements together with engagement and interaction leads to a sense of customer loyalty on Instagram within the digital marketing sphere. However, a holistic analysis that will follow this study will determine the hypothesis.

Figure 17: Instagram Customer Loyalty

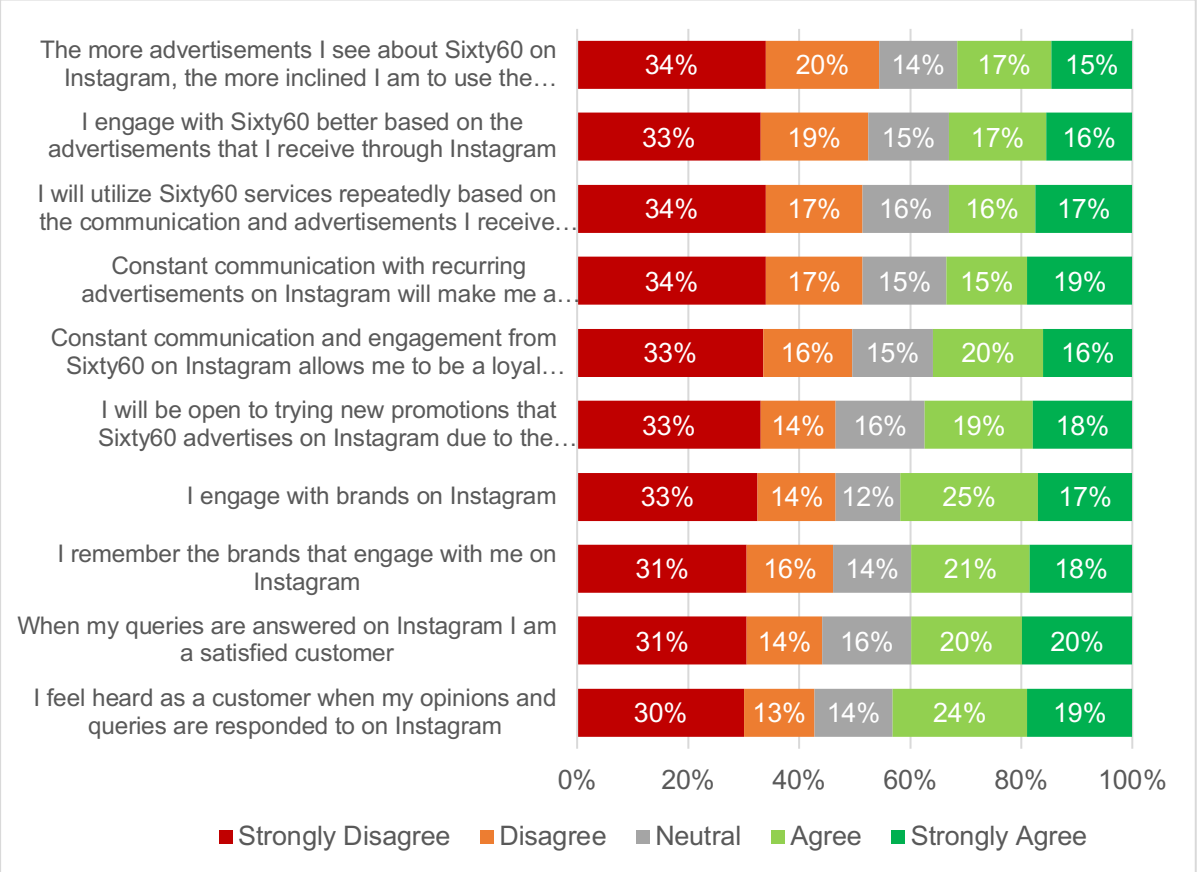


Table 12: Instagram Customer Loyalty

		Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly	Mean	Std.
Instagram Customer Loyalty								
ICL7	I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Instagram	30%	13%	14%	24%	19%	2.89	1.53
ICL5	When my queries are answered on Instagram I am a satisfied customer	31%	14%	16%	20%	20%	2.85	1.53
ICL4	I remember the brands that engage with me on Instagram	31%	16%	14%	21%	18%	2.82	1.52
ICL1	I engage with brands on Instagram	33%	14%	12%	25%	17%	2.80	1.53

ICL10	I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Instagram due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	33%	14%	16%	19%	18%	2.76	1.52
ICL8	Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Instagram allows me to be a loyal customer	33%	16%	15%	20%	16%	2.69	1.50
ICL9	Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Instagram will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	34%	17%	15%	15%	19%	2.67	1.53
ICL6	I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Instagram	34%	17%	16%	16%	17%	2.65	1.51
ICL2	I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Instagram	33%	19%	15%	17%	16%	2.63	1.48
ICL3	The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Instagram, the more inclined I am to use the services	34%	20%	14%	17%	15%	2.58	1.47

4.7 Twitter Advertising and brand awareness

4.7.1 Twitter Advertising

The analysis below regarding Twitter gives one a mixed sentiment, therefore it is vital to conduct a holistic analysis in order to understand the influence of Twitter advertising. A holistic analysis will be conducted further in chapter 4 that will determine the hypothesis.

Figure 18: Twitter Advertising

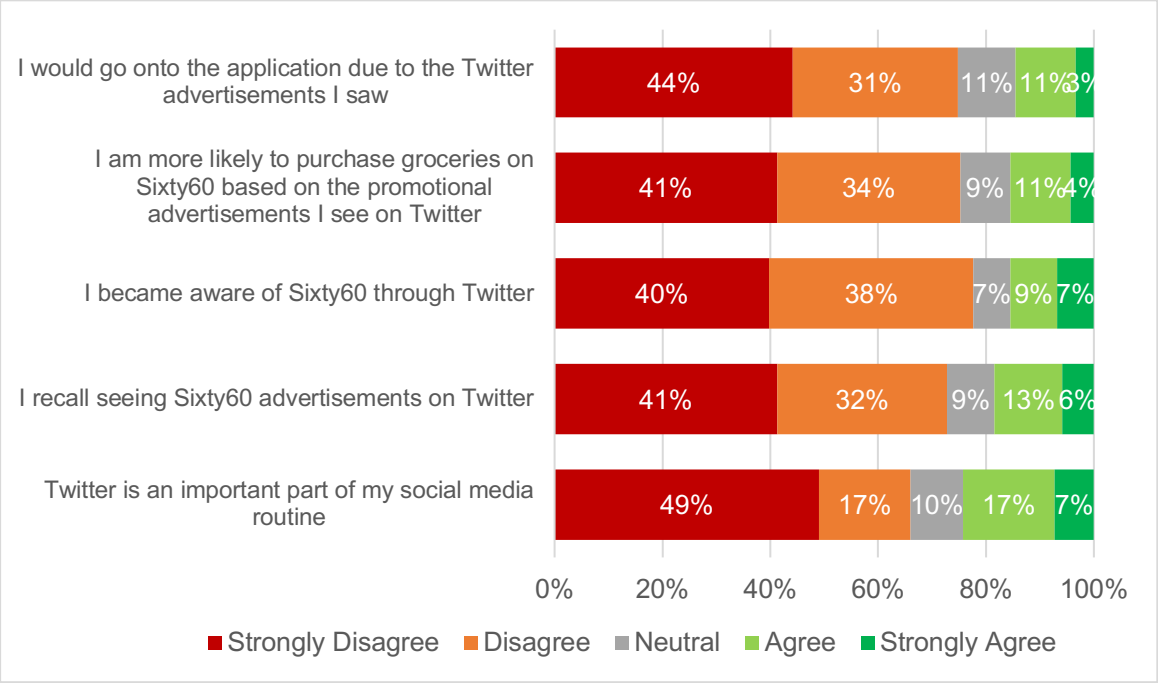


Table 13: Twitter Advertising

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Twitter Advertising								
TA1	Twitter is an important part of my social media routine	49%	17%	10%	17%	7%	2.17	1.38
TA3	I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	41%	32%	9%	13%	6%	2.10	1.24
TA2	I became aware of Sixty60 through Twitter	40%	38%	7%	9%	7%	2.05	1.20
TA5	I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Twitter	41%	34%	9%	11%	4%	2.03	1.16
TA4	I would go onto the application due to the Twitter advertisements I saw	44%	31%	11%	11%	3%	1.99	1.14

4.7.2 Twitter Brand Awareness

The analysis below gives one a very diverse reading, where the audience tend to give one a mixed analysis. However, since the analysis below only identifies mean and standard deviation methods, it is vital to understand that the results presented in Table 21 below show that Twitter advertising (β = 0.905, t-value = 15.930, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on Brand awareness. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Twitter advertising (β = 0.905) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This will be discussed further in detail below.

Figure 19: Twitter Brand Awareness

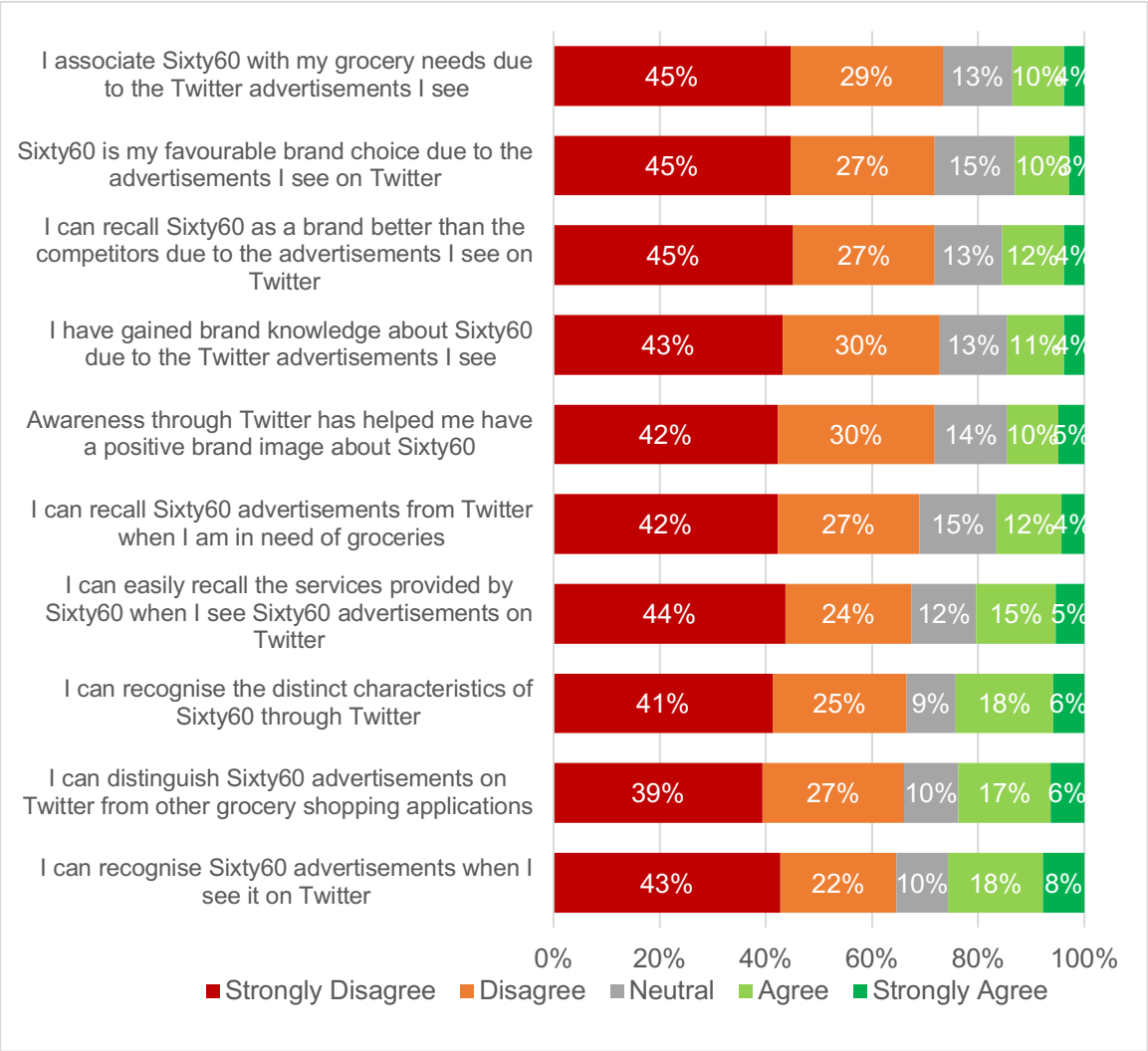


Table 14: Twitter Brand Awareness

		Strongly D...	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly A...	Mean	Std. D...
Twitter Brand Awareness								
TBA1	I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Twitter	43%	22%	10%	18%	8%	2.26	1.37
TBA2	I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter from other grocery shopping applications	39%	27%	10%	17%	6%	2.25	1.31
TBA3	I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Twitter	41%	25%	9%	18%	6%	2.22	1.31
TBA4	I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	44%	24%	12%	15%	5%	2.15	1.28
TBA5	I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Twitter when I am in need of groceries	42%	27%	15%	12%	4%	2.10	1.20
TBA7	Awareness through Twitter has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	42%	30%	14%	10%	5%	2.05	1.18
TBA6	I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Twitter advertisements I see	43%	30%	13%	11%	4%	2.02	1.16
TBA8	I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Twitter	45%	27%	13%	12%	4%	2.02	1.18
TBA9	Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Twitter	45%	27%	15%	10%	3%	2.00	1.13
TBA10	I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Twitter advertisements I see	45%	29%	13%	10%	4%	2.00	1.15

4.8 Twitter brand awareness and Customer Loyalty

4.8.1 Twitter Customer Loyalty

It is vital to understand that Twitter brand awareness created through advertising creates a sense of customer loyalty. The analysis below gives one a sense of mixed reading, where the respondents tend to give one a diverged sense of analysis. However, due to the fact that the

analysis below only analysed mean and standard deviation methods, it is vital to understand that the results presented in Table 21 show that Twitter brand awareness (β = 0.897, t-value = 14.826, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Twitter brand awareness (β = 0.897) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This will be discussed further in detail below that will help in determining the hypothesis.

Figure 20: Twitter Customer Loyalty

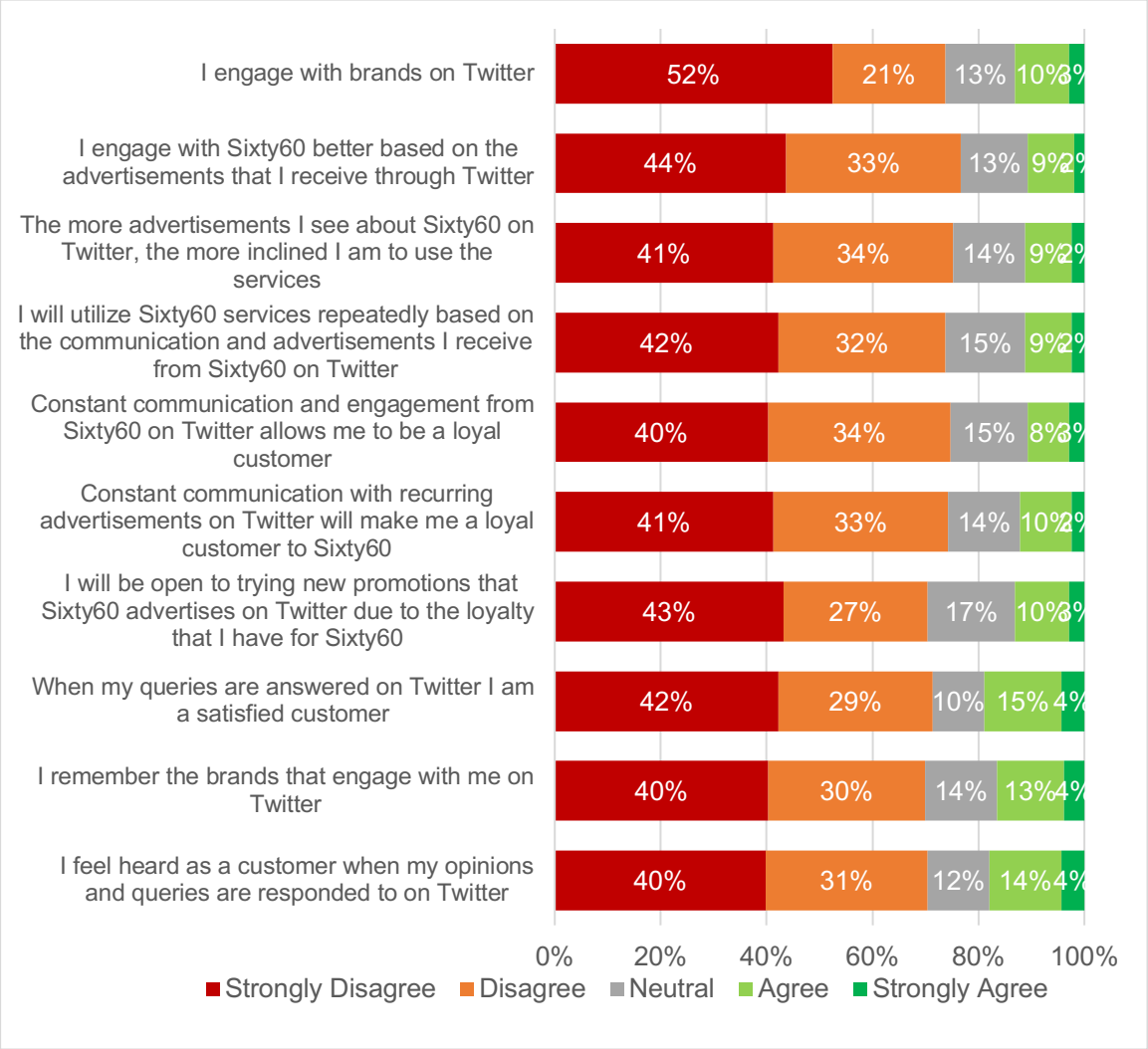


Table 15: Twitter Customer Loyalty

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Twitter Customer Loyalty								
TCL7	I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Twitter	40%	31%	12%	14%	4%	2.12	1.20
TCL4	I remember the brands that engage with me on Twitter	40%	30%	14%	13%	4%	2.10	1.18
TCL5	When my queries are answered on Twitter I am a satisfied customer	42%	29%	10%	15%	4%	2.10	1.22
TCL10	I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Twitter due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	43%	27%	17%	10%	3%	2.02	1.13
TCL9	Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Twitter will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	41%	33%	14%	10%	2%	1.99	1.08
TCL8	Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Twitter allows me to be a loyal customer	40%	34%	15%	8%	3%	1.99	1.06
TCL6	I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Twitter	42%	32%	15%	9%	2%	1.98	1.07
TCL3	The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Twitter, the more inclined I am to use the services	41%	34%	14%	9%	2%	1.97	1.06
TCL2	I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Twitter	44%	33%	13%	9%	2%	1.92	1.04
TCL1	I engage with brands on Twitter	52%	21%	13%	10%	3%	1.90	1.15

4.9 Facebook, Instagram and Twitter customer loyalty and Brand Referrals

4.9.1 Brand Referrals

The analysis below gives one a holistic sense of brand referrals in relation to social media. The analysis below will be analysed in relation to each social media platform used in this study namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, that will give one a clear sense of understanding.

Figure 21: Brand Referrals

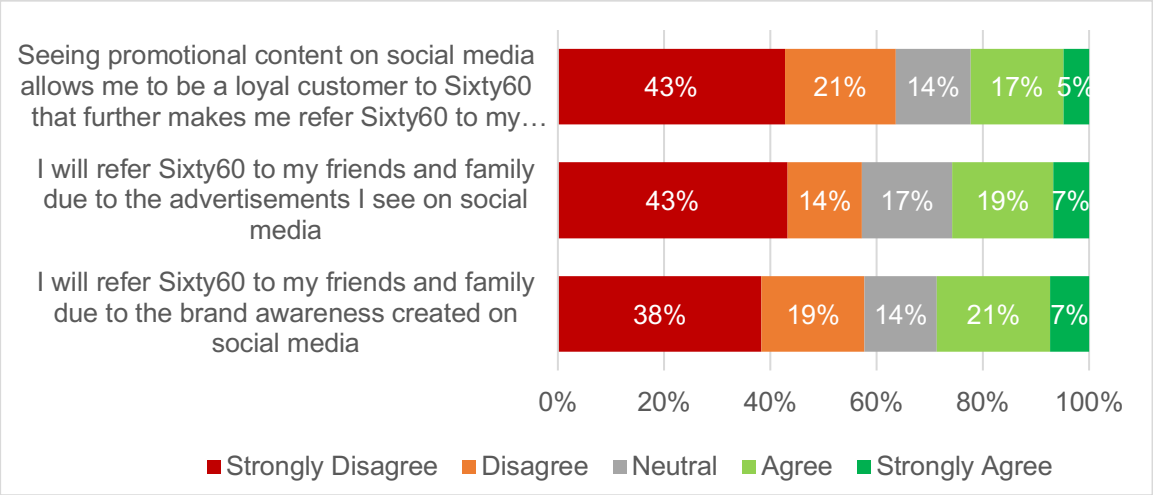


Table 16: Brand Referrals

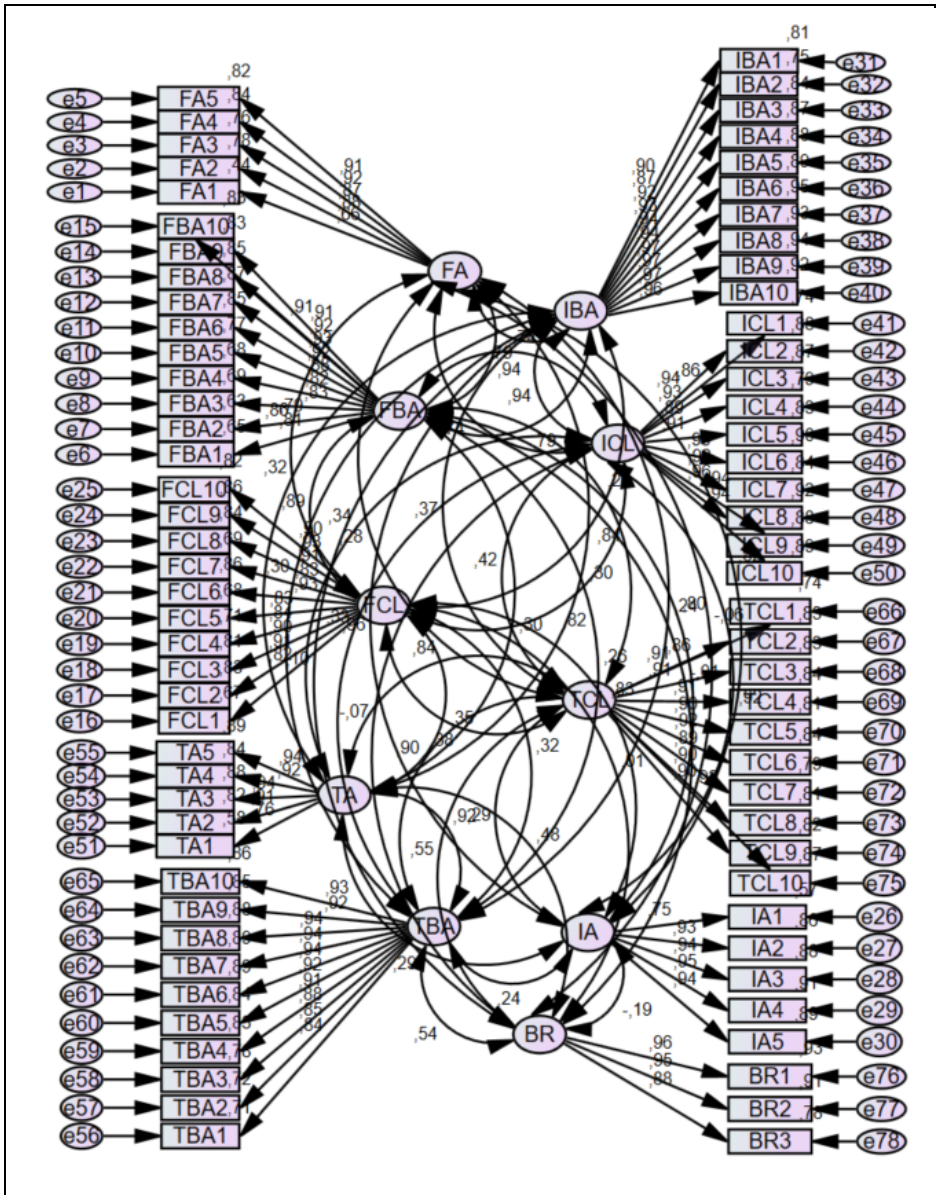
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Brand Referrals								
BR2	I will refer Sixty60 to my friends and family due to the brand awareness created on social media	38%	19%	14%	21%	7%	2.40	1.37
BR1	I will refer Sixty60 to my friends and family due to the advertisements I see on social media	43%	14%	17%	19%	7%	2.32	1.37
BR3	Seeing promotional content on social media allows me to be a loyal customer to Sixty60	43%	21%	14%	17%	5%	2.21	1.29

	that further makes me refer Sixty60 to my family and friends							

4.10 Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the constructs were assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). This was conducted using IBM Amos version 21. The composite reliability (CR) measure was used to assess the reliability while Average variance Extracted (AVE) was used to assess convergent validity and discriminant validity was assessed using the maximum shared variance (MSV). The model with all the constructs and items as they had been hypothesised by the research is show in Figure 22.

Figure 22: Hypothesised CFA Model (before Pruning)



The model fit indices presented in Table 17 show that all the model was not good fit for the data. This means that the model required pruning to improve the model fit.

Table 17: Model Fit Indices before Pruning

Absolute Fit Indexes	Acceptable Value	Value	Outcome
GFI (Goodness of fit index)	>0.9	0.449	Outside acceptable range
RSME (Root mean square error of approximation)	RSMEA<0.08	0.090	Outside acceptable range

NFI (Normed fit index)	>0.9	0.756	Outside acceptable range
NNFI (TLI) (Non-normed fit index)	>0.9	0.824	Outside acceptable range
CFI (Comparative fit index)	>0.9	0.831	Outside acceptable range
CMIN /DF (Chi-square fit statistics/degree of freedom)	< 5	2.661	Acceptable

The pruned model is presented in Figure 23 below.

Figure 23: Final CFA Model after pruning.

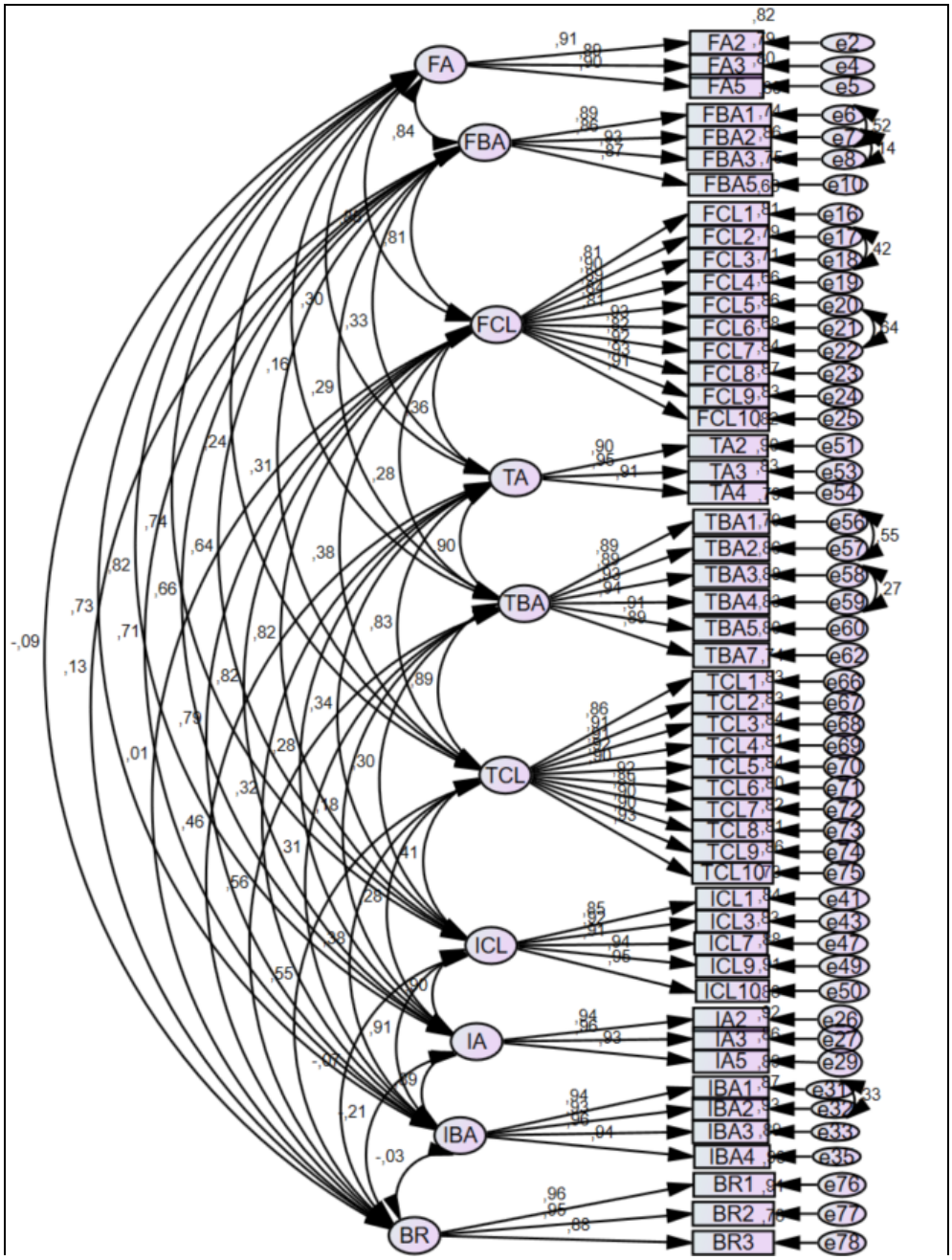


Table 18 summarises the final factor composition after pruning, representing the factor loadings, composite reliability (CR) scores, and AVE scores.

Table 18: Final Construct Composition

		Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Facebook Advertising				
FA2	Section B - 8. I became aware of Sixty60 through Facebook	,906	0.925	0.803
FA3	Section B - 9. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook	,887		
FA5	Section B - 11. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Facebook	,896		
Facebook Brand Awareness				
FBA 1	Section B - 12. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Facebook	,894	0.937	0.788
FBA 2	Section B - 13. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook from other grocery shopping applications	,861		
FBA 3	Section B - 14. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Facebook	,926		
FBA 5	Section B - 16. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Facebook when I am in need of groceries	,868		
Facebook Customer Loyalty			0.971	0.771
FCL 1	Section C - 22. I engage with brands on Facebook	,811		
FCL 2	Section C - 23. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Facebook	,902		
FCL 3	Section C - 24. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Facebook, the more inclined I am to use the services	,890		
FCL 4	Section C - 25. I remember the brands that engage with me on Facebook	,841		
FCL 5	Section C - 26. When my queries are answered on Facebook I am a satisfied customer	,814		
FCL 6	Section C - 27. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Facebook	,929		
FCL 7	Section C - 28. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Facebook	,825		
FCL 8	Section C - 29. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Facebook allows me to be a loyal customer	,917		

FCL 9	Section C - 30. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Facebook will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	,932		
FCL 10	Section C - 31. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Facebook due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	,910		
Instagram Advertising			0.960	0.890
IA2	Section D - 33. I became aware of Sixty60 through Instagram	,940		
IA3	Section D - 34. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	,961		
IA5	Section D - 36. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Instagram	,929		
Instagram Brand Awareness			0.971	0.893
IBA 1	Section D - 37. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Instagram	,941		
IBA 2	Section D - 38. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram from other grocery shopping applications	,931		
IBA 3	Section D - 39. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Instagram	,963		
IBA 4	Section D - 40. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see a Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	,944		
Instagram Customer Loyalty			0.963	0.838
ICL 1	Section E - 47. I engage with brands on Instagram	,855		
ICL 3	Section E - 49. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Instagram, the more inclined I am to use the services	,918		
ICL 7	Section E - 53. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Instagram	,909		
ICL 9	Section E - 55. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Instagram will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	,939		
ICL 10	Section E - 56. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Instagram due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	,952		
Twitter Advertising			0.944	0.849
TA2	Section F - 58. I became aware of Sixty60 through Twitter	,904		
TA3	Section F - 59. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	,947		
TA4	Section F - 60. I would go onto the application due to the Twitter advertisements I saw	,913		
Twitter Brand Awareness			0.966	0.824

TBA 1	Section F - 62. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Twitter	,887		
TBA 2	Section F - 63. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter from other grocery shopping applications	,889		
TBA 3	Section F - 64. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Twitter	,927		
TBA 4	Section F - 65. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	,936		
TBA 5	Section F - 66. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Twitter when I am in need of groceries	,913		
TBA 7	Section F - 68. Awareness through Twitter has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	,892		
Twitter Customer Loyalty			0.978	0.818
TCL 1	Section G - 71. I engage with brands on Twitter	,862		
TCL 2	Section G - 72. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Twitter	,909		
TCL 3	Section G - 73. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Twitter, the more inclined I am to use the services	,911		
TCL 4	Section G - 74. I remember the brands that engage with me on Twitter	,917		
TCL 5	Section G - 75. When my queries are answered on Twitter I am a satisfied customer	,900		
TCL 6	Section G - 76. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Twitter	,917		
TCL 7	Section G - 77. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Twitter	,892		
TCL 8	Section G - 78. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Twitter allows me to be a loyal customer	,903		
TCL 9	Section G - 79. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Twitter will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	,902		
TCL 10	Section G - 80. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Twitter due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	,930		
Brand Referrals			0.953	0.871
BR1	Section H - 81. I will refer Sixty60 to my friends and family due to the advertisements I see on social media	,962		

BR2	Section H - 82. I will refer Sixty60 to my friends and family due to the brand awareness created on social media	,955		
BR3	Section H - 83. Seeing promotional content on social media allows me to be a loyal customer to Sixty60 that further makes me refer Sixty60 to my family and friends	,881		

The Model Fit indices for the final CFA model are summarised in Table 19.

Table 19: Model Fit Indices after pruning.

Absolute Fit Indexes	Acceptable Value	Value	Outcome
GFI (Goodness of fit index)	>0.9	0.671	Below the acceptable range
RSME (Root mean square error of approximation)	RSMEA<0.08	0.073	Acceptable
NFI (Normed fit index)	>0.9	0.856	Slightly below acceptable range
NNFI (TLI) (Non-normed fit index)	>0.9	0.911	Acceptable
CFI (Comparative fit index)	>0.9	0.918	Acceptable
CMIN /DF (Chi-square fit statistics/degree of freedom)	< 5	2.105	Acceptable

The results on the model fit indices show that the RSME, NFI, NNFI (TLI), and CFI indices were either within the acceptable ranges or slightly outside the acceptable range (Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen, 2008). The AGFI was below the acceptable range (Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen, 2008). Since most of the indices were met, the model was a good fit for the data. Further pruning of the model did not improve the indices. The validity and reliability results are summarised in Table 20.

Table 20: Reliability and validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)
FA	0.925	0.803	0.724	0.925
FBA	0.937	0.788	0.702	0.941
IA	0.960	0.890	0.808	0.963
TA	0.944	0.849	0.803	0.948
BR	0.953	0.871	0.314	0.963
TCL	0.978	0.818	0.790	0.979
ICL	0.963	0.838	0.823	0.968
IBA	0.971	0.893	0.823	0.972
FCL	0.971	0.771	0.724	0.975
TBA	0.966	0.824	0.803	0.967

The composite reliability (CR) values were all above the minimum required value of at least 0.7, indicating that there was good reliability (Bacon, Sauer and Young, 1995). There was convergent validity as the AVE values were all above the minimum cut-off of at least 0.5. Discriminant validity was also achieved as all the MSV values were less than the AVE values for all constructs.

The Fornell-Larcker Criterion scores presented in Table 21 show that the diagonal elements were higher than the off-diagonal elements (Bohndick, Hilkenmeier, Hilkenmeier and Bohndick, 2017). This indicates items within a construct were strongly related among themselves than they were with items from other constructs. This confirms that there was divergent validity.

Table 21: Fornell-Larcker Criterion Scores

	1.	**2.**	**3.**	**4.**	**5.**	**6.**	**7.**	**8.**	**9.**	**10.**
FA	.896									
FBA	.838	.888								
IA	.818	.658	.943							
TA	.296	.328	.283	.922						
BR	-.095	.130	-.214	.460	.933					

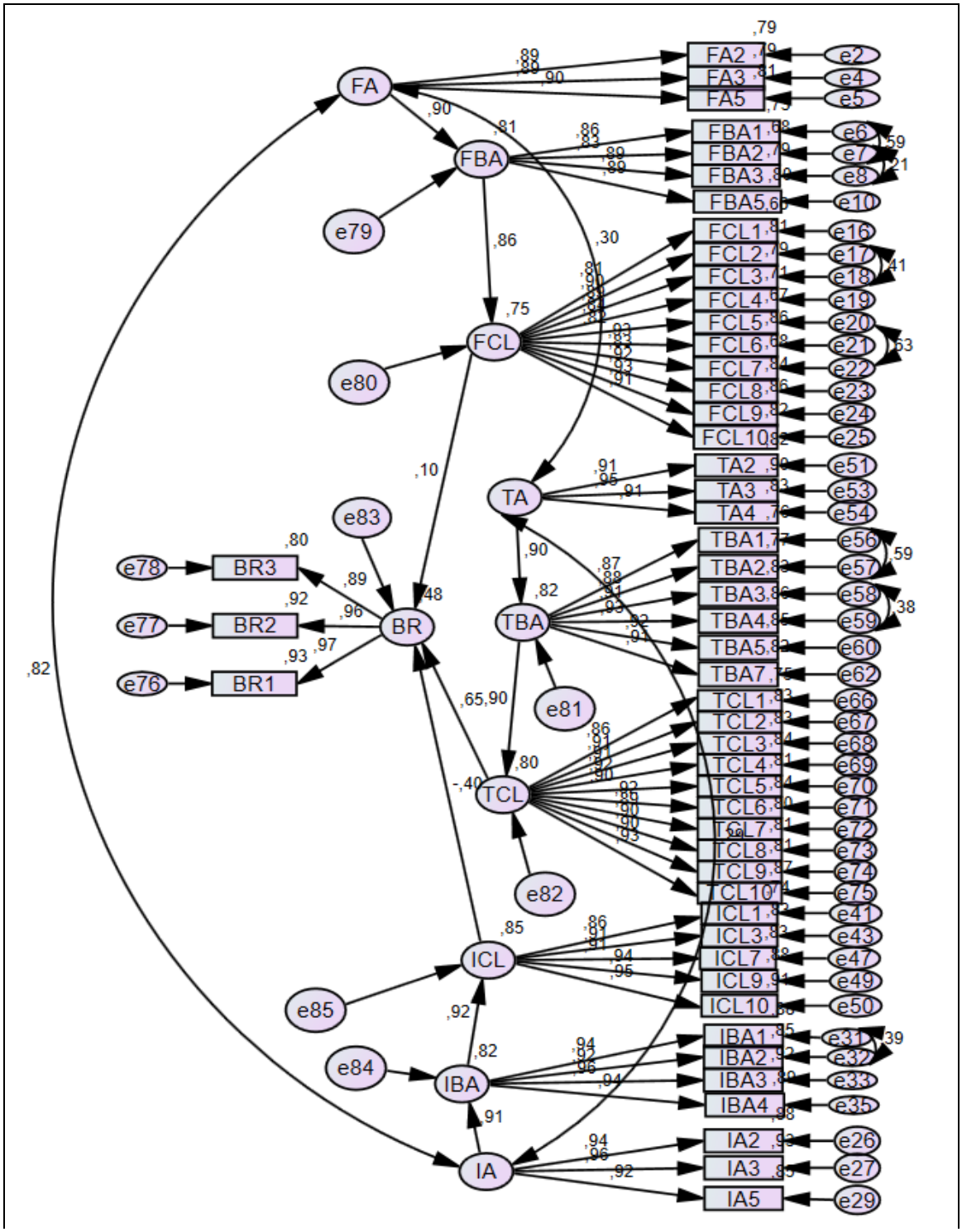
TCL	.242	.307	.276	.834	.549	.904				
ICL	.740	.644	.899	.342	-.070	.415	.915			
IBA	.726	.712	.892	.323	-.032	.385	.907	.945		
FCL	.851	.805	.818	.356	.006	.379	.821	.792	.878	
TBA	.156	.294	.179	.896	.560	.889	.296	.313	.280	.908

Note: N = 253; SD = standard deviation; values off the diagonal are square root of average variance extracted

4.11 Hypothesis testing using SEM and results

To assess the hypotheses, a Structural Equation Model (SEM) was fitted with the items that were retained in the final CFA model. The results are presented in Figure 24.

Figure 24: SEM Model



The regression weights are presented in Table 22

Table 22: SEM Model - Regression Weights

Hypotheses / Path Analysis			Estimates	Standardised Estimates	T-value	P-value	R-square	Hypothesis Supported
FA	→	FBA	,792	,900	14,644	***	,811	Supported and significant
TA	→	TBA	1,001	,905	15,930	***	,819	Supported and significant
IA	→	IBA	,951	,907	19,914	***	,822	Supported and significant
FBA	→	FCL	,872	,865	12,565	***	,748	Supported and significant
TBA	→	TCL	,743	,897	14,826	***	,805	Supported and significant
IBA	→	ICL	,861	,920	17,010	***	,846	Supported and significant
ICL	→	BR	-,429	-,405	-6,055	***	,477	Not Supported but significant
TCL	→	BR	,912	,650	10,603	***		Supported and significant
FCL	→	BR	,114	,097	1,506	,132		Supported but not significant

Note: **** indicates a p-value less than 0.001.

The r-square values indicated that Facebook Advertising explained 81.1% of the variation in Facebook Brand Awareness (r-square = 0.811), while Facebook Brand Awareness explained 74.8% of variation in Facebook Customer Loyalty (r-square =0,748).

Instagram Advertising explained 82.2% of the variation in Instagram Brand Awareness (r-square = 0.822), while Instagram Brand Awareness explained 84.6% of variation in Instagram Customer Loyalty (r-square =0,846).

Twitter Brand Advertising explained 81.9% of the variation in Twitter Brand Awareness (r-square = 0.819), while Twitter Brand Awareness explained 80.5% of variation in Twitter Customer Loyalty (r-square =0,805).

While Facebook Customer Loyalty, Instagram Customer Loyalty, and Twitter Customer Loyalty explained 47.7% of variation in Brand Referrals (r-square = 0.477).

This study showed one that if the p value is less than 0.05 the hypothesis was rejected and if the p value was greater than 0.5 the hypothesis was therefore accepted. The below helps one understand the hypothesis that were rejected and accepted.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H1: Relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness

H0: There is no relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness

H1: There is a relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness

The results presented in Table 21 show that Facebook advertising (β = 0.900, t-value = 14.644, p-value <0.001) has a positive and significant effect on Brand awareness. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Facebook advertising (β = 0.900) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H2 – Relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty

H0: There is no relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty

H2: There is a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty

The results presented in Table 21 show that Facebook brand awareness (β = 0.865, t-value = 12.565, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Facebook brand awareness (β = 0.865) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H3 – Relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness

H0: There is no relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness

H3: There is a relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness

The results presented in Table 21 show that Instagram advertising (β = 0.907, t-value = 19.914, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness. The

relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Instagram advertising (β = 0.907) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H4 – Relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty

H0: There is no relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty

H4: There is a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty

The results presented in Table 21 show that Instagram brand awareness (β = 0.920, t-value = 17.010, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Instagram brand awareness (β = 0.920) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H5 – Relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness

H0: There is no relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness.

H5: There is a relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness.

The results presented in Table 21 show that Twitter advertising (β = 0.905, t-value = 15.930, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on Brand awareness. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Twitter advertising (β = 0.905) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H6 – Relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.

H0: There is no relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.

H6: There is a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.

The results presented in Table 21 show that Twitter brand awareness (β = 0.897, t-value = 14.826, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Twitter brand awareness (β

= 0.897) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H7 – Relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H0: There is no relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H7: There is a relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

The results presented in Table 21 show that Facebook Customer Loyalty (β = 0.097, t-value = 1.506, p-value = 0.132) had a positive but insignificant effect on Brand referrals. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for Facebook Customer Loyalty (β = 0.097) was greater than zero. It was not significant since the p-value was greater than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was not rejected. It is thus concluded that there is no sufficient evidence at 5% significance level to suggest that there is a relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H8 – Relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H0: There is no relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H8: There is a relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

The results presented in Table 21 show that Instagram Customer Loyalty (β = -0.405, t-value = -6.055, p-value < 0.001) had a negative and insignificant effect on Brand referrals. The relationship was negative because standardised coefficient for Instagram Customer Loyalty (β = -0.405) was less than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. It is thus concluded that there is a relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals and the relationship is negative.

Results pertaining to Hypothesis H9 – Relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H0: There is no relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H9: There is a relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

The results presented in Table 21 show that Twitter Customer Loyalty (β = 0.650, t-value = 10.603, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on Brand Referrals. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Twitter Customer Loyalty

($\beta = 0.650$) was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals and the relationship is positive.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the main findings of the study at hand. This study aims to help one understand whether social media advertising has an effect on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector. This section is built on the findings presented above and the findings above are elaborated in further detail to unpack the findings and analyse the hypothesis. The findings above supported the fact that there is a relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness as well as Facebook brand awareness in turn has a relationship with customer loyalty, and Instagram advertising has a relationship with brand awareness and Instagram brand awareness in turn has a relationship with customer loyalty, Twitter, likewise, has a relationship with brand awareness and in turn Twitter brand awareness has a relationship with customer loyalty. However, Facebook and Instagram social advertising does not have a relationship with brand referrals, while Twitter advertising, on the other hand, has a relationship with brand referrals. These findings will be discussed in further detail in the chapter.

5.2 Discussion of the main research problem

The main research problem is to unpack the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector. This study focuses on social media platforms namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This study also touches on the matter of brand referrals and whether social media advertising leads to brand referrals. The hypothesis of this study is, therefore, centred around understanding whether the selected social media platforms namely, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have an effect on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector. The online shopping sector is vast and the brand Sixty60 was selected as the case study since Sixty60 is a popular online shopping application that specialises in groceries (MoneyWeb, 2022).

The literature above suggests that Facebook is an effective tool that is used by advertisers to market their brands and create the utmost brand awareness on the Facebook platform while increasing their reach to millions of potential customers (Hutter et al., 2013). Instagram, on the other hand, is effective in creating interactive brand awareness and Twitter is used to

create brand awareness in a microblogging manner (Datta and Kaushik, 2019). The literature also suggests that these social media platforms that are used to create brand awareness, are also used as a tool to interact and engage with customers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to create a customer relationship since the more the customers feel heard in their needs , the better the brand and customer relationship and the higher the potential to progress into customer loyalty (Baird and Parasnis, 2011). The hypothesis regarding the relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness; Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty; Instagram advertising and brand awareness; Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty; Twitter advertising and brand awareness; Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty were supported. However, the relationship between Facebook Customer loyalty and Instagram customer loyalty in relation to brand referrals were not supported. However, Twitter customer loyalty in relation to brand referrals was supported.

This study along with the literature discussed previously, regarding brand awareness, brand knowledge, brand image and brand equity, allows one to understand the ways in which social media advertising plays a vital role in building brand awareness within customers on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (Baird and Parasnis, 2011). This study also unpacks that customer loyalty is built through customer satisfaction, and customer relationship management and customer satisfaction occur when customers receive engagement from brands in a manner that is well receptive and received by the customer at large on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This study also unpacks how brand referrals are formed through social media; however, this study will discuss how brand referrals on social media was not supported by this study.

Table 23 below summarizes the hypothesis discussed in chapter 4:

Table 23: Hypothesis Summary

Hypothesis	Results
H1 – **Relationship Between Facebook Advertising and Brand Awareness**	This hypothesis was significant and supported
H2 - **Relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty**	This hypothesis was significant and supported
H3 – **Relationship between Instagram advertising and brand awareness**	This hypothesis was significant and supported

H4 - **Relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty**	This hypothesis was significant and supported
H5 - **Relationship between Twitter advertising and brand awareness**	This hypothesis was significant and supported
H6 - **Relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty**	This hypothesis was significant and supported
H7 – **Relationship between Facebook customer loyalty and brand referrals.**	This hypothesis was not significant and not supported
H8 – **Relationship between Instagram customer loyalty and brand referrals.**	This hypothesis was not significant and not supported
H9 – **Relationship between Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals.**	This hypothesis was significant and supported

5.3 Relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness

H0: There is no relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness.
H1: There is a relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness.

The data that was collected which helped determine the results gives one a clear indication that there is indeed a relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness. This can be said as there was a positive relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness in accordance with the survey conducted. The answers given by the respondents revealed that when they see an advert on Facebook, they are inclined towards the brand of products or services that are being advertised; this created a sense of recognition of the product and services offered by the case study brand, Sixty60 (Mariani and Mohammed, 2014). The advertisements on Facebook, therefore, also create a sense of recall value where the customers link their need with the advertisement. The results presented show that Facebook advertising ($\beta = 0.900$, t-value = 14.644, p-value <0.001) has a positive and significant effect on Brand awareness. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Facebook advertising ($\beta = 0.900$) was greater than zero.

A study conducted by Alnsour and Tayeh (2019) helps build the literature that is in line with this study as this research indicates that Facebook advertisements with consistent activity on

the brand page lead to a sense of recognition of the brand within the customer's mind. Therefore, Facebook plays a huge role in gaining the first step towards creating customer interaction between the brand and the customer, where the customer is attracted towards a brand due to the advertisements that they receive on their Facebook feed. This recognition of the brand leads to a sense of brand recall, that further creates a distinction between the customer's needs with the brand being advertised, hence the Facebook advertisement leads to brand awareness (Alnsour and Tayeh, 2019).

A study conducted by (Haque, Momen, Sultana, & Yasmin, 2013) affirms the results of the study at hand and helps one understand that there is indeed a positive relationship between Facebook advertising and brand awareness. The study by (Haque et al., 2013) showed that since Facebook has a high customer base and unique advertising strategies, that allows brands to target customers based on their interests, and brands can create brand awareness within the right target audience. This study also indicated that Facebook creates attraction towards a particular brand when they receive advertisements on Facebook, and this attraction creates recognition and a notion of buzz within the customers that allows brands to successfully create brand awareness within the audience (Haque et al., 2013).

The previous studies together with the results collected by the study conducted at hand with Sixty60 as the main case study also, therefore, indicates that there is indeed a relationship between Facebook and brand awareness. Therefore, **H1:** There is a relationship between Facebook advertising and Brand awareness is supported.

5.4 Relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty

H0: There is no relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty.
H2: There is a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty.

The data that was collected in relation to Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty was carefully analysed in accordance with the critical role of Facebook brand awareness and whether this sense of awareness created on Facebook leads to customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is an extremely critical factor for a brand's identity including the essence of the role of brand knowledge (Ogba and Tan, 2009). The better the knowledge about a particular brand, the more traction is created within the customers mind in relation to the brand. When

customers are aware about a brand and resonate their needs with a brand, the customer loyalty process is initiated (Chiou, Droge, and Hanvanich, 2002). The data that was collected in relation to Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty indicated that there is a positive relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty. In light with the questions presented in the survey, this indicated that there is a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty, therefore brand awareness created on Facebook creates a platform to create customer loyalty within the customers for the case study brand, Sixty60. The results presented show that Facebook brand awareness ($\beta = 0.865$, t-value = 12.565, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Facebook brand awareness ($\beta = 0.865$) was greater than zero.

A study conducted by (Muangmee, 2021) confirms that the utilisation of Facebook marketing by brands encourages brand loyalty and brand and business growth within the brand marketing ecosystem (Muangmee, 2021). This study revealed that Facebook marketing capabilities using strategies that include hybrid Facebook advertising, together with engagement filled content that attracts potential customers through significant interaction baits, creates likes and customer reviews that results in positive brand loyalty and growth within the organisation (Muangmee, 2021). An extensive study conducted by Gamboa and Goncalves (2014) unpacked how Facebook brand awareness and advertising is an extremely important instrument to create customer loyalty. This study largely illustrates that Facebook is a medium through which brands build brand awareness through brand specific content (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014). This content drives engagement. Facebook, therefore, is a platform through which extensive communication can be created between the brand and the customers, and communication strategies together with engagement with the content of a brand leads to customer satisfaction, value, and commitment for the brand (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014). This study, therefore, helps to understand that when communication is received in a positive manner on Facebook when the voice of the customer is heard, customer satisfaction is created. This constant customer satisfaction leads to customer loyalty due to Facebook brand awareness (Gamboa and Goncalves, 2014).

The studies conducted previously, together with the results collected by the study conducted at hand with Sixty60 as the main case study also help one construe that there is a relationship

between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty. Therefore, **H2** – There is a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty, is supported.

5.5 The relationship between Instagram advertising and brand awareness

H0: There is no relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness
H3: There is a relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness

The data that was collected that was centred around Instagram advertising and brand awareness indicated a pivotal analysis towards the study. Instagram is an application that is highly appreciated by the audience and is growing at a fast pace especially in the advertising industry (Huey and Yazdanifard, 2014). A lot of brands advertise their brands on Instagram to get a maximum amount of reach and awareness (Lavoie, 2015). The study at hand indicated that there is a positive relationship between Instagram and brand awareness. The analysis of the survey helped understand that Instagram advertising indeed leads to brand awareness (Lavoie, 2015). It is also vital to note that not only is there a positive relationship between Instagram advertising and brand awareness, but the most popular social media application that the respondents used was Instagram. Therefore, out of Facebook and Twitter, Instagram is used the most by the respondents, and most of the respondents strongly agreed with the section regarding Instagram. In summary, many of the respondents use Instagram and view many advertisements on Instagram that increases their brand knowledge about Sixty60, that further inclines them towards Sixty60 with a positive brand image (Pessala, 2016). Instagram is a platform where the more advertisements the audience see, the better the chances are they will buy products based on the promotions that they see, and customers can also recognise Sixty60 advertisements, and distinguish the services that Sixty60 offers as opposed to the other brands. This shows one that Instagram aids a sense of recall value, that further increases brand awareness. The results show that Instagram advertising ($\beta = 0.907$, t-value = 19.914, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Instagram advertising ($\beta = 0.907$) was greater than zero.

A study conducted by Al-Abdallah, Dandis and Al Haj Eid (2022) clearly indicated that Instagram has a great effect on brands as a whole that transform the way a brands personality is perceived by the customer, as Instagram posts and content by the brand dictates the persona and brand tone that navigates the success rate of a brand on Instagram to their target

audience, this further assist brand management that effectively leads to brand awareness (Al-Abdallah et al., 2022). This study found that there was a strong relationship between Instagram, brand personality and brand awareness as a whole, that further confirms the findings and analysis of the study at hand (Al-Abdallah et al., 2022). The study at hand also indicated that Instagram advertising has a positive relationship with brand awareness in relation to the case study sixty60 as a brand as a whole (Al-Abdallah et al., 2022).

The studies conducted in the past are in line with the data collected regarding Instagram advertising and brand awareness by the study at hand in relation to Sixty60 as a brand. Therefore, **H3**: There is a relationship between Instagram advertising and Brand Awareness is supported.

5.6 Relationship between Instagram Brand Awareness and Customer Loyalty

H0 – There is no relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty.
H4 – There is a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty.

The data that was collected through the process of the survey method helped transcribe the relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty. The data that was collected was analysed and revealed that the relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty is positive. This essentially helps one understand that there is indeed a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty, hence supporting the hypothesis 4, labelled as H4. Instagram is a popular platform that is widely used by brands to build brand awareness through advertisements that promote brand knowledge, insights, and brand image. This holistic brand awareness on Instagram through various Instagram posting techniques, further leads to customer interaction and engagement with the brand (Usman and Navari, 2019). The results show that Instagram brand awareness ($\beta = 0.920$, t-value = 17.010, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Instagram brand awareness ($\beta = 0.920$) was greater than zero.

The survey analysis revealed that when brands interact with customers and answer their queries, the customers feel heard as a customer and that further allows a potential customer to convert into a loyal customer through the positive brand interaction (Cuillierier, 2016).

Engagement plays a huge role in determining loyalty of customers for brands, as engagement builds a sense of loyalty within the customers, and when customer queries are answered, a positive sentiment is created (Zahid, Ali, Samdani and Kamal, 2022). Constant communication together with recurring advertisements creates a notion of customer satisfaction that leads to customer loyalty (Zahid et al., 2022). This also creates a brand recall value as customers remember the brand that engages with them, therefore customer loyalty on Instagram is built through interaction and engagement (Johansson and Eklöf Wallsbeck, 2014).

The previous studies conducted around the topic of Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty is aligned with the hypothesis that was supported in this study. A previous study conducted by Park and Namkung (2022) uncovered that marketing activities by brands on Instagram lead to entertainment, interaction, customisation and lastly, trendiness. The interaction aspect allows brands to build a relationship with the customers, and that allows brands to communicate their brand image, brand positioning, and brand knowledge that further affects the brands image and awareness in the customer's mind. This positive interaction has the potential to lead to the customer's intention on the perceived quality (Park and Namkung, 2022). This type of Instagram brand awareness and interaction has a huge impact on the attitude and behaviour in the customers mind regarding behavioural loyalty within the customers mindset about a particular brand. This study, therefore, revealed that Instagram brand awareness through advertising leads to brand loyalty through successful meaningful interaction between the brand and the customer, in relation to the brand's ideals (Park and Namkung, 2022).

The studies conducted in the past is in line with the data collected regarding Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty by the study at hand in relation to Sixty60 as a brand. Therefore, **H4** – There is a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty is supported.

5.7 The relationship between Twitter advertising and brand awareness

H0: There is no relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness.
H5: There is a relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness.

This survey collected data in a randomised manner to gain responses that are unbiased and random, thus attaining a large spectrum of responses that can help one analyse data that is coherent. The data was analysed, and it was shown that Twitter advertising has a positive relationship with brand awareness. The results presented show that Twitter advertising (β = 0.905, t-value = 15.930, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on Brand awareness. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Twitter advertising (β = 0.905) was greater than zero. This essentially allows one to understand that when brands create advertisements on Twitter consistently, brand awareness is built simultaneously (Soboleva, 2018).

Twitter is a platform that is highly popular and used by many customers in order to gain updates about their preferred brands, as well as indulge in quirky content between brands, since Twitter has a micro blogging nature to it, a lot of information can be grasped by customers within a short space of time, within a few words (Soboleva, 2018). Brands are encouraged to keep their brand awareness techniques short and simple, with visual content that is to the point, hence Twitter is a platform that builds brand awareness in an effective and quick manner (Krüger, Stieglitz and Potthoff, 2012). The survey also revealed that Twitter advertisements have a great effect on brand recall value because the microblogging nature of twitter allows brands to engage with customers through effective content that is concise and easy to recall (Bilgin, 2018). Checkers Sixty60 is active on Twitter and engages with customers in an intriguing and effective manner, with content that is to the point yet has an impact on the audience. Customers could recall the advertisements, and they would go onto the application due to the advertisements that they viewed, and customers could also recognise Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter, leading to a positive brand image and knowledge within the customers. Customers also associated their grocery needs with the advertisements that they saw on Twitter, and this recall value, therefore, aids a positive sentiment towards brand awareness (Hilman, Hanaysha and Ghani, 2017). This is the reason the respondents were in alliance with the understanding that Twitter advertising has a relationship brand awareness.

There have been previous studies that helped one understand that Twitter adverting has a positive impact on brand awareness. A study conducted by (Soboleva, Burton and Khan, 2015) revealed Twitter is an extremely cost-effective way of adverting for brands to create brand awareness because Twitter as a platform is popular and organic followers are seen to

rise when engaging content is posted by brands on Twitter either occasionally or often (Soboleva, Burton and Khan, 2015). Customers prefer content that is highly engaging in nature, and that builds brand awareness. Twitter also entails the feature of creating hashtags, that helps brands reach a lot of people within a short amount of time, and the hashtags also help brands segregate their audience and connect to the right audience. Twitter also entails the feature of retweeting and favouriting tweets; this is a method through which the followers of a brand can create awareness within their follower network to popularise the brand being advertised. Another study conducted by Soboleva (2018) revealed that brands use Twitter to build awareness by building customer networks within the Twitter sphere to build engagement through intriguing content that customers can share and circulate to their networks, creating a sense of customer network chain. It was understood that brands that tweet infrequently, however tweets with promotional content have a better impact on customers on Twitter (Soboleva, Burton and Khan, 2015). Twitter is seen as an effective platform to build brand awareness by previous studies that is indeed aligned with the findings of this study.

The studies conducted in the past is in line with the data collected regarding Twitter advertising and brand awareness by the study at hand in relation to Sixty60 as a brand. Therefore, **H5:** There is a relationship between Twitter advertising and Brand awareness is supported.

5.8 Relationship between Twitter Brand Awareness and Customer Loyalty

H0: There is no relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.
H6: There is a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty.

The survey respondents were asked questions that were centred around whether the brand awareness that is displayed on Twitter through advertisements leads to a sense of customer loyalty, through relentless interactions with the customers and the brand. It was understood that Twitter brand awareness does lead to customer loyalty within the minds of the customers. The data analysed revealed that the results presented show that Twitter Customer Loyalty ($\beta = 0.650$, t-value = 10.603, p-value <0.001) had a positive and significant effect on Brand Referrals. The relationship was positive since the standardised coefficient for of Twitter Customer Loyalty ($\beta = 0.650$) was greater than zero. This essentially helps one

understand that the more the brands spread brand awareness on Twitter, the more customer loyalty is built (Okazaki, Díaz-Martín, Rozano and Menéndez-Benito, 2015). This is due to the fact that, when brands interact with customers on Twitter, the customers feel heard, the more engagement that is conducted on Twitter, a better sense of relationship is built within the customers and the brand (Okazaki et al., 2015). This also adds to the recall value of the brand, where customer associate their needs with the brand that they recall in the time of need (Ravaglia, Brivio and Graffigna, 2015). The survey was specifically in line with the brand Sixty60. Therefore, this study helped one understand that when brands such as Sixty60 engage with customers, the customers tend to remember the services of the brand within their mind frame, and when constant communication is conducted, it derives a better utilisation of Sixty60 as a brand in a better manner (Ravaglia, Brivio and Graffigna, 2015). This is because a sense of recall is built within the customer when they see the brand Sixty60 being advertised, and this recall, when combined with constant communication, leads to satisfaction within the customer that leads to customers aligning their needs with the services of Sixty60 as a brand, that further leads to the sentiments of loyalty (Bilgin, 2018).

There are many previous studies conducted by many reputed scholars that show one through their research that they are in line with the discussion above that support the analysis that there is a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty. A study conducted by Li (2015) revealed that Twitter is one of the most important channels where brands communicate with their customers in this modern era. This study also revealed that Twitter gives customers a sense of assurance when communicating with the brand, as customers feel the safety of communicating directly to the brand that allows them to be heard, where their needs as a customer is met. This sense of assurance on Twitter with brands leads to a sense of customer loyalty. Twitter also has a way of communicating with the audience in a dialogue where the content seems in touch with the real world, rather than promotional content. Another study conducted by Oyalabu (2012) revealed that communication between brands and customers is often interactive and effective due to the concise method of communication and content creation on Twitter. The communication messages shared are seen to be impactful, precise, and simple in manner, and this technique allows customers to understand the communication of the brand rather than seeing the engagement as overbearing to build promotional content (Oyalabu, 2012).

This, therefore, promotes a sense of dialogue within the customer and the brand that adds a human element to the conversation that is conducted in real time. Information and knowledge sharing capabilities are shared between the brand and customers in a way where customers feel heard and in turn the promotional sentiment of the brand is catered to (Oyalabu, 2012). This sense of the customer's needs being fulfilled through interaction leads to a sense recall value within the customers where their needs are linked to the brand that is engagement driven, leading to the sentiment of loyalty within the customers (Oyalabu, 2012).

The studies conducted in the past is in line with the data collected regarding Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty by the study at hand in relation to Sixty60 as a brand. Therefore, **H6:** There is a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty is supported.

5.9 Relationship between Facebook, Instagram, Twitter loyalty and brand referral

H0: There is no relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals
H7: There is a relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H0: There is no relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals
H8: There is a relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

H0: There is no relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals
H9: There is a relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals

This survey lastly collected information regarding brand referrals. The questions were structured around understanding whether social media advertising leads to brand referrals, and if customers who engage with Sixty60 as a brand on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter advertising, have the potential to turn into loyal customers who refer the brand to further potential customers. Although the aforementioned hypothesis—that customers would interact with brands on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter using brand awareness techniques developed by brands like the subject of this study, Sixty60—was confirmed, customer loyalty can still result from brand awareness if the engagement and interaction are perceived as being beneficial to the customer..

Brand awareness is a vital aspect of creating a sense of relativity within the customer and the brand, where the customers understand the brand and resonate with the brand. However, it is vital to have a sense of customer loyalty as the end goal for customers to refer a brand to fellow customers (Singh, 2021). Therefore, this hypothesis tested whether social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter customer loyalty have a relationship with brand referrals. Since social media is a broad spectrum, and this study considers only Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, the hypothesis was divided within three hypotheses. The relationship between Facebook customer loyalty and brand referrals showed a negative relationship, the relationship between Instagram customer loyalty and brand referrals showed a negative relationship and while the relationship between Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals also showed a positive relationship.

Facebook and Instagram showed a negative relationship as customers view brand awareness on social media as beneficial to themselves and can become potential loyal customers when they feel heard as a customer and when positive interaction and engagement is shared by the customer with the brand, this is seen as a personal experience, rather than an experience that they want to share with potential customers (Eisingerich, Chun, Liu, Jia and Bell, 2015). The brand awareness is converted to self-awareness of brands and hence it can be said that brand referrals do not play a role in this sphere of social media advertising in relation to Facebook and Instagram both (Eisingerich et al., 2015).

This is because Facebook and Instagram are platforms where self-reflection and content related to oneself is encouraged rather than sharing brand related content. However, brand related content is absorbed in an efficient manner that leads to brand awareness and customer loyalty within the customer rather than referral capabilities (Eisingerich et al., 2015). Twitter, on the other hand, is highly interactive with its engaging microblogging characteristics, where customers can share their experiences with their followers and fellow customers network about a particular brand through limited characters. This is essentially the process of microblogging, a short amount of information can be shared in a space of time that is grasped by fellow customers (Soboleva, 2018). Twitter also makes the essence of sharing content easy. Customers can retweet a brand's content to their fellow followers to popularise the brand within their follower network (Jansen, Zhang, Sobel and Chowdury, 2009). This goes to show that sharing of information through retweeting and favouriting builds a sharing

sentiment among the network, this, therefore, is a highly convincing way to help recommend brands that accounts for the positive relationship between Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals. Therefore, customers who are loyal to a brand such as Sixty60 will, therefore, refer the brand on Twitter (Jansen et al., 2009).

A study conducted by Xevelonakis (2015) on the topic of advertising and brand referrals indicated that word of mouth is a powerful tool, however, digitally, it is not used by customers while referring brands to other fellow customers and this is not a strategy that is seen as beneficial especially on Facebook; as negative word of mouth is prominent, where customers communicate their negative experiences rather than positive experiences. Therefore, this is not considered to be a referral of the brand as referrals are usually said to be positive (Xevelonakis, 2015). Another study conducted by Chatterjee (2011) confirmed that customers can loosely speak about brands that are seen on Facebook and Instagram, however, this does not lead to an effective brand referral that will translate into a sale, as loosely speaking about a brand is not strong enough to help fellow customers to become paying customers on Facebook and Instagram. It can be said that Facebook and Instagram have an audience that is not the target for brand referrals since the audience is not highly receptive towards sharing branded content, as content that is consumed on Facebook and Instagram is for self-knowledge rather than sharing as brand referrals.

A study conducted by Jaring, Bäck, Komssi and Käki (2015) revealed that Twitter is a platform that is highly used by a number of customers throughout the world, due to the interactive features it entails such as retweeting, favouriting and microblogging. Customers who are loyal to a brand can retweet and share a brand's posts to refer their preferred brand to fellow customers; this study also confirmed that Twitter is vital in accelerating brand growth by growing customer loyalty on Twitter.

Hence, this study together with the previous studies were in line with the thought process that was conceived before conducted this study, it was believed that social media does have an effect on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector, as one was always influenced by the adverts that were seen on social media. This study therefore was in line with the hypothesis that were revealed. It is also believed that Facebook and Instagram are more influential in this day and age than Twitter. Therefore the hypothesis confirmed that,

H0: There is no relationship between Facebook Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals is supported,
H0: There is no relationship between Instagram Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals is supported, **H9:** There is a relationship between Twitter Customer Loyalty and Brand Referrals is supported.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter analysed the results of the study that were based on the analysis conducted in Chapter four. This chapter helped one understand the hypotheses projected and discussed which hypothesis is supported and which hypothesis is not supported. This chapter also highlighted the studies conducted by previous scholars to validate the results in the study. This chapter, therefore, concluded that there is a relationship between Facebook and Brand awareness and furthermore, a relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty. When brands spread awareness on Facebook, the brands are recognised, and this recognition creates a sense of interaction that leads to loyalty within the customers.

This chapter also concluded that there is a relationship between Instagram and brand awareness and further there is also a relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty. This is because brands use Instagram to popularise their brands through the unique brand marketing features that Instagram entails and the target market of Instagram is seen to be engaging and interactive. This interactive and engaging nature helps customers build a connection and loyalty with the brand.

This study also concluded that there is a relationship between Twitter and brand awareness and furthermore, a relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty. This is because Twitter is a microblogging platform that is highly popular within customers and brands. Twitter helps brands connect with customers in a precise manner that builds brand awareness and customer loyalty through a sense of engagement. This study concludes that Twitter customer loyalty has a relationship with brand referrals, however Facebook and Instagram customer loyalty does not have a relationship with brand referrals. This is because Facebook and Instagram are not seen as highly interactive, and the target market are not customers who will share brands with fellow potential customers. The features of Instagram and Facebook are for self-awareness of brands and brands use this to spread awareness,

whereas Twitter has an interface that is highly receptive towards engagement; therefore, brand referrals are a positive possibility. Twitter as a platform allows users to communicate their brand liking through a series of features that Twitter offers such as retweeting and favouriting as well as resharing capabilities, in a microblogging fashion. All the statements above have been validated by scholars in previous papers. This chapter, therefore, has analysed the results in detail.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH PARADIGM

6.1 Introduction

This section of the study helps one understand the conclusive statements that this study entails. The contribution of the study is discussed in detail in the South African context, where one can understand how this study will help one understand the online shopping sphere in South Africa in relation to the relationship brand awareness and customer loyalty have with Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This section also indicates the practical implications of the study and the ways in which this study will contribute to one understanding the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sphere. This section also helps one understand the ways in which this study is limited due to the platforms used, and the geographical sphere. However, the concept of this study is versatile and highly relevant in the marketing sphere and fellow scholars can build on this study in the future, by taking into consideration different social media platforms as well as online shopping, expanding the reach to other geographical locations as well.

6.2 Conclusions of the Study

This study examines the relationship between social media and brand awareness as well as customer loyalty, while also understanding the role of brand referrals. This study directly understands the influence that social media has on the paradigm of brand awareness and customer loyalty in the sphere of online shopping. The study looks at Checkers Sixty60 as a case study, as this is an in line with online shopping platforms as a whole and is highly popular in South Africa and hence is relevant to the study at hand. Online shopping is a highly growing phenomenon in South Africa in the currently ecosystem (Deloitte, 2021). The South African customers have become more tech savvy and prioritise convenience as

opposed to shopping on-site (Deloitte, 2021). This growing spike in the digital sphere of online shopping was the core of the study at hand. This study is relevant to the current atmosphere that the South African customer is shopping in, as a result, it is relevant in relation to the current state of the South African online shopping approach. This study also is centred around social media and the influence that social media has on brand awareness and customer loyalty, as well as the concept of brand referrals. This study examines three main social media platforms namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and unpacks the influence that advertisements on these social media platforms have on brand awareness and how this brand awareness leads to customer loyalty, while also understanding whether social media advertising has a role to play in terms of brand referrals (Bobovnický, 2011).

The literature of this study is rich with insights about the various parameters of brand awareness and branding. This study unpacks literature from previous authors who are well versed in the topic of brand awareness, customer loyalty and brand referrals. It is also centred around branding, and how branding is critical in the world of advertising. The way a brand is constructed on social media through advertising methods is highly reliant on the brand knowledge that the brand is trying to portray, and this knowledge is what is transcribed into the minds of the customer and further sets the brand image and brand tone of the brand through the advertisements of the brand (Monica and BalaÅŸ, 2014). The brand equity is then created, which leads to brand awareness of a brand (Chandon, 2003). On the other hand, when brand awareness is created, interaction is created with the brand and the customer that creates a sense of brand recall. This recall value and interaction have the potential to lead to customer loyalty (Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair and Okumus, 2015). Scholars have outlined that customer loyalty is created through intensive interaction with the customers and engagement with the customer that has the potential to lead to customer satisfaction, and this is created through customer relationship management techniques (Hudson et al., 2016). This therefore has the potential to result in brand referrals, as a customer's sentiment of referring a brand is produced when they are satisfied with a brand of products or services(Julian, 2012).

Scholars who have studied brand awareness in relation to social media advertising, have confirmed that platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter lead to brand awareness, and Facebook and Instagram have a greater impact on brands and their advertising techniques. These techniques have further affected the process of brand awareness in a positive manner (Devi, Kamal, Alyssa, Shafira and Oktavia, 2022). Customers are more

receptive to the advertisements of a brand on Facebook and Instagram, and brand knowledge can be created through these platforms that aid a sense of recall value (Devi et al., 2022). Twitter, on the other hand, creates brand awareness through immense interactive microblogging strategies (Read, Robertson, McQuilken and Ferdous, 2019). This study indeed also confirmed that Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter tend to have an effect on the selected sample size of the study that was in relation to Checkers Sixty60.

A study by Chierici, Del Bosco, Mazzucchelli and Chiacchierini (2019) revealed that social media leads to brand awareness, brand reputation and ultimately customer loyalty also known as brand loyalty. The study also uncovered the understanding that social media advertising is interconnected with the parameters as customers rely on social media for information regarding brands and brand knowledge. The integrated social media management that involves extensive advertising through brand knowledge parameters can lead to brand loyalty through the process of customers gathering brand information (Chierici et al., 2019).

The study concludes that social media application increases brand awareness, this can be said as study has unpacked the fundamentals of brand awareness such as the theory of brand knowledge, brand image and brand equity. These are the three pillars that lead to the structure of brand awareness. This is because brand knowledge is the understanding that customers have towards a brand that builds a sense of recall value and a positive brand knowledge, which leads to a positive brand image, leading to brand equity, that is fundamentally the commercial value of a brand; this put together leads to the fundamentals of brand awareness (Alimen and Guldem Cerit, 2010). Customer loyalty, on the other hand, was discussed by understanding the mindset of a customer and the ways in which positive interaction and engagement leads to a positive perception of a brand; therefore, customer relationship management techniques were discussed to understand how customer loyalty is formed (Ogba and Tan, 2009). This literature review and theoretical knowledge was linked to digital marketing and the influence of social media in terms of how a brand can be marketed through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. These platforms were understood in detail to understand the importance of these three leading platforms in this day and age (Blank and Lutz, 2016). Furthermore, customer loyalty was also understood in relation to brand referrals and customer loyalty is the main aspect that drives customers to refer a brand to their network of potential customers, due to the brand loyalty and brand satisfaction that they entail (Blank and Lutz, 2016).

This study analysed the results through the techniques of SEM, CFA, Validity and relativity test and factor loading. This showed that Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have a positive relationship with brand awareness and customer loyalty. This is because the standardised coefficient was greater than zero. This was a highly vital element to note because the p-value was less than 0.05 in relation to the relationship brand awareness and customer loyalty have on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. On the other hand, the p-value for the brand referrals on Instagram and Facebook was greater than 0.05, this suggested that customer loyalty on Facebook and Instagram does not lead to brand referrals; however, in the case of Twitter, the p-value for Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals was indeed less than 0.05, which clarifies the fact that Twitter customer loyalty does result in brand referrals.

This study therefore states conclusions that are in line with the hypothesis that helps one understand that Hypothesis one states that; The Relationship Between Facebook Advertising and Brand Awareness was supported as when individuals view Facebook advertisements the brand awareness is raised, as customers tend to resonate with brands on social media platforms such as Facebook when the advertisements relates to their needs. Hypothesis two states that; The Relationship between Facebook brand awareness and customer loyalty was supported as brand awareness creates a relationship with the customer that intrigues the customer about the brand and once the brand has been bought by the customer in the form of a product or service, a relationship is built that creates loyalty though continuous interaction through direct and indirect means that is strengthened by customer relationship management. Hypothesis three states that; The Relationship between Instagram advertising and brand awareness was supported this is because Instagram is a platform that creates awareness through posts that are receptive towards the audience, individuals in this day and age learn about brands through social media platforms such as Instagram, that creates a sense of likability towards a brand if a brand has been popularised enough in a manner that is in line with the current trends, this leads to customer interaction. Therefore Hypothesis four states that; The Relationship between Instagram brand awareness and customer loyalty was supported, this is because the more customers interact with brands on Instagram, the better the loyalty is, that is formed as customers get accustomed towards the brand that they resonate with.

Hypothesis five states that; The Relationship between Twitter advertising and brand awareness was supported, this is because customers view advertisements on Twitter through a microblogging fashion that is more receptive as information is grasped and awareness is constructed in an instant manner. That leads to Hypothesis six which states that; The Relationship between Twitter brand awareness and customer loyalty was supported as Twitter is a platform that is precise in the manner of the content that is seen as intriguing and unique that leads to customers interacting with the brand due to the nature of Twitter being a platform where users share their opinions, which further creates customer loyalty if the brand practices customer relationship management.

Hypothesis seven and eight state that; The Relationship between Facebook and Instagram customer loyalty and brand referrals was not supported as customers engage with brands on Facebook and Instagram however they do not refer the brands to others as the brand is consumed for the purposes of the needs of the customers, however on Twitter customers tend to refer a brand to one and other due to the nature of Twitter being engagement and interaction centric, therefore hypothesis nine which states that; The Relationship between Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals was supported

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter tend to have an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty especially in the online shopping sector. Though Facebook and Instagram have a great impact on brand awareness and customer loyalty, the social media advertisements have no impact on brand referral on the platforms, thus social media advertisements do not lead to brand referrals, even though they lead to brand awareness and customer loyalty. However, Twitter customer loyalty was seen to have a relationship with brand referrals. This study, therefore, confirms that social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty and further has an influence on brand referrals in relation to select social media platforms especially in the online shopping sector.

6.3 Practical Implications

The results that were obtained in this study were around the topics of the relationship between social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and their relationship with brand awareness, customer loyalty as well as brand referrals to an extent. The questions that were asked to the respondents in the survey were centred around whether

Facebook leads to brand awareness by syncing the questions around the notion of recall value, how the customers become aware of brands, whether the customers are nudged into using Sixty60 as an application due to the advertisements that they see on social media, as well as how social media affects their purchase instincts due to the brand awareness that is created through constant advertisements on social media. The results were then analysed through SEM, CFA, factor loading, validity and reliability tests. The analysis of the results suggested that social media platforms specifically Facebook, Instagram and Twitter lead to significant and positive brand awareness.

Social media platforms have enabled brands to share their content on social media platforms to build awareness through the use of creating content around brand knowledge that imbibes knowledge about a brand within customers. This brand knowledge is then translated into brand image fundamentals and creates a recall value within the customers, where the needs of the customer is associated with a brand (Cakmak, 2016). The better the brand image in the minds of the customers is, the better the loyalty quotient. Customer loyalty comes into play when brand awareness is created on social media platforms since when customers are aware about a particular brand, there tends to be a sense of interaction, and this interaction and engagement brings about a sense of loyalty with the customers if the brands respond and interact with customers in a manner where they feel heard, and their needs are catered to (Cakmak, 2016). The better the interaction, the better the loyalty (Cakmak, 2016). Loyalty further leads to brand referrals (Ramaseshan, Wirtz and Georgi, 2017). This study, therefore, confirms that social media marketing leads to brand awareness, that further leads to customer loyalty, and this loyalty is translated into brand referrals on Twitter. This study helps one understand that Facebook and Instagram customer loyalty does not lead to brand referrals (Ramaseshan, Wirtz and Georgi, 2017).

This study is extremely significant and relative in this modern era since digital marketing is becoming one of the most important forms of marketing, because it is cost-effective and reaches a large number of potential customers in a short span of time (Aydoğan, 2020). This study takes into consideration three leading social media platforms that are used to market a brand and gain customer loyalty and brand referrals. This study, therefore, has the potential to help brands understand the fact that Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter lead to brand awareness (Blank and Lutz, 2016). However, the content that is shared on social media plays a huge role in building the positive brand awareness that brands aspire to. This study

highlights the importance of creating brand knowledge within the content in a manner that is intriguing to the customer (Ansari, Ansari, Ghori and Kazi, 2019). As the potential customer presently is inquisitive, branded content that is based on selling the brand is not appreciated, but interactive content that builds brand awareness by sharing informative knowledge that is in line with the brand knowledge is vital (Ansari et al., 2019). Customers gain knowledge about brands through social media platforms; therefore, it is vital for brands to be informative about the brand, and the product and services it offers on social media platforms. This brand knowledge builds a positive brand image within the customers mind that builds the brand equity and essentially builds brand awareness (Bilgin, 2018).

This study found that Facebook and Instagram are platforms that are highly vital in building awareness as most of the customers nowadays, look to Facebook and Instagram to gain knowledge about brands, as well as researching about new and upcoming brands. The customers also link their needs to branded advertisements that they see on social media platforms (Sawant, 2012). The more knowledgeable the advertisements are, the better the linking of needs will be. Facebook and Instagram are viewed by customers as a platform that customers use for oneself and to gain self-knowledge and awareness about brands (Sawant, 2012).

Twitter, on the other hand, is utilised by the customers as a platform where customers can interact with the brand, through replying to the brand's content or by Tweeting to the brand. Customers also share the knowledge that they have received from the brand pages through to their networks by using Twitter features such as retweeting and favouriting tweets by the brands; these features allow customers to share branded content (Krüger et al., 2012). Twitter is seen as interactive and engagement driven between the brand and the customer, where awareness is built through interchange of information, whereas Facebook and Instagram are platforms where customers consume brand knowledge and branded content into their daily lives to solve a need that the customer may have (Soboleva, 2018).

Through the analysis above, brands can use this study to understand each platform, and how the brands can use these platforms to gain the best results for their brand visions and missions. This study uses Sixty60 as a case study, however the knowledge from this study can be applied to any brand that is using digital marketing to popularise their brand through brand awareness, as every brand is need of brand awareness through these platforms. This

study will help brands understand how brand knowledge can help build a positive brand image using social media platforms (Aydoğan, 2020).

It is important to note that Facebook and Instagram were platforms that were used the most, however advertisements were mostly seen on Facebook. Hence, determining that brand awareness is built on Facebook and Instagram mostly, and Twitter is seen as interactive is vital to understand (Martínez and Del Bosque, 2013). This study also helps one understand that customer loyalty is generated through interaction and engagement with the customers. It was revealed that when brands respond to customer queries on social media platforms, they feel significant as a customer, and this leads to customer satisfaction that further leads to customer loyalty (Hutter et al., 2013). Customers tend to remember the brands that directly engage with them to social media platform, which further leads to a recall value that helps customers associate brands with their needs. It was also understood that customers repeatedly use brands that interact with them due to the relationship that is built that leads to customer loyalty (Cuillierier, 2016).

This study can, therefore, help brands understand the power that interacting with customers has within the mind of the customer, therefore brands can use this study to build customer interaction tactics that will help brands create customer loyalty. This study will help brands understand that interacting with customers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter is vital to creating a good brand image. This study also helps marketing executives understand that brand referrals are not prominent on Facebook and Instagram, however customer loyalty on Twitter does lead to brand referrals. This study, therefore, shows that Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have a positive relationship with brand awareness and customer loyalty as the standardised coefficient was greater than zero. It was significant since the p-value was less than 0.05. On the other hand, the p-value for the brand referrals on Instagram and Facebook was greater than 0.05, suggesting that customer loyalty on Facebook and Instagram does not lead to brand referrals, however the p-value for Twitter customer loyalty and brand referrals was less than 0.05 suggesting that Twitter customer loyalty leads to brand referrals.

This study reveals that Facebook, Instagram together with Twitter is used to build brand awareness, and interaction on all three platforms, especially Twitter is vital. This study also helps brands understand that building brand awareness on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter is interlinked with gaining customer loyalty, and that has the potential to lead to brand referrals.

This is because brand awareness leads to customers gaining knowledge about the brand that leads to interaction, and the quality of interaction determines the brand loyalty that further leads to brand referrals (Alimen and Guldem Cerit, 2010). This study will also help brands understand that customer loyalty on Twitter leads to brand referrals due to the interactive microblogging nature of the platform, whereas Facebook and Instagram do not lead to brand referrals, rather to better brand awareness and customer loyalty. This study confirms that social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty, as well as on brand referrals on select platforms.

This study also highlights possible recommendations to brands, and brand marketing managers to strengthen their social media marketing presence to create brand awareness and customer loyalty that further has the potential to lead to brand referrals. This study therefore gives brands and brand managers a confirmation that social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty especially in the online shopping sector, while customer loyalty on social media leads to brand referrals on select platforms such as Twitter. Social media, therefore, has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty.

6.6 Limitations of the study

This study was holistic in terms of understanding the online shopping spectrum in relation to the Sixty60 grocery application. However, this study was limited to sending out the survey to Sixty60 followers on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, since these individuals were avid users of Sixty60. The Wits University network was also used to obtain this information. The data was collected in a random manner to have a fair sense of analysis. This study was also limited to the geographical location on South Africa as Sixty60 online delivery is present only in South Africa. Therefore, this study was only limited to the followers of Sixty60 and the Wits university network in South Africa, whereas the online shopping sphere is large and has various and different parameters from different geographical locations, that still should be uncovered. This study was also limited to the followers of Sixty60 only on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This also was also limited to the research analysis on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter as the social media platforms that were analysed. There are various social media platforms such as LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube that were not analysed in the study at hand. The sampling

method was the convenience sampling method as well as a self-administered questionnaire, where the survey questions were based on a multiple-choice method. This restricted the respondents to expand on their views on certain aspects of the questionnaire. As the survey was self-administered, there are chances that acute honesty was lacking while answering the questions. Therefore, there is a large scope for future research on this research topic.

6.6 Future research and Recommendations

There is immense scope for further research with the study at hand, as this research topic offers a variety of concepts that can be uncovered. This research focused on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; other research topics can cover other social media platforms such as LinkedIn, YouTube and TikTok. There should be research around TikTok especially, as it is a growing social media platform that is gaining popularity at an exponential pace (Gesmundo, Jordan, Meridor, Muyot, Castano, and Bandojo, 2022). This research also looks at the fundamentals of brand image, brand knowledge, branding and brand equity and brand awareness; further research can expand on this topic in detail by researching on how brands can improve their branding techniques through branded content, and how content creation matters while creating brand awareness on social media.

A study that focuses on content creation through the lenses of brand awareness and branding can help brand managers understand the type of content that the audience resonates with on social media, this can thus help advertisers with their advertising campaigns (Ansari et al., 2019). The study also focused on customer loyalty and customer relationship management techniques. Further research can focus on the ways in which customer relationships should be enhanced and what techniques can be used to enhance relationships between the brand and the customers. This will help advertisers facilitate the conversations that they can engage with the customers. This study focused on customer loyalty, however future studies can focus on community management on social media, that entails information regarding how brands can engage with customers to gain more sales through conversations that are friendly yet convincing.

This will also entail the ways in which customer queries can be handled. The theory behind these further studies would therefore entail the parameters of customer behaviour studies and theories (Henry, 1991). These further research topics can be centred around online shopping

as well, however, the industry can be different as well, since each brand belongs to a different industry, and customer behaviour, branding techniques and content creation differs from one industry to another because customers consume different brands in a different manner (Henry, 1991). This study focused on the grocery sector in relation to online shopping, whereas further studies can focus on different industries such as the beauty industry, the clothing industry, the appliance industry et cetera. The future studies can also be located on South Africa or any part of the world with different respondents that have the potential to be diverse and high in population in relation to the industry that is being focused on.

6.7 Conclusions

This chapter discussed the ways in which this study can contribute to further studies in the future, by helping one understand the scope of this study in the digital marketing and online shopping industry. This study specifically took into consideration Checkers Sixty60 as the case study. This study helped one uncover the contribution to the study by explaining the fundamental concepts of brand awareness and customer loyalty and how it can indeed be applied to different industries as the concept and content of the study is wide and high relevant for many sectors, not only will this study contribute to different sectors, but this study can also be conducted in many different geographical spheres in order to get a larger perspective with the study at hand.

This study was limited to South Africa as well as to the Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook followers of Sixty60, however if the study is broadened to a greater population, a greater perspective can be gained. This study concluded that Facebook and brand awareness have a relationship with one another, and in turn Facebook brand awareness has a relationship with customer loyalty; while also proving that Instagram and brand awareness have a relationship with one and other, and in turn Instagram brand awareness has a relationship with customer loyalty; as well as Twitter and brand awareness have a relationship with one and other, and in turn Twitter brand awareness has a relationship with customer loyalty. It was also understood that Facebook and Instagram do not have a relationship with brand referrals, however Twitter as platforms has a relationship with brand referrals. This, therefore, goes to show that social media has an influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the online shopping sector, while select social media platforms have an influence on brand referrals in the online shopping sector, through the Sixty60 case study.

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Appendix A

Research Cover Letter

Good day,

I am Srishti Sumani, I am a Wits Business School Masters Candidate. I am currently conducting a research on Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness and its effect on online shopping customer loyalty. This research essentially aims to study whether social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have a lasting influence on brand awareness and customer loyalty as a whole. The main research problem is examining the influence of social media on brand awareness and customer loyalty in the E-commerce sector.

This study focuses on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter due to the fact that Sixty60 is widely advertised on these platforms. This study focuses on the relationship between social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and their relationship with brand awareness that translates into customer loyalty.

Thank you so much for taking the time to respond to the survey questions below.

Sincerely,

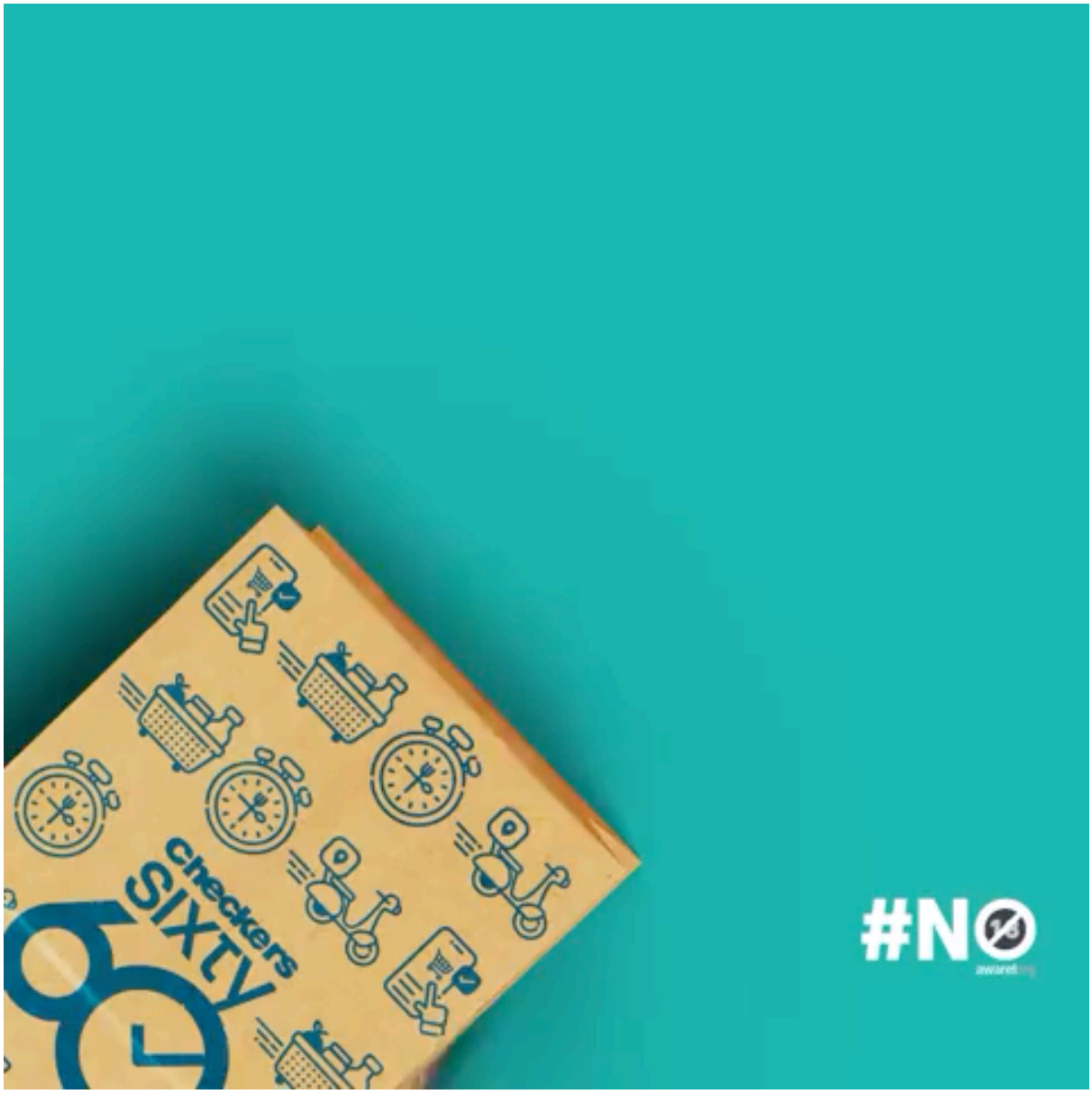
Srishti Sumani

Appendix B:

Questionnaire

Section A				
1. What is your age	○ 18 - 25	○ 25 - 35	○ 35 - 45	○ 45+
2. What is your education Level?	○ Bachelor's Degree	○ Honours Degree	○ Master's degree	○ PHD
3. Are you active on Social Media?	○ Strongly Agree	○ Agree	○ Disagree	○ Strongly Disagree
4. Which Social media applications do you use the most?	○ Facebook	○ Instagram	○ Twitter	○ Other
5. Which social media application do you see the most ads on?	○ Facebook	○ Instagram	○ Twitter	○ Other
6. When you think of online grocery shopping, which brand comes to your mind first?	○ Sixty60	○ Zulzi	○ Takealot	○ Other

Advertisement 1 : Please click the image below to play the video or click on the link provided



Source: https://web.facebook.com/CheckersSixty60App/videos/696228474817761/

Section B	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
7. Facebook is an important part of my social media routine	○	○	○	○	○
8. I became aware of Sixty60 through Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
9. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
10. I would go onto the application due to the Facebook advertisements I saw	○	○	○	○	○
11. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
12. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
13. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook from other grocery shopping applications	○	○	○	○	○
14. I can recognise the distinct characteristics	○	○	○	○	○

of Sixty60 through Facebook					
15. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see a Sixty60 advertisements on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
16. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Facebook when I am in need of groceries	○	○	○	○	○
17. I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Facebook advertisements I see	○	○	○	○	○
18. Awareness through Facebook has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○
19. I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
20. Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
21. I associate Sixty60 with my	○	○	○	○	○

grocery needs due to the Facebook advertisements I see					

Advertisement 2:: Please click the image below to play the video or click on the link provided

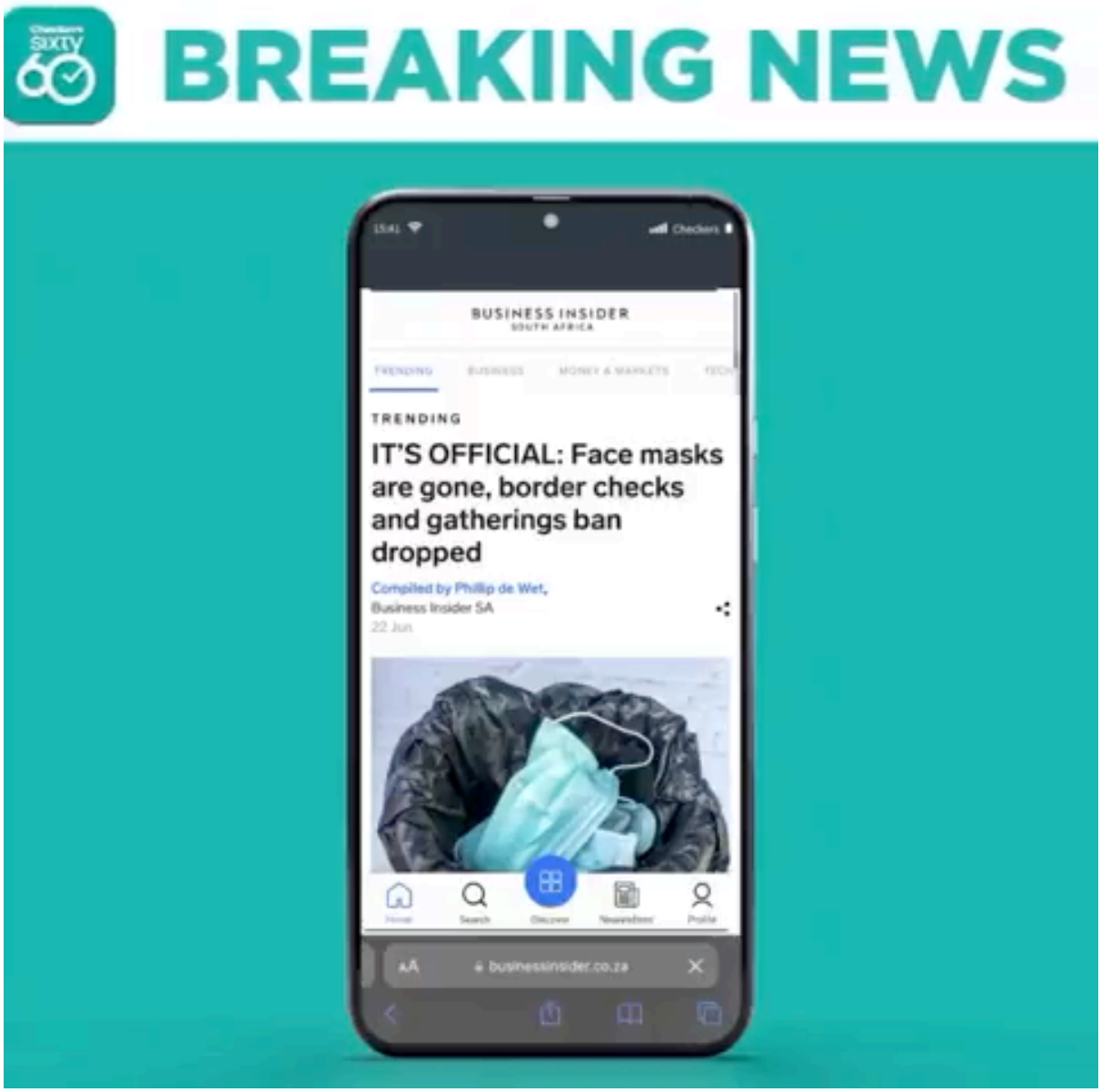


Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2RMUD74zjY

Section C	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
22. I engage with brands on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
23. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
24. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Facebook, the more inclined I am to use the services	○	○	○	○	○
25. I remember the brands that engage with me on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
26. When my queries are answered on Facebook I am a satisfied customer	○	○	○	○	○
27. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○

28. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
29. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Facebook allows me to be a loyal customer	○	○	○	○	○
30. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Facebook will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○
31. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Facebook due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○

Advertisement 3: Please click the image below to play the video or click on the



Section D	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
32. Instagram is an important part of my social media routine	○	○	○	○	○
33. I became aware of Sixty60 through Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
34. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
35. I would go onto the application due to the Instagram advertisements I saw	○	○	○	○	○
36. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
37. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
38. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram from other grocery shopping applications	○	○	○	○	○

39. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
40. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see a Sixty60 advertisements on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
41. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Instagram when I am in need of groceries	○	○	○	○	○
42. I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Instagram advertisements I see	○	○	○	○	○
43. Awareness through Instagram has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○
44. I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○

45. Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
46. I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Instagram advertisements I see	○	○	○	○	○

Advertisement 4: Please see image provided below



Section E	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
47. I engage with brands on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
48. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
49. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Instagram, the more inclined I am to use the services	○	○	○	○	○
50. I remember the brands that engage with me on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
51. When my queries are answered on Instagram I am a satisfied customer	○	○	○	○	○
52. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○

53. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
54. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Instagram allows me to be a loyal customer	○	○	○	○	○
55. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Instagram will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○
56. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Instagram due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○

Advertisement 4: Please see image provided below



Section F	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
57. Twitter is an important part of my social media routine	○	○	○	○	○
58. I became aware of Sixty60 through Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
59. I recall seeing Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
60. I would go onto the application due to the Twitter advertisements I saw	○	○	○	○	○
61. I am more likely to purchase groceries on Sixty60 based on the promotional advertisements I see on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
62. I can recognise Sixty60 advertisements when I see it on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
63. I can distinguish Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter from other grocery shopping applications	○	○	○	○	○

64. I can recognise the distinct characteristics of Sixty60 through Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
65. I can easily recall the services provided by Sixty60 when I see Sixty60 advertisements on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
66. I can recall Sixty60 advertisements from Twitter when I am in need of groceries	○	○	○	○	○
67. I have gained brand knowledge about Sixty60 due to the Twitter advertisements I see	○	○	○	○	○
68. Awareness through Twitter has helped me have a positive brand image about Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○
69. I can recall Sixty60 as a brand better than the competitors due to the advertisements I see on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○

70. Sixty60 is my favourable brand choice due to the advertisements I see on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
70. I associate Sixty60 with my grocery needs due to the Twitter advertisements I see	○	○	○	○	○

Advertisement 5: Please see image provided below



Section G	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
71. I engage with brands on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
72. I engage with Sixty60 better based on the advertisements that I receive through Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
73. The more advertisements I see about Sixty60 on Twitter, the more inclined I am to use the services	○	○	○	○	○
74. I remember the brands that engage with me on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
75. When my queries are answered on Twitter I am a satisfied customer	○	○	○	○	○
76. I will utilize Sixty60 services repeatedly based on the communication and advertisements I receive from Sixty60 on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
77. I feel heard as a customer when my opinions and queries are responded to on Twitter	○	○	○	○	○

78. Constant communication and engagement from Sixty60 on Twitter allows me to be a loyal customer	○	○	○	○	○
79. Constant communication with recurring advertisements on Twitter will make me a loyal customer to Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○
80. I will be open to trying new promotions that Sixty60 advertises on Twitter due to the loyalty that I have for Sixty60	○	○	○	○	○

Section H	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
81. I will refer Sixty60 to my friends and family due to the advertisements I see on social media	○	○	○	○	○
82. I will refer Sixty60 to my friends and family due to the brand awareness created on social media	○	○	○	○	○
83. Seeing promotional content on social media allows me to be a loyal customer to Sixty60 that further makes me refer Sixty60 to my family and friends	○	○	○	○	○