

Engaging with Brands: The Influence of Dispositional and Situational Brand Engagement on Customer Advocacy

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INTRODUCTION

Firms have become increasingly interested in engaging customers with their products and services (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Driven by research on understanding such customer engagement and its impact on outcomes beyond purchasing, such as word-of-mouth (Van Doorn et al. 2010; Vargo and Lusch 2004), researchers have recently turned their attention to the processes by which consumers become engaged with brands (Brodie et al. 2011; Hollebeek 2011; Puligadda et al. 2012; Sprott et al. 2009). Furthermore, we are beginning to witness such brand engagement

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processes playing out in practice. Recently, brands such as Coca-Cola, McDonald's, and Red Bull have allocated substantial marketing resources toward their Facebook pages to generate fanfare, leading to more "likes" and positive word-of-mouth (Thompson 2015).

Although the growing body of brand engagement literature has provided a number of theoretical and practical insights, researchers have devoted minimal attention to understanding how various forms of brand engagement influence one another and predict important marketing outcomes, especially outcomes that are non-transactional (i.e., advocating a brand via social media). In particular, prior work has neglected to consider simultaneously the impact of dispositional brand engagement (enduring, individual differences in how consumers engage with brands), along with situational engagement with a brand. In the current research, we address this situation by developing a theoretical framework that relates dispositional brand engagement to engagement with a specific brand.

In particular, we draw from research involving the self-concept and innate brand dispositions, wherein consumers have been shown to incorporate important brands in the self (i.e., brand engagement in the self-concept [BESC]; Sprott et al. 2009) and process product or service information in terms of the brand (vs. attributes; Puligadda et al. 2012). The influence of these dispositional forms of brand engagement is proposed to affect customer advocacy (i.e., word-of-mouth and posting in social media) via cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of situational engagement with a brand (Hollebeek 2011). In addition to research on dispositional and situational brand engagement, the current research also relies upon insights from the co-creation of value with customers that has been shown to lead to post-purchase behaviors.

In terms of contributions, our work expands the field's theoretical understanding of dispositional and situational brand engagement and how each affects important market outcomes that do not necessarily occur at the point of purchase—a topic as yet to be addressed in the literature. Our research also provides insights regarding the differential degree to which cognitive, affective, and behavioral influences mediate the effect of brand engagement dispositions on customer advocacy, an important marketing outcome not yet empirically tested, but theorized in the brand engagement realm. In the remainder of our chapter, we review the relevant customer and brand engagement literatures in order to develop our conceptual model and associated hypotheses. We then present the method and results of a study providing empirical support for the model. Finally, we conclude with discussion of theoretical and managerial implications of our work.

ENGAGEMENT FROM CUSTOMERS TO BRANDS

As with the evolution of brands extending from marketplace differentiators to symbols that can possess human traits (Fournier 1998; Levy 1959), the view of customers by marketers has similarly evolved. In particular, we have seen a major shift in marketing actions that were once product-centric to actions that are becoming increasingly customer-centric (Day and Montgomery 1999; Webster 1992). The idea that customers no longer act as passive recipients in relationships with organizations, but rather are co-creators of value in the exchange process is often referred to as customer engagement (Sashi 2012). As captured by the service-dominant logic paradigm (Vargo and Lusch 2004; Vivek et al. 2012), marketers no longer focus only on the transaction, but rather attend to the development of interactive (rather than unidirectional) experiences (Vargo 2009). It has been suggested that these co-created experiences between customers and firms result in behaviors from engaged customers that extend beyond a purchase, such as positive word-of-mouth or blogging (Van Doorn et al. 2010; Verhoef et al. 2010).

There are two main perspectives regarding customer engagement. One approach views engagement as behavioral in nature. From this perspective, behavior extends beyond the customer-firm transaction and serves as a motivational driver to a broad spectrum of interactions between the customer and the firm (e.g., Jaakkola and Alexander 2014; Van Doorn et al. 2010). A second view of engagement is psychologically based and focused on the interaction between the customer and firm, as reflected by cognitive, emotional, and behavioral states of the customer during the co-creative experience (e.g., Brodie et al. 2011; Calder et al. 2009; Hollebeck 2011).

Brand engagement is an extension of customer engagement. Rather than the interactive experience comprising value co-creation between a customer and a firm, the engagement now occurs between a customer and brand (Solem and Pedersen 2016). Brand engagement can occur with not only just one customer, but also between a brand and its community (Brodie et al. 2013). Two forms of brand engagement (the focus of our research) have been examined in the literature and include both dispositional and situational brand engagement. Dispositional brand engagement represents the enduring individual differences in how consumers engage with multiple (favorite) brands beyond a transaction in a particular consumption setting. We examine two forms of dispositional brand engagement, namely, brand engagement in the self-concept (BESC) and brand schematicity. BESC is the dispositional tendency to define the

self-concept with important brands (Sprott et al. 2009), whereas brand schematicity is the disposition to process incoming product information in terms of the brand (vs. attributes; Puligadda et al. 2012). In contrast, situational brand engagement represents engaging with a specific brand beyond a purchasing context and is comprised of three dimensions: cognitive, affective, and behavioral.

Dispositional Brand Engagement

Research on dispositional brand engagement is grounded in work examining the role of brands within the self (e.g., Escalas and Bettman 2003, 2005; Johnson et al. 2011). Academics have long postulated that possessions can become integrated within a person's self-concept (e.g., James 1890)—an idea that forms the theoretical basis of Belk's (1988) influential treatment of the extended self. Brand research first explored the role of brands in the self-concept by theorizing and measuring self-brand connections (Escalas and Bettman 2003; Escalas 2004; Escalas and Bettman 2005). Building on this work, more recent research has conceptualized and developed measurement tools for enduring individual difference in brand engagement, namely, brand engagement in the self-concept and brand schematicity.

Brand Engagement in the Self-Concept Brand engagement in the self-concept (BESC) is conceptualized as a consumer's general propensity to incorporate important brands in the self-concept (Guèvremont and Grohmann 2016; Sprott et al. 2009). It is important to distinguish BESC and prior research on related branding constructs, such as self-brand connections; while the latter is often restricted to a relationship with a specific brand, BESC is viewed as a generalized tendency for consumers to include multiple brands as part of the self-concept.

The studies reported by Sprott et al. support the basic idea that consumers higher in BESC include their favorite brands as part of their self-concepts which in turn can lead to important reactions to brand-related marketing. In particular, these researchers demonstrated that consumers with a higher tendency to include brands in their self-concepts were able to access favorite (vs. least favorite) brands more easily from memory, recalled a greater quantity of branded products that they owned, and recalled a greater amount of brand names after incidental

exposure. BESC was also shown to influence consumers' attention to favorite brands with overt logos, as well as to brand loyalty (operationalized by time insensitivity for waiting on new products to be offered by their favorite brands). More recently, research involving BESC has shown that consumers, with a stronger tendency to include important brands as part of the self, preferred national as opposed to private label brands (Liu et al. 2016).

Brand Schematicity Brand schematicity represents the degree to which consumers process information regarding a product or service based on the brand itself, rather than the features absent in the brand (Puligadda et al. 2012). Brand schematicity relies heavily on schemas within a consumer's self-concept (Halkias 2015). Schemas are cognitive structures (Higgins 1996) that enable a person to organize incoming information and help search for assimilating information when making sense of information on hand (Marshall 1995). Thus, brand schematicity is informed by Keller's (1993) customer-based brand equity framework and draws from the formation of brand knowledge and the storing of such information in associative memory.

Brand schematicity is regarded as a propensity to process brand information from the consumption environment generally, rather than for a specific brand. In such settings, brand schematic consumers will utilize incoming brand information to make sense of the product or service and then draw from prior information in self-schemas to form evaluations and make purchase decisions. Further, consumers with higher levels of brand schematicity have an innate intent to seek and integrate brand information in their memory. In contrast, brand aschematic consumers rely solely on the attributes of the product or service to make consumption decisions. The studies conducted by Puligadda et al. support the importance of brand information for brand schematic consumers in the context of brand extensions. Specifically, consumers higher in brand schematicity responded more favorably when a brand extension had a brand concept consistent with the parent brand. In contrast, brand aschematics did not show variability in evaluations regardless whether the brand extension was consistent or inconsistent with the parent brand. Recent work has also shown brand schematic consumers processing brand information that is aesthetic in nature (e.g., Apple brand logo that is an object vs. Samsung brand logo that is text). In particular, work by Jeon and Lee (2016)

demonstrated a higher likelihood of brand schematic (vs. aschematic) consumers to purchase a moderate complementarity accessory (i.e., camera strap) from a highly aesthetic brand (i.e., Apple).

Situational Brand Engagement

When customers engage with a specific brand, the interaction has been described as a context-dependent, fluctuating, and iterative state (Hollebeek 2011). We refer to this state as situational brand engagement. Research on this form of engagement has explored the dimensions of interactive engagement between a customer and a particular brand. Similar to customer engagement, the majority of this research has concluded that interacting with a brand is multi-dimensional in nature. In particular, researchers have shown customers to invest cognitive, affective, and behavioral resources during the brand interaction (e.g., Higgins and Scholer 2009; Hollebeek 2011; Hollebeek et al. 2014). Cognitive activity during brand engagement is represented by brand-related elaboration, while affect is viewed as the degree of positive emotion. Situational engagement involving behavior reflects the effort invested while engaging with a brand (Hollebeek et al. 2014). Notably, some have associated the behavioral dimension of brand engagement with non-transactional activity such as positive word-of-mouth and liking on Facebook (Hollebeek 2011). The motivational state of situational brand engagement has been shown to positively influence brand usage intent (Hollebeek et al. 2014) and brand loyalty (Leckie et al. 2016) (Table 12.1).

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

BESC and Situational Brand Engagement

Regarding the effect of BESC on situational engagement with a brand, we draw upon the foundational work by Sprcott et al. (2009) where an individual difference measure of brand engagement (BESC) was developed and based on a cognitive view of the self-concept. Sprcott et al. showed that consumers who are more likely to define themselves through important brands will incorporate such brands as part of their self-concepts. This work builds on the established view that the self can organize and maintain brands as part of the self-schema and associated memory structures (e.g., Keller 1993). Importantly, research finds that the inclusion of important brands within the self-concept can affect consumers' associated evaluations

Table 12.1 Overview of selected brand engagement research contributing to this chapter

<i>Author(s) and year</i>	<i>Research type</i>	<i>Construct</i>	<i>Key content</i>
Hollebeek (2011)	Empirical: Qualitative	Situational brand engagement	Conceptualizes and defines brand engagement with three dimensions (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) during an interaction between a brand and a customer.
Brodie et al. (2013)	Empirical: Qualitative	Situational brand engagement	Reveals the various sub-processes related to brand engagement in an online brand community.
Hollebeek et al. (2014)	Empirical: Quantitative	Situational brand engagement	Develops a brand engagement scale and validates the scale by testing its nomological net in a social media context.
Sprott et al. (2009)	Empirical: Quantitative	BESC	Conceptualizes the individual difference of brand engagement in the self-concept and develops scale. Predictive validity studies are presented.
Guèvremont and Grohmann (2016)	Empirical: Quantitative	BESC	Consumers with higher levels of BESC, when socially excluded, reported greater emotional brand attachment toward an authentic (vs. inauthentic) brand.
Puligadda et al. (2012)	Empirical: Quantitative	Brand Schematicity	Conceptualizes the individual difference of brand schematicity and develops scale. Predictive validity studies are presented.
Halkias (2015)	Conceptual	Brand Schematicity	Reviews brand schema, schema theory, and components of a brand schema.
Jeon and Lee (2016)	Empirical: Quantitative	Brand Schematicity	Brand schematic (vs. aschematic) consumers demonstrated a stronger likelihood to purchase an accessory with moderate complementarity from a high (vs. low) aesthetic brand.

and behaviors (Escalas and Bettman 2003; Markus 1983; Sprott et al. 2009). Thus, we expect that the cognitive nature of BESC will positively relate to cognitive engagement with a particular brand.

In terms of BESC's influence on affective situational engagement with a brand, we once again rely on Sprrott et al.'s (2009) original research and their idea that Ball and Tasaki's (1992) work on attachment to possessions is a related, but distinct, construct from BESC. While BESC is focused on a dispositional tendency to include multiple important brands as part of the self, attachment to possession is focused on one specific object. Despite the cognitive basis of both BESC and possession attachment, attachment theory (which underlies both constructs) also includes an affective dimension, in terms of bonds that are formed with people (Bowlby 2012) and also brands (Thomson et al. 2005). Due to the relationships between possession attachment, BESC, and attachment theory, we believe that affect is an important consideration for BESC. Indeed, recent research has linked BESC and emotional brand attachment. In particular, work by Guèvermont and Grohmann (2016) showed high BESC consumers to report greater emotional brand attachment toward an authentic (vs. inauthentic) brand. Although the affective response from high BESC consumers only emerged when socially excluded, we propose that engagement of important brands in the self is unlikely to be void of affect. For this reason, we expect that BESC should have a positive relationship with consumers' affective engagement with a brand.

Lastly, we address the influence of BESC on behavioral engagement with a particular brand. Previous research has shown that higher BESC consumers have better recall of branded possessions, pay closer attention to incidental exposure to brand logos on others, and report longer willing-to-wait times for future products released by their favorite brands (Sprrott et al. 2009). These results suggest that BESC leads to important behavioral marketing outcomes for consumers; as such, we predict that BESC will have a similar effect on consumers' behavioral engagement with a specific brand. Based on this reasoning, we hypothesize:

H₁ Brand engagement in the self-concept (BESC) is positively associated with the dimensions of situational brand engagement: (a) cognitive, (b) affective, and (c) behavioral.

Brand Schematicity and Situational Brand Engagement

Our second hypothesis considers the influence of brand schematicity on situational engagement with a brand. As previously discussed, brand schematicity primarily draws from research on cognitive schema (Puligadda et al. 2012). Brand schematic consumers have an inclination to process

products/services at the brand (rather than attribute) level. While processing brand information from the marketplace, brand schematic consumers rely on self-schemas to assimilate brand knowledge (i.e., associations and awareness) from prior brand interactions and their current experiences. For example, when consumers engage with a brand in a co-created experience (e.g., participating in user-generated content), they heavily invest their cognitive resources in the relevant brand (i.e., think about the brand). Given the cognitive basis of brand schematicity, we expect this construct to have a positive relationship with the cognitive engagement with a brand.

Further, we also predict that consumers' tendencies to cognitively process brand information (e.g., for a brand that they are engaged with in a co-created experience) will have a positive relationship with behavioral brand engagement. While not necessarily drawn to every brand, a tendency for brand-schematic consumers is to process brand information for a particular brand, which should likely progress to an investment of behavioral resources when engaging with the brand. Finally, due to brand schematicity's heavy reliance upon cognitive self-schema, we do not expect brand schematicity to have an influence on a person's affective engagement with a brand.

Based on the preceding, we hypothesize:

*H*₂ Brand schematicity is positively associated with the (a) cognitive and (b) behavioral dimensions of situational brand engagement, but not with the (c) affective dimension.

Brand Engagement and Customer Advocacy

Our final hypotheses relate to the effect of dispositional brand engagement and the three dimensions of situational brand engagement on customer advocacy. We operationalize customer advocacy as non-transactional behavior benefiting a brand, such as positive word-of-mouth and "Liking" on Facebook (e.g., Van Doorn et al. 2010). Previous research has suggested, but not yet empirically tested, that engagement with a particular brand should positively influence customer advocacy (Hollebeek 2011; Verhoef et al. 2010). We agree with this view, as the context-dependent state of a consumer's encounter with a particular brand should activate cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement with that brand, which will in turn lead to downstream non-transactional behaviors in favor of the brand. Each of the components motivates non-transactional behaviors that will ultimately and positively impact the firm, such as advocating on behalf of the brand to others.

Further, we also propose that dispositional brand engagement will have a positive influence on consumer advocacy given the importance brands play in defining the self-concepts of consumers who have stronger dispositional brand engagement (e.g., those higher in BESC and brand schematicity). Often, consumers are motivated to spread negative word-of-mouth when they are dissatisfied (Blodgett et al. 1993). In contrast, we expect that positive word-of-mouth will occur when consumers consider brands that help to define themselves. In any particular situation, we expect that situational engagement with a specific brand will serve as a mediator of these effects. Based on the preceding reasoning, we hypothesize the following:

H_3 Situational brand engagement along the (a) cognitive, (b) affective, and (c) behavioral dimensions is positively associated with customer advocacy.

H_4 Dispositional brand engagement is positively associated with customer advocacy, with the effect being mediated by situational brand engagement.

METHOD

The objective of the current work was to test the proposed framework in Fig. 12.1 comprised of dispositional brand engagement, situational brand engagement, and customer advocacy. We examined the effect of BESC ($H1_{a-c}$) and brand schematicity ($H2_{a-c}$) on the three dimensions of situational brand engagement (i.e., cognitive, affective, and behavioral). We also explored the relationship between engaging with a brand and customer advocacy ($H3_{a-c}$). In addition, we tested the mediating role of situational brand engagement for the relationship between dispositional brand engagement and customer advocacy (H_4).

Participants

U.S. respondents recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) service completed an online survey in exchange for \$1.00 ($n = 481$; 51.60% female; mean age = 35.18 years; 75.30% Caucasian).

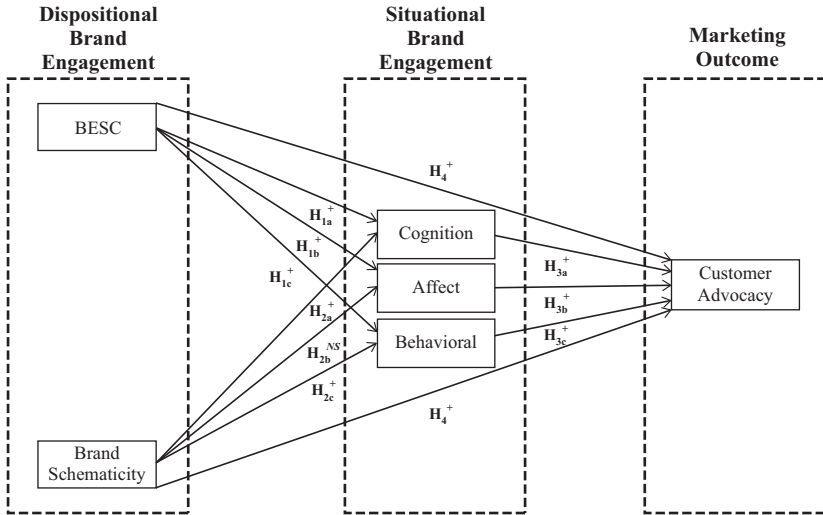


Fig. 12.1 Conceptual model

(Notes: BESC = brand engagement in the self-concept. H4 hypothesizes the positive relationship between the dispositional brand engagement constructs and customer advocacy and this effect being mediated by situational brand engagement with a specific brand)

Procedure

Participants first completed two individual difference measures assessing dispositional brand engagement: BESC (Sprott et al. 2009) and brand schematicity (Puligadda et al. 2012). Each of the brand engagement disposition scales were randomly presented. Next, participants were asked to recall an electronics brand that they often use and input the brand’s name in the survey; participants proceeded to complete the situational brand engagement measure for that brand (Hollebeek et al. 2014). Each of the items of this measure referred to the electronic brand specified by the participant. Lastly, participants completed customer advocacy measures (i.e., positive word-of-mouth and “Like” on Facebook) and concluded the study by completing various demographic measures. All measures were assessed using seven-point scales (see Appendix for items).

RESULTS

Measurement Model and Common Method Variance

Prior to our main analyses, we evaluated the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure the items reflected their appropriate latent constructs (i.e., BESC; brand schematicity; cognitive, affective, and behavioral situational brand engagement; and customer advocacy). The CFA yielded a six-factor model that fit the data well ($\chi^2(390) = 1243.95$, $p < 0.001$; CFI = 0.92; SRMR = 0.04; RMSEA = 0.07), and all factor loadings were substantial (>0.58) and significant (p -values < 0.001).

Following recommendations of Fornell and Larcker (1981), we tested for convergent and discriminant validity. Analyses supported convergent and discriminant validity of our constructs: (a) average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs exceeded the suggested value of 0.50; (b) AVEs exceeded the squared correlation between constructs; and (c) the composite reliabilities for all constructs were adequate (>0.75).

To rule out any significant influence of common method variance, we conducted two tests. First, we ran a Harman's one-factor test (Mossholder et al. 1998). All items from the latent variables were loaded on one-factor in a confirmatory factor analysis model. The one-factor model did not fit the data well ($\chi^2(405) = 4237.53$, $p < 0.001$; CFI = 0.68; SRMR = 0.11; RMSEA = 0.14). Second, we introduced a common-method factor to our six-factor measurement model (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Results of a confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the additional factor accounted for less than 4% of the variance in the indicator variables. Taken together, these ex-post analyses found no evidence for a significant influence of common method variance in our data.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 12.2 shows the means, standard deviations, AVEs, composite reliabilities, and correlations for the model variables. From the correlation matrix, the dispositional brand engagement constructs were positively related to all dimensions of engagement with a brand, which positively related to customer advocacy. As expected, dispositional brand engagement was positively correlated with customer advocacy.

Table 12.2 Correlation matrix and descriptive statistics for the model variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. BESC	1.00					
2. Brand schematicity	0.73**	1.00				
3. SBE – Cognition	0.62**	0.51**	1.00			
4. SBE – Affect	0.59**	0.48**	0.64**	1.00		
5. SBE – Behavioral	0.40**	0.33**	0.49**	0.62**	1.00	
6. Customer advocacy	0.42**	0.30**	0.46**	0.54**	0.50**	1.00
<i>Mean</i>	3.61	3.21	3.76	4.94	5.05	5.16
<i>SD</i>	1.56	1.18	1.60	1.19	1.23	1.39
<i>AVE</i>	0.79	0.54	0.73	0.69	0.69	0.61
Composite reliability	0.97	0.92	0.89	0.90	0.87	0.75

BESC = brand engagement in self-concept, *SBE* = situational brand engagement, *SD* = standard deviation, *AVE* = average variance extracted

** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed); $n = 481$ (listwise deletion)

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis

Our primary analysis consisted of SEM using Stata 14. We also conducted logical follow-up indirect effect tests using Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macros (i.e., Model 4; multiple mediator test using bootstrapped samples). Building from the conceptual model depicted in Fig. 12.1, our estimation focused on customer advocacy regressed on situational brand engagement, which was, in turn, regressed on both dispositional brand engagement variables (i.e., BESC and brand schematicity). We also estimated the direct effects of the brand disposition variables on customer advocacy. Finally, dispositional and situational brand engagement variables were allowed to correlate among one another. The model and standardized path coefficients were estimated with a maximum likelihood estimation and resulted in good fit indices, $\chi^2(392) = 1249.38$, $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.93, SRMR = 0.04, RMSEA = 0.06 (Fig. 12.2).

We first predicted that BESC would be positively related to all three dimensions of situational brand engagement (i.e., cognitive, affective, and behavioral). Our model estimation supported these relationships; thus, $H1_{a-c}$ was supported. It is worth noting that BESC's influence on situational brand engagement was stronger for the cognitive and affective, compared to the behavioral, dimensions. BESC's varying effects on situational engagement suggest that consumers who include brands as part of their self-concepts are more likely to do so by thinking about the brand and how it makes them feel, rather than by using a particular brand. Given

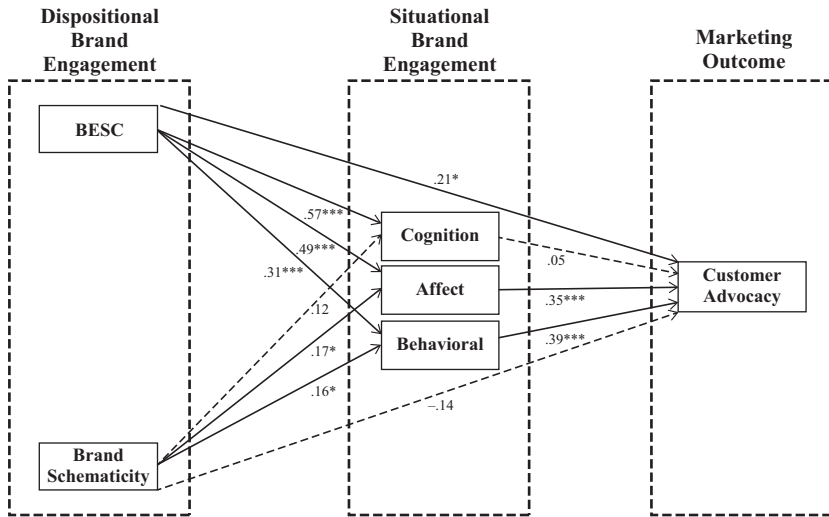


Fig. 12.2 Structural equation model estimation results
 (Notes: * $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.001$; BESC = brand engagement in the self-concept. Model above was estimated using structural equation modeling and parameter estimates are standardized. For brevity, reflective items for constructs are not shown. Dispositional brand engagement constructs were correlated with one another as well as situational brand engagement constructs. Fit indices: $\chi^2 (392) = 1249.38$ ($p < 0.001$); CFI = 0.93; SRMR = 0.04; RMSEA = 0.06)

the cognitive nature of BESC, its positive influence on cognitive engagement with a brand was not overly surprising. The same argument could be made for BESC’s positive influence on behavioral engagement with a particular brand; however, this influence was less based on our data. While dispositional engagement in the form of BESC is primarily anchored in cognitive mechanisms, there is clearly a relationship to affective forms of engagement with a particular brand.

Our second set of hypotheses predicted that brand schematicity would be positively related to the cognitive and behavioral dimensions (H2_{a-b}) of situational brand engagement, but not to the affective dimension (H2_c). We found that brand schematicity had no influence on the cognitive dimension and a modest, positive influence on the behavioral dimension; these results support H2_b, but not H2_a. In addition, results revealed a positive influence on affectively engaging with a brand; thus, H2_c was not

supported. The magnitude of this effect was similar to brand schematicity's positive influence on behaviorally engaging with a brand. The entirety of brand schematicity's theoretical development is generally comprised of a consumer's cognitive processing of brand or product information. Due to the cognitive nature of brand schematicity, we found it surprising that brand schematicity did not have a positive influence on the cognitive component of engaging with a brand, but did have an influence on behavioral and affective engagement.

Overall, both BESC and brand schematicity influenced consumers' affective and behavioral engagement with a brand, with a stronger influence being witnessed regarding the emotional form of engagement. The fact that both BESC and brand schematicity had positive influences on affective engagement with a specific brand suggests that the branded schema (while cognitively based) is not void of emotion. Comparing the strength of effects between brand schematicity and BESC on situational brand engagement, we found BESC to have an overall stronger effect than brand schematicity. Interestingly, BESC also had a positive direct effect on spreading positive word-of-mouth and liking on Facebook, while brand schematicity did not.

The next set of hypotheses (H3_{a-b}) focused on the expected positive relationship between each dimension of situational brand engagement and customer advocacy. As discussed, previous research has suggested that engaging with a brand from cognitive, affective, and behavioral perspectives should have positive effects on outcomes such as positive word-of-mouth and liking on Facebook. However, no prior work has explored these assumptions in an empirical setting. Our results revealed that the affective and behavioral dimensions of engagement with a specific brand lead to customer advocacy, but contrary to expectations, there was no such effect regarding cognitive engagement with the brand. These findings suggest that thinking about a particular brand when engaging with it does not necessarily mean a consumer responds with valuable marketing outcomes (such as customer advocacy). This finding is somewhat unexpected given that engaging with a brand (at cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels) has been assumed to motivate consumers to act favorably toward the brand, not just during a transaction, but before and after as well. However, recent research aligns with our work by suggesting that cognitive brand engagement may not affect brand usage intent and may even negatively influence brand loyalty (Hollebeek et al. 2014; Leckie et al. 2016). These findings and our own research suggest that the influ-

ence of cognitive (compared to affective and behavioral) brand engagement on marketing outcomes may not be as important as originally presumed.

Our last hypothesis (H4) predicted the mediational effect of situational brand engagement regarding the positive influence of dispositional brand engagement on customer advocacy. To test this hypothesis, we conducted two follow-up indirect effect tests using bootstrapped samples. In each model (i.e., multiple mediators; Model 4; Hayes 2013), we tested for the direct effect of dispositional brand engagement on customer advocacy through the dimensions of situational brand engagement. Our first test focused on BESC's direct effect on customer advocacy through all three dimensions. Specifically, our analysis used 5000 bootstrapped samples and revealed 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals that were statistically different from zero (cognitive, 0.006–0.109; affective, 0.075–0.186; behavioral, 0.054–0.126) through three positive indirect effects (cognitive, 0.058; affective, 0.130; behavioral, 0.086). For our second test, we examined for brand schematicity's direct effect on customer advocacy through the affective and behavioral dimensions of engaging with a brand. Our analysis, using 5000 bootstrapped samples, revealed 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals that were statistically different from zero (affective, 0.138–0.279; behavioral, 0.061–0.161) through both tested dimensions for positive indirect effects (affective, 0.204; behavioral, 0.103). These findings support H₄.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

In the past two decades, branding research has focused on understanding how consumers engage with brands in various contexts (e.g., Aaker 1997; Aggarwal 2004; Johnson et al. 2011). Grounded in research on brand relationships (Fournier 1998) and self-brand connections (Escalas 2004), scholars have explored two different forms of brand engagement. At the dispositional level, brand engagement in the self-concept (BESC; Sprott et al. 2009) and brand schematicity (Puligadda et al. 2012) represent enduring individual differences in terms of how consumers engage with a variety of brands. Both forms of brand engagement rely on the cognitive nature of the self. At the brand level, in contrast, direct engagement with a specific brand has also been explored along cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions (e.g., Hollebeck 2011). Such a situational brand engagement represents a motivational state during the brand interaction

that leads to both transactional and non-transactional outcomes positively impacting a brand (Brodie et al. 2011). While both views of brand engagement have received attention in the literature, there has been surprisingly little attention aimed at understanding how these approaches relate to one another and how they may influence consumers' responses to brands.

In the current work we propose that dispositional brand engagement (i.e., BESC and brand schematicity) positively influences cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement with a particular brand, which in turn impacts consumer responses to the brand. Based on our empirical model, we find that BESC has a stronger influence on situational brand engagement than does brand schematicity, and that these effects differ depending upon the nature of engagement with a particular brand. Specifically, BESC has stronger effects on cognitive and affective engagement with a brand, but relatively less influence on behavioral engagement. In contrast, brand schematicity had no impact on cognitive engagement, but similar (yet modest) influences on behavioral engagement, and (unexpectedly) on affective engagement.

Our results also showed BESC, compared to brand schematicity, to have an overall stronger influence on situational brand engagement. In other words, the prevalence of defining one's self-concept with important brands had a stronger effect on how consumers engaged with a specific brand than the tendency to process brand information. In comparison to prior research, we found that affective and behavioral engagement with a specific brand had an equal and positive impact on consumers' advocacy for the brand, but cognitive engagement had no influence. We now turn to the theoretical and practical implications of our findings.

Theoretical Implications

Our research suggests that dispositional forms of brand engagement (BESC and brand schematicity) are influential antecedents of situational brand engagement. To our knowledge, this is the first research that has explored the interplay between these two different types of engagement with a brand. Our work also suggests that dispositional brand engagement influences market outcomes (namely, customer advocacy) in multiple ways—a finding that is consistent with prior research supporting brand engagement as a multi-dimensional construct (Brodie et al. 2011; Calder et al. 2009).

Dispositional Brand Engagement A central finding from the current work relates to dispositional engagement and BESC's positive influence on affective engagement with a specific brand. As previously discussed, BESC's theoretical development draws (at least partially) from attachment to possessions. Research examining possession attachment suggests owned possessions that reflect the owner originate in the self-concept, which by nature is a cognitive structure (Ball and Tasaki 1992). Yet one of attachment theory's main tenets is the emotional development in a relationship—an effect shown to occur in brand relationships (Bowlby 2012; Thomson et al. 2005). Despite our findings not resolving the potential conflicting views of affect in the branded self-concept, our findings at the very least suggest that affect is involved (at least partially) when defining the self-concept with brands. In other words, a consumer's engagement with a particular brand will not be solely based on cognitive processing but also in how the brand makes a person feel.

The impact of dispositional engagement on affective engagement with a specific brand was also supported by brand schematicity. These results also support our assertion that emotions do play a role to a certain degree in the cognitive branded self-concept. Although dispositions toward brand engagement are theoretically derived from the cognitive nature of the self-concept, our findings suggest that the role of affect is not void when the focus is on the brand schema.

Situational Brand Engagement Cognitive engagement was only influenced by BESC (not brand schematicity) and had no influence on customer advocacy for a particular brand. Much of the research on dispositional brand engagement has its theoretical roots in cognition, and thus similar to our finding that BESC influences cognitive brand engagement. For example, Sprott et al. (2009) found BESC to impact memory and attentional processes associated with brands. In contrast, brand schematicity was expected to positively influence cognitive brand engagement, as this disposition helps consumers make sense of incoming product/service information at the brand (not attribute) level.

Overall, our work suggests that the influence of consumers' dispositional brand engagement on marketing outcomes (such as customer advocacy) is more emotional (and behavioral) in nature, versus cognitive. Future research can usefully explore this issue with additional empirical research, perhaps featuring moderators that differentially influence the various forms of brand engagement. In addition, future work should

investigate the role of affect when consumers define their self-concept with brands as well as when processing incoming brand information from the consumption environment.

Managerial Implications

Brand managers are increasingly concerned about how to engage consumers with their firms and brands (Van Doorn et al. 2010; Vivek et al. 2012). Indeed, our work suggests that two different dimensions of engagement should be considered when forming branding strategies at the cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels. To date, brand engagement research has not yet recommended that managers consider dispositional brand engagement while engaging customers with their brands.

Firms should consider the dispositional form and degree of brand engagement regarding their customers. As reviewed earlier, individual differences in brand engagement have been shown to impact a variety of marketing outcomes (Spratt et al. 2009; Puligadda et al. 2012). Yet, it has been unclear how this type of engagement might impact the way consumers engage with a particular brand firm. Our work provides initial empirical evidence for brand managers that dispositional brand engagement is, at the very least, beneficial for understanding how target markets will respond to a brand in the marketplace. For example, if a brand's target market has higher levels of BESC or the proclivity to be brand schematic, then a manager can better position a brand to be differentially engaging from a cognitive, affective, or behavioral standpoint. In order for brand managers to gauge dispositional brand engagement among their customers, applicable items from BESC and brand schematicity scales could be embedded in customer satisfaction surveys. After determining the composition of dispositional brand engagement, managers could then develop brand positioning strategies that appropriately engage their customers from a cognitive, affective, or behavioral perspective.

Our findings indicate that dispositional engagement has differential impact on emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement with a brand. In particular, managers should place more priority on branding strategies that resonate on an emotional and behavioral level for consumers who are predisposed to all types of brands. The apparently unique influence of emotional engagement with a brand suggests that firms should carefully consider strategies that are affect-based. As previously discussed, brand engagement dispositions have primarily been associated with a cognitive

framework due to the nature of the self-concept. Our findings suggest to brand managers that appealing to consumers' emotions is just as important as providing brand information, and, in some cases, may even trump communicating a brand's functional purpose.

APPENDIX: SCALE ITEMS

- 1) **Brand Engagement in the Self-Concept** (Sprott et al. 2009; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)
 - I have a special bond with the brands that I like.
 - I consider my favorite brands to be a part of myself.
 - I often feel a personal connection between my brands and me.
 - Part of me is defined by important brands in my life.
 - I feel as if I have a close personal connection with the brands I most prefer.
 - I can identify with important brands in my life.
 - There are links between the brands that I prefer and how I view myself.
 - My favorite brands are an important indication of who I am.

- 2) **Brand Schematicity** (Puligadda et al. 2012; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)
 - I couldn't care less what brands people around me are using. (R)
 - Product features are more important than brand names in my buying decisions. (R)
 - When I go shopping, I am always scanning the environment for brand names.
 - Brands are not at all important to me. (R)
 - Brand name considerably influences my buying decisions.
 - I like to surround myself with recognizable brand names at home.
 - When I am considering products, the brand name is more important to me than any other information.
 - Brands are important to me because they indicate social status.
 - The brand name is the least important information to me when I am considering a product. (R)
 - I keep abreast of the brands people around me are using.

- 3) **Situational Brand Engagement** (Hollebeck et al. 2014; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

Cognition

- Using “*the brand*” gets me to think about “*the brand*.”
- I think about “*the brand*” a lot when I’m using it.
- Using “*the brand*” stimulates my interest to learn more about “*the brand*.”

Affect

- I feel very positive when I use “*the brand*.”
- Using “*the brand*” makes me happy.
- I feel good when I use “*the brand*.”
- I’m proud to use “*the brand*.”

Behavioral

- I spend a lot of time using “*the brand*”, compared to other electronic brands.
- Whenever I’m using electronic brands, I usually use “*the brand*.”
- “*The brand*” is one of the brands I usually use when I use electronic brands.

- 4) **Customer Advocacy** (1 = extremely unlikely, 7 = extremely likely)

- How likely would you be to “Like” “*the brand*’s” Facebook page?
- Assuming your friend needs to purchase an electronics product, how likely is it that you would recommend that your friend buy from “*the brand*”?

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