

Revisiting the past for informing the future: A bibliometric expedition on social media customer engagement

Abstract

Customer engagement is an important marketing concept, and doubles the importance when it's connected with social media. The companies can easily access and maintain relationships with their customers through social media is an opportunity. The study aimed to present the art of social media customer engagement studies and to find the potential area for future customer engagement studies. The Scopus database was used to extract data for bibliometric analysis. After reviewing all the retrieved data, a total of 498 articles from 2014 to 2023 were chosen for the study. Software tools like R studio, biblioshiny were used for visualize the bibliometric data. Analysis has shown that the field of study is growing well and offering numerous opportunities for future study. This study serves as a valuable resource for researchers, academicians for referring the area of study.

Keywords: social media, customer engagement, consumer engagement, social networking, consumer behavior.

Introduction

The emergence of new technologies and the popularity of social media usage have played a significant role in the evolution of relationship marketing(Lim & Rasul, 2022). Also, with high-speed internet access, customers can access brand-related information quickly (Lim & Rasul, 2022). Now, social media has allowed customers can openly express their opinions, attitudes through comments, likes, shares(Lim & Rasul, 2022). By introducing new digital communication modes such as email messages, blogs, texts, and social networks, individuals and organizations were altered in accordance with the change(URBAN & MAPHATHE, 2021). Social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram provide brands to give customers a virtual experience of reality attheirfingertips (URBAN & MAPHATHE, 2021). New tools such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn also connect sellers with customers to connect with each other and can form interconnected networks(Sashi et al., 2019). Social media is a widely used tool for customer relationships(Lim & Rasul, 2022). Popular social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram are commonly used to engage with their customers (Lim & Rasul, 2022). Face book is particularly emerged as the main channel for customer-brand interactions(Lim & Rasul, 2022). At the same time, social media can make customer engagement more complex because it allows not only the exchange of brands but also the exchange between the customers themselves(Lim & Rasul, 2022). On the other hand, the transformation of customers into active

35 participants can attain by social media itself(Lim & Rasul, 2022). Customer engagement is
36 treated as the relevant concept in the customer management area(Chen et al., 2019).The
37 marketing academicians and practitioners were contribute their interest on customer engagement
38 because of the development of internet and social media communication having a potential for
39 engaging with the customers and building relationships(Sashi et al., 2019). At present, the need
40 and importance of customer engagement is relatively high(Miryam & Antonio, 2022).
41 Entertainment, customization, interaction, trends and perceived risk were treated as the
42 fundamental ingredients of social media marketing for increasing the brand equity (Miryam &
43 Antonio, 2022). As per the previous literature, it is identified that creating an intention for
44 engaging in physical activity on social media through content quality factors and perceived
45 utilities (Miryam & Antonio, 2022). Web 2.0 social media networks can help the seller to satisfy
46 the customer needs more than the traditional media(Sashi et al., 2019). Two way interactions
47 with the potential and existing customers can be done using web 2.0 tools and build a
48 relationship with them.(Sashi et al., 2019). The existing marketing studies have evaluated the
49 connections to customer engagement with other customer related concepts(Lim & Rasul, 2022).
50 Those concepts brings prominent scientific attention which includes commitment, loyalty, trust,
51 involvement, value and brand attachment(Lim & Rasul, 2022). The results obtained from the
52 research studies in this area are relevant for the marketing and branding in which they are
53 allowing the company's to make strategic business decisions having a clear understanding of the
54 chain of customer engagement and its implications.(Lim & Rasul, 2022). Customers may share
55 their experience about the brand with their peers when they get brand information from social
56 media platforms and get familiar with the product and service(Miryam & Antonio, 2022).
57 Marketers were promotes their brands by consumer generated content, it is treated as an
58 advertising tool (URBAN & MAPHATHE, 2021). Nowadays, online influencers are very
59 popular for using brands on social media platforms thus, the brands may create a working
60 relationship to tap into their followers by word of mouth and recommendations(URBAN &
61 MAPHATHE, 2021). Companies are struggling for evaluate the online customers even the
62 cooperation of social media in digital business(Jani & Zakaria, 2021). Getting not only the
63 comments and likes but also about increasing the engagement, it indicates the expansion of
64 audience.(Golab-Andrzejak, 2022). Gaining attention from the customers is important but
65 building a community to maintain that attention and encourage for engagement should give more
66 than that (Riley, 2020). Customer engagement is act as an innovative methodology of
67 implementing corporate social responsibility(Loureiro & Lopes, 2019). Customer interaction and
68 communication are always essential for creating a long term healthy bonds for the
69 companies(Achen, 2017). Thus, the importance of customer and customer engagement is always
70 remains constant.

71 Now a days, businesses, brands and celebrities use social media strategies to connect with their
72 audience. Through social media, groups and individuals may collaborate to produce, distribute
73 and edit material in a dynamic, online setting. The technique of increasing website traffic using
74 social networking sites is known as social media marketing. Social media differs from the

75 traditional media as a marketing tool. It offers quantifiable, meaningful, and helpful information
76 on trends, customer engagement, feedback, public opinion, brand activity and consumer
77 purchasing patterns. It is adaptable, extensive, quick, reasonably priced, increases brand
78 recognition, and enhances customer service. While encouraging their customers and clients to
79 engage conversations on how to enhance or alter their goods, businesses are able to increase
80 traffic to their own websites. While encouraging their customers and clients to conduct
81 conversations about how to enhance or modify their products or services, the organizations are
82 able to increase traffic to their own websites (Humbe, 2012). It highlights how social media
83 platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter have grown to be essential tools for
84 businesses trying to engage and communicate with their clientele (Guha 2021).

85 Social media involvement is crucial for customer relationship management (CRM). For effective
86 CRM, it assists companies in building and maintaining relationships with their customers. social
87 media engagement and CRM performance are closely tied. Information and insights from social
88 media platforms may significantly enhance CRM efforts, allowing them to better cater to the
89 wants and preferences of their clientele. By communicating with customers on social media,
90 businesses may reduce the chance of losing them. Companies that actively participate in
91 conversations and respond to comments can boost customer retention rates and foster loyalty.
92 Social networking is a good way to get feedback and suggestions from customers may help firms
93 enhance their products and offerings (Devita 2024).

94 Customers react more favourably to brand engagement campaigns that are seen as honest,
95 indicating that sincere communication is essential to creating enduring customer connections.
96 Skill-based promotional games, such as advergaming, are more successful than chance-based
97 games at creating favourable sentiments towards a company, suggesting that the kind of
98 engagement activity has a big influence on customer attitude (Mariana 2023)

99 Beyond simple transactions, consumer engagement entails an ongoing effort to build connections
100 that promote brand knowledge and loyalty. It emphasizes that a business and its customers have
101 a continuous relationship that extends beyond simple business dealings. Building relationships is
102 essential to increasing brand recognition and loyalty. Social media's the potential as an effective
103 instrument for strengthening bonds with customers, encouraging brand loyalty, and raising
104 general consumer happiness (Madhupriya 2024).

105 In order to manage commercial connections, client involvement is crucial. Through efficient data
106 analysis and historical examination, it seeks to build solid alliances and improve relationships.
107 The environment of consumer engagement has changed dramatically as a result of digital
108 transformation. These days, technologies like automation, cloud computing, big data analytics
109 and artificial intelligence are essential for increasing customer interactions, efficiency, and
110 customization. Customer experiences are improved by the integration of these technologies. By
111 using automation and artificial intelligence (AI) to analyze massive volumes of client data,
112 businesses may improve workflows and obtain a competitive advantage. An organization may

113 develop individualized marketing campaigns, product suggestions and customized experiences
114 by collecting and analyzing client data. This customization is essential for increasing client
115 engagement and loyalty (Sharma 2024).

116 In marketing research and practice, the customer interaction strategies have drawn a lot of
117 attention. Customers may interact with companies in five different ways through digital
118 platforms: for enjoyment, learning, feedback, work, and conversation (Eigenraam 2018).
119 Different motivational states of consumer brand involvement are associated with these
120 behaviours(Eigenraam, 2018). B2B partnerships, gamification, design thinking, online reviews,
121 and sustainable economies are just a few of the settings where customer engagement ideas are
122 used (Kumar 2019). Customer involvement is becoming more and more important to businesses,
123 especially in developing nations where the service sector is expanding (Desai 2012). The straight
124 adoption of Western best practices may be hampered by contextual variations in developing
125 Asian nations, which might affect consumer interaction strategies (Desai 2012).

126 CE is greatly improved by AIML, BT, and ARVR with the largest favorable correlations shown
127 between AIML and BT. On the other hand, VSO is linked to detrimental effects on CE (Kumar
128 2024). Critical characteristics of the involvement of the client as, the businesses may better
129 predict client wants with the use of social media analytics. Proactively resolve the problems by
130 businesses and enhance the general customer experience, engagement, contentment, and social
131 impact by recognizing trends and patterns in consumer behavior. These factors are very
132 important to create a thorough analytical model that reliably determines the degree of interaction
133 with clients. Businesses will develop trust with their customers as well as clients by employing
134 data-driven insights, which are essential for creating enduring bonds and brand loyalty (Alla
135 2024).

136 The social media engagement can be classified into behavioural, emotional, and cognitive
137 reactions rather than being a single idea. It implies that a range of emotional and psychological
138 elements have a role in customer engagement, which means that marketers should take into
139 account a number of things when planning their social media campaigns. Its cause, methods and
140 outcomes are the components of social media engagement. The researcher and the practitioners
141 may discover and analyze several factors that affect consumer interactions on social media with
142 the help of this organized framework (Salam 2024)

143 By fostering consumer involvement, which requires regular posting schedules, high-quality,
144 pertinent material, and interactive elements like surveys, live videos, and tailored replies. In
145 order to create and preserve a devoted clientele, the marketers should maximize their social
146 media efforts by stressing the importance of responsiveness, authenticity, and smart content
147 development (Ayekpam 2024).

148 The following research questions were addressed for the study:

149 RQ 1: How is the publication pattern of social media customer engagement studies in between
150 2014-2023?

151 RQ 2: Which countries and journals are the most relevant in social media customer engagement
152 studies?

153 RQ 3: What are the current themes and trends of social media customer engagement studies?

154 RQ 4: what are the scope of customer engagement studies in future?

155

156 **Research Methodology**

157 It was decided to review the customer engagement studies published between 2014 and 2023.
158 2014 was chosen as the starting point. So, the study was focused on a decade-long study of social
159 media customer engagement. The search for the study was done in December 2023.

160 Scopus database has a wider coverage and has plenty of indexing criteria for scrutinizing articles,
161 so in this study, the articles were retrieved from the database- Scopus.

162 The search queries are used as (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("social media") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY
163 ("customer engagement") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("consumer engagement")) AND (LIMIT-
164 TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Social Media") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD,"Customer
165 Engagement") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Social Networking (online)") OR
166 LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD," Consumer Engagement") OR LIMIT
167 TO(EXACTKEYWORD, "Consumer Behavior")). The database resulted in 849 articles.

168 These 800 articles are further filtered for“subject area”, which was limited to “Business,
169 Management, Accounting”, “Social Science”, and “Psychology”. The source type and the
170 document type were limited to “Journal” and “Article” respectively. The language was limited to
171 “English”. After applying the filtration process, 498 articles are used for final analysis.

172 Table 1: filtration strategy

173 In the study, (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("social media") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("customer
174 engagement") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("consumer engagement")) are used as primary keywords
175 and found 1208 articles, then after applyingthe following filtration process

Database	Scopus	
Review period	2014-2023	1142
Keywords	“social media”, “customer engagement”, “consumer engagement”, “social	800

	networking”, and “consumer behavior”	
Subject area:	“Business, Management, Accounting”, “Social science”, and “Psychology”	606
Source type	Journal	532
Document type	Article	504
Language	English	498

176

177 The above table shows that the filtration process was used for the study, and at last 498 articles
178 were selected for final analysis. It was analyzed using BiblioShiny of R Studio software

179

180 **Analysis and Results**

181 The present study aimed to find out the publication trends,

182 To do so, bibliometric data of 498 articles published in Scopus between 2014 and 2023 were
183 analyzed using Biblioshiny from R Studio software

184 **Main Information About Data**

Timespan	2014:2023
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	219
Documents	498
Annual Growth Rate %	20.49
Document Average Age	3.9
Average citations per doc	36.97
References	30569
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	711
Author's Keywords (DE)	1358
AUTHORS	
Authors	1265
Authors of single-authored docs	53

AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	57
Co-Authors per Doc	2.99
International co-authorships %	33.73
DOCUMENT TYPES	
Article	498

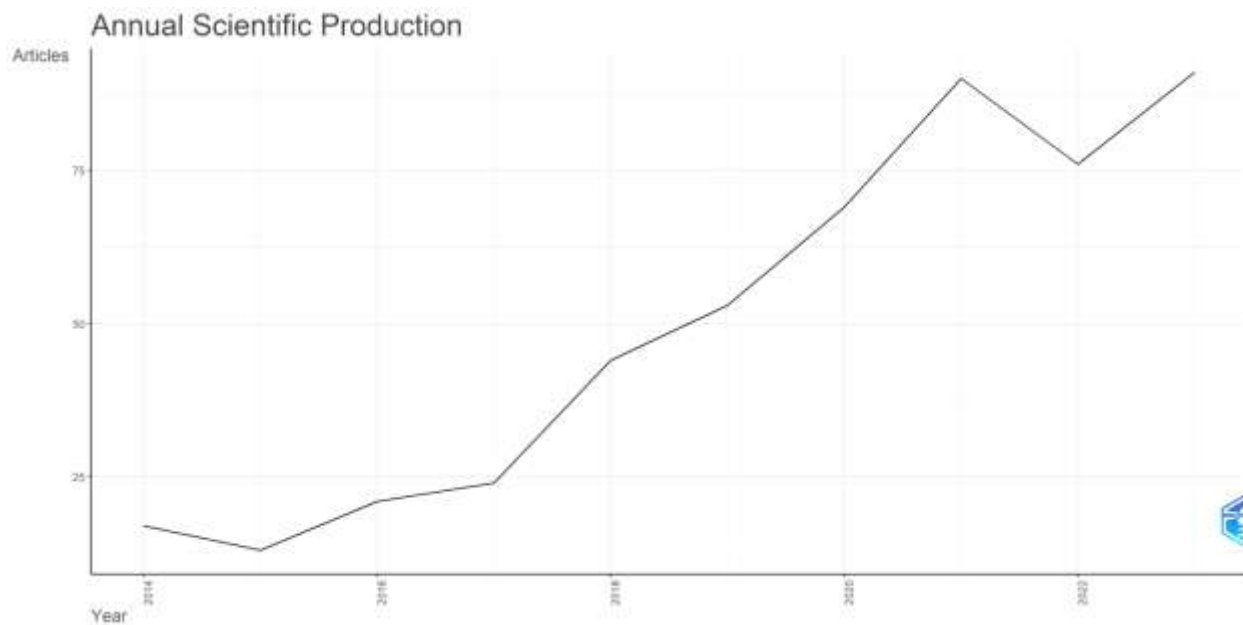
185 *Source: biblioshiny*

186 This is the information extracted from the Biblioshiny application from R Studio software, which
 187 is related to the whole data under study.

188

189 **1.Publication Trend**

190 The publication trend reflects the performance of the social media customer engagement research
 191 field. For this, 498 articles were retrieved from the Scopus database. The results indicate a
 192 growing trend of customer engagement research.



193

194 *Source :biblioshiny*

195 Figure 1 *Publication trend*

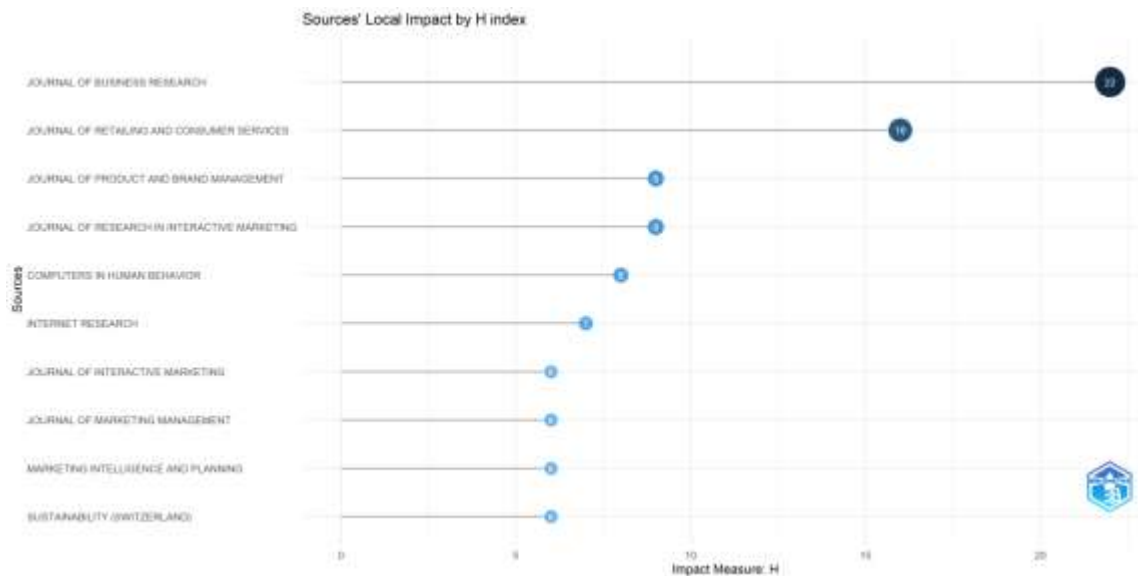
196

197 Here, Figure 1 shows the trend of social media customer engagement research. There is a huge
 198 growth of customer engagement studies in the year 2021, that is, 90 studies. In 2022, there was a
 199 decreasing tendency of customer engagement studies, say 76, and in the year 2023, there is an
 200 upward tendency of 91 studies. That is back to growing. There is a slight downward movement
 201 in the publication of customer engagement studies during 2021-2022, which may have happened
 202 due to the COVID-19 pandemic impact.

203

204 **2. Most relevant articles**

205 A measurement of the cumulative effect and the performance of scholarly output of a journal is h
 206 index. To find a leading journal in a particular field, it is to be noted the quantitative citations. h
 207 index is more relevant to see for this. If h index is said to be 10, which indicates ten papers with
 208 at least 10 citation for each on a journal.



209

210 *Source :biblioshiny*

211 *figure 2 Most relevant articles*

212 The figure 2 shows that top 10 journals having the most h index citation on the social media
 213 customer engagement studies under the bibliometric data. Journal of Business Research having
 214 an h index of 22, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services has 16 h index. Both the Journal of
 215 Product and Brand management and the Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing have 9 h
 216 index each.

217 Under SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), “Journal of Business Research” holds an overall rank of
 218 663, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services has 850th rank. It implied that the studies

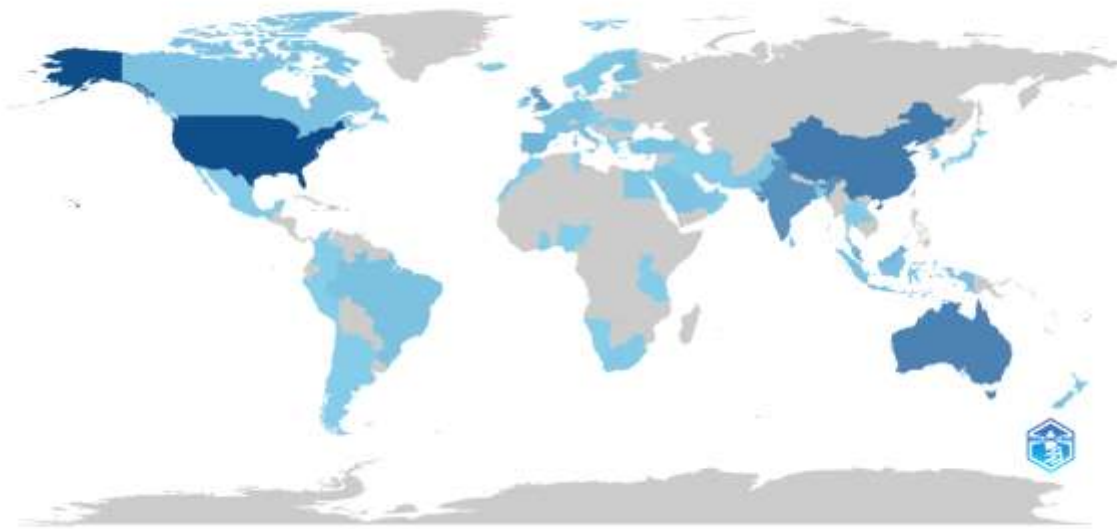
219 related to social media customer engagement were published on noteworthy journals and there is
220 a scope of wider publication related to the studies on better journals in the field.

221

222 **3. Most relevant countries**

223 There are numerous countries which are published papers of social media customer engagement.
224 The darker color indicates more social media customer engagement studies conducted countries
225 and vice versa.

Country Scientific Production



226

227 *Source: biblioshiny*

228 *figure 3 Most relevant countries*

229 The figure 3 shows that social media customer engagement studies were conducted more USA
230 say 250 studies, in china 158 studies were conducted related to the area and Australia has 141
231 studies. There is more scope in the countries such as Finland, South Korea having conducted
232 least studies such as 24, 29 respectively. The filtration process limited to English language
233 studies. Thus, that limitation may also rectify in future studies.

234

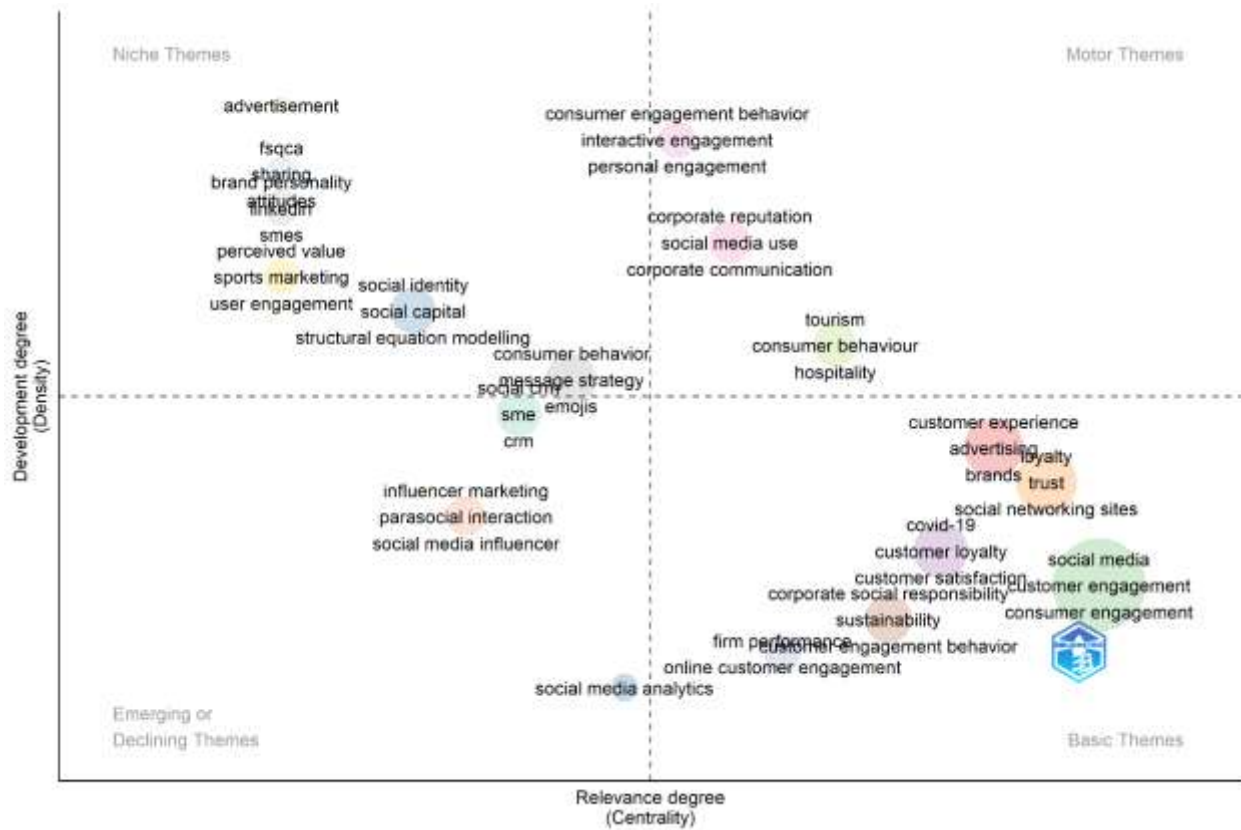
235 **4. Research theme analysis**

236 As given figure shows that thematic map. It was constructed based on the author keywords up to
237 the limit of 150 words and it was mapped into four themes such as, motor themes on the top
238 right, these are represented the future area of opportunity. Niche theme on the left top ,basic

239 theme on the right bottom and the decline theme on the left bottom, which indicates the declining
240 keywords.

241

242



243

244

Source :biblioshiny

245 figure 4: thematic map

246 Figure 4 shows that under motor themes, there are three clusters; cluster 1 includes the scope of
247 keywords such as consumer engagement behavior, interactive engagement, and personal
248 engagement. The second cluster includes corporate reputation, social media use, and corporate
249 communication, and cluster 3 includes tourism, consumer behavior, and hospitality. Motor theme
250 shows the future potential area.

251

252

253 **5. Research trend analysis**

254 **5.1 Word Cloud Analysis**

255 The most frequent research keywords have to be examined using the figure below- world cloud.
256 When the font size of words is seen as bigger has to be considered that the word is used more in
257 the journals.



258

259 *Source: biblioshiny*

260 *Figure 5 word cloud analysis*

261 The most frequent keywords were “social media”(e.g., online networking, digital networking,
262 internet communication, and web-based networking), 127 times used. 55 times used “social
263 networking”(e.g., cyber networking, virtual networking and internet networking) 40 times used
264 the keyword “marketing”(e.g., promotion, advertising, selling, campaigning, retailing and
265 merchandising) and 31 times used the keyword of “consumer behavior”(e.g., consumer choices,
266 buying behavior, customer behavior and purchasing behavior.

267

268 5.2 Tree map analysis



269

270

Source: biblioshiny

271 *Figure 6: Tree map analysis*

272 Figure 6 shows the most frequent bigrams of the research title. It is a figure called a tree map.
273 Among these titles, “social media” was seen in most of the papers (31% of the documents). The
274 second most published research title was customer engagement and consumer engagement (9%
275 documents) and followed by media marketing and media engagement have 3% of the documents.
276 Brand communities, brand engagement, media brand, and social networking composed 2% of the
277 documents

278 Findings and Discussion

279 The present study aimed to state the art of social media customer engagement studies and to find
280 future research by providing a structure to the existing studies related to the area. In order to
281 achieve this objective, a bibliometric analysis of 498 articles on social media customer
282 engagement studies published between 2014 and 2023 in the Scopus database was used.

283 The results indicated an upward movement of growth on social media customer engagement
284 studies.

285 The studies related to social media customer engagement were widely published in the
286 noteworthy journals, and found that there is a scope for publishing in quality journals in the area
287 of study.

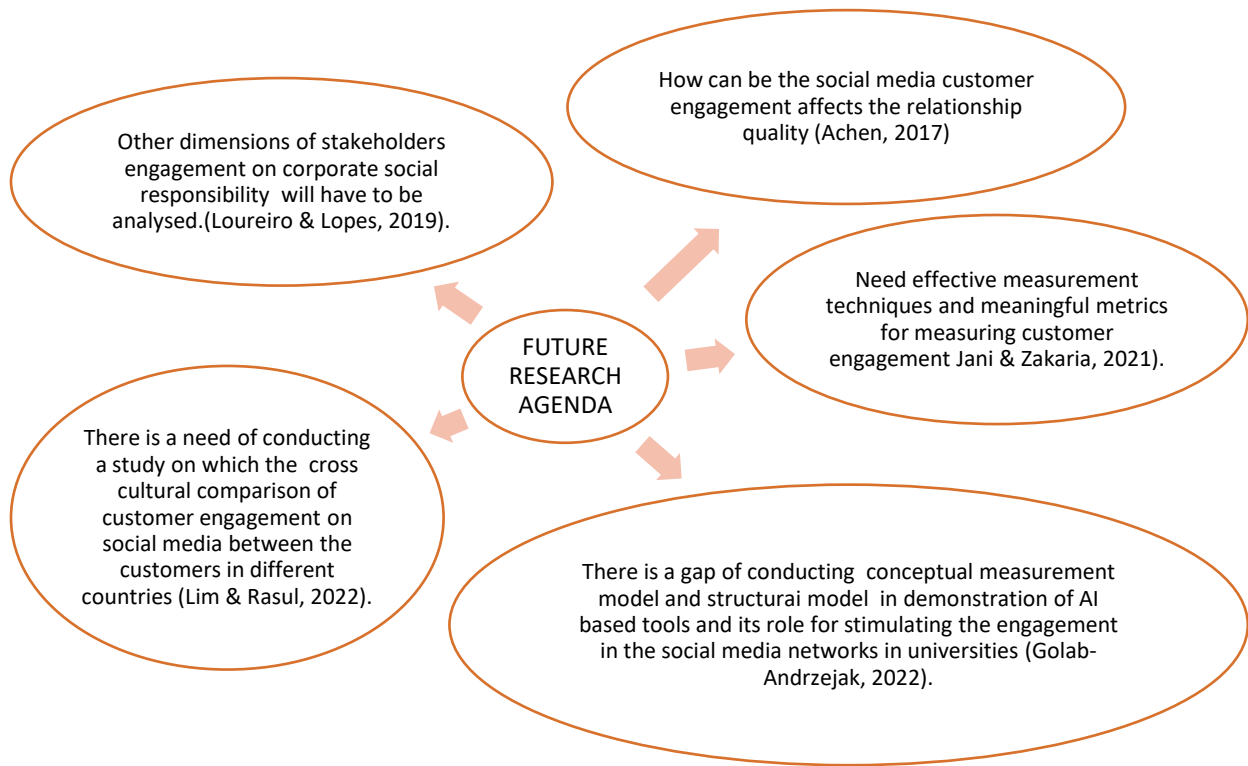
288 The researchers in both developing and developed countries have contributed to the field. Thus,
289 those countries have explored the role of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence,
290 virtual reality, social media, augmented reality, etc. There is a scope of exploring different
291 cultures across different countries; researchers need to explore whether the culture affects
292 customer engagement or not.

293 The frequently used keywords for social media customer engagement studies as per the given
294 data, are social media, social networking, and marketing.

295 The most used words in the title of social media customer engagement studies are social media,
296 customer engagement, consumer engagement, and media engagement.

297 Research theme analysis displayed that the keywords such as consumer engagement behavior,
298 interactive engagement, personal engagement, corporate reputation, social media use, corporate
299 communication, tourism, consumer behavior, and hospitality are the future scope of research
300 keywords.

301 However, the study has several limitations; therefore, the drawbacks of this study can be made
302 an opportunity in future research. Firstly, the data are retrieved only from the Scopus database.
303 There may be a chance of missing papers that have an important contribution to customer
304 engagement may be published on some other database. Also, the study was reviewed only in the
305 form of an article document and preferred only the English language. Also, the present study
306 considered only a decade of studies (2014-2023)



307

308 Conclusion

309 In the present study state of the art of social media customer engagement studies. The study
 310 fulfilled the objectives and gave a direction for future studies. The social media customer
 311 engagement area is currently growing. Nowadays, people can't live without social media and
 312 digital technologies. Thus, companies can access and maintain their customers with the help of
 313 social media. So, they were exploring the benefits and appointing personnel for managing the
 314 company's social media accounts. Therefore, the study related to social media customer
 315 engagement is necessary for future studies.

316

317

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