Practicing Market Orientation for Customer Engagement: The Mediating Effect of Personalization and Multi-Channel Marketing

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine whether an organization can create customer engagement by practicing market orientation, personalization and using multi-channel marketing. The proposed conceptual framework is empirically tested using quantitative data. Survey data were collected from 240 students of both private and public universities in Pakistan. The findings show support that market orientation and personalization do not lead to customer engagement but multi-channel marketing does have a relationship with customer engagement. The proposed mediation of personalization and multi-channel marketing was not empirically supported. The results of this research suggest that firms should practice multi-channel marketing to interact with the target market. Multi-channel marketing is most likely to keep the existing and potential consumers engaged. This study adds value to the literature by providing an explanation of the impact of the two inbound marketing themes; personalization and multi-channel marketing and their consequent relationship with customer engagement.

1. Introduction

Market orientation (MO) has been a topic of interest for many researchers (Chuang, 2016; Uncles, 2011; Harris & Ogbonna, 2001). The significance of market orientation is recognized and acknowledged by both academics and practitioners (Wu, 2017). Matanda and Ndubisi (2009) have studied market orientation in relationship with brand value and economic benefits. There are studies which show support for a relationship between MO and customer loyalty and customer satisfaction (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Im & Workman, 2004), employee commitment and employee

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satisfaction (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). Market orientation comprises competitor orientation, customer-orientation and inter-functional coordination (Narver & Slater, 1990). Customer engagement is seen as a central measure of marketing effectiveness (Ge & Gretzel, 2017). Some researchers conceptualize customer engagement as a mental process (Bowden, 2009) whilst others see it as non-transactional behavior (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Amongst researchers, customer engagement has gained importance as a topic of interest as it has been fruitful in keeping customers involved (Bowden, 2009). Many studies have associated customer engagement with mobile phone applications and digital media, primarily because new and alternative marketing mediums have gained strength relative to traditional marketing initiatives (Guesalaga, 2015; Dovaliene, Masiulyte & Piligrimiene, 2015).

Inbound marketing aims to create memorable content, and markets it through search engine optimization (SEO), blogs, webinars, social media, search engine marketing and email marketing (Capatina, Bleoju, Matos & Vairinhos, 2016). The companies using such forums are practicing inbound marketing. Firms end up practicing multi-channel marketing as a consequence of adapting inbound marketing (Halligan & Shah, 2009; Opreana & Vinerean, 2015). Multi-channel marketing is a phenomenon which is gaining attention (Kumar, 2010) and is known as one of the themes in inbound marketing. It is due to multi-channel marketing that the customers tend to use multiple forums to access, choose, compare and buy things (Hubspot, 2016).

Personalization is considered important for the acceptance and success of digital marketing (Chiu, Kao & Lo, 2010). Often organizations make use of personalized services to serve the needs of consumers (Salvador, 2007). Prior literature has shown that sound understanding of personalization is an important feature for e-commerce and for the brands which rely heavily on digital marketing (Zanker Ricci, Jannach & Terveen, 2010; Chau, Ho, Ho & Yao, 2013). Considering the recent attention of researchers towards personalization, this study has considered it as a theme of inbound marketing (Hubspot, 2016). MO, multi-channel marketing (Payne & Frow, 2005) and personalization (Tam & Ho, 2006) are viewed as predictors of customer engagement.

Unlike prior studies, this research adds considerable value to the existing literature on inbound marketing. It takes into consideration the themes of inbound marketing such as personalization and multichannel marketing, which have not been studied before (Halligan & Shah, 2009;

Steenburgh, Avery & Dahod, 2009). Moreover, inbound marketing themes have not been studied in relation to customer engagement in Pakistani context. This study proposed to address the following research questions:

Q1) Is there a relationship between MO and inbound marketing themes?

Q2) Is there a relationship between inbound marketing themes and customer engagement?

Q3) Is there a relationship between MO and customer engagement?

2. Literature Review

There is an increased need for understanding customer purchasing behavior because customers are no longer passive receivers of the messages that are being sent by brands; instead, they wish to be actively engaged with the brand. This explains why there is a shift from the traditional one-way medium of communications (Thakur, 2016) to more dynamic, interactive communication with customers.

2.1. Customer Engagement

Customer engagement can be explained as "the repeated interactions between consumers and brand that strengthen emotional, psychological or physical investment a customer has in that brand" (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Customer engagement, as highlighted in multiple studies, results in sales growth, and continuous customer involvement and feedback is reported to lead to improved product development (Nambisan & Baron, 2007; Bowden, 2009; Bijmolt et al., 2010). Customer engagement is the customer exhibiting a relationship at the psychological, cognitive and emotional levels with the brands (Patterson, Yu & De Ruyter, 2006). Bowden (2009) explains customer engagement as a cognitive process where the old customers maintain loyalty to the same brand whilst the new customers build their loyalty towards a new brand. Some researchers have rightly identified customer engagement as a "non-transactional behavior" which motivates the customers to demonstrate interest in a brand (Van Doorn et al., 2010).

There are multiple studies that have broken down customer engagement into "cognitive, emotional and behavioral" aspects (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric, & Ilic, 2011; Hollebeek, 2011). Recently Zhang, Guo, Hu and Liu (2016) divided customer engagement into "conscious participation, enthusiasm and social interaction". Thakur (2016) considered customer

engagement to be a result of customer experience having utilitarian, emotional, social and monetary aspects, and understanding these is required to understand its effect on customer loyalty. Customer engagement has also been studied in relation to virtual aspects such as customer interactions on mobile phone applications and social media (Guesalaga, 2015; Dovaliene, Masiulyte & Piligrimiene, 2015; Verhagen, Swen, Feldberg & Merikivi, 2015; Harrigan, Evers, Miles & Daly, 2016). Most of the brands are inclined to build their online platforms which support the customers and keep them engaged (Wagner & Majchrzak, 2006). Das (2003) has identified that these digital platforms help maintain relationships with customers, as well as to provide customer service at a low-cost and are relatively more effective.

This study builds on previous research that emphasizes the significance of the impact of customer engagement on digital media (Harrigan et al., 2016). In this study, customer engagement was treated as a latent construct with 5 dimensions: enthusiasm, attention, absorption, interaction and identification (So, King & Sparks, 2014) (See table 1).

Table 1: Dimensions of Customer Engagement

Dimension	Citation	Definition
Enthusiasm	Vivek (2009)	An individual's strong level of excitement or zeal and interest in a brand.
Attention	Lin, Gregor and Ewing (2008)	Customer's level of focus, consciously or sub-consciously.
Absorption	Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker (2002)	The dimension of absorption can be explained by emphasizing on customer's level of concentration and inclination in a brand.
Interaction	Harrigan et al. (2016)	Customers exchanging the ideas, thoughts and feelings about their experiences with the brands.
Identification	Bagozzi & Dholakia (2006)	Customers tend to relate with some brands over the others. This happens because they tend to relate themselves with these brands, by matching their self-image with the brands.

2.2. *Market Orientation*

The concept of market MO helps brands to be aware of marketplace requirements and to develop its capabilities as per the external

environment that connects with the firm (Morgan, Vorhies & Mason, 2009. A firm's MO can influence the performance of that firm (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Kirca, Jayachandran & Bearden, 2005). Studies have also reported that the firms that are market-oriented benefit in the marketplaces, and employees of these firms also develop positive attitudes towards such firm (Lings, 2004).

Multiple studies have conceptualized MO (Narver & Slater, 1990; Homburg & Pflesser, 2000; Narver, Slater & MacLachlan, 2004). MO has been broken down into competitor orientation, inter-functional coordination and customer orientation (Narver & Slater, 1990) also MO can be operationalized with respect to cultural and behavioral (Homburg & Pflesser, 2000) and can be classified as responsive and proactive (Narver et al., 2004). Responsive MO occurs when the firm dedicates its resources to understanding and fulfilling customer needs, and proactive MO occurs when the firm dedicates its resources to understanding and fulfilling the latent needs of the customers (Chuang, 2016).

Chuang (2016) viewed MO as a phenomenon which can be further broken down into competitor orientation, inter-functional coordination, customer orientation and customers' latent need fulfillment. Competitor orientation occurs when the firm is collecting information on competitor's strategies, and short- and long-term strengths and weaknesses (Ge & Ding, 2005). Similarly, inter-functional coordination occurs when the firm utilizes its intelligence, resources and other information to ensure that all employees work toward a common goal of satisfying the customer (Narver & Slater, 1990). Customer orientation occurs when the firm aims to satisfy the needs of the customer in order to ensure a long-term customer relationship (Balakrishnan. 1996). Latent need fulfillment occurs where the firm attempts to identify the hidden needs of the customer and then fulfills them by devising products or services accordingly (Nasution, Mavondo, Matanda & Ndubisi, 2011).

2.3. *Personalization*

Personalization as a phenomenon began to gain importance because it accommodates the differences between the consumers at the individual level (Macquet & Stanton, 2014). Service personalization is discussed as a "process of using individual's own information to tailor the service and the transactional environment to improve the benefits accruing to them" (Lee & Crange, 2011). Personalization is described as using a customer's information to make the product or service meet customer

needs. However, customers fear that their personal information is at stake which is why some researchers consider personalization a paradox (Lee & Rha, 2016).

Every firm needs a clear understanding of its customers' needs and wants to be able to provide personalized services (Gwinner, Bitner, Brown & Kumar, 2005). Adapting to customer differences is challenging for firms because customer preferences are usually ill-defined (Bettman, Luce & Payne, 1998). To understand customer preferences, firms interact with the consumers themselves (Glushko & Nomorosa, 2013). In these interactions, the concerned firms ask the customers questions regarding their likes and dislikes and infer their probable behavior in a buying situation (Adomavicius & Tuzhilin, 2005).

Personalization has different meanings for different individuals (Fan & Poole, 2006). Bonet (2001) emphasized that personalization is necessary for user satisfaction and that it helps create a personalized touch. Personalization is often confused with customization and is used interchangeably. Sundar and Marathe (2010) distinguished between them by explaining that personalization is system-initiated and customization is user-initiated. One way to further differentiate between them is on the basis of their applications. Personalization is mostly focused on the technological, virtual and internet aspects of marketing (Kwon et al., 2010). However, customization research focuses on tangible products and is now also incorporated in service studies (Wichary et al., 2005).

Kennedy, Goolsby and Arnould (2003) underscored the importance of customer orientation implementation which they view as a dimension of MO. By collecting on-site data using ethnographic collection methods, the researchers concluded that personalization, along with prioritization and empowerment, is necessary to ensure customer orientation. MO is hypothesized to have a significant positive relationship with personalization (Leigh & Marshall, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2003). Therefore, the hypothesis proposed to be tested was (See Figure 1a):

H_1: There is a relationship between MO and personalization.

Tuli, Kohli and Bharadwaj (2007) identify the importance of customer solutions with a customer adaptiveness focus. They concluded that while keeping customers' needs in mind, firms should make use of integration and customization, leaning on a clear understanding of customer requirements. In their research on customer relationship

management, Payne and Frow (2005) identified a value creation process; proposed new frameworks and explored the role of each variable in the framework. According to their view, overall strategy can be divided into business strategy and customer strategy. Customer strategy considers customer choice and characteristics collectively. Customer strategy can be viewed as personalization of customer choice i.e. their likes and dislikes are considered hence leading to the value creation process with the intention of customer acquisition and retention. Customer retention means that during their interactions with the brand they have developed loyalty and chosen to stay engaged with it. Based on prior literature we can infer that personalization has a relationship with customer engagement (Tuli, Kohli & Bharadwaj, 2007; Payne & Frow, 2005; Tam & Ho, 2006). Therefore, the proposed hypothesis was tested (See Figure 1a):

H_2: There is a relationship between personalization and customer engagement.

Rakthin, Calantone and Wang (2016) surveyed 990 marketing and sales managers, testing the direct and indirect relationship of MO with customer acquisition and retention. They reported the impact of MO on customer acquisition and retention as significant and positive. Kirca et al. (2005) in their meta-analysis identified that the most important consequences of MO are perceived quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Market-oriented firms were found to enhance customer loyalty because such firms are well positioned to anticipate customer needs and to offer goods and services to satisfy those needs. If the customers are loyal towards one brand, it means the brand has engaged the customer successfully. MO was found to have significant positive relationship with customer engagement (Kirka et al., 2005; Rakthin et al., 2016). Therefore, the proposed hypothesis was tested (See Figure 1a):

H_3: There is a relationship between MO and customer engagement.

Consumer channel-choice behavior has been previously studied (Wallace, Giese & Johnson, 2004). There is a trend among marketers to approach the customer from different mediums of communications. Today, customers have multiple touch points and while remaining on the go they want to be accessed by companies. Customers are now faced with two decisions whilst shopping: "which firm to interact with and through which channel" (Neslin et al., 2006, p. 91). Multi-channel marketing is widely used these days to motivate customers to shop more frequently (Hansotia & Rukstales, 2002). Other objectives of multi-channel marketing

include coverage expansion in the hopes of achieving marketing goals, massive adaption in the location of the customers, to eradicate the intermediaries, and to spread the risk over all other marketing channels (Kontis & Lagos, 2015).

Customers exhibit the common behavior of taking advantage of all possible opportunities when they shop through multiple channels. Melis et al. (2016) examined customer costs and benefits for making use of the multiple channels whilst shopping. They found the benefits of online channels included convenience, time saving and eradication of transport costs. Whilst the downside included information overload as there are multiple online vendors and the threat of information breach.

Ensuring that the product reaches the consumers through multiple channels is a complex task (Agatz, Fleischmann & Van Nunen, 2008). Neslin et al. (2006) identified five challenges associated with multi-channel retailing. Firstly, data integration across multiple channels becomes an inconvenience. Secondly, understanding the variations in customer behavior emerging from their use of different channels becomes difficult for vendors. Thirdly, channel evaluation: how a channel is performing and how the performance of a particular channel can be improved. Fourthly, allocation of resources to each channel of marketing involves a considerable amount of risk. Finally, coordination amongst channels is difficult for vendors since there is a need to keep the message consistent amongst all marketing channels.

There is limited literature available which links the practice of MO of firms with their practice of using multi-channel marketing. Reid, Luxton and Mavondo (2005) have reported a link between integrated marketing communication (IMC) and MO. IMC is a process which involves the management of customer relationships by the firm controlling all messages sent to customers via all mediums of communications (Reid et al., 2005). One important dimension of MO is customer orientation which involves understanding the customer's needs, including their channel preference. The firm's MO may elevate the need for multi-channel marketing via IMC. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed for testing was (See Figure 1a):

H$_4$: There is a relationship between MO and multi-channel marketing.

Payne and Frow (2005) noted the role played by Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and the way it enhances customer value. The two-way process of value creation via multi-channel marketing has

been established. In their model, Payne and Frow (2005) described multi-channel marketing comprising salesforce, mobile commerce, retail outlets, telephony, electronic commerce and direct marketing. They note customer acquisition and retention which may be related to customer engagement. Thus, it can be deduced that the practice of multi-channel marketing is likely to leads to customer engagement. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed for testing was (See Figure 1a):

H_5: There is a relationship between multi-channel marketing and customer engagement.

Gallant, Irizarry and Kreps (2007) define user-centered design of a product as easy to use for the customers. This may be inferred as one of the dimensions of MO which is related to customer orientation. For example, traffic through a hospital website may increase if there were trust, credibility, usefulness and personalization exhibited. Therefore, building on the existing literature we can conclude the hypothesis (See Figure 1b):

H_6: Personalization mediates the relationship between market orientation and customer engagement.

Fensel, Toma, García, Stavrakantonakis and Fensel (2014) provided a rationale for multiple channel marketing, asking why there is a need to connect to the customer in one or more ways. Fensel et al., (2014) cite an increase in online customer communication with different brands. Thus, while being customer and competitor oriented, firms can choose to practice multi-channel marketing and expect customer engagement in return. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed for testing was (See Figure 1c):

H_7: Multi-channel marketing mediates the relationship between MO and customer engagement.

Figure 1a: Inter-Relation between Market Orientation, Personalization, Multi-Channel Marketing and Customer Engagement.
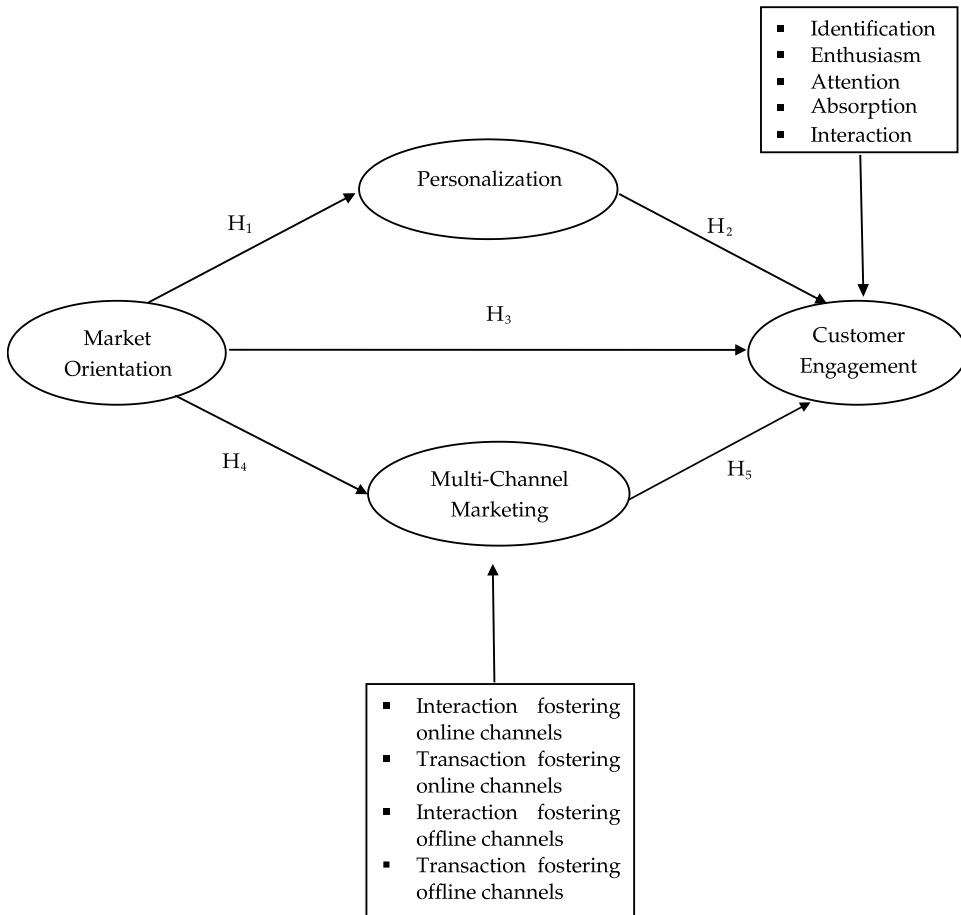

Figure 1b: Mediating Effect of Personalization on relationship between Market Orientation and Customer Engagement.
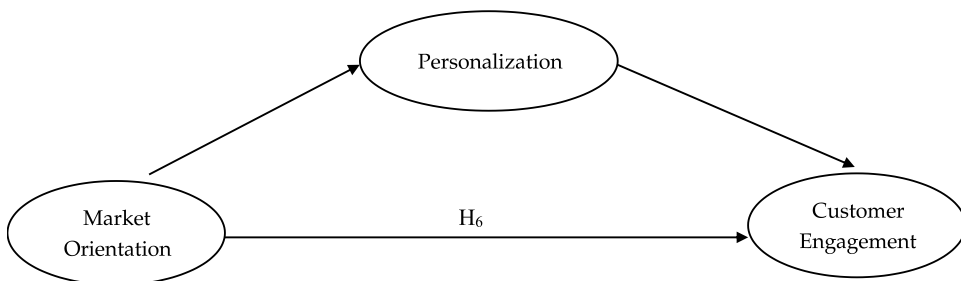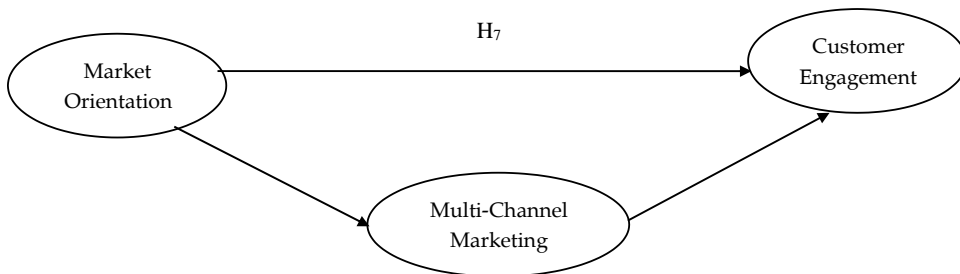
Figure 1c: Mediating Effect of Multi-Channel Marketing on relationship between Market Orientation and Customer Engagement.

3. Methodology

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from established instruments. The responses were on a 5-point likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree). All the items for each variable were re-worded to complement the purpose of this study (Table 2). Rahman (2013) recommended that for a population size of 100,000 or greater, a sample size 204 is sufficient under the precision rate of ± 7% and the confidence interval of 95% (See Table 3). This study has a sample size of 240.

Table 2: Variable Details

Instrument	Creator	Number of items
Personalization	Komiak and Benbasat (2006)	3
Market Orientation	Hooley, Greenley, Cadogan and Fahy (2005)	5
Multi-channel marketing ▪ "Interaction fostering online channels ▪ Transaction fostering offline channels ▪ Interaction fostering offline channels ▪ Transaction fostering online channels"	Johansson and Kask (2016)	15
Customer Engagement ▪ Identification ▪ Enthusiasm ▪ Attention ▪ Absorption ▪ Interaction	So et al. (2014)	25

Table 3: Sample Size Determination

Size of Population	Sample Size for Precision of:			
	±3%	±5%	±7%	±10%
>100,000	1,111	400	204	100

Several customer engagement studies have made use of online forums as well as student bodies to obtain data (Chuang, 2016; Sprot, Czellar & Spangenberg, 2009; Zhang et al., 2016; Verhagen et al., 2015). The survey used in this study was created on Google docs and circulated amongst students via digital media. Students were from both private and public universities in Pakistan. Simple random sampling technique was used. The questionnaire outlined the objective of the research and guaranteed confidentiality. Respondents were instructed to choose a brand with e-commerce to qualify for the research. It was ensured that every respondent answered all the questions by keeping a check on the Google forms. The Google form was set to reject missing answers and was set to prompt the respondent to answer missed question.

4. Data Analysis and Results

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the conceptual framework (Jung, Namkung & Yoon, 2010). In order to ensure the robustness of this research, convergent validity, discriminant validity and the construct reliability were calculated. Validity helps in determining the rationality and appropriateness of the results (Messick, 1990) and reliability determines "the successful continuous attainment of the results that originally an instrument is developed for" (Black & Champion, 1976, p. 42. Characteristics of the respondents of this research are consolidated in Table 4:

Table 4: Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	N=240	Percentage
Gender		
Male	114	47.5%
Female	126	52.5%
Age Group		
Under 21	12	5%
21-29	225	93.8%
30-40	3	1.2%

Characteristics	N=240	Percentage
Brands of Choice		
Khaadi	24	10%
Apple	21	8.75%
Nestle	15	6.25%
Coca Cola	6	2.5%
Uniworth	6	2.5%
Samsung	6	2.5%
Sapphire	6	2.5%
Miscellaneous	156	65%

For this study, a confirmatory actor analysis (CFA) was conducted on four constructs. CFA was used to evaluate the model fit (Bartholomew & Knott, 1999) as well as the factor structure of the variables under study (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006). Using AMOS 22.0, items related to MO, personalization, multi-channel marketing and customer engagement were loaded on to evaluate the model fit and structure of the variables.

Table 5 shows the factor loadings, construct reliability and validity. To improve the CFA model, a few items were deleted from the respective variables (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Any item which had a factor loading below 0.5 was taken out from the model. All the variables had a construct reliability score greater than 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The average variance extracted (AVE) for all latent variables was greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) implying that the constructs were valid and these latent constructs comprise items that reflect the theoretical latent constructs. Table 6 shows the details of discriminant validity of the constructs. All variables have the average shared value (ASV) of less than their AVE implying that all the latent constructs are distinct from each other and that discriminant validity holds. Table 7 exhibits the model fit indicators. CMIN/DF should be between 2 and 5, all the index indicators have a cut-off point of 0.7 and RMSEA should be less than 0.10 (Yang, 2010).

Table 5: Construct Details

Construct Items	Factor Loadings
Market Orientation (CR=0.797, AVE=0.500)	
The aims and strategies of my brand/company are oriented towards customer satisfaction	0.686
The service commitment of my brand/company to the customers is tightly controlled	Dropped
The competitive strategies of my brand/company are based on understanding the customers' needs	0.616
The organizational functions of my brand/company are integrated and coordinated to satisfy the customers' needs	0.865
The strategies my brand/company are aimed at increasing customer value	0.635
Personalization (CR=0.779, AVE=0.545)	
The brand/company understands my needs	0.748
The brand/company knows what I want	0.854
The brand/company takes my needs as its own preferences	0.589
Multi-channel Marketing	
Interaction Fostering Online Channels (CR=0.794, AVE=0.567)	
Have social media interactions.	0.807
Supports bloggers to get positive mentions online through a third party	0.599
E-mails me (addressed direct mail online)	Dropped
Holds interactive real time communication online (e.g. chat, Skype, web-based seminars).	0.832
Transaction Fostering Offline Channels (CR=0.807, AVE=0.583)	
Has channels print advertising (unaddressed; e.g.ads in newspapers, flyers, billboards, etc.).	0.804
Has traditional PR work (press releases, make contacts with journalists).	0.72
Has store front presentations in physical stores	Dropped
Advertises on TV and/or Radio commercials.	0.764
Interaction Fostering Offline Channels (CR=0.767, AVE=0.623)	
Sends me direct mail (Printed)	0.842
Calls present and potential customers	0.733
Bonds with local sport communities (e.g. sponsorship, dis- counts and themed evenings)	Dropped
Holds "Face-to-face" interactions (e.g., fairs, seminars, presentations)	Dropped
Transaction Fostering Online Channels (CR=0.813, AVE=0.595)	
Has search engine marketing	0.874
Has online advertising on webpages ('banners', etc.)	0.704
Advertises in games/music/video services online (e.g. YouTube videos and Spotify ads)	0.724

Construct Items	Factor Loadings
Customer Engagement	
Identification (CR=0.843, AVE=0.574)	
When someone criticizes this brand/company, it feels like a personal insult	0.769
When I talk about this brand/company, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'.	0.703
This brand's successes are my successes	0.713
When someone praises this brand/company, it feels like a personal compliment.	0.838
Enthusiasm (CR=0.928, AVE=0.722)	
I am heavily into this brand/company	0.694
I am passionate about this brand/company	0.875
I am enthusiastic about this brand/company	0.934
I feel excited about this brand/company	0.91
I love this brand/company	0.814
Attention (CR=0.922, AVE=0.702)	
I like to learn more about this brand/company	0.848
I pay a lot of attention to anything about this brand/company.	0.809
Anything related to this brand/company grabs my attention.	0.813
I concentrate a lot on this brand/company	0.882
I like learning more about this brand/company	0.834
Absorption (CR=0.879, AVE=0.594)	
When I am interacting with this brand/company, I forget everything else around me.	0.832
Time flies when I am interacting with this brand/company	0.797
When I am interacting with this brand/company, I do not get carried away.	Dropped
When interacting with this brand/company, it is difficult to detach myself.	0.624
In my interaction with this brand/company, I am immersed.	0.777
When interacting with this brand/company intensely, I feel happy.	0.806
Interaction (CR=0.842, AVE=0.519)	
In general, I like to get involved in this brand/company community discussion.	0.76
I am someone who enjoys interacting with like-minded others in this brand/company community.	0.822
I am someone who likes actively participating in this brand/company community discussion.	0.667
In general, I thoroughly enjoy exchanging ideas with other people in this brand/company community.	0.682
I often participate in activities of this brand/company community.	0.656

Notes: CR= Construct Reliability and AVE= Average Variance Extracted

Table 6: Discriminant Validity

Constructs		1	2	3	4
1	Market Orientation	1			
2	Personalization	0.832	1		
3	Multi-channel Marketing	0.313	0.407	1	
4	Customer Engagement	0.312	0.28	0.618	1
	ASV	0.295	0.312	0.215	0.185

Notes: The matrix represents the correlations; ASV denotes average shared variance.

Table 7: Model Fit Indices

CMIN/DF	AGFI	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
3.075	0.728	0.78	0.737	0.732	0.69	0.729	0.08

5. Hypothesis Testing

Data analysis was performed in Amos 22.0 to test the proposed hypotheses about the latent variables. Table 8 shows the results of the SEM. MO was found to have a positive relationship with personalization (SV[1] =0.905, $p<0.001$). Therefore, it can be concluded that MO has a positive and significant impact on personalization implying that if the firm is market-oriented it will likely adapt personalization for its customers. Personalization (SV=-0.135, p=0.577) has negative impact on customer engagement, but this finding did not reach significance failing to support the hypothesized relationship. Therefore, an increase in personalization is unlikely to increase customer engagement, so a firm practicing personalization will not keep its customers engaged. MO (SV=0.276, p=0.300) showed a positive impact on customer engagement, but the finding did not reach significance. Thus, no relationship was found between firms practicing MO and customer engagement. MO (SV=0.192, $p<0.01$) was found to have a positive and significant impact on multi-channel marketing. Therefore, an increase in MO will result in an increase in multi-channel marketing. This means firms practicing MO are likely to opt for multi-channel marketing. Multi-channel marketing (SV=1.318, $p<0.001$) was found to be positively and significantly related to customer engagement. It seems that firms which practice multi-channel marketing can engage their customers well.

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[1] Standardized beta co-efficient.

Table 9 shows the model fit indices. According to Yang (2010), the cut-off point of CMIN/DF should be between 2 and 5, all the indices should be greater than 0.7 and RMSEA should be less than 0.10. All criteria were met; TLI and CFI indices are very close to 0.7. The proposed model demonstrates good fit with the data collected from the sample of respondents in this study.

Table 8: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationships	Standardized Value (SV)	P-Value	Decision Rule
H1	Market Orientation → Personalization	0.905	***	Accept
H2	Personalization → Customer Engagement	-0.135	0.577	Reject
H3	Market Orientation → Customer Engagement	0.276	0.300	Reject
H4	Market Orientation → Multi-channel Marketing	0.192	0.002	Accept
H5	Multi-channel Marketing → Customer Engagement	1.318	***	Accept

Notes: *** $p<0.001$

Table 9: Model Fit Indices

CMIN/DF	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
3.515	0.883	0.711	0.738	0.653	0.691	0.065

6. Mediation Model

The hypothesized conceptual framework proposed that multi-channel marketing and personalization mediates the relationship of MO and customer engagement. There was no direct effect of MO on customer engagement (SV=0.276, p=0.300). Baron and Kenny (1986) propose that mediation cannot be tested if the direct effect fails to reach significance. However, Zhao, Lynch and Chen (2010) proposed a modified measurement method to test for mediation. The first step in mediation analysis approach proposed by Zhao et al. (2010) is to test for the indirect effect of MO and personalization on customer engagement. The indirect effect of MO and multi-channel marketing on customer engagement must also be tested. For ease of analysis, mediation was tested in two separate measurement models using AMOS 22.0 for H_6 and H_7 (see figures 1d and 1e). The standardized beta co-efficient of an indirect effect was significant for both mediators (namely personalization and multi-channel marketing), SV=0.070, p<0.001 and SV=0.315, p<0.001 respectively. The first step in the mediation analysis approach of Zhao et al. (2010) testifies that mediation is present.

The second step is to test for the standardized beta co-efficient between the independent variable and dependent variable, the independent variable and mediator, and the mediator and dependent variable. For H_6, the standardized beta co-efficient between MO and customer engagement was 0.407, p<0.001; the beta estimate for the relationship between MO and personalization and personalization and customer engagement was 0.289, p<0.001 and 0.244, p<0.01 respectively. The results are consistent with the hypothesized framework that personalization mediates the relationship between MO and customer engagement. Model fit statistics showed a good model fit; CMIN/DF=3.445, NFI=0.819, RFI=0.781, IFI=0.893, TLI=0.770, CFI=.745 and RMSEA=0.071. Similarly, For H_7, the standardized beta co-efficient between MO and customer engagement was 0.371, p<0.001; the beta estimate for the relationship between MO and multi-channel marketing and multi-channel marketing and customer engagement was 0.409, p<0.001 and 0.772, p<0.01 respectively. These results are consistent with the hypothesized framework that multi-channel complementarily mediates the relationship between MO and customer engagement. Model fit statistics showed a good model fit; CMIN/DF=2.990, NFI=0.756, RFI=0.821, IFI=0.799, TLI=0.882, CFI=.740 and RMSEA=0.069.

Table 10: Mediation Analysis

Hypotheses				Direct Effect		Indirect Effect		Decision
	Independent Variables	Mediator	Dependent Variables	β^*	P	β^*	p	
H_6	Market Orientation	Personalization	Customer Engagement			.070**	.000	Mediation
	Market Orientation		Customer Engagement	.407**	.000			
	Market Orientation		Personalization	.289**	.000			Complementary Mediation
	Personalization		Customer Engagement	.244**	.001			
	Total effect: .30							
Model fit indices: CMIN/DF=3.445, NFI=0.819, RFI=0.781, IFI=0.893, TLI=0.770, CFI=.745 and RMSEA=0.071								
H_7	Market Orientation	Multi-channel marketing	Customer Engagement			.315**	.000	Mediation
	Market Orientation		Customer Engagement	.404**	.000			
	Market Orientation		Multi-channel marketing	.409**	.000			Complementary Mediation
	Multi-channel marketing		Customer Engagement	.772**	.001			
	Total effect: .58							
Model fit indices: CMIN/DF=2.990, NFI=0.756, RFI=0.821, IFI=0.799, TLI=0.882, CFI=.740 and RMSEA=0.069								

Figure 1d: Results of Mediating Effect of Personalization between Market Orientation and Customer Engagement.
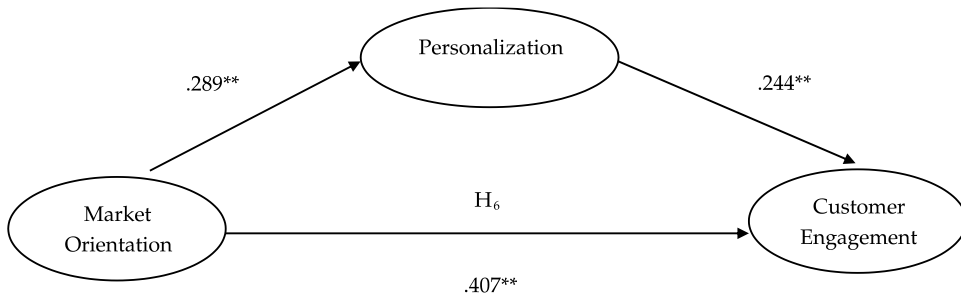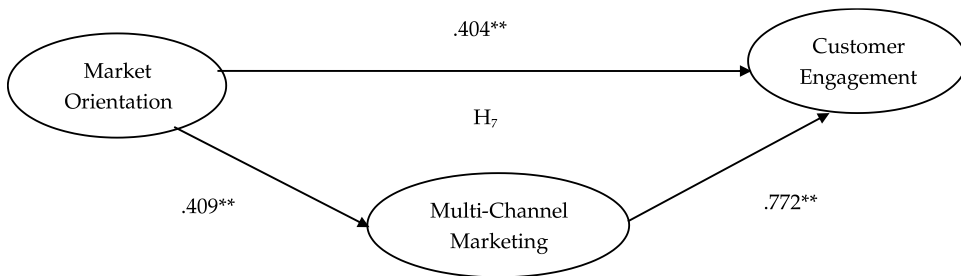

Figure 1e: Results of Mediating Effect of Multi-Channel Marketing between Market Orientation and Customer Engagement.

7. Discussion

The aim of this study was to analyze the impact of MO, personalization and multi-channel marketing on customer engagement. This study also aimed to test for the presence of a mediating effect of personalization and multi-channel marketing in the relationship between MO and customer engagement.

The findings of this study show support for a significant effect of MO on personalization. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Kennedy et al. (2003) which states that if the firm practices MO as proposed by Narver and Slater (1990), and in this practice they aim to satisfy customer needs and wants as proposed by Balakrishnan (1996), then such firms can make use of the inbound marketing theme of personalization as proposed by Macquet and Stanton (2014). This finding implies it is highly likely for a firm to opt for personalization if it is market-oriented. One possible explanation for this relationship is that if the firm is market-oriented then it would aim for one of the dimensions of customer orientation.

The findings of this study did not support relationship between personalization and customer engagement. These findings are inconsistent with the findings of Payne and Frow (2005). This means that if the firm is practicing personalization and is taking care of individual aspects that are responsible for the customer needs and wants then such personalization is not likely to lead to customer engagement with that brand. One possible explanation for this absence of relationship is that customer engagement is a set of repeated interactions that the firms or their brands have with the customers (Van Doorn et al., 2010), but the presence of personalization eliminates the need for these repeated interactions. In the presence of personalization, the firm is already aware of the customer's needs and wants and therefore there is no additional information or desire that the customer wishes to send to the firm. This might be why personalization appears not to have a significant effect on customer engagement.

The findings of this study demonstrated that MO does not have a significant effect on customer engagement, which is inconsistent with the findings of Rakthin et al. (2016). This means that if the firm is practicing MO, and is trying to cater all dimensions of MO (Narver & Slater, 1990), then such efforts are not likely to enhance customer engagement. The customer may feel that the firm is catering to their needs and there is no need for engagement.

The findings of this study accept H4, which predicts that MO has a significant impact on multi-channel marketing. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Reid et al. (2005). This means that if the firm is practicing MO then it might opt for multi-channel marketing, which involves making use of online and offline mediums to reach out to its consumers (Melis et al., 2016). One possible explanation for the presence of this positive and significant relationship is that in their attempt to practice consumer orientation and cater to consumer needs, firms try to reach consumers using all available channels. Knowing that consumers are now available through different touch points the firm practices multi-channel marketing.

The findings of this study demonstrate support for a significant effect of multi-channel marketing on customer engagement, which is consistent with the findings of Payne and Frow (2005). This means that if the firm is practicing multi-channel marketing and is reaching its customers using multiple marketing mediums then it is more likely to engage its customers. One possible explanation for this relationship is that when the firm reaches customers using different mediums, it reinforces its message and connects with customers effectively. By practicing multi-

channel marketing, the firm facilitates multiple interactions between itself and the customers leading to customer engagement. The study showed support for the proposition that personalization and multi-channel marketing mediate the relationship between MO with customer engagement. These findings are consistent with those of Gallant et al. (2007) and Fensel et al. (2014).

The findings from this study will help academicians and practitioners alike; firstly, it indicates that if a firm practices its three dimensions of MO, it tends to practice personalization. Moreover, market-oriented firms include personalization in its offerings. Secondly, the results indicate that if the firm practices MO it is highly likely that it would also incorporate multi-channel marketing in its business model. Lastly, the results indicate that practicing multi-channel marketing is likely to lead to customer engagement and that if a firm practices MO and personalization then it is likely to develop customer engagement. Similarly, if a firm practices MO along with multi-channel marketing, it is likely that the firm will develop strong customer engagement.

7.1. Managerial Implications

This research has several managerial implications. Firstly, it emphasizes on the inbound marketing approach i.e. existing online marketing trends becoming crucial for firms. This is because the online channels of marketing are increasingly used as consumer touch points. This connection is highly significant as the firms are presented with a chance not only to communicate the existence of a brand but also to persuade the users to buy that brand, and reinforce the consumers have made the right choice. Another implication of this study is the realization of the importance for the firms to practice market-oriented approach. Moreover, for implementing and practicing MO, firms need to implement all three dimensions of being consumer, competitor and inter-functionally focused. This means that firms need to keep track of all three perspectives in order to be aware of the industry and its changing trends.

The consumer focus side of MO drives the firm to offer personalization to its consumers and to practice multi-channel marketing. But both practices were found unlikely to keep the customers engaged. For strong customer engagement, it is crucial for firms to practice multi-channel marketing and personalization. Nevertheless, multi-channel marketing is likely to facilitate the brand and consumer interactions thereby helping firms attain customer engagement. Customer engagement is extremely important

for the firms because it helps remind consumers that a brand exists and why it is superior to competing brands. These continuous interactions serve as the basis for building the brand image, brand trust and finally the brand equity hence leading to consumer lifetime value.

7.2.   *Limitations and Future Research*

This study used cross sectional approach. Future research can be based on longitudinal approach which could help researchers to understand the causal relationship better between variables. Furthermore, this study focuses on the direct impact of MO and personalization on customer engagement. Future studies could incorporate other variables and analyze the indirect impact of these variables on customer engagement. This research also considers only two themes of inbound marketing; the model of this study can be enhanced for future studies by taking into account content creation and distribution, life cycle marketing and integration. Finally, since there is evidence of complementary mediation of personalization and multi-channel marketing between MO and customer engagement, it is likely there is an intervention from another variable which this research has not considered. Researchers can consider more variables which might act as contributory factors on the relationship between MO and customer engagement.

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