

The Influence of Commercial Twitter Messages on Retweet and Purchase Intentions: An Examination of Motivational Factors and Brand Attitude¹

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of commercial X (formerly Twitter) messages on users' intentions to retweet and subsequently their purchase intentions. We propose a model that elucidates the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, brand attitude, Twitter usage, and users' behavioral intentions. The mediating role of the relationship with branded X/Twitter accounts is also examined. The findings from structural equation modeling reveal that extrinsic motivation and brand attitude significantly influence users' relationships with branded accounts, which in turn affects retweet and purchase intentions. The study concludes with implications for marketers leveraging X/Twitter as a platform for engagement and conversion.

Keywords: X, Twitter, twitted commercial messages, twitter usage, social media, retweet intention, purchase intention, communication technology, structural equation model.

¹ *Disclosure: This research findings were partially presented in a conference but not published anywhere.*

1 INTRODUCTION

The advent of social media has transformed marketing strategies, with platforms like Twitter (officially renamed to X)² becoming pivotal for brands to engage with consumers. Research indicates that consumers' emotional and cognitive attachments to brands such as subjective norms, behavioral control, and brand attachments are a complex interplay of consumer psychology, social dynamics, and marketing strategies (Chu, Chen, & Sung, 2015). Understanding how commercial messages on X/Twitter can influence user behavior is crucial for marketers. This study aims to explore the dynamics between X/Twitter messages, user motivations, brand attitudes, and their subsequent effects on retweet and purchase intentions based on call for further research to explore consumer motivational and attitudinal factors (Chu et al. 2015).

Almost 63.8 percent of global of the world's population have entered into the Social Networking Sites (SNS) to interact with others (Petrosyan, 2024)³. 92% of business organizations addressed the importance of social media from commercial perspective (DeMers, 2014). A huge segment of social media messages is generated by brands and aimed toward the existing and prospective consumers to gain positive brand view and message-sharing among peer networks (Swani, Milne, & Brown, 2013).

However, among numerous SNS platforms, X/Twitter, which allows its users to post real-time contents to their followers, has turned into one of the top microblogging SNS generating 500 million Tweets per day (Twitter, 2022). It is a popular way to communicate and spread news and

² Twitter is officially renamed as X since June 2023 but this paper used Twitter as the survey was conducted under the brand name Twitter in year 2022.

³ Petrosyan, A. (2024). Worldwide digital population, 2024. Accessed on 29 November 2024 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/617136/digital-population-worldwide/#:~:text=Worldwide%20digital%20population%202024&text=As%20of%20October%202024%2C%20t here,population%2C%20were%20social%20media%20users.>

information in social, political and cultural domain (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2012). A pervasive trend of using X/Twitter as a marketing tool has also grown among the US marketers for connecting the customers, as marketers have admitted that the control of the brand has transferred from the hands of its producers to those of its consumers (Boyd, Golder & Lotan, 2010; Burton, & Soboleva, 2011, Pacea, 2011). According to the concept of attention economy (Davenport & Beck, 2013), brands are constantly fighting with each other to get proper attention from the potential customers in the social media. As X/Twitter offers short and instant communication channel among users, it has gained a competitive advantage to catch quick attention among both users and brand marketers. According to Kantar's Media Reactions 2024, 12% of the marketers trusts in advertising on X/Twitter (Kantar, 2024). The major goal for marketers to use X/Twitter is to increase brand awareness, followed by driving traffic in the Internet, engaging existing customers and finding new leads or sales and customers (Marketingcharts, 2014). Kantar (2024) also reported that consumers ad preferences for X/Twitter has gone up significantly since 2022.

Here arise the questions of what effects Twitted commercial messages can generate to gain marketers' desired goals and which factors are significant here. Addressing such questions would be of significant value for marketers, as these can reveal important managerial implications regarding the effective development, use and management of branded X/Twitter messages. Chu et al. (2015) examines brand-following behavior on X/Twitter and reveals that attitude towards brand following, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and brand attachments have significant influence on purchase intention and outcomes of intention to follow brands on X/Twitter. Diwanji and Lee (2024) examined the brand generated advertising on X/Twitter and reveals that consumer generated branding has significantly greater influence on consumers decisions compared to brand generated advertising on X/ Twitter, challenging to rethink marketers advertising strategies on

social networks. While SNSs (e.g. Facebook) has been widely used to study purchase intention, however, limited research has been conducted on X/Twitter (Chu et al. 2015). Consequently, this research addresses firstly, how X/Twitter messages aid marketing outcomes by determining users' intention to retweet and users' purchase intentions and secondly, the study examines which factors play influential role in this process. This study used three important factors as antecedents of behavioral intentions: motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation), brand attitude and X/Twitter usage suggested by extant literature. The study developed and tested a hypothesized model to explain these linkages. This study can be distinguished from earlier research, as very few or no research have been to address these issues by combining constructs from different paradigms, especially from consumer motivations and attitudinal factors (Chu et al. 2015).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivations

Motivation theory is considered a useful paradigm for asserting individual's behavior (Deci, 1972). Motivation theories and its 'relevant framework is ubiquitously used to examine new media usage, particularly to investigate motives for Internet and Web usage (e.g., Eighmey & McCord, 1998; Korgaonkar & Wolin, 1999; Rodgers & Cannon, 2000; Wells & Chen, 1999) and their effectiveness in terms of users' attitude and behavioral intentions (e.g., Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005; Rodgers, 2002).

Although motivational theory has been approached from several point of views, two broad categories of motivation, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation, have been the widely used approaches (Calder & Staw, 1975; Deci, 1971; 1975; Lee, Cheung, & Chen, 2005). Extrinsic motivation inclines people to do an activity in order to have its perceived instrumental value, which

comes from the results of the activity, rather than the activity itself (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992). Extrinsic motivation focuses on the goal-driven reasons such as, rewards, benefits, improved performance, pay, or promotions earned when performing an activity (Lin, 2007). While sharing knowledge, individuals also think about cost-benefit analysis (Lin, 2007). If the perceived benefit from sharing equals or exceeds costs, individuals are motivated extrinsically (Lin, 2007). Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is referred as “doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 56). In other words, intrinsic motivation encourages people to perform an activity in order to get the innermost satisfaction of the activity itself, such as fun or challenge involved in the task, rather than for any external stimulus, pressures, or rewards (Davis et al., 1992; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Extrinsic motivation has also been compared with “perceived usefulness”, whereas, intrinsic motivation has been compared with “perceived enjoyment” (Teo, Lim, & Lai, 1999). Perceived usefulness is defined as the potential user's individual belief that using a specific application system will increase his or her job performance (Teo et al., 1999). Perceived enjoyment is defined as the perception of pleasure obtained from helping others through knowledge sharing (Kankanhalli, Tan, Wei, 2005). Both of these concepts were widely used to find motivational factors for using new media (e.g., Davis et al., 1992; Lee, 2009; Lu, Zhou, & Wang, 2009; Pontiggia & Virili, 2010; Sledgianowski & Kulviwat, 2009; van der Heijden, 2004).

2.2 Brand Attitude

The concept of attitude has frequently been used as a significant factor, particularly in the field of social psychology and marketing, as a relatively stable determinant of actual behavior or intention that ultimately can direct the actual behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

In marketing, brand attitude is defined as general internal evaluation or affective reactions of the recipients toward a brand (Lutz, MacKenzie, & Belch, 1983). In other words, it is simply an

individual's overall positive or negative assessment of a given brand. A general process of brand attitude development is depended on both brand cognition or consumers' thoughts related to brand, and persuasive message cognition or consumers' thoughts related to persuasive brand messages such as, advertising (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Referred cognitions are ultimately able to create influence on consumers' attitudes toward both the brand, which consequently can influence behavioral intentions (Muesling & Laczniak, 1988; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The current paper directly used the concept of brand attitude, as an independent variable, to ultimately measure its effect on consumers' behavioral intentions on X/Twitter context.

2.3 Relationship with Brand and Brand social Media

Earlier studies have already established the idea that consumers develop association with brands (e.g., Aggarwal & Zhang, 2006; Esch, Langner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006; Fournier, 1998; Johnson & Grimm, 2010; Mathwick, 2002). According to Breivik and Thorbjørnsen (2008), consumer-brand relationships can be defined as the quality of relationship between consumers and brands. This relationship aid marketers, in particular, by creating a position for the brand in the mind of customers (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Franzen, 1999; Keller, 2001). However, two fundamental factors for building such relationship with a brand are consumer experience (Franzen, 1999) and brand knowledge or brand meanings (Evard & Aurier, 1996; Franzen, 1999). Here, brand knowledge is always linked to brand personality, brand association, brand attitude, and brand image in the minds of consumers (Franzen, 1999).

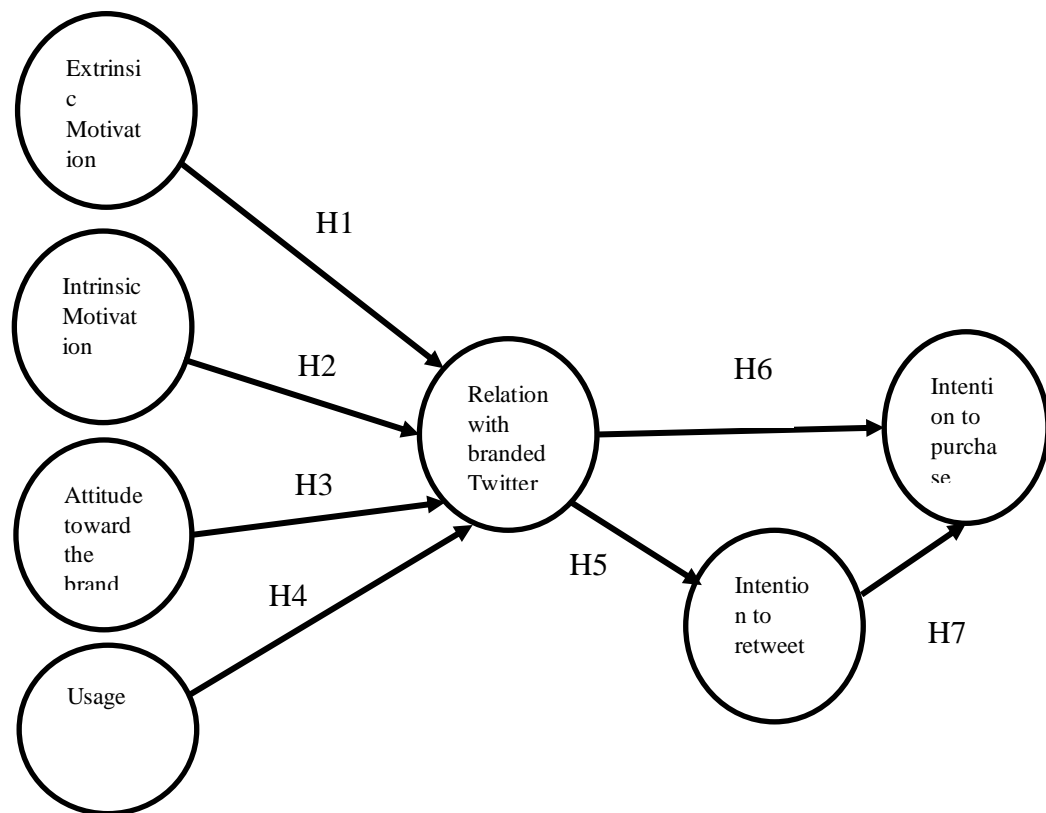
Although many studies have investigated the relationship pattern in offline context, few are done on the relationship between consumer and social networking sites. Social networking sites have turned into viable marketing channels to interact with consumers and build communities in order to form a strong relationship with the brand. In other words, brands try to create

interaction, engagement and relationship with their consumers via their online presence (Enginkaya & Yilmaz, 2014). A recent study of Li & Li (2014), based on social interpersonal relationship literature, examined how consumers evaluate brands differently on X/Twitter based on relationship norms and found that that X/Twitter users follow a pattern of relationship in which light users prefer exchange relationship norms, though heavy users prefer both exchange and communal relationships. Whereas exchange relationship an obligation among the relationship partners to give and receive a comparable benefit in return, communal relationships impose no such obligation, rather benefits are provided in response to each other's welfare concerns (Clark & Mills, 1979). However, based on earlier discussion, it can be asserted that, whatever be the type of relationship, branded social media sites, such as X/Twitter, can also develop a specific relation with users.

2.4 Proposed Model and Hypotheses Development

The present study proposed a model that identified motivational factors (extrinsic and intrinsic), brand attitude factor and brand usage factor as important antecedents to establish relation with branded X/Twitter account, and thus, in turn, affect users' retweet intention and purchase intention. The model generated (see figure 1) the following hypotheses:

Figure 1. Proposed Model



Motivation → Relation Path

Extant literature claim that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors are the strongest predictors of user behavior (e.g., Atkinson & Kydd, 1997; Moon & Kim, 2001; Taylor & Todd, 1995; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Enginkaya and Yılmaz, (2014) found five motivational factors, including both extrinsic and intrinsic elements, to be quite influential in creating consumers'

relationship with the brands on social media: brand affiliation, investigation, opportunity seeking, conversation and entertainment. The present study also proposed that both of the factors can directly be associated with users' relation with branded X/Twitter account.

Agrifoglio, Black, Metallo and Ferrara (2012) conducted a study to find out what motivates peoples continued X/Twitter use. Results revealed that X/Twitter use helps users to improve their goal-oriented performances. For instance, if any specific performance based goal is set toward the users, they are extrinsically motivated to achieve that goal. Brands frequently employ such techniques in X/Twitter in order to attract user traffic by extrinsically motivating them. According to Lin (2007), such motives influence individuals' intention toward an action, as well as their actual behavior. According to Agrifoglio et al.'s (2012) study, X/Twitter users believe that using X/Twitter can improve their performance to achieve goals or provide them with reward and, thus, they are more extrinsically motivated to use the account. These consequences unlimitedly are likely to generate relationship with the branded X/Twitter account.

Several studies (e.g., Barnes, 2011; Moon & Kim, 2001; Thong, Hong, & Tam, 2006) have reported that intrinsic motivation is also a crucial factor in Web technologies adoption behavior. Shang, Chen and Shen's (2005) study, for instance, claimed that in the case of online shopping, when people are intrinsically motivated, they experience enjoyment and internal pleasure. However, similar to these kind of new media experiences, users' X/Twitter experiences can also be internally satisfactory as the social site frequently offers entertainment, fun or relaxation factors. These ultimately are likely to make them intrinsically motivated to use X/Twitter account (Agrifoglio et al., 2012). Additionally, X/Twitter is considered as familiar and friendly tool that encourages users to be more natural, creative and ingenious. Therefore, brands that can create tweet messages triggering pleasure, joy, and fun are more likely to attract more user traffic by

motivating them intrinsically. However, based on above discussion, both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are likely to trigger a relationship with the branded X/Twitter account.

H1: The X/Twitter users' extrinsic motivation to use X/Twitter has positive association with their relation to the twitted brand account.

H2: The X/Twitter users' intrinsic motivation to use X/Twitter has positive association with their relation to the twitted brand account.

Brand attitude → Relation Path

As discussed earlier, one of the important factors for developing consumer-brand relation is brand meaning (Franzen, 1999). Brand attitude is significantly associate with establishing brand meaning, making brand attitude an important factor for creating the relationship (Chang & Chieng, 2006). In case of establishing relation with branded X/Twitter account, users' exiting/new brand cognitions or message/ tweet cognition can affect their overall positive or negative evaluation of the brand, creating brand attitude. Such attitude, in turn, is likely to affect users' relationship with the brand's X/Twitter account (Franzen, 1999).

H3: The X/Twitter users' attitude toward the brand has positive association with their relation to branded X/Twitter account.

Usage → Relation Path

Based on how the usage pattern of social media, customer can build a relationship with the branded social media. The experimental study of Li and Li (2014) investigated this connection in X/Twitter on the basis of usage patterns. Their study suggested that X/Twitter brand followers showed varied attitude toward messages, based on their X/Twitter usage (heavy or light) styles (Li & Li, 2014). According to the findings, light users showed more favorable attitude toward

exchange related brand tweets than communal message, however heavy users did not show any favoritism over a particular type of brand messages. Rather, heavy users have preferences on communal brand messages over exchange relationship messages. As discussed earlier, in case of exchange relationship, individuals want something in return of giving something to others (Clark & Mills, 1979; 1993). If something in return is not assured, the relationship may not be successful. On the other hand, in communal relationship, individuals do not expect something in return of giving something (Clark, & Mills, 1979; 1993). Rather, individuals are inherently motivated to act in such relationships.

Based on these concepts Li and Li (2014) conducted an experiment where they studied whether X/Twitter brand followers show different attitudes toward relationship and communal brand tweets, based on how much time they spend on X/Twitter. Their experiment revealed that in case of branded X/Twitter communication, both heavy and light users tends to prefer exchange relationship based tweets. On the other hand, if the tweet message are independent and social information related, users react differently, where the stronger communication is established within the users' community rather with the brand. Again, in terms of heavy users, both communal and exchange relationship can coexist when interacting with a brand in X/Twitter (Li, & Li, 2014). Thus, it can be seen that X/Twitter users; usage pattern has direct impact on the relationship with the brand communication in X/Twitter.

H4: The X/Twitter users' current usage of X/Twitter has positive association with their relation to the twitted brand account.

Relation → Retweet Intention and Relation → Purchase Intention Paths

Sharing is an important function of X/Twitter. In addition to composing and posting tweets, X/Twitter user can also rebroadcast his or her tweet to followers, which is known as “retweet” (Shi

et al., 2014). Retweeting spreads information by bringing new audiences to the content. Boyd et al. (2010) also claimed that retweeting brings new people into a particular conversation which can be understood both as a form of information diffusion and as a means of participating in a diffused conversation. Retweeting can also display a “chain effect” to a tweet’s author’s followers, and also followers’ followers (Shi et al., 2014).

From marketing perspective, retweeting has several benefits. A retweet can reach millions of customers creating a huge diffusion of information for the marketers (Stelzner, 2009). When people see a tweet from a brand or from a company, people think that the company is trying to sell something to him or her, regardless of whatever the tweet contains (Malhotra, Malhotra, & See, 2012). However, retweets can generate indirect but positive word of mouth for the company (Malhotra et al., 2012). According to Malhotra et al. (2012), in addition to reaching more potential customers, retweets can create implicit, and often explicit, endorsement. Thus, retweet works as a form of social promotion in which followers become promoters of the brand within their own personal social networks and also validate it by passing it along (Malhotra et al., 2012).

Kwon and Sung (2011) reported that by using retweets, marketer communicate directly with the consumers and continue their relationship. This finding showed that a continuing relationship foster consumers’ retweet intention as marketers are personally involved with them. Individuals who have strong relationship with a brand would consider it a duty to share knowledge and thus would retweet the brand messages. (Wasko & Faraj, 2005). A study conducted by Kim, Sung and Kang (2014) also revealed that brand followers who have close relationships with brands are more likely to retweet brand tweets to their followers than their counterparts.

Esch, Langner, Schmitt and Geus (2006) confirmed that brand relationship has a strong relationship on consumers purchase behavior. For long-term brand success, brand relationship

variables, such as brand trust, brand satisfaction and brand attachment, play important roles in purchasing behavior. Li and Li (2014) also suggested that brand-consumer relationship orientation influence consumers to retweet brand messages. Therefore, we predict that relation with the brand has influence on retweet intention and retweet intention has influence on purchase intention.

H5: The X/Twitter users' relation to the twitted brand account has positive association with their retweet intention.

H6: The X/Twitter users' relation to the twitted brand account has positive association with their purchase intention.

Retweet Intention → Purchase Intention Path

Andrew (2011) reported that consumers retweet intention is positively associated with their purchase intention. Gong, Zhang, Zhao and Jiang (2014) found significant influence of retweeting on purchase intention. Their experiment on Weibo showed that both companies tweets and influential retweets have significant and substantial impact on the sales of the company's shows and boost show viewing by 77% and 33% respectively. Retweets increased their show viewing by reaching their own followers and this process was more effective if the original company tweet is informative. Again, influential retweets brought new followers to the company, which in turn amplified the effect of company tweets and increased show viewing indirectly (Gong et al., 2014). Thus, it can be predicted that users' retweet intention has positive impact on their purchase intention.

H7: The X/Twitter users' retweet intention has positive association with their purchase intention.

3 METHOD

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

This study is based on the United States of America as X/X/Twitter is particularly popular in the United States with 106.23 million users in the country followed by Japan and India with 69 million and 25 million users respectively.⁴ Two hundred and seventy-two students at a Midwestern University at USA participated in the study voluntarily. The survey was conducted in a classroom setting and participants were asked to fill out paper questionnaires. Questionnaire were developed based on a clothing brand of United States. Young student sample are methodologically appropriate for the current study as they represent a significant segment of the X/Twitter users worldwide. According to Statista (2024), the age distribution of 70 percent global X/Twitter users are between 18 years to 34 years.⁵ This segment also represents fraction of the population with new media skills and heavy internet user (Chen, Clifford, & Wells, 2002; Rodgers, Jin, Rettie, Alpert, & Yoon, 2005; Yang, Zhou, & Liu, 2010). In addition, student sample is good for the studies that deal with brand evaluations and purchase intentions in social media settings (Naylor, Lamberton, & West, 2012). Therefore, students were approached for this study.

After cleaning the dataset, a total of 224 samples were used for data analysis. Males and females comprised 27.7% and 72.3% of respondents respectively. Most of the respondents fall in the 19-22 years old age group, where the mean age was 21 years. Participants reported that they spend an average of more than 41 minutes on X/Twitter per day ($M = 41.67$, $SD = 45.163$). Participants also reported that they send an average of more than 10 tweet messages ($M = 10.68$, $SD = 45.340$) and 14 retweet messages per week ($M = 14.54$, $SD = 68.116$).

⁴ Statista Research Department (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/242606/number-of-active-twitter-users-in-selected-countries/>

⁵ Statista (2024) retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1498204/distribution-of-users-on-twitter-worldwide-age-and-gender/>

3.2 Measurement of Variables

In order to measure the factors regarding the effect of commercial tweeted message on users' purchase intention, the study used six constructs – Twitter usage, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, relationship to the brand X/Twitter account, attitude toward the brand and intention to retweet and intention to purchase. Twitter usage was measured with three factors of Chen's (2011) study: number of minutes they spend actively on Twitter per day, number of total tweets they post per week, number of total retweets they post per week. Rest of the measures are presented in Table 1. All the items were measured with 7-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), as higher scores reflect more or higher levels of the construct.

Table 1 Summary of Measurements with Mean, Standard Deviation, Cronbach Alpha

Constructs	Measures
Extrinsic Motivation	<p>I will receive a financial reward for performing well on Twitter. (Hung et al., 2011)</p> <p>Others were aware of the quality of my performance on Twitter.</p> <p>When I share my knowledge through Twitter, I believe that I will get an answer when I give an answer.</p> <p>When I share my knowledge through Twitter, I expect somebody to respond when I'm in need.</p> <p>When I contribute knowledge to Twitter, I expect to get back knowledge when I need it.</p> <p>When I share my knowledge through Twitter, I believe that my queries for knowledge will be answered in the future.</p> <p>($M = 3.397$, $SD = 1.166$, $Cronbach's \alpha = .832$)</p>
Intrinsic Motivation	<p>I enjoy sharing my knowledge with others through Twitter. (Hung et al., 2011)</p> <p>I enjoy helping others by sharing my knowledge through Twitter.</p>

	It feels good to help someone else by sharing my knowledge through Twitter. Sharing my knowledge with others through Twitter gives me pleasure. ($M = 4.609, SD = 1.472, Cronbach's \alpha = .929$)	
Attitude Toward Brand	The brand is ... Bad-Good Dislikable-Likable Unpleasant-Pleasant ($M = 3.720, SD = 1.312, Cronbach's \alpha = .915$)	(Mitchell, 1986)
Relation to the Branded Twitter Account	I really like the brand's Twitter account. I get along with people from the brand's Twitter account. I consider the people from the brand's Twitter account my friends. ($M = 2.598, SD = 1.067, Cronbach's \alpha = .802$)	(Morhart et al., 2009)
Intention to Retweet	I would like to act on the advice that is offered in the message. I would recommend the advice on Twitter to others. I would Retweet the brand information to my acquaintances. ($M = 2.701, SD = 1.438, Cronbach's \alpha = .850$)	(Lee & Sundar, 2013)
Intention to Purchase	I have strong possibility to purchase the brand's product. I'm likely to purchase the brand's product I have high intention to purchase the brand's product. ($M = 1.711, SD = 1.063, Cronbach's \alpha = .966$)	(Chandon et al., 2005; Hung et al, 2011; Schlosser et al., 2006).
Twitter Usage	Number of minutes I spend actively on Twitter per day Number of total tweets I post per week Number of total retweets I post per week Number of followers I have on Twitter Number of people I follow on Twitter Number of years I have been using Twitter for	Chen, 2011

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

4 Analysis

4.1 Measurement Model Evaluation

In the context of SEM, confirmatory factor analysis serves as a robust statistical technique to validate the measurement model by assessing whether the observed variables align with the hypothesized latent constructs. In this study, CFA was conducted using AMOS 18 to evaluate the full measurement model. The analysis revealed that all indicators significantly loaded on their respective latent constructs, with p-values less than .01, indicating a strong relationship between the observed variables and their corresponding constructs. Table 2 presents the correlations among the latent constructs within the measurement model. Here, all correlation coefficients were below the recommended threshold of .70 (Tabachnik and Fidell, 2001). This finding indicates that multicollinearity is not a significant concern within the model, allowing for clearer interpretations of the relationships among constructs.

The convergent and discriminant validity of the latent constructs were examined. Convergent validity was checked in two ways – 1) checking factor loading of each item to the latent constructs, and 2) checking AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value, which should be higher than .05. As stated, all items were significantly loaded to the correspondent latent constructs ($p < .001$), and all latent constructs' AVEs were greater than .05.

Table 2 *Correlation, Covariance and Variance Matrix for Latent Constructs*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. EM	1.962	1.301	-.033	.190	.213	.262	.165
2. IM	.644	2.078	-.156	.273	.032	.254	.095

3.	ATT	-.022	-.099	1.189	.021	.485	.146	.536
4.	Usage	.364	.507	.052	.139	.013	.057	.032
5.	REL	.166	.024	.486	.039	.837	.231	.466
6.	RT	.165	.155	.119	.135	.223	1.284	.496
7.	PI	.105	.059	.440	.076	.456	.392	1.247

Note: All correlation coefficients are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Note: EM – Extrinsic Motivation, IM – Intrinsic Motivation, ATT – Attitude, REL – Relationship to Branded Twitter Account, RT – Retweet Intention, PI – Purchasing Intention.

Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the square root of the AVE for each construct with the correlations between constructs (Fornell and Larcker , 1981). The square root of the AVE should be greater than the correlations with other constructs, which was confirmed in this analysis, indicating that the constructs are distinct from one another. All AVE estimates of latent constructs were greater than the MSV and ASV estimates as shown in Table 3. Thus, both convergent and discriminant validity of latent constructs were obtained.

Table 3 *Test of Convergent and Discriminant Validity of Latent Variables*

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
EM	.911	.719	.415	.102
IM	.934	.779	.415	.118
Usage	.777	.544	.257	.070
ATT	.917	.788	.236	.076
REL	.715	.556	.236	.087
RI	.865	.686	.154	.048

PI .966 .905 .208 .096

Note: EM – Extrinsic Motivation, IM – Intrinsic Motivation, ATT – Attitude, REL – Relationship to Branded Twitter Account, RT – Retweet Intention, PI – Purchasing Intention.

4.2 Structural Equation Model Evaluation

Table 4 reports the parameter estimates of the SEM. Table 4 shows that only extrinsic motivation was positively associated with the construct “relation to the branded Twitter account,” lending support for H1. However, intrinsic motivations does not have any significant association with the banded Tweeter account making H2 unsupported. Next, attitude toward brand was positively associated the construct relation to the branded Twitter account, confirming H3. Nevertheless, no statistically significant association was found between Twitter usage and relation to the branded Twitter account. Thus, H4 was not supported. Relation to the branded Twitter account was positively associated with both retweet intention and purchase intention, supporting H5 and H6. Lastly, retweet intention and brand purchase intention shown statistically significant association leading to support H7.

Table 4 *Analysis of Structural Model*

Relationship From → To	Model	
	Unstd.	Std.
H1: Extrinsic Motivation → Relation	.143*	.224
H2: Intrinsic Motivation → Relation	-.025	-.040
H3: Attitude → Relation	.453*	.549
H4: Usage → Relation	-.081	-.034
H5: Relation → Retweet Intention	.296*	.236
H6: Relation → Purchase Intention	.578*	.463
H7: Retweet Intention → Purchase Intention	.274*	.734

<i>Goodness-of-fit indices</i>	
χ^2 (d.f.)	348.621(196)
χ^2 /d.f. ratio	1.779
Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	.846
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	.911
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	.951
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	.959
RMSEA	.059

^a $p > .05$

^b $p < .05$

^c All other parameters are significant at $p < .01$.

The goodness-of-fit indices suggest that the model fit the data appropriately; $\chi^2 = 348.621$, d.f. = 196, $p < .001$, χ^2 /df ratio = 1.779; AGFI = .846; NFI = .911; TLI = .951; CFI = .959; RMSEA = .059. Goodness-of-fit indices are also presented in table 4.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

This study was designed to investigate how X/Twitter messages can affect users' intention to retweet and purchase intentions. Based on extant literature this study focused on three factors (motivational factor, brand attitude factor and Twitter usage factor) as important antecedents for intention to retweet and purchase intention. Additionally, this study used 'users' relationship with branded X/Twitter account' as mediator to examine extended relationship.

Findings suggests that five out of seven hypothesized relationships were supported. With regards to motivational factors, extrinsic motivations were directly associated with users' relationship with branded X/Twitter account, whereas intrinsic motivations had no significant association with consumers purchase intention. The findings aligns with the concept of extrinsic exchange relationships rather than intrinsic satisfaction. That means X/Twitter users of the current study are inclined to the external outcomes of having relationship with the branded X/Twitter account, rather to have internal satisfaction of just maintaining a relationship with the brand account. These outcomes on X/Twitter platform can be explained from two perspectives. First, literature on interpersonal relationship and communal norms can be important here. According to Li and Li (2014), a Twitter user establishes either an exchange or a communal relationship. Exchange relationships demand give and take of benefits and are most likely to develop among strangers and business partners, whereas communal relationships impose no give and take obligations and take place among family members and friends (Clark & Mills, 1994). In X/Twitter, users may develop exchange relationship with the branded accounts through mutual exchange and fulfillment of commitments (Gronroos, 1990, p. 5). Tweets from different brand frequently offer external stimulus, such as promotional offers, important brand-related information and updates, etc. Users, in exchange, follow the branded accounts or share brand contents to have benefits. Hence, there exists a commercial context. Therefore, extrinsic motivations are likely to have association with building relationship with branded X/Twitter accounts in this study. Conversely, X/Twitter users in the study may not find it satisfactory enough to just share branded tweets or follow branded accounts without any stimulus and find the relationship less communal. Thus, they were not intrinsically motivated to develop relationship with branded accounts. Secondly, these results can also be explained from usage and brand familiarity perspective. Compared to non-users

or light users, heavy or regular X/Twitter users may become more familiar and more experienced with certain brands (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Hargittai, 2007; Li & Li, 2014) and such usage and familiarity can develop a communal relationship among users and the branded account (Li & Li, 2014). Due to either non-familiarity or light usage or both, respondents of the study might not have inclined enough intrinsically to develop relation with the account.

As expected, brand attitude is directly associated with users' relation with branded X/Twitter account. This result confirms the earlier research on positive association between attitude toward brand and relationship with the brand (e.g., Chang & Chieng, 2006) and also positive association between attitude toward brand and a branded social media site, X/Twitter. Later result would be a significant addition to current literatures, as very few studies have been conducted in this arena. This result implies that brand evaluations, either through existing brand cognition or message cognition, are capable of influencing relationship development with the X/Twitter account itself. As we can see, brands try to build positive cognitions and attitude by providing both informational and entertainment experiences through their X/Twitter accounts and messages. Such experiences are fundamental for building relation with brand and, thus, with branded X/Twitter accounts (e.g., Evard & Aurier, 1996; Franzen, 1999).

However, X/Twitter usage factor did not seem to have any association with relationship. The degree or intensity of using one's own X/Twitter account, in terms of time, number of tweets and retweets, basically appeared insignificant when it comes to the question of having relationship with a specific brand account. One explanation of this result would be that the heavy X/Twitter users of the current study may not be the heavy followers of branded X/Twitter accounts or are least interested to interact with the commercial messages of such accounts. Such behavior can decline the likelihood of developing a relation.

Rest of the hypotheses, which focus on user-branded account relation to behavioral intention, were also significant, confirming previous researches. Results show that relation with branded X/Twitter account was positively associated with both retweet intention and purchase intention, mentioning a significant association between retweet and purchase intention as well. These findings, indeed, confirm the significant role of relation with X/Twitter account in achieving marketing goals. Relation not only confirmed its association with users' purchase intentions (e.g., Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Franzen, 1999) but also confirmed user's retweet intention (e.g., Kim et al., 2014; Kwon & Sung, 2011), which is considered one of the most important marketing goals on X/Twitter platform.

Overall, the hypothesized model quite appropriately explained significant associations between the independent and dependent variables. Placing relation paradigm between antecedents and users' behavioral intentions in a model showed fairly a good fit, raising the model's academic and practical applicability. The primary theoretical contribution of the study supports the proposition that motivational theory (extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors) plays a crucial role in predicting user's behavioral intentions on X/Twitter. This study proposed a model to predict consumers' engagement through brand retweet and their intentions to purchase, which can be further tested for other SNS sites. Relationship norms using motivational theory are added to the proposed model to aid a new lens of thinking about social media sites from communication and marketing perspectives. This study builds upon the traditional technology adoption model (TAM) by replacing the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use with intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. The findings suggest that while functionality of SNS platforms remain important, consumers engagement and intention to purchase is increasingly driven by value exchange propositions (e.g. promotional incentives and perceived brand benefits). Furthermore, this study challenges the existing role of intrinsic motivational factors in brand-engagement on SNS platforms. Prior research suggested that intrinsic motivational factors such as personal enjoyment, community

belongingness, and self-expression plays vital role in social media interactions (Shang, et. al. 2005, Agrifoglio et al. 2012). However, this study reveals that in the context of X/Twitter, users are more likely to engage if there are clear extrinsic motivational factors, such as exclusive offers, incentives, or tangible rewards supporting extant literature (Pellegrino Abe, and Shannon, 2022; Wellman, Stodt, Tully, & Ekdale, 2020) These findings posit the shifting nature of consumers-brand engagement behavior on SNS platforms as it has moved towards more value-driven engagement rather than mere intrinsic satisfaction. These has crucial implication for refining existing consumer-brand interaction theories of marketing.

The findings of the study also bear managerial implications. First, X/Twitter, as the most popular micro-blogging site, has turned into a viable marketing channels to interact with consumers and build communities in order to form a strong relationship with the brand. In other words, brands are now trying to create interaction, engagement, and relationship with their consumers via X/Twitter (Enginkaya & Yılmaz, 2014). Therefore, understanding how X/Twitter messages aid marketing outcomes and which factors play influential roles would be prominent for marketers to develop effective branded tweet strategies. According to the study result, focusing more on creating extrinsic stimuli and elements of positive brand evaluation in messages would aid marketers. So, while creating a message for X/Twitter, the importance of attractive and meaningful content with appropriate external stimuli should be considered.

The study has a few limitations. First, the study is limited to a certain age group ranging from 18 to 24 and therefore, the results cannot be generalized beyond this specific age segment. In addition, as the study was conducted in one university campus based in US, therefore, the study results cannot be generalized to other countries. Future research may find interesting and important results regarding the factors by including people from different age group and from different locations. Although the study focused on X/Twitter platform, the model can be applied to other

social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) to find out its appropriateness from a theoretical point of view.

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Appendix: Sample Questionnaire

In this section, we would like you to look at a tweet from an actual Twitter account of a real brand. You will see a tweet of a profile maintained by **Abercrombie & Fitch**, a real clothing brand of the United States. **Please look closely at the information featured on their Tweet and answer the following questions as honestly as possible.**



Perception of the Number

1. I perceive the number of retweets shown in the above tweet as high.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Brand Familiarity

a) I have heard of the brand Abercrombie & Fitch.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b) Fashion brand Abercrombie & Fitch is familiar to me.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I am familiar with Abercrombie & Fitch brand in Twitter.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Attitude toward Brand

Abercrombie & Fitch is...

1. Bad

Good

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Dislikable

Likable

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Unpleasant

Pleasant

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Relation to Brand Twitter Account

1. I really like the Abercrombie & Fitch’s brand Twitter account.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I get along with people from Abercrombie & Fitch’s brand Twitter account.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I consider the people from Abercrombie & Fitch’s brand Twitter account as my friends.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Extrinsic Motivation

1. I will receive a financial reward for performing well on Twitter.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Others were aware of the quality of my performance on Twitter.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. When I share my knowledge through Twitter, I believe that I will get an answer when I give an answer.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. When I share my knowledge through Twitter, I expect somebody to respond when I'm in need.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. When I contribute knowledge to Twitter, I expect to get back knowledge when I need it.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. When I share my knowledge through Twitter, I believe that my queries for knowledge will be answered in the future.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Intrinsic motivation

1. I enjoy sharing my knowledge with others through Twitter.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I enjoy helping others by sharing my knowledge through Twitter.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. It feels good to help someone else by sharing my knowledge through Twitter.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Sharing my knowledge with others through Twitter gives me pleasure.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Intention to Retweet

1. I would like to act on the advice that is offered in the message.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I would recommend the advice on Twitter to others.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I would Retweet the brand information to my acquaintances.

Strongly disagree**Strongly agree**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please answer the following questions based on the above tweet

Purchase Intention

1. I have strong possibility to purchase Abercrombie & Fitch's product.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I'm likely to purchase Abercrombie & Fitch's product.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I have high intention to purchase Abercrombie & Fitch's product.

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please answer the following questions

Demographics

1. What is your gender?

a-Male

b-Female

2. How old are you?

() years old

3. Education

a. Freshman

b. Sophomore

c. Junior

d. Senior

e. Graduate

THANK YOU