Instagram, Facebook or Twitter: Which Engages Best? A Comparative Study of Consumer Brand Engagement and Social Commerce Purchase Intention

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Abstract

Social media networks compete with each other, and they make an effort to increase their number of users while at the same time trying to create engagement. That is because a social media brand with high engagement creates high commitment and that leads to satisfying its business partners. This also increases the social commerce through that social media brand. Social commerce is defined as the commercial activities through social media channels, and it is a subdimension of online commerce. The new realities increased the interest towards social commerce through social networks and made it valuable to explore for both practical and academic environments. This study aims to investigate social media engagement regarding social media networks and explore the relationship between social media engagement and social commerce purchase intention. In the light of these objectives, a survey was conducted to collect the data and shared through social media networks. Hypotheses in the research were analyzed by using independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and multiple regressions. Results showed social media networks differ according to consumer brand engagement. Also, consumer brand engagement differs according to age, education level, and income level. Another result proves that consumer brand engagement differs according to social media usage frequency and time spent using social media. Furthermore, social commerce purchase intention differs according to the social media networks. Finally, the study found that there is a positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and social commerce purchase intention.

Keywords: Consumer Brand Engagement, Social Commerce, Social Media Marketing

Introduction

Consumer brand engagement (CBE) represents the specific brand interactions of consumers' in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). This engagement can be observed through social media networks (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media networks are not just the channels that people interact with each other by creating a profile page, but also they have become the platforms that provide new business models and thus made the emergence of social commerce concept possible (Liang & Turban, 2011). Studies on social commerce started to increase after 2010 and 110 different studies have been carried out by the end of 2015 (Busalim & Hussin, 2016a). The objectives of most of these studies are related to the conceptualization of social commerce, understanding consumer behavior in this context and investigating the interface of the websites that make social commerce. Busalim & Hussin (2016a) indicate that in the studies they investigated, there is only one of them emphasizes on consumer engagement in social commerce. The common social networks have their own construct, and culture and therefore, they have different engagement levels (Clark, Black, & Judson, 2017; Smith, Fischer, & Yongjian, 2012). A study takes these differences into account is expected to contribute to both academic and managerial areas.

From this point of view, the primary objective of this research is to compare the engagement levels of social media networks and explore the relationship between these engagements with social commerce. In this context, the fundamental questions of the research are:

RQ1: Is there a difference between social media networks regarding consumer engagement?

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RQ2: Does high consumer engagement turn into high social commerce purchase intention?

RQ3: Which social media network user tends to purchase in social commerce?

The study starts with the literature review of consumer brand engagement and social commerce concepts and continues with organizing research model and building research model and hypotheses. After giving information related to sampling, method, and analyses, hypotheses were tested. The results have been evaluated from academic and managerial points.

Literature Review

Service-Dominant Marketing and Consumer Brand Engagement

Consumer brand engagement (also known as customer brand engagement) is a concept that is supported by service dominant marketing theory and appeared in the literature in the 2000s (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011). In service dominant marketing, customers take part in producing the service as a result of the engagement with customers. Together with this, the element that determines the value of the product is associated with the satisfaction level of customer (Erdoğan, Tiltay, & Kimzan, 2011). From this point of view, consumer engagement is a reflection of customer's particular psychological state induced by the customer's interactive experiences with a brand or platform (Brodie et al., 2011).

Nowadays social media prominently affects every area of life as it is a new form of communication (Klososky, 2011), it also started to influence purchase decision (Pongpaew, Speece, & Tiangsoongnern, 2017). The social media platforms that offer their users engagement remain on the agenda of marketers. At present time, brands try to manage a range of processes that start from identity creation on social networks, blogs, and other digital tools and continue with customer service in the frame of social media marketing (Kırcova & Enginkaya, 2015). Therefore, nowadays consumer engagement means consumers' experiences on social media platforms and accordingly reflections of their psychological states.

Fundamentally consumer engagement has three dimensions: a) cognitive processing b) affection c) activation. Cognitive processing is "a consumer's level of brand-related thought processing and elaboration in a particular consumer/brand interaction". As consumer's cognitive processing capacity increases, the engagement also increases. Affection is defined as "a consumer's degree of positive brand-related affect in a particular consumer/brand interaction." Finally, activation is "a consumer's level of energy, effort and time spent on a brand in a particular consumer/brand interaction." (Hollebeek et al., 2014)

Engagement in social platforms includes how consumers use, share and talk about the content related to brand and company (Kırcova & Enginkaya, 2015). The first expectation of brands that use social media marketing is users' adaptation and contribution to the content and engaging with the brand (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). Nowadays most of the consumers engage with brands through social media and brands also use social media networks as customer services and as a fundamental contact point with consumers (Clark et al., 2017).

When the penetration rate of social networks are investigated, we can see that the most used social networks are Facebook (%63), Instagram (%27) and Twitter (%22) (Smartinsight, 2017). In Turkey, most used social networks are Facebook, Twitter and Google+ while Instagram is the fifth most used social network after Youtube and it is the most developing one (Statista, 2017). In the consumer researches that were carried out on social media networks, it was found that the users of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter differentiate according to some dimensions (Clark et al., 2017). However, this differentiation was not investigated from the point of engagement.

This study investigates consumer engagement of three most prominent social networks comparatively. In this context, first three hypotheses are related to the differentiation of consumer engagement according to social media networks, socio-demographic variables, and social media usage habits.

H1: Consumer brand engagement differs according to social media networks.

H2: Consumer brand engagement differs according to socio-demographic variables.

H3: Consumer brand engagement differs according to social media usage habits.

Engagement and Social Commerce Purchase Intention

The fact that the social media networks like Facebook and Twitter become popular opened the way for a new e-business distribution channel named social commerce (Liang, Ho, Li, & Turban, 2011). Social commerce can be defined as doing commercial transactions through social media networks. Nowadays many e-commerce firms aim to reach the global market by moving their commercial activities to social media (Zhou, Zhang, & Zimmermann, 2013).

Social commerce concept has been increasingly popular in the recent years. For instance, there are 25 million commercial profiles worldwide as of December 2017. This number was 15 million in June 2017. Nowadays, %80 of people on Instagram follow a business profile and %25 of people on Instagram (equals to 200 million people) visit a commercial page every day. These facts point that social commerce has become an area that companies are especially interested in (Instagram-Press, 2017).

Academic studies related to social commerce increased after Yahoo introduced common shopping interface named social commerce for the first time in 2005. It is identified that there are 110 studies in years 2010-2015. Most of these studies focused on user behavior on social commerce, social commerce models, website designs, security and firm performance (Busalim & Hussin, 2016b). With the development of social commerce concept, consumers' intention of shopping through social media networks often became subject of studies. These studies generally focused on perceived trust, risk and social support (Farivar, Turel, & Yuan, 2017; S Kim & Park, 2013; Liang et al., 2011).

It is observed that firms engage with consumers in an attempt to stay connected with them. In a research, it is found that marketers should especially invest more in Facebook and Twitter to reach customers and engage more with them (Smith et al., 2012). Therefore social media engagement has become an essential element for both marketing and sales activities. From this point of view, it is expected that as social network engagement increases, purchase intention in social commerce also increases.

Social media increasingly become a part of life and studies prove that it affects purchasing decisions together with daily socialization needs. Various studies indicate that social media explains %18 to %79 of social commerce (Abed, Dwivedi, & Williams, 2017). For instance, Kim & Park (2013) found that trust in social media explains %33 of social commerce purchase intention. Another study specifies that perceived commercial risk and trust in website explain %54 of social commerce purchase intention (Farivar et al., 2017).

The primary objective of social commerce is gaining benefit through social networks. This benefit is measured by determining purchase intention which is an indicator of consumer behavior (Liang et al., 2011). In this context, H4 and H5 are as follows:

H4: Social commerce purchase intention differs according to social media networks.

H5: There is a positive relationship between social commerce purchase intention and consumer brand engagement.

Methodology

The selection of social networks used in the research

It has been 20 years since the first big social network website opened. According to the classification of Boyd & Ellison (2007), social network sites that become widespread in 1997, nowadays has turned into a global network that includes 2.46 billion people (Statista, 2017). Facebook has become the most crowded community in the world with its more than 2 billion users after ten years of its establishment which is 2005 (Huffington Post, 2015).

In the world, Facebook (%94) is the primary social media network that businesses use for marketing purposes, and Twitter (%68), Linkedin (%56) and Instagram (%54) follows it (StatistaX, 2017). Although Instagram appeared lastly, Instagram is expected to be in the first three social networks in the year 2018 with its pace. Therefore it can be seen that the most important and primary tools for social commerce transactions are Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

According to a research carried out by Hootsuite, more than 1/3 of the world uses social media networks as of 2017, and the networks increase their user numbers annually %21. Turkey is the 12th country that has the biggest user number with its penetration rate of %60.

Similar to the world, the most used social media networks in Turkey are Youtube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (We Are Social, 2017). This research was carried out on the most used social networks in Turkey and the world in the context of social commerce. The research involves the first three networks Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Youtube was excluded since it focuses on video.

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Variables of the Research

Studies on social media engagement fundamentally have two different approaches:

The studies focusing on the reactions of consumers (number of likes, number of comments, follower number etc.) to the posts made by Brand X or Brand Group X's account in social media networks (Malhotra, Scholar, Hill, & Malhotra, n.d.; Mishra & Mishra, 2017; Olczak & Sobczyk, 2013; Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013).
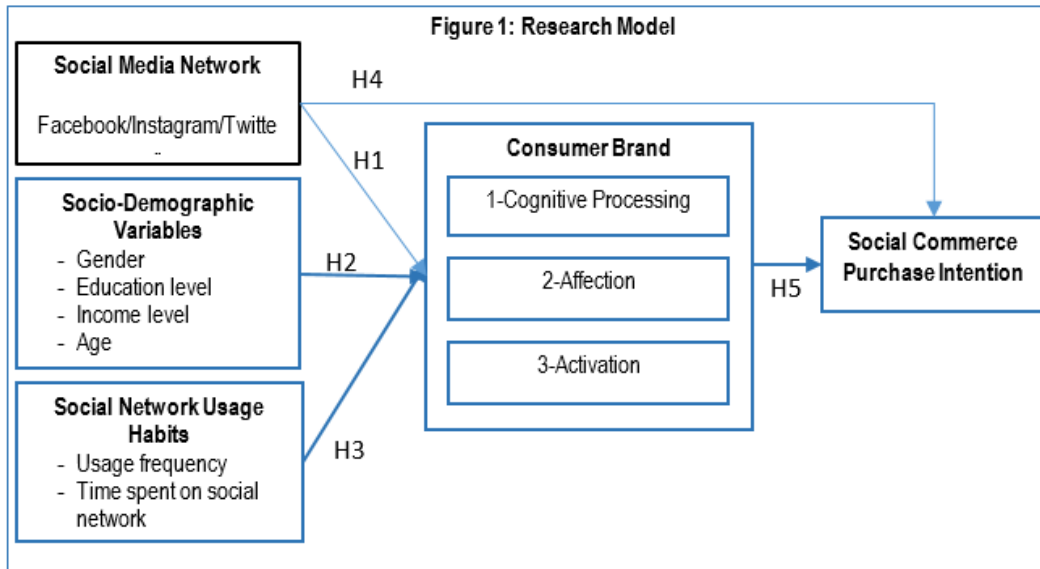
The studies focusing on consumers' declaration related with engagement based on the personal experiment on social media (Clark et al., 2017; Enginkaya & Esen, n.d.; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Kabadayi & Price, 2014; Pongpaew et al., 2017).

This study follows the second approach. Therefore, in this research Hollebeek et al.'s (2004) social media engagement measure was used. The scale has three dimensions: cognitive processing, affective and activation. This study also used Kim & Park's (2013) social commerce purchase intention scale.

The research was carried out with an online survey. In the first question, participants were asked which social media network they use the most. According to this answer, they were given a specially designed survey. This means, participants only answer the questions related to the social media they use the most. Tablo 1 shows the details of three-dimensional consumer brand engagement (CBE) and one dimension purchase intention (PI) scales.

Table 1: Measures of The Research	
CBE_Cognitive Processing	1.1 Using F/I/T gets me to think about F/I/T.
	1.2 Using F/I/T stimulates my interest to learn more about F/I/T.
	1.3 I think about F/I/T a lot when I'm using it.
CBE_Affection	2.1 I feel very positive when I use F/I/T.
	2.2 Using F/I/T makes me happy.
	2.3 I feel good when I use F/I/T.
	2.4 I'm proud to use F/I/T.
TME_Activation	3.1 I spend a lot of time using F/I/T, compared to other professional social networking sites.
	3.2 Whenever I'm using professional social networking sites, I usually use F/I/T.
	3.3 F/I/T is one of the brands I usually use when I use professional social networking sites.
Purchase Intention	I am likely to purchase products on F/I/T
	Given the opportunity, I would consider purchasing products on F/I/T in the future.
	It is likely that I will actually purchase products on F/I/T in the near future.
	Given the opportunity, I intend to purchase products on F/I/T.

Research Model and Hypotheses

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Figure 1: Research Model

Consumer brand engagement, social commerce purchase intention, choice of the social media network, socio-demographic variables (gender, education level, income level, and age), social network usage habits (frequency, time spent on the social network) are included in the research model. Figure 1 demonstrates the research model of the study.

The hypotheses of the research are as follows:

H1: Consumer brand engagement differs according to social media networks.

H2: Consumer brand engagement differs according to socio-demographic variables.

$H_{2.1}$: Consumer brand engagement differs according to gender.

$H_{2.2}$: Consumer brand engagement differs according to education level.

$H_{2.3}$: Consumer brand engagement differs according to income level.

$H_{2.4}$: Consumer brand engagement differs according to age.

H3: Consumer brand engagement differs according to social media usage habits.

$H_{3.1}$: Consumer brand engagement differs according to usage frequency.

$H_{3.2}$: Consumer brand engagement differs according to time spent on the social network.

H4: Social commerce purchase intention differs according to social media networks.

H5: There is a positive relationship between social commerce purchase intention and consumer brand engagement.

Sampling and Data Collection Method

Users who define their most used social network as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter aged above 18 are the population of this research. A sample group who declares to use the related social networks was chosen to reach the population. Convenience sampling method which is suitable for exploratory research was used. Although this study investigates causal relationships, "social commerce" area is still open for exploring, and it still improves. Therefore convenience sampling can be chosen despite the limitations.

After the data collection process, 408 valid surveys were obtained. The study used the commonly used sampling formula; $n=\pi(1-\pi)/(e/Z)$ (Kurtuluş, 2004). In the light of this, the necessary sample size for this research is 384 (%5 standard error and %95 confidence interval Z=1, 96). The number of variables in the study can also be taken into account while

determining the sample size. Accordingly, minimum participant number must be at least ten times of statements investigated in the research (Hair et al. 2014). Since the measurements in this research have 14 statements, minimum sample size should be above 140. Therefore the obtained sample size can be accepted. A pilot study with 20 people was carried out to test the clarity of survey questions. As a result of the pilot test, some misunderstandings were corrected. The final survey consists of 4 parts and 22 questions. The data was analyzed with SPSS 23. Independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and multiple regressions were used.

Analysis and Findings

Sample Characteristics

Table 2 demonstrates the characteristics of the sample. %66 of the sample mostly uses Instagram, %22 of them mostly uses Facebook and %12 of them mostly uses Twitter. %57 of the participants are women, %64 of them graduated from high school (university student), %60 of them has income 3500 TL and below, %65 of them are aged between 18-23. When their usage habits are investigated, it can be seen that %50 of the participants frequently use social media while %43 of them spend more than one hour on their most used social network.

Table 2: Sample Characteristics

Variables		N	Percent (%)	CBE Mean	Value (t/F)	Sig.	Result
Most used social network	Facebook	90	22	3,16	14,600	0,000	H 1: Accept
	Instagram	270	66	3,59			
	Twitter	48	12	3,30			
Gender	Woman	232	57	3,48	1,824	0,069	$H_{2.1}$: Reject
	Man	176	43	3,43			
Education Level	High school and below	261	64	3,61	18,253	0,000	H 2.2: Accept
	University	83	20	3,14			
	Post graduate	64	16	3,25			
Monthly household income	2.000 TL and below	126	31	3,51	4,312	0,005	H 2.3: Accept
	2.001 – 3.500 TL	118	29	3,61			
	3.501 – 5.000 TL	71	17	3,31			
	5.001 TL and above	93	23	3,32			
Age	18 - 23	264	65	3,61	9,990	0,000	H 2.4: Accept
	24 - 29	44	11	3,37			
	30 - 35	24	6	3,09			
	36 - 41	35	9	3,03			
	42 and above	41	10	3,18			
Usage Frequency	1-3 times in a day	96	24	3,07	24,769	0,000	H 3.1: Accept
	4-6 times in a day	110	27	3,42			
	7 times or more in a day	202	50	3,67			
Time spent on social network	Less than 30 minutes in a day	93	23	3,13	25,156	0,000	H 3.2: Accept
	30-60 minutes in a day	140	34	3,35			
	More than 60 minutes in a day	175	43	3,72			

Validity and Reliability Analyses

Factor analysis was used to test the validity of the scales used in the research. KMO values for consumer brand engagement scale and purchase intention scale 0,813 and 0,852, respectively. Table 3 and Tablo 4 show factor analyses result for CBE and purchase intention scale, respectively. Consumer brand engagement scale has three dimensions and explains %74, 3 of the total variance while purchase intention scale has one dimension and explains %82,61 of the total variance.

Table 3: Result of the Factor Analysis- CBE Scale

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Statements/ Factors	Affective	Activation	Cognitive Processing
CBE_AF3	0,85	0,28	0,10
CBE_AF2	0,82	0,35	0,16
CBE_AF1	0,82	0,14	0,25
CBE_AF4	0,72	(0,03)	0,20
CBE_AC3	0,10	0,87	0,05
CBE_AC2	0,15	0,85	0,05
CBE_AC1	0,21	0,81	0,06
CBE_CP1	0,10	0,02	0,88
CBE_CP3	0,29	(0,03)	0,82
CBE_CP2	0,19	0,17	0,82

Table 4: Result of the Factor Analysis- Purchase Intention Scale

Statements	Factor Loadings
PI4	0,94
PI3	0,93
PI2	0,92
PI1	0,84

Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability of the scales used in the research. Reliability of consumer brand engagement scale is 0,839 and reliability of purchase intention scale is 0,929. No statement in the scales was removed. Table 5 shows the details.

Table 5: Test Result Related to the Scales

Variable	Statement	Statement Avg.	Avg.	Cronbach-Alfa	Total Variance Explained (%)	Pearson Correlation			
						CBE_CP	CBE_AF	CBE_AC	PI
CBE General		3,46	3,46	0,839	74,30				,379**
CBE Cognitive Processing	CBE_CP1	3,03	2,97	0,828	42,20	1,000			
	CBE_CP2	3,13							
	CBE_CP3	2,74							
CBE Affection	CBE_AF1	3,47	3,24	0,862	19,56	,430**	1,000		
	CBE_AF2	3,61							
	CBE_AF3	3,56							
	CBE_AF4	2,33							
CBE Activation	CBE_AC1	4,22	4,25	0,825	12,54	,151**	,390**	1,000	
	CBE_AC2	4,25							
	CBE_AC3	4,27							
Purchase Intention	PI1	2,69	2,72	0,929	82,61	,310**	,308**	,219**	1,000
	PI2	2,72							
	PI3	2,71							
	PI4	2,78							

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

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Results of correlation analyses show that all three dimensions of consumer brand dimensions are in a linear relationship with social commerce purchase intention. Cognitive processing dimension has the highest correlation (0,310); affective dimension (0,308) and activation dimension (0,219) follow it. Consumer brand engagement in general also has a positive relationship with social commerce purchase intention (0,379).

Results of Hypotheses

The first hypothesis was accepted after applying one way ANOVA. As seen in Table 2, Instagram (3, 59) has the highest engagement when compared to two other social media networks (3, 16-3, 30).

In order to test the second hypothesis, t-test was used for gender and one way ANOVA was used for the three other variables. According to the results, consumer brand engagement does not differ according to gender but differs according to age, education and income level. Therefore, $H_{2.1}$ (sig. = 0,069) was rejected while $H_{2.2}$ (sig. = 0,000), $H_{2.3}$ (sig. = 0,000) and $H_{2.4}$ (sig. = 0,000) were accepted.

Table 2 shows that consumer brand engagement differs according to usage frequency and time spent on the social network. It can be seen that people who use social network frequently and spend more time on that network have higher engagement points as expected. Therefore $H_{3.1}$ (sig. = 0,000) and $H_{3.2}$ (sig. = 0,000) are accepted after applying one way ANOVA.

H4 was tested by applying one way ANOVA. According to the results, social commerce purchase intention differs according to the social media network. In this respect, Instagram was first with the highest average (2, 92) and Facebook (2, 54) and Twitter (1, 92) follow it. Therefore, H4 is accepted.

In order to test the last hypothesis, correlation and multiple regression analysis were applied. According to the Pearson correlation analysis that can be seen in Table 5, there is a positive relationship (0,379) between consumer brand engagement and social commerce purchase intention. Results of the regression analysis show that consumer brand engagement explains social commerce purchase intention (Table 6: R^2:0,146; F: 31,237; Sig.:0.000). Hence, H5 is accepted.

Table 6: CBE-PI Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,382[a]	,146	,140	1,16410
a. Predictors: (Constant), Activation, Cognitive Processing, Affection				

ANOVA[a]	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	93,712	3	31,237	23,051	,000[b]
	Residual	547,468	404	1,355		
	Total	641,180	407			
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Activation, Cognitive Processing, Affection						

Conclusion

Consumer brand engagement is a reflection of a consumer's psychological state that appears during the interactive experience with a brand or social media platform (Brodie et al., 2011). Nowadays consumers experience this through social media platforms. Now that social media affects daily decisions, this situation peaked, and social media currently leads the purchase decisions of consumers.

Consumer brand engagement concept is explored in literature within the scope of service-dominant marketing theory, and the concept was studied in various perspectives (Brodie et al., 2011). At present time, the fact that half of the world population use social media platforms makes brands highly interested in social media and therefore, social media have become a channel that commercial activities take place. Brands try to be influential on these platforms and strengthen their relationships with their consumers by creating high engagement. This relationship also increases trust and loyalty to the brand and consequently provides direct or indirect marketing support.

There are various studies on social commerce which is positioned as a sub-branch of electronic commerce (Liang & Turban, 2011). However, there is still need for studies that address its relationship with brand engagement. This study aims to fill the gap by addressing customer brand engagement levels according to social media platforms and its relationship with social commerce purchase intention.

Users of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are included in this research. The sample mostly comprised of young university students (%65). The sample mostly uses Instagram (%66), Facebook (%22) and Twitter (%12), respectively. Although the biggest social network is Facebook regarding the number of users, Instagram is continuously growing. It is also found in the study that especially young people choose Instagram.

Consumer brand engagement scale (Hollebeek et al., 2014) that consists of 3 dimensions and 10 statements and social commerce purchase intention scale (Kim & Park, 2013) consists of one dimension and 4 statements. The scales were valid and reliable. Later, hypotheses were tested and all hypotheses except $H_{2.1}$ were accepted.

The main focus of the study is to determine whether there is a relationship between consumer brand engagement and social commerce purchase intention since there is a gap in the literature regarding this relationship. The most important finding of the study is that there is a positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and social commerce purchase intention and consumer brand engagement can explain purchase intention in social commerce. Another finding is that this relationship differs according to social media network. High engagement means high purchase intention.

This study determined the positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and social media purchase intention as an academic contribution. The study also advises for marketing practitioners about which social media network to focus while making social media investment. Managers should understand the importance of engagement and reserve the highest budget on the social network that gets the most engagement. Even though Facebook is the biggest social network, Instagram started to attract investments with its high engagement and purchase intention rate. Findings of the study support these statements. According to the findings, the most used social network is Instagram (%66), and it also has the highest consumer brand engagement mean (3.59). Although Facebook is the second most used social network (%22), consumer brand engagement mean of Twitter (3.30) is higher than Facebook (3.16).

Although social commerce is only %10 of e-commerce (Emarketer. com, 2017), it is an area that has a potential to develop. Therefore it continues to draw the attention of both consumers and brands. Despite the fact that brands currently invest on Instagram that gives the best results (Entrepreneur.com, 2017), they used to invest in Facebook years ago, and the appearance of a new innovative platform can change the rules of the game.

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