

QATAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS' CULTURAL ORIENTATION ON MOTIVATIONS TO  
CREATE BRAND-RELATED USER GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)

BY

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## ABSTRACT

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Title: The role of individuals' cultural orientation on motivations to create brand-related user-generated content (UGC)

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Online platforms such as social media, blogs, forums and brand websites have not only enabled consumers all over the world to communicate with each other but have also enabled marketers and brands to reach out to the consumers. Consumers engage with brands by creating content in the form of pictures, videos, feedback, suggestions, views, and ideas known as User-Generated Content (UGC). Furthermore, UGC is an emerging field in the literature, where its motivations have been examined. However, there remains a gap in terms of studying individuals' cultural orientation that affects brand-related UGC creation. Moreover, consumers' cultural values play a crucial role in their behavior or actions. This study, therefore, proposes to examine the role of individuals' cultural values on motivations for brand-related UGC involvement. Data was collected through an online questionnaire and analyzed using SEM. The results of the study indicated that consumers' cultural values have a positive impact on the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for brand-related UGC involvement.

## DEDICATION

*I dedicate this thesis to my friend, Tahniyath Fatima, for her unconditional support throughout the process, without which this thesis and my success would not have been possible.*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	x
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1. Overview .....	1
1.2. Research importance .....	2
1.3. Research contributions .....	6
1.4. Research objectives .....	6
1.5. Structure of the thesis .....	7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
2.1. Introduction .....	8
2.2. User-Generated-Content (UGC) .....	8
2.3. Focus of previous UGC studies .....	9
2.4. Theories and methodologies .....	11
2.5. Identified antecedents for UGC creation .....	12
2.6. Identified consequences of UGC Creation .....	16
2.7. Theoretical framework and hypotheses development .....	20

2.7.1. Values-Attitude-Behavior model .....	20
2.7.2. Brand-related UGC involvement on social media platforms and virtual communities.....	21
2.7.3. Motivations for UGC creation on social media platforms and online communities.....	26
2.8. Perceived motivations for UGC .....	31
2.8.1. Perceived co-creation .....	32
2.8.2. Perceived empowerment.....	34
2.8.3. Perceived community .....	35
2.8.4. Perceived self-concept.....	36
2.9. Cultural orientations and behavior .....	37
2.9.1. Culture, social media and e-WOM .....	38
2.9.2. Cultural frameworks .....	42
2.9.3. Hofstede’s cultural dimensions .....	43
2.9.4 Power distance, uncertainty avoidance and long/short-term orientation.....	47
2.10. Relationship between personal cultural values and motivations.....	48
2.10.1. Relationship between collectivism/individualism and perceived motivations .....	48
2.10.2. Relationship between masculinity/femininity and perceived motivations ....	51
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....	57

3.1.	Introduction.....	57
3.2.	Theoretical perspective - Positivism.....	57
3.3.	Research design .....	58
3.4.	Data collection and sample .....	58
3.5.	Measures .....	61
CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION.....		66
4.1.	Pilot study .....	66
4.1.1	Results.....	66
4.2.	Main study .....	80
4.3.	Results.....	80
4.4.	Further analysis.....	85
4.5.	Discussion.....	86
CHAPTER 5: THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSION .....		90
5.1.	Theoretical and managerial implications.....	90
5.2.	Limitations and future research .....	92
5.3.	Conclusion .....	94
REFERENCES .....		96
APPENDICES .....		112



Appendix A – Summary of UGC studies.....	112
Appendix B- Motivations identified in previous studies .....	155
Appendix C- Questionnaire.....	157
Appendix D- Factor analysis results .....	165
Appendix E- Factor analysis (scree plot) .....	169
Appendix F- Validity results of the main study (n=293) .....	170

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Summary of studies on motivations for UGC .....	13
Table 2: Brand-related UGC on social media platforms .....	23
Table 3: Demographic characteristics of the sample .....	61
Table 4: Scale items .....	63
Table 5: Results from the exploratory factor analysis .....	70
Table 6: Intercorrelation matrix .....	72
Table 7: UGC usage by the sample.....	81
Table 8: Intercorrelation matrix .....	82
Table 9: Results of the structural equation modeling .....	84
Table 10: Results of mediation analysis .....	85

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual model.....	56
Figure 2: Revised conceptual model.....	79

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Overview

The growing use of Internet by individuals has allowed them to utilize the benefits of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 is a second generation of the internet or web based services that provide a virtual platform for individuals and organizations to engage in social activities such as communication, networking and creating content for each other. Web 2.0 serves as a tool allowing interaction between the users of the net, facilitating knowledge sharing and collaboration (Sivarajah, Irani, and Weerakkody, 2015). Social media networks and virtual or online brand communities have added to the surge in internet usage all over the world. Consumers today not only rely on the web for information and entertainment but consider it as a source of communication and self-expression. Social media platforms, online brand communities, review websites, forums and blogs have enabled users all over the world to interact or engage with each other. (Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011). These platforms that enable engagement are not only beneficial for the consumers but are highly used by marketers as well. Brands today are making their existence felt on various platforms in order to reach out to the consumers (Hamilton, Kaltcheva, and Rohm, 2016). These platforms not only provide brands with exposure, but also assist them in engaging with their consumers in the form of feedback, suggestions, views, and ideas. Apart from facilitating engagement, these technological advanced platforms have empowered the consumers to create or contribute content for the brand (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Hence, when consumers interact with brands by providing their ideas, reviews and opinions on social media and other platforms, the posted content is known as User-Generated Content (referred to as UGC

hereafter) (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).

## 1.2. Research importance

With high importance placed on WOM and e-WOM in the literature, UGC is also a budding avenue for researchers (Liu-Thompkins and Rogerson, 2012). Extant literature on UGC has examined its motivations, usage behavior, usefulness, impact on brands and consumer decision making. Social networking sites are a major outlet for consumers to create content followed by online communities. UGC is also highly prevalent on an increasing number of online brand communities along with social networking sites, which has also contributed to the development of UGC literature (Heinonen, 2011). However, Lamberton and Stephen (2016) in their meta-analysis covering 15 years of literature in digital, social media and mobile (DSMM) networks have identified the development of research on UGC, where WOM and social networks are highly investigated and cited. Whereas, UGC was the 4<sup>th</sup> highest cited topic in the DSMM field calling for future works to focus on UGC in general rather than focusing only on reviews as a type of UGC or WOM on social networks.

Brand-related UGC is content produced by the consumers for the brands irrespective of positive or negative intention which included actions such as posting, commenting, liking on pictures, videos or reviews relating to the brand (Christodoulides, Jevons, and Bonhomme, 2012). With consumers engaging with brands on various platforms through UGC, consumers' expectations in terms of brands responding to their comments or suggestions is increasing (Labrecque, 2014). Furthermore, research on consumer-brand engagement on social media platforms and virtual communities have also contributed in understanding UGC to a great extent (Hollebeek, 2011; Hollebeek,

Glynn, Brodie, 2014; Brodie, Ilic, Juric, and Hollebeek, 2013). Consumers engagement with brands on social media or online communities is a result of fulfilling their desires to meet various intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Poch and Martin, 2015; Kim and Drumwright, 2016). Motivations such as entertainment, information seeking, remuneration, social integration, self-expressions, co-creation, sharing views in brand communities are a major driving force for content creation by the users (Shao, 2009; Muntinga et al., 2011).

Moreover, upon reviewing UGC literature, it has been identified that several studies exploring motivations to engage in UGC have applied the uses and gratification (U&G) theory, which explains usage of media for the gratification of needs (Shao, 2009). Although motivations for UGC have been studied extensively, analyzing the antecedents to these motivations is an interesting avenue that is to be explored (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). Motivations for an action are triggered by various internal and external factors. Similarly, motivations for UGC creation can be caused by consumers' intrinsic desires of self-actualization or self-expression or extrinsic desires such as social acceptance. These intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are shaped by consumers' individual values or norms of the society they belong to. Thus, values are considered as strong guiding principles for consumer motivations and behavior (Schwartz, 1992). Furthermore, exploring antecedents to UGC motivations is also important in terms of its theoretical and managerial benefits. Theoretically, identifying antecedents to UGC motivations adds to the literature. Whereas, in managerial terms, understanding consumers' motivations based on its antecedents such as values helps brands and firms to reach out or understand their consumers better.

Word-of-mouth or e-WOM on social media platforms and brand communities has been investigated notably in terms of culture and its impact on consumers' engagement worldwide. This indicates that determining or examining consumer behavior with respect to culture on digital platforms is crucial for researchers and practitioners. Consequently, cross-cultural studies have been investigating consumer behavior on social networking sites, online communities and diffusion of positive or negative WOM on the web (Chu and Choi, 2011; Goodrich and Mooij, 2013). However, given the importance of culture on digital platforms, there exists a gap in the UGC literature where culture has not been investigated yet. As mentioned earlier, research on UGC has been increasing over the years in terms of identifying the consumers' perceptions and motivations to engage on a variety of platforms for brands or services that they use. In addition to this, researchers are extensively focusing on UGC in terms of social networking sites, thereby indicating that there exists a strong gap for future researchers to focus on UGC in general (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Furthermore, the research problem that persists in the literature is that it lacks attention on the cultural context that may have an impact on UGC creation or the role of culture that influences consumers' choice on whether to engage in UGC or not (Shao, 2009; Lamberton and Stephen, 2016; Halliday, 2016; Fong and Burton, 2008; Belk, 2013). As important UGC is for consumers to express themselves, similarly it holds great significance for brands to foster engagement with present or future consumers. Moreover, the difference in attitudes of consumers coming from varying cultural backgrounds posits to be a hindrance for brands and firms as well trying to expand themselves on online platforms (Fong and Burton, 2008).

Consumer behavior and culture has been investigated in various contexts. Culture is known to shape values held by consumers' where their actions reflect these values. Moreover, values are formed based on a person's surrounding or society, which shapes their expectations with respect to others or their self. Values influence the strength and direction of motivations, which explains a consumers' behavior (Schwartz, 1992). Values are also formed by ones' culture; thus, one can be individualistic or collectivistic where the former aims for self-oriented actions and latter aims at the prosperity of the group. Furthermore, values can also reflect an individual's actions in terms of their status consciousness or assertiveness with others or caring and sympathetic attitude towards all members of the society. Hence, it is important to examine the impact of such values on consumer motivations. Culture is a crucial antecedent to various aspects of behavior making it necessary to identify its role on motivations. Several aspects of psychological processes such as attitudes and behaviors are a result of an individual's cultural values. Culture influences individuals in terms of their thinking and actions (Liu, Smith, Liesch, Gallois, Ren and Daly, 2011; Madupu and Cooley, 2010). Culture has always been an integral part of consumer behavior, which is evident from the fact that a variety of cross-cultural studies have been conducted to compare the consumers from different cultural backgrounds. Moreover, it has been stated that several aspects of consumer behavior are obliged by culture, which has also led to an increase in the number of studies examining the influence of culture on consumer behavior (Mooij and Hofstede, 2011). Given its high influence on consumers' attitudes and intentions, makes it an important field to be explored. It is imperative for research studies should consider the impact of cultural



values on relationships between motivations, intentions, and behaviors (Luna & Gupta, 2001).

### 1.3. Research contributions

This thesis contributes to the existing UGC literature in several ways. First, the framework of the thesis posits cultural values as antecedents to motivations for brand-related UGC, which is filling a void that currently exists. Second, it is also adding to the culture based studies in the UGC context. Third, UGC literature has been dominated by the uses and gratification theory (U&G), making it important to explore UGC with other important theories that explain motivations. Moreover, this thesis is one of the first attempts to use the values-attitudes-behavior framework in the context of UGC. Thus, the postulated hypotheses in the thesis are well grounded in theory. Fourth, the framework and results of this thesis can have several theoretical and managerial implications, in addition to an interesting pathway for future researchers to explore. Lastly, measuring culture at an individual level based on consumer's personal orientation to these values adds to the cross-cultural marketing and UGC literature.

### 1.4. Research objectives

The aim of this thesis is to examine the role of cultural values as an antecedent to motivations that lead to brand-related user-generated content. This paper aims to fill a gap in the literature by examining the role of culture at an individual level that may have a strong/weak impact on the relationship between motivations and brand-related UGC involvement. The cultural dimensions; collectivism and masculinity are being used in this thesis to identify an individual's orientation towards these values and its impression on UGC involvement. These cultural values are apt in the context of this thesis as they are

inclined to measure an individual's personal values that impact ones intrinsic or extrinsic perceived motivations that lead a person to involve in UGC for brands. In addition to this, as pointed out by other researchers, significant gap exists in terms of applying a proper theory to examine the impact of UGC on brands (Christodoulides, Jevons, and Bonhomme, 2012). Hence, this thesis aims to answer calls for future research and fills in a theoretical gap with respect to culture and UGC by providing a conceptual framework that is in line with the value-attitude-behavior model (Homer & Kahle, 1988).

### 1.5. Structure of the thesis

The flow of this thesis is organized as follows. First, the literature review begins with defining user-generated content (UGC) and a synthesis of previous UGC studies that identifies the antecedents and consequences of UGC. The succeeding section elucidates on the main constructs of this thesis and explains the relationships between these constructs that lead to the development of hypotheses and a conceptual framework. Second, a detailed account of the methodology used for the thesis is explained. Third, this section is followed by the results and discussion based on the data analysis. Fourth, the theoretical and managerial implications of this thesis are discussed. Lastly, the study concludes on limitations of the thesis followed by prospects for future research.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Introduction

The literature review begins with defining User-Generated Content (UGC) followed by a synthesis of UGC studies over the years in different contexts. The review identifies the focus of previous studies, shedding light on the theories and methodologies used, and stating the findings of these studies. From these findings two major themes have emerged namely; antecedents of UGC (motivations) or consequences of UGC. This is followed by an elaboration of the main constructs of this thesis namely: brand-related UGC involvement, perceived motivations for UGC and personal cultural values (collectivism and masculinity). Lastly, the section elucidates on the rationale for the links between these constructs that leads to the development of hypotheses and a conceptual framework for this thesis.

### 2.2. User-Generated-Content (UGC)

User-Generated-Content (UGC) has been defined in the literature as content/own-created material rather than by paid professionals and is uploaded by the users on various platforms for different purposes that is distributed on the internet (Saridakis, Baltas, Oghazi, and Hultman, 2016; Daugherty, Eastin, and Bright, 2008; Shao, 2009). UGC can be produced, reformed, shared and consumed by individuals or a group of users using social media platforms (Smith, Fischer, and Yongjian, 2012). User-generated content could be in the form of reviews, opinions, ratings, sharing photos or suggestions on platforms such as Facebook (social networking), Instagram (photo-sharing), TripAdvisor (travel), Zomato (restaurants), IMDb (movies), and eBay/Amazon (e-commerce). UGC is also associated with the terms word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (e-

WOM); defined as comments or views (negative or positive) stated by previous, current and future customers accessible to other consumers on the internet regarding a brand's goods and services (Bahtar and Muda, 2016). However, Smith et al. (2012) state that e-WOM is similar to UGC such that an overlap exists between the two when UGC is brand-related. Furthermore, electronic-word-of-mouth is linked to online brand interactions between consumer-to-consumer, whereas, UGC is used for the content produced and uploaded by consumers rather than businesses (Muntinga et al., 2011). Therefore, in this study brand-related e-WOM and UGC will be used interchangeably as the content created in both the activities is posted or shared by the consumers. Moreover, the focus of this research is based on branded content on online platforms. Upswing of user-generated-content has made a strong impact on customers, marketing professionals and media platforms, in addition to compelling researchers to understand the short and long-term implications of the content on these platforms that reach out to other consumers (Daugherty et al., 2008).

### 2.3. Focus of previous UGC studies

The literature review for this thesis is based on a total of 30 UGC studies that were critically reviewed to identify their focus, key issues addressed, theory, methodology and results (*see Appendix A*). The review includes papers from 2007 till 2017, giving a holistic assessment of UGC literature over the years. Thirteen studies have considered motivations for UGC creation and the remaining seventeen have explored UGC in various contexts such as tourism, advertisement, purchase decisions, trust and attitude, differences in UGC based on platforms used and willingness-to-pay (WTP) based on review volume. Focus of UGC studies in the past have been examining the

motivations to produce, create, consume or contribute to UGC on the internet or writing online reviews on online communities (Daugherty et al., 2008; Shao, 2009; Leung, 2009; Yoo and Gretzel, 2008). However, over the years, motivations to create UGC has shifted its focus to brand-related content created by users that is posted on various online social media platforms or communities (Muntinga et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012; Christodoulides et al., 2012; Poch and Martin, 2015; Teichmann et al., 2015; Saridakis et al., 2016; Halliday, 2016; Kim and Drumwright, 2016; Wang and Li, 2017).

Additionally, UGC literature has also indicated inclination towards online reviews in the tourism industry as the main aspect in various studies (Yoo and Gretzel, 2008; Marchiori and Cantoni, 2015; Baka, 2016). Furthermore, UGC has also been investigated with respect to its impact on consumers' purchase decisions, willingness to pay, consumers' trust in online information, perception of UGC quality, value and usage (Park and Lee, 2009; Bahtar and Muda, 2016; Malthouse et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2013; Wu and Wu, 2016; Pan and Chiou, 2011; Kim et al., 2012). Lastly, few studies have also determined the types of UGC, consumer-brand engagement through UGC and moderating role of consumers' personality on motivations for UGC (O'Hern and Kahle, 2013; Schamari and Schafers, 2015; Rossman et al., 2016; Pagani, Goldsmith and Hofacker, 2013; Presi, Saridakis and Hartsman, 2014).

The above-mentioned studies have focused on three aspects of UGC namely; creation, contribution and consumption of content, thereby asserting the need to know the differences between them. Muntinga et al. (2011) were the first to develop a typology or framework to identify brand-related activities online known as COBRA and its usage types. COBRA stands for Consumers' Online Brand-Related Activities, which is

categorized based on three types namely: consuming, contributing, and creating. Consuming brand-related content includes activities related to consumption of UGC such as watching brand videos or pictures, and listening or reading brand-related reviews. Contributing includes activities that require consumers to contribute to UGC like rating the product(s) or brand(s), following brand pages on various platforms, being a part of conversations on brand communities and forums, and commenting or liking brand posts such as pictures, videos, audios etc. Creating brand-related content pertains to a consumers' high involvement activity of creating UGC from scratch, which includes activities such as posting brand-related images, videos, pictures and audio, publishing brand-related articles or weblogs, and posting product reviews (Muntinga et al., 2011). Therefore, when consumers engage in creating brand-related UGC it can be regarded as a response to a stimulus, where they satisfy their need to meet certain motivations resulting in accomplishment of significant values and outcomes. Given the fact that content creation is a high involvement activity makes it an interesting aspect to investigate. Thus, the review will be focusing only on antecedent and consequences of content creation given consumers' high involvement in creating content for the product or service.

#### 2.4. Theories and methodologies

The studies that look into various aspects of UGC have used theories that support their theoretical framework or explain the hypothesized relationships. Seven studies have applied the uses and gratification theory (U&G), two studies used the elaboration-likelihood-model (ELM), two studies employed the self-determination theory (SDT), two used technology acceptance model (TAM) and two used the consumer culture theory (CCT). The remaining fifteen studies used functional theory, consumer behavior theory,

expected utility theory, social learning theory and reinforcement theory, equity theory, prospect theory, theory of reasoned action (TRA), and service-dominant logic (S-D).

These studies used a combination of different research methodologies such as longitudinal multilevel methodologies, case studies, netnography, quasi-experiments, structured/unstructured personal interviews and self-administered online/offline surveys. However, majority of the studies (nine) have opted for a questionnaire based methodology, which was either analyzed by regression or SEM (AMOS, LISREL, SmartPLS). Experimental designs were also adopted by various studies to check for manipulations that were analyzed by ANOVA, MANCOVA, linear regression and multiple regression. Moreover, the use of qualitative methodologies such as in-depth structured or unstructured interviews or analyzing online content through content analysis procedure has been useful in determining significant themes such as motivations or impact on purchase decision in the UGC literature (Muntinga et al., 2011; Park and Lee, 2009). Thus, UGC literature indicates that myriad types of methodologies were used indicating that the field has not been confined to a particular type of methodology.

### 2.5. Identified antecedents for UGC creation

Upon analyzing the extant literature on UGC, many studies aim at identifying the antecedents for UGC i.e. the motivations behind creating UGC on social networking platforms (brand pages/personal accounts), reviews websites and blogs/forums. These platforms serve as a medium of expression for consumers, where they create UGC to engage with brands, which is a result of their goal-directed motivations and behavior (Leung, 2009; Muntinga et al., 2011; Poch and Martin, 2015; Lamberton and Stephen, 2016; Malthouse et al., 2016; Halliday, 2016). Majority of the studies have focused on

UGC creation on social media platforms (Muntinga et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012; Christodoulides et al., 2012; Pagani et al., 2013; Schamari and Schaefers, 2015; Saridakis et al., 2016; Halliday, 2016; Kim and Drumwright, 2016; Wang and Li, 2017), while a few studies focus on online brand communities (Muniz and Schau, 2007; Yoo and Gretzel, 2008; Teichmann et al., 2015; Malthouse et al., 2016; Rossman et al., 2016)). Over the years there are a several studies that look into these intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that lead to UGC creation (Daugherty et al., 2008; Shao, 2009; Leung, 2009; Muntinga et al., 2011; Christodoulides et al., 2012; Pagani et al., 2013; Poch and Martin, 2015; Teichmann et al., 2015; Rossman et al., 2016; Halliday, 2016; Saridakis et al., 2016; Presi et al., 2016; Wang and Li, 2017) (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Summary of studies on motivations for UGC*

<b>Research Study</b>	<b>Motivations identified</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Theory</b>
Daugherty et al. (2008)	Social, Ego-defensive, Knowledge, Utilitarian, Value-expressive	Relationship between motivation and creation of UGC mediated by attitude towards UGC	Functional theory



Yoo and Gretzel (2008)	Enjoyment/positive self-enhancement, venting negative feelings & collective power, concerns for other consumers and helping the company (service provider)	Motivation for online travel reviews	-
Shao (2009)	Information and entertainment (consuming), social interaction and community development (participating), self-expression and self-actualization (producing)	Motivations for creation, consumption and contribution to UGC	Uses and gratification theory
Leung (2009)	Recognition needs, cognitive needs, social needs and entertainment needs	Gratifications of content creation online	Uses and gratification theory (focus on gratification)
Muntinga et al. (2011)	Entertainment, integration and social interaction, personal identity, information, remuneration, empowerment	Creation, consumption and contribution to UGC	Uses and gratification theory
Christodoulides et al. (2012)	Perceived co-creation, perceived empowerment, perceived community and perceived self-concept	Motivations for brand-related UGC involvement	-

Pagani et al. (2013)	Social identity expressiveness	Extraversion (dimension of human personality) leading to UGC	Consumer behavior theory
Presi et al. (2014)	Altruism, vengeance, venting negative feelings, self-enhancement and economic	Motivations of a service consumer with a negative service experience	-
Teichmann et al. (2015)	Opinion leadership, self-presentation, enjoyment and altruism	Motivations that lead to content creation on online communities	Equity theory
Halliday (2016)	Networking, shopping, audio/video updates, to study and entertainment	Motivations for creation and consumption of brand-related UGC by young individuals	Service-dominant logic and consumer culture theory
Rossmann et al. (2016)	Acquaintance (with community members) and experience (with a product/service)	Motivations based on association within community and product/service experience	Uses and gratification theory
Saridakis et al. (2016)	Information, entertainment, personal identity, integration & social interaction, empowerment and remuneration	Motivations for brand-related social media use	Uses and gratification theory

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Wang and Li (2017)	Perceived competence, perceived autonomy, perceived relatedness	Antecedents to motivation to produce UGC	Self- determination theory
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Antecedents that lead to UGC mentioned above, imply that motivations to engage in UGC can either be individualistic (based on personal needs) or collectivistic (based on community needs). Moreover, motivation based studies also indicate that UGC creation can be either brand-related or related to the individual (personal content). Brand-related UGC not only helps consumers to share their experience with the brand but also helps the brand in terms of creating WOM. Thus, it is also imperative to identify the consequences of UGC as it serves the needs of both consumers and brands. The following section elucidates on the consequences of UGC identified in the literature review.

#### 2.6. Identified consequences of UGC Creation

The literature review also helped identify the various consequences of UGC creation. Consumers rely on the information they receive online to create content of their own, which in turn influences their behavior in various aspects. Creating UGC not only helps them put forth their views or suggestions, but also affects their purchase behavior, intentions to pay, and trust. Most importantly, creation of UGC allows consumers to engage with brands that results in co-creation of value.

While motivations are an important aspect of UGC creation, yet another important aspect are the consequences of UGC involvement. UGC creation often influences to

purchase behavior, willingness-to-pay, and attitude formation or trust for future consumer-brand engagement or UGC usage. In the context of tourism, the findings indicate the importance of exposure to UGC creation aids in shaping consumers' perception for a destination (Marchiori and Cantoni, 2015). Baka (2016) in his study concluded the importance of reviews and ratings on a travel website (TripAdvisor) that resulted in the development of a framework assisting organizational reputation management in the travel sector. Furthermore, consumers today not only rely on UGC creation for travel related decisions, but heavily depend on other users' reviews and ratings for a product or a service before purchasing it. Park and Lee (2009) in their study identify the influence of online reviews (e-WOM) on purchase behavior moderated by national cultural values. The study concludes that the purchase influence and usage frequency of online reviews is mainly due to the perceived usefulness of the online reviews (Park and Lee, 2009). Similarly, Malthouse et al. (2016) explore the influence of UGC on purchase behavior. The results of this study indicate that an engaging UGC creation experience such as a competition between users or incentive based activity positively impacts consumers' purchase behavior. Thus, consumers' perceptions of UGC are preceded by their internal and external characteristics that in turn shape their attitude towards UGC.

Kim et al. (2012) in their study aim to identify and evaluate the quality factors that affect UGC value, which ultimately influences the usefulness of UGC. The study concludes that three quality factors i.e. content, design and technology are strongly associated to increase the functional, emotional and social value of UGC. Furthermore, new, easy to understand and refreshing content is important for social and emotional

value, whereas, well-organized UGC in terms of interface, audio and video results high on all three values of UGC. Finally, the study states that emotional and functional values are crucial for perceived UGC utility than social value (Kim et al., 2012).

Moreover, in complement to the aforementioned studies that impact purchase behavior, few studies also investigated the impact of UGC volumes on the consumers' willingness-to-pay (WTP) for the desired good or service for which they seek information on online platforms (Wu and Wu, 2016; Wu, Wu, Sun and Yang, 2013). Moreover, consumers' risk attitudes or uncertainty preferences play a critical role in their willingness-to-pay based on online reviews. Thus, risk-averse individuals place their trust in online information such as reviews and ratings or content created by them such as queries posted on platforms that are answered by other members of the network. Thus, the information they receive on their content acts as a deciding factor for their willingness to pay for the product or service. Therefore, willingness to pay for a product or service is an important consequence of UGC creation on various platforms. In addition to these studies that explain the consequences of brand-related UGC creation and social media networks and communities, scholars have also investigated the consequences of creating brand-related UGC on value co-creation, customer value, and brand communities (Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016; Hamilton et al., 2016; Brodie et al., 2013; Hsieh and Chang, 2016). Consumer engagement with brands or other consumers is supported by brand pages (e.g. Apple's page on Facebook) on social media platforms that lead to formation of virtual brand communities. Thus, brand-related UGC involvement is also deemed important for co-creation of value resulting from brand-consumer/ consumer-consumer engagement

The review has identified the focus of these studies over the years, where motivations for UGC have been studied extensively. Gaps in the UGC literature with respect to motivations are being answered by studies that are examining the role of individuals' personality or cross-cultural differences. Additionally, studies have also covered the resulting impact of UGC on consumers that shapes their purchase decisions, trust factors and development of positive attitude that increases UGC usefulness and usage. While UGC is being actively researched in different contexts such as impact of user reviews on tourism, influence on purchase decisions, and willingness-to-pay, concurrently, scholars are also investigating brand-related UGC activities on various platforms extensively.

Hence, though UGC is being explored in these contexts, there still exists a gap in literature to examine the role of culture at an individual level on UGC. Park and Lee (2009) and Wang and Li (2017) have investigated the impact of culture on UGC by comparing two national cultures i.e. on purchase decisions and trust in UGC. The results indicated that there exists a significant difference between cultures (Chinese and American) in terms of their need satisfaction for UGC creation indicating the influence of culture on UGC (Wang and Li, 2017). However, examining the role of culture at an individual level is yet to be studied. Therefore, this thesis aims to fill the void in literature by examining the role of an individual's cultural values on motivations to create brand-related UGC. The following section elaborates on the main constructs of the thesis and links them to formulate the hypotheses to be tested.

## 2.7. Theoretical framework and hypotheses development

### 2.7.1. *Values-Attitude-Behavior model*

Values-attitude-behavior model explains the relationship between values and behavior that is mediated by attitude. The model posits that values do not directly influence behavior, but this relationship is mediated by attitude (Homer & Kahle, 1988). The model also signifies the importance of hierarchy of human cognition where values are abstract cognitions and attitudes are mid-range cognitions that finally lead to concrete behaviors. Furthermore, Xie, Bagozzi, and Troye (2008) have indicated the importance of values on attitude and behavior, which supports the cognitive hierarchy stated by Homer and Kahle (1988). Values hold high importance in shaping attitudes and behaviors given their strong hold in an individual's culture or social environment. These values also enable one to identify their end-state of existence based on personal and social preferences. Thus, values have a strong influence on behavior that is intervened by attitudes (Xie, Bagozzi, & Troye, 2008).

Similarly, this thesis is based on the foundation that individuals' personal cultural values are indirectly linked to or affect their brand-related UGC creation behavior through motivations. Hence, research based on values-attitude-behavior model exploring the engagement of consumers in UGC is practically nonexistent, thereby indicating the prevalence of a considerable theoretical gap in UGC research. Therefore, this thesis aims to explore the role of personal values (collectivism or masculinity) as antecedents to motivations' impact on brand-related UGC involvement.

### *2.7.2. Brand-related UGC involvement on social media platforms and virtual communities*

Analyzing the extant literature on UGC, several studies have examined the opportunities UGC is serving to brands in terms of uniquely engaging consumers on different social networking platforms and online brand communities (Smith et al., 2012; Christodoulides et al., 2012; Schamari and Schaefer, 2015; Gangi and Wasko, 2016; Kim and Drumwright, 2016; Rossman, Ranjan and Sugathan, 2016). Given the growing use of social media platforms by consumers, brands find it crucial to have a presence on these platforms. Moreover, most of the UGC available on social media platforms is brand-related, which serves a great opportunity for marketers in shaping consumers' perceptions about the brand (Smith et al., 2012). On the other hand, Christodoulides et al. (2012), in their study, investigate the impact of consumers' involvement in brand-related UGC on their perception of brands. Furthermore, existing literature on UGC and social media platforms investigates the impact of brand-related Facebook posts that influence consumers' decision making; how brand-related UGC differs across YouTube, Facebook and Twitter and the differences in motivations to engage on these platforms to create brand-related content (Kim and Johnson, 2016; Smith et al., 2012; Muntinga et al., 2011; Saridakis et al., 2016; Heinonen, 2011; Zhang and Benyoucef, 2016; Khan, 2017). Brand-related UGC can be in various forms and on different platforms such as Facebook for updating status when using a product/service, Twitter for tweeting brand information and YouTube for video advertisement and reviews (Smith et al., 2012; Gangi and Wasko, 2016). Smith et al. (2012) in their study aim to investigate whether brand-related UGC differs on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The study concluded that YouTube is a



platform mostly used for self-promoting brand-related UGC, whereas, Twitter serves as a platform for discussion and for sharing news that makes it most likely brand centrality.

On the other hand, UGC that is self-promoting, brand central, market-directed communication and a response to online market action is more likely to be on Facebook than YouTube and Twitter.

Easy availability of information and accessibility of these platforms instills a sense of effortlessness in retrieving or creating brand-related reviews or ratings. Consumers' today rely on reviews from strangers on these platforms rather than waiting for reviews from family and friends (WOM). Each social media platform such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Yelp, Zomato, and TripAdvisor has its own features and specifications that are used according to consumers' choices for content creation. For instance, individuals engage on Facebook to keep up with other people, maintain interpersonal interconnectivity and social enhancement. Whereas, on Twitter, users generate content actively to a point where they get a high number of followers. Moreover, commercial users of Twitter (brands, businesses, and celebrities) post content on a regular basis (Weller, 2016). These platforms are enhancing the users' experience given their interactive nature and easy to use technological features (Labreque, 2014). UGC whether brand-related or not needs a platform where consumers can create it. The most prominent platforms identified in the literature are various social media platforms, brand communities such as forums, brand pages or communities. Each platform is used as per its feature and is serving to both brand and consumers resulting in consumer-brand engagement that ultimately results in brand related content creation (Muntinga et al., 2011). Thus, it is essential to understand and identify the differences in motivations for

UGC creation on social media platforms and online communities. The table below (see Table 2) identifies the type of brand-related UGC that can be created on various media platforms either social media or online communities.

Table 2

*Brand-related UGC on social media platforms*

<b>Type of UGC</b>	<b>Media Platform</b>
Photos/images/pictures	Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, Twitter, Flickr
Videos/tutorials/reviews	YouTube, Facebook, Instagram
Reviews and ratings	Zomato, TripAdvisor, IMDb, Yelp, forums and blogs
Discussions	Facebook, WhatsApp, Tumblr, Twitter, LinkedIn, forums and blogs

The two-way communication facilitated by Web 2.0 allows the brands to incorporate input from consumers in the form of suggestions, ideas, or reviews in a variety of forms that is known as consumer engagement behavior (Doorn, et al., 2010). Moreover, as indicated in the literature, brand-related UGC is mostly prominent on social networking websites. These social media platforms are serving brands enormously by providing them a space to gather their consumers who are brand fans or brand loyal. This aggregation of alike consumers on social platforms mostly takes place via brand pages (e.g. Apple’s page on Facebook) leading to the formation of virtual brand communities.

Online brand communities come in existence when members belonging to it develop a sense of relationship and integrate their thoughts and ideas which are relevant to them (Teichmann et al., 2015). These communities serve as engagement platforms for user's interaction with respect to receiving/giving feedback, solving problems, positive or negative reviews relating to a product of a brand (Brodie, Ilic, Juric and Hollebeck, 2013). Thus, with consumer engagement whether on social media platforms or online brand communities, leads to value co-creation for the brand (Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016; Hamilton et al., 2016).

Yet another interesting aspect of social media platforms with respect to brand-related UGC was investigated by Kim and Johnson, 2016. Using a S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism- Response) framework, the study concluded that brand-related UGC on Facebook served as a stimulus for consumers evoking emotional and cognitive responses which in turn influenced their behavioral responses. In addition to this, Kim and Johnson (2016) also posit that positive user-generated content helps the brand more effectively in terms of future consumers' engagement in e-WOM. Hence, brand-related UGC on Facebook serves as a stimulus that leads to pleasure, arousal and perceived information quality (organism). This in turn leads to responses such as information giving, impulse and future purchase and engagement with the brand.

Therefore, the most important aspect of consumers' actions with respect to creating content for brands is engagement. This positively impacts brand equity i.e. creating or adding value for the brand (Christodoulides et al., 2012). Furthermore, it is implied that firms or brands also need effective social media strategies to have a strong and positive impact on the brand pages available for consumers on these platforms

(Zhang and Benyoucef, 2016). Likewise, brand pages on social media platforms like Facebook, stimulate greater consumer engagement only when they provide an interactive and delightful experience (Vries, Gensler, and LeeFlang, 2012; Tafesse, 2016).

Additionally, the S-O-R framework along with the decision-making process supports activities of consumers' engagement with brands through UGC for the selling and marketing of products and services on various social media platforms and brand communities (Zhang and Benyoucef, 2016).

Moreover, these goals for consumer-brand engagement are driven by certain motivations and virtual brand communities serve as a medium of consumer expression based on their participation which is triggered either by extrinsic or intrinsic motivation (Eisenbeiss, Blechschmidt, Backhaus, and Freund, 2012; Tafesse, 2016). Furthermore, brands are also taking advantage of consumer involvement or engagement by taking extra measures in order to ensure continuous involvement on these networks or communities (Labrecque, 2014). Thus, brands are carefully increasing their awareness on these online social networks by creating virtually interactive environments and facilitating timely exchange of reliable information between motivated users (Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie, 2014; Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair, and Okumus, 2015; Lamberton and Stephen, 2016; Hamilton et al., 2016; Halliday, 2016). Thus, brand-related user generated content is increasing at an alarming rate as the number of online communities have increased, facilitating brand engagement (Hollebeek L. D., 2011; Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric, and Ilic, 2011).

### *2.7.3. Motivations for UGC creation on social media platforms and online communities*

Daugherty et al. (2008), Shao (2009) and Leung (2009) were the first studies in the UGC literature to identify motivations for UGC creation on the internet. Based on the functional theory framework<sup>1</sup>, Daugherty et al. (2008) investigate the functional motivations (ego-defensive, social, value expressive, knowledge and utilitarian) that affect attitudes leading to creation and perception of UGC. The study concluded that social and ego-defensive consumer motivations significantly contribute to perception or attitude towards UGC creation. Ego-defensive motivation helps individuals to reduce self-doubts and feel a sense of community, which allows them to overcome their inner insecurities and outer threats. Social functional motivation to create UGC allows them to seek activities that are considered important and favorable by others. This gives them a chance to associate and interact with friends and others, thus, helping them meet their sense of community and belongingness. Leung (2009) identified four needs that consumers meet upon online content creation namely: recognition needs, cognitive needs, social needs and entertainment needs. Analogous to Daugherty et al. (2008), Leung (2009) concluded that the most important need or antecedent for consumers to create content is to meet their social needs. On the contrary, Shao (2009) concluded that self-expression and self-actualization were identified as the main motives for UGC creation. Therefore, it is evident from these studies that UGC creation on the internet serves

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<sup>1</sup> Functional theory, a robust framework for motivational sources states that “attitudes serve various motivations, depending on the purpose, such that one's behavior becomes a function of their attitude toward that behavior” (pp. 17). The theory also mentioned that to influence behavior, it is important to understand its motivational source (i.e., attitude) (Daugherty et al. 2008)

individuals in meeting their needs either for themselves or others. However, these motivations might differ based on the type of platform used by the individuals to engage with brands.

Most of the motivations identified in the studies look into two aspects mainly i.e. community oriented or self-oriented. Sense of belongingness was identified as a motive for UGC creation by various studies, where individuals were triggered by their social needs to create content. Muntinga et al. (2011) and Saridakis et al. (2012) identify this motivation as integration and social interaction, whereas Christodoulides et al. (2012) identify it as perceived community that leads to brand-related UGC creation. Moreover, Kim and Drumwright (2016), identified motivations (extrinsic and intrinsic) behind consumers' engagement with brands on social media platforms moderated by consumers' perception of social relatedness with other consumers. Thus, consumers who experience social relatedness to other users on these platforms are more likely to engage in brand-related activities to meet their extrinsic motivations such as engagement, consuming intention, satisfaction, affective commitment, and trust (Kim and Drumwright, 2016). Additionally, Gangi and Wasko (2016) indicate that users' social interactions and the technical features of the social media are crucial for users' engagement and shaping their social media behavior. Furthermore, Wang and Li (2017) in their cross-cultural study propose that needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness are crucial antecedents to motivations to produce UGC. Where, perceived relatedness positively impacts UGC creation and is defined as the desire to maintain a sense of mutual connections and respect for others during social media interactions, for instance, feeling responsible for UGC they produce as others care about their actions.

In addition to satisfying social needs on social media platforms, individuals also create content to satisfy their personal needs such as self-expression. Self-expressiveness as identified by Shao (2009), is an important aspect of UGC creation, which was also mentioned in various studies as personal identity (Muntinga et al., 2011; Saridakis et al., 2012), perceived self-concept (Christodoulides et al., 2012), social identity expressiveness (Pagani et al., 2013), self enhancement (Presi et al., 2014) and perceived competence (2017). Furthermore, Halliday (2016) supports this motivation in young creators of content by mentioning that individuals engage with brands through UGC for self-identity rather than for the brand community or a group indicating their solitary nature.

Apart from social needs and self-expressiveness, empowerment is another aspect of UGC creation identified in the literature. Leung (2009) states that creation of UGC enhances an individual's psychological empowerment, thereby satisfying their need for desire to control or self-efficacy. In the context of social media platforms, empowerment enables individuals to create content independently and gives them the power to control their actions. Wang and Li (2017) identified perceived autonomy as a positive influence on motivations for UGC creation. Perceived autonomy is to achieve or claim ownership of ones' actions and experiencing choice in creating UGC i.e. deciding what and how to create UGC. Thus, empowerment is considered to have a positive impact on UGC creation (Muntinga et al., 2011; Saridakis et al., 2012). However, perceived empowerment identified by Christodoulides et al. (2012) does not have a significant impact on brand-UGC involvement contrary to the findings of Muntinga et al. (2011) and Saridakis et al. (2012).

Lastly, content creation on social media platforms is often a result of motivations such as providing information to others, seeking entertainment and involving themselves in value co-creation for the brand. Perceived co-creation as identified by Christodoulides et al. (2012), had a positive impact on brand-related UGC involvement leading to brand equity, i.e. the stronger a consumer perceives that a brand is co-created, the higher his/her chances to be involved with this brand through UGC. Social media platforms also cater to individuals' needs to provide information about a product or a service in their network. By creating content, they are helping other members in their network and also attain entertainment (Halliday, 2016). However, Muntinga et al. (2011) found no relationship between UGC creation and entertainment motive (Muntinga et al. 2011).

In addition to the studies that identify motivations for UGC creation on social media platforms, there are a few studies that investigate the motivations or antecedents for UGC creation on online communities. Consumers engage in brand communities to put forth their opinions and views. Muniz and Schau (2007) investigated advertisements created by consumers via content creation in brand communities. The results suggested that by creating ads for the brand in the community, users can showcase their skills, proficiency and creativity adding unique brand meaning, which is similar to self-expressiveness on social media platforms. Additionally, a consumers' motivation to create content on brand communities also depends on various factors that they need to satisfy. Given the importance placed by individuals on reviews and ratings on travel related websites such as TripAdvisor (Baka, 2016), it is also necessary to investigate the motivations that lead consumers to write these reviews. To identify these, Yoo and Gretzel (2008) in their study identified four motivations namely; enjoyment/positive self-



enhancement, venting negative feelings and collective power, concerns for other consumers and helping the company (service provider). The study concludes that writing online reviews is a result of meeting the needs of aiding the service provider, concern for other consumers and enjoyment/positive self-enhancement. However, venting negative feeling was not a strong motivation to write online reviews. Additionally, Presi et al. (2013) in their study identified motivations (altruism, vengeance, venting negative feelings, self-enhancement and economic) of UGC creation after a negative service experience. Similar to Yoo and Gretzel (2008), this study also concluded that venting negative feelings and self-enhancement motivations do not lead to UGC creation after negative service experience. However, the study concluded that altruism, vengeance and economic motivations are strong predictors of UGC creation after a negative experience (Presi et al., 2013).

A brand community can either be hosted by the company or by the consumers. Based on this differentiation, Teichmann et al. (2015) identified four motivations that lead to content contribution namely: opinion leadership, self-presentation, enjoyment and altruism. These motivations were categorized based on two dimensions i.e. extrinsic vs. intrinsic and self-oriented vs. other-oriented. Opinion leadership (extrinsic/self-oriented/economic value), self-presentation (extrinsic/other-oriented/social value) and enjoyment (intrinsic/self-oriented/hedonic value) positively affect content contribution on company-hosted communities. Altruism (intrinsic/other-oriented/altruistic value) negatively affects content contribution on company-hosted online communities, but the negative effect is lesser in consumer-hosted online communities. Additionally, this research study also concluded that extrinsic motivations that satisfy an individual's social

and economic values are highly prevalent on company-hosted online communities. Whereas, intrinsic motivations that satisfy hedonic and altruistic values are pertinent on consumer-hosted online communities. Furthermore, Rossman et al. (2016) identified motivations such as users' prior experiences with the product/service and their acquaintance with the community members that leads to user engagement or e-WOM communication. Engagement was measured in terms of users' likes and comments on two communities on Facebook. The study reveals that experience and acquaintance play a crucial role in user engagement for both products and services, where "likes" were more prominent in product communities and "comments" in service communities. Moreover, the results also implied that product communities are more inclined towards information sharing, whereas, engagement in service communities' orients towards information building.

Thus, the differences in motivations based on the type of platform namely; social media and online communities are quite less. Both the platforms serve motivations that meet social needs, self-expression, helping others, information, enjoyment and entertainment. However, altruism or concern for well-being of others has been identified as a prime motive on online communities (Yoo and Gretzel, 2008; Presi et al., 2013; Teichmann et al., 2015).

## 2.8. Perceived motivations for UGC

This thesis is partially adapting the conceptual model proposed by Christodoulides et al. (2012) in order to examine the role of culture as antecedents to the motivation identified in this study, which leads to UGC creation. Therefore, perceived co-creation, perceived empowerment, perceived community and perceived self-concept

are the motivations that will be focused on in this study. Additionally, the above brand-related motivations are encapsulating all the motivations that were identified in the previous studies for the creation of UGC, therefore, these brand-related motivations will be more relevant for the scope of this study (*see Appendix B*). In the context of this study, brand-related UGC involvement or creation is considered an individual's intention to engage with the brand upon being motivated by the identified perceived motivations.

### *2.8.1. Perceived co-creation*

Perceived co-creation is a consumer's perception about themselves as being an integral part in the value-creation system for a brand (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Vargo and Lusch, 2004). The service dominant (S-D) logic posits that co-creation process is an interaction between the consumer and the supplier of the service such that value is created in every phase of this process, which includes development, design, creation and distribution (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). Moreover, co-creation is serving tremendously to the brands' growth in terms of innovation and new product development as it has taken consumer-firm/brand engagement to the next level. This interaction has also evolved the process of co-creation by redefining value for both consumers and brands (Hsieh and Chang, 2016). Hsieh and Chang (2016) have identified the psychological aspects of engagement in brand co-creation (vigor, dedication and absorption). The authors state three outcomes of co-creation i.e. purchase intention, intention to help others and receive feedback. These outcomes are a result of satisfying their psychological needs of perceived competence and perceived relatedness along with their connection with the brand mediated through brand co-creation engagement. Therefore, consumers co-create value to achieve a certain goal by utilizing their knowledge, information, skills and

abilities, co-creation driven by a goal (Payne, Storbacka, and Frow, 2008).

Social media platforms have enabled both consumers and brands to engage with each other resulting in creation of content by consumers, which is facilitated by the brands (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Brodie et al., 2013; Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016; Hsieh and Chang, 2016; Hamilton, Kaltcheva and Rohm, 2016). Therefore, a brand that allows consumers for co-creation, increases individual's motivation to engage in UGC. Though co-creation can be viewed from different perspectives, in this context it stands for consumer's engagement with brands through UGC. Consumer's co-creation process is defined as successive actions that a customer undertakes to accomplish a specific goal. The ability to create value depends on consumer's access to information, skills, knowledge, and other resources (Payne, Storbacka, and Frow, 2008, p.86). Moreover, co-creation cultivates a customer-brand relationship that serves beneficial to the brand in the long run. Co-creation also enables consumers to achieve hedonic benefits such as enjoyment, interaction with others, trusting other's opinions, giving views and customizing the product or service as per own needs (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016). Additionally, brand co-creation occurs at an individual (brand-consumer interaction) or group level (brand communities), signifying the importance of both levels for co-creation experience (Hsieh and Chang, 2016). Thus, brands need to make themselves available to these consumers on multiple channels in order to avail consumer's proactive input (content creation, consumption and contribution) (Saridakis et al., 2016).

### *2.8.2. Perceived empowerment*

The internet over the years has empowered consumers in identifying their choices, helped in decision making and getting information about products, services or other consumers (Christodoulides et al., 2012). Thus, when a consumer's perception is strengthened on the basis of his power to create content online that helps in meeting personal goals such as efficacy, determination, independence and overcoming feelings of inability can be termed as perceived empowerment (Füller, Mühlbacher, Matzler, and Jawecki, 2009; Christodoulides et al., 2012). UGC has facilitated a shift of power from firms to consumers allowing consumers to influence other consumers and firms (O'Hern and Kahle, 2013; Muntinga et al., 2011). The level of control or power perceived by the consumers in terms of creating content in an online environment is known as perceived empowerment (Christodoulides et al., 2012). Web 2.0 and UGC have empowered the youth digitally to create content for brands on various platforms (Halliday, 2016). Additionally, perceived empowerment with respect to brands has also led consumers to exercise their authority and influence over the brand and other members of the brand community (Saridakis et al., 2106). According to Leung (2009), creating online content is a form of psychological empowerment which consists of three components i.e. self-efficacy, desire for control, and perceived competence. Users who create or contribute ideas for the community and public matters have enhanced their gratification need and feel empowered psychologically (Leung, 2009). Several marketing efforts are being designed to activate feelings of power and control to create content, which satisfies consumer's needs and wants. When consumers are given the liberty to share their views, suggestions or even give reviews about products or services, the feeling of empowerment

further motivates them to engage or involve with UGC. In order to generate positive WOM on online platforms, brands are making sure that they allow the consumer to have the power to alter the attitudes and behaviors of other consumers as well (Kim & Johnson, 2016). Apart from empowerment in content creation, the literature also indicated perceived empowerment as an important aspect of new product development through co-creation of value in virtual brand communities and making an impact on the brand and defining its brand values (Füller et al., 2009; Hsieh and Chang, 2016; Christodoulides et al., 2012).

### *2.8.3. Perceived community*

Perceived community can be defined as a consumer's perception of belongingness or being a part of a community that is facilitated by the brand. This brand enables consumer engagement with each other in addition to creating content for the brand, which allows them to form communities where they are emotionally invested by sharing ideas and insights (Seraj, 2012; Christodoulides, et al., 2012). UGC allows these consumers with opportunities to express themselves in line with the expectations of the brand community. This also aids individuals to create their own identity, develop a sense of belonging, share knowledge, experiences, emotions, norms, and receive recognition and rewards from other members of the community (Daugherty et al., 2008; Christodoulides, et al., 2012; Shao, 2009; Leung, 2009). Consumers' decision to rely on UGC is formed by their perception about its relevance, trustworthiness and usefulness (Pan and Chiou, 2011; Park and Lee, 2009). Pan and Chiou (2011) in their study state that trust in electronic word-of-mouth is important for e-WOM communication between users. Trust in online information about a good or service is often preceded by the strength of social

ties established with online peers and the nature of the information shared (positive or negative). Similarly, trust between users of social media platforms such as Facebook is also imperative for both consumers and brands. Consumers today rely on their Facebook friends rather than on ads indicating high level of trust placed in the community for brand recommendations through user-generated content (Chari, Christodoulides, Presi, Wenhold, & Casaletto, 2016). Thus, perceived trust in online information plays crucial role in shaping a consumers' attitude towards it. Thus, UGC involvement results in consumers placing trust on the content created by other members leading to positive attitude towards it. The growing interest of researchers in virtual communities indicates the impact of UGC on online platforms. Therefore, feelings of community, belongingness, sharing or receiving knowledge and interaction with others for entertainment are stated to be motivational factors that drive consumers to engage with these brand communities (Brodie et al., 2013; Muntinga et al., 2011). Furthermore, when consumers perceive that a brand serves them with the advantages of a community, their engagement level in terms of UGC increases (Christodoulides, et al., 2012).

#### *2.8.4. Perceived self-concept*

Self-concept is defined as how an individual apprehends the cognitive and abstract view of himself/herself on a continual basis (Berthon, Pitt, & Campbell, 2008). However, Christodoulides et al. (2012) have proposed that self-concept is a holistic construct which comprises of not just understanding oneself, but also includes self-expression and self-promotion that is in alignment with other consumers. Moreover, brands that are perceived to be facilitating self-expression (i.e. self-relevant stimuli) are highly valued by consumers on various UGC platforms. This helps individuals to express

themselves as the brands match their self-concept, which is an important aspect of an individual (Smith et al., 2012). Subsequently, the creation of content for these brands allows one to identify himself/herself, express their creativity and to build a self-image as compared to other individuals and brands (Daugherty, et al., 2008; Christodoulides et al., 2012). Furthermore, other researchers have come up with constructs similar to self-concept such as personal identity. Accordingly, Muntinga et al. (2011) state that personal identity motivation can be met for individuals who engage on social networking sites through blogging, thereby aiding self-enhancement and self-fulfillment. Therefore, each individual's self-concept differs and brands that match or are in alignment with a consumer's personality have a higher chance of them being engaged by consumers through UGC.

## 2.9. Cultural orientations and behavior

Culture is defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another” (Hofstede, 2001, p.9). As culture differentiates individuals from one another it also has an influence over their behavior as consumers, which involves their emotions and motivations (Mooij and Hofstede, 2011; Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Values (principles or standards of behavior) exhibited by the consumers is also an outcome of their culture and their surrounding society (Kim, Forsythe, Gu and Moon, 2002). Being one of the most influential factor in shaping consumers' motives and attitudes towards intentions for purchase or engagement with a good/service, identifying cultures role in marketing is imperative (Ko, Roberts and Cho, 2006). The self-determination theory posits that an individuals' culture helps him/her support in satisfying needs that are intrinsically or



extrinsically motivated (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Furthermore, research on the influence of culture on consumer behavior has surged in the recent times given the impact of globalization and diversification that has in turn affected markets and its consumer segments (Sharma, 2010). Thus, cultural values are often seen to be influencing a consumers' internet usage and social networks (Mooij and Hofstede, 2002; Lam, Lee and Mizerski, 2009).

### *2.9.1. Culture, social media and e-WOM*

Several studies also compare cultures on their level of usage, participation, trust, consumer engagement with brands, e-WOM behavior on social networking sites/online brand communities and types of UGC (structured or unstructured) (Goodrich and Mooij, 2013; Chu and Choi, 2011; Tsai and Men, 2014; Madupu and Cooley, 2010; Zhang, Yu, Li and Lin, 2016). Of these, one of the first attempts to determine role of culture on word-of-mouth communication were studies undertaken by Lam et al. (2009) and Park and Lee (2009).

Upon analyzing motivations for internet usage or interactivity on a website, Ko et al. (2006) compared two countries (Korea and USA) based on their culture. They categorized culture as high and low context, where high and low context depends on the amount of information an individual can manage. They differentiated the two countries such that high-context cultures such as Asian countries (e.g. Korea) have more indirect and ambiguous communication whereas, low-context cultures (e.g. USA) rely on data and direct information. The identified motivations for internet usage were entertainment, social interaction, convenience and information. The study concluded that low-context cultures were motivated by information and convenience preferring to interact with the

website through navigation and choosing information they want. On the other hand, high-context cultures were highly motivated by social interactions on the internet and preferred interacting with other users directly through feedback, opinions, suggestions etc.

Following the same cross-cultural comparison between the two countries (Korea and USA), Park and Lee (2009) proposed a model that examines the influence of a consumer's characteristics on attitude and behavioral results for online reviews moderated by national culture. Similar to the aforementioned study, they categorize the countries as high and low context, but in addition to this they use two of Hofstede's (2001) cultural values i.e. collectivism/individualism and uncertainty avoidance. The study concluded that culture moderates the relationship between attitude and behavior. Koreans are more proactive in terms of using online reviews and perceive these reviews as useful before making purchase decisions. However, Americans use online reviews for browsing but do not rely on reviews prior to purchase decision making. Therefore, cross-cultural studies that compare countries are useful in segmenting consumers based on their characteristics geographically. These studies have helped in analyzing the incontestable role of culture that shapes a consumer's values and behaviors on various aspects crucial in the marketing literature.

WOM has been studied extensively in various contexts including culture. It is an interesting arena to explore in terms of identifying the effect of culture on consumers' word-of-mouth behavior (Lam et al., 2009). Based on the Hofstede's four cultural values (individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and power distance) the study aims to explore WOM diffusion in social groups (in and out). In-group refers to an individual's family and friends circle, whereas out-group refers to people outside this circle. The

results were as follows:

- individualism had a strong impact on out-group positive WOM
- masculinity had an impact on in-group WOM about products and brands
- uncertainty avoidance had no significant impact on WOM in-and-out group interactions
- power distance had a positive impact on in-group WOM and a negative association with out-group WOM

As studies examined effects of culture on WOM, interactivity on the web and usage of reviews etc., it was also crucial to study the impact of culture social media platforms and online brand communities. These two platforms are used by majority of consumers for engagement with the brands, purchase decisions or gathering information about products and services (Hollebeek et al. 2014; Brodie et al., 2013). Pookulangara and Koesler (2011) suggested a framework and Goodrich and Mooij (2013) investigated the role of culture on social media networks that influences purchase intentions or decisions. This study centered on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) explains behaviors and intentions of using technological innovations based on their perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Pookulangara and Koesler (2011) proposed a conceptual framework where culture moderates the relationship between subjective norms, social search, self-efficacy and perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use of social media. This in turns leads to usage of social networking sites and online purchase intentions. The study proposed a framework and hypotheses based on Hofstede's four cultural values indicating their positive and negative impact of the three factors identified i.e. subjective norms, social search and self-efficacy in using social media.

On the other hand, Goodrich and Mooij (2013) examined the direct impact of culture on social media usage, trust in online information and purchase decision making based on Hofstede's four cultural dimensions (collectivism/individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and long/short-term orientation) was compared for 50 countries. The study revealed the following: individualism negatively impacts usage of social media and trust in e-WOM on forums, search engines, product reviews and TV that leads to purchase decision. Whereas, power distance positively influences usage of social media and instills trust in forums prior to purchase decisions. Moreover, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation also has a positive impact on trust in online platforms prior to decision making. The authors also provided maps of comparison between the 50 countries on individualism and collectivism (Goodrich and Mooij, 2013).

Moreover, several studies have also been undertaken to measure the cross-cultural impact on consumer behavior. For instance, researchers have examined the role of culture on service evaluations, purchase of domestic or foreign goods, word-of-mouth and country-of-origin effects, motivations for using social networking sites, motivations for consumers interactivity on the web, online purchase intentions, online interactions, implementation of online interactive review features, and type of posted online content (Mattila, 1999; Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos, 2015; Fong and Burton, 2008; Kim, Sohn, and Marina, 2011; Ko et al., 2006; Pookulangara and Koesler, 2011; Qiu, Lin, and Leung, 2013; Yun, Park, and Ha, 2008; Zhang, Yu, Li, and Lin, 2016).

### *2.9.2. Cultural frameworks*

Another interesting aspect of these cross-cultural studies has been the framework proposed by Hofstede in categorizing the cultural dimensions. Hofstede (2001) has identified five dimensions namely; collectivism/individualism, masculinity/femininity, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and long/short-term orientation. These dimensions are used extensively in various studies to compare and contrast cultural values between countries. Thus, from Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, a framework for cross-cultural communication, to theory of basic human values developed by Schwartz which identifies ten universal values, the literature indicates the usage of these scales or frameworks for many cross-cultural studies (Schwartz, 1992; Hofstede, 2001; Luna and Gupta, 2001).

However, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are highly criticized for comparing cultures based on a country level of analysis (Eringa, Caudron, Rieck, Xie and Gerhardt, 2015). Moreover, the existing heterogeneity amongst individuals in a country further necessitates measuring culture at an individual level (Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz, 2011). Additionally, Taras, Kirkman, and Steel (2010) have indicated how the predictive power of culture at an individual level has not been examined. Thus, this thesis focuses on studying the impact of culture at an individual level on brand-related UGC motivations. While individual cultural orientations are based on the dimensions identified by Hofstede, however these will be measured at an individual level as implemented by Yoo and Donthu (2005) and Yoo et al. (2011), thereby overcoming the ecological fallacy of Hofstede's cultural dimensions on a national level. Despite receiving high criticism, Hofstede's cultural framework continues to be widely adapted by researched in different

academic disciplines (Yoo and Donthu, 2005). Furthermore, other cultural frameworks such as Triandis' (1995) horizontal and vertical individualism/ collectivism and Schwartz's (1992) ten universal values are also being adapted by several researchers. However, these frameworks resonate Hofstede's cultural dimension where Triandis' (1995) framework is similar to the existing power distance dimension of Hofstede and Schwartz's (1992) ten universal values are basically grouped on the dimensions (openness to change, self-enhancement, conservation, and self-transcendence) similar to uncertainty avoidance, masculinity, power distance, and collectivism of Hofstede's framework (Hofstede, 2011). Hence, given the overlap of these frameworks with Hofstede's cultural dimensions, this thesis adapts the latter provided its universal acceptability and adaptability.

### *2.9.3. Hofstede's cultural dimensions*

There are several aspects to culture that can influence consumer behavior, however the dimensions identified by Hofstede (2001) are the most widely used even today. Researchers base their studies either on all five dimensions or rely on using only collectivism and individualism, which is considered as the most frequently used dimension in cross-cultural consumer research (Green et al., 2005; Madupu and Cooley, 2010; Tsai and Men, 2014). Another aspect of individualism and collectivism is the classification by Triandis (1995) i.e. horizontal collectivism/individualism and vertical collectivism/individualism. Horizontal collectivism and individualism considers everyone at the same level or equally whereas, vertical collectivism and individualism places importance on hierarchy (Triandis, 1995). Based on this classification of collectivism and individualism studies have investigated e-WOM on social networking sites between

China and USA where they have implied USA being a more individualistic country and China being inclined towards collectivism. Tsai and Men (2014) compared motivations for brand-related e-WOM engagement in social networking sites. Based on motivations identified by Muntinga et al. (2011), the authors have compared the two countries on these, in addition to aspects such as social media usage dependence, parasocial interactions and identification with the community. The results obtained indicated that horizontal collectivists (HC) are motivated to engage on SNS for brands for information seeking, entertainment and social integration. Furthermore, HC are more dependent on using social media, higher consumption and content-contribution, identification with brand SNS communities, and showcasing higher level of parasocial engagement (connecting with media personalities). On the other hand, vertical individualists (VI) were motivated by remuneration, empowerment and personal identification. VI also indicated behaviors opposite from horizontal collectivists in terms of dependence on social media, consumption and content-contribution, parasocial engagement. However, community identification for consumer-brand level of engagement on social networking sites was significant for both horizontal collectivists and vertical individualists (Tsai and Men, 2014). Similar to this study, Chu and Choi (2011) measured the influence of culture on social relationships that leads to e-WOM on social networking sites based on HC and VI. However, the study was based on three social dimensions for engagement on SNS i.e. opinion leadership, opinion seeking and pass-along behavior. Based on data collected from the two countries the results were similar to that of Tsai and Men (2014). Horizontal collectivists seem to score high on all social dimensions upon engaging on social networks as compared to vertical individualists. Moreover, collectivists retain close knit

ties on social networks placing trust on others, whereas individualists tend to have large and loose knit network irrespective of the trust factor.

Additionally, given the importance of online brand communities for consumer engagement, Madupu and Cooley (2010) have examined impact of cultural differences on motivations to engage in them. A cross-cultural study on based on two dimensions i.e. individualism/collectivism and power distance measured the impact of these cultural values on motivations such as receiving or giving information, social integration, status enhancement and self-discovery that leads to participation in online brand communities. Results indicate that collectivists on online brand communities are motivated by receiving/giving information, social integration, self-discovery, status enhancement. In addition to that, collectivists exhibit greater moral responsibility, rituals and traditions and connection with other members of the community more than individualistic people.

As we can see, most of the studies in the context of studying culture have focused on comparing the nations or countries using Hofstede's cultural dimensions on different things. However, these studies have not focused on individuals' cultural orientation irrespective of their group or country's culture. Even though consumers belong to a certain group based on their culture, each individual's personal orientation is quite different (Mooij and Hofstede, 2011; Green, Deschamps, and Paez, 2005). For instance, westerners are scored quite high in terms of individualism but we cannot generalize that all individuals only think about themselves within their cohort, since there are individuals who lean more towards collectivism. Therefore, measuring culture only based on nations may not be valid in all cases, as individuals' cultural orientations may differ (Sharma, 2010). Moreover, acculturation and cultural pluralism in multicultural environments is



also influencing consumer's behaviors or actions. Hence, individuals belonging to the same geographic location are distinctive in terms of their consumption patterns of goods or services (Cleveland, Laroche, Pons and Kastoun, 2009; Demangeot and Sankaran, 2012). Therefore, this study fills a gap in the UGC literature that has only focused on cross-national/cultural comparisons. The study aims to identify the role of culture at an individual level that influences consumer's motivations to engage in brand-related UGC creation.

Researchers have been increasingly studying culture as a moderator in various contexts and fields (Zhou, Jin, Fang, and Vogel, 2015; Zhang and Benyoucef, 2016). However, scholars have not prominently studied the differing individual motivations that could be influenced by their cultural backgrounds. Between-country cultural variations are a widely-studied topic that leads to overgeneralization of consumers' personality belonging to a specific country. Therefore, it is crucial to consider within-country cultural variations to identify a consumer's personal cultural orientation (Green et al., 2005; Sharma, 2010). Furthermore, consumers coming from varied cultural backgrounds within a country may acquire different personalities for the same global brands (Mooij & Hofstede, 2011). In addition to this, consumers' involvement with UGC is highly dependent on their varying individual motivations such that it leads to creation, consumption or contribution to UGC (Daugherty et al., 2008). Moreover, it is also critical to analyze the socio-demographic, individual characteristics of an individual to understand whether UGC is a collectivistic or individualistic action (Shao, 2009). Thus, it is crucial to examine the role of culture as an antecedent to the perceived motivations that leads to UGC creation which is examined by this study. Accordingly, as mentioned

previously, value-attitude-behavior model supports the theoretical framework of this thesis, where personal cultural values are considered as antecedents to brand-related UGC motivations.

Given the extensive use of Hofstede's categorization of culture and its application in various studies and contexts (Yoo, Donthu, & Lenartowicz, 2011; Goodrich and Mooij, 2013) have led to the adoption of this framework or cultural classification in this thesis as well. Though there are five cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede (2001), only two cultural dimensions i.e. collectivism/ individualism and masculinity/femininity are being taken into consideration for this thesis. Although, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and long-short term orientation are crucial dimensions that influence consumer behavior, only collectivism and masculinity will be focused on for this study in the context of online content creation via UGC. Furthermore, using masculinity/femininity dimensions in this study adds to the literature in this context as only a few studies have used this cultural value; thus, making it an interesting avenue to explore.

#### *2.9.4 Power distance, uncertainty avoidance and long/short-term orientation*

Power distance refers to the acceptance level of unequal distribution of power by less powerful people in the society (Mooij & Hofstede, 2011). Therefore, high power distance oriented individuals tend to emphasize their status in the society whereas low power distance oriented individuals do not regard importance to social status and status symbols. Power distance is more apt on social media platforms where people can showcase their status by posting images and videos of brands that pose as their status symbols. However, since brand-related UGC involvement is beyond social media and

includes other platforms like blogs, brands websites, and online communities etc. (Kim, Jin, Kim, and Shin, 2012), power distance may not have a significant impact on perceived motivations leading to brand-related UGC.

Uncertainty avoidance, a cultural dimension, refers to the degree of risk and predictability (Hofstede, 2001, p.148), where people with high uncertainty avoidance are more structure oriented and desire stability, whereas, people with low uncertainty avoidance are open to ambiguous situations and risky behavior. Since, UGC involvement does not involve risk taking, uncertainty avoidance may not have a substantial impact on perceived motivations-brand-related UGC involvement relationship. Lastly, long-term vs short-term orientation may not considerably affect perceived motivations for brand-related UGC because it involves actions that are based on time frame. However, brand-related UGC involvement is not an investment that differs on the basis of time frame but results due to perceived motivations that occur at a point in time. It is also stated by Green et al. (2005), that most of the within-country cultural studies have indicated a similarity between characteristics of collectivism with femininity and characteristics of individualism with masculinity. Therefore, it will be interesting to investigate these cultural dimensions as antecedents to motivations for UGC creation i.e. collectivism and masculinity.

## 2.10. Relationship between personal cultural values and motivations

### *2.10.1. Relationship between collectivism/individualism and perceived motivations*

The cultural dimension, individualism vs. collectivism is highly studied by researchers in the field of psychology (Cohen, Wu, and Miller, 2016; Zhou et al., 2015). These dimensions categorize individuals based on their independent and interdependent

views of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Moreover, an individual's motivation differs based on this self-construal (Hofstede, 2001, p. 210). With respect to motivations and a view of one's self, collectivists are motivated by actions that enrich relationship and connection with others. Whereas, individualistic people are motivated by actions that help in expressing themselves or defining themselves to others based on their inner positive traits (Markus and Wurf, 1987).

Individualism is defined as how an individual sees himself/herself and his/her immediate family (Sharma, 2010). Individualistic people are more 'I'-conscious and give importance to self-actualization such that they assume that their values are applicable to the entire universe. Their self-concept is based on their view entirely and is never influenced by others. Consumers inclined towards individualism prefer expressing themselves as they are (Madupu and Cooley, 2010). They are usually motivated by their own personal goals rather than group goals. Individualists focus on their needs and preferences, which also influences their motivations (Triandis, 1995). Therefore, when brands facilitate co-creation, individualistic people collaborate with brands to satisfy their needs and wants that suffice their personal goals. They co-create value for the brand based on their abstract ideas which accentuates their perception of being an integral part of the value creation system. Additionally, individualistic people engage in high levels of explicit textual and verbal communication (Hofstede, 2001; Mooij and Hofstede, 2002; Mooij and Hofstede, 2011; Christodoulides et al., 2012). Furthermore, individualistic people highly value power achievement and hedonism (Sharma, 2010). In individualism, identity and image are and should be the reflection of a unique self (Mooij and Hofstede, 2011). Additionally, in individualistic cultures, brands should be unique and distinct with

consistent characteristics. Therefore, individualistic behavior can be identified by their consistent attitudes, feelings, and behaviors. Thus, when a brand empowers its consumers to create content for them, individualistic people are encouraged to participate as this is in alignment with their nature. Madupu and Cooley (2010) in their study indicate that individualism influences consumer's behavior on online communities such that individualists are more of information seekers than information givers on online platforms. This supports the aforementioned characteristic of individualists which states that they engage explicitly in textual and verbal communication. They also rely on websites, TV, radio and friends for purchase decision rather than relying on strangers on communities. Thus, individualistic consumers may not be active on online brand communities.

Collectivism is defined as a person's connection and integration with the group to whom they are loyal for the entire life time (Sharma, 2010; Hofstede, 2001). Collectivist individuals are more "we" oriented and identify themselves based on the group they belong to. They believe in building relationships and giving importance to the goals of their group over personal goals (Mooij & Hofstede, 2011). Collectivists value traditions, benevolence, and harmony and place importance on motivations that are formed by customs and obligations by the group (Triandis, 1995). Collectivists develop relationships with brands if they can be viewed as being a part of a larger whole, and originating from a trusted company (Sharma, 2010). They also place trust in the parent brand making acceptance of product extensions easier for brands (Mooij and Hofstede, 2011). Moreover, collectivists are inclined or interested in tangible product features, which could positively influence their co-creation behavior in providing suggestions and ideas.

Additionally, collectivists value group rewards, implying that they engage in brand co-creation or online communities for the betterment of the entire group (Lam et al., 2009). Furthermore, collectivists primarily engage first, which later results in the formation of attitudes, indicating that there exists no consistency between their attitudes and future behavior (Mooij and Hofstede, 2011). In terms of expressing their identity or self-concept, unanimous acceptance by the group they belong to plays an essential role. Their self-esteem is attached to their relationship with others (Mooij & Hofstede, 2002). Moreover, collectivists believe in self-concept and self-discovery such that they evaluate themselves based on other opinions and learn from their self-criticism. They are accepting of other views on them and strive to please others in the group (Madupu and Cooley, 2010). Therefore, brands that are perceived to be community oriented and allow opportunities for self-expression tend to be highly valued by collectivists. Thus, the interdependent self-construal of a collectivist allows him/her to be a part of a brand community, thereby, expressing their self in a manner that is acceptable by other members of the group. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H1:** Individuals with value orientation to collectivism positively affect (a) perceived co-creation, (b) perceived community and (c) perceived self-concept

**H2:** Individuals with value orientation to collectivism negatively affect perceived empowerment

#### *2.10.2. Relationship between masculinity/femininity and perceived motivations*

This cultural dimension distinguishes the role of genders in a society, where masculinity stands for assertiveness, toughness and material success, while femininity stands for tenderness, modesty and quality of life (Hofstede, 2001, p.297). Moreover,

masculinists give importance to performance (self-orientation), achievement, and role differentiation on the basis of gender, whereas femininity-oriented individuals are more people-oriented, easily satisfied, do not differentiate based on gender, and are not status-oriented (Mooij & Hofstede, 2002).

Femininity-oriented individuals care for others, showcase interdependency, carry out shared decisions, thereby valuing relationships (Sharma, 2010; Mooij and Hofstede, 2002). Hence, it can be suggested that feminists are more community-oriented and favor brands that give back to the society through knowledge-sharing, supporting social connections and network, and allowing advocacy in online communities. In addition to that, people with feministic-orientation believe in strong characteristics such as modesty and equality indicating that they value their own self-expression (Sharma, 2010; Hofstede, 2001, p. 298 – p. 299). Furthermore, femininity-oriented individuals are stable in terms of emotions, exhibit higher control on ego, and prefer quality of life over materialistic success (Hofstede, 2001, p. 298). This indicates that brands that allow individuals to put forward their self-concept will motivate them to be involved in creating content.

Individuals with high masculinity prefer status symbols as a means to show their success and achievements emphasizing the difference of genders and giving importance to their independence. They are hard-hitting and competitive in terms doing what they want (Sharma, 2010; Mooij and Hofstede, 2002). Masculine individuals prefer actions that are self-enhancing followed by their self-esteem. Masculine individuals are gender biased and value independence. Therefore, brands that facilitate empowerment, co-creation and self-concept can be highly valued by masculinists. Their assertiveness and

status consciousness support empowerment. Whereas, by providing their insights for the brand through co-creation also helps them meet their goals of achievement i.e. if they get any extrinsic rewards as an achievement. Moreover, masculinists lean increasingly towards innovativeness and assertiveness which enhances their participation in co-creating value for a brand (Sharma, 2010). Masculinists can also engage with brands on various platforms as they value the feeling of power and control. Masculinists can also boost their self-esteem if they connect with brands that let them express their symbols of success. Thus, they connect with brands that are luxurious or high-status to differentiate themselves from others (Mooij and Hofstede, 2002). Additionally, with respect to WOM, masculinists may not be active in communities with close knits, but rather prefer stating their level of satisfaction to unknown individuals. This indicates that masculine people are more active on review based websites where they engage in one time conversations over highly interactive online brand communities (Lam et al., 2009). However, masculinists do not engage in communities for the benefit of the community or altruism, but rather for self-related goals such as assertiveness or showcasing status symbols in these communities. This leads to the following hypotheses:

**H3:** Individuals with value orientation to masculinity will positively affect (a) perceived co-creation, (b) perceived empowerment and (c) perceived self-concept

**H4:** Individuals with value orientation to masculinity negatively affect perceived community

Motivations to engage in brand-related UGC are based on the consumers' perceptions about the brand (Christodoulides et al, 2012). If consumers are satisfied with the brand in terms of engagement, providing ideas and suggestions, expressing



themselves through the brand and having a community of like-minded people, eventually proliferating their levels of content creation for the brand. Moreover, positive perceptions about the brand influences strengthen a consumers' intention to engage or create content on various platforms. Perceived co-creation is a motivation that enables consumers to see themselves as an integral part of the brand value chain (Etgar, 2008). Co-creation enables consumers to create content to meet their needs of autonomy (Wang and Li, 2017), thus, positively affecting their brand-related UGC involvement (Christodoulides et al., 2012). Hence it can be hypothesized:

**H5:** Perceived co-creation has a positive impact on brand-related UGC involvement

The shift of power from firms to consumers in creating content for the brand has positively affected consumers perception of their relationship with the brand to a great extent, thus empowering consumers (O'Hern & Kahle, 2013) Leung (2009) has identified the three components of empowerment that are met through the creation of online content i.e. self-efficacy, desire for control, and perceived competence. Therefore, when users create content online or contribute to online communities it is an act to enhance their need for gratification and psychological empowerment as mentioned above. Thus, when brands enable consumers to meet their desires of perceived empowerment with respect to having a dialogue with the brand and other respective users and consumers, this in turn impacts a user's involvement in creating content with the brand (Christodoulides et al., 2012). Hence, it can be hypothesized:

**H6:** Perceived empowerment has a positive impact on brand-related UGC involvement

Perceived community is a motivation that helps consumers satisfy their needs of belongingness and being a part of a brand community. Thus, when consumers feelings of community, belongingness, sharing or receiving knowledge and interaction with others for entertainment are met these drives them to engage with these brand communities (Brodie et al., 2013; Muntinga et al., 2011). Additionally, when consumers perception of brands is favorable with respect to meeting all their community needs or serves them with the advantages of a community, their level of engagement in terms of creating content for the brand increases (Christodoulides, et al., 2012). Thus, it can be hypothesized:

**H7:** Perceived community has a positive impact on brand-related UGC involvement

Perceived self-concept is a consumer motivation that is gratified when consumers are able to express their identity or self-image with a brand through content creation or engagement. Self-expression by the consumers is a crucial aspect that the brands need to satisfy with respect to oneself or being in alignment with others. Thus, when brands facilitate perceived self-concept, consumers involvement with content creation is triggered (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2012). Therefore, it can be hypothesized:

**H8:** Perceived self-concept has a positive impact on brand-related UGC involvement

Consequently, based on these hypotheses, the following conceptual model (Figure 1) is proposed in this thesis. The next chapter will elucidate on the methodology that is implemented to test the model and state the results.

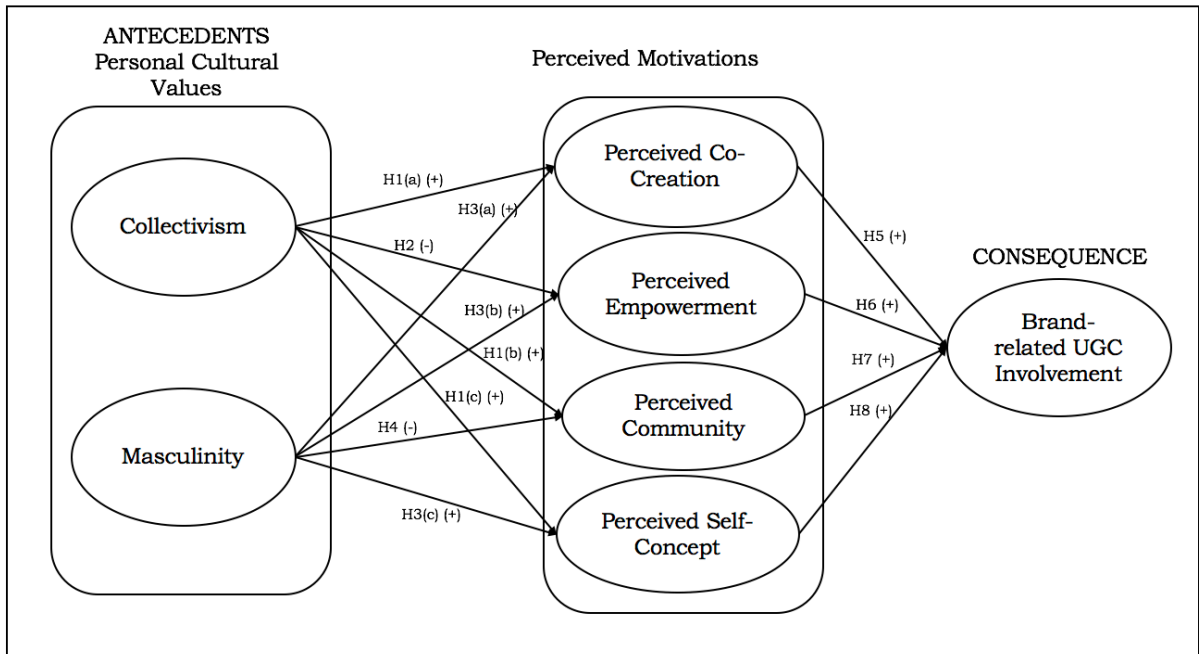


Figure 1. Conceptual Model.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an outline of the research method that is being used in this thesis. The literature review section has identified the main constructs that are being investigated in this thesis. The hypotheses developed mentions the relationships that are to be examined using an apt methodological approach. This chapter sheds light on the research design, data collection, sampling and measures used.

### 3.2. Theoretical perspective - Positivism

There are two main philosophies of research, i.e. positivism (objective) and interpretivism (subjective). For positivism, the theory is a starting point, whereas interpretivism starts with an argument followed by collection of data to support or refute the argument (Gray, 2014, pp.20-23). Furthermore, in the field of marketing, studying the underlying variables given the behavioral aspect of the respondents has been of prime focus. Hudson and Ozanne (1988) have posited that positivism allows for a higher degree of structure and confidence in examining the causal relationships between different variables, thereby implying the suitability of applying positivist theoretical perspective for this respective thesis. Given the positivist stance, a quantitative approach is utilized to ensure adherence to protocols, thereby ensuring a stable research design and allowing to accurately answer the research questions. Additionally, pre-tests and pilot tests were conducted which strengthened the structure of the thesis (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). Hence, as based on positivism, this thesis incorporates a descriptive approach to understand the impact of individuals' underlying cultural values on brand-related UGC involvement through their motivations.

### 3.3. Research design

Descriptive research methodology allows us to examine a phenomenon in its natural environment at a greater level of detail. In contrast, exploratory studies are popularly done for topics where the extant literature is scarce (Gray, 2014, p.36). Thus, this thesis focuses on a survey research method (quantitative) to examine the relationship between the main construct of this study, i.e. personal cultural values, motivations, and brand-related UGC involvement. Moreover, as this thesis utilizes a pre-established theoretical framework, i.e. Values-Attitude-Behavior model, to test the research hypotheses, it uses a deductive reasoning or approach. According to Gray (2010), deductive approach is characterized by hypotheses testing of abstract ideas which may affirm or refute existing principles that explain the relationship between the constructs. Given the importance of operationalization of underlying constructs in deductive approach, this thesis is based on pre-tests and a pilot study which helped in identifying the factor structure followed by a main study. Furthermore, to test the significance of the proposed hypotheses, data collected through an online questionnaire was analyzed through structural equation modeling (SEM) on AMOS. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and path model conducted on SPSS and AMOS were implemented to test the relationship between the variables used in this thesis.

### 3.4. Data collection and sample

In order to collect the data and test the proposed model an online survey was conducted. Prior to collecting the data, 2 pre-tests were conducted through self-administrated online questionnaire created on an online survey tool, Qualtrics. These pre-

tests were conducted on university students in Qatar, to ensure whether the questionnaire is well understood by the participants. The first pre-test consisted of 35 participants, whereas the second pre-test was conducted on 75 participants. The feedback collected from the first pre-test was helpful in amending the survey design and layout of the questionnaire. The suggestions from the second pre-test were helpful in making necessary changes in the item wordings of the questionnaire. This aided in reducing ambiguity and confusion for the participants to be involved in the pilot and main study. Upon making the changes based on the pre-tests, a pilot study was conducted on a sample of 146 participants to test the hypotheses.

The survey was designed and hosted on Qualtrics and research participants were recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). The sample consisted of both males and females residing in the United States of America (USA) with representation of all age groups i.e. below 25 to above 58. Data collected only from one country i.e. USA, will help in filling the gap of analyzing within-country cultural variations. Moreover, it is crucial to identify the variation in the results as compared to Hofstede's national score for USA where it ranks high in individualism and masculinity (Hofstede, 2001). The participants of this study also represented the educated segment of the population with majority of the individuals having achieved a bachelor's degree. The participants were avid users of certain brands and indicated frequent engagement with these brands on different platforms and in different forms. For example, participants engaged with brands such as Nike, Adidas, and Apple etc. through pictures or videos. Whereas, service oriented brands such as Amazon, eBay, and TripAdvisor etc. indicated consumers engagement through reviews or suggestions.

The questionnaire started out with an introduction to the survey followed by a screening question for which only respondents who answered “yes” can proceed further i.e. have you ever posted a picture/video/reviews relating to a brand online? This ensured that only individuals who have created brand-related content could participate in the study. In order to proceed to the next section of the questionnaire, the participants had to specify:

- the brand for which they created content
- type of content posted (picture, video, reviews and other)
- how recently did they post content?
- what platform did they use (personal social media, official brand page or social media account, forum/blogs/review websites and other)

The following sections of the online questionnaire included questions for brand-related UGC involvement or creation, perceived motivations and cultural values. The final part of the questionnaire included demographic questions, such as gender, age and educational qualifications.

In the final study, a total of 473 responses were recorded out of which 293 usable responses were used after discarding the incomplete responses. Additionally, two attention filters were included in the questionnaire to identify respondents who are not reading the questions before answering. The question was as follows: “Please select strongly disagree” in the questionnaire, and individuals who responded to this incorrectly, their response was not counted. The resulting sample (see Table 3) consisted of 54.9 percent females and 45.1 percent males. Moreover, 50.2 percent of the respondents were between 25 and 35 years old and 48.5 percent had a bachelor’s degree.

Table 3

*Demographic characteristics of the sample*

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	132	45.1
Female	161	54.9
<i>Age</i>		
Below 25	37	12.6
25 – 35	147	50.2
36 – 46	67	22.9
47 – 57	31	10.6
58 and above	11	3.8
<i>Education level</i>		
High School/GED	108	36.9
Bachelor’s degree	142	48.5
Master’s degree	27	9.2
Professional degree	12	4.1
Doctorate degree	4	1.4

## 3.5. Measures

The self-administered online questionnaire consisted of questions assessing the key constructs that examined the relationship between culture and motivations that lead to brand-related UGC involvement. The questionnaire used established scales to measure the dependent and independent variables (*see Appendix C*). These scales have been tested and validated in the previous studies. The measures used in the study, items and reliability coefficients are presented in Table 4.

To measure brand-related UGC involvement i.e. intent for creating brand-related UGC, a four-item scale measured with a seven-point Likert scale (1= “Strongly disagree” and 7= “Strongly agree”) was adapted from the paper by Kim and Drumwright (2016).



The scale for the perceived motivations i.e. co-creation (4 items), empowerment (5 items), community (4 items) and self-concept (5 items) were adapted from Christodoulides et al. (2012) and Madupu and Cooley (2010). The items adapted for perceived empowerment, perceived community and perceived self-concept, were rephrased and reworded to fit the context of this study. A total of 18 items were used to measure these 4 motivations on a five-point Likert scale where 1= “Strongly disagree” and 2= “Strongly agree”. Finally, the cultural values were operationalized using five-point Likert scale (1= “Strongly disagree and 5 = “Strongly agree”), adapted from the studies by Yoo, B., and Donthu, N. (2005) and Yoo, B., Donthu, N., and Lenartowicz, T. (2011). Collectivism was measured on a 6-item scale and masculinity was measured on a 4-item scale. The pre-existing scales adapted for the study were based on five and seven point Likert scales as mentioned above. In addition to measuring the constructs, these scales also helped in overcoming the common method bias or maintaining consistency in the data. For instance, using a 5-point Likert scale for the entire questionnaire will push the respondents to fill the survey in an automatic matter. Therefore, in order to ensure consistency, the scales should be of different formats and different points (e.g.: 5-point Likert scale or 7-point Likert scale). Thus, the aim of this research is to avoid the common method bias, which was achieved by adapting 2 different kinds of scale formats (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003)

Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the reliability of the measures. All the constructs consisted of more than two items and were measured on the benchmark 0.7 (see Table 4) (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). All the constructs except perceived co-creation (0.612) had acceptable level of reliability i.e.  $\geq 0.70$ , highest being collectivism

with a value of 0.865 and lowest being perceived co-creation. Therefore, these reliability values signify mediocre internal consistency.

Table 4

*Scale items*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Reliability (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>
Brand-related UGC Involvement (Kim and Drumwright, 2016)	I intend to engage in conversations about the brand <sup>2</sup> (e.g., commenting, asking questions, and sharing questions) 2. I intend to share the brand's posts (e.g., videos, audio, pictures, or texts) on my own social media page I intend to recommend brand-related content to my social media contacts (e.g., retweeting) I intend to upload brand-related videos, audio, pictures, or images	0.837
Perceived Co-creation (Christodoulides et al., 2012)	I enjoy creating online content (such as posting pictures, videos, reviews, blog posts, and creating discussion threads on forums) about this brand I want to be able to have an online dialogue or interaction with this brand (sharing/communicating my views with this brand)	0.612

<sup>2</sup> On Qualtrics, the word "brand" in the questionnaire will be replaced by the brand respondent will specify in Q.1.a.

	I find online information from other consumers in the form of reviews, blogs or forum discussions about this brand trustworthy If I can customize this brand online (adding extra features of my choice) then I feel more confident using this brand	
Perceived Empowerment (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Madupu and Cooley, 2010)	I expect to be able to create whatever I want about this brand online It is important for me to create or own online content about this brand I create online content about this brand because I want to be heard I feel influential by providing others with information about this brand online I feel influential by contributing to a pool of online information that is available about this brand	0.790
Perceived Community (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Madupu and Cooley, 2010)	I feel a sense of community from posting my own online content about this brand I engage with other people online because of a shared interest in this brand My membership in a social network encourages me to produce online content about this brand Helping other members or users of this brand is very important to me	0.755

<p>Perceived Self-concept (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Madupu and Cooley, 2010)</p>	<p>I use this brand to express myself online My link with this brand says a lot about me I make my point of view known by creating online content about this brand I learn about myself and others by creating online content for this brand I create online content for this brand to gain insights into myself</p>	<p>0.829</p>
<p>Collectivism (Yoo, B., and Donthu, N., 2005; Yoo, B., Donthu, N., and Lenartowicz, T., 2011)</p>	<p>Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group (e.g. family, friends, colleagues etc.) Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties Group welfare is more important than individual rewards Group success is more important than individual success Individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group Group loyalty should be encouraged even if individual goals suffer</p>	<p>0.865</p>
<p>Masculinity (Yoo, B., and Donthu, N., 2005; Yoo, B., Donthu, N., and Lenartowicz, T., 2011)</p>	<p>It is more important for men to have a professional career than it is for women Men usually solve problems with logical analysis; women usually solve problems with intuition Solving difficult problems usually requires an active, forcible approach, which is typical of men There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman</p>	<p>0.847</p>

## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Pilot study

A pilot study on a sample of 146 participants helped in ensuring the usefulness of the data and the statistical procedure being used in the study. It also ensures that the main study is analyzed more efficiently. The pilot study consisted of all the above-mentioned constructs and items to measure them.

#### *4.1.1 Results*

##### *4.1.1.1 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)*

Motivations for brand-related UGC are based on 4 factors as mentioned earlier. However, since the items of these four motivations were combined from two studies, it will be beneficial to identify the psychometric properties or dimensionality of the measuring items. EFA helps in identifying the link between latent and observed variables factors. Additionally, this step helps in identifying the smallest number of factors that accounts for the covariation between the observed variables (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, and Strahan, 1999; Byrne, 2010). Moreover, upon conducting a confirmatory factor analysis on this data, the model did not yield an acceptable fit, which led to the use of EFA on scales that are adapted from two different studies. Using EFA in this study will aid in determining the degree to which the item measurements (the observed variables) are related to the 4 latent constructs i.e. perceived co-creation, perceived empowerment, perceived community and perceived self-concept. The criteria for choosing only these four constructs for the EFA is because the items for these constructs are adapted from two different studies i.e. Madupu and Cooley, 2010 and Christodoulides et al., 2012. However, the dependent construct i.e. brand-related UGC

involvement and the cultural values are adapted from pre-existing and tested scales that do not require exploratory factor analysis.

To determine the factor structure, factor analysis employing the principle components extraction method, varimax orthogonal rotation method with Kaiser normalization was performed on SPSS 23.0 software package. Principal component analysis is a psychometric practice that extracts vital information from the data. Principal component analysis helps in determining the linear relationship among the variables by identifying the contribution of each variable on that component. Orthogonal rotation method (varimax) is appropriate for independent or unrelated factors. Varimax rotation enables the maximum dispersion of loadings on a factor that tries to load a smaller number of variables highly onto each factor resulting in interpretable clusters of factors (Field, 2009). Additionally, the KMO test measures the sampling adequacy of the factor analysis. KMO test also measures the proportion of variance or common variance among the variables. Values close to 1 denotes that the pattern of correlations among the variables is relatively small, which implies that the factor analysis will lead to distinctive and reliable factors. Hence, values between 0.5 and 0.7 average, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, and values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great (Field, 2009; Kaiser, 1974). Moreover, Bartlett's test of sphericity represents the correlations between the items. Hence, a significant result of this test implies that the correlations between the items are large enough for a principal component analysis (Field, 2009). With respect to the factor extraction values below 0.3 were suppressed and values above and equal to 0.7 for a factor were acceptable or retained based on the sample size of this pilot study (n=146) (Field, 2009). Moreover, the literature also suggests that the item loadings for the

unobserved variables should be above 0.7 or at least 0.6. With respect to the cross-loadings, the primary loading must exceed the secondary loading by 0.2 (Chin, 1998; Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, 2010).

Upon running the factor analysis using the principal component analysis and varimax extraction on the 18 items for the four motivations, the following results were obtained: KMO of value 0.854 (“very good”) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity of value ( $\chi^2[153] = 1173.267, p < .000$ ) (significant) (Field, 2009; Madupu and Cooley, 2010) indicate that correlations between the items for the four motivations is sufficient to conduct EFA. The rotated component matrix (*see Appendix D*) indicated that few items cross-loaded on two to three factors.

Fourth item from perceived community (COMM\_4 - *my membership in a social network encourages me to produce online content about this brand*), cross-loaded on three factors. Whereas, two items from perceived co-creation (CoCr\_1 - *I enjoy creating online content (such as posting pictures, videos, reviews, blog posts, and creating discussion threads on forums) about this brand* and CoCr\_2 - *I want to be able to have an online dialogue or interaction with this brand (sharing/communicating my views with this brand)*) cross loaded on two factors. Therefore, in the second round of running the factor analysis by eliminating the above -mentioned items, the following results were obtained (*see Appendix D*)

The third round of factor analysis was run removing one item of each motivation due to cross-loading with a difference less than 0.2 between the primary and secondary factor (*italicized in the table*). Thus, items from perceived communication (COMM\_5- *Helping other members or users of this brand is very important to me*), perceived

empowerment (EMP\_7- *I create online content about this brand because I want to be heard*) and perceived co-creation (CoCr\_4- *If I can customize this brand online (adding extra features of my choice) then I feel more confident using this brand*) were eliminated. This resulted in a component matrix with few cross-loadings which were excluded in the fourth round of the analysis resulting in a three-factor structure (*see Appendix D*) (excluded items: SCO\_17- *I learn about myself and others by creating online content for this brand*, CoCr\_3- *I find online information from other consumers in the form of reviews, blogs or forum discussions about this brand trustworthy* and COMM\_1/COMM\_2- *I feel a sense of community from posting my own online content about this brand/ I engage with other people online because of a shared interest in this brand*).

Lastly, two items of perceived empowerment were eliminated as they loaded on component 3, whereas the scree plot suggested only a two-factor model. Moreover, component 3 explained only 12.9 percent variance. After five rounds of elimination based on low ( $<0.7$ ) and cross-loadings, the following factor structure was obtained, which was also in line with the scree plot with eigenvalue greater than 1 (*see Appendix E*). Two components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 70.73% of the variance (see Table 5) (Field, 2009).



Table 5

*Results from the exploratory factor analysis*

	Rotated Component Matrix	
	Component	
	1	2
I feel influential by providing others with information about this brand online (EMP)	0.891	
I feel influential by contributing to a pool of online information that is available about this brand (EMP)	0.861	
I make my point of view known by creating online content about this brand (SCO)	0.731	0.351
I use this brand to express myself online (SCO)		0.833
My link with this brand says a lot about me (SCO)		0.823
I create online content for this brand to gain insights into myself (SCO)		0.733
Eigenvalues	3.062	1.182
Percentage of variance	51.02	19.70
A	0.817	0.757

*4.1.1.2 Confirmatory Factor analysis (CFA)*

The next step to be conducted after an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). CFA helps in identifying the link between the factors identified in the EFA and their measured variables i.e. the measurement model relates the constructs to their measures. Thus, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) confirms the factor structure that was extracted in the prior step (Hair et al., 2010). Based on the new

factor structure for motivations, the next step will be to run CFA on AMOS 21 to ensure the model matches the observed data. Conducting a CFA on the new structure model will help in developing the final conceptual model of this study. The measurement model for the pilot study was estimated and yielded an acceptable fit ( $\chi^2 = 265.5$ ,  $df = 160$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $CFI = 0.912$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.06$ ) (MacCallum, Browne and Sugawara, 1996; Byrne, 2010).

Apart from confirming the factor structure of the proposed model, CFA also helps in determining the validity and reliability of the constructs. Construct validity is defined as the degree to which the measured items reflect or measure the latent constructs grounded in theory. The main components of construct validity are convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is the degree to which the measurement items of a construct converge or indicate a significant proportion of variance in common. Average variance extracted (AVE) is an indicator of convergence and a cut-off point of 0.5 and above is to be met for a construct to have convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, reliability is also considered as an indicator of convergent validity. Composite reliability (CR) of 0.7 and above accounts for higher internal consistency and an indicator of good reliability of the measures for the latent construct (Hair et al., 2010). Discriminant validity is defined as the degree to which the measure is unique and does not reflect any other variable (Churchill, 1979). Discriminant validity is achieved when the AVE is greater than the squared correlations of the constructs (Hair et al., 2010). Thus, to assess the validity of the constructs AVE was employed for convergent and discriminant validity. All the constructs indicate convergent validity as AVE values were greater than the cut off threshold (0.5) (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, AVE of each

construct was higher than the squared correlation with other constructs, thus, discriminant validity was met for all the constructs. Lastly, all the constructs indicated acceptable levels of CR with values greater than 0.7, signifying high reliability and internal consistency (Jarvis, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2003). Table 6 below reports the values of CR and AVE for the constructs.

Table 6

*Intercorrelation matrix*

	CR	Factor 1 (motivation)	Factor 2 (motivation)	Collectivism	Masculinity	Brand- related UGC
Factor 1 (motivation)	0.712	<b>0.510</b>	0.376	0.056	0.010	0.358
Factor 2 (motivation)	0.759	0.614	<b>0.514</b>	0.056	0.101	0.436
Collectivism	0.845	0.237	0.237	<b>0.518</b>	0.071	0.037
Masculinity	0.870	0.102	0.318	0.267	<b>0.627</b>	0.030
Brand- related UGC	0.839	0.599	0.661	0.193	0.175	<b>0.569</b>

**Note:** The diagonal represents the AVE for each construct. Correlations are presented below the diagonal and squared correlations are presented above the diagonal.

Thus, based on these results it can be concluded that motivational factors can be categorized into two. Hence, a new revised conceptual model and hypotheses will be formulated in the following section.

#### *4.1.1.3 Revised Conceptual Model and Hypotheses*

Although, this study started out on a conceptual model with four motivations that lead to brand-related UGC involvement, the exploratory factor analysis resulted on two factors that the respective items measured. Christodoulides et al. (2012) in their study state that brand-related UGC is driven by intrinsic factors such as co-creation, community and self-concept. They also included empowerment, which is an extrinsic motivation behind brand-related UGC. However, the analysis groups the four motivations differently with cross/low-loadings. Extant literature on UGC and its motivations has indicated or stated that motivations for UGC or consumer engagement on platforms such as social media and brand communities can be of two types i.e. intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Madupu and Cooley, 2010; Muntinga et al., 2011; Pagani et al., 2013; Poch and Martin, 2015; Teichmann et al., 2015; Tafesse, 2016; Kim and Drumwright, 2016; Wang and Li, 2017).

Motivations to engage in an activity are highly varied based on an individual's experiences and consequences. People behave in a certain way that complements their needs and satisfaction, which could be personal or for their surroundings. There are two orientations for motivations namely: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivations include activities that are driven towards interesting things, enjoyment, satisfaction, personal growth that occur from undertaking the activity itself done spontaneously and with self-interest. Whereas extrinsic motivation involves doing a task or an activity to achieve acceptance from others, build a reputation in the society or community and attain rewards such as monetary or non-monetary (fame and image) (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Ryan and Deci, 2000). In the UGC context, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can be stated such

that; consumers' involvement with brand-related UGC for enjoyment, fun or community can be categorized as intrinsic. Extrinsic motivations with respect to brand-related UGC can be getting a positive feedback from other members of the community, empowerment to co-create content and rewards for activities on the web (Muntinga et al., 2011). Etgar (2008) have recognized extrinsic and intrinsic values such that individuals with intrinsic values gain experiences for one's own sake. Whereas, individuals with extrinsic values aim to meet ends that they desire for the external world. Poch and Martin (2015) have identified extrinsic and intrinsic motivations to create brand-related UGC or word-of-mouth. The identified intrinsic motivations are namely product satisfaction/dissatisfaction, altruism, product involvement, vengeance and customer loyalty. On the other hand, self-enhancement, anxiety reduction, advice seeking, social benefits and economic incentives are extrinsic motivations. The study aimed to analyze the impact of altruism, economic incentives and social benefits on brand-related video UGC. The results implied that altruism positively impacts brand-related UGC and economic rewards or incentives are more effective for positive brand-related content creation over social benefits. Additionally, Teichmann et al. (2015) have also categorized their motivations into extrinsic and intrinsic for individuals' creation of content for online communities, where opinion leadership and self-presentation were extrinsic and enjoyment and altruism were intrinsic motivations.

Thus, based on the EFA, a 2-factor structure for motivations was resulted on contrary to the anticipated 4-factor structure as mentioned earlier in the study. The 2-factor structure also confirmed by CFA with a good fit of the model. Moreover, the identified factors (and the items measuring them) are also consistent with the motivations

that are identified in the literature i.e. intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Therefore, based on the findings of the previous literature and value-attitude-behavior framework, it can be postulated that individuals' personal cultural orientations such as collectivism and masculinity will influence intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that lead to brand-related UGC involvement.

Collectivism and masculinity can influence an individual's extrinsic and intrinsic motivations in various ways. Collectivists are group oriented individuals undertaking actions that are acceptable by all. They prefer to succumb to the choices made or expressed by others to fulfill their innate need of belongingness (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999). Their engagement on social media networks and online communities is based on altruism i.e. an attitude of self-sacrifice for the betterment of others. Moreover, Poch and Martin (2015) have identified this as an intrinsic motivation for UGC creation. They also seek acceptance from others in the community, making them value social integration on these platforms. Therefore, collectivists who can engage with other members of the brand community are more involved in the activities of the group. Moreover, intrinsic motivations to engage in brand-related UGC are more related to expressing one's own self-concept or gain insights about oneself (Shao, 2009). Furthermore, by expressing themselves through the brand, collectivists connect with other brand members forming a community or a group of like-minded people with similar values and expectations from each other (Lam et al., 2009). Hence, collectivists' values support the intrinsic motivations for the creation of UGC for brands.

As for masculinists, factors that optimistically reinforce their intrinsic motivations are expressing assertiveness and status through the brand, differentiating the role of

gender on communities, independence in expressing their views through the brand and getting positive reinforcement from members of the brand community, which serves as an achievement for them (Mooij and Hofstede, 2002; Sharma 2010). Additionally, as Deci and Ryan (1985) state, intrinsic motivations are best met when psychological needs of perceived competence and perceived autonomy are satisfied. This also leads to that stance that UGC creation by individuals who are motivated intrinsically are engaging in the act because they have autonomy and control over their content. Creating content for the brand also empowers them to make a choice whether to engage or not. Both the cultural values support intrinsic motivations for UGC. Based on this discussion, the following hypotheses will be tested:

**H1:** Individuals with value orientation to collectivism positively affect intrinsic motivations

**H2:** Individuals with value orientation to masculinity positively affect intrinsic motivations

Individuals' behaviors triggered by extrinsic motivations are controlled significantly by external factors (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Extrinsically motivated consumers are more interested in the outcomes of an activity than being involved in the activity for self-enhancement. Moreover, the control of external factor on their behavior limits the extent of autonomy, which is required for self-determination (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Pagani et al. (2013) in their study identify the difference between the personality traits, extraversion and introversion for UGC creation. Extraverts are highly active and enthusiastic to be a part of social interactions, whereas, introverts are less active and prefer staying alone and aloof. Personality difference based on this dimension is

considered crucial factor to identify the differences between individuals. Therefore, Presi et al. (2013) in their study check for the moderating role of extraversion between motivations and UGC creation after a negative service experience. Additionally, individuals with high extraversion frequently update about their social activities backed by their motivation to use social networking platform to communicate and connect with others (Marshall, Lefringhausen, and Ferenczi, 2015). Thus, extraversion followed by social identity expressiveness leads to active use and creation of UGC (Pagani et al., 2013). Moreover, Poch and Martin (2016) identified self-enhancement, anxiety reduction, advice seeking, social benefits and economic incentives as extrinsic motivation for branded content creation whereas, opinion leadership and self-presentation were considered extrinsic motivations for engagement in online brand communities (Teichmann et al., 2015). Hence, values of a collectivist that links them to extrinsic motivations are mainly in terms of social integration, advice seeking or gaining various other social benefits (connecting with other members, sharing information, honest opinions and reviews to help other given their benign nature). Besides, individuals inclined towards collectivism consider internet mainly as a tool for social interaction (Kim, Sohn and Choi, 2011). Therefore, when collectivists perceive brands facilitating their needs as a group or helping them connect through different platforms, it positively supports extrinsic motivations for creating brand content.

Masculinists are individuals who are assertive, status conscious, value achievement, performance and success (Sharma, 2010). They are driven by material success and a demonstration of this success is innate to their behavior (Ng et al., 2007; Mooij and Hofstede, 2011). In a context of creating content for the brand through UGC,



the values of a masculine individual that influences their motivation can be as follows. Extrinsic motivations such as economic incentives, social enhancement and opinion leadership aligns well with masculine individuals. Economics incentives monetary or non-monetary is a key driving force for actions online, as they get a reward for their action i.e. value achievements. Self-enhancement goals are met when masculine individuals contribute content to indicate their status. Venting their feelings, positive or negative on social media or communities with respect to a brand entails their assertive nature. Additionally, given their confrontational nature (Sharma, 2010), masculinists would also take a role of an opinion leader on platforms where their opinion is considered adding to their self-enhancement value. Even though individuals with masculine values are involved in loose-knit ties on brand platforms, their engagement through WOM in brand communities is influential (Lam et al., 2009). Therefore, based on this discussion it can be inferred that masculinity positively supports the intrinsic motivations that are required for brand-related UGC creation. Thus, the following hypotheses will be tested:

**H3:** Individuals with value orientation to collectivism positively affect extrinsic motivations

**H4:** Individuals with value orientation to masculinity positively affect extrinsic motivations

Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are necessary for individuals to create content for the brands they like (Etgar, 2008). Posting content on personal social media or official brand pages is purely based on ones' motivations from desiring some sort of social or economic benefit (Muntinga et al., 2011). Motivations are a driving force for actions shaped by consumers' values. Thus, intrinsic motivation that is for the self and

extrinsic motivation that is to reap external benefits, positively impact brand-related UGC content creation. Thus:

**H5:** Intrinsic motivations positively impact brand-related UGC involvement

**H6:** Extrinsic motivations positively impact brand-related UGC involvement

Below is the revised conceptual model (Figure 2) that will be tested in the next section followed by the results and discussion.

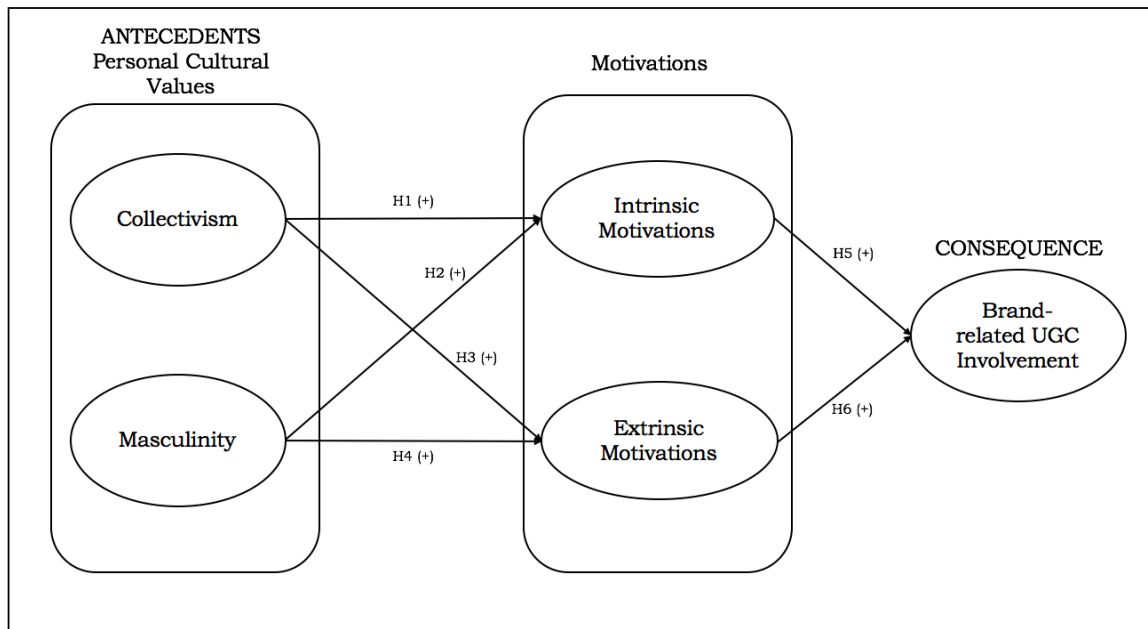


Figure 2. Revised Conceptual Model

## 4.2. Main study

The final data collection for the study was conducted on Amazon's MTurk through Qualtrics. A total of 147 responses were recorded for the main study. CFA was conducted on this new sample (n=147) to confirm the model fit. Responses from both the studies were merged (n= 293) as the factor structure is similar for both pilot and main study respondents. Additionally, the measuring instrument, i.e. the survey was not modified post pilot study and similar sampling techniques were used for both the studies, thereby allowing for the inclusion of the sample from pilot study into the main study. This ensured for an improvement in the efficiency of the results of the main study (Thabane et al., 2010). AMOS 21 and SPSS 23 statistical software's were used to analyze the collected data to test the revised conceptual model and hypotheses.

## 4.3. Results

Analyzing the introductory segment of the questionnaire stipulated the following findings (see Table 7): 48 percent of the respondents posted reviews (pictures/videos/text) for the brand they created content for. Whereas, 45 percent posted brand-related pictures, 4 percent posted videos and 2 percent created other types of content. Majority of the respondents (43%) also stated that they posted content 1-3 months prior to responding to the survey. The most used platform to post content was personal social media accounts (69 %) followed by forums, blogs or review websites (17 %), official brand website or social media pages (10 %) and other platforms (4%).

Table 7

*UGC Usage by the Sample*

	%
<i>Type of content posted</i>	
Pictures	45
Videos	4
Reviews (pictures, videos or text)	48
Others	2
<i>How recently did they post content?</i>	
current month	21
1-3 months before	43
4-6 months before	16
7 months or more	20
<i>Platform used to post content</i>	
Personal social media accounts (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc.)	69
Official brand websites or social media pages	10
Forums, blogs or review websites	17
Other platforms	4

The conceptual model was tested with structural equation modeling (SEM). Utilizing the two-step model suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), where the first step is to estimate the measurement model followed by structural model in the second step. Upon conducting the CFA on the second sample (n=147), the following results were obtained ( $\chi^2= 275$ ,  $df = 160$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $CFI = 0.914$ ,  $RMSEA=0.07$ ). This indicates that the model fits the data well. Convergent and discriminant validity was also met as all

values were above the cut off points 0.7 and 0.5 respectively (see Appendix F).

CFA on the entire sample (n= 293) yielded the following results ( $\chi^2= 274.1$ , df = 142,  $p < 0.001$ , CFI = 0.944, RMSEA = 0.05), which indicates the goodness of fit of the model. Convergent validity was achieved as composite reliability (CR) for each construct exceeded the threshold value i.e. 0.7 and the average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs was above the cutoff point of 0.5. The AVE for all the constructs exceeded the squared correlations between the constructs, thus, ascertaining discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Intercorrelation matrix*

	Masculinity	Intrinsic	Extrinsic	Brand-related UGC	Collectivism
Masculinity	<b>0.59</b>	0.08	0.17	0.02	0.02
Intrinsic	0.29	<b>0.52</b>	0.29	0.47	0.03
Extrinsic	0.08	0.54	<b>0.56</b>	0.24	0.02
Brand-related UGC	0.17	0.69	0.49	<b>0.57</b>	0.01
Collectivism	0.15	0.19	0.17	0.13	<b>0.53</b>
Composite Reliability (CR)	0.85	0.76	0.79	0.84	0.85

**Note:** The diagonal represents the AVE for each construct. Correlations are presented below the diagonal and squared correlations are presented above the diagonal.

The second step was to run the structural model/ path model to test the hypotheses (H1-H6). The results for the path model are summarized in Table 9. The overall structure of the model was supported by the data indicating an adequate fit:  $\chi^2 = 327.35$ ,  $df = 145$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , CFI. 0.923, RMSEA. 0.06, GFI=0.901).

The data supported H1 as collectivism positively impacts intrinsic motivation, but this impact was not highly significant ( $\beta = 0.078$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, data supported H2 as masculinity significantly impacts intrinsic motivation ( $\beta = 0.072$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). H3 was also supported by the data since collectivism positively impacts extrinsic motivation ( $\beta = 0.058$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), while the data did not support H4 as masculinity does not impact extrinsic motivation ( $\beta = 0.051$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). H5 and H6 were to check the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on brand-related UGC creation; the data supported both the hypotheses since the both the intrinsic motivation ( $\beta = 0.119$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and extrinsic motivation ( $\beta = 0.134$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) positively and significantly impacted brand-related UGC creation.

Table 9

*Results of the structural equation modeling*

Relationship	Standardized estimate	CR	Hypothesis testing
Collectivism → Intrinsic motivation	0.078*	2.238	H1: Supported
Masculinity → Intrinsic motivation	0.072**	3.649	H2: Supported
Collectivism → Extrinsic motivation	0.058*	2.297	H3: Supported
Masculinity → Extrinsic motivation	0.051	1.025	H4: Not supported
Intrinsic motivation → Brand-related UGC	0.119**	8.092	H5: Supported
Extrinsic motivation → Brand-related UGC	0.134**	3.976	H6: Supported

Notes: \*  $p < 0.05$   
\*\* $p < 0.01$

Additionally, a mediation analysis as suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008) was conducted to examine the indirect effect of the values on brand-related UGC involvement. The purpose of running the mediation analysis is to provide evidence that the effect of cultural values is mediated by the motives leading to UGC creation. The results indicate that there is no direct effect of culture on UGC, however there exists, an indirect effect. This indirect effect is checked by bootstrapping (number of bootstrap samples = 2000 and percentile confidence interval of 90) on AMOS, which yielded the following results (see Table 10). Collectivism has an indirect effect on brand-related

UGC involvement ( $\beta = 0.140$ , lower bound = 0.022, upper bound = 0.260). The indirect effect is checked by confirming that the zero (0) does not fall between the confidence interval generated by the upper and lower bounds of the bootstrapped mediation analysis. Similarly, masculinity has an indirect effect on brand-related UGC involvement ( $\beta = 0.185$ , lower bound = 0.083, upper bound = 0.296). Thus, these results indicate that personal cultural values indirectly effect UGC involvement, thus confirming the mediating role of motivations between the values and behavior.

Table 10

*Results of mediation analysis*

	Standardized Indirect		
	Effect (Beta Coefficient ( $\beta$ ))	Lower Bounds (PC)	Upper Bounds (PC)
Collectivism $\rightarrow$ Brand-related UGC involvement	0.140	0.022	0.260
Masculinity $\rightarrow$ Brand-related UGC involvement	0.185	0.083	0.296

#### 4.4. Further analysis

In addition to measurement model and path model, multi-group analysis was also conducted to check for the moderating impact on gender, high/low collectivism and high/low masculinity on the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and



brand-related UGC. Measurement model invariance was tested for these groups along with their moderation on the relationship. The results of the 3-measurement model invariance (CFA) are as follows: gender (CMIN=22.049 and  $p=0.397$ ), collectivism (CMIN= 40.568 and  $p=0.006$ ) and masculinity (CMIN=39.591 and  $p=0.008$ ). These results indicate that the respondents based on their high/low- collectivism and masculinity do have different understanding on the constructs in the model, whereas for gender both males and females perceive the concepts/constructs in the model similarly.

Based on the measurement model invariance of collectivism and masculinity, two groups were created on the high and low level of the above-mentioned cultural values to test their moderating role on the relationship between motivation and UGC involvement. However, the results of this analysis do not support the results of the measurement model invariance as the model comparison  $p$ -value was insignificant indicating that groups of high/low collectivism and masculinity do not moderate the relationship between motivation and UGC involvement.

#### 4.5. Discussion

This research makes several contributions to the UGC literature. The main aim of this study was to propose and test a conceptual model that explains the role of culture on motivations to create brand-related UGC. Grounded in the values-attitude-behavior model, the thesis fills a theoretical gap that existed in explaining the source of motivations. The current thesis will provide a better understanding of UGC with respect to culture, which was called for in various research studies (Shao, 2009; Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). Moreover, the study is also filling a void in the UGC literature that was pointed out to be lacking foundation in theory and other aspects. Thus, the study is

amongst the first few studies in UGC that have applied a theory other than uses and gratification. The thesis implies that cultural values such as collectivism and masculinity at an individual level do impact intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that lead to brand-related UGC. Thus, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations mediate the relationship between cultural values and behavior i.e. brand-related UGC involvement. Moreover, measuring Hofstede's cultural values at an individual level also helped in identifying the discrepancy between the national scores that generalizes the population of a country to certain values. This thesis measured collectivism that is not associated with consumers of USA, however, the results have indicated that even though USA is labeled an individualistic country, consumers do possess collectivistic values. Interestingly, even though USA ranks high on masculinity according to Hofstede, the results indicate a low or insignificant impact of this value on motivations for UGC creation.

Collectivism has a positive impact on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for brand-related UGC. Whereas, masculinity only has a positive impact on intrinsic motivations and no impact on extrinsic motivations for UGC creation. However, it is stated that low masculinity leads to higher internet usage for leisure purposes (Mooij and Hofstede, 2011), which can be a reason for the data not supporting the hypothesis. Moreover, Lam et al. (2009) also discovered that in contrast to the values of masculine individuals who would engage in WOM to out-groups, the results showed a negative relationship indicating their engagement in WOM with in-group members i.e. family and friends. This study also shows that intrinsic and extrinsic factors are equally important for individuals to engage in brand-related UGC creation. Moreover, Shao (2009) had concluded with the stance that content creation is affected by an individual's self-

actualization and self-expression, which is also a result of an individuals' personal cultural values (Sharma, 2010). Therefore, measuring the impact of values at an individual level on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for UGC involvement further supports the findings made by Shao (2009) and Muntinga et al. (2011).

The results of this study can also be compared to various cross-cultural studies that have taken into consideration USA and have identified the country to be individualistic and masculine based on Hofstede's national scores. However, the results of this thesis shed light on the aspect of collectivism being prominent in consumers based in USA irrespective of the generalizations. Prior studies undertaken by Ko et al. (2006) and Park and Lee (2009) have differentiated cultures based on high and low context. Where USA falls under a low-context culture, where consumers rely on direct information and data. The results of these studies also indicate that consumers in the USA are highly motivated by extrinsic motivations to engage in conversations online or creating content. However, on the contrary, the results of this thesis indicate that irrespective of consumers in the USA being masculine in nature, have indicated low importance to extrinsic motivations for UGC involvement.

Additionally, it is fascinating to see collectivism having a significant impact on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for UGC involvement in the USA. Prior studies have subjected Asian countries with respect to collectivism and its impact on WOM (Lam et al., 2009), but the results of thesis have indicated that values cannot be generalized based on a country given in today digitized and globalized world. Although, this thesis has only focused on two values namely collectivism and masculinity, the model can be tested using other values such as power distance, uncertainty avoidance,

and horizontal and vertical- collectivism and individualism to further strengthen the argument that consumers personal values do play a significant role on their motivations irrespective of their national values or scores by Hofstede.

## CHAPTER 5: THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSION

### 5.1. Theoretical and managerial implications

The results of this thesis indicate the importance of personal cultural values on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that lead to brand-related UGC involvement. Both collectivism and masculinity have a significant impact on intrinsic motivations for brand-related UGC involvement. However, only collectivism has a significant impact on extrinsic motivations for brand-related UGC involvement. Masculinists insignificant impact on extrinsic motivations is quite intriguing given their characteristics that are inclined towards extrinsic motivations. Thus, the results of this thesis can be implied in both theoretical and managerial perspectives. Additionally, this thesis expands on the existing knowledge on user-generated-content with respect to brands and how it is influenced by an individual's culture. This thesis is one of its kind in the UGC literature towards apply a different approach i.e. the value-attitude-behavior model, compared to the myriad of UGC studies that are based on uses and gratification theory. The study provides a framework that can be extended in future studies by applying various other cultural aspects that will enhance UGC literature. Extant literature on social networking websites, online communities, word-of-mouth or e-WOM and consumer-brand engagement investigates the impact on culture in a limited manner. Most of the studies either use culture as a moderator or compare two countries based on its dominant cultural values or national scores posited by Hofstede (2001). Studies have neglected the within-country differences in culture and have over generalized the results to the entire population. However, this study extended the meaning of culture by measuring

individuals' cultural orientation rather than labeling them based on their nation's cultural score. Therefore, a theoretical contribution of this study is that it sheds light onto how even though consumers belong to one "nation", their behaviors might differ based on their unique values.

In terms of managerial implications, the results of this thesis can be helpful for marketers and brands in various ways. Brands that are unable to reach out to consumers due to their country wise categorization of cultural values can use this study to better understand their target audience. Thus, managers can use the results of this study for better segmentation of their consumers. Moreover, markets today are culturally diverse making consumers' values and cultural orientations crucial for brands, businesses or marketers to understand. Firms need to analyze the complexity of cultural values and cater to the needs of their market. Consumers creating content for the brand helps in boosting its presence on various platforms creating a positive effect on the brand value. Therefore, understanding your customers based on the values they portray will cater to positive engagement and co-creation of value. Moreover, consumer-brand engagement that satisfies the consumers eventually leads to positive WOM. To facilitate UGC from the consumers, brands need to meet the motivations that are essential for consumers need satisfaction. Facilitating consumer-to-consumer interactions, timely feedback, appreciation or a chance to express themselves through the brand are vital areas that brands need to focus on. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations should be given equal importance by the brands and a better understanding of these motivations is needed to involve more consumers with the brand. Moreover, providing consumers an opportunity to fulfill their desire to meet their cultural values is also crucial for an overall

contentment that improves content creation on a regular basis. For example, Coca-Cola's presence on various social media platforms and being followed by millions of followers explains how it caters to each individual who resonates with the brand. Michael Donnelly once stated that, "we want to communicate with individuals and local communities around the world, as opposed to communication on a global basis. We want to talk with people, not at them as most traditional advertising does" (Deighton and Kornfeld, 2012, p.6).

Thus, brands need to target their audience based on their inclination towards respective values and design communication campaigns that will foster greater engagement. Technology has enabled firms to reach out to millions of fans, which should be utilized to the fullest to generate long lasting value for the brand (Heinonen, 2011). UGC can also play a vital role for new product development and innovative projects of the firm. Hence, calling for engagement and meeting self-enhancement, information, enjoyment and other needs is essential for brands. Lastly, in communicating with consumers on a global basis, brands need to give importance to their local personal values that helps them get motivated either intrinsically or extrinsically for content creation.

## 5.2. Limitations and future research

Although this thesis has filled theoretical gaps in the UGC literature by investigating culture's role as an antecedent to motivations that lead to brand-related UGC, however, like any other study, this research also has certain limitations that can be overcome by future studies. Firstly, the study is based on a survey based quantitative methodology which has been used by several UGC studies. Therefore, to get more

generalizable results qualitative or exploratory approaches such as personal interviews and experiments could be used to get first-hand information about a consumers' cultural orientation. Secondly, the study is based on Hofstede's cultural framework, which is one of the most frequently used frameworks for cultural studies. Moreover, the framework has also been criticized for being applied in marketing studies as it was developed in a management context indicating that studies need to move beyond this framework (Ng, Lee, and Soutar, 2007; Zhang et al., 2008; Sharma, 2010). Thirdly, only two cultural dimensions were used in the study. Fourth, the data is collected through convenience sampling (MTurk) and may also limit the generalizability of the findings indicating the use of a more representative sample. Lastly, specifying a particular platform may also have affected the results of the study, however not focusing on one single platform such as social media or online communities could also be a potential drawback of the study.

Future researchers could draw upon the limitations of this study and explore the field of UGC and culture in various ways. Current research in UGC is dominated by quantitative methods such as online surveys and lab experiments. Thus, this calls for future researchers to determine other resourceful options for methodology in UGC studies such longitudinal methods, research design, qualitative methods (personal interview, focus groups, observation), netnography and studies based on content analysis. These research methods will help in better understanding user-generated-content in general as well as in linking culture to UGC. Additionally, other cultural values such as horizontal (individualism and collectivism) and vertical (individualism and collectivism), power distance, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation can also be studied in future studies as antecedents, moderators or mediators to investigate their influence on



brand-related UGC. However, cross-cultural or cultural research has overused Hofstede's cultural values framework, thus future studies can adopt other frameworks. For example, Schwartz's (1992) ten universal values can be an interesting approach to investigate differences and comparisons (Ng, Lee, and Soutar, 2007). Moreover, few researchers have also indicated that comparing cultures or countries only on the basis of five values identified by Hofstede are not sufficient to comment on a culture. Therefore, factors such as religion, ethnicity, and ethnocentrism also reinforce cultural values that influence consumer behavior (Brian, 2014; Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos, 2015).

Additionally, future studies can conduct studies in multicultural environments and compare the results based on the dominant cultural values of the region and whether the results subjugate to the respective cultures. Future studies can also measure the impact of UGC and culture on new product innovation and diffusion, as the input provided by consumers with different values can help in shaping a product that meets the needs of all individuals (Griffith and Rubera, 2014). Lastly, studies can examine the impact of an individual's personality (big-five personality traits) on cultural values or vice-versa leading to UGC for brands.

### 5.3. Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis was an attempt to investigate the role of culture as an antecedent for extrinsic and intrinsic motivations that are essential for brand-related UGC creation. With the increasing use of social media platforms, online brand communities and other engagement platforms, it is imperative for brands to understand their consumers' values to nurture higher engagement. Moreover, with extant literature focusing on motivations for UGC creation (Daugherty et al., 2008; Shao, 2009; Muntinga

et al., 2011; Christodoulides et al., 2012; Halliday 2016) it was imperative to investigate the values triggering or affecting these intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Thus, the conceptual model of this thesis was formulated to test the impact of an individual's cultural values on motivations that are habitually supported by the values the individual holds. Using a quantitative online questionnaire for data collection, the study investigated antecedents of brand-related UGC; cultural values - collectivism and masculinity followed by motivations (intrinsic and extrinsic) and its consequence i.e. brand-related UGC creation. Collectivism and masculinity has a positive impact on intrinsic motivations, whereas, only collectivism had a positive impact on extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are highly important for consumer engagement with UGC, which is in line with all the motivation based UGC studies in the past.

Lastly, the findings of this research study have important theoretical and managerial implications. The study adds to the existing UGC literature that needs attention in addition to providing a better understanding to marketing practitioners. Prior investigations on UGC have mostly focused on its motivations, types and platforms used till date. However, this research is one of the first few attempts to test culture as an antecedent to motivations for UGC. Furthermore, refinement of the existing model is deemed necessary for its application in the future where UGC or customer-brand engagement can be studied in different contexts and settings.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A – Summary of UGC studies

Author (year)/journal	Focus of the study	Key issues addressed	Theory	Research method	Key findings
Muniz and Schau (2007)/ JA	Advertisements created by consumers via content creation in brand communities	Ads generated by consumers by content posted on online communities	Consumer culture theory	Netnography- Observation and interviews	Consumer-generated brand-related ads in a brand community help brands in various aspects. Consumer-created ads boost the brand community and aids the brand in its modification, repair and innovation. Moreover, by creating ads for the brand in the

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					community, users can showcase their skills, proficiency and prolific creativity adding unique brand meaning.
Daugherty et al. (2008)/ JIA	Motivation and attitude for UGC creation	Relationship between attitude and behavior. This Study explains how motivations to produce UGC	Functional theory	Web-based questionnaire/ multiple regression	The findings of the study indicate that the relation between use and creation of UGC is mediated through attitude towards UGC. Two functional sources that highly influence attitude towards

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		affects perception of UGC			UGC creation on social media, webpages and blogs are ego-defensive and social.
Yoo and Gretzel (2008)/ ICTT	Motivations to write online travel reviews in virtual communities	Explores motivations that leads consumers to write online travel reviews (e-WOM) on virtual communities	—	Web-based survey conducted on TripAdvisor/ EFA and t-tests	Motivations to write online reviews differ based on gender and income level. Enjoyment/positive self- enhancement, venting negative feelings and exercising collective powers, and helping the

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		based on demographic differences			company were motivations that differ based on gender. Whereas, income level influenced venting negative feeling/exercising collective power and concerns for other consumers.

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Shao (2009)/ IR	Motivations for creating, contribution and consuming UGC	Explains how people use media to gratify their needs and helps in understanding motivations for media behavior	Uses and gratification theory (U&G)	Conceptual paper/Macro-analysis of the literature	Content creation, contribution and consumption are inter-related activate. Individuals gratify various needs through UGC. Content creation is also affected by an individual's self-actualization and self-expression.
Park and Lee (2009)/ JIM	Impact of online reviews on purchase decisions	Comparing cultural differences of consumers	Technology acceptance model (TAM) and uses and	Personal interviews and online survey conducted in USA and Korea/ multi-group	The findings of this study indicate that the relationships among online reviews and its

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		based on their attitudes towards online reviews (UGC) and outcomes of positive attitude towards online reviews	gratification theory (U&G)	analysis	antecedents are moderated by national culture. The results suggest that an effective marketing communication strategy for Korean consumers should be attitude-oriented, whereas for US consumers a behavior-oriented marketing communication strategy is more effective.



<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Leung (2009)/ NMS	Motivations of internet users to generate content online	This study aims to identify the role of gratifications on content creation online. Additionally, the study also looks into factors such as civic engagement and psychological	Uses and gratification theory (U&G)	Telephone survey/ Regression	The study identified the aspects of online content creation such as: gratifications of creation content, mental empowerment, and civic engagement. Motivations to create content online are deemed necessary to meet needs such as recognition, cognitive, social and entertainment. The results indicate that social needs are the most

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		empowerment catered by UGC on the internet.			vital needs for consumers to create content online.
Pan and Chiou (2011)/ JIM	Perceived trust in online information for goods and services	The study analyzes the impact of perceived trust in online information on attitude towards the goods or services	Elaboration- Likelihood Model (ELM) and Heuristic- Systematic Processing Model (HSM)	Experimental design (2*2*2 between- subjects, questionnaire /Latent Variable Structural Equation Modeling (LVSEM)/ LISREL 8.51	Negative statements are perceived to be more trustworthy than positive statements for both experience and credence goods. The social relationships among members of a community do not affect information trust. Positive reviews for

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					a product helps individuals to develop more positive attitudes towards the product. Trust placed by individuals on the positive reviews and online information also affects their attitudes toward the product or service significantly.
Muntinga et al. (2011)/ IJA	Motivations for brand-related social media use	Developed a typology for consumers' online brand-	Uses and gratification theory (U&G)	Unstructured and open-ended interviews/ content analysis	Entertainment, personal identity, information, integration and social interaction, empowerment

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		<p>related activities (COBRAs). The study provided a comprehensive view of consumers' motivations for brand-related social media use</p>			<p>and remuneration are identified as the main motives for creation, consumption and contribution of brand-related UGC. Personal identity, integration and social interaction, empowerment and entertainment were motivations to create brand-related content.</p>

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Smith et al. (2012)/ JIM	Brand-related UGC creation on different social media platforms	The study aims to explore the differences in brand-related UGC across three social platforms; Facebook, YouTube and Twitter	—	Content analysis (brand-related post on the three social media platforms)/ data coding, Poisson and log-linear analysis	YouTube serves individuals to create UGC that is self-promoting, whereas Twitter posts are likely to brand centric which is least likely for UGC created on YouTube. Moreover, YouTube is also the least favorite avenue for communication that is market-directed and UGC responses to online marketer action. Factual

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					information about brands is equally likely to be presented across Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Lastly, brand sentiment presented through UGC creation differs across sites.
Kim, Jin, Kim, Shin (2012)/ JECR	Consumers' UGC perception based on its quality, value and utility	The objective of this research study is to examine and evaluate the effect of UGC	Uses and gratification theory (U&G)	Survey questionnaire/Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (AMOS 5.0)	The three factors of UGC quality i.e. technology, content and design are linked to increase the value of UGC in terms of functional, emotional and

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		<p>quality factors such as content, design and technology on functional, emotional and social value of UGC. This value of UGC eventually impacts the usage or utility of UGC.</p>			<p>social. Moreover, functional and emotional values of UGC are more importance drivers of UGC usage as compared to social value. Easy to comprehend, fresh and new content is important for social and emotional value. However, UGC that is well organized in terms of video, audio and interface leads to higher emotional, functional and</p>

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					social value of UGC.  Quality of technology also plays a vital role in UGC usage.
Christodoulides et al. (2012)/JAR	Motivations for brand-related UGC involvement on social media	This study investigates the impact of brand-related UGC involvement that affects a consumers' perception about brands	—	In-depth face-to-face interviews, questionnaire survey/ Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (AMOS 16.01)	The findings of this study signify that consumers' perceptions of co-creation, community, and self-concept motivations have a positive impact on UGC involvement. This, in turn, positively impacts consumer-based brand equity. However, the



<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		and its equity.			results suggest that perceived empowerment does not have a significant influence on brand-related UGC involvement.
Liu-Thompkins and Rogerson (2012)/ JIM	UGC diffusion	This research study explores the impact of network structure, connectivity, content and content creators'	Proportional rates model	Data collected on YouTube/Partial likelihood approach	The results of this study indicate that the size of the network has a moderate impact on UGC diffusion. This implies that networks that are medium sized are enough for video based UGC to be spread. Content characteristics

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		<p>personality on diffusing user- generated content i.e. online videos.</p>			<p>namely, entertainment and education values also impact UGC diffusion. However, the quality of UGC creation only affects its diffusion based on the ratings of the user rather than just the quality. Lastly, UGC creator or author characteristics that influence UGC diffusion depend on their previous success and age. These two factors affect</p>

Author (year)/journal	Focus of the study	Key issues addressed	Theory	Research method	Key findings
					diffusion such that posts from young content creators tend to get more popular and viral easily.
Pagani, Goldsmith and Hofacker (2013)/ JRIM	UGC creation on social media based on individuals' personality	The purpose of this study is to show how extraversion, a basic dimension of human personality, is positively	Consumer behavior theory	Online survey/ SEM (AMOS)	The results support hypotheses that extraversion and social identity expressiveness are positively related to active use of social media web sites, and that extraversion is related to active use both directly and

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		<p>related to this activity, both directly and through its impact on social identity expressiveness.</p>			<p>indirectly through social identity expressiveness.</p>

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Wu et al. (2013)/ DSS	Role of user reviews (UGC) for products or sellers on consumers' willingness-to-pay	Impact of online user reviews for products or sellers on consumers WTP based on a two-stage consumer decision process moderated by consumers' risk attitudes.	Expected utility theory	Experimental design (2*2*2)/ data collection of product reviews (Amazon and eBay)/ Aggregate and disaggregate analysis	Consumers risk attitude with respect to product uncertainty and seller uncertainty significantly moderates the relations between online user reviews (based on volume and variance) and their willingness-to-pay (WTP).

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
O'Hern and Kahle (2013)/ GEMR	UGC typology for brands	This paper distinguishes the various types of UGC created by the empowered consumers and addresses UGC related issues relevant to brand managers	—	Conceptual paper/Macro-analysis of the literature	Based on objective of UGC i.e. product promotion and innovation, and direction of knowledge flow i.e. C2C and C2B: typology for UGC- informing, pioneering, co- communication and co- creating.

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Presi, Saridakis and Hartsmans (2014)/ EJM	Identified motivations for creation of UGC after a negative service experience	This research study investigates the motivations of service customers to create user- generated content (UGC) after a negative service experience, which is moderated by	—	Online survey/ SEM (AMOS)	Motivations that strongly influence UGC creation after a negative service experience are vengeance, altruism and economic/monetary. These motivations are also connected to user participation on specific online platforms. Furthermore, consumers who are highly extraverted create UGC more often after a negative service

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		<p>extraversion.</p> <p>The study also scrutinizes customers' attitudes towards responses in return service recovery after a negative service experience.</p> <p>Additionally, the study also</p>			<p>experience when they are motivated by vengeance.</p> <p>Lastly, individuals who showcase high level of altruism and self-enhancement motivation are linked to have a positive attitude towards the response of the firm after a negative experience. However, consumers who are highly motivated by vengeance only show negative</p>



<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		explains the relationship between UGC creation and usage of a certain online platform.			attitude on the firms' response.
Schamari and Schafers (2015) / JIM	Consumer-brand engagement through UGC on social media	The study investigates possibilities for brands to use web-care for driving engagement on	Social Learning Theory and Reinforcement theory	Between subject experimental study 3 (web-care: no, impersonal, personal) × 2(platform type: consumer-generated, brand-generated)/	Using brand web-care on consumer-generated platforms can be useful in increasing engagement intentions, where consumers' response to this web-care enlightens

Author (year)/journal	Focus of the study	Key issues addressed	Theory	Research method	Key findings
		consumer- generated or brand- generated platforms		Multivariate analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA)	its reinforcing effect. One of the most effective drivers of consumer engagement is personal web-care in consumer- dominated spaces than impersonal web-care. This impact is justified by the consumers' views for a brand that involves itself in a conversation with the consumers through their style of communication. Therefore, the findings

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					<p>indicate that brands should use web-care on consumer-generated social media platforms that is out of their direct control rather than relying on their home turf only.</p>

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Poch and Martin (2015)/ JSM	Motivations for brand-related UGC	Identifies the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for brand-related content creation	–	Experimental survey based design (2*2*2)/ independent groups t- test and within group ANOVA	Altruism positively impacts brand-related UGC and economic rewards or incentives are more effective for positive brand-related content creation over social benefits.
Teichmann et al. (2015)/ PM	Motivations for content contribution on online communities	This study examines the differences based on the type of community	Equity theory	Online questionnaire/ OLS regression	Motivations are categorized based on four dimensions: intrinsic and extrinsic, and self-oriented and other-oriented. These motivations are based on

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		host  (consumer- hosted versus company- hosted communities). The effect of type of community and the relationship between motivational drivers and content			the values of the consumer, for instance, opinion leadership which is self-oriented and extrinsic falls under economic values. Motivations that positively affect content contribution are opinion leadership, self- presentation (social value), and enjoyment (hedonic value); whereas, motivation that negatively

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		contribution to online communities is also examined in this research.			affects content contribution is altruism (altruistic value).
Marchiori and Cantoni (2015)/JDMM	UGC in tourism	This study presents a critical reflection on the effect of prior experience of a destination and	—	Quasi-experimental design/ multiple linear regression	Findings indicate that the belief of web users who declared that they had not visited a given destination significantly increased for most of the topic dimensions. This result suggests that the

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		the change in users' perceptions following exposure to user-generated content (UGC).			knowledge acquisition following exposure to UGC tends to positively increase their perception about a destination.
Saridakis et al. (2016)/ PM	Motivations to engage in brand-related social media use	Identifies motivations for brand-related social media use for content creation, contribution	Uses and gratification theory (U&G)	Fuzzy set comparative qualitative analysis (FSQCA) & multiple regression analysis.	Consumers' motivations differ in terms of creating, consuming and contributing to brand-related social media. Content consumption: high levels of information

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		and consumption			and empowerment motives. Entertainment, personal identity and integration motives lead to content consumption. For content contribution personal identity, integration, and empowerment motives are high. Information, personal identity, integration, and empowerment motivations are high for content



<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					creation.
Baka (2016)/ TM	User reviews (UGC) in tourism	Study focuses on how UGC reviews and ratings have intensified the contingency of organizational reputation in the travel sector	—	Longitudinal study, multilevel methodology. Extensive field study, case study and netnography	Identified a reputation landscape based on online reviews. Also, these company's ratings and rankings over time led to an assessment of changes in the firm. Additionally, the study also compared industry competitors based on these reviews, publication reach and lastly, the readership and methodology for

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					reviewing and ranking these reviews was discussed.
Bahtar and Muda (2016)/PEF	UGCs influence on purchase decision	The study investigates the influence of UGC on Instagram users to purchase products promoted and reviewed. It also considers the content	Technology acceptance model (TAM) and Theory of Reasoned Action	Self-administered questionnaire/ Structural equation modeling (SEM)	Suggested conceptual framework. Findings not reported.

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		provided by unknown users that influences one's decisions.			
Malthouse et al. (2016)/ JMM	UGC engagement and purchase behavior	Consumers are motivated to create UGC for a brand that engages them in such a way that they are enthusiastically thinking about	Elaboration likelihood model (ELM) and goal- setting theory	Data collected from an online community (Air Canada loyalty program site)/ Logistic regressions	Engaging UGC experiences influences consumers' purchase behavior. Consumers' engagement with brands affects its meaning and their personal goals, which can be maximized with consumer and brand

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		<p>achieving their personal goals positively impacts their purchase decisions or behavior.</p>			<p>intersection. Moreover, engaging consumer-brand interactions are more effective than incentives or rewards provided for engagement. That it is important for consumer-brand engagement to facilitate elaboration of personal goals related to a brand. This also impacts the central-route of persuasion that eventually impacts their behavior.</p>

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					Thus, individuals with higher UGC elaboration consistently had a more positive behavioral response.
Wu and Wu (2016)/ JIM	Volume of users' review (UGC) on willingness to pay	Explores the role of online review statistics consumers' willingness-to-pay (WTP) decisions. The study also	Prospect theory	Experimental (3 × 11 within-subjects) and empirical (data collected from eBay)/ Weighting function assessment and linear regression	Review volume and review valence had significant positive influences on consumer WTP. Review volume positively influences consumer WTP, review valence had a significant positive impact on WTP.

Author (year)/journal	Focus of the study	Key issues addressed	Theory	Research method	Key findings
		<p>examines heterogeneity of the consumers in analyzing volume of the reviews; and to quantify the varying consumer preferences toward online reviews</p>			<p>Specialty (featured or high rated product) had a consistently positive impact on WTP across groups.</p>

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Lamberton and Stephen (2016)/ JM	Reviews digital, social media and mobile marketing studies/ including UGC studies	Investigates the advances in scholarly researchers' perceptions on three major themes from 2000-2015 i.e. digital, social media, and mobile (DSMM) marketing.	—	Meta-analysis review/ Macro-level analysis of DSMM	The results of this meta- analysis review indicated that WOM and Social Networks were the two most cited topics in the literature. Moreover, UGC was highly focused in terms of online reviews. The key themes emerging in five-year time frame for DSMM indicated that it facilitates individual expression, acts as decision support tool, and

Author (year)/journal	Focus of the study	Key issues addressed	Theory	Research method	Key findings
					helps firms by acting as a market intelligence source.
Halliday (2016)/ JBR	Motivation for brand-related UGC creation	This research study examines the motivations behind creation and consumption of brand-related UGC by young adults.	Service- dominant logic and consumer culture theory	Dairy entries/ Nvivo9	Networking, shopping, audio-video world, study and entertainment are the top 5 reasons why young generation gets involved in brand-related UGC. Self-affirmation is another aspect of their participation in brand UGC. Moreover, youngsters focus on self-



<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					identity rather than group identity for brand engagement; this however, presents a challenge to firms developing brand communities. Source credibility and self-identity were the themes identified as motivations for brand-related UGC for young individuals.
Rossmann et al. (2016)/ JSM	e-WOM engagement based on	The effect of the senders' prior	Uses and gratification theory (U&G)	Data collected through user postings from a corporate fan page /	Senders' prior experience and acquaintance positively affect user

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
	product experience and community acquaintance	experience with products and services, and their extent of acquaintance with other community members, on user engagement with the e- WOM		data on experience collected through qualitative research/ Multiple regression analysis	engagement with e-WOM, and these effects differ across communities for products and services and across their influence on “likes” and “comments”. Communities for products are orientated toward information sharing, while those discussing services engage in information building.

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Kim and Drumwright (2016)/ CHB	Motivations to engage with brands on social media	Moderating role of social relatedness or sense of belonging on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for brand-related social media engagement and building relationship with the brand.	Self- determination theory	Online experiment (2*2 between subjects' design) and online questionnaire (MTurk)/ MANCOVA	The relationship between consumer motivation and engagement, intention to consumer, satisfaction, emotional commitment and trust is moderated by consumers' perceived social relatedness. The findings also determine the importance of satisfying the need of social relatedness in the social media context, specifically for those

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
					individuals who are motivated to engage in brand-related activities through extrinsic motivations such as rewards or incentives.
Wang and Li (2017)/ JCIS	Motivation to produce UGC	Based on SDT, this study explores cross-cultural differences (USA and China) between motivation to	Self-determination theory	Multi-study model comparison approach/ survey with snowball sampling /SmartPLS	The analyses indicated that the SDT (perceived competence, autonomy and relatedness) justified the motivations required to create UGC significantly. Moreover, trust in UGC support

<b>Author (year)/journal</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
		produce UGC based on trust and need satisfaction of the consumers			people's need for relatedness. The findings also indicate significant disparities between Chinese and American culture in terms of motivations to produce UGC.

Appendix B- Motivations identified in previous studies

<b>Research study</b>	<b>Motivation constructs</b>	<b>Brand-related motivations</b> (Christodoulides et al., 2012)
Halliday (2016)	• Networking	• Perceived community
	• Audi/Video updates	• Perceived community & Perceived self- concept
	• To study	• Perceived self-concept
	• Entertainment	• Perceived community & Perceived self- concept
Daugherty et al. (2008)	• Utilitarian function	• Perceived self-concept
	• Knowledge	• Perceived community/ Perceived co- creation
	• Ego-defensive	• Perceived self-concept/ Perceived empowerment
	• Value-expressive	• Perceived self-concept & Perceived community
Teichmann et al. (2015)	• Opinion leadership	• Perceived community & Perceived empowerment
	• Self-presentation	• Perceived self-concept
	• Enjoyment	• Perceived community & Perceived self- concept
	• Altruism	• Perceived community & Perceived self- concept
Seraj (2012)	• Intellectual value	• Perceived co-creation
	• Social value	• Perceived community
	• Cultural value	• Perceived self-concept & Perceived community
Muntinga et al. (2011)	• Personal identity	• Perceived self-concept & Perceived empowerment
	• Integration & Social Interaction	• Perceived community & Perceived co-

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Empowerment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creation</li> <li>• Perceived community &amp; Perceived self-concept</li> <li>• Perceived empowerment</li> </ul>
Leung (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition needs</li> <li>• Cognitive needs</li> <li>• Social needs</li> <li>• Entertainment needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived community &amp; Perceived self-concept</li> </ul>
Shao (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-expression &amp; Self-actualization</li> <li>• Virtual communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived self-concept</li> <li>• Perceived community</li> </ul>
Wang & Li (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived autonomy</li> <li>• Perceived relatedness</li> <li>• Perceived competence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived co-creation</li> </ul>
Pagani et al. (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extraversion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived self-concept</li> </ul>

## Appendix C- Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the following research study. This questionnaire is a part of Master's graduation thesis project. Your participation is completely voluntary. By clicking on the link, you agree to participate in this research project. This study is trying to determine if consumer's personality impacts their interaction with brands on online platforms (social media, blogs, forums etc.).

Please note that your individual responses will be used solely for research purposes. The identity of the respondent will remain anonymous and the collected information is purely confidential. Your honest responses will be highly appreciated. We expect the questionnaire should take you approximately 8-10 minutes to complete.

Thank you again for your time.

If you have any question, you may contact:

Email: fb1002711@qu.edu.qa

M.Sc. Marketing Student

College of Business & Economics, Qatar University

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**Q.1** Have you ever posted a picture/video/reviews relating to a brand online?

Yes

No

If yes, please answer the below questions.



**Q.1.a.** Please specify the brand for which you have posted content online:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Q.1.b.** What type of content did you post?

- Picture
- Video
- Reviews (pictures, videos or text)
- Others

Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.1.c.** How recently did you perform the above-stated activity online?

- current month
- 1-3 months before
- 4-6 months before
- 7 months or more

**Q.1.d.** What platform did you use to perform the above activity?

- Personal social media accounts (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc.)
- Official brand website or social media pages
- Forums, blogs or review websites
- Other platforms

If others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Next, the researcher would like for you to answer some questions regarding your intentions to post online content for the **brand that you mentioned above**.

**Q.2.** Please indicate how often **YOU** do each of the following:

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>							<b>Strongly Agree</b>		
<b><u>(Please answer each row.)</u></b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>			
a. I intend to engage in conversations about the brand (e.g., commenting, asking questions, and sharing questions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
b. I intend to share the brand's posts (e.g., videos, audio, pictures, or texts) on my own social media page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
c. I intend to recommend brand-related content to my social media contacts (e.g., retweeting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
d. I intend to upload brand-related videos, audio, pictures, or images	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Next, the researcher would like for you to answer some questions regarding the reasons for posting online content for the brand, which you indicated at the beginning of the questionnaire.

**Q.3.** Please indicate the extent to which **YOU** agree with the following statements:

<b><u>(Please answer each row.)</u></b>	<b>Strongly</b>					<b>Strongly</b>	
	<b>Disagree</b>					<b>Agree</b>	
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
a. I enjoy creating online content (such as posting pictures, videos, reviews, blog posts, and creating discussion threads on forums) about this brand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
b. I want to be able to have an online dialogue or interaction with this brand (sharing/communicating my views with this brand)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
c. I find online information from other consumers in the form of reviews, blogs or forum discussions about this brand trustworthy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
d. If I can customize this brand online (adding extra features of my choice) then I feel more confident using this brand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

e. I expect to be able to create whatever I want about this brand online

f. It is important for me to create or own online content about this brand

g. I create online content about this brand because I want to be heard

h. I feel influential by providing others with information about this brand online

i. I feel influential by contributing to a pool of online information that is available about this brand

j. I feel a sense of community from posting my own online content about this brand

k. I engage with other people online because of a shared interest in this brand

l. My membership in a social network encourages me to produce online content about this brand

m. Helping other members or users of this brand is very important to me

n. I use this brand to express myself online

o. My link with this brand says a lot about me

p. I make my point of view known by creating online content about this brand

q. I learn about myself and others by creating online content for this brand

r. I create online content for this brand to gain insights into myself

*Next, the researcher would like for you to answer some questions regarding your personality and attitude.*

**Q.4.** Please indicate the extent to which YOU agree with the following statements:

<b><u>(Please answer each row.)</u></b>	<b>Strongly</b>					<b>Strongly</b>	
	<b>Disagree</b>					<b>Agree</b>	
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
a. Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group (e.g. family, friends, colleagues etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
b. Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

c. Group welfare is more important than individual rewards

d. Group success is more important than individual success

e. Individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group

f. Group loyalty should be encouraged even if individual goals suffer

g. It is more important for men to have a professional career than it is for women

h. Men usually solve problems with logical analysis; women usually solve problems with intuition

i. Solving difficult problems usually requires an active, forcible approach, which is typical of men

j. There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman.

*Lastly, the researcher would like to obtain demographic information for classification purposes only.*

**Q.5. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female

**Q.6. What age group do you belong to?**

- Below 25
- 25 – 35
- 36 - 46
- 47 – 57
- 58 and above

**Q.7. What is your highest level of education?**

- High School/GED
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree

Appendix D- Factor analysis results

*Factor Analysis (first round)*

	Rotated Component Matrix			
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
I use this brand to express myself online (SCO)	0.759			
I learn about myself and others by creating online content for this brand (SCO)	0.726		0.358	
I create online content for this brand to gain insights into myself (SCO)	0.691			0.457
If I can customize this brand online (adding extra features of my choice) then I feel more confident using this brand (CoCr)	0.619			
My link with this brand says a lot about me (SCO)	0.597	0.528		
<i>I enjoy creating online content (such as posting pictures, videos, reviews, blog posts, and creating discussion threads on forums) about this brand (CoCr)</i>	<i>0.355</i>	<i>0.353</i>		
I engage with other people online because of a shared interest in this brand (COMM)		0.721		
I feel a sense of community from posting my own online content about this brand (COMM)		0.673		
Helping other members or users of this		0.531	0.399	



brand is very important to me (COMM)				
<i>I want to be able to have an online dialogue or interaction with this brand (sharing/communicating my views with this brand) (CoCr)</i>	0.356	0.484		
<i>My membership in a social network encourages me to produce online content about this brand (COMM)</i>	0.442	0.46		0.418
I feel influential by providing others with information about this brand online (EMP)			0.736	0.331
I feel influential by contributing to a pool of online information that is available about this brand (EMP)			0.718	0.34
I find online information from other consumers in the form of reviews, blogs or forum discussions about this brand trustworthy (CoCr)		0.333	0.676	
I make my point of view known by creating online content about this brand (SCO)	0.412		0.627	
I expect to be able to create whatever I want about this brand online (EMP)				0.78
It is important for me to create or own online content about this brand (EMP)	0.327			0.715
I create online content about this brand because I want to be heard (EMP)				0.622

**Note:** SCO- Perceived self-concept, CoCr- Perceived co-creation, COMM- Perceived community, EMP- Perceived empowerment

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*Factor Analysis (second round)*

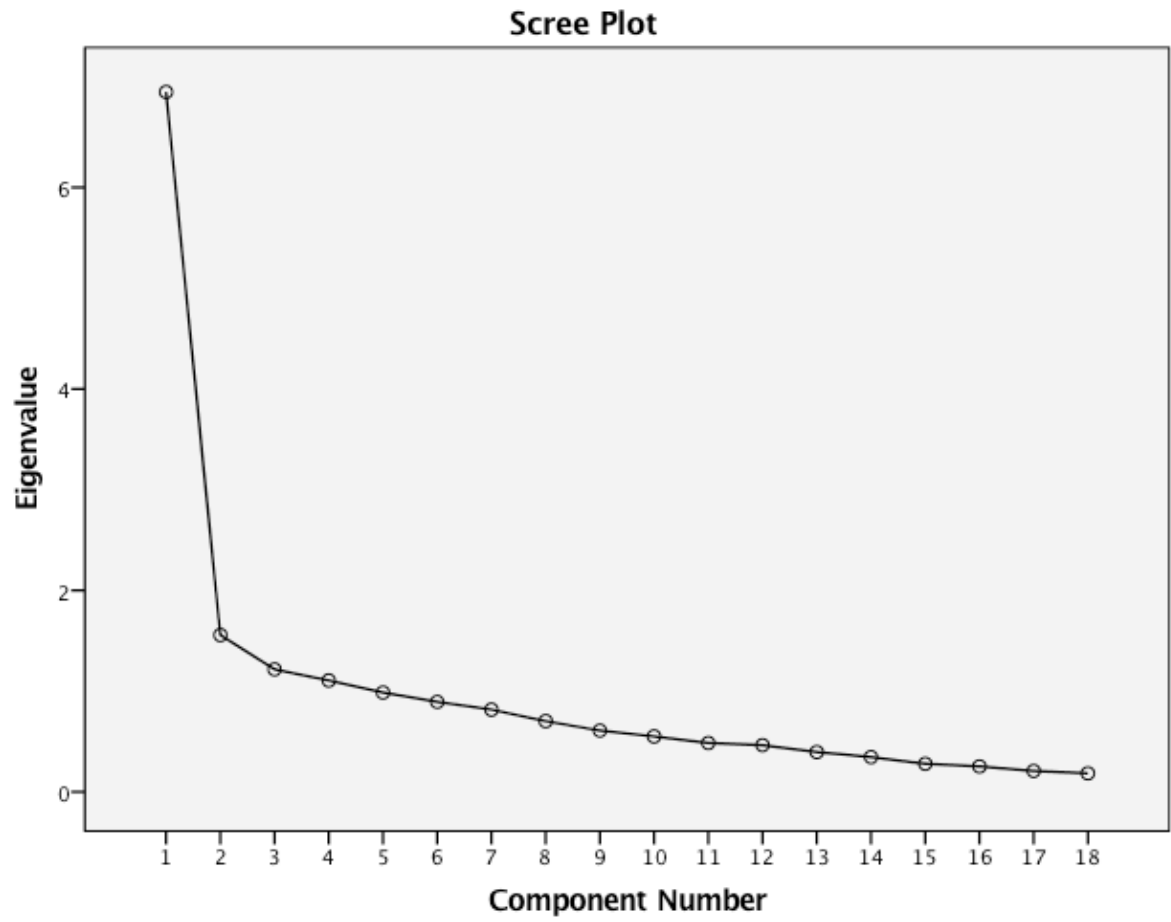
	Rotated Component Matrix			
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
I use this brand to express myself online (SCO)	0.770			0.306
I learn about myself and others by creating online content for this brand (SCO)	0.738	0.351		
I create online content for this brand to gain insights into myself (SCO)	0.690		0.463	
<i>If I can customize this brand online (adding extra features of my choice) then I feel more confident using this brand (CoCr)</i>	0.637		0.567	
My link with this brand says a lot about me (SCO)	0.612			0.558
I find online information from other consumers in the form of reviews, blogs or forum discussions about this brand trustworthy (CoCr)		0.350	0.356	
I feel influential by providing others with information about this brand online (EMP)		0.721	0.343	
I feel influential by contributing to a pool of online information that is available about this brand (EMP)		0.685	0.371	
I make my point of view known by creating online content about this brand (SCO)	0.422	0.617		
I expect to be able to create whatever I want about this brand online (EMP)			0.762	
It is important for me to create or own online content about this brand (EMP)	0.329		0.740	

<i>I create online content about this brand because I want to be heard (EMP)</i>	0.615	0.675	
I engage with other people online because of a shared interest in this brand (COMM)			0.744
I feel a sense of community from posting my own online content about this brand (COMM)			0.731
<i>Helping other members or users of this brand is very important to me (COMM)</i>	0.376		0.498

*Factor Analysis- Rotated Factor Matrix (after third and fourth round)*

	Rotated Component Matrix		
	Component		
	1	2	3
I feel influential by providing others with information about this brand online (EMP)	0.848		
I feel influential by contributing to a pool of online information that is available about this brand (EMP)	0.802		
I make my point of view known by creating online content about this brand (SCO)	0.785	0.34	
I use this brand to express myself online (SCO)		0.844	
My link with this brand says a lot about me (SCO)		0.81	
I create online content for this brand to gain insights into myself (SCO)		0.651	0.49
<i>It is important for me to create or own online content about this brand (EMP)</i>		0.347	0.819
<i>I expect to be able to create whatever I want about this brand online (EMP)</i>	0.302		0.802

Appendix E- Factor analysis (scree plot)



Appendix F- Validity results of the main study (n=293)

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Masculinity	Intrinsic	Extrinsic	Brand-related UGC	Collectivism
<b>Masculinity</b>	0.851	0.590	0.083	0.864	<b>0.768</b>				
<b>Intrinsic</b>	0.766	0.523	0.475	0.908	0.288	<b>0.723</b>			
<b>Extrinsic</b>	0.797	0.569	0.293	0.934	0.083	0.541	<b>0.754</b>		
<b>Brand-related UGC</b>	0.841	0.575	0.475	0.954	0.166	0.689	0.491	<b>0.758</b>	
<b>Collectivism</b>	0.849	0.534	0.036	0.965	0.149	0.191	0.166	0.132	<b>0.730</b>

Validity results of the main study (n=147)

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Extrinsic	Collectivism	Masculinity	Intrinsic	Brand-related UGC
<b>Extrinsic</b>	0.770	0.532	0.311	0.794	<b>0.729</b>				
<b>Collectivism</b>	0.886	0.566	0.056	0.929	0.090	<b>0.753</b>			
<b>Masculinity</b>	0.835	0.560	0.068	0.950	0.049	0.140	<b>0.748</b>		
<b>Intrinsic</b>	0.773	0.535	0.501	0.958	0.558	0.237	0.260	<b>0.732</b>	
<b>Brand-related UGC</b>	0.845	0.584	0.501	0.968	0.465	0.112	0.167	0.708	<b>0.764</b>