

Customer engagement strategies within family businesses in emerging economies: a multi-method study

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Customer Engagement Strategies within Family Businesses in Emerging Economies: A Multi-method Study

Abstract

Customer Engagement (CE) research has been growing considerably over time, however, most of this research emanates from developed economies and large organizational contexts. Little is known about CE strategies when it comes to family-owned businesses in emerging market context. This paper tries to synthesize the extant literature on CE to identify the state of research concerning CE practices followed in family-owned businesses from emerging markets. To achieve this objective, we first conducted a structured literature review of CE research published in last two decades in the top tier management and marketing journals. Second, drawing from the insights received from the findings of the structured review, we design a structured interview schedule to collect first-hand data from the managers working in family-owned businesses in India. This rich data is then analyzed using a qualitative data analysis package. Findings from our analysis reveal that social media platforms, continuous monitoring of the customer feedback and reviews, importance to non-financial goals, safeguarding the reputation, and maintaining the trustful relationship are critical aspects of family-owned firms' CE strategy. Another interesting aspect about the CE strategies in family businesses vis-à-vis non-family-businesses, specifically from an emerging country context is the reliance on the third-party agencies to manage the content creation and digital marketing. Study findings not only help advance the scholarship within the twin fields of customer engagement and family business, but also provide valuable insights to the practitioners of family-owned businesses.

Keywords: Customer engagement, family business, marketing strategies, value creation, emerging economies, structured literature review.

1. Introduction

The concept of customer engagement (CE) has received considerable attention in last one decade from both academic scholars and practitioners. Annual growth rate of thirty six percent in number of publications indicate the ever-increasing scholarly interest in this area (data retrieved from Web of Science database as on 04.06.2021). The scope of such research has been through effective conceptualization, validity and measurement, exploration of antecedents and outcomes, and underlying mechanism of such relationships etc. Findings of these studies to a large extent unanimously suggest that CE has a positive impact on almost all desired business outcomes. These include outcomes such as value co-creation (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014) sales promotion & growth (Kaveh et al., 2021), brand loyalty (Hollebeek et al., 2014)) sustainable competitive advantage, effectiveness of customer relationship management campaign (Christofi et al., 2020), shareholder value (Beckers, van Doorn, and Verhoef, 2018) and so on. The underlying assumption between CE and desirable firm specific positive outcomes is that “engaged customers play a key role in viral marketing activity by providing referrals and/or recommendations for specific products, services, and/or brands to others” (Brodie et al., 2011, p. 252).

The extant research has established CE as highly context specific construct (Hollebeek et al. 2019, p. 173; Behnam et al., 2021) and consequently, it has been explored in a variety of organizational and cultural contexts; however, the concept has not been investigated adequately in context of family businesses (Rajan et al., 2023). With majority ownership within a family (Dede & Ayranci, 2014) and characterized by the pursuit of different strategic goals and performance outcomes (Gómez-Mejía et al., 2011; Leitterstorf & Rau, 2014) that are reflected in the decision-making and management processes (Deephhouse & Jaskiewicz, 2013), family businesses offer a unique context (Zellweger et al., 2010) to study CE.

The under-investigation is surprising given that the family businesses often have a strong commitment to maintaining a positive relationship with their customers and a desire to preserve the company's reputation within the community (Carrigan & Buckley, 2008). Additionally, family businesses often have a long-term perspective (Davis, 2020), which can lead them to prioritize customer satisfaction to ensure the ongoing success and viability of the company (Lumpkin & Brigham, 2011). Because of these factors, it is important for family businesses to focus on customer engagement to maintain strong relationships and foster loyalty. However, limited research has been done to understand on how family businesses acquire the ability and specific skills to engage with customers (Zanon et al., 2019). This exploration will advance the family business field and contribute to a better understanding of family business – consumer behavior/engagement connection.

Given that most of the original CE research emanates from developed economies and large organizational contexts (Lim et al., 2022), family-owned businesses from emerging markets offers a meaningful extension to the CE scholarship. Also, since family businesses are the most common and global form of business organization (De Massis et al., 2018), therefore, the integration of CE in family business research may provide interesting and novel perspectives. Additionally, by studying family businesses, this research can provide insights as to how a context alters CE theories and frameworks, an agenda highlighted for future engagement research (see Hollebeek et al., 2016).

We primarily address two research questions. *First*, what is the overall conceptual structure and status of CE research, i.e., what are the popular themes, the density and centrality of these themes and where CE research is heading in terms of its potential future expansion? *Second*, what are the CE practices in family businesses in emerging economy and how these are different from the ones adopted by non-family firms? Through this, the study attempts to examine CE in family businesses operational in an emerging economy context and makes significant contributions by objectively synthesizing the past research in the CE field and highlighting the limited research conducted in context of family businesses in an emerging economy. Importantly, by providing qualitative inputs from the lens of current family-owned business managers, the study responds to the call (Ng et al., 2020) to study complex and diverse contexts beyond those commonly investigated.

To address our research questions, we use a mixed method approach (see Malina, Nørreklit, & Selto, 2011; Pearson et al., 2015). The first study, a systematic and quantitative review of CE scholarship, is undertaken to see if *contextualization* based on market or type of firm emerge as a thematic cluster in the knowledge map. The absence would clearly indicate a gap in this direction and presence would provide a path to synthesize what has been already investigated in context of family businesses in emerging economies. In the second study, we use qualitative and exploratory design to address the next research question. Interview protocol was developed based on the insights from study one and data were collected from structured interviews of seventeen executives (after achieving the theoretical saturation) from family-owned businesses of an emerging economy based. Structured interview analysis was employed using content and cluster analysis to complement the structured literature review. The data produced through the interviews, are coded and processed through the MAXQDA software, which uses the full scripts of the interviews to produce the statistical analysis of the keywords in a format quite similar to the quantitative analysis. More specifically, our analysis comprises of the frequency distribution of the phrases used by the respondents, including the frequency of the key terms used in each of the questions. Besides, we also perform the Silhouette Analysis and clustering of the themes in our pursuit to perform the analysis in a rigorous manner.

We structure the remainder of this paper as follows. The next section provides the structured literature review (SLR) of CE research base published in top 104 management and marketing journals as per the Australian Business Deans Council journal quality list. The next section on methods details the data retrieval process for structured literature review, and data collection process used to interview the executives of family-owned firms. Next is the section on analysis and findings and thereafter we discuss the implications of the research both theoretical and practical. Finally, the study concludes by discussing the possible future research avenues and study limitations.

2. Literature review

Literature review of this paper includes three sections. First, we present the brief review of family business context and then we present review of customer engagement literature by using an objective and quantitative literature review technique (i.e., bibliometric analysis) and constituted the knowledge map of customer engagement scholarship. Thereafter, we detail the knowledge by using a more analytical review discourse. Second, we review the literature specifically on customer engagement in family business in an emerging country context.

2.1. Family business context

A family-owned business is defined as a firm where family and the business are intricately intertwined (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003), or in other words, a business controlled and managed by a family, single owner, the founder, or their relatives (Miller & Le Breton-Miller, 2005). Research estimates that almost 60 percent of the economic activities and businesses are family-owned businesses, and thus these firms are ubiquitous within both the local as well as global economy (Déniz et al., 2005; Rondi et al., 2021).

Most of the early research on family businesses has focused on understanding the ways in which they differ from non-family firms in terms of features, behaviors, approach, ownership, governance, goals, performance, and succession. With long term orientation, resilience and flexibility (Kets de Vries, 1993), and higher family social capital (Carney, 2005), it has been noted that family firms may be at some advantage than non-family firms. However, it is also well established that family-owned firms may pursue many noneconomic goals and these goals may also vary for different stakeholders (Tagiuri and Davis, 1992) causing internal conflicts. Also, the pyramidal structure, quite prevalent in large family-owned firms, is seen to be causing agency problem and extreme risk aversion (Gómez-Mejía et al., 2001; Morck and Yeung, 2003).

2.2. Customer Engagement knowledge map

The term CE is defined as “a customer’s investment of cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social resources during, or related to, specific brand interactions” (Hollebeek et al., 2019, p. 171). The concept has been conceptualized in several ways such as psychological state (Brodie et al., 2011); psychological process (Bowden, 2009); and so on, but the service dominant logic is the most popular framework used for defining and examining CE and consequently the interactive perspective remains dominant over other conceptions of CE. Despite the multiple and sometime inconsistent conceptions, CE is termed as an important value-creating imperative (Chang et al., 2019).

Although, CE is a popular concept within the marketing domain, it has achieved a high degree of maturity and legitimacy across many contexts (Behnam et al., 2021). Thus, we constituted a knowledge map of customer engagement research to understand its underlying features and explanations i.e., various popular research themes, trends, evolution, and potential areas for growth (Ross, 2001). Although, there have been attempts to present the knowledge foundations of CE research but with some limitations as highlighted by Lim et al. (2022). The current review extends Lim et al. (2022) in two ways: one, by using Web of Science database as a cross-check mechanism to validate the thematic clusters/patterns found earlier, and second, in terms of presenting the classification of themes using strategic maps. We used co-word analysis technique using bibliometric package in R software (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017) to present the visualization of thematic areas through a two-dimensional strategic map (Figure 1). The detailed approach and bibliometric dataset are presented in the methodology section later.

The strategic map places the themes of CE research in four quadrants (i.e., Motor theme, Base theme, specialized/niche theme, and emerging or disappearing theme) as per their centrality and density rank values. Figure 1 presents ten themes (2 motor themes, 3 base themes, 2 peripheral themes, 2 emerging themes and 1 transition theme) with authors elaborations.

2.2.1. Motor themes

The upper right quadrant of knowledge map (Figure 1) has two themes, and these themes are called motor themes due to high centrality and density rank values (Murgado-Armenteros et al., 2015). Research themes in motor quadrant, considered as central to the research base and are fully developed. These themes are *Customer Engagement Behavior* and *Digital Marketing*.

2.2.1.1. Customer Engagement Behavior

The research theme *Customer Engagement Behavior* constitutes of keywords such as customer engagement behavior, word of mouth, online reviews, and social networks, e-word of mouth, networks, service fairness, hospitality and so on. Research in this theme address the issues around Customer engagement behaviors, understood as behavioral manifestation of customer engagement. Traditionally, an engaged customer is expected to add value through behaviors such as repurchase, positive word of mouth etc. Later this extra role behavior has been expanded to other categories in behaviors such as augmenting, co-developing, influencing and mobilizing customer engagement behaviors (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014). Considering the role of customer engagement behaviors in value co-creation, it is one among the most studied theme in CE research and thus rightly placed in motor quadrant of the knowledge map. Research under this theme mainly addresses the issues of antecedents and drivers of customer engagement behaviors, its outcomes and their behavioral manifestations. For example, customer trust and value in use (Roy et al., 2018); goal pursuit (Li and Han, 2021), social interactivity on social network platforms (Ting et al., 2021), organizational characteristics such as ambience, location etc. (Roy et al., 2020), service quality and fairness, disengagement behavior and performance (Katsifaraki and Theodosiou, 2020) so on. Few other research issues in this theme are word of mouth, e-word of mouth and online reviews (Katsifaraki and Theodosiou, 2020; Azer and Alexander, 2020).

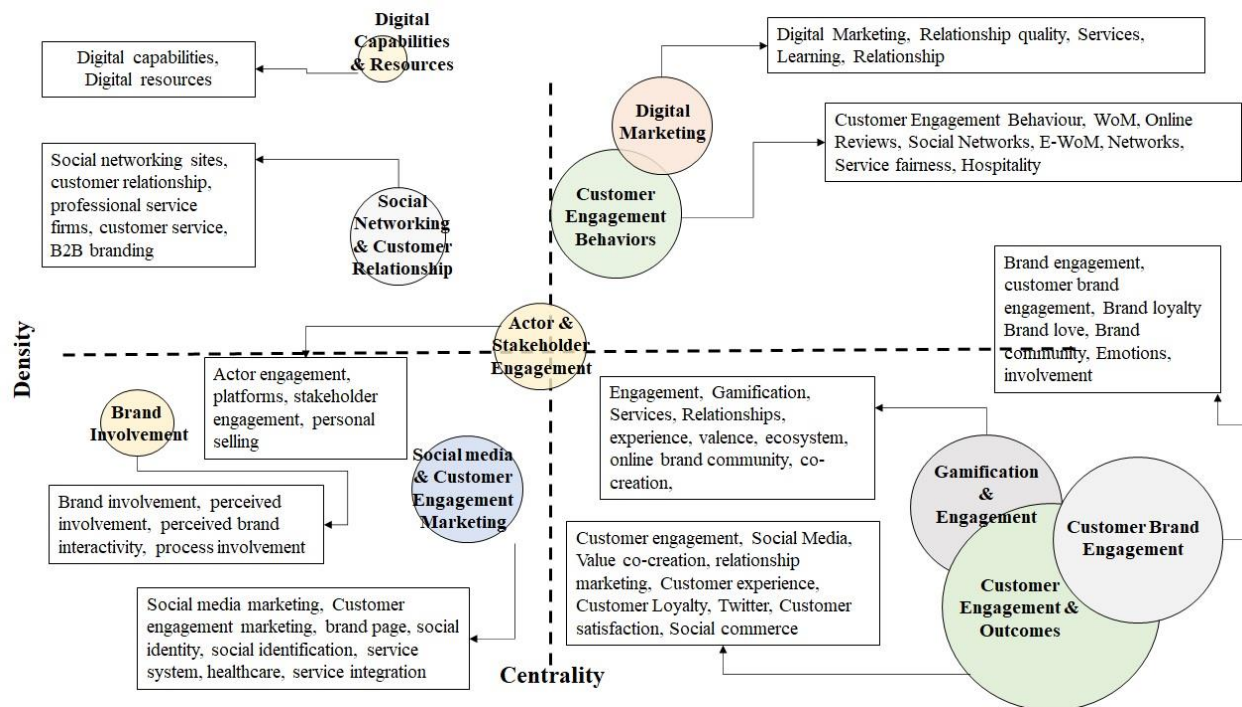


Figure 1: Knowledge map of the literature on customer engagement
(Source: Bibliometrix R package – authors elaboration)

Most of the research in this theme is from a developed country perspective except a few comparative analyses on trust and customer engagement behaviors, and role of organizational characteristics on such behaviors. Our review suggests that the main theoretical frameworks in this theme are service dominant logic, customer dominant logic, self-expansion theory, stimulus organism response, and social influence theory.

2.2.1.2. *Digital Marketing*

The second motor theme, *Digital Marketing*, is composed of keywords such as digital marketing, relationship quality, services, learning and relationship. Comparatively, this theme is smaller in terms of number of research however has high link strength with the CE research field, as well as within the theme. Research within this theme examines the issues such as customer engagement in context of digital service providing firms (Lee et al., 2018), social media engagement (Aydin, 2020) and social selling using online media (Ancillai et al., 2019). Other topics within this theme include online customer engagement activities (Eigenraam et al., 2021), service quality and quality of relationship (Arcand et al., 2017), customer learning and knowledge sharing for customer engagement (Behnam et al., 2021); and self-disclosure (Lin et al., 2019). The main theories in this theme are service dominant logic and stimulus organism response theory. In terms of context, we witness domination of this theme by topics such as service-based research within a developed country context.

2.2.2. *Base themes*

The lower right quadrant of knowledge map (Figure 1) is the base quadrant, which includes the important and central themes for structuring global research in CE, however, are yet to become fully developed. This quadrant has three research themes namely *Customer Engagement & Outcomes*, *Customer Brand Engagement*, and *Gamification & Engagement*.

2.2.2.1. *Customer Engagement and Outcomes*

The *Customer Engagement and Outcomes* theme emerges as the largest among all the themes within the CE research. Primarily, this research theme has examined the outcomes of CE for e.g., value co-creation, customer experience, customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction. Thus, we may say this is primarily a performance theme. Research topics addressed here include – conceptualizing and measuring CE, CE and value co-creation in a multi-stakeholder service firm (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014); co-producing the service experience from service dominant logic (Minkiewicz et al., 2016); typology of customer participation i.e. mandatory, replaceable, and voluntary (Dong and Sivakumar, 2017); store attributes and customer experience (Mohd-Ramly and Omar, 2017); social media platforms for value co-creation (Sorensen et al., 2017); customer engagement and positive customer attitude (Berge et al., 2019); value co-creation circle in social commerce (Yu et al., 2020); customer reengagement (Friend et al., 2020). The main arguments built around this theme include service dominant logic and actor participation approach. We see evidence of research in this area growing as we also see evidence of a few extensions of research in this theme, that include topics such as engaging customers beyond transactional engagements such as corporate social responsibility, use of AI and big data and, augmented realized based technologies (Heller et al., 2021). Additionally, building engagement ecosystem i.e., moving

beyond focal actor to family and other members of social networks is also an evolving area. Again, we witness research in this theme emerging mainly from developed markets, however recently emerging market participation is growing.

2.2.2.2. *Customer Brand Engagement*

The next theme in the base quadrant is *Customer Brand Engagement* and it includes research topics such as antecedents and consequences customer brand engagement (Wong & Merrilees, 2015; Hughes et al., 2019), brand loyalty (Khan, 2019) and brand love (Vernuccio et al., 2015). Additional topics include the experience, brand engagement and emotional involvement (Junaid et al., 2019; Junaid et al., 2020), e-word-of-mouth and brand engagement (Srivastava & Sivaramakrishnan, 2020); cocreation and brand evangelism (Harrigan et al., 2020), to name a few. In this theme too, mainly the theories used are service logic, emotional and psychological perspective.

2.2.2.3. *Gamification and Engagement*

The third theme appearing in the base quadrant is *Gamification and Engagement* and the main research inquiries within this theme are as follows. Gamification as customer engagement experience (Harwood & Garry, 2015; Robson et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2017; Eisingerich et al., 2019; Xi & Hamari, 2020); online brand communities (Bailey et al., 2021; Glavee-Geo et al., 2019; Islam et al., 2018), to name the key. The key theoretical frameworks apart from service logic evidenced here are technology acceptance model, theory of reasoned action and congruity theory. We thus witness that this theme is mainly dominated by technology and addresses issues such as app usages etc.

2.2.3. *Peripheral/Niche themes*

The upper left quadrant of knowledge map (Figure 1) is named as a peripheral quadrant and research themes included in this quadrant have high internal tie strength and have poor or low external linkage i.e., within the overall research field. Thus, themes in this quadrant are peripheral or niche themes. Figure 1 suggests that the CE research field has two peripheral themes namely *Social Networking & Customer Relationship*, and *Digital Capabilities & Resources*.

2.2.3.1. *Social Networking & Customer Relationship*

The research theme *Social Networking & Customer Relationship* examines topics such as social media motivations (social facilitation motivation, participating and socializing motivation, and information motivation) of customer social networking sites and customer engagement (Bailey et al., 2021). Additional topics here include psychological drivers of engagement (Quoquab et al., 2020); positive and negative customer engagement and social network sites (Naumann et al., 2020); self-brand image congruity and value congruity online brand communities context (Islam et al., 2018); robotics for customer services operations (Xiao & Kumar, 2021), to name the key. This theme also includes research from professional service contexts, such as the influence of organizational buyers' functional versus imagery beliefs (Casidy et al., 2018) and driver of customer engagement (Nyadzayo et al., 2020), as examples. This research theme is mainly

dominated by B2B research in developed markets and the dominant theories utilized here are reflection theory, congruity theory and the social interaction perspective.

2.2.3.2. *Digital Capabilities and Resources*

The second theme within the peripheral quadrant includes *Digital Capabilities and Resources*. Topics under this theme are addressed from the perspective of resource based and capability view (Kim et al., 2021; Hollebeek, 2019), and the framework here is coined as social media dynamic capabilities framework (De Oliveira et al., 2020). Quantity wise, this is the smallest theme among all the themes in the map.

2.2.4. *Emerging/Disappearing themes*

The emerging or disappearing quadrant (the lower left quadrant) of knowledge map (Figure 1) includes two themes namely *Social Media and Customer Engagement Marketing*, and *Brand Involvement*. Research themes in this quadrant have low internal tie strength and have poor external linkage thus considered as emerging or disappearing themes.

2.2.4.1. *Social Media and Customer Engagement Marketing*

Social Media and Customer Engagement Marketing is the largest theme in this quadrant and the main research focus in this is around social media marketing, customer engagement marketing, brand page, social identity construction, to name the key. Topics here include using social media for arousing customer passion for a brand (Mukherjee, 2020), difference in social media message strategy between B2B and B2C. It is noted that B2B companies use more rational appeals and less emotional appeals, have lower degree of informativeness and perform better in interactivity and variety than B2C companies (Zhang & Du, 2020). Additional topics include impact of social-media marketing elements, namely entertainment, customization, interaction, electronic word-of-mouth and trendiness, consumer-brand engagement and brand knowledge (Cheung et al., 2020), social media marketing tactics for online brand community governance using the levers such as appealing, consulting and affiliating (Cooper et al., 2020). Besides these topics, the theme include social media engagement strategy for increased interaction between marketing and R & D interface during new product development (Chirumalla et al., 2018), social media marketing and marketing performance (Tafesse & Wien, 2018); social media, online communities and innovation (Carlson et al, 2018) and so no. Very interesting extension of this line of research concerns the use of social media platform by traditional Institutions for identity construction (Fujita et al., 2020). This theme has a good representation from emerging markets and main theoretical framework used in this theme are social construction theory, social identification theory, and social exchange theory.

2.2.4.2. *Brand Involvement*

The second theme in this quadrant is *Brand Involvement* and topics addressed in this theme are brand interactivity and purchase intentions (Gligor & Bozkurt, 2021); social media as a platform for communicating and engaging customer and its effect of quality of relationship between customer and brand (Gómez et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2021). Additional topics include brand interactivity and customer intentions to co-creating brand value (Cheung et al., 2020), live interactions (i.e., personalization, responsiveness, entertainment, mutuality, perceived control) and

customer engagement using mobile applications (Xue et al., 2020). This theme also has a comparatively good participation from emerging markets and mainly use theories such as social construction and stimulus-organism-response paradigms.

The transition theme includes the topic *Actor Engagement* and research within this theme addressed the area such as transitioning customer to actor and stakeholder (Hollebeek et al., 2022; Clark et al., 2020); actor engagement as micro foundation of value co-creation (Storbacka et al., 2016); actor engagement, value creation and market innovation (Storbacka, 2019). Additional topics here include platform perspective of actor engagement (Blasco-Arcas et al., 2020); negative engagement and valence (Azer & Alexander, 2020a; 2020b; Naumann et al., 2020), to name the key. This theme is an emerging theme however it may move to motor theme soon due to the expectation of its growth.

2.3. Family business and customer engagement in emerging economies context

Emerging economies are characterized by rapid economic growth due to high production levels and significant industrialization. In such a context, family firms are crucial as they become the backbone of entrepreneurial investments (Chakrabarti and Mondal, 2020). However, emerging economies also represents the scarce environment with high volatility and low to medium per capita income. It is the unique attributes of family governance namely parsimony, personalism, and particularism (see Carney, 2005) that becomes the potential source of competitive advantage for family-owned firms enabling them to better able to compete in such environments.

Though, business and management research in family-owned firm context is on the spur including research on marketing and consumer research (Cano-Rubio et al., 2021; Pieper, 2019; Lude & Prügl, 2018; Rondi et al., 2021), however, there are not many studies conducted in emerging economies context (De Massis et al., 2012). A close look into the literature reveals that large part of the current research on family-owned businesses is context-less (Gupta et al., 2008) and focuses more on developed economies (Basco, 2018). Thus, a gap has been identified to investigate family-owned businesses in context of emerging economies. This responds to the scholarly calls (e.g., Sharma & Chua, 2013) to include context in family business studies.

We observe, through our analysis that family-owned firms have strong and long-lasting relationships with their stakeholders including customers and this ability of family-owned firms to engage with stakeholders is a major determinant of their competitiveness (Arregle et al., 2007, Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2005). For example, Notre Art (an Egyptian family-owned firm) has started using a digital platform, which allows Notre Art to engage its customers worldwide in product design activities (Sekulich, 2021). Family-owned firms are largely dependent upon external stakeholders for new knowledge as these firms may not like to invest in formal research and development facility with a delicately trained work force and thus engaging external stakeholder in such activities is the only economic and viable option for value co-creation (Rondi et al., 2021). Similarly, Gamble et al. (2021) examined the business model of family-owned firms for value creation through external stakeholder engagement. As observed, contemporary research in family business is calling for addressing the issues of value dimension from external stakeholders (Clinton, McAdam, & Gamble, 2018). Our review of the relevant literature highlights

that there is a shortage on CE research and very little is known about CE in a family-owned context as out of 459 retrieved we could not get papers on CE in family-owned business particularly. The absence of studies indicates the gap in literature which this study aims to address.

Nonetheless, we were able to locate some research (detailed above) on value co-creation through stakeholder engagement in a family-owned business context which predominantly relies on service dominant logic (SDL) - an interactionist perspective that views all interactions within an economy as service-to-service interactions (Gamble et al., 2021). Notably, SDL perspective believes that it's the interaction with the consumers that creates a product or service's value (for fundamental principles of SDL, see Vargo & Lusch, 2006). Such evidence suggests the theoretical and practical legitimacy of CE concept in family-owned firm context and thus offers us a confidence to explore the issue further using SDL. The SDL framework has a robustness applicable to the context of end consumers as well as other external stakeholders (Mijnheer and Gamble, 2019). In case of non-family businesses, the primary use of SDL revolves around value creation for the end consumer perspective, however, in family-owned businesses, we see evidence of SDL used largely in reference to the external stakeholders.

To conclude, customer engagement is an extensively studied phenomenon and it has achieved a degree of maturity in terms of concept, theory, its antecedents and outcomes within non-family business research (So et al., 2021). However, it received less attention or rather there is a dearth of CE research within family-owned firm contexts and certain questions remained unanswered. For example, an interesting research question that arise here is how different is CE in a family-owned business, and what are the key customer engagement strategies? Thus, we design our study to address these questions in a family-owned business.

Further, given India's robust growth in manufacturing, business friendly reforms, infrastructural development and political stability, it is the most prominent emerging market for the investor to invest and for the researchers to investigate (Shirodkar, Boga & Shah, 2017). Moreover, it is predicted that by 2050 India will be one of the three largest economies of the world ("India among three", 2009). Thus, India has been identified as the appropriate emerging economy to study the nexus of family business and customer engagement.

3. Methodology

We utilize two methodological approaches in this study. First, we systematically and robustly reviewed the customer engagement literature using a quantitative and objective technique i.e., bibliometric analysis. Our second complementary methodological approach included a qualitative interview-based strategy. We reviewed an extensive and vast body of literature on customer engagement (459 research documents retrieved from Web of Science) and constituted its knowledge map. This knowledge map helped us in understanding the epistemology, status and emerging research areas in customer engagement research. Based on this analysis, we then identified certain areas for customer engagement in family business in an emerging economy context and designed our interview questions. Further, we collected the data from the family-owned business from a representative emerging country i.e., India, using the developed interview questions.

3.1 Bibliometric dataset

Our bibliometric analysis on the topic of customer engagement research stock, included metadata of relevant research documents, retrieved from Web of Science database on the 4th June 2021 by following a prescribed data retrieval protocol. This included, first, searching for the term ‘customer engagement’ and ‘consumer engagement’ within all relevant fields i.e., title, abstract and keywords. This search yield us with 980 research documents. Our next step included excluding documents other than those in the English language, and this excluded two documents. Next, we excluded all the disciplines except business, management, hospitality, sports and leisure, all psychology disciplines, sociology and social issues within the discipline category. This exclusion limited the number of our relevant research documents to 783. Thereafter, we limited our search by ‘document type’ to include research articles, early access articles, review articles and this resulted in 762 research documents. Our next step included screening of the relevant documents where we limited our search only to top tier journals to maintain the quality of data set. We considered the Australian Business Deans Council journal quality list to include ‘A’ star category journals in management and marketing field of research and ‘A’ category journals in marketing field of research. These criteria yielded us 104 titles i.e., 11 ‘A’ star and 38 ‘A’ category titles in marketing field (i.e., the Journal of Service Research, Marketing Science, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science; Journal of Business Research, Journal of Adverting etc.), and 55 A star titles in management field (Academy of Management Journal, Strategic Management Journal etc.). This exercise thus reduced our search to 461 research documents on customer engagement. We further removed two more articles after a manual screening done by authors. This final 459 documents constitute the final dataset.

3.2 Interview dataset

Our exhaustive literature review enables us to synthesize the CE domain and provide the agenda for future CE studies. To this purpose, we have formulated seven relevant questions for future scholars in the subject. To enhance the significance of our study, we have converted these essential topics into seven interview questions (Table 2) and reached out to the family business managers (as described in Table 1) for their extensive responses through structured interviews. These managers were contacted using purposive and snowball sampling ensuring representation of as many industry types. This helps us answer our second research question (i.e., What are the customer engagement practices in family businesses in emerging economies? How are these different from those in the non-family businesses?).

Table 1: Demographics of the interview participants

Respon- dent No.	Age	Gender	Position	Education	Industry type	Age of the business	Total Workforce
R1	35	M	Manager	MBA	Food and Beverage	6	250
R2	35	M	CEO	B-TECH	Retail	12	550
R3	32	F	Head Analytics	MTECH, BTECH	Construction	11	175
R4	43	F	CFO	BBA	Trading	9	1100
R5	47	M	Procurement Manager	PHD	Supply Chain	17	250
R6	37	F	Designer and Head Sales	MBA	Fashion	13	350
R7	36	F	Marketing Manager- APAC	MSc	Retail	7	600
R8	34	M	HNI Client Head	MCOM, ICWA	Financial Trading	10	450
R9	29	M	Legal Consultant	LLB	Corporate Law	4	150
R10	48	M	Regional Sales Head	BPHARMA	Pharma	20	1250
R11	41	F	CTO	MS; MBA	IT	19	700
R12	36	F	Head- HR	BTECH	Retail	13	350
R13	45	M	System Manager	MCA	Computer Hardware	8	550
R14	41	M	Business Relations	MBA	Mining	11	100
R15	38	F	R&D Scientist	PHD	Fishing	14	1300
R16	38	F	Business Head- South Asia	MSC	Finance	9	200
R17	42	F	Analyst	MSTAT	Analytics	17	850

3.3 Data analysis

For study 1, the bibliometric metadata i.e., article title, authors, citation, publication source, keywords, abstract etc. of 459 research articles was retrieved for further analysis. The retrieved metadata was analyzed using Bibliometrix package in R and on basis of co-word analysis a knowledge map has been constituted to understand the conceptual structure of the extant knowledge in the field. Based on the density and centrality rank values, the thematic clusters were plotted on a two-dimensional space called a strategic diagram, classifying pattern of themes into

four clusters – motor cluster, basic cluster, emerging or disappearing themes, and niche cluster (Cobo et al., 2011).

For study 2, the structured interviews were conducted till the theoretical saturation was not achieved (Charmaz, 2014; Guest et al., 2006). which was reached after fourteenth interview. However, we conducted three more interviews to confirm the theoretical saturation, therefore, a total of 17 interviews were conducted. The comprehensive responses of the interviewees are examined through the content and cluster analysis, which combines quantitative and qualitative analysis of the structured interview data. Cluster analysis is used as an exploratory tool to support the identification of associations within qualitative data. Its use to analyze data generated through qualitative research has already been discussed and documented (see Macia, 2015).

Table 2 Interview questions and variables

Interview Questions	Significant variables	Key references
1. What are the key customer engagement strategies adopted by your business? Do you think those are in synchronization with other family businesses? How are the customer engagement strategies of family businesses different from the non-family businesses?	Customer engagement strategies	(Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014), (Roy et al., 2018), (Li and Han, 2021), (Ting et al., 2021)
2. How does your business approach digital marketing vis-à-vis physical marketing? Do you think the usage of digital marketing in family businesses is somehow different from the non-family businesses?	Digital marketing v/s Physical marketing	(Lee et al., 2018), (Aydin, 2020), (Ancillai et al., 2019)
3. How do you assess the customer engagement? Typically, firms use word of mouth, online reviews, social networks, e-word of mouth, networks, customer trust and value in use; goal pursuit, social interactivity on social network platforms, service quality and fairness, etc. to understand the level of customer engagement. Which tools are the most prominent for your business?	Customer engagement tools	(Katsifaraki and Theodosiou, 2020), (Azer and Alexander, 2020), (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014)
4. Do you think the customer engagement has increased from the availability of digital media platforms? Do you think your business has transitioned smoothly in this direction? What were the key challenges in this transition?	CE and digital media	(Eigenraam et al., 2021), (Arcand et al., 2017), (Behnam et al., 2021), (Lin et al., 2019)
5. Do you think the family tag act as a driver for your brand value, or is it an impediment in creating a solid brand in the eyes of the consumers?	Family tag and brand value	(Wong & Merrilees, 2015), (Hughes et al, 2019), (Khan, 2019), (Vernuccio et al., 2015)

6. Is there any observable difference with the respect to the marketing workforce's preference towards/against family businesses? What are your experiences in this regard?	Marketing workforce and family business	(Bailey et al., 2021), (Quoquab et al., 2020), (Islam et al., 2018), (Carlson et al., 2018)
7. Is the ownership of the business (family vis-à-vis non-family) more of a factor in B2B or B2C marketing?	Ownership and B2B/B2C marketing	(Zhang & Du, 2020), (Cheung et al., 2020), (Cooper et al., 2020), (Tafesse & Wien, 2018)

Source : Review of relevant literature

4. Findings from the interview analysis

Statistical analysis of the keywords is performed by use of the MAXQDA programme, which codes and processes the data generated during the interviews by using the entire scripts of the interviews. Particularly, we looked at how often certain words and phrases were used by respondents and how often they appeared in each of the questions. In an effort to be as thorough as possible, we also undertake Silhouette Analysis and theme clustering. Analysis of interview responses indicate emphasis of managers from family businesses on few important CE aspects which are presented as 17 key terms in Figure 2. The content analysis further reveals specific phrases used by respondents to indicate emphasis on those CE aspects. It is found that family businesses place a premium on marketing strategies such as digital marketing, customer interaction, social media marketing, direct marketing, word of mouth marketing, customer trust, and customer experience. The use of these terms demonstrates family-owned companies' growing emphasis on digital means of customer engagement.

The findings suggest that most often family business managers use key customer engagement strategies such as engaging customers through social media campaigns and recognizing them as top followers through credits. Additionally, we identify aspects of monitoring customer reviews/feedback on product usage or service experience; engaging customers by making them social influencers; offering loyalty cards, membership cards, and other reward programs to prospective customers; and developing a brand community to engage existing customers. The distinction from non-family firms was acknowledged by the respondents in terms of CE approach and methods employed. For example, management in family-owned firms is more concerned with boosting revenue and profits through client acquisition and retention, but in non-family enterprises, the emphasis is on expanding sales as well as general economic and social growth. The respondents pointed out that employee well-being is not a major focus area in family-owned businesses as compared to non-family businesses. Additionally, the respondents underlined the need of family-owned firms to pursue more active customer interaction tactics than non-family businesses.

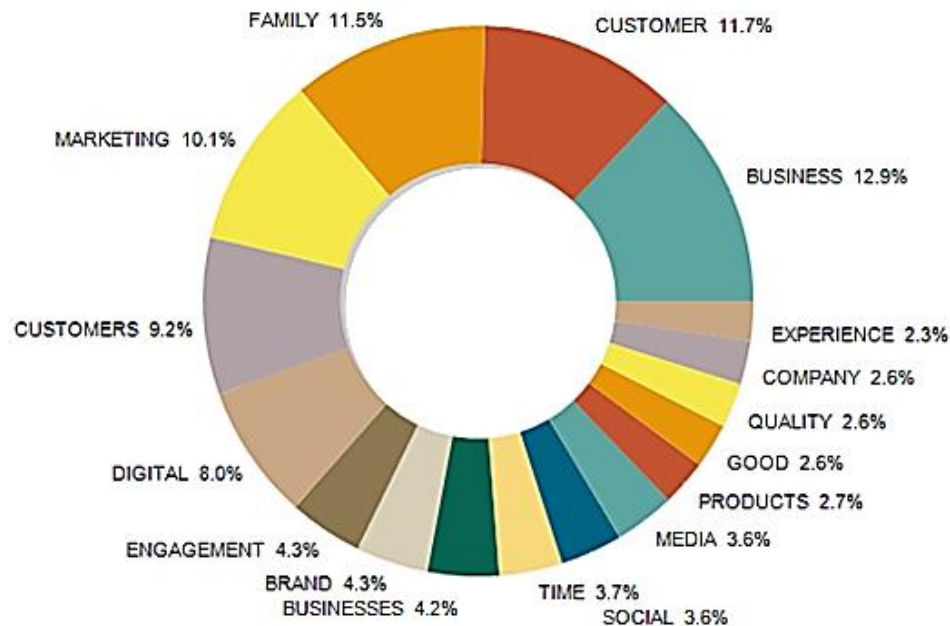


Figure 2: Distribution of keywords (interviews)

Next, it is found that most family businesses obtain information on CE from multiple sources like customer reviews, social networking sites, word-of-mouth, etc. However, Facebook emerged as the most critical platform in the world of social networking sites. Such sources entail minimum investment, are simple to administer, and requires little physical participation. One interview participant explained, ‘small scale family businesses need to care about cost. We mostly use free or low-cost tools for customer engagement and marketing’.

The findings indicate an increased access to mobile phones and therefore, social networking platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp along with TV advertisements, served as the best strategies for family businesses to develop their customer base. It is found that these digital platforms also assist businesses in organizing promotional events, campaigns, and other activities; tracking the likes, comments, and shares of promotional posts on social media platforms; monitoring active users/followers; and assessing the quality of product and service reviews on social media platforms. Other assessment measures used by family-owned firms include referrals, brand track score, sales satisfaction, service satisfaction, customer retention, customer life-time value (CLTV), and net promoter score (NPS). Additionally, businesses host digital events and customer meetings at high-profile hotels or landmarks to connect with consumers, such as devil's circuit (DC), rallies, and contests, where customer engagement is critical for eliciting additional insights from customers. In addition, it was found that values, service quality, and fairness had a direct practical influence on how a such business handles its customers.

The availability of digital media platforms and digitization has improved CE by enabling customers to do transactions via a digital platform. Unlike traditional sales or marketing personnel, the possibility of availability of digital media executives at any time and the ability to even attend to numerous consumers concurrently, has clearly given advantages to family-owned firms using such platforms.

In addition, it is found that having a well-known family tag is crucial as it aids in the formation and maintenance of a client base and serves as a catalyst for raising the value of any business. One of the family-owned business interviewees highlighted, ‘we benefit from the family-owned tag because we can demonstrate and extend our family values to our client interactions’. The company's aim is to give clients with creative, high quality, and value-added solutions, and in these instances, the family-owned label may demonstrate and extend family values to client relationships. We also found that the brand value is determined by the promoters' reputation and goodwill, which encourages every customer/potential customer to show trust in the brand, therefore assuring brand loyalty.

Interestingly, we found a range of perspectives about the marketing workforce's preference for/against family companies. In general, non-family firms have well-structured divisions, as well as well-organized roles and duties and communication channels. Non-family companies have a greater level of passion, commitment, and fervor for their job. As a result, employees who want a more organized management structure are usually opposed to family firms. However, in the case of family-owned firms, there is usually a lack of organization in the marketing workforce, with unclear roles and duties and various jobs performed by the same individual, complicating a fluid communication channel. As a result, the work environment at family-owned firms is dynamic and regularly changes according to the whims of the owners. However, as highlighted by one of the interview participants, ‘family businesses are generally very good at articulating their purpose. Purpose is an increasingly critical factor in attracting and retaining talent; it defines what the business is doing to improve the lives of others, how its products or services benefit the community or society at large’.

Additionally, it is found that ownership plays a significant part in business-to-business marketing, since decisions about strategy and structure center more on the business family's owner, whereas business-to-consumer marketing is more of an external phenomenon. When it comes to business-to-consumer marketing, the most effective tactics emphasize the outcomes and advantages that the product or service provides to the final customers. It is found that consumers have a significantly shorter purchase cycle than businesses, and so the business-to-business connection is a long-term one, with ownership playing a significant role in preserving product quality, client base, brand value, and trust between the parties.

Figure 3 presents the most significant terms for each of the questions on which the interview was structured.

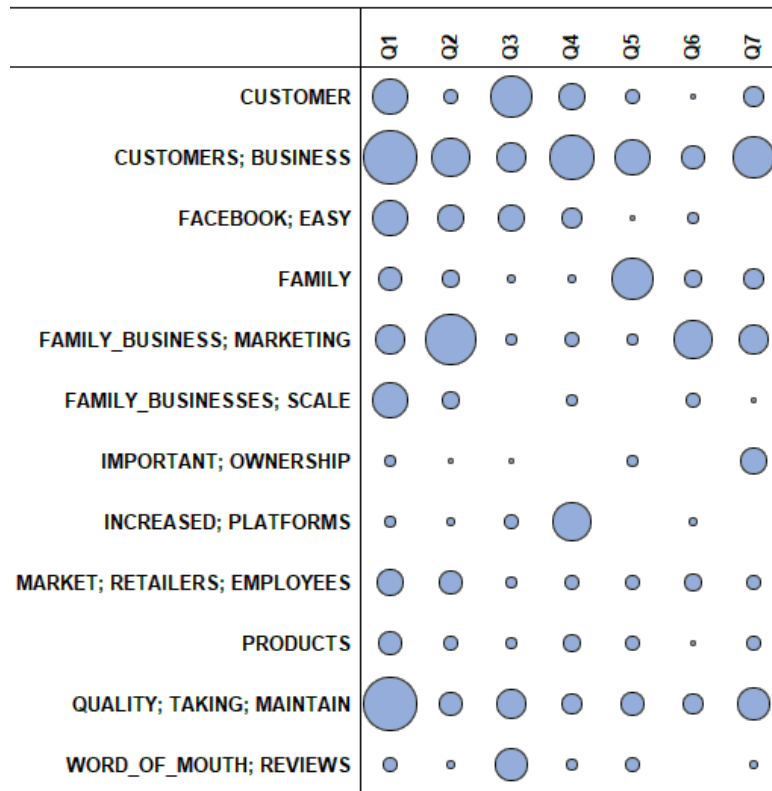


Figure 3: Frequency for variable

Table 3: Clustering of themes

ITEM	CLUSTER	SILHOUETTE	ALTERNATE	SCORE
TIME	1	0.384	11	0.196
CUSTOMERS	1	0.350	11	
GOOD	1	0.336	17	
MONEY	1	0.344	7	
PEOPLE	1	0.257	2	
BASE	1	0.234	6	
ENGAGE	1	-0.152	2	
BUSINESS	1	-0.182	5	
TRADITIONAL	2	0.648	1	0.581
PHYSICAL	2	0.515	26	
BULK	3	0.721	1	0.414
ORDER	3	0.604	6	
ORDERS	3	0.602	1	
DELIVERY	3	0.592	12	
TALK	3	0.584	15	
TAKING	3	0.515	5	
QUALITY	3	0.480	12	
FATHER	3	0.387	17	

PRODUCT	3	0.375	6	
FACE	3	0.354	1	
NUMBER	3	0.323	4	
THINGS	3	0.325	1	
MAKE	3	-0.004	20	
MAINTAIN	3	-0.061	1	
FB	4	0.679	18	
INSTAGRAM	4	0.664	26	
EASY	4	0.631	3	
FACEBOOK	4	0.597	26	
COST	4	0.592	1	0.430
WHATSAPP	4	0.539	2	
PAGE	4	0.376	3	
TOOLS	4	0.052	11	
SMALL	4	-0.258	18	
PERSON	5	0.456	1	0.311
COMPANY	5	0.167	20	
PROVIDE	6	0.529	11	0.460
EXPERIENCE	6	0.390	7	
RUN	7	0.466	8	0.351
STRATEGIES	7	0.236	2	
SERVICES	8	0.722	6	
PRODUCTS	8	0.500	1	0.571
PLATFORM	8	0.492	11	
CHALLENGE	9	0.884	17	
INCREASED	9	0.880	11	
DIGITAL_MEDIA	9	0.781	11	0.738
ENGAGEMENT	9	0.607	11	
PLATFORMS	9	0.541	11	
SERVICE	11	0.478	12	
CUSTOMER_ENGAGEMENT	11	0.389	9	0.347
CUSTOMER	11	0.175	1	
REVIEWS	12	0.602	11	
WORD_OF_MOUTH	12	0.574	11	0.483
ONLINE	12	0.507	4	
TRUST	12	0.247	14	
TAG	14	0.936	1	
BRAND	14	0.699	1	0.766
FAMILY	14	0.664	5	
OWNERSHIP	15	0.792	18	0.758
IMPORTANT	15	0.723	1	
START	17	0.523	1	0.456
BUSINESSES	17	0.388	11	
OWNER	18	0.616	17	
FAMILY_BUSINESS	18	0.578	26	0.442
MARKETING	18	0.132	2	

FAMILY_OWNED	20	0.552	5	0.506
TEAM	20	0.459	26	
HAI	23	0.769	15	0.547
RETAILERS	23	0.773	8	
MARKET	23	0.735	26	
EMPLOYEES	23	0.726	26	
SALES	23	0.150	26	
CLIENTS	23	0.132	20	
PHYSICAL_MARKETING	26	0.565	23	0.506
DIGITAL_MARKETING	26	0.447	2	
CUSTOMER_ENGAGEMENT_STRATEGIES	28	0.801	11	0.624
KEY	28	0.733	6	
FAMILY_BUSINESSES	28	0.485	7	
SCALE	28	0.475	4	

We employ cluster analysis (Macia, 2015) to identify reliable and meaningful clusters (Table 3). The average Silhouette coefficient of 0.473, which is well within the suggested range of -1 and 1 (Rousseeuw, 1987), indicates a reasonable structure of the interview responses. The first cluster contains the terms like time, customer base, business, engagement, and money. A formal commitment to customer relationship management, is found to be increasingly seen as a critical tool in a business's competitive climate. The second cluster focuses on the firms' conventional and physical ways of maintaining and monitoring customer engagement. These strategies include shifting service for customers to digital platforms to minimize actual shop visits, loyalty programs, tailored sessions through video conferencing, digital feedback on services and products, and organizing various events such as customer gatherings. The third cluster addresses product quality, on-time delivery, bulk orders, communication, and client retention. This cluster underlines the techniques and strategies that place a premium on continual improvement and investment in the quality of products and services to facilitate company expansion and/or growth. The fourth cluster includes keywords for social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and other website tools that enable businesses to connect with their existing and prospective customers directly or indirectly using these online communication platforms, software, and applications' various value-added features. The fifth cluster is concerned with people and organizations, namely workers, vendors, suppliers, retailers, and final customers, whereas the sixth and seventh clusters are concerned with experiences and strategies, respectively. The eighth cluster represents products and services, while the ninth cluster focuses on the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing digital media platforms, as well as the resistance that businesses face from workforce management, ongoing programs, policies, and processes as they transit from a traditional to an advanced digitization approach.

The tenth cluster addresses customer engagement methods, while the eleventh cluster focuses on the most effective tools for measuring customer engagement capabilities, such as word of mouth, online reviews, and trust. The twelfth cluster highlights the critical function of the family tag in the brand name development process. The thirteenth cluster discusses the role of family-owned and non-family-owned firms in adopting customer engagement initiatives. The fourteenth and

fifteenth clusters focus on the features and marketing methods of family-owned firms. The sixteenth cluster addresses the different supply chain stakeholders in the business, including workers, retailers, vendors, customers, and other market participants. The seventeenth cluster focuses on the critical distinctions between digital and physical marketing tactics, while the eighteenth cluster specifies the size and major customer engagement methods of the family business. Family-owned businesses feel that developing and maintaining personal ties with consumers is a critical factor in determining their future success.

5. Discussion, Implications and Conclusion

5.1. Discussion

The study had two-fold objectives. First aim was to synthesize the CE knowledge domain and take stock of research conducted in context of family businesses in emerging economies. The findings of the bibliometric analysis yielded ten themes; however, it is interesting to note that research in most of the identified themes come mainly from developed markets. No specific theme emerged that corresponds to either family business or emerging market context. Only notable CE research trends in emerging markets were concerning the use of social media platform by traditional Institutions for identity construction (Fujita et al., 2020). This again confirms the previously identified gap and responds to the scholarly calls (e.g., Sharma & Chua, 2013) to explore CE strategies and activities as it pans out in context of family businesses in emerging economies.

Second aim of the study was to generate insights from structured interviews of family business managers and executives. Specifically, the study aimed at finding out the key CE practices being used in Indian family businesses along with highlighting the contrast with the practices as documented for large corporations and/or in developed countries. Evidently, family businesses in India rely more on CE strategies using social media and believes in building brand communities to engage with consumers. Congruous to the general economic factors of an emerging economy, Indian family firms have indicated preference for word-of-mouth and major social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp. This is majorly due to the minimum investment required, simplicity to administer and use, and requirement of minimum physical participation. Use of social media is equally popular with non-family large organizations in developed economies as well, however, the primary reason for which it is used is the extensive reach and popularity among the new generations. Another distinction is that non-family large organizations use a formal structure and hire specialists to manage the social media platforms professionally, whereas, in family-owned firms this may be missing.

The finding related to the use of family tag/label as the brand and extending family values to client relationships is peculiar for family-owned businesses. This leads to the trusting relationships and create social capital for the family firms (Arregle et al., 2007). Next, the study provides additional evidence to support the prevalence of high centralization in family firms leading to all CE related strategic decisions being taken at the owners' or at the family level. This further guides the choice of communication channel and organization of workforce handling CE. It is to be noted, however,

that the findings concerning the different approaches used by family-owned firms and non-family-owned firms may stem primarily on the basis of the scale of operation.

5.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Customer engagement (CE) theory is a multidimensional idea that has gained considerable traction in contemporary marketing research. Rooted in relationship marketing and service-dominant reasoning, CE encompasses the cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and social components of consumer interactions with a brand or organization (Islam & Rahman, 2016). Sashi (2012) includes the CE cycle and CE matrix in a theoretical framework for CE. The CE cycle consists of connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, loyalty, advocacy, and engagement, and it depicts the journey of consumers from first connection to brand advocates. In contrast, the CE matrix classifies consumers as transactional customers, delighted customers, loyal customers, and fans, depending on the degree of relational exchange and emotional attachments in their relationships with sellers. Our findings emphasize the need of co-creating value with customers through interactions, feedback, and content creation (Thi et al., 2021). Future research must contribute to the expansion of the CE theory by educating companies on how to better satisfy customers and facilitate their progression through the phases of the customer engagement cycle in light of the emergence of new media, social media, and other AI-based communication platforms. In contemporary times of robust communication outreach, it cannot be ruled out that their negative impacts on companies (particularly those emanating from channels such as e-word-of-mouth) may moderate the benefits of CE on company performance (Santini et al., 2020). Therefore, further research is required to evaluate the use of different Web 2.0 technologies for CE and to better appreciate the multifaceted nature of CE in various markets, its processes, and its outcomes (Ranaweera & Silva, 2021).

Family business theory tries to understand the unique characteristics and dynamics of family-owned companies, as well as to explain why family businesses have competitive advantages over nonfamily businesses and how they might achieve lasting competitive advantage (Hoffman et al., 2006). Family capital, which refers to the unique resources and capacities obtained from the family's social connections, shared values, and intergenerational relationships, is a crucial concept in family business theory, according to the existing literature. Family firms with high levels of family capital are more likely to preserve a competitive advantage over nonfamily enterprises and family businesses with low levels of family capital (Hoffman et al., 2006). Family businesses have also been viewed from the theoretical lens of institutional theory (Leaptrott, 2005). This lens provides a broader perspective that includes examination of other entities imposing institutional influences on the family business, such as relatives beyond the nuclear family, other industry members and groups, and government agencies (Leaptrott, 2005). Transgenerational intent (TI), i.e., the intention of present leaders of family-managed firms to transfer the company to the next generation, has been examined in the family business literature, although in a very limited manner (Williams et al., 2013). Galvagno et al. (2022) provide a paradigm that blends signalling theory with corporate branding to investigate the family business branding process. Signaling theory may be a useful theoretical lens for the future research in comprehending how family companies employ

branding to lower the decision-making risks of stakeholders and improve brand value (Galvagno et al., 2022).

Limited research has been conducted on the customer relationship management (CRM) practices of family businesses (Cooper et al., 2005). Family businesses have unique advantages in building and maintaining customer relationships (Carrigan & Buckley, 2008), due to which they prioritize excellent customer service and perceive it as critical to their future success (Cooper et al., 2005) through greater customer loyalty, price premiums, barriers to competition, and repeat purchasing (Carrigan & Buckley, 2008; Cooper et al., 2005). A comparative analysis of family and non-family businesses found that family businesses were more likely to have informal customer service policies aligned with family values (Cooper et al., 2005). CE is a critical aspect of business success, and family businesses may have unique advantages in building and maintaining customer relationships through traditional means as well as social commerce (Busalim et al., 2019). Understanding consumer perceptions of family businesses, the CRM practices of family businesses, and the evolving ways in which customers engage with businesses can provide valuable insights for businesses to enhance their customer engagement strategies. Further research is needed to explore these areas in more depth.

As it is evident that CE literature has been growing each year, SLR of the existing research has consolidated and provided a structured synthesis of the extant CE knowledge base. This will help CE research audience in understanding what are the popular research issues (i.e., well studied research areas, under-addressed research areas, and emerging research areas) in CE research, and where this research is heading. This understanding is crucial particularly when a research field is young and growing organically. Besides, findings of our exploratory study of CE practices in family-owned businesses from emerging economies will help in appreciating the contextualization of CE practices in an understudied context. This will certainly augment the theoretical legitimacy of CE theories and frameworks.

The study has implications for practice as well. Since we identify CE (empirically) as one of the antecedents of sustainable firm competitiveness, a knowhow about CE in emerging economies family-owned firms would benefit these firms in developing strategies for engaging the customers for reaping its positive outcomes such as value creation, competitiveness, customer satisfaction, to name a few. Also, the study findings act as a ready reckoner for the family-owned business to understand the general trend and established practices and strategies adopted by other such businesses to engage with the customers. As evident from the findings, engagement on social media platforms and continuously monitoring and responding to the customer feedback and reviews is critical for the family-owned business to meet the non-financial goals of safeguarding the reputation and maintaining the trustful relationship with the customers. It is found that use of third-party agencies to manage the content creation and digital marketing is very well working out for family-owned businesses, thus, small family-owned businesses can look forward to such arrangements with minimal investment.

Last, but not the least, since CE has been empirically identified as one of the antecedents of sustainable firm competitiveness, a knowhow about CE in emerging economies family-owned firms would benefit these firms in developing strategies for engaging the customers for reaping its positive outcomes such as value creation, competitiveness, customer satisfaction and so on.

5.3. Conclusion

This study deviates from the norm of typical review papers, as it includes an empirical investigation thus complementing the robust scientific review, leading to developing key areas to pursue and confirm research questions and interview topics/questions. Specifically, novel and innovative approach complements the extensive review of literature on the theme of customer engagement in family-owned businesses with the structured interviews of seventeen family business managers. Additionally, through our paper here, we identify that though the extant literature on CE is growing, but the knowledge base is yet to be consolidated and synthesized. We further ascertained the CE practices preferred by family-owned firms in emerging context.

6. Limitations and Direction for Future Research

Like any other academic work, this paper also has few limitations to acknowledge. First, the paper has a specific scope and thus looks at family business and marketing nexus with a focus on customer engagement. Also, for the qualitative study, respondents were from a single emerging economy. Future studies can be conducted to include bibliometric analysis of a broader spectrum of consumer research in family businesses context in emerging economies. For better insights, the analysis can be done at different level and size of the family businesses to understand if the CE strategies vary at those levels.

Another limitation of this study is the interviewee sample for the qualitative study. Although, the participants were purposively chosen to ensure a good representation of different type of industry and theoretical saturation was reached with 17 participants, nonetheless, it is still a small non representative sample. Future studies can be conducted with a large representative sample.

Further, we identify the following key future research agenda. First, it would be good to see more empirical (quantitative) analysis of the CE strategies of family vis-à-vis non-family-businesses. Second, our interview results highlight a limited focus of family businesses towards social issues as well as the employee well-being related issues. This observation needs further examination through empirical analysis. Third, we observe a considerable impact of digitization on the success of CE in family businesses, but at the same time, it is realized that the lack of workforce keeps the family businesses from exploiting this digitization opportunity. Future research may be undertaken to suggest a national-level or industry-level framework to support digitization initiatives of family businesses. Next, as the research on family businesses in emerging economies is scant but growing, the field would benefit from more case study-based research in such context.

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