



## Research Paper

**Presenting a structural model of the perceived value of social media as influenced by social media self-efficacy and customers' attitude towards the brand**MohaMmad Taleghani <sup>1</sup> , Seyyed majid mohammadnezhad <sup>2</sup> , Ali Eyni Delijani <sup>3</sup> 

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**Abstract**

The present study was conducted with the aim of presenting a structural model of the perceived value of social media as affected by social media self-efficacy and customers' attitude towards the brand. The research type is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-survey in terms of data collection method. The statistical population of the study consisted of customers of the online store Digikala in Rasht city. 384 people were selected as statistical samples based on the Cochran formula and convenience sampling method and responded to the research questionnaires. The validity of the questionnaires was confirmed based on confirmatory factor analysis. The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated and confirmed using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient method. Data analysis was performed at two levels of descriptive and inferential statistics, including structural equation modeling, using the SmartPLS statistical software. The results showed that brand attitude has a significant effect on perceived self-efficacy with a path coefficient of (0.302). Perceived self-efficacy has a significant effect on perceived value with a path coefficient of (0.372). Brand attitude has a significant effect on perceived value with a path coefficient of (0.379). Social media self-efficacy plays a mediating role in the impact of customers' brand attitude on perceived value of social media.

**Keywords:**

Perceived value of social media, social media self-efficacy, brand attitude.

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Email: <a href="mailto:A.Eyni_Delijani@iau.ac.ir">A.Eyni_Delijani@iau.ac.ir</a>	This work is licensed under a <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/">Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License</a> .	



## Extended Abstract

### Introduction

In the age of social media, the needs for using social media have become more diverse as communication between audiences and media outlets has become a two-way street and media audiences have become active participants in the creation of social media content rather than merely passive recipients of messages (Falco & Kleinhans, 2018). As a result, social media platforms have become a place to reflect personal experiences, emotions, social lives, worldviews; Users' political views, etc. have become (Cuellar-Garcia et al, 2020). Given that various needs for media use and satisfaction are aligned with perceived brand values, and that perceived brand values predict brand trust, researchers believe that multidimensional needs for social media use, or perceived media values, predict trust in social media brands (Dwivedi et al, 2019). Social media self-efficacy can directly and indirectly affect perceived value. Users who feel skilled in using social platforms are more likely to be able to take advantage of all its features, which leads to higher perceived value (Chen & Gao, 2023). People with high self-efficacy are more likely to use various platform features (stories, live, groups, marketplaces, ads, etc. ), which leads to a more positive experience. People who consider themselves capable of using social media (i. e. , have high self-efficacy) are better able to use the various features of these platforms (Pekala & van Zoonen, 2022). This leads to a better and more personalized user experience. They communicate more effectively. They search and analyze the required information more easily, and ultimately, they understand the functional and informational value of social media more (Hamidnia, A, Shekarchizadeh, 2017) Brand attitude is defined as the tendency to react to favorable or unfavorable evaluations of a particular brand. Brand attitudes are important because they often form the basis of consumer behavior. Therefore, marketers and managers must pay close attention to their consumers' attitudes if they want to gain more market share and, consequently, enjoy greater profits (Kim et al, 2019). Customer attitudes towards a brand play a significant role in the formation of perceived value. When a customer's attitude towards a brand is positive, they follow brand content on social media more seriously. They are more likely to interact with the content and, as a result, the practical, social, and informational value of social media is more perceived (Rahimnia et al, 2019). Customers who have a positive attitude towards the brand consider brand information on social networks to be more credible. They are less skeptical or pessimistic. This strengthens the perceived cognitive and informational value of the platform. Also, customers with a positive attitude have a better psychological experience of interacting with the brand and feel a greater sense of belonging (Bagheri & Dadash, 2019). This experience increases the emotional and psychological value of the media. Finally, it can be acknowledged that a customer's positive attitude towards the brand, as a mental filter, causes the customer to perceive a higher value from the social media related to that brand. This attitude strengthens the customer's perception of the usefulness, entertainment, trust, and credibility of the media (Kurdi & Chegini, 2021). Considering the above, the researcher seeks to answer the question of whether customers' attitude towards the brand, emphasizing the mediating role of social media self-efficacy, has a significant effect on the perceived value of social media?



## Theoretical framework

### Perceived Value

Although the importance of customer value has been widely recognized, research on the concept of customer value has not provided a clear definition. Studies on the effects of marketing strategies argue that value is determined by product quality, price, and customer expectations (Fathi, 2017). Zeithamel (1998) defines value as a customer's overall assessment of the desirability of a product based on his or her perception of what he or she receives in return for what he or she pays (Konuk, 2018). Dodds et al. (1991) argue that a buyer's perception of value reflects the relationship between the quality of benefits received in a product and the value foregone in paying the price of the product. Gall (1994) considers value as the perceived quality of the market that corresponds to the price of the product (Kim et al., 2019).

### Self-efficacy Media

Self-efficacy is a widely used component for self-assessment of various skills and knowledge. This component exists in social cognitive theory, which emphasizes that human behavior is shaped and controlled by individual cognitions in a social environment (Yilmaz Ferhatoglu & Kudsioglu, 2020). This theory assumes a multidimensional causal structure that develops competencies and regulates action, relies on an affective perspective, and emphasizes the role of an individual's affect on their performance. Bandura (1986) defines self-efficacy as an individual's personal belief in their abilities to successfully perform a specific task. In other words, self-efficacy is about perceived capability and deals with an individual's estimate of their abilities to perform a task using their personal skill set (Walsh et al, 2016).

### Brand Attitude

Attitude is a general and permanent evaluation of an object, thing, person, and behavior (Murwaningtyas et al, 2020). Attitude is a favorable or unfavorable tendency that drives consumer behavior towards something (Santoso, 2018). Attitude is a combination of beliefs and emotions and a reflection of the consumer's feelings towards an issue (Raziq et al, 2018). Although some attitudes remain stable over time and are resistant to change, most of them will be subject to change if information and experience accumulate. This is one of the reasons why attitude is important in marketing research, and it seems that by manipulating factors affecting attitude, this important element of consumer behavior can be changed positively. Another important factor in the field of consumer behavior is the effect it has on behavioral intention (Kurdi & Chegini, 2021).

(Pekkala & van Zoonen, 2022) stated in a study that self-efficacy in social media can have a significant impact on users' perceived value. (Zhang et al, 2022) In a study conducted on Chinese social media, they concluded that Chinese users see five layers of value in using social media applications, including information value, entertainment value, social networking value, social status value, and organizational connection value.

## Research Methodology

The present study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-survey in terms of data analysis. The statistical population of the study consisted of all customers of the online store



Digikala in Rasht city. Based on the formula for determining the sample size of an unknown statistical population (Cochran formula), the sample size was 384 people and was obtained by convenience sampling. Standard questionnaires were used to collect data. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine the validity of the research tool. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the research tools. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the collected data. To test the research hypotheses, first the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to examine the normality of the data distribution and the structural equation technique was used to examine the effect of independent and mediator variables on the dependent variable using the SmartPLS statistical software.

### Research Findings

Descriptive statistics related to demographic information are shown in Table (2). The results showed that out of 384 customers who referred to the Digikala online store, 247 were male and 137 were female. Of these, 14 had a diploma, 56 had a post-diploma degree, 159 had a bachelor's degree, 91 had a master's degree, and 64 had a doctoral degree. 71 were in the age range of 20-30 years, 192 were in the age range of 31-40 years, and 121 were over 40 years old. Among the variables of the perceived value index, the information value variable has obtained the highest score with a mean of 3.83 and a standard deviation of 0.777, and the social status value variable has obtained the lowest score with a mean of 3.45 and a standard deviation of 0.817. The perceived value index has obtained a mean of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 0.558. Among the variables of the social media self-efficacy index, the organizational commitment variable has obtained the highest score with a mean of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.873, and the media education variable has obtained the lowest score with a mean of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 1. And the social media self-efficacy index has obtained a mean of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.684. The brand attitude index has obtained a mean of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 0.923. The significance level of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for all research variables is less than 0.05. As a result, all research variables have a non-normal distribution. Therefore, Smart PLS statistical software was used to analyze the data.

### Conclusion

The present study aimed to present a structural model of the perceived value of social media as affected by social media self-efficacy and customers' attitude towards the brand. The results of the first hypothesis test showed that attitude towards the brand has a positive and significant effect on perceived self-efficacy. In this regard, it can be stated that customers who have a positive attitude towards the brand feel that they can better use the brand's products or services and achieve their goals. This increases perceived self-efficacy. A positive attitude makes customers more willing to learn how to use the brand better and be more active in interacting with the brand, which strengthens self-efficacy. A negative or skeptical attitude can reduce belief in the ability to use the brand effectively, while a positive attitude increases a person's self-confidence. The results of the second hypothesis test showed that perceived self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on perceived value. In this regard, it can be stated that users with high perceived self-efficacy believe that they can benefit from social



media features well. This feeling of empowerment leads to a better user experience and, consequently, an increase in perceived value. Self-efficacy causes users to use the features and tools of the platforms more and better (such as sharing content, interacting with others, producing content), which helps increase the practical and social value of media. When people feel that they have the necessary skills, they are less anxious or confused and enjoy their interaction with social media more, which strengthens psychological and emotional value. The results of the third hypothesis test showed that attitude towards the brand has a positive and significant effect on perceived value. In this regard, it can be stated that customers' positive attitude towards the brand makes them more willing to follow, participate in, and interact with brand content on social media. This increases the value of social interaction and content of media. A positive attitude towards the brand increases trust in the content presented on social media, and users consider these media to be a credible source for receiving information and communicating with the brand, which increases the perceived value of the media. The results of the test of the fourth hypothesis showed that perceived self-efficacy plays a mediating role in the effect of brand attitude on perceived value. In this regard, it can be stated that a positive attitude towards the brand makes customers feel that they can better use social media related to that brand. This attitude increases confidence in their abilities to interact with content and social media tools (perceived self-efficacy increases). When people believe that they are capable of using social media effectively, they better understand and experience the different values (practical, social, psychological) of the media. These findings are consistent with the results of research (van Zoonen & Banghart, 2018) and (Marsh, 2021).

Based on the dimension of perceived information value, it is suggested that users of this store should pay attention to comparing information and quality related to the products they are considering with other stores. The most important factor in gaining trust in digital platforms is the users' knowledge of the information provided by online stores. Therefore, in order to create trust in this platform, it is suggested that users and buyers of the store should make efforts regarding the accuracy and completeness of the store's security information. On the other hand, it is suggested that the management of the Digikala store should continuously communicate with its customers to receive their opinions and take their opinions into account in providing services to them. It is suggested that the management of online stores should try to reduce user risk and subsequently increase customer trust by adopting solutions such as receiving the e-commerce trust symbol or increasing the website security coefficient. Among the limitations of the present study was the existence of a conservative spirit in some customers and their lack of appropriate responsiveness. Accordingly, it is suggested that online store managers, while instilling a sense of trust in this brand, pay special attention to the category of customer orientation and comprehensive communication with customers.