

Motives of Social Media Usage on Building Consumer Behavioural Engagement

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Abstract

Social media plays a pivotal role in the present digitalized business context by reshaping the marketing strategies of business entities by focusing greater level of consumer engagement. The consumer participation in brand building activities has become a mainstream research concern over social media marketing. Despite the different marketing and promotional efforts taken by marketers, recent studies emphasis more on investigating level of consumer engagement within contemporaneous digital platforms. Alongside, this study attempted to investigate the consumer behavioural engagement in social media marketing, and it was conceptualized based on self – determination theory. Accordingly, consumer autonomy, competence, and relatedness were tested with consumer behavioural engagement in social media marketing. Following a deductive method as the approach, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to construct the study hypotheses. Survey method was used to collect data from a sample of 246 undergraduates in both state and private sector higher educational institutes. The analysis was based on both descriptive and inferential analysis, to understand the relationship between key consumer autonomy, competence, and relatedness towards behavioural engagement. Findings reveal that the consumer competence over social media platforms is the most important determinant of one's self – determination. Further, the behavioural engagement of consumers is highly influenced by consumer relatedness, showing favourable relationships among both community relatedness as well as brand relatedness. Some of the determinants such as self-censorship and privacy concerns were identified as no significant relationship with consumer behavioural engagement. It provided a considerable amount of interesting findings for practitioner for developing effective marketing and promotional campaigns in the context of social media to gain a greater level of consumer behavioural engagement. Finally, the study was concluded with important insights about the consumer behavioural engagement in social media marketing with some recommended practices for higher achievements.

Keywords: Autonomy, Self – censorship, Self – Efficacy, Relatedness, Behavioural engagement

INTRODUCTION

The ongoing developments in technology contribute considerably on changing the strategic orientation of companies and as a result, traditionally product/service centered business models have become more customer oriented ones today (Hodgan, et al, 2002). This paradigm shift in marketplace encouraged businesses to develop more effective ways to ensure survival through obtaining sufficient profits. In this context, online base communities or the social network sites are considered as an effective platform to build good customer interaction. Thus social media enables the companies to interact with customers directly with no time boundaries, according to Oracle (2009) the social media is the engine that has transformed the web from being a one – way information tool to a two – way collaboration mechanism. Further, with the rapid growth of social networking sites like Facebook, twitter, Friendster, YouTube, etc, the usage of social media in terms of number of users has rapidly increased in recent years.

Research shows a higher usage of social networking sites and also highlights that, people now spend more hours per day in social media activities. According to the current statistics, in Sri Lankan context, there is a considerably high usage of social networking sites by its users, regardless of their age, literacy level, designation, etc and people use these sites to publish, share, and discuss their experiences in day – to – day life under different areas such as: personal, business, political, gossips and entertainment, etc. According to Abeysekara (2014), in Sri Lanka, 32% females and 68% males are active members of Facebook and the highest usage of Facebook is shown among the age groups between 18 years – 24 years (41.6%) and 25 years – 35 years (33.8%). Additionally, a majority of Sri Lankan companies too have activated their promotions and service provisions in Facebook and several other social networks. Thus, it is evident a continuous growth of consumer participation in brand activities in social media and further, it also considers the consumers have become an influential party of such brands (Bernoff & Li, 2008).

Evans et al, (2010) state that, consumers do not browse the social media simply to search their preferred brands on social media, however, they interact with those brands through the process called consumer engagement, thus, the social media facilitates the businesses with great opportunities through the consumer engagement platforms. It gives customers the ability to interact with business and related communities in an effective manner (Deighton & Kornfeld, 2009). Clemons and Gao (2008), highlight that, customers have a good path to get more details and good understanding over the brands which they prefer and allow them to form brand related communities in the social media platforms. By clicking on the like button of any online brand on a social media allows customers to be a part of the particular brand community (Wirtz et al, 2013). Marketers should understand how

and why individuals engage in brand communities in social media as the consumer interactions with brands in social media is much stronger in shaping the brand as a whole than the forms of traditional marketing efforts (Christodoulides, 2009).

Problem Statement

During the past few years, a considerable attention was emerged for consumer engagement along with the rise of online social media. Nelson- Field and Taylor (2012) stated that, the new marketing catchphrase is “engage or die” based on this growth of social media usage. Kumar et.al (2010) explained that, consumer engagement is a prevailing concept which has to create deeper customer – brand relationship and businesses have gradually come to a point that realizes, it does require changing the way of looking at customers. In that perspective customer engagement is a key to success even though the traditional media plays a major role in reaching customers, with social media presence the consumer relationships can be effectively managed. Larsson (2017) has specified, having access to different social networks and the visual aids platforms in social media were figured out as key motivating features of social media which enable consumer engagement. Further communication, enjoying, and information sharing perspectives of social media were highly discussed in recent empirical studies (Dahlhoff, 2016). Theory support evidences lack in the area of consumer engagement though there are many research studies conducted in social media marketing. As concluded by Dissanayake et al (2019) studies should figure out how effective social media influence towards consumer long term brand relationships.

Therefore, it is very important to understand the underlying motivations of consumers to participate in the brand related activities and communities in the social media (Tsai & Men, 2013). Accordingly, this study is proposed to understand the impact of social media marketing on consumer behavioural engagement (actions). It conceptualizes the consumer behavioural engagement on social media marketing in the context of self – determination theory. The below research question are to be addressed accordingly;

What is the impact of consumer’s level of autonomy on social media engagement?

Do social media relate competencies have a positive impact on consumer social media engagement?

Does consumer relatedness determine their engagement on social media?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing

Chikandiwa et al (2013), illustrate the social media marketing, as a system which allows marketers to engage, collaborate, interact and harness intelligence crowd sourcing for marketing purpose, while Erdogmus and Cicek (2012) stated, the social media marketing is a different concept then traditional way of marketing and it requires special focus and strategies to reach the brand image and loyalty through social media. As explained by Gordhamer (2009), social media is a more sincere way of communicating with consumers that trying on showing what the brand, is instead of controlling its image. Significantly, consumers today highly addicted to social media and once Jackson (2011) has figured that, most of the social media users are likely to talk about, recommend or purchase a particular product or service after engaging social media pages of that particular product or service. Another important feature of the social media marketing is that, it allows consumers to share the information with their peers regarding the online brands (Stileman, 2009). Moreover research have identified different underline motivations behind social media usage of consumers, accordingly Enginkaya and Yilmaz (2014), classifies the components of social media usage as follows; Brand affiliation – consumer's motivation to follow a brand on social media because of its congruity with his/her lifestyle, possession desires, preference tendency, and intention to promote it; Opportunity seeking – the beneficial reasoning of the consumers to follow a brand; Conversation – social media's role on consumers' need to communicate with brands and other consumers; Entertainment – consumers' affection with the corporate pages and/or brand related contents to have amusement and fun; Investigation – reflects the social media's role on consumers' quest of reliable information about the brands and products.

Self – Determination Theory

Deci and Ryan (2012) defined the self – determination theory as the fundamental psychological needs which human beings require to be competent, autonomous and relatedness. It measures the influence of social media marketing on consumer engagement based on the three conditions that foster human motivation; autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The self - determination theory is a very useful theoretical ground to understand the role of consumer motivation towards building consumer engagement. It has been defined by Deci et al., (1991) as a sense of autonomy and control over one's own actions and decisions. As a well-known theory of human motivation, self-determination theory (SDT) explains the significance of human innate inclinations for development and personality development, as well as for social functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Autonomy:

Autonomy is described as a key element of motivation which leads consumer to self – determined (Vallerand et al, 2008), thus in a social environment it should be highly autonomous to create a high motivation to participate. As discussed by Deci and Ryan (2012), in the contexts where the individuals are supported with higher autonomy, it would finally lead to a superior motivation of them to take part. Thus the environments that provide autonomy lead to higher self- determined motivation (Vallerand et al, 2008). Bachman and Stewart (2011) define the autonomy as –being the source of one’s own behavior and reaching congruence amongst the activity and one’s assimilated sense of self. In this study, autonomy will be assessed through *privacy concerns* of consumers and *self – censorship* which can impact the degree of consumer interaction.

Competence:

Competence is defined as extent to which one owns self – reliance to perform certain activities (Reeve et al, 2004) and its requirement for challenge (Ryan et al, 2006). Further, competency is known as one’s capacity of carrying out an effort, and also it is a feeling of having opportunities for demonstrating efficacy (Kreijns et al, 2014). In the social media contexts, competence plays a quite significant role since it provides an exciting opportunity to exhibit skills and efficacy (Ryan et al, 2006). The competence will be measured through consumer *self – efficacy* and *social skills* in terms of using social media networks according to Kreijns et al (2014).

Relatedness:

Relatedness is defined as a feeling of belonging which individuals are associated (Kreijns et al, 2014). It is also known as a fundamental need for individuals (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). However, in the context of being part of a social media online brand community, a customer who feels associated to the particular community and the brand is anticipated to demonstrate a larger degree of customer engagement (Khan, 2014). Accordingly the consumer brand relatedness and community relatedness will be assessed.

Social Media Marketing and Consumer Behavioural Engagement

Consumer engagement is known as a key to success of an organization, with this concept the consumer engagement is the way to build deep relationships with customers (Kumar et.al.2010). As discussed by Behavioural engagement means —taking part in or —contributing to some specific activity or event (Barki & Hartwick, 1994). In the context of branded online space this is all about posting, sharing, conversing, and co-creating content with the particular brand or other consumers.

Casalo et.al. (2007) stated, the involvement in a branded online space is reflected to be one of the most significant aspects to the improvement and survivability of the space. Scholars have paid their attention towards how participation in a branded online space promotes consumer loyalty of the particular brand (Muñiz & O’Guinn, 2001). Number of studies have come up with a positive relationship between the consumer behavioural engagement and brand loyalty (Muñiz & O’Guinn, 2001; Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006).

METHODOLOGY

The study follows the positivistic research philosophy, followed by Saunders et al. (2016), that highlights the involvement of highly structured design and large samples. Hence the study of social media and building consumer engagement is experimented from an objective perspective. Among the three research approaches; induction, deduction and abduction (Saunders et al, 2016) the present study is in deductive approach where the study is initiated with theoretical base developed through conducted literature. Accordingly, the methodological choice of the study determined as quantitative study, and the study gathers data only for once, more specifically the study methodological choice will be mono method quantitative where it uses a single data collection technique (questionnaire). Research strategy of the present study is relied on survey, accordingly it gathers standardized data from a large sample in a cost effective way. Study is cross sectional due to the time constrains.

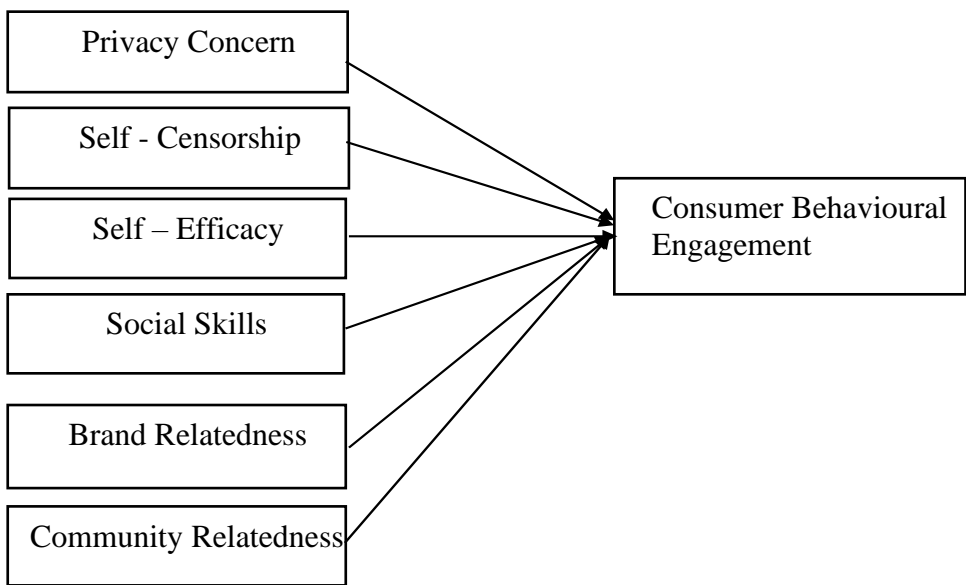


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses for the study are developed as follows and the operationalization of the variables was attached in the appendix. (see appendix table: 1)

H1: Privacy concern is negatively related to the consumer behavioural engagement in Facebook brand pages

H2: Self – Censorship is negatively related to the consumer behavioural engagement in Facebook brand pages

H3: Social media self – efficacy will be positively related to the consumer behavioural engagement in Facebook brand pages

H4: Social skills will be positively related to the consumer behavioural engagement in Facebook brand pages

H5: Brand Relatedness will be positively related to the consumer behavioural engagement in Facebook brand pages

H6: Community Relatedness will be positively related to the consumer behavioural engagement in Facebook brand pages

Studies show a high usage rate of social media among youth between 18 – 35 years (Abeysekara, 2014). Thus by considering the age range of the Facebook users; specifically the highest usage, and the Facebook usage patterns of college students, the study focuses on the university students in Sri Lanka given the age range between 19 to 29 years as the study population. Accordingly based on the University Grants Commission (UGC) statistics on Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), university students are categorized under three areas, namely UGC intake, External, Open and Distance Learning and Foreign. Representing 86, 321 of UGC intake, 345, 744 of external, open and distance learning and 291 of foreign students there are 432,356 undergraduate students in Sri Lanka (Total Undergraduate Enrolment in Universities and Higher Educational Institutions, 2015). However the foreign category will not be taken in the study population as this study focuses only on Sri Lankan context. Finally the population of the study, i.e. the university undergraduates (both state and private universities) is 432,065. Using convenience sampling technique it was decided the sample size to be 384 (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). The sample consists of both the students from state universities as well as from other higher educational institutions. More specifically all respondents are expected to be active users of Facebook. Hence the questionnaires were distributed with a screening question at the beginning to ensure the respondents active participation in Facebook. It could be able to collect 246 filled questionnaires for the analysis.

Study focuses on using questionnaire method for its data collection. The recent studies further discussed that, the respondent's desirability towards both online and offline survey methods are same (Dodou & de Winter, 2014). Considering that, questionnaire was developed aiming to collect data from traditional paper based survey with the purpose of achieving a higher responsiveness within a limited time period.

Instrument pre – testing was conducted prior to the data collection process, with the purpose of dealing with various possible issues and misunderstandings which might be encountered by the respondents when answering the questionnaires (Presser et. al., 2004). Significantly, the pretest enhanced the quality of data (Grimm, 2010).

Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used for the study for proper analysis of the sample data to generalize the finding to the larger context. Focusing on multivariate analysis, the most commonly used regression analyses were performed to understand the relationship between the consumer self - determination and consumer engagement

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

First, it tested the association between the factors of Self – Determination and Consumer Behavioural Engagement using correlation analysis. According to the analysis probability of the association between Self - Censorship and the Behavioral Engagement is 0.073, this is marginally significant result at 10%. Co – efficient of correlation is 0.114 this says that there is a positive association between Self – Censorship and Behavioural Engagement. Factors of Self – Efficacy, Social Skills, Brand Relatedness and Community Relatedness are highly significant at 1% with Behavioural Engagement as their probabilities less than 0.01. All the co – efficient of correlation are positive. Accordingly, they are having positive association with Behavioural Engagement (see appendix: Table 2).

Multiple regression model was applied to determine the effect of Self – Determination on Consumer Behavioural Engagement. Accordingly the multiple correlation is 0.612 (see appendix: Table 3), this says that factors of Self – Determination are having joint association with Behavioural Engagement. Co- efficient of determination (R^2) says that 37.5% of Behavioural Engagement has been enclosed by multiple regression model. Even though this value is less, the model is jointly significant as the regression ANOVA result is appropriate. Durbin Watson test of statistic is 1.53. This is in the standard level that is 1.5 and 2.5. Therefore, residuals are independent and results are more valid. Jointly significance of the model has been tested in the regression ANOVA result (see appendix: Table 4). In the ANOVA results F statistic is 23.88 corresponding probability of F statistic is 0.000.

This is highly significant at 1% and indicates that regression result is jointly significant. Therefore the model is appropriate to determine individual effect of Self – Determination on consumer Behavioural Engagement

According to the individual regression results for variables (see appendix: Table 5), probability of consumer Self- Efficacy is 0.014. This is a significant result and it says that, Self – Efficacy has an individual effect on Behavioural Engagement. Individual Beta value is 0.176. Accordingly, Self – Efficacy has a significant positive effect on Behavioural Engagement. Community Relatedness is a highly significant factor as the P value is 0.000. Individual Beta value is 0.567. This means that, Community Relatedness is also positively influencing on Behavioural Engagement. Brand Relatedness is a marginally significant factor as the probability is 0.73. Individual Beta is 0.11. Factors of Privacy Concern, Self – Censorship, and Social Skills do not individually influence on Behavioural Engagement, because their probabilities are insignificant. They influence jointly with other factors of Self – Determination. Researcher ordered the factors of Self – Determination influencing on Behavioural Engagement using standardized coefficient of Beta. Highest Beta is represented by Community Relatedness. Therefore, it is having the highest influence on Behavioural Engagement. The second influence is given by Self – Efficacy and the third factor is Brand Relatedness.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study focuses on the three intrinsic motivations of consumers based on self – determination theory namely: consumer autonomy, competence and relatedness. Depending on these three characteristics the study develops six determinants of consumers: privacy concern, self – censorship, self – efficacy, social skills, brand relatedness and community relatedness towards consumer behavioural engagement. Privacy concern on sharing information online is an extensively discussed phenomenon (Woo, 2006). As hypothesized the study findings figured out negative direct effect of consumer privacy concern on consumer behavioural engagement which is not statistically significant. This is contrast to findings of Dell and Marinova (2002); Khan (2016) as those studies proved a highly significant negative relationship between privacy concern and consumer behavioural engagement. However, the self – censorship was identified as key factor which constraint the behaviours of consumers specifically in the areas such as politics, religion or relationships (Marwick, 2011) and in the contrary the study shows an insignificant relationship with consumer behavioural engagement. Therefore, this study concluded that the consumer self – censorship has no significant effects on their behavioural engagement in social media. Similar to the findings of Khan (2016), this

study also proved that, the consumer self – efficacy has a positive and significant relationship with consumer behavioural engagement. Therefore, in line with the findings of Ren (1999), self – efficacy gives confidence to actively like, comment, share and engage in brand pages on Facebook. This shows that, consumer self – efficacy is a good predictor of consumer degree to which they behaviorally engage in Facebook. Contrary to the findings of Spitzberg & Cupach, (2011); Baron & Markman, (2000) the study figured insignificant relationship between consumer social skills and behavioural engagement. Further, the study findings were oppose to the findings of Khan (2016) in the context of social media setting, social skills are to be positively correlate with the customer engagement on Facebook brand pages. Therefore, consumer social skills will not determine the effective behavioural engagement of consumers on Facebook. Study concludes, the consumer brand relatedness have no significant implications over their behavioural engagement, though Goldsmith et al (2011) stated it is key indicator for consumer interactions and engagement in social media. . In line with the findings of Khan (2016) which a strong brand and community relationship positively predicts customer engagement on Facebook brand pages, present study confirm the relationship between two variables. Findings of this study show that relationship with the community and the brand proved to be the strongest predictors of customer behavioural engagement on Facebook brand pages. Consumer behaviours such as liking, commenting, and sharing had a positive link with brand and community relationship.

The results of this study, particularly, highlights interactions building with consumers view out as the most significant factor in prompting consumer behavioural engagement and that should provide a base to initiate brand related activities on social media to strengthen relationship. Therefore, consumers require to be offered an involvement which is value-oriented. This kind of active consumer behavioural engagement eventually creates the consumer a part of the marketing team/ plan. Recognizable consumer behavioural engagement in the form of product or service testimonials on social media forms the foundation of increasing the customer community and it produces favorable public relationships.

Businesses which are having social media presence necessarily require building an engaged customer base. Engagement of consumers in the form of behavioural implies the consumer supportive relationship towards a brand on social media. As discussed by Kang et al, (2014), kind of healthy relationships are continues with benefits such as sensual, social and financial. Thus strengthen the mutual benefits with associated benefit to customers will enable businesses to improve consumer behavioural engagement.

Social media practitioners can apply the findings of this study to develop their social media presence to provide more customized relationship marketing efforts in social media. Therefore, in the process of determining the social media marketing activities, marketers can utilize the consumer self – determination implications to understand whether they are targeting the right set of followers. Nevertheless, based on the findings of the study, on condition that a social interpersonal marketing platform within brand activities, such as promising consumers to get involved in interpersonal communication with other social media users or brands.

Based on the findings of the study, it can recommend to use more community related interactive programmes which allows customers to gather and share their experiences in terms of enhancing consumer behavioural engagement. Further it is beneficial to arrange engagement activities, such as allowing customers to act as testimonials, content developers for their favorite brands, and give away efforts to stimulate their behavioural engagement by demonstrating their self – efficacy in social media platforms. As customers expect value based interaction, it is recommended to develop contests among users in brand communities.

The study focuses only on university students representing both state and higher education institutes, therefore, a convenience sample of students was taken for the study. Further, implications which can be recommended for future researches should concern the diversity of the sample. Due to the limitations of the sample, it can be claimed that study findings may not be abundantly generalizable to other users of Facebook brand pages in Sri Lanka. . The study has been limited to self – determination theory and therefore it provides limited conclusion. The research model which has been measured provides important understandings in the domain of social media marketing; however, there are other variables apart from the self-determination theory that might forecast the consumer engagement phenomenon.

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Appendix

Variable	Dimension	Reference
Privacy Concern	Privacy Personal Information Identity	Buchanan, et al, (2007), Khan (2016)
Self – Censorship	Opinion expressions Trust	Marwick, (2011) Gonzenbach (2013)
Self – Efficacy	Confident Capability	Williams, et al, (2006), Eastin and LaRose (2000)
Social Skills	Accurate judgments Ability to recognize	Baron and Markman (2000) , Baron and Markman (2003), Spitzberg (2006)
Brand Relatedness	Personal connection Identifiability Self-indication	Sprott et al (2006), Auter and Palmgreen (2000)
Community Relatedness	Interaction with others Friendliness Connection with others	LaGuardia, et al, (2000), Khan (2016)
Behavioural Engagement	Liking, Commenting, Sharing, Noticing, Browsing frequency	Cheung, et al (2011), Khan (2016)

Table: 1 - Operationalization of Variables

Table: 2 – Correlation Analysis Factors		BE
PC	Pearson Correlation	.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.623
	N	246
SC	Pearson Correlation	.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.073
	N	246
SE	Pearson Correlation	.214**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	246
SS	Pearson Correlation	.211**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	246
BR	Pearson Correlation	.433**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	246
CR	Pearson Correlation	.572**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	246

Note: PC – Privacy Concern, SC – Self Censorship, SE – Self Efficacy, SS – Social Skills, BR – Brand Relatedness, CR – Community Relatedness, BE – Behavioural Engagement

Table: 3 – Regression Model Summary

Model R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin – Watosn
0.612 ^a	0.375	0.359	0.65210	1.532
Predictors: (Constant), CR, SE, SC, PC, SS, BR				

Dependent Variable: BE

Note: PC – Privacy Concern, SC – Self Censorship, SE – Self Efficacy, SS – Social Skills, BR – Brand Relatedness, CR – Community Relatedness, BE – Behavioural Engagement

Table 4: Regression ANOVA Result for Behavioural Engagement

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	60.949	6	10.158	23.888	.000 ^b
Residual	101.632	239	.425		
Total	162.581	245			

Predictors: (Constant), CR, SE, SC, PC, SS, BR

Dependent Variable: BE

Table 5: Individual Effect of Self – Determination on Behavioural Engagement

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-.074	.364		-.204	.839		
PC	-.009	.042	-.011	-.209	.835	.884	1.131
SC	.026	.065	.022	.404	.687	.873	1.145
SE	.176	.071	.145	2.472	.014	.765	1.308
SS	.063	.065	.057	.968	.334	.762	1.312
BR	.110	.061	.115	1.801	.073	.641	1.560
CR	.567	.074	.490	7.708	.000	.647	1.544