

Value Co-creation behavior of members in brand communities on social media platforms: Opportunities and Challenges for firms' marketing activities

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Abstract: *The rapid development of social media platforms has transformed firm-consumer relationships, shifting marketing from one-way communication toward interactive, participatory, and community-based value creation. In this context, brand communities on social media have become important spaces where members not only exchange information and experiences but also actively contribute to brand-related value through content creation, advocacy, feedback, support, and collaborative interaction. This paper reviews value co-creation behavior among members in social media brand communities and examines its implications for firms' marketing activities. Drawing on the literature on online brand communities, social capital, member interaction, and value co-creation, the paper synthesizes key forms of member co-creation behavior, discusses the social and relational conditions that enable such behavior, and identifies both opportunities and challenges for firms seeking to leverage these dynamics. The review indicates that member value co-creation can enhance customer engagement, strengthen brand meaning, expand advocacy, and provide rich market intelligence. At the same time, it may create managerial difficulties related to control, conflict, misinformation, co-destruction, and reputational risk. By systematizing the literature, the paper offers a conceptual foundation for future empirical research and practical insights for firms building more participatory and resilient brand communities.*

Keywords: brand community, marketing activities, member interaction, social media, value co-creation behavior.

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, social media has become a core infrastructure of contemporary marketing. Rather than functioning only as channels for information dissemination, platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Zalo, and Reddit increasingly serve as social spaces where consumers interact, create content, negotiate meanings, and influence brand-related conversations in real time (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Kietzmann et al., 2011). This shift has changed the traditional boundaries of marketing communication. Firms are no longer the sole producers of brand messages; instead, value is increasingly shaped through ongoing interactions among firms, consumers, and broader networked publics (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Ahmad et al., 2019). As a result, social media marketing has become more community-based, dialogic, and participatory than in earlier digital environments (Jenkins, 2006; Merz et al., 2018).

Within this context, brand communities on social media have attracted growing scholarly and managerial attention. A brand community is commonly defined as a specialized, non-geographically bound community based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; McAlexander et al., 2002). On social media, these communities may appear as Facebook groups, fan pages, creator-led communities, hashtag publics, or user-led interaction spaces centered on a focal brand (Laroche et al., 2012; Habibi et al., 2014). Their members are far from passive audiences. They share usage experiences, answer questions, defend or criticize brands, recommend products, create reviews, construct symbolic meanings, and sometimes even contribute ideas for product improvement or campaign development (Laroche et al., 2012; Tsiotsou, 2015). Social media brand communities therefore function not only as communication environments but also as important arenas of value creation (Laroche et al., 2012).

The concept of value co-creation offers a useful lens for understanding this phenomenon. Unlike firm-centric views that treat value as something designed and delivered by producers, value co-creation emphasizes that value emerges through interaction, resource integration, participation, and shared experiences among multiple actors (Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Ranjan & Read, 2016). In brand communities, members contribute informational, emotional, relational, cultural, and symbolic resources that shape both customer experience and brand presence in the market (Ind et al., 2013; Merz et al., 2018). On social media, the visibility and immediacy of interaction further amplify these contributions. A comment, recommendation, tutorial video, meme, user review, or public defense of the brand may all become acts of co-creation that extend beyond the focal individual and influence the wider community and market (Casaló et al., 2010).

For firms, these behaviors create substantial opportunities. Participation in brand communities can deepen engagement, foster trust and relational closeness, stimulate user-generated content, strengthen advocacy, and provide a continuing source of market intelligence (Habibi et al., 2014). Communities can also reduce communication distance between firms and consumers and support more adaptive marketing strategies grounded in real-time interaction (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Labrecque, 2014). In many industries, including fashion, beauty, food, travel, gaming, education, and consumer technology, community-based interactions increasingly influence awareness, consideration, trial, and loyalty (Laroche et al., 2013; Ha, 2023). The more members participate in co-creating value, the more firms may benefit from organic reach, peer influence, and socially embedded brand meaning.

At the same time, these dynamics also generate important challenges. Value co-creation in social media brand communities is not always controllable or uniformly positive. Member interactions may produce conflict, exclusion, misinformation, unrealistic expectations, brand polarization, and even value co-destruction (Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Echeverri & Skålen, 2011). Highly active communities can amplify negative narratives as easily as positive ones, raising issues of moderation, governance, authenticity, ownership of user contributions, and the balance between managerial direction and community autonomy (Labrecque, 2014; Santos et al., 2022). In this sense, social media brand communities create a double-edged marketing environment in which member co-creation can both strengthen and destabilize brand value.

Although prior research has examined online brand communities, social media engagement, customer participation, and value co-creation, the literature remains fragmented. Some studies emphasize social capital and interaction quality, others focus on engagement, identification, trust, sense of belonging, or brand love, while another stream examines outcomes such as loyalty, advocacy, satisfaction, and innovation-related participation (Santos et al., 2022; Pan & Chiou, 2011). Fewer review-oriented discussions have directly addressed the specific issue of value co-creation behavior among members in social media brand communities and its implications for firms' marketing activities, especially from the dual perspective of opportunities and challenges (Santos et al., 2022). This issue is particularly relevant in Vietnam, where social media is deeply embedded in everyday communication and commerce, yet remains insufficiently systematized in academic discussion.

Against this background, the present paper reviews the literature on value co-creation behavior among members in social media-based brand communities and analyzes the opportunities and challenges such behavior creates for firms' marketing activities. Specifically, the paper clarifies the concept and major forms of member value co-creation behavior, synthesizes key antecedents and enabling conditions highlighted in prior studies, and discusses the strategic opportunities and managerial challenges associated with these behaviors in increasingly participatory digital markets.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Brand communities on social media and value co-creation behavior

Brand communities have long been viewed as important social formations in which consumers develop shared meanings, rituals, and relationships around a focal brand (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; McAlexander et al., 2002). Early studies described them as specialized, non-geographically bound communities rooted in structured social relations among brand admirers (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Algesheimer et al., 2005). With the rise of social media, this idea has expanded considerably. Brand communities are no longer limited to firm-hosted forums or relatively closed online spaces; they now increasingly operate on open, dynamic, and interactive platforms where visibility, speed, and network effects intensify community processes (Labrecque, 2014; Laroche et al., 2013). On platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Reddit, Discord, and Zalo, these communities may take the form of official brand pages, fan groups, hashtag

conversations, creator-led spaces, or informal user collectives organized around a shared interest in a brand, product category, or consumption lifestyle (Laroche et al., 2013).

The movement of brand communities onto social media has changed both their structure and their marketing significance. Social media lowers barriers to participation, enables user-generated content at scale, and creates continuous opportunities for member-to-member interaction (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Members can comment, react, share, remix, recommend, criticize, educate, and mobilize others in ways that are more immediate and publicly visible than in many earlier forms of online community (Schau et al., 2009; Kietzmann et al., 2011). As a result, the value of brand communities no longer lies only in symbolic affiliation or relational attachment, but also in their capacity to generate distributed contributions that shape brand meaning, customer experience, and market communication (Merz et al., 2018; Ind et al., 2013).

Within this context, value co-creation has become central to understanding the role of members in brand communities. The service-dominant perspective argues that value is not embedded in products and delivered unilaterally by firms; instead, it emerges through resource integration and interaction among multiple actors (Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Lusch & Vargo, 2014). Customers are therefore not passive recipients of marketing outputs, but active participants who shape value through their knowledge, skills, emotions, experiences, and social connections (Ranjan & Read, 2016; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). In social media brand communities, members may co-create value by sharing information, offering advice, solving problems, defending the brand, creating content, providing feedback, legitimizing meanings, and sustaining the atmosphere of the community (Schau et al., 2009; Laroche et al., 2013). These activities can enrich both functional and symbolic value and often extend beyond the firm's direct control (Merz et al., 2018; Ind et al., 2013).

Value co-creation behavior in this setting can therefore be understood as a set of voluntary, interactive, and resource-integrating actions through which members contribute to the functioning, meaning, and attractiveness of the brand community and the associated brand (Ranjan & Read, 2016; Merz et al., 2018). A member may answer another user's question, share a product demonstration, offer emotional support, post creative brand-related content, or help maintain group norms and identity (Schau et al., 2009). These actions may create value not only for the individual contributor, but also for other members, the wider community, and the brand itself (Merz et al., 2018; Ind et al., 2013). Prior research also suggests that such value is multidimensional, including informational, social, experiential, emotional, symbolic, and relational forms (Grönroos, 2011; Merz et al., 2018). From the firm's perspective, these forms of value can contribute to stronger engagement, richer brand associations, greater advocacy, and more adaptive marketing strategies (Merz et al., 2018; Ind et al., 2013).

At the same time, value co-creation should not be assumed to be automatically beneficial. Because social media environments are open, visible, and often weakly governed, the same member activities that generate value may also create tension, conflict, misinformation, exclusion, or negative amplification (Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Järvi et al., 2018). This has led some scholars to stress that co-creation and co-destruction may coexist, especially in digitally networked communities shaped by differing motivations, uneven participation, and contested brand meanings (Vafeas et al., 2016; Järvi et al., 2018). Any meaningful analysis of member value co-creation behavior in social media brand communities therefore needs to address both the conditions that enable it and the ambivalent consequences it may produce for firms.

2.2. Forms of member value co-creation behavior in social media brand communities

Value co-creation behavior is described in the literature through a range of related concepts, including participation, engagement behaviors, helping behaviors, advocacy, user-generated content, customer citizenship behavior, community contribution, and collaborative innovation (Yi & Gong, 2013; Groth, 2005). Although these concepts are related, they do not always refer to the same phenomenon. In social media brand communities, value co-creation behavior is better understood as an umbrella concept covering multiple forms of member contribution that create benefits for other members, the community, or the brand (Ranjan & Read, 2016; Santos et al., 2022). Prior studies suggest that these contributions tend to appear in several recurring forms.

A highly visible form is informational contribution. Members create value by sharing knowledge, reviews, product-use experiences, comparisons, troubleshooting advice, and purchase recommendations (Wiertz & de Ruyter, 2007; Dholakia et al., 2009). These contributions reduce information asymmetry, support decision-making, and help less experienced members deal with products and brand-related issues (Pan & Chiou, 2011; Algesheimer et al., 2005). Their importance is particularly evident in uncertain categories such as technology, cosmetics, health products, finance, and travel services (Sethna et al., 2017; Purnawirawan et al., 2015). Peer advice also strengthens the credibility of brand-related

information because it is often seen as more authentic than formal brand communication (Wasko & Faraj, 2005; Pan & Chiou, 2011).

Value co-creation also takes place through supportive interaction and brand advocacy. Members respond to one another, offer reassurance, validate experiences, and provide emotional support, especially in communities where brands are tied to identity, lifestyle, or emotionally meaningful consumption (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2007; Hollebeek & Chen, 2014; Schau et al., 2009; Algesheimer et al., 2005). At the same time, they may recommend the brand, defend it publicly, correct misinformation, and contribute positive word of mouth (Algesheimer et al., 2005; Pan & Chiou, 2011). On social media, these actions are especially consequential because posts, comments, shares, and reactions are visible and scalable, allowing individual contributions to influence broader publics and support outcomes such as awareness, trust, and social proof (Santos et al., 2022; Labrecque, 2014; Laroche et al., 2013). Such advocacy, however, is more likely when members identify with the community and perceive the relationship as reciprocal and meaningful (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Algesheimer et al., 2005).

Another important set of behaviors involves content creation, feedback, and community maintenance. Social media platforms enable members to produce tutorials, testimonials, unboxing videos, memes, reinterpretations, livestreams, and narratives that shape how the brand is represented and experienced (Schau et al., 2009; Gensler et al., 2013; Labrecque, 2014). Members also create value by suggesting improvements, testing ideas, providing constructive criticism, and participating in discussions about new offerings or brand initiatives, turning the community into a space for listening, experimentation, and adaptive marketing (Nambisan & Baron, 2009; Fuller, 2010; Santos et al., 2022). In addition, some members contribute by welcoming newcomers, explaining community rules, modeling appropriate conduct, and reinforcing shared identity and norms (Butler et al., 2008; Ridings et al., 2006). Although less visible, these maintenance behaviors are essential because they support the stability and integrity of the community, which in turn helps sustain engagement and meaningful interaction over time (Butler et al., 2008; Ridings et al., 2006; Santos et al., 2022; Pan & Chiou, 2011).

2.3. Key antecedents of member value co-creation behavior

Prior research indicates that value co-creation behavior in social media brand communities is shaped by social, relational, psychological, and interactional conditions rather than emerging randomly (Santos et al., 2022). Among the most important antecedents are social capital and interaction between members. Social capital theory explains how networks, trust, shared meanings, and social ties support cooperation and resource exchange (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Putnam, 2000). In digital communities, social capital is commonly understood through structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions (Chiu et al., 2006). Structural social capital reflects patterns and intensity of connections, relational social capital concerns trust, reciprocity, and emotional closeness, and cognitive social capital relates to shared language, values, and understanding (Chiu et al., 2006). These dimensions matter in social media brand communities because member contributions depend strongly on the quality of social embeddedness.

Structural social capital encourages co-creation by increasing exposure among members, expanding participation opportunities, and facilitating information flow (Chiu et al., 2006). Relational social capital reduces the perceived risk of contribution and increases willingness to help, share, and support others (Santos et al., 2022). Cognitive social capital supports smoother communication and stronger interpretive alignment, allowing members to coordinate more effectively and feel that their contributions will be understood and appreciated (Chiu et al., 2006; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Alongside social capital, interaction between members serves as a direct enabling condition for value co-creation. The literature distinguishes between interaction intensity and interaction quality. Interaction intensity refers to how frequently members exchange, while interaction quality concerns the usefulness, responsiveness, civility, relevance, and depth of those exchanges (Zhou et al., 2012). High interaction intensity can sustain community vitality, whereas high interaction quality turns activity into meaningful participation (Zhou et al., 2012; Santos et al., 2022). In social media settings, these effects are amplified by platform features such as visible comment threads, replies, reactions, tagging, and content circulation (Labrecque, 2014; Laroche et al., 2013).

The literature also highlights members' psychological experiences as a bridge between social conditions and participatory behavior. Sense of belonging, community identification, engagement, psychological ownership, and inspiration are frequently discussed as mechanisms that translate community dynamics into active contribution (Algesheimer et al., 2005; Shukla & Misra, 2024). When members feel they belong to a community, they are more likely to internalize its norms, view it as meaningful, and invest effort in sustaining it (Algesheimer et al., 2005). Inspiration, though

less studied than belonging or identification, is increasingly seen as a motivational state that encourages members to act creatively, share enthusiastically, and contribute beyond minimal participation (Böttger et al., 2017; Thrash & Elliot, 2003). In social media brand communities, inspiration may be triggered by peer-generated content, collective enthusiasm, brand narratives, or highly engaging interactions, making it a plausible mechanism linking social dynamics to value co-creation behavior (Santos et al., 2022; Shukla & Misra, 2024).

2.4. Implications for firms' marketing activities: opportunities and challenges

From a marketing perspective, value co-creation behavior in social media brand communities creates both important opportunities and significant managerial challenges. When members move beyond passive consumption and participate actively in brand-related interactions, co-creation can deepen customer engagement and make the brand ecosystem more participatory and socially vibrant (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Santos et al., 2022). It can also stimulate user-generated content, strengthen advocacy, enrich customer experience, support peer learning, and generate authentic social signals that firms often cannot easily reproduce through formal communication alone (Gensler et al., 2013; Laroche et al., 2013). At the same time, active communities may function as real-time sensing environments, allowing firms to observe emerging preferences, unmet needs, symbolic interpretations, and consumer innovations as they develop (Nambisan & Baron, 2009). In this way, co-creation contributes not only to communication outcomes but also to broader marketing capabilities related to listening, adaptation, and relationship building.

These opportunities are accompanied by challenges of control, consistency, and risk. Because social media environments are open and highly participatory, firms cannot fully script community discourse or ensure that member contributions always align with managerial intentions (Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Labrecque, 2014). Highly engaged members may spread inaccurate information, intensify negative sentiment, challenge brand decisions, or create symbolic meanings that diverge from intended positioning (Järvi et al., 2018; Gensler et al., 2013). Visible peer interaction may also escalate disputes and create conditions for value co-destruction when distrust, exclusion, or conflict emerges within the community (Järvi et al., 2018). Firms therefore face a delicate governance challenge: they must encourage participation and preserve community autonomy while maintaining enough oversight to protect brand integrity and community health (Santos et al., 2022).

These tensions suggest that co-creation should not be treated simply as a desirable marketing outcome, but as a complex social process requiring strategic facilitation. Firms need to understand which forms of member behavior generate value, under what conditions such behavior emerges, and how social media dynamics shape both beneficial and problematic outcomes (Santos et al., 2022; Nambisan & Baron, 2009). Without a clear conceptual understanding of these behaviors, managerial efforts to build community may remain superficial or become counterproductive.

III. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

3.1. Discussion

The reviewed literature suggests that value co-creation behavior in social media brand communities should be understood as a socially embedded, interaction-driven, and relationally sustained phenomenon, rather than a simple extension of consumer participation (Schau et al., 2009; Pongsakornrungruangsri & Schroeder, 2011). Members do not co-create value merely because they are exposed to brand content or because platforms allow them to react and comment. Co-creation emerges when community conditions support connection, reciprocity, shared meaning, and meaningful interaction among members (Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Nambisan & Baron, 2009). This perspective shifts attention away from purely firm-driven communication and toward the broader social architecture of brand communities.

A key implication of the literature is that social capital forms an important foundation of member value co-creation behavior. Network ties, trust, reciprocity, and shared understanding facilitate knowledge sharing, mutual assistance, advocacy, and collaborative participation (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Wong et al., 2023). Structural social capital increases opportunities for contact and exchange, relational social capital creates emotional safety and obligation to contribute, and cognitive social capital improves communication through shared values, language, and interpretations (Chiu et al., 2006). In social media brand communities, these dimensions matter because interactions are recurrent, visible, and shaped by social ties rather than by transactional exchange alone (Li et al., 2024). Co-creation therefore depends not only on platform affordances but also on whether the community develops sufficient social infrastructure to sustain voluntary contribution.

The literature also shows that member-to-member interaction is a direct and dynamic driver of co-creation. In social media environments, interaction is one of the central mechanisms through which value is generated and circulated (Zhou et al., 2012; Carlson et al., 2019). Frequent exchanges increase exposure to community life, while high-quality interactions make participation rewarding, informative, and socially meaningful (Zhou et al., 2012). What appears as co-creation at the community level is often the cumulative effect of repeated micro-interactions such as comments, replies, recommendations, corrections, affirmations, and content exchanges (Santos et al., 2022).

Another important point is that value co-creation behavior is multidimensional. It includes information sharing, emotional support, advocacy, content creation, feedback provision, and community maintenance (Schau et al., 2009; Yi & Gong, 2013). These activities do not carry the same meaning or produce the same outcomes. A member who offers product advice contributes differently from one who defends the brand publicly or helps reinforce community norms through creative participation (Gensler et al., 2013; Nambisan & Baron, 2009). This diversity matters theoretically because it calls for more refined models of antecedents and outcomes, and managerially because firms may need to encourage different forms of co-creation depending on their strategic goals (Carlson et al., 2019; Merz et al., 2018).

The reviewed studies further indicate that value co-creation behavior is shaped not only by social conditions but also by psychological states such as sense of belonging, community identification, inspiration, and related forms of attachment (Algesheimer et al., 2005; Shukla & Misra, 2024). When members see themselves as part of a meaningful collective, they are more likely to internalize community goals and act in ways that sustain shared value (Algesheimer et al., 2005). Inspiration may be especially important in social media contexts because visible peer contributions can motivate members to imitate, extend, or creatively reinterpret what others do (Böttger et al., 2017; Santos et al., 2022). This suggests that co-creation is not purely rational or instrumental, but is often energized by affective and symbolic dynamics within the community (Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Merz et al., 2018).

At the same time, the literature makes clear that value co-creation in social media brand communities is ambivalent. Although participation is often viewed as beneficial, co-creation may coexist with co-destruction, conflict, exclusion, misinformation, and reputational volatility (Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Järvi et al., 2018). Social media platforms intensify both supportive and disruptive behaviors because content spreads quickly, peer influence is strong, and public visibility raises the stakes of interaction (Wong et al., 2023). A highly active community may generate advocacy and innovation, but it may also become a space of dissatisfaction, resistance, symbolic contestation, or negative mobilization (Järvi et al., 2018). Firms therefore need a more balanced view in which co-creation is recognized as valuable but also inherently unpredictable.

3.2. Opportunities for firms' marketing activities

The reviewed literature indicates that member value co-creation behavior creates important opportunities for firms' marketing activities. A major benefit lies in stronger customer engagement. When members share knowledge, provide support, create content, and advocate for the brand, the community becomes more participatory and emotionally meaningful, reinforcing both individual involvement and collective vitality (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Carlson et al., 2019). This engagement not only draws attention to the brand but also embeds it in members' everyday digital interactions (Santos et al., 2022).

Another important opportunity comes from user-generated content and peer-driven communication. Brand communities on social media continuously produce reviews, testimonials, tutorials, comments, photos, videos, and creative reinterpretations that firms can observe, amplify, and align with strategically (Gensler et al., 2013; Laroche et al., 2013). Such content extends brand communication and adds authenticity that formal messages often cannot fully achieve (Labrecque, 2014). In contexts marked by advertising fatigue and skepticism toward overt persuasion, peer-created content can become a particularly influential form of socially validated communication (Schau et al., 2009; Santos et al., 2022).

Member co-creation also strengthens brand advocacy and organic influence. When members identify strongly with the community and voluntarily defend, recommend, or legitimize the brand, they generate positive word of mouth and reinforce social proof (Algesheimer et al., 2005; Wong et al., 2023). Because content on social media is easily shared and highly visible, such advocacy can shape the perceptions of both current participants and potential consumers beyond the community itself (Carlson et al., 2019). In this way, co-creation supports brand awareness, trust formation, and preference development through socially embedded mechanisms (Merz et al., 2018; Vargo & Lusch, 2008).

The literature also highlights the value of social media brand communities as sources of market intelligence and adaptive marketing. Through ongoing discussion, feedback, and experimentation, firms may detect unmet needs, complaints, usage innovations, symbolic interpretations, and changing expectations earlier than through conventional research alone (Nambisan & Baron, 2009; Li et al., 2024). These communities can therefore function as distributed sensing systems that support more responsive decisions and richer understanding of how consumers use and interpret the brand in everyday life (Pongsakornrungrasri & Schroeder, 2011; Understanding value-creating practices, 2017).

Finally, co-creation can deepen relationships and strengthen community-based brand resilience. Communities marked by active co-creation may foster stronger ties among members and between members and the brand, thereby enhancing attachment and collective commitment over time (Schau et al., 2009; Carlson et al., 2019). In competitive or unstable markets, this relational depth can stabilize the brand by anchoring it more firmly in social life and reducing dependence on isolated transactions (Merz et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2023). When members experience the brand as part of a meaningful community, firms may gain more durable relevance and loyalty, even if these outcomes remain only partly manageable (Vargo & Lusch, 2008).

3.3. Challenges for firms' marketing activities

Despite these opportunities, the literature also highlights a number of challenges that make it difficult for firms to fully benefit from member value co-creation on social media. A central difficulty concerns managerial control. Brand communities on social media are often only partially governable, even when firms establish and moderate official spaces themselves. They cannot fully determine how members will interpret the brand, interact with one another, or mobilize around brand-related issues (Nambisan & Baron, 2009). As a result, co-creation is inherently difficult to script. The openness that makes member participation valuable at the same time reduces the firm's ability to manage meaning and communication in a top-down manner (Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Järvi et al., 2018).

Another challenge lies in reputational risk and negative amplification. The same social mechanisms that support advocacy and positive peer influence can also magnify criticism, misinformation, dissatisfaction, and collective backlash. Member interactions do not always diffuse tension; in some cases they intensify it, especially when controversial issues emerge or when members feel ignored, mistreated, or excluded (Järvi et al., 2018; Plé & Cáceres, 2010). On highly visible platforms, these dynamics can quickly spread beyond the immediate community and shape broader public perceptions of the brand. Firms therefore face an ongoing challenge in monitoring community discourse and responding appropriately without weakening the autonomy that makes the community meaningful in the first place (Santos et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2023).

The literature also draws attention to conflict, exclusion, and value co-destruction within communities. Interactions among members are not always supportive or inclusive. Differences in status, expertise, taste, and commitment may generate gatekeeping, symbolic hierarchy, hostility, or fragmentation (Vafeas et al., 2016; Järvi et al., 2018). Under such conditions, the community may create value for some members while diminishing value for others. This issue is particularly salient in social media brand communities, where performative participation and public visibility may intensify competition for recognition and amplify interpersonal tension (Plé & Cáceres, 2010). Firms that rely on community dynamics in their marketing activities therefore need to recognize that active communities may also produce social costs and uneven experiences.

A further difficulty concerns authenticity and overmanagement. Firms may be inclined to instrumentalize brand communities too directly by pushing campaigns, steering discussion, or treating the community primarily as a promotional channel (Fournier & Lee, 2009; Nambisan & Baron, 2009). Yet excessive intervention can weaken perceived authenticity and reduce members' willingness to contribute voluntarily. Value co-creation depends partly on the perception that the community is socially meaningful rather than merely a managed marketing device (Seraj, 2012; Pongsakornrungrasri & Schroeder, 2011). This creates a persistent paradox for firms. They need to facilitate and support the community, but if they dominate it too visibly, they risk undermining the very conditions that make co-creation possible.

Measurement and strategic alignment present an additional challenge. Many of the benefits associated with community-based co-creation, including trust, belonging, symbolic meaning, peer learning, and collective identity, are difficult to capture with conventional marketing metrics (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Carlson et al., 2019). Firms may therefore underinvest in community-building or misjudge its strategic importance because the value generated is diffuse, long-term, and socially distributed rather than immediately transactional (Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Merz et al., 2018). At the same

time, when communities are assessed only through surface indicators such as likes, comments, or reach, deeper relational and cultural processes that sustain genuine value co-creation may be overlooked (Santos et al., 2022; Understanding value-creating practices, 2017). Managing brand communities on social media effectively therefore requires more nuanced frameworks that take account of both visible activity and underlying social quality.

3.4. Managerial implications

The literature reviewed in this paper suggests several implications for firms seeking to cultivate and benefit from value co-creation behavior in brand communities on social media. What appears most important is not simply the production of content, but the development of community conditions that make member contribution possible. Building social capital by encouraging trust, reciprocity, recognition, and shared norms appears to be essential for sustaining participation and stimulating member contribution (Wong et al., 2023). Firms also need to pay close attention to interaction design, including how participation is invited, how questions are answered, how discussion quality is maintained, and how supportive exchanges are acknowledged and reinforced (Santos et al., 2022).

The reviewed studies also suggest that firms should distinguish among different forms of co-creation instead of treating all member activity as equivalent. Informational support, advocacy, creative content, and collaborative feedback do not generate the same kinds of value and may not be equally relevant in every strategic context (Yi & Gong, 2013; Carlson et al., 2019). This means that firms need to identify which forms of member behavior are most important for their objectives and create community conditions that encourage those forms without suppressing spontaneity.

Community governance is more likely to be effective when it is facilitative rather than overly controlling. Moderation remains necessary, but its purpose should be to preserve trust, discussion quality, and community health rather than simply to impose promotional consistency (Nambisan & Baron, 2009). Brand communities should also be approached as long-term relational assets rather than short-term campaign instruments. The value that emerges in these spaces often accumulates gradually through repeated interaction, trust formation, and shared meaning making (Fournier & Lee, 2009; Merz et al., 2018). Because co-creation can also generate risks, firms need capabilities for monitoring tensions, responding transparently, and learning from member feedback without eroding the community's sense of autonomy (Järvi et al., 2018; Plé & Cáceres, 2010).

IV. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper reviewed the literature on value co-creation behavior of members in brand communities on social media and discussed its implications for firms' marketing activities. The review shows that value co-creation is a socially embedded and interaction-based process shaped by social capital, member-to-member interaction, and psychological conditions such as belonging and inspiration. It also suggests that co-creation behavior is multidimensional, including information sharing, support, advocacy, content creation, feedback, and community maintenance. These behaviors can generate important marketing value, but they may also create risks that firms cannot fully control. The review highlights a dual implication for firms. Member value co-creation can strengthen engagement, expand advocacy, enrich customer experience, and provide useful market insight for more adaptive marketing. At the same time, it may create challenges related to reputational risk, conflict, authenticity, and governance, especially because social media interactions are visible, scalable, and difficult to manage in a fully top-down way. Co-creation should therefore be understood as a valuable but complex process that requires strategic facilitation rather than simple promotion.

This paper has several limitations. As a review-based study, it does not empirically test the relationships discussed and therefore cannot establish causal conclusions. The paper also relies on conceptual synthesis rather than systematic meta-analysis. In addition, the discussion focuses mainly on social media-based brand communities, which may differ from other forms of online or offline community.

Future research should continue to clarify the forms of member value co-creation behavior in social media brand communities. More studies are also needed to examine how social capital, interaction patterns, belonging, inspiration, and identification combine in co-creation processes. Greater attention should be paid to the coexistence of value co-creation and value co-destruction, to platform-specific differences across social media platforms.

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