



# Distribution of Brand Community in University: A Systematic Review of Literature on Higher Education Market-Oriented Strategy

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Brand community in higher education institutions comes up as an important topic to be discussed because the relationships among consumers can support the institutional brand and ultimately give meaning and vitality to the market-oriented strategy. This study aims to investigate how the literature on brand community in higher education have been distributed in research trends, theoretical frameworks, and methods. **Research design, data and methodology:** A total of 24 articles were organized from four reputable international databases. Content analysis were performed followed by synthesis toward potential directions and suggestions. **Results:** The researches in this area have increasingly focused on online interaction. Social identity theory and relationship theory were the two most prevalent theories used. Since the internet provides any social relationship with a specific relationship to form the brand community, its contextualization in higher education resulted in new concept implementation. **Conclusions:** The relationship within online participation has impacted the market-oriented strategy of higher education in searching for ways toward a long-term and enduring bond among students, alumni, institutions and brands. As there is a plenteous prospect of data availability combined with big data analysis technology, the online participation will pique the interest of scholars to conduct further research on it.

**Keywords:** Distribution of Brand Community, Higher Education Institution, Systematic Literature Review, Market-Oriented Strategy.

**JEL Classification Code:** M31, M38, I23

## 1. Introduction

Since the 1990s, the researchers' focus in consumption analysis has shifted from individual consumer activities to group activities, so that the term "communities of consumption" has emerged (Dalli, 2021). The phenomenon

can be seen in the incorporation of individual consumers into several types of consumer groups based on consumption specifications, known as consumer collectives (CC), such as lifestyle grouping, subculture, consumer tribe; brand community; consumer micro-culture; and resistance movement (Hughes, 2009).

There are researches which bring out main conceptual

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theory about CC that get the most citation from the other scholars, such as consumption sub-culture (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), consumer tribe (Cova & Cova, 2002), and brand community (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; McAlexander et al., 2002). Among those types of consumer groups, brand community has received the most attention from next researchers (Wang et al., 2013; Schau et al., 2009). Brand community is defined as a type of community whose ties are more likely based on a set of social relations among brand fans rather than geographical ties (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). It is grounded in social dimensions of customer experience in marketing concern as outcome of satisfaction and loyalty (Fournier, 1998).

In line with the growing concern about market-oriented strategies in higher education management (Štimac & Šimić, 2012; Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006), studies on brand community in higher education institutions have given rise. It comes up as an important topic to be discussed because the relationships among the customers and stakeholders can support the institutional brand and ultimately give meaning and vitality to the relationship marketing within market orientation of higher education institution (McAlexander et al., 2005). It also supports the long-term effects of shared student experiences and the co-creation of a university identity (McAlexander et al., 2006), including in the co-creation of value, while preserving their long-term welfare (Dwyer, 2022). Additionally, the literature of brand community provides a framework that can inform and guide marketing investments in ways that lead to a stronger loyalty to the brand and institution.

Previous researches related brand community have been found in various contexts of industries, including retail, automobiles, social media, consumer electronics, sports, fashion, tourism, etc. (Roy Bhattacharjee et al., 2022); however, the conceptualization of brand community within market-oriented strategies of higher education has not been traced. In fact, brand communities in the context of higher education had emerged, at least in the early 2000s (such as McAlexander et al., 2001). The topic then developed in subsequent research with various methods and theoretical frameworks, thus providing a new perspective on the strategy of higher education market-oriented. Until this point, no previous study has synthesized the distribution of a considerable amount of literature regarding brand communities as a basis of market-oriented strategies in higher education, particularly in research trends, theoretical frameworks, and methods.

Thus, this study explores the development of researches, either empirical or theoretical related to brand community in higher education institutions regarding their market-oriented strategy, and opens up space for scientific contributions research in the future. Specifically, this study proposes two questions as follows to be addressed.

RQ1: How has the literature on brand community in higher education institution distributed in research trends, theoretical frameworks, and methods?

RQ2: What are the next research directions and recommendations for market-oriented higher education administrators?

The systematic literature review (SLR) is a conceivable method to address the said questions. It is considerable because it contributes to the advancement of the research field by summarizing published research in a specific field and proposing new ideas (Webster & Watson, 2002). The synthesis of all publications related to brand community in higher education provides a contribution to the strengthening theoretical framework in higher education marketing literature. Practically, administrators in higher education advancement, marketing, fundraising, and giving could use this study result to improve their competitive positioning in the nuance of market-oriented strategies.

## 2. Research Method

The method used in this study is systematic literature review (SLR). It is an objective, comprehensive, and critical analysis summaries from previous researches related to current studied topic (Higgins et al., 2019). The SLR procedure follows Webster & Watson (2002) as well as that used by Alshamsi, Alshurideh, Kurdi, & Salloum (2021): (1) specifying the criteria of inclusion and exclusion, (2) determining data resource and research strategy, (3) quality assessment; and (4) content analysis and synthesis. The details of each procedure are as follows:

[1]. Specifying the criteria of inclusion and exclusion.

The criteria for articles that will be included in the SLR have been set up: publication periods, article types, article scopes, research types, and research contexts, as presented in detail in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Criteria of inclusion and exclusion data resources in SLR list.

No	Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
1	Publication periods	All	
2	Article types	Journal research article	Book, proceeding, research report
3	Article scopes	Business & industry, social science, management	Engineering, medical
4	Research types	Peer-review, quantitative, qualitative, empirical study, SLR	Annual report, documentation, descriptive analysis.
5	Contexts	Article related to the topic of brand community in higher education institution	Examine brand community outside higher education institution

[2]. Determining data resource and collecting strategy. The articles have been collected from four reputable international publications databases, i.e., Taylor, Francis, Emerald, Springer, Willey, and Science-direct, as well as from an article indexing platform of Google Scholar. The search has been focused on title, abstract and keyword data sources for each database with these keyword combinations: (1) brand community\* AND

higher education; (2) brand community\* AND university\*; (3) brand community\* AND college. From the 285 articles obtained based on the keyword combinations that met the criteria and duplication analysis, the remaining 63 articles were obtained, as presented in detail in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Data resources and search keywords.

No	Search Syntax	Database	Result	Meet the Criteria	Duplication	Used Articles
1	[Abstract: brand community*] AND [Abstract: higher education]	Taylor and Francis	24	11	7	
2	[Abstract: brand community*] AND [Abstract: university*]		46	10		
3	[Abstract: brand community*] AND [Abstract: college]		14	3		
			84	24		17
4	(Abstract: "Brand community*") AND (abstract: "higher education")	Emerald	3	3	3	
5	(Abstract: "Brand community*") AND (abstract: "university*")		5	5		
6	(Abstract: "Brand community*") AND (abstract: "college")		4	4		
			12	12		9
7	Title, abstract, keywords: brand community* AND higher education	Science-direct	6	4	-	
8	Title, abstract, keywords: brand community* AND university*		22	9		
9	Title, abstract, keywords: brand community* AND college		3	-		
			31	13	-	13
10	"Brand community*" in Abstract and "higher education" in Abstract	Willey	11	5	1	
11	"Brand community*" in Abstract and "university*" in Abstract		26	5		
12	"Brand community*" in Abstract and "college" in Abstract		17	2		
			44	12		11
13	"Brand community*" in higher education"	Springer	2	2	-	
			2	2		2
14	"Brand community*" in higher education/university* OR college"	Google scholar	114	12	-	
			114	12		12
	<i>Total</i>		285	74	11	64

[3]. Quality assessment  
In this stage, quality assessment has been conducted through three steps, as shown in Table 3. It resulted in 24 final articles, which were then analyzed and synthesized to address research questions.

[4]. Content analysis and synthesis.  
The next step is analyzing the obtained articles. It results in an overview of all articles underlining on: research focus, research type, participation form, theoretical lens, methodology, unit analysis, context, and number of citations., which is presented in Table 4. The synthesis is then performed to generate conclusions in order to address the research questions.

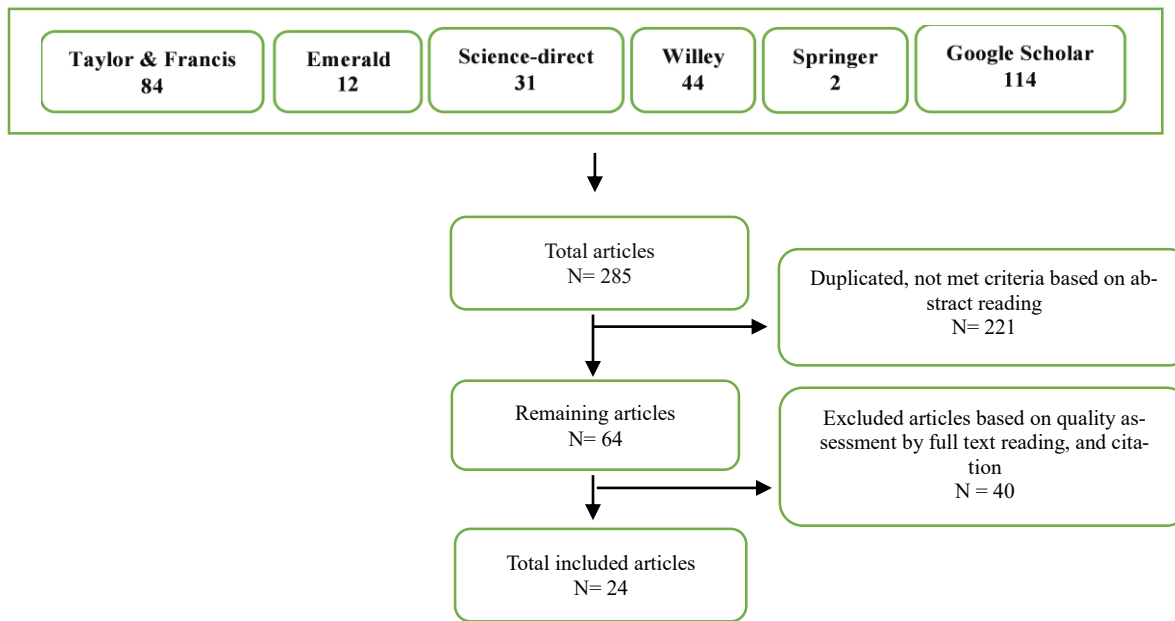
The diagram representing the overall SLR process in this study is shown in Figure 1.

### 3. Result and Discussion

A total of 24 articles were obtained across different 18 journals/publications, with mostly found in Journal of Marketing for Higher Education (n=8). The rest was spread among various journals with one article respectively. The exploration of findings in this study to address research question is shown in the following sub-chapters below.

**Table 3:** Filtering quality of articles

Steps	Filtering	Taylor and Francis	Emerald	Science-direct	Wiley	Springer	Google scholar	Total
Step-1	Articles that match all the keywords, meet the specified criteria, and are not duplicated.	17	9	13	11	2	12	64
Step-2	Read the title, abstract, and its content: specifically on conceptual research/empirical research/literature review that supports the study of brand community in higher education institution.	9	3	2	1	2	9	26
Step-3	Citation $\geq 5$ especially for the issues before 2021.	10	3	2	1	2	6	24

**Figure 1:** The SLR process diagram**Table 4:** Overview of articles obtained from SLR protocol

No	Authors/years	Research focus	Research type-participation form	Theoretical lens	Methodology	Sample/Unit analysis	Context	Citation GS
1	McAlexander and Koenig (2001)	...investigating the nature and impact of alumni relationships with the university as a supporting concept in emerging brand community in higher education institution.	Empirical	Relationship theory in marketing; equity theory	Quantitative: Multiple stage regression	n = 481, alumni of West. U.	USA	137
2	McAlexander et al. (2005)	...exploring how the nature of relationships among students affects their long-term loyalty to a university.	Empirical	Relationship theory in marketing	Quantitative: multiple stage regression	n = 481, alumni of West. U.	USA	137
3	McAlexander et al. (2006)	...contextualizing component relationships of a brand community to higher education, and test the overall model of brand community integration with alumni of university.	Conceptual	Theory of brand community; relationship theory in marketing	Quantitative: Multiple stage regression	n = 497, alumni of West. U.	USA	127
4	Opoku et al. (2008)	... identifying and describing the brand personalities of	Empirical-online		Qualitative: content analysis	n = 17, official English	Sweden.	87

No	Authors/years	Research focus	Research type-participation form	Theoretical lens	Methodology	Sample/ Unit analysis	Context	Citation GS
		universities in their online community.				Websites of university.		
5	McAlexander and Koenig (2010)	...exploring how brand community integration and college size relatively impact to desired marketing outcomes.	Empirical	Relationship theory in marketing	Quantitative: ANOVA and MANOVA	n = 1954 alumni of colleges and universities.	USA	51
6	Rhie (2010)	...exploring how the character of the brand communities affects intention of purchase and oral transmission communication in online university.	Empirical-online		Quantitative: multiple regression	n = 307, students in online university.		5
7	Pinar et al. (2011)	...proposing a conceptual framework that presents the major value-delivery networks and their interactions in building successful brands in higher education.	Literature review					183
8	Heere et al. (2011)	... examining the way in which existing community identities affect identification with a brand community in higher education.	Empirical	Social identity theory	Quantitative: MANOVAs and Structural Equation Modelling	n = 872, students from three universities.	USA	245
9	McAlexander and Koenig (2012)	...exploring how the brand community construct can be adapted to philanthropic purposes for non-profit organizations such as higher educations in their cultivation process.	Empirical		Quantitative: ANOVA and MANOVA	n = 1,954, alumni of colleges and universities.	USA	38
10	Chauhan and Pillai (2013)	...exploring the role of content strategy in higher education which have created brand community on social media web sites to initiate customer engagement.	Empirical-online		Qualitative-quantitative: netnography with CAQDAS-MANOVA	n = 1,440, Facebook posts made by university on its Page for their community members.	India	24
11	Martin et al. (2015)	...investigating the role of traditions and rituals, as important parts of the brand community, on getting involved on campus and on brand community of a higher education institution.	Empirical		Quantitative: one-way MANOVA	n = 1,227, alumni of public university.	USA.	34
12	Nevzat et al. (2016)	...exploring how a university Facebook page may be related to their identification with the university community and the university brand.	Empirical-online	Attitude theory; social exchange theory; social identity theory	Quantitative: Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS	n = 206, users of the Facebook page of a university.	Cyprus.	68
13	Amegbe et al. (2017)	...exploring how consumers integrate into brand communities on social media network sites (SNSs) and how it affects overall satisfaction of social media sites users among students.	Empirical-online	S-D logic theory; theory of social capital	Quantitative: Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS	n = 608, students of university.	Kenya	6
14	Dziewanowska (2017)	...exploring three-dimensional brand community commitment in higher education, and the relation of its dimensions with the student loyalty.	Conceptual		Quantitative: Factor analysis and non parametrix test.	n = 536, students in three public universities.	Poland.	9

No	Authors/years	Research focus	Research type-participation form	Theoretical lens	Methodology	Sample/Unit analysis	Context	Citation GS
15	Fujita et al. (2017)	... exploring the nature of collaborative co-creation in a university-initiated social media brand community (SMBC).	Conceptual-online	Consumer culture theory; social identity theory	Qualitative: netnography with Nvivo	n = 331, threads of the university's Facebook page data-set.	Australia.	24
16	Fujita et al. (2018)	...investigating the role of university content strategies on student experiences in social media brand communities (SMBCs)	Empirical-online	Social identity theory	Qualitative: netnography with Nvivo	n = 100, pieces of marketer content from two social media accounts: FB and Instagram.	Australia.	64
17	Fujita et al. (2019)	...exploring how co-created content (CCC) can facilitate relevant and meaningful customer experiences in social media brand communities (SMBCs).	Empirical-online	Social identity theory	Qualitative: netnography with Nvivo	n = 100, pieces of marketer content from two social media accounts: FB and Instagram.	Australia.	22
18	Garza et al. (2019)	...exploring the HEIs some new ways to increase brand loyalty through their virtual brand communities and Brand Fan Pages (BFPs).	Conceptual	Relationship theory	Mix method: qualitative-quantitative	University students.	Mexico.	21
19	Khanna et al. (2019)	... exploring the factors that influence brand resonance among alumni with the objective of building competitive and innovative service strategies.	Empirical	Customer-based brand equity	Mix method: qualitative-quantitative	n = 324, alumni of business school.	India.	9
20	Hashim et al. (2020)	...investigating the impact of Malaysian postgraduate students' perceived values (utility, hedonic and relational) on brand relationship quality (BRQ) with their institutional brand and ultimately on brand resonance (BR).	Empirical	Relationship theory; social exchange theory; triangular theory; customer-infused brand theory	Quantitative: Structural Equation Modeling with PLS	n = 701, students of business and social science.	Malaysia.	17
21	Kelly and Vamosiu, (2021)	...employing the brand community framework to analyze the role of the strength of the bonds between donors as it pertains to the level of charitable contributions to the university.	Conceptual		Quantitative: ordinal logistic regression	Alumni of university.	USA.	4
22	Larson and Salvador (2021)	...exploring the humorous parody content among students in social media, and the ways in which engagement with the content could both positively and negatively impact student perception.	Empirical-online	Cognitive dissonance theory	Quantitative: regression analysis	n = 200, students in a public university.	USA.	-
23	Le et al. (2021)	... examining the impact of participating "Confessions pages"- the anonymous online community in higher education on the brand relationship outcomes.	Empirical-online	Theory of planned behavior	Quantitative: Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS	n = 480, students who follow universities' confession pages.	Vietnam.	-
24	Shah et al. (2021)	...examining the conceptual model involving utilization of social media technologies, online brand communities,	Empirical-online	Self-congruity theory	Quantitative: Structural	n = 400, students of public university.	Pakistan.	1

No	Authors/years	Research focus	Research type-participation form	Theoretical lens	Methodology	Sample/Unit analysis	Context	Citation GS
		social customer relationship management capabilities, customer engagement, customer loyalty, and university reputation.			Equation Modeling with Smart PLS.			

Note: GS: Google Scholar. The total amount of citations updated on 21 August 2022

### 3.1. Research Trend

It can be seen from the year-wise distribution of publications presented in Figure 2 that the publication was initially emerged in the early 2000s, and over the last ten years—from 2010 to 2021—the number of publications related to brand communities in higher education has increased substantially. As brand communities are flexible and change over time, participants of brand community can be different in many ways, such as the social context, how long they last, where their members live, and how they identify themselves (McAlexander et al., 2002). Since the 2010s, at least starting with research by Rhie (2010), researches on this area have increasingly focused on online

participation and social media rather than offline participation such as on "Facebook community" (Nevzat et al. 2016), "communities on social media network sites (SNSs)" (Amegbe et al. 2017), "Brand Fan Pages (BFPs)" (Garza Salgado & Royo Vela 2019) and "confessions pages" (Le et al. 2021). It indicates that researches of brand community in these online participations are in the growth phase. Along with the development of situations and conditions that facilitates the social interaction of community members that support the specification of relationships in brand community (such as information technology development), the study of brand community so far has led to three forms of participations, i.e., offline, online, and social-media-based (Hook et al., 2018).

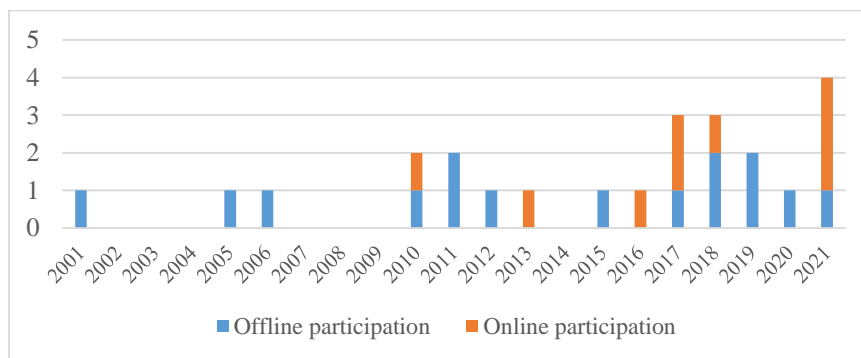


Figure 2: The year-wise distribution of publications related brand community in higher education.

In a dichotomy between conceptual and empirical research (Gad & Ribes, 2014), the finding shows that there are predominately empirical researches (19 articles) while the rest are conceptual in nature (5 articles). The classification in this study refers to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, which defined conceptual research as research related to or based on ideas, while empirical research is a research based on experiments or experiences. However, the labelling of article types in this study is "tendency", or not absolute, because sometimes research is a combination of conceptual and empirical approaches. The conceptual-empirical combination is unavoidable in actual researches (Jensen, 2014). This situation can be taken as an impetus for more explorations from conceptual-empirical relation and inventive potential for both of it.

Since the initial studies of brand community in higher

education were contextualized in US, i.e., McAlexander et al. (2001; 2005; 2006), it is not surprising that many subsequent empirical studies were carried out in that country. Even so, this topic was expanding widely in other countries in line with the flexibility of brand communities in many ways such as social context and technology advances.

The initial study related brand community in higher education which had been conducted by McAlexander and Koenig (2001) found that alumni's perceived relationships with their alma mater significantly influenced their long-term loyalty and support for the institution. While McAlexander et al. (2005) examines the importance of relationships among consumers in universities (i.e., student) so that meaning and strength are formed among them. It revealed that the characteristics of relationships among

students and alumni affects their long-term loyalty to a university. In the next study, McAlexander et al. (2006) contextualized several relation components of the existing brand community, i.e., product-consumer, brand-consumer, institution-consumer, and consumer-consumer, in the context of higher education institution in the western country.

Relation components of brand community were contextualized in higher education institution by McAlexander et al. (2006) as follows:

- [1]. product-consumer: the relationship between students and the educational service product that has been obtained;
- [2]. brand-consumer: pride and attitude toward the institution brand;
- [3]. institution-consumer: the relation that has been built between the students and the representation of higher education institution such as the lecturers and administration staff; and
- [4]. consumer-consumer: the relation and interaction that has been built between the students itself.

The empirical test within the study revealed that alumni's university experiences created significant perceived relationships with the education product, the brand, the institution, and other alumni, and the collective influence of those relationships had a significant impact on loyalty outcomes. This conceptual and empirical result was confirmed by the next empirical research focusing on integrated brand community relationship with the behavior related to loyalty of the students and alumnus, such as donation for the institution development in the future (Sarkis & Daou, 2013; Kelly & Vamosiu, 2021), charitable contributions to the institution (Kelly & Vamosiu, 2021), university merchandise purchases (McAlexander et al., 2006; Martin et al., 2015), and commitment (Dziewanowska, 2017).

Martin et al. (2015) found that as important parts of the brand community, traditions and rituals can be a way for students to get involved in the university and in the brand community of a higher education institution, which can help them become active and giving alumni. Additionally, through social identity theory, Heere et al. (2011) revealed that the interaction between community identities had a substantial impact on consumer behavior. This study was the most cited among others (245 citations), which indicates that the results are an important basis for the next study.

Meanwhile, the other empirical studies were found in online participation such as Rhie (2010), which revealed that activities within online brand communities and their characters had a significant effect on customer behavior in higher education context. Specifically, the character of the brand communities had significant effect on intention of purchase and oral transmission communication (Rhie,

2010). Furthermore, Chauhan and Pillai (2013) discovered that brand community strategy plays an important role in achieving desired customer engagement on social media. Specifically, the content type and content agility within website were found to have significant effect on number of likes and comments, which were treated as manifest variables for customer engagement.

Moreover, Nevzat et al. (2016) revealed that the perceived Facebook community is related to identification with the university community and the university brand, which are ultimately impacted to the trust and loyalty. Through self-congruence theory, Shah et al. (2021) developed a new integrated social customer relationship management (SCRM), which empirically revealed that the online brand community in higher education has a significant effect on SCRM capabilities, student engagement, and loyalty. While Le et al.'s (2021) research discovered a distinct empirical result stating that online interaction proclivity in university confession pages and attitude toward confession pages—the anonymous community—had no relationship with brand relationship outcomes.

### **3.2. Application of Theoretical Framework**

It can be seen from Table 4 that at least 15 theoretical frameworks have been used in 12 different articles related to brand community in higher education. Several articles used more than one theory to build their conceptual framework. It was not limited to marketing literature such as consumer culture theory, customer-infused brand theory, and customer-based brand equity (CBBE), but also to social psychology theories such as social exchange theory, equity theory, cognitive dissonance theory, and the theory of planned behavior (TPB). It can be said that studies about brand community in higher education institutions have been conducted from several theoretical points of view, although the main theory is still based on marketing literature.

Rosado-Serrano et al. (2018) and Roy Bhattacharjee et al. (2022) stated that the most common theory is the main finding to be discussed in the SLR study. As social identity theory (n=5) and relationship theory (n=6) were the two most prevalent theories used in this topic, this study will concentrate on them. Social identity theory defines a community as a collection of people who categorize themselves as part of the same social category and internalize defining identity attributes to define and evaluate themselves (Hogg, 2021). The aforementioned characteristics encapsulated and demonstrated the similarities and differences between communities.

In the marketing context, consumers identified themselves using brands that represented and strengthened their identities within their associations (Nevzat et al.,



2016). The social identity theory was used specifically in the studies to explain the relationship between brand-student, institution-student, and other consumers, whether in offline participation, online participation, or on social media. Higher education institution is an example of the brand community concept because the university provides a variety of services and products under the built-in brand. (Heere et al., 2011; Nevzat et al., 2016; Fujita et al., 2017; Fujita et al., 2018; Fujita et al., 2019). This is the basis of the hypothesis that has been proposed by Nevzat et al. (2016) that the strength of the Facebook university community is related to the identification level of the university community. It also served as the foundation for several netnography studies conducted by Fujita et al. (2017, 2018, 2019) that influencing members' construction of social identities within social media platforms is an important strategic issue for marketers.

The relationship theory used in the study of brand community in higher education refers to the development of theory in the consumer study of Fournier (1998). According to Fournier (1998), consumers do not just buy a brand because they like it or because it operates in good conditions; they become involved in relationships with these brands to benefit from the meaning that they add to their own lives. This theory serves as the basis for the definition that a brand community is the result of social interaction between users who despite their geographic location, recognize their similarities and share the ritual, tradition, and responsibility for the brand (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

The empirical explorations based on relationship theory were conducted for the outcome of the long-term stability of the brand in higher education industry (McAlexander et al., 2001, 2005, 2006, 2010; Hashim et al., 2020; Garza Salgado & Royo Vela, 2019). While in theoretical

framework of social exchange theory, Hashim et al. (2020) introduced the holistic formation model of customer-brand relationship, with the consideration of various antecedent and intervention factors. According to McAlexander et al. (2002), customer-brand relationship is one of the relational components in brand community, which is contextualized into a higher educational institution in the form of student and alumnus pride towards the institution.

### 3.3. Methods

Since there is an increasing social interaction in social media (Hook et al., 2018), whereas the internet provides any social relationship community with a specific relationship leading to the brand community, the contextualization of brand community resulted in conceptual implementation, including "online brand communities" (Rhie, 2010; Shah et al., 2021), "brand community on social media" (Chauhan & Pillai, 2013), "virtual brand community" (Amegbe et al., 2017), "social media brand communities" (Fujita et al., 2017), and "online communities on brand" (Le et al., 2021). Accordingly, the collecting data was predominantly conducted by online, as portrayed in Table 5. This is also advocated by the condition where the coronavirus pandemic has limited physical interaction. It was empirically tested by Chi (2011) that there were different motivations and responses from social media users towards marketing carried out in interactive digital advertising and virtual brand communities. Specifically, it revealed that social media users are more receptive to virtual brand communities than they are to digital advertising such as Facebook ads. It means that students and alumni, as social media users, have more respect for the virtual brand community than they do for digital advertising.

**Table 5:** Participation forms and data collection techniques

	Article total	Article Samples
<b>Participation forms</b>		
Online (social media/online)	10	Rhie (2010); Chauhan and Pillai (2013) ...
Offline (offline)	12	McAlexander et al. (2001); Martin et al. (2015) ...
Other (literature review)	2	Pinar et al. (2011); Sarkis and Daou (2013)
<b>Data Collection</b>		
Survey (e-questionnaire)	10	Rhie (2010); Martin et al. (2015) ...
Survey (telephone)	5	McAlexander et al. (2001); Opoku et al. (2008) ...
Literature review	2	Sarkis and Daou (2013); Pinar et al. (2011); ...
Content analysis (website/social media account)	6	Fujita et al. (2017); Chauhan and Pillai (2013); Opoku et al. (2008); ...
Focus group discussion	1	Garza Salgado and Royo Vela (2019)

The methods used in brand community research in higher education institution are predominately quantitative, with hypotheses tested in the form of a relationship between variables. The remaining are qualitative in several analysis techniques, such as netnography, literature review, focus group discussion, and content analysis. The use of netnogra-

phy and content analysis (website) in several studies indicates that the social interaction in the online participation form has given rise to a concern in the study of brand community in higher education. This reciprocates with the study of brand community by Roy Bhattacharjee et al. (2022), which shows that 18% of some studies in brand community fields have been done through the netnography method.

Because of technological progress, the world is now more connected than ever including online community like brand community. This means that research on brand needs to be looked at again from the point of view of firms, consumers, and society as a whole (Swaminathan et al., 2020). Therefore, it was suggested that higher education institutions should be able to create managerial awareness to the internet communities based on their brands. This is because, conceptually and empirically, there are significant effects of activities within online brand communities and their characters on customer behavior in higher education context (Rhie, 2010). As the majority of brands in higher education are not strong market leaders (Chapleo, 2015), employing this managerial awareness in such a community is probably an effective for any institutions in their marketing-oriented strategy.

#### 4. Conclusion

The SLR study has been undertaken in order to explore the development of brand community in higher education institution and to open up more scientific research contribution space in the future in their marketing strategy context. A total of 24 articles obtained from SLR protocols. Base on the year-wise distribution of publications, brand community in higher education institution topic is relatively new. Additionally, since the 2010s, researches on this area have increasingly focused on online participation and social media rather than offline participation.

Several articles used more than one theoretical framework to build their conceptual framework. It was not limited to marketing literature such as consumer culture theory, customer-infused brand theory, and customer-based brand equity (CBBE), but also to social psychology theories such as social exchange theory, equity theory, cognitive dissonance theory, and the theory of planned behavior (TPB). It can be said that theoretical framework of studies about brand community in higher education have been distributed in several theoretical points of view, although the main theory is still based on marketing literature. The literature of brand community in higher education have focused on how brand communities facilitate co-creation and strengthen relationships between a student, the brand, the service product, the institution and other stakeholders.

Since there is an increasing amount of social interaction in social media, whereas the internet provides any social relationship community with a specific relationship leading to the brand community, the contextualization of the brand community resulted in several new terms, including "online brand communities," "brand community on social media," "virtual brand community," "social media brand communities (SMBCs)," and "online communities on

brand." This is also advocated by the condition where the coronavirus pandemic has limited physical interaction. This condition has impacted the marketing orientation of higher education in their search for ways to improve consumer relationships by creating strategies for a long-term and enduring bond. In the future, because it provides a plenteous prospect of data availability combined with big data analysis technology, the participation form in online and social media will pique the interest of scholars to conduct further research on the brand community in the higher education institution field.

This SLR study has several limitations. The SLR protocol tried to involve a lot of reputable databases, but not all of the databases have been used. To improve the quality of SLR, reputable index databases such as Scopus and WoS will be able to be used in the future. Several technical issues that might be important to be studied have not been fully explored in this SLR study, including the example data analysis that has been used, the data collection model, and the research contribution towards the brand community in higher education institution topics.

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