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**"Us" to co-create value and hate "them": Examining the interplay of consumer brand identification, peer identification, value co-creation among consumers, competitor brand hate, and individualism**

Journal:	<i>European Journal of Marketing</i>
Manuscript ID	EJM-06-2019-0469.R4
Manuscript Type:	Original Article
Keywords:	customer identification, brand identification, peer identification, value co-creation, brand hate, individualism self-construal, customer value, repurchase intentions, Competition, Relationship marketing

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## 'Us' to co-create value and hate 'them': Examining the interplay of consumer brand identification, peer identification, value co-creation among consumers, competitor brand hate, and individualism

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### Abstract

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**Purpose:** To understand the role of identity-based relationships, customer brand identification and peer identification, in driving customer outcomes including customer experiential hedonic value, social influence and repurchase intentions through the effects on value co-creation among customers and competitor brand hate, while taking into consideration the moderating impact of individualism.

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**Design:** The study integrates social identity theory, identity-based marketing perspective, and self-construal theory to develop the relationships. The data comprises a web-based survey of customers in the United States and was analyzed using structural equation modeling.

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**Findings:** Customer brand identification and peer identification are drivers of value co-creation among customers, which leads to favorable outcomes at the customer and brand levels. Customer brand identification drives customers to hate competing brands, which in turn motivates customers to exert social influence in favor of their brand and to hold additional repurchase intentions. Customer brand identification and peer identification play different roles in motivating customers to co-create value with their fellows and drive customers to feel hatred toward competing brands contingent on customer individualism.

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**Research limitations/implications:** Customer brand identification and peer identification play different roles in engaging customers in value co-creation with their peers and competition brands have with their rivals. Individualism self-construal holds a dual role when interacting with customer identification. The study fills multiple gaps in the literature by examining additional effects of customer brand identification and peer identification and exploring a relatively new dimension of value co-creation process as well as the role of customers in the competition between brands.

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**Practical implications:** Brands need to view customers who identify with them as socially active customers capable of participating in value co-creation with other customers and engaging in the rivalry faced by the brands. Moreover, brands are required to build and nurture relationships that are based on social identification to encourage customer brand identification and peer identification which result in favorable customer and business outcomes.

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**Originality/value:** This study examines the effects of two forms of customer identification on value co-creation between customers and competitor brand hate. In addition, it identifies the dual moderating role of customer individualism on the effects of both social identification forms. The study fills multiple gaps in the literature by understanding new aspects of customer identification, value co-creation, and brand hate.

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**Keywords:** customer identification, brand identification, peer identification, value co-creation, brand hate, individualism, customer value, repurchase intentions

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**Paper type:** Research paper

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3 **'Us' to co-create value and hate 'them': Examining the interplay of consumer brand**  
4 **identification, peer identification, value co-creation among consumers, competitor brand**  
5 **hate, and individualism**  
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7 **Introduction**  
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10 Customers are becoming more influential in brands' operations, marketing strategies, and  
11 competition. Consequently, brands are looking for different ways of benefiting from customers'  
12 voices, particularly customers who advantageously act as social activists for, supporters of, and  
13 co-creators with brands and fellow customers. Social-based market is driving brands toward  
14 integrating customers into their marketing efforts, forcing brands to focus on the relationships  
15 they can build with customers, especially strong relationships that are founded on the basis of  
16 *identification* or oneness with the brand and its customers. This is because customer  
17 identification is a major psychological facet of deep, strong, and meaningful relationships  
18 between brands and customers (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Taken together, this study builds  
19 on Social Identity Theory and examines how brands can benefit from customer brand  
20 identification and peer identification to drive customer experiential hedonic value, social  
21 influence, and repurchase intentions through the effects of both forms of identification on  
22 customer-to-customer value co-creation and customer hate toward competing brands.  
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39 Brands operating in dynamic and socially condensed contexts as well as highly  
40 competitive services market (Bruwer *et al.*, 2019; Horng *et al.*, 2013) have to build on  
41 identification-based relationships capable of creating strong and quality bonds with customers.  
42 These relationships motivate customers to favor and advocate the brand they identify with as  
43 they personally experience its successes and failures (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Customer  
44 identification drives the idea that *we are what we consume*, a major pillar of customer brand  
45 relationship (e.g. Mishra and Mishra, 2010). Furthermore, customer identification results in-  
46 group favoritism and matures a consciousness of kind — sense of 'us' versus 'them' — toward  
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3 their peers leading to rivalry and hate with other groups (e.g. Ellemers *et al.*, 1999; Lin and  
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5 Bruning, 2020). Customer identification is said to play a key role in socially condensed settings  
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7 where relationships between group members or peer customers (within the group) are vital and  
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9 competition taking place between different groups (outside the group) is tough. Accordingly, this  
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11 study investigates the effect of customer brand identification and peer identification on customer-  
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13 to-customer value co-creation (within the group — ‘us’) and customer hate toward competing  
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15 brands (outside the group — ‘them’).  
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19 Customer identification manifests itself at multiple levels (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2012). This  
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21 suggests that one’s identity can expand to include others, such as a company or brand, a group,  
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23 or other customers (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2012; Cardador and Pratt, 2018), and provides opportunities  
24  
25 to examine the extended concept of customer identification. For that, the current study examines  
26  
27 not only customer brand identification but also peer identification. In this study, ‘peer’ refers to  
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29 other customers of a given brand (e.g. Fombelle *et al.*, 2012). Peer customers who symbolize  
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31 cues about the brand (Lovelock, 1993). This in turn triggers identification of customers leading  
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33 to a state of peer identification or *oneness* among customers. Peer identification implicates self-  
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35 expansion of a customer, part of ‘who we are’ as fellow customers become anchored in the  
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37 customer self.  
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42 The study focuses on customer brand identification and peer identification to examine  
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44 their consequences on customer and business outcomes through customer-to-customer value co-  
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46 creation and customer hate toward competing brands. This is done while taking into  
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48 consideration the contingent role of customer individualism self-construal, which refers to the  
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50 way in which a customer defines one-self as independent, self-sufficient, and less concerned  
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52 about social and interpersonal relationships. Individualism is one of the most distinguishing self-  
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3 orientation in terms of how customers process social attitudes and behaviors (e.g. Laroche *et al.*,  
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5 2005; Lee, 2000). At the individual level and as a personality variable (Triandis *et al.*, 1988),  
6  
7 customers have different levels of individualism (e.g. Brewer and Chen, 2007; Tsai and Bagozzi,  
8  
9 2014). As a self-orientation, individualism self-construal guides members' attitudes and  
10  
11 behaviors within a group (Jetten *et al.*, 2002). For example, individualism is found to moderate  
12  
13 the impact of social identity on consumer desire to contribute to other group members (Tsai and  
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15 Bagozzi, 2014). Self-construal has the power to emphasize either the 'we' or the 'I' (Hofstede,  
16  
17 2001). Contrary to collectivism, individualism has the tendency to emphasize "the importance of  
18  
19 the "I" identity over the "we" identity, individual rights over group interests, and individuated-  
20  
21 focused emotions over social-focused emotions." (Ting-Toomey, 2010, p. 173). Thus, the  
22  
23 incorporation of individualism self-construal into the study allows better understanding of the  
24  
25 role customer identification plays in the conceptualized model (e.g. Cooper and Thatcher, 2010).  
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27 Because of the increase in self-construal orientation diversity between customers, especially in  
28  
29 the service dining context, it is imperative to examine the interaction effect between customer  
30  
31 identification and individualism. At this end, the study tests if customer self-construal differences  
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33 can exacerbate or attenuate the effects of customer identification on customer-to-customer value  
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35 co-creation and competitor brand hate.  
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42 This study answers multiple research questions and contributes to existing literature.  
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44 *First*, it investigates new outcomes as well as direct and indirect advantages of customer brand  
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46 identification and peer identification for brands operating in socially condensed and dynamic  
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48 services setting as well as highly competitive market. The study examines the indirect effects of  
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50 customer brand identification and peer identification on customer outcomes, including customer  
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52 hedonic value, social influence, and repurchase intentions, through customer-to-customer value  
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3 co-creation and customer hatred of competing brands. Accordingly, brands operating in  
4 competitive markets can gain from customer brand identification and peer identification in  
5 enhancing their value co-creation strategies and positioning themselves more aggressively  
6 against competitors resulting in better customer outcomes and sales performance.  
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12 *Second*, this study explores the effect of customer brand identification and peer  
13 identification on brand hate, specifically, the hate targeted at competitors, which is a neglected  
14 concept in the literature. The study examines this concept and tests its likely advantages for  
15 brands through its impact on consumer repurchase intentions and social influence.  
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21 *Third*, by examining customer-to-customer value co-creation behaviors that take place  
22 among customers as a possible outcome of customer brand identification and peer identification,  
23 the study fills a major gap in the literature, which has underscored the importance of value co-  
24 creation that develops among consumers and focused more on the value co-created between  
25 brands and consumers (e.g. Nicholls, 2010; Rihova *et al.*, 2013). Thus, this study adds to the  
26 current knowledge on value co-creation by highlighting the key role of multiple actors,  
27 specifically fellow customers, and not only the brand, in driving the value co-creation process.  
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38 *Finally*, the study integrates customer self-construal as a relevant social and personal  
39 concept to examine the moderating impact of individualism on the effects of customer brand  
40 identification and peer identification. Individualism relates to discrepancies in the degree to  
41 which *self* versus *other* dynamics are relevant to identification (Moorman and Blakely, 1995). By  
42 investigating the moderating impact of individualism, a better understanding of the role customer  
43 self-construal plays in the relationships between customer identification and customer-to-  
44 customer value co-creation as well as competitor brand hate is offered. In an overall, this study is  
45 conducted to provide vital insights to the brand management literature on the key role of  
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3 developing stronger relationships with and among customers based on the power of  
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5 identification. Definitions of the major constructs examined in this study are included in Table 1.  
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8 [Insert Table 1 here]  
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10 Prior studies in the marketing literature have focused mainly on the identification that  
11  
12 takes place between customers and brands and largely overlooked the vital role of identification  
13  
14 among customers themselves (e.g. Fombelle *et al.*, 2012). On top of that, extant research has  
15  
16 been silent about the impact of customer brand identification and peer identification on value co-  
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18 creation among customers and competitor brand hate in a social services context where  
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20 consumption is collective and shared. This requires further research to understand the impacts of  
21  
22 customer identification at different levels. A summary of the key studies on customer  
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24 identification with the related research gaps filled by this study are provided in Figure 1.  
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28 [Insert Figure 1 here]  
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## 30 **Theoretical background**

### 31 *Social identity theory and customer identification*

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33 Rooted in social psychology research, social identity theory examines a range of interrelated  
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35 topics such as one's self-concept, group cohesion, and in-group/out-group relations (Brewer,  
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37 1991; Tajfel, 1974). According to this theory, identity is not only related to personal  
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39 preferences/capabilities, but also to social identity, which an individual forms on the basis of his  
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41 or her relationships with other individuals and entities. Furthermore, the theory suggests that  
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43 individuals identify themselves with others possessing particular characteristics and categorize  
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45 people into in-groups and out-groups (Tajfel, 1974). In spite of the favorable outcomes that  
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47 social identification have, social identity theory holds that identification have adverse  
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3 consequences because it is associated with in-group and out-group biases (Brewer, 1991; Haslam  
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5 *et al.*, 2006).

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8 Individuals have social identities that along with their personal identities form their self-  
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10 concept. Individuals value the peers with whom they identify with (Hogg and Turner, 1985)  
11  
12 because social identification directs them to pursue a common stance with their in-group  
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14 (Haslam *et al.*, 1999), favor their peers (Brewer, 1991), cooperate with them (Haslam *et al.*,  
15  
16 2005), and act in solidarity, harmony, and unanimity (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000). The presence  
17  
18 of identification is even confirmed when membership of a group does not exist (Sen and  
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20 Bhattacharya, 2001) with no effect to the size of the group. Individuals exhibit an in-group  
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22 mindset, with all its inherent biases, even if the group is considered to be of a small size group  
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24 (Hogg and Abrams, 2007).

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28 Individuals place themselves and others into groups (i.e. in-group versus out-group) to  
29  
30 make sense of the world (Hogg *et al.*, 1995; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Social identification  
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32 includes a cognitive mechanism that underlies inter-groups relationships and results in the notion  
33  
34 of 'us' versus 'them' (Haslam *et al.*, 2006). It requires constant social comparison with and  
35  
36 opposition to the out-group, leading to cross-group biases and conflicts. Individuals view the out-  
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38 group as inferior to their in-group in order to boost self-esteem and confidence (Tajfel, 1974).  
39  
40 They justify in-group values by means of moral superiority to others, expectation of  
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42 interdependence under circumstances of mistrust, sensitivity to threats, social comparison  
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44 practices, and power politics, which makes in-group identification leads to overt hostility toward  
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46 out-groups (Brewer, 1999).

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51 Strong bonds between in-group members may result in hatred of and aggression toward  
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53 out-groups (Brewer, 1991). Identification leads to greater conformity and cohesion between in-  
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3 group members and highlights the differences with out-groups through social comparison in  
4 favor of maintaining identity distinctiveness (Hogg and Abrams, 2007). As a result, conflicts and  
5 rivalry between groups emerge (Ewing *et al.*, 2013). According to Parker and Janoff-Bulman  
6 (2013), out-group 'hate' is naturally accompanied by in-group 'love.' Moreover, any  
7 involvement with the out-group carries threats to social identification with the in-group (Brewer,  
8 1999). These threats are aggravated when groups pursue similar goals and compete for the same  
9 resources. During competition between groups, the 'us' versus 'them' differences are intensified  
10 and boundaries between groups are clearly drawn (Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

11  
12 Social identity theory and the interrelated topics it examines underpin customer  
13 identification research. In this regard, customer identity stems not only from one's personality  
14 but also from one's sense of belonging to a brand and to other users or customers of the brand.  
15 At this end, customers derive their identities and meanings from what they consume (Belk and  
16 Costa, 1998; Fournier, 1998) and do not consume (Englis and Solomon, 1997). The influence of  
17 identity on customer decision-making has inspired identity-based marketing, as reported in brand  
18 identity and customer identity research (e.g. Balmer, 2011; Jan Alsem and Kosteljik, 2008), and  
19 provides a strong foundation for an identity-based customer brand relationship (Haumann *et al.*,  
20 2014; Lam, 2012; Marzocchi *et al.*, 2013; Wolter *et al.*, 2017).

21  
22 While individualism is related to cultural self-orientation of customer, it is said to play a  
23 role in intragroup and intergroup relationships making it a contingent factor that can impact the  
24 mechanisms of social identity within and among groups. This becomes more important when  
25 knowing that individualism differs at the customer level (e.g. Brewer and Chen, 2007; Tsai and  
26 Bagozzi, 2014). As a self-orientation, individualism directs attitudes and behaviors of individuals  
27 within a group (Jetten *et al.*, 2002) and has the power to underline the 'I' versus the 'We' of ab

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3 individual (Hofstede, 2001). At this end, Tsai and Bagozzi (2014) found an interaction effect of  
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5 consumer social identity and individualism on customer desire to contribute to other members of  
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7 the group. Thus, the integration of individualism self-orientation into customer identification  
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9 research permits better understanding to the effects of identification on consumers' attitudes and  
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11 behaviors. The increase difference in self-construal orientation among customers and the  
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13 promising moderating effect of individualism on the effects of customer identification make it  
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15 imperative to test the role of individualism self-construal in customer identification studies.  
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### 19 *Customer identification*

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21 Customer brand identification is defined as the sense of *oneness* customers have with a brand  
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23 (Bhattacharya *et al.*, 1995; Mael and Ashforth, 1992). It represents “the primary psychological  
24  
25 substrate for the kind of deep, committed, and meaningful relationships that marketers are  
26  
27 increasingly seeking to build with their customers” (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003, p. 76).  
28  
29 Customer identification prompts the social ‘we’ rather than the individual ‘I’ of a customer in  
30  
31 relation to a brand and other customers of the brand. Customers perceive themselves as  
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33 “psychologically intertwined with the fate” of the brand and its customers because of  
34  
35 identification (Mael and Ashforth, 1992, p. 104). Brands symbolize attractive and meaningful  
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37 social identities for customers who expend these identities to fulfill self-definitional needs  
38  
39 (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Customer identification is rooted in the notion of customer  
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41 “feeling of belongingness” and “consciousness of kind” toward the brand and fellow customers  
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43 (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006; Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001).  
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49 Customer identification, as a psychological state, drives customers to perceive, sense, and  
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51 value their belongingness to a brand (Lam *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, identification answers a  
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53 major question for customer—*Who Am I?*—in relation to the customer self-concept that  
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3 represents a mental picture of who the customer is as a person (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003;  
4 Mael and Ashforth, 1992). Brands are deeply symbolic entities that perform a vital function in  
5  
6 the lives of customers who utilize these brands to profile and communicate their group  
7  
8 memberships as well as individual identities (Swaminathan *et al.*, 2007).  
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12 The concept of customer identification has, to a great extent, been looked at from the  
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14 perspective of social identity (Elbedweihi and Jayawardhena, 2014) and has been extended to  
15  
16 include peer identification; that is, peers represent other customers of a given brand (Fombelle *et*  
17  
18 *al.*, 2012). Customer identification has many targets and occurs at multiple levels, including the  
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20 brand, brand community (both online and offline), and fellow customers (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2012;  
21  
22 Fombelle *et al.*, 2012). Customer brand identification evokes an individual customer-level sense  
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24 of inclusiveness with the brand, whereas peer identification evokes a collective customer or  
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26 group level sense of inclusiveness with other users of the brand (e.g. Cardador and Pratt, 2018).  
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31 Identification and consumption are interconnected. Customers who identify with a brand  
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33 become psychologically dedicated to its success because they consider the brand to be their own  
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35 (e.g. Asatryan and Oh, 2008) and are intrinsically inspired to engage in voluntary acts on behalf  
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37 of the brand, interact with other customers cooperatively, and commit themselves to achieving  
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39 the brand's goals (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Identification leads customers to hold a great  
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41 desire to help the brand achieve its goals, not just through the additional purchases they make. In  
42  
43 the words of Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), customer "identification is active, selective, and  
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45 volitional on consumers' part and causes them to engage in favorable as well as potentially  
46  
47 unfavorable company-related behaviors" (p. 77). At the bottom line, research shows that  
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49 customer identification increases annual spending at the brand customer identify with  
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54 (Lichtenstein *et al.*, 2010; Netemeyer *et al.*, 2012). For that, brands are paying more attention to  
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3 customer identification since it allows them to achieve better results than those they could  
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5 achieve by means of other factors such as satisfaction (e.g. Haumann *et al.*, 2014; Wolter *et al.*,  
6  
7 2017).  
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10 Customer identification with peer customers is developed in a different way to that  
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12 formed with the brand (Fombelle *et al.*, 2012). While customer brand identification signifies the  
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14 sense of oneness customers have with a given brand, peer identification signifies the sense of  
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16 oneness a customer develops with other customers of the brand. Fombelle *et al.* (2012) refer to  
17  
18 peer identification “as the extent of an individual’s identification with other of the same type of  
19  
20 individuals associated with the organization.” (p. 590). For customers, other customers  
21  
22 symbolize cues about the brands they use (Lovelock, 1993). Peer identification involves self-  
23  
24 expansion of customer self, part of ‘who we are’ as they become anchored in other customers.  
25  
26 With reference to social identity theory, customers who identify with a brand and/or its  
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28 customers are motivated to contribute to the welfare of the brand and fellow customers because  
29  
30 they constitute their in-group. On top of that, they are likely to hold certain feelings about  
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32 competing brands because these brands represent the out-group from which threats can result and  
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34 damage the success and reputation of the brand customers identify with.  
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40 The imperative effects of customer identification on brand success have been shown in  
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42 earlier studies focusing on outcomes such as customer spending (Carlson *et al.*, 2009), word-of-  
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44 mouth (Stokburger-Sauer *et al.*, 2012), loyalty (Marzocchi *et al.*, 2013), willingness to pay more  
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46 (Haumann *et al.*, 2014), and resilience to negative publicity (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2012; Elbedweihy *et*  
47  
48 *al.*, 2016). Moreover, preceding studies have found that peer identification positively influences  
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50 brand passion (Hsu *et al.*, 2015), commitment (Rather and Hollebeek, 2019; Zhou *et al.*, 2012),  
51  
52 trust, and loyalty (Nevzat *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, Carlson *et al.* (2008) have shown that  
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3 identification with a given group and its members creates a sense of psychological union;  
4 accordingly, customers belong to brands' communities or groups to fulfill their social  
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6 identification needs (Phua *et al.*, 2017). Despite its importance in social-based markets and the  
7  
8 essential role that other customers have, peer identification construct has not been widely studied  
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10 in comparison to customer brand identification.  
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15 Customers who identify with a brand or its other customers have moral responsibility and  
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17 develop a 'consciousness of kind' toward the brand and its customers. Peer identification drives  
18  
19 customers to consider their peers as their in-group. For example, Algesheimer *et al.* (2005) found  
20  
21 social identification among car-club members to be an antecedent of drivers' engagement in  
22  
23 group activities, interaction with other members, and participation in citizenship behaviors.  
24  
25 Through peer identification, customers can define their identities and differentiate their positions  
26  
27 in the society. In another study, customer identification with a brand community is found to  
28  
29 increase inter-brand bias (Hickman and Ward, 2007). Moreover, customer identification drives  
30  
31 customers to compare and contrast their brand with its competitors (e.g. Ewing *et al.*, 2013). At  
32  
33 this end, strong bonds with a brand, based on identification, may lead to ignorance (Carroll and  
34  
35 Ahuvia, 2006) and may induce rivalry, opposition, and derogation toward competing brands  
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37 (Muniz and Hamer, 2001).  
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#### 42 *Customer-to-customer value co-creation*

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44 Value co-creation is "emerging as the new frontier and leading edge in marketing thought and  
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46 gaining currency as one of the most provocative, paradigm shifting, and practical ideas in the  
47  
48 field" (Fisher and Smith, 2011, p. 326). Shifts in the market toward increased value co-creation  
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50 are encouraging brands to adopt a different customer mindset that regards customers as social  
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52 individuals who can co-create value with the brand and among themselves (Kandampully *et al.*,  
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3 2018). Value co-creation is more than a “win-win” process for brands and customers, it is a “win  
4 more–win more” process in which unique value is created efficiently (Ramaswamy, 2009). The  
5  
6 concept of co-creation includes participation, citizenship, and pro-social behaviors (Yi and Gong,  
7  
8 2013). Value co-creation is one of the components of the service exchange, specifically, the  
9  
10 customer experience (Heinonen *et al.*, 2010). In this study, customer-to-customer value co-  
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12 creation includes behaviors targeted toward co-creating value with other customers. In spite of  
13  
14 the hype in value co-creation research, knowledge about how value is co-created can benefit  
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16 from further research (e.g. Rihova *et al.*, 2015).  
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22 Service-dominant logic has taken into consideration the role of multiple actors in the  
23  
24 service experience (Vargo and Lusch, 2016). This is because customers are said to participate in  
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26 co-creative contributory behaviors with others (Chen *et al.*, 2018; Witell *et al.*, 2011). This  
27  
28 participation is vital as Holbrooks (1999) argues that customer value resides “in the consumption  
29  
30 experiences.” Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000) suggest that the customer is a partner when it  
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32 comes to value creation, a fact that marketers should not overlook but instead learn how to  
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34 connect customer competences to the consumption process.  
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38 In services contexts, value co-creation is synergetic in nature (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011)  
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40 and includes different parties, resources, and activities (Gummerus, 2013). Value co-creation can  
41  
42 be described as a process of resources exchange between multiple actors based on constructive  
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44 interactions and reciprocity (Grönroos, 2008). These actors are not limited to customers and  
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46 service providers (Chandler and Vargo, 2011; Patrício *et al.*, 2011) but include fellow customers,  
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48 technology, and tangible effects in the servicescape. The presence of fellow customers is known  
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50 to influence the service process and can directly affect customer cognitive and affective states  
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52 through interpersonal encounters and interdependent roles (Grove and Fisk, 1997; Larivière *et*  
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3 *al.*, 2017). Nicholls (2007) advises service organizations to facilitate customer-to-customer  
4 interactions for the purpose of achieving systematic value creation. Interactions among  
5 customers outweigh those between customers and employees in services settings (Clark and  
6 Martin, 1994). This is important matter given that value determination is not only about rational  
7 benefits calculated by customers, but also about phenomenological and experiential outcomes  
8 (Vargo and Lusch, 2008).

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17 Customers are a critical tangible cue in the social servicescape (Line *et al.*, 2018) and  
18 value co-creation resides in different social layers of customers interactions and relationships  
19 (Heinonen *et al.*, 2010, 2013) This is in line with social identity theory, which explains how  
20 interpersonal assistance and collaboration are functions of the relationships between group  
21 members (Venkataramani and Dalal, 2007). As such, this study introduces the concept of  
22 customer-to-customer value co-creation, which refers to behaviors, such as participation,  
23 citizenship, and pro-social activities that customers engage in to co-create value with other  
24 customers. This concept is part of the value “co-creation for others” (Witell *et al.*, 2011) and is  
25 supported by prior theorizing that highlights the critical role of different social units including  
26 customers and their fellows in value co-creation (e.g. Rihova *et al.*, 2013).

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40 The literature on value co-creation focuses on the service exchange that takes place  
41 between brands and customers, but overlooks the possibility of value co-creation taking place  
42 among customers. This study holds that value co-creation process is not limited to the value co-  
43 created between customers and brands. Unfortunately, only few studies have studied customer  
44 instigation of value co-creation for others (e.g. Chen *et al.*, 2018; Nuttavuthisit, 2010). Without  
45 examining value co-creation between customers, knowledge about how value is co-created will  
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3 remain limited. Thus, it is of great importance for research to explore customer value co-creation  
4 with fellows and to examine what motivates customers in this respect (Lin *et al.*, 2017).  
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8 Customers hold operant resources such as knowledge, abilities, and social and soft skills  
9 that are central to value co-creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). In general, many services are  
10 produced within socially condensed settings that include interactions among customers with  
11 many possibilities for customers to co-create value with each other. The social interactions  
12 within different services contexts involve an exchange of different types of resources, which  
13 according to social resource theory (Foa and Foa, 1980) include love, services, information, and  
14 status. Thus, it is arguable that the resources shared between customers are part of the overall  
15 value to be co-created (Quach and Thaichon, 2017).  
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26 Customer-to-customer interactions take place through protocol or sociable (Grove and  
27 Fisk, 1997) task-related/non-task-related incidents (Clark and Martin, 1994) in the form of the  
28 provision or receipt of help in a reactive or promotive way (Parker and Ward, 2000). Past studies  
29 have provided case studies and anecdotal evidence in which social interactions between  
30 customers are depicted as a source of value creation (e.g. Nicholls, 2007, 2010). Along the same  
31 lines, recent empirical evidence has shown that value co-creation in tourism can take place  
32 between residents and tourists (Lin *et al.*, 2017). At this end, the current study examines the  
33 value co-created among customers in a service setting.  
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#### 44 *Brand hate and competitors*

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46 Hate comes after love as the most important emotional state (Fehr and Russell, 1984) and the  
47 highest negative emotional state experienced by people (Shaver *et al.*, 1987). According to  
48 Plutchik (1991), hate combines anger and disgust. Hate extends to consumption and brands as  
49 research has identified both the negative and positive feelings customers have toward brands. For  
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3 example, Luo *et al.* (2013) report that 33% of the consumers surveyed had a love relationship  
4 with McDonald's, while 29% were found to be haters of the brand. Bourdieu (1984) argues that  
5 customers have more potent and strongly held opinions of distaste than of taste. In general, some  
6 customers may feel in love with a brand, others may hold neutral feelings about it, and others  
7 may hold feelings of hatred toward it (Khan and Lee, 2014). Such hate is an outcome of the  
8 customer brand relationship and symbolizes a strong hostility to a brand (Johnson *et al.*, 2011).  
9 The significance of hate feelings in relation to consumption and brands makes it important to  
10 understand the concept of brand hate from a new perspective, specifically, competition between  
11 brands.  
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24 Brand hate is defined as "a more intense emotional response consumers have towards a  
25 brand than brand dislike" (Hegner *et al.*, 2017, p. 14). This study adapts this definition and  
26 extends it to a new concept, the *competitor brand hate*, which is defined as an intense emotional  
27 response that customers have toward a competitor of a given brand. Brand hate describes a "true  
28 brand disgust" (Alba and Lutz, 2013, p. 268) and results in "the purposeful and deliberate  
29 intention to avoid or reject a brand, or even to act out behaviors that demonstrate this rejection"  
30 (Bryson *et al.*, 2013, p. 395). Within social identity theory research, the notion of an undesired or  
31 rejected self that includes negativity and hostility outcomes (Hogg *et al.*, 2009; Ogilvie, 1987)  
32 appears to be the psychological concept that conforms to the concept of brand hate (Hegner *et*  
33 *al.*, 2017). Hatred emotions have immense consequences for the reputation and performance of  
34 brands since haters have open access to various channels, including social channels, to voice  
35 their feelings.  
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51 Brand hate could be the outcome of past experience (Park *et al.*, 2013), dissatisfaction  
52 (Romani *et al.*, 2012), ideological incompatibility, symbolic incongruity (Hegner *et al.*, 2017)  
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3 and concerns about country of origin (Bryson *et al.*, 2013). Previous studies have reached a  
4  
5 conclusion that brand hate can drive customers to increase brand retaliation, complaints, negative  
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7 word-of-mouth, protesting behaviors, and switching to rival brands (Hegner *et al.*, 2017;  
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9 Zarantonello *et al.*, 2016). Avoidance and aversion in certain consumption situations result from  
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11 customers' desire to avoid self-abasement and to protect their self-esteem within their desired  
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13 self (Hogg *et al.*, 2009). Haters of a given brand are likely to distant themselves or attack that  
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15 brand (Zarantonello *et al.*, 2016).  
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19 Brand hate is more evident in competitive markets, but the literature has neglected the  
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21 hatred that customers may feel toward competitors of a brand they consume. When brands offer  
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23 products and services that are substitutable, these brands will engage in gradual competition  
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25 (Kuo and Hou, 2017). As an example, take the "burger war" between Burger King and  
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27 McDonald's that has been ongoing since the 1970s. Rivalry between Starbucks drinkers and  
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29 independent coffee shop drinkers has appeared in discussions on lifestyle selections (Thompson  
30  
31 and Arsel, 2004). In such cases, competition between brands can be extended to customers of  
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33 these brands through emotional reactions such as hate.  
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38 Brand hate is related to the feelings of malicious pleasure individuals take in the  
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40 misfortune of competitors (Dalakas and Melancon, 2012). The reason for this association could  
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42 be the negative emotions such as contempt, anger, fear, disgust, and dehumanization associated  
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44 with brand hate (Zarantonello *et al.*, 2016). While such hatred could be related to competition  
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46 between brands, the literature has, to a great extent, overlooked the concept of competitor brand  
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48 hate. This study introduces this construct and uses empirical evidence to examine its effect on  
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50 brand performance. Competitor brand hate can play a critical role in competition between  
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3 brands. It represents one aspect of faithful customer engagement in brand rivalry in favor of one  
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5 brand against its competitors.  
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8 Although hate has harmful consequences that brands need to avoid, brands might find  
9  
10 some advantages in the hate that customers hold towards their competitors. For example, the ad  
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12 campaigns waged by Apple and Samsung have the main objective of making fun of and  
13  
14 generating hatred toward the other brand. In the restaurant context, Ilhan *et al.* (2018) have found  
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16 that fans of McDonald's and fans of Burger King attack one another by posting on each other's  
17  
18 social media pages. Similarly, the heated Twitter exchange between Wendy's and McDonald's  
19  
20 over a failed Black Friday tweet by McDonald's has also generated lot of customer-generated  
21  
22 hate. Such heated exchanges are often repeated, allowing customers to participate in brand  
23  
24 competition by revealing their hatred toward the rivals of a brand they consume. These examples  
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26 show how customers can play an important role in competition between brands through  
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28 competitor brand hate.  
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33 By integrating social identity theory, customer identification literature, and self-construal  
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35 theory, this study assembles a conceptual model for testing. The conceptualized model and  
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37 hypothesized relationships are presented in Figure 2. In the subsequent sections, the  
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39 hypothesized relationships within this model are developed.  
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42 [Insert Figure 2 here]  
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## 45 **Hypothesis development**

### 46 *Customer identification and customer-to-customer value co-creation*

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48 Customer brand identification motivates customers to support a given brand by going beyond  
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50 normal purchasing behavior (Karaosmanoğlu *et al.*, 2011) as they form a sense of psychological  
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52 ownership toward the brand (Asatryan and Oh, 2008). According to the customer identification  
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3 framework developed by Bhattacharya and Sen, “identification causes people to become  
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5 psychologically attached to and care about the organization, which motivates them to commit to  
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7 the achievement of its goals, expend more voluntary effort on its behalf, and interact positively  
8  
9 and cooperatively with organizational members” (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003, p. 83).  
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12 Customer brand relationships based on identification result in customers viewing brands’  
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14 failures and successes as their own. This kind of customer relationships have the power to  
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16 motivate customers to participate in value co-creation (e.g. Payne *et al.*, 2008). As suggested by  
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18 Stokburger-Sauer *et al.* (2012), customer identification motivates customers to engage in pro-  
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20 social and citizenship behaviors toward the brand. Karaosmanoğlu *et al.* (2011) have found  
21  
22 customer brand identification to increase customer extra-role behaviors such as volunteering in  
23  
24 brand-sponsored activities and contesting competitors’ badmouthing. In a recent study, Paulssen  
25  
26 *et al.* (2019) found that customer–retailer identification drives customers to engage in  
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28 collaboration opportunities with retailers such as participating in customer groups, designing  
29  
30 brand events, and improving assortments in favor of the retailer. For that, value co-creation may  
31  
32 be another behavior that customers who identify with a brand are motivated to pursue as they  
33  
34 view it as a reliable way of expressing their identification. Building on the above, it is suggested  
35  
36 that customer brand identification drives customers to co-create value with fellow customers who  
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38 represent in-group members by interacting more with them, providing help when needed, making  
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40 sure they are happy, and enabling engagement in consumption to maximize value. Thus, the  
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42 following is hypothesized:  
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49 *H<sub>1</sub>. Customer brand identification has a positive impact on customer-to-customer value co-*  
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51 *creation.*  
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3 Social identity theory posits that identification motivates individuals to favor and find common  
4 ground with their in-group members (Brewer, 1999; Haslam *et al.*, 2001) by helping and  
5 supporting them build in-group solidarity and altruism (Haslam *et al.*, 2005). Relational bonds,  
6 on the basis of identification, are created among customers, leading them to feel a sense of duty  
7 toward their fellows (e.g. Carlson *et al.*, 2008; Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001). Identification leads to  
8 in-group favoritism (Ellemers *et al.*, 1999) since it drives customers to hold moral responsibility  
9 and to develop a consciousness of kind—a sense of ‘us’ versus ‘them’—toward their fellows  
10 (Muniz and Hamer, 2001).  
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21 Peer identification pulls group members together and inspires social intentions to  
22 collaborate and engage with other members with a view to overcoming obstacles and achieving  
23 collective goals (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006; Reicher *et al.*, 2008). For example, identification  
24 with brand community members is said to increase engagement behaviors among members such  
25 as support of and collaboration with other members (Algesheimer *et al.*, 2005). The sense of  
26 oneness experienced by peer customers is capable of driving customers to serve and care about  
27 each other. Moreover, the interactions and collective participation give customers who identify  
28 with the brand a sense of self-enhancement (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006). The ‘relationality  
29 framework’ by FitzPatrick *et al.* (2015) proposes that high relationality in interactions (e.g.  
30 identification) will increase value co-creation, interpersonal engagement, and reciprocity  
31 behaviors. In addition, engaging in value co-creation with other customers provides customers  
32 who identify with their peers ample opportunities to gain social benefits, and experience and  
33 promote their identities to maintain self-enhancement. This leads to the following hypothesis:  
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51 *H2. Peer identification has a positive impact on customer-to-customer value co-creation.*  
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### *Customer identification and competitor brand hate*

According to social identity theory, social identification has different emotional consequences and reactions in relation to in-groups and out-groups (Hogg *et al.*, 1995; Tajfel, 1974). At a time of threat, negative out-group perceptions are promoted (Riek *et al.*, 2006). This notion extends to brands as well as customers who may take part in the competition between brands. If social identity theory is correct, rival brands, being part of the out-groups, would be the target of hate and defamation by customers who identify with a particular brand. For example, Berendt *et al.* (2018) found that interfirm rivalry increases customer-perceived brand distinctiveness. Customers regularly attack competing brands and combat them indirectly (Converse and Reinhard, 2016). In their study, Haumann *et al.* (2014) found that customer identification plays a better role at immunizing customers against competitors' tactics than satisfaction does.

Identification can result in harmful reactions, including internal and external trash talk about competing brands caused by various mechanisms of inter-group stereotyping (Hickman and Ward, 2007). The present study claims that brand identification provokes feelings of identity differentiation, driving customers to express their identification by hating competing brands. Past studies have related customer identification to negative emotions including disappointment, anger, and betrayal (Johnson *et al.*, 2011; Ma, 2018). Likewise, fan identification has been associated with less control over aggression (Dimmock and Grove, 2005) and feelings of pleasure or joy in response to the misfortune of rival teams' members (Dalakas and Melancon, 2012). In this regard, customer brand identification results in detaching customers from competing brands in a "my brand versus the other brands" attitude that evokes intentions to protect against and direct hate toward competing brands. Thus, customer brand identification may drive customers to hate competing brands in the process of defending brands they identify

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3 with as well as their self-concept associated with the brand, and satisfying identity needs. Thus,  
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5 the following relationship is hypothesized:  
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8 *H3. Customer brand identification has a positive impact on competitor brand hate.*  
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12 It has been suggested that quality relationships—in terms of stronger bonds between  
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14 customers and the brand and/or fellow customers—result in customers refusing to purchase rival  
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16 brands' offerings (Kuo and Hou, 2017). In line with social identity theory, it can be argued that  
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18 identification with peer customers may lead to negative emotions and behaviors toward the out-  
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20 group characterized by rival brands and their customers. As an example, Ewing *et al.* (2013)  
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22 claim that identification can drive customers to share negative word-of-mouth about competing  
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24 brands, driven by deep feelings of rivalry and hatred.  
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29 Competing brands are regarded as a source of threats to their identity and as part of the  
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31 undesired self of customers who identify with other customers consuming the same brand. The  
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33 potential threats and failures associated with the out-group characterized by competing brands  
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35 may lead in-group members to feel hostility and hatred toward competitors (e.g. Reicher *et al.*,  
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37 2008). It is important to highlight that dealing with competing brands can damage one's self as it  
38  
39 is regarded by peer customers, resulting in increased competitor brand hate, which is  
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41 psychologically associated with the rejected or undesired self of the customer (e.g. Hegner *et al.*,  
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43 2017). Given the discussion above, the following effect of peer identification is hypothesized:  
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47 *H4. Peer identification has a positive impact on competitor brand hate.*  
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51 *Moderating effect of customer individualism self-construal*  
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3 Customer brand relationship is often affected by contingent personal factors that differ across  
4 customers (Algesheimer *et al.*, 2005). These factors include customer cultural orientation of  
5 one's self in relation to other or individualism, which is a self-concept orientation that describes  
6 consumer way of thinking towards oneself as an individual or a group member (Cooper and  
7 Thatcher, 2010). Individualism is related to social identity theory (Capozza *et al.*, 2000) and  
8 differs among customers making it an important factor to incorporate in models that examine  
9 customer identification. At this end, this study tests the contingent role of individualism on the  
10 effects of customer identification hypothesized. A great degree of the confusion about  
11 consumption can be explained by individualism (Cova, 1997) because it has huge effect on  
12 customer attitudes and behaviors (Han *et al.*, 2017). Individualism self-construal has the power  
13 to moderate the effects of customer identification on value co-creation behavior and competitor  
14 brand hate (e.g. Lam *et al.*, 2012; Tsai and Bagozzi, 2014).  
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31 Service consumption (e.g., dining) exists mostly in socially condensed context and  
32 affected by interpersonal interactions between customers, which makes it important to inspect  
33 the role individualism plays within these interactions (e.g. Bruwer *et al.*, 2019; Her and Seo,  
34 2018). The moderating role of individualism has been widely studied because of its significance  
35 in the marketing and services literature (e.g. Han *et al.*, 2017; Mai *et al.*, 2019; Patterson *et al.*,  
36 2006). Nonetheless, little is known about the interaction effect between customer identification  
37 and individualism on customer affective, cognitive, and behavioral factors.  
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47 Since customers diverge in terms of self versus group perspective and actions (e.g.  
48 Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman, 1993), the present study seeks to investigate the  
49 moderating effect of customer individualism as an ideological variable that influences customer  
50 mental modes of interpersonal relationships (Mai *et al.*, 2019) and affects customer relationships  
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3 with and behaviors toward brands. Despite the possibly interrelated roles of customer  
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5 identification and self-construal, very few empirical studies have examined the interaction  
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7 impact of both variables (e.g. Lam *et al.*, 2012; Tsai and Bagozzi, 2014). The inclusion of  
8  
9 customer individualism construct will enhance knowledge on the role customer identification  
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11 plays since such construct is established as a customer self-construal that can alter customer  
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13 attitudes and behaviors toward a brand and its users.  
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17 According to Hofstede and Bond (1988, p. 10), “individualism on the one side versus its  
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19 opposite (*collectivism*) on the other ... describes the degree to which individuals are integrated  
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21 into groups.” For that, it is clear that customers also differ on the basis of their individualism  
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23 self-construal orientation in their belonging to social groups and relationship with other group  
24  
25 members. This orientation exists on a continuum and is highly relevant to customer identification  
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27 research (Lam *et al.*, 2012). Individualism urges individuals to engage in a never-ending identity  
28  
29 quest (Cova, 1997).  
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33 Individualists refer to the self as independent, different from others, and self-sufficient  
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35 (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). They promote their personal goals, pursue self-interests, and  
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37 prefer formal ties with others (Hofstede, 1984; Schwartz, 1994). Their behaviors are driven by  
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39 self-attitudes rather than in-group norms (Triandis, 2001). Individualists are not concerned to  
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41 learn, internalize, and act in accordance with the social norms of the group they belong to (Jetten  
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43 *et al.*, 2002). They make sure to remain discrete individuals, even when they are part of social  
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45 groups. Moreover, they are more likely to express resistance to work with other group members  
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47 (Kirkman and Shapiro, 2001). In contrast, collectivists believe the self to be interdependent and  
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49 define their identity on the basis of group membership (Schwartz, 1994). They have an  
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51 interdependent and sociocentric identity (Bochner, 1994) and are concerned about the welfare of  
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3 the group (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Collectivists “regard themselves as less differentiated  
4 from, and more connected with, other people, especially those whom they regard as significant,  
5 and will put much value on harmonious interpersonal relationships” (Bochner, 1994, p. 274).  
6  
7 Collectivists assume that “groups bind and mutually obligate individuals” (Oyserman *et al.*,  
8 2002, p. 5). They care about the success of the group since such success can raise their self-  
9 esteem (Capozza *et al.*, 2000). In comparison to individualists, collectivists are strongly united,  
10 mutually bounded, and belong to multiple close in-groups (Hofstede, 1980).  
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19 In the present study, it is anticipated that the influence of customer brand identification  
20 and peer identification on customer-to-customer value co-creation and competitor brand hate  
21 may be subject to the level of customer individualism. This is because independent individualists  
22 are less sensitive to social identity than interdependent collectivists are (Kim and Hyun, 2013).  
23 Customers with dominantly individualistic orientation look after themselves (Lam *et al.*, 2012)  
24 and focus on their personal needs rather than group membership or relational role (Cooper and  
25 Thatcher, 2010). Individualism is less likely to promote the consequences of customer brand  
26 identification and peer identification such as the success of the in-group. The more  
27 individualistic customers are, the more they are likely to ignore the success of other group  
28 members (e.g. peer customers) (e.g. Capozza *et al.*, 2000). Moreover, the relative strength of  
29 group identification is to be lower among individualists because group affiliation is less  
30 important to their self-construal (Lam *et al.*, 2016; Van Knippenberg *et al.*, 2004). Thus, attitudes  
31 and behaviors of individualistic customers have lower likelihood to be affected by peer  
32 identification.  
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51 Brand identification is more related to a customer self-concept compared to that with  
52 collective groups (e.g. peer identification). A brand does not necessarily represent a social group  
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3 compared to a brand community or group of peer customers but a single entity that forms a  
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5 major part of the self-concept of the customer who identifies with it. Brand identification is less  
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7 about the 'group' or other users and more about self-identity in relation to the brand. Hence, it  
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9 could be argued that the identity shared with the brand will have a stronger impact for  
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11 individualistic customers than peer identification would since brand identification represents a  
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13 more personal self-identity of the customer. By contrast, peer identification is about many other  
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15 and, thus, the social group. It is part of the customer self motivated by others' interests which  
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17 individualistic customers are likely to ignore or sometimes work against. For that reason, peer  
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19 identification may have weaker effects for more individualistic customers. Given the  
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compared to a brand community or group of peer customers but a single entity that forms a major part of the self-concept of the customer who identifies with it. Brand identification is less about the 'group' or other users and more about self-identity in relation to the brand. Hence, it could be argued that the identity shared with the brand will have a stronger impact for individualistic customers than peer identification would since brand identification represents a more personal self-identity of the customer. By contrast, peer identification is about many other and, thus, the social group. It is part of the customer self motivated by others' interests which individualistic customers are likely to ignore or sometimes work against. For that reason, peer identification may have weaker effects for more individualistic customers. Given the aforementioned, the following moderating relationships are hypothesized:

*H5a. The positive impact of customer brand identification on customer-to-customer value co-creation will be strengthened at higher levels of customer individualism self-construal.*

*H5b. The positive impact of customer brand identification on competitor brand hate will be strengthened at higher levels of customer individualism self-construal.*

*H5c. The positive impact of peer identification on customer-to-customer value co-creation will be weakened at higher levels of customer individualism self-construal.*

*H5d. The positive impact of peer identification on competitor brand hate will be weakened at higher levels of customer individualism self-construal.*

#### *Effect of customer-to-customer value co-creation*

The value co-created among customers has additional benefits that optimize the overall customer experience. Value co-creation can create better customer experience through social and hedonic benefits perceived by customers (Marticotte *et al.*, 2016). This is highly relevant in services

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3 contexts where the perceived value depends on customers' consumption and service experience  
4  
5 (Itani *et al.*, 2020b; Sandström *et al.*, 2008), which is based on benefits that result from social  
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7 interactions, meaningful information sharing, collaborative consumption, and engagement  
8  
9 between customers.  
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11  
12 Social identity comprises an in-group affect state (Cameron, 2004). The social dimension  
13  
14 of experiential hedonic value is an important facet of consumption (Arnould and Price, 1993;  
15  
16 Batra and Ahtola, 1991) since emotions have collective motives and outcomes (Keltner and  
17  
18 Haidt, 1999). The 'customer experience relationships modeling framework', developed by Baron  
19  
20 and Harris (2010), specifies that fellow customers are instrumental to the network of the  
21  
22 customer experience. According to social identity theory, as a brand becomes part of a customer  
23  
24 self, the customer experiences feelings of pleasure and excitement when engaging in social  
25  
26 interactions related to the brand. Social interactions with in-group individuals, such as friends  
27  
28 and fellow customers, induce hedonic value presented by increased feelings of enjoyment,  
29  
30 pleasure, and excitement (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, the social and functional benefits  
31  
32 associated with value co-creation between customers will inevitably enhance customer-perceived  
33  
34 value (Ulaga and Eggert, 2006) and increase customer intentions to rebuy from the same brand.  
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40 Customer hedonic value results from social experiences and factors inherent in the value  
41  
42 co-creation process (Rihova *et al.*, 2013). This value is associated with playfulness, mood,  
43  
44 entertainment, compassion of service employees, and social interaction (Hwang and Ok, 2013;  
45  
46 Park, 2004). Customer experiential hedonic value is defined as the value that customers  
47  
48 experience from gratification, excitement, fun, and enjoyment during the consumption process.  
49  
50 In services contexts, customer experience is more social in nature. This is in line with the notion  
51  
52 of value-in-the-experience (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012), which emphasizes the role of value co-  
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3 creation in driving customer overall perceived value. In the production of many services, a  
4 platform is offered to make customers feel an increased sense of connectedness, which in turn  
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6 forms affective experiences and drives loyalty (Drengner *et al.*, 2012). The interpersonal  
7  
8 interactions customer has with employees and/or other customers have the power to allow  
9  
10 customers to experience positive emotions about the brand (e.g. Hwang and Ok, 2013). As  
11  
12 suggested by Schau *et al.* (2009), brand users derive social and hedonic value from the social  
13  
14 experience they have with each other. Prior studies have found evidence of the positive effect of  
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16 customer value co-design on enhancing the overall perceived value of a service (Li *et al.*, 2017).  
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18 The rationale suggests that value co-creation can maximize the psychological and emotional  
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20 benefits that comprise the experiential hedonic value. Moreover, the ‘we feeling’ associated with  
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22 customer social engagement in value co-creation can elicit emotions of enjoyment, fun, and  
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24 excitement, leading to enhanced experiential hedonic value.  
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31 Customers exert their social influence to drive potential prospects’ and other customers’  
32  
33 attitudes and behaviors in favor of a brand (Kumar *et al.*, 2010). As social creatures, customers  
34  
35 post on social sites, write online reviews, rate offerings, and utilize direct communication  
36  
37 channels to share their experience and know-how about a given brand offerings as a way to exert  
38  
39 social influence and stimulate actions from new customers to the advantage of the brand (Itani *et al.*  
40  
41 *et al.*, 2020a; Pansari and Kumar, 2017). Customer social influence represents one facet of  
42  
43 customer engagement and is based on social persuasion and aimed at eliciting positive attitudes  
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45 and behaviors of current and potential customers with the need to enhance brand performance.  
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47 Social influence is associated with influence marketing, which drives value to brands through  
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49 customer advocacy, awareness, social reach, and publicity impact. Customers who engage in  
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51 social influence are likely to build on their value co-creation experience with fellow customers to  
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inspire new customers. Chen *et al.* (2018) have found that users' shared experience (e.g. reviews, ratings, and feedback) of using mobile online services drive brand-desired customer efforts and insights. Given the aforementioned, the following is hypothesized:

*H6. Customer-to-customer value co-creation has positive impact on (a) customer experiential hedonic value, (b) customer social influence, and (c) customer repurchase intentions.*

#### *Effect of competitor brand hate*

Brand hate increases customer resistance and anti-consumption behaviors toward the despised brand. Hatred toward a brand drives customers to avoid (Lee *et al.*, 2009), boycott (Hoffmann and Müller, 2009), and reject the brand (Sandıkcı and Ekici, 2009). Customers usually criticize brands they don't buy, or hate, and claim that customers who choose different brands than the one they use are making the wrong decision (Kuo and Hou, 2017). This conclusion is in line with social comparison theory, which suggests that people tend to compare themselves to others because social comparison is a fundamental component of human nature and an adaptive mechanism for survival (Festinger, 1954). Likewise, customers compare products and services offered by the brand they consume with the offerings of competing brands, causing customers to hold certain attitudes and feelings, such as hate, toward competing brands and what they offer. Though competitor brand hate can result in anti-branding behaviors against competing brands, it can also result in pro-social behaviors toward the consumed brand.

Social identity theory suggests that out-group hate naturally arises with in-group love (e.g. Parker and Janoff-Bulman, 2013). The experience of hate and opposition toward a rival brand may affect the overall customer experience. For example, fans who identify with their team are found to hold feelings of *schadenfreude* or pleasure in the misfortune of competitors

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3 (Dalakas and Melancon, 2012). As expressed by Muniz and Hamer (2001), customers “may  
4 derive an important component of the meaning of the brand and their sense of self from their  
5 perceptions of competing brands, and may express their brand loyalty by playfully opposing  
6 those competing brands” (p. 355).  
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12 Hate toward brands, including that toward competing brands, drives customers to avoid  
13 and reject the brand, leading them “to act out behaviors that demonstrate this rejection” (Bryson  
14 *et al.*, 2013, p. 395). The rationale suggests that competitor brand hate will result in customer  
15 evasion and rejection of competing brands. Simultaneously, competitor brand hate may have  
16 positive outcomes for brand customer identify with such as customers discussing the brand’s  
17 offerings using social sites and making sure to build their conversations about it while  
18 highlighting the benefits and experiences they derive from its offerings. For example, online  
19 conversations are found to provide loyal brand enthusiasts (e.g. Ford versus Holden customers in  
20 Australia) with a space to share their social identity and passions, and to freely ridicule opposing  
21 (hated) brands (Ewing *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, avoidance and revenge desires that result from  
22 hate feelings drive haters to engage in behaviors that punish and cause harm to brands they hate  
23 (Grégoire *et al.*, 2009). Thus, customers of a given brand who are haters of rival brands will  
24 reject the competing brands. Concurrently, they will try to maintain their relationships with the  
25 focal brand by referring back to it for their purchases, thus enhancing the brand’s customer share  
26 in the long run. The hate toward competing brands will drive customers to refer back to their  
27 own brand and use it more frequently. The above discussion leads to the following hypothesis:  
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49 *H7. Competitor brand hate has a positive impact on (a) customer experiential hedonic value, (b)*  
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51 *customer social influence, and (c) customer repurchase intentions.*  
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### *Effect of customer experiential hedonic value*

Experiential hedonic value perceived by customers through the self-indulgent benefits they experience with the brand is an influential factor capable of driving customers' intentions and behaviors, including their social influence behavior and repurchase intentions. Zeithaml (1988) suggests that many customer behavioral decisions are based on the offerings' value they perceive as well as the value consequences. This suggestion is empirically supported by documentation of the direct relationship between value and customer behavioral intentions (Cronin *et al.*, 2000). Thus, value is key factor affecting customer decision making.

In services settings, value has positive influence on customer outcomes in the post-purchase stage, including engagement in referral marketing, spreading positive word-of-mouth, and repurchase intentions (Brady and Cronin, 2001). In their study, Hwang and Ok (2013) examined the effects of hedonic attitude, characterized by fun, enjoyment, and delight, on restaurant preference, and found it to have a stronger effect than utilitarian attitude on diners' preferences. The prior discussion leads to the following hypothesis:

*H8. Customer experiential hedonic value has a positive impact on (a) customer social influence and (b) customer repurchase intentions.*

## **Method**

### *Research design*

For this study, a self-administered web-based questionnaire using Qualtrics was prepared to collect data from an online customer panel of geographically and demographically diverse customers in the United States. Using a convenience sampling approach, the questionnaire link was shared by the research company to gather the required data. Filter questions were included to

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2  
3 ensure that respondents meet the criteria to participate in the study. For example, only  
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5 respondents who usually dine out and had multiple dining experiences during the last six-month  
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7 period before the date of taking the survey were invited to participate. Similar data collection  
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9 method was used in prior studies of the same context (e.g. Hwang and Ok, 2013; Line *et al.*,  
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11 2018; Mattila *et al.*, 2014; Zhang and Hanks, 2018).  
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15 The restaurant industry was selected for multiple reasons. First, this industry is one of the  
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17 largest in the United States as it employs 10% of the overall workforce and its sales revenue was  
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19 projected to reach \$825 billion in year 2018<sup>1</sup>. Second, it is growing fast because of the changes in  
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21 customer lifestyle and family structure (de Rezende and de Avelar, 2012). According to the  
22  
23 Restaurant Industry Pocket Factbook, 90% of customers enjoy going to restaurants and around  
24  
25 80% say that dining with family members and friends is a better way to spend leisure time<sup>2</sup>.  
26  
27 Eating out at restaurants holds psychological and symbolic importance to customers by means of  
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29 social status, distinction, identification, and group membership (Han *et al.*, 2016; Thienhirun and  
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31 Chung, 2017). According to Eversham (2019), restaurants with established identities are  
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33 expected to be the only ones to grow. Third, restaurants operate in a competitive industry in  
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35 which greater need to branding is crucial for surviving the hostile market (Gao *et al.*, 2018;  
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37 Jogaratnam, 2017). These conditions provide ample opportunities to customers to engage in the  
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39 competition between brands. Fourth, dining restaurants operate in a dynamic and socially  
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41 condensed services context where consumption is collective and shared allowing social  
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43 encounters and relationships to develop between customers and brands as well as among  
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45 customers (e.g. Her and Seo, 2018; Sun and Morrison, 2007). In addition, the restaurant  
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54 <sup>1</sup> <https://www.restaurant.org/research> (assessed June 1, 2019)

55 <sup>2</sup> <https://www.restaurant.org/home> (assessed June 1, 2019)

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3 servicescape creates a unique consumption experience for customers with ample opportunities of  
4 customer-to-customer value co-creation. Finally, the restaurant industry is established as an  
5 applicable setting for research interested in examining customer identification and value co-  
6 creation (e.g. Huang *et al.*, 2017) since many hospitality services contexts are rich in social  
7 interactions and relationships between customers (Nicholls, 2010; Rihova *et al.*, 2013). Despite  
8 that, little remains discovered about social identification and social exchange in the hospitality  
9 sector (Rather and Hollebeek, 2019).

19 The questionnaire was examined by two practitioners with expertise in the restaurants  
20 context as well as two marketing scholars knowledgeable about related research areas. The  
21 experts consulted assured the appropriateness of the questionnaire including the content validity  
22 of the measures. A pretest was conducted with 22 diners who were not part of the final sample.  
23 The pretest resulted in satisfactory outcomes regarding the measures utilized. The final data  
24 collection process was launched after that.

33 Upon agreeing to participate in the study and passing the filter questions, participants  
34 were instructed to think about one of the restaurants they have dined in during the last six-month  
35 period. Using time method allows more variation between responses (Hwang and Ok, 2013; Line  
36 *et al.*, 2018) in terms of the diverse set of restaurants participants have visited as well as the  
37 frequency and recurrence of their visits to these restaurants. Respondents were then asked to  
38 answer a set of statements about the restaurant of their choice. In one week-period, 2033 panel  
39 members clicked on the questionnaire link but only 405 were qualified to participate in the study.  
40 Out of the 405 responses, 8 were incomplete leaving 397 as a final sample used in the analysis  
41 (19.5% valid response rate). Further, the restaurants chosen by the respondents were of wide  
42 range of names and cuisines. Appendix A provides a summary of the sample characteristics.

### *Measures and data collection*

The measure developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992) is adapted to measure customer brand identification and peer identification. These two measures capture customer *oneness* with the brand (i.e. restaurant) and peer customers, respectively. To measure customer-to-customer value co-creation, a seven-item measure was utilized based on the measures developed by Lin *et al.* (2017) and O’Cass and Ngo (2012). The measure reflects customer value co-creation with other customers as it captures collective work and co-participation among customers to maximize overall value. The name of the restaurant chosen by each respondent was inserted into the relevant measures and items.

After responding to the value co-creation measure, respondents were directed to new survey webpage and guided to name one of the major competitors to the brand they chose earlier. At this stage, respondents were not able to check or read about the competitor brand hate measure. After stating the name of the competitor, respondents were directed to another webpage of the survey in which they were asked to respond to the competitor brand hate measure that is adapted from Hegner *et al.* (2017). The measure captures customer intense feelings of hate toward the competing brand and its offerings. The name of the competitor brand was inserted into the items of the competitor brand hate measure.

The survey continued on a new webpage and respondents were guided to think about the brand they named at the beginning of the study to answer the experiential hedonic value measure that is adapted from Babin *et al.* (1994). The measure represents the hedonic value customers perceive from their experience with the brand. A measure from Kumar and Pansari (2016) is adapted to capture customer social influence. The measure captures respondents’ inclusion of the brand in their social settings and discussion as a way of influencing others’ attitudes toward the

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3 brand beyond word-of-mouth (Kumar and Pansari, 2016). Customer repurchase intentions  
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5 measure is adapted from Breivik and Thorbjørnsen (2008). The measure captures customer  
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7 intentions to repurchase from and revisit the restaurant identified at the beginning of the  
8  
9 questionnaire.  
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11  
12 The survey continues with individualism self-construal measure adapted from Erdem *et*  
13  
14 *al.* (2006). The measure assesses customer individualism at the individual unit of analysis (e.g.  
15  
16 Patterson *et al.*, 2006). This measure captures the way a respondent mentally represents  
17  
18 his/herself in relationship to others. The higher (lower) the score on this scale, the more  
19  
20 individualistic (collectivistic) and independent (interdependent) the respondent is (e.g. Lam *et*  
21  
22 *al.*, 2012). Measuring individualism at the customer level is highly relevant (Tsai and Bagozzi,  
23  
24 2014), especially in the restaurant context (Han *et al.*, 2016). A 7-point Likert agreement scale  
25  
26 was used in most of the measures. A summary of all measures with their items, loadings, average  
27  
28 variance extracted (AVE) as well as reliability are included in Appendix B.  
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33 Respondents were also asked to report their relationship length with the restaurant,  
34  
35 monthly average spending on eating at restaurants, age, and yearly income. These variables were  
36  
37 included as covariates in the model (e.g. Brouthers and Xu, 2002; Itani *et al.*, 2019; Pansari and  
38  
39 Kumar, 2017). To account for some of the differences between the restaurants chosen by  
40  
41 respondents, the average meal cost was included as a covariate. The model incorporates direct  
42  
43 impacts of the covariates on experiential hedonic value, customer social influence, and customer  
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45 repurchase intentions. Correlations and descriptive statistics are summarized in Table 2.  
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49 [Insert Table 2 here]  
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51 *Measurement model*  
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3 A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to check the reliability and validity of the latent  
4 variables as well as the fit of the measurement model. The first measurement model analyzed had  
5 a poor fit because of low loading items ( $< .5$ ). The measurement model was specified once more  
6 after dropping these items. This time, the measurement model resulted in a good fit. The  $\chi^2/df$   
7 ratio (3.13) demonstrates satisfactory results. The fit indices also met the recommended levels  
8 [CFI = .96; GFI = .95; RMSEA = .064; SRMR = .05].  
9

10  
11 For internal consistent reliability, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability demonstrate  
12 satisfactory results ( $> .7$ ). All items loaded significantly ( $p < .01$ ) on their own respective  
13 constructs with no problematic cross loadings providing evidence of convergent validity. All the  
14 measures hold satisfactory AVE ( $> .5$ ). Discriminant validity was assessed, first, by comparing  
15 the square root of the AVE of every latent construct with the intercorrelations the latent construct  
16 has with other constructs. In all comparisons, none of the correlations between the latent  
17 constructs has exceeded the square root AVE. Second, the "heterotrait–monotrait ratio" (HTMT)  
18 was tested. Discriminant validity was again supported with all inter-factor HTMT values scored  
19 below .9 threshold (Henseler *et al.*, 2015).  
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23 Procedural remedies (e.g., separation of predictor and criterion constructs) were utilized  
24 to avoid the possibility of inflating or deflating the variance explained because of common  
25 method bias (CMB). Furthermore, multiple statistical tests were conducted to check for CMB. A  
26 single-factor measurement model using Harman's factor method was conducted. This  
27 measurement model resulted in a poor fit and explained way less than fifty percent of the  
28 variance. Furthermore, the latent factor method was utilized with the structural model analyzed.  
29 No significant changes in the results were found. Both methods demonstrate no concern of CMB.  
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## 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 **Results** 55 56 57 58 59 60

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3 Overall structural model analyzed holds a good fit (Hypothesized Model – Table 3). The  $\chi^2/df$   
4 ratio (3.26) demonstrates satisfactory levels. The fit indices met recommended levels [ $CFI = .95$ ;  
5  $GFI = .94$ ;  $RMSEA = .068$ ;  $SRMR = .055$ ]. Results – hypothesized model – show evidence in  
6 support of  $H_1$  ( $\beta = .29, p < .01$ ), customer brand identification positively influences customer-to-  
7 customer value co-creation. Consistent with  $H_2$ , a significant positive relationship is  
8 demonstrated between peer identification and customer-to-customer value co-creation ( $\beta = .32, p$   
9  $< .01$ ). Furthermore, findings provide evidence in favor of  $H_3$ , which proposes customer brand  
10 identification increases competitor brand hate ( $\beta = .41, p < .01$ ). The relationship between peer  
11 identification and competitor brand hate ( $H_4$ ) is not statistically supported ( $\beta = .06, p > .1$ ).  
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24 To examine  $H_5$ , the links from customer brand identification and peer identification to  
25 customer-to-customer value co-creation and competitor brand hate are tested for moderation by  
26 restricting the relevant links between the variables. For every link, the  $\chi^2$  difference between the  
27 restricted model and unrestricted model is compared to the critical  $\chi^2_{0.05}$  value (3.84). In all the  
28 cases tested, the difference between the two models is greater than the critical value. Findings  
29 demonstrate interesting moderating effects. Specifically, the positive relationship between  
30 customer brand identification and customer-to-customer value co-creation is weakened the more  
31 individualistic customers are ( $\beta = -.23, p < .05$ ). This is contrary to  $H_{5a}$ . On the other side,  
32 individualism is found to boost the positive relationship between customer brand identification  
33 and competitor brand hate ( $\beta = .19, p < .05$ ) in support of  $H_{5b}$ . Consistent with  $H_{5c}$ , the results  
34 confirm a significant negative interaction effect between peer identification and individualism  
35 self-construal on customer-to-customer value co-creation ( $\beta = -.21, p < .05$ ).  $H_{5d}$  is not  
36 supported. Ad hoc analysis using  $f^2$  test revealed all the changes in  $R^2$  in the dependent variables  
37 explained by the interaction effects discovered are significant (Cohen, 1988). The approach  
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recommended by Aiken *et al.* (1991) was used to plot the significant interaction effects found (Figures 3, 4, & 5). Further explanation about the moderating effects found is included in the 'Discussion' following section.

[Insert Figures 3, 4, & 5 here]

Further findings reveal a positive impact of customer-to-customer value co-creation on experiential hedonic value ( $\beta = .24, p < .01$ ), customer social influence ( $\beta = .58, p < .01$ ), and customer repurchase intentions ( $\beta = .27, p < .01$ ) providing support to H<sub>6a, b, & c</sub>. These results confirms the significant role of customer-to-customer value co-creation in customer experience. Further, the results demonstrate that competitor brand hate increases customer social influence ( $\beta = .08, p < .05$ ) and customer repurchase intentions ( $\beta = .12, p < .05$ ) providing support to H<sub>7b & c</sub>. Competitor brand hate has a nonsignificant effect on experiential hedonic value providing no evidence in support of H<sub>7a</sub>. These results demonstrate some of the advantages the focal brand can benefit from when customers hate competing brands. Consistent with H<sub>8a & b</sub>, experiential hedonic value positively affects customer social influence ( $\beta = .26, p < .01$ ) and customer repurchase intentions ( $\beta = .27, p < .01$ ). Results are summarized in (Table 3).

[Insert Table 3 here]

## Discussion

Fierce competition has been forcing brands to investigate new strategies for survival. Simultaneously, new changes in the market are disrupting how customer value is co-created and how brands compete to achieve their marketing and business goals. Accordingly, brands need to find new ways to engage customers in their different operations and processes including value



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3 co-creation, market competition, and brand equity (e.g. customer social influence and loyalty or  
4 repurchase intentions). This is very important for brands that operate in dynamic and socially  
5 condensed services settings where consumption is collective and shared. For that, this study  
6 focuses on customer identity-based relationships and examines the effects of customer brand  
7 identification and peer identification because of the role identity-based relationship can play in  
8 supporting brands in today's market. The processes of social identification guide not only the  
9 customer brand relationship but also the relationships customers have with the brand's  
10 competitors. Furthermore, the study investigates the moderating role of customer individualism  
11 in the effects of customer brand identification and peer identification. The study brings together  
12 research on customer identification, value co-creation, brand hate, and self-construal, and in  
13 doing so contributes to each.

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29 Customers are establishing themselves as a determinative factor in value co-creation,  
30 forcing brands to think about new strategies to motivate them to participate more in this process  
31 in favor of the brand with particular regard to the value co-created between customers while  
32 reaping the benefits of the extra hedonic value. Further, brands are trying to gain value by  
33 motivating customers to play an indirect role in their competition with rival brands through  
34 negative emotional and behavioral reactions toward rivals. For example, Burger King has  
35 launched 'Burn That Ad' campaign aimed at encouraging customers to use a mobile app to 'burn  
36 away' the ads of rival brands and thus engage in the fierce competition between restaurants.  
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Despite its importance, it is not clear in the literature if brands can possibly gain advantage by trying to stimulate customers to hold negative feelings, especially hate, toward competing brands. At this end, this study provides answers that can help brands understand how they can

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3 benefit from the power of customer identification in their value co-creation strategies and  
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5 competition against rivals leading to enhanced customer and business outcomes.  
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8 Customer identification is a relational factor capable of supporting brands in enhancing  
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10 value co-creation practices as well as competing with their rivals. A new purview of the  
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12 outcomes of customer identification is revealed in this study through the effects identification  
13  
14 has on value co-creation among customers and competitor brand hate.  
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16

17 Identification encompasses the intrinsic motivation for customers to support each other  
18  
19 with a view to maximize overall value. Specifically, peer identification is recognized as a driver  
20  
21 of customers co-creating value with each other. Value co-creation allows customers to signal  
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23 their brand identification by supporting the brand and its customers with enriched experience.  
24  
25 While other customers constitute a less controllable factor for brands, findings suggest that  
26  
27 brands need to encourage peer identification between customers to better manage fellow  
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29 customers as an asset and to build on the cohesiveness among them. Value co-creation and  
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31 competition brand hate, as consequences of identification, drive positive outcomes to customers  
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33 (i.e. experiential hedonic value) and brand (i.e. customer social influence and repurchase  
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35 intentions).  
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40 The present study examines the role of customer individualism self-construal and found it  
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42 of significant impact when it comes to identity-based marketing. Specifically, individualism self-  
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44 construal is discovered to diminish the positive effects of customer brand identification and peer  
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46 identification on customer-to-customer value co-creation. However, individualism self-construal  
47  
48 has the power to strengthen the positive effect of customer brand identification on competitor  
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50 brand hate. This explains how self-construal plays a dual role with different forms of customer  
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52 identification and their outcomes.  
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3 In the case of high individualism, the effects of customer brand identification and peer  
4 identification tend to be weaker when the outcome is perceived at the group level, as in the case  
5 of value co-creation among customers. In other words, when a customer perceives one's self to  
6 be more independent and less integrated into a group, the customer will be less inspired by brand  
7 identification and peer identification to co-create value with other customers.  
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12 The current study demonstrates that individualistic consumers who identify with a given  
13 brand or its users will feel less comfortable in co-creating value with other customers because  
14 they rely less on interpersonal interactions than do less individualistic customers. The  
15 visualization of the moderating impact of customer individualism on the link between customer  
16 brand identification and customer-to-customer value co-creation (Figure 3), indicates that  
17 customers who identify strongly with a brand and are low on individualism are the ones who  
18 engage most in value co-creation with other customers. Similarly, the visualization (Figure 4) of  
19 the moderating impact of individualism on the relationship between customer brand  
20 identification and competitor brand hate indicates that customers who have the greatest hatred  
21 for competitors are individualistic customers who identify strongly with the brand. Figure 5  
22 shows that customers who identify strongly with their peers and are less individualistic engage  
23 more in value co-creation among customers. In other words, despite their identification with their  
24 peers, individualistic customers are less likely to align their objectives with other customers,  
25 leading them to fewer value co-creation behaviors. The findings highlight the imperative role of  
26 customer identification and individualism in driving social consequences that support brands in  
27 maximizing customer value and competing with rival brands.  
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### 51 **Theoretical Implications**

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3 This study extends identity-based marketing as a strategic initiative that can support brands in  
4 achieving their marketing and business goals. Building on social identity theory and identity-  
5 based marketing, this study demonstrates the effects of customer brand identification and peer  
6 identification on customer-to-customer value co-creation and competitor brand hate, which, both,  
7 influence customer social influence, experiential hedonic value, and repurchase intentions. These  
8 results suggest that consumption is interdependent with social factors and that customer social  
9 identification and interactions results in different feelings and behaviors among customers  
10 leading to favorable customer and brand outcomes.  
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22 This study shows how customer brand identification and peer identification can drive  
23 customer outcomes in favor of the brand through the effects both forms of identification have on  
24 value co-creation and competitor brand hate. This adds to the knowledge on customer  
25 identification in the brand management and relationship marketing literature and underlines why  
26 it is important for brands to focus on brand identification as well as peer identification to gain  
27 enhanced customer experience and unique competitive advantage. Identification extends the  
28 customer self by including brands and peer customers forming social groups that support each  
29 other to accomplish success. Concurrently, identification protects the in-group from competing  
30 outsiders. Thus, identification is not only responsible of making customers experience the  
31 successes and failures of the brand they identify with, but also responsible to make customers  
32 aware about the competition their brands are facing leading to them to hold hate feelings toward  
33 competitors. This in turn, drive customers to exert more social influence in support of the brand  
34 they identify with and get them to hold additional repurchase intentions to favor the brand.  
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51 Customer identification provides an important competitive advantage for brands  
52 operating in highly hostile markets and a resource for implementing successful value co-creation  
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3 strategies. The current study extends the knowledge on value co-creation by demonstrating the  
4 possibility of co-creating value between customers and fills part of the knowledge gap by  
5 identifying how value could be co-created among customers. From the customer perspective, it is  
6 clear that customers don't restrict value co-creation process to the co-creation taking place  
7 between customers and brands. For customers, value co-creation process is extended to include  
8 fellow customers who act as key actors of value co-creation in most of the socially dense  
9 services contexts. Relatively limited attention has been paid to date to services in which  
10 customer-to-customer interaction is one of the main causes of value creation.  
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22         Preceding research on brand hate has overlooked the concept of competitor brand hate,  
23 including its origins and consequences. This study shows that brands capable of building quality  
24 relationships with customers, particularly identity-based relationships, are in a better position to  
25 drive their customers to evoke feelings of hate toward competing brands, and, thus, indirectly  
26 engage customers in the competition brands face.  
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33         This study differentiates between self-expansion of customer brand identification and that  
34 of peer identification, taking into consideration the contingent role of customer individualism  
35 self-orientation since direct and interactive effects are found to result in various outcomes. The  
36 study demonstrates that individualism reduces the effects of customer brand identification and  
37 peer identification when the outcome is collective and social-based, as in the case of customer-  
38 to-customer value co-creation. These results are in line with prior studies that suggest  
39 individualists derive only a trivial part of their social identity from their group (Epitropaki and  
40 Martin, 2005; Triandis *et al.*, 1988). On the other hand, the effect of customer brand  
41 identification on competitor brand hate is stronger for individualistic and independent customers.  
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3 identity and that could be one of the reasons why the positive effect of brand identification on  
4 competitor brand hate is intensified when customers are more individualistic. Another  
5 explanation for this finding could be due to the reason that emotions are more prominently  
6 featured in individualists' decision making (e.g. Tsai and Bagozzi, 2014). This study highlights  
7 the importance of examining overlooked concepts including peer identification, customer-to-  
8 customer value co-creation, and competitor brand hate for their significance in the marketing  
9 literature.

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19 The results offered in this study add insights on why brands are required to manage their  
20 relationships with and among customers to drive identification-based bonds. Findings show that  
21 peer identification is effective in supporting value co-creation and provides additional insights  
22 into the relationships and collaboration taking place among customers above and beyond the  
23 effects of customer brand identification. For that, brands need to consider how they can better  
24 manage their customers' base by taking into consideration not only their relationships with  
25 customers and also the relationships customers have with each other. Brands operating in  
26 services context where dynamic and social consumption exists are at a unique advantage if they  
27 are able to benefit from the bonds formed and resources shared between customers. Brands are  
28 not anymore capable of ignoring the other actors in the market, specifically peer customers who  
29 based on this study are important actors in value co-creation, which in turn drives greater  
30 customer experiential hedonic value, social influence, and repurchase intentions.

### 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 **Managerial Implications**

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49 Certainly, stronger bonds characterized by the identification or oneness of customers with brands  
50 and other customers are required for successful implementation of relationship marketing  
51 strategies that can bring better results for customers and brands. The current study recommends  
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3 that brands need to adopt a new mindset about customers who identify with them and to think  
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5 about those customers as co-creators of value as well as social activists who have feelings of hate  
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7 for competitors and may participate in brands' competition against rivals. This implies that  
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9 managers need to focus on building relationships on the basis of customer brand identification  
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11 and peer identification.  
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15 Prior studies show that customer brand identification can be achieved by strengthening  
16  
17 brand positioning in the market, enhancing its quality, attractiveness, and distinctiveness, as well  
18  
19 as by providing additional value to customers and building trust with them (e.g. Donovan *et al.*,  
20  
21 2006; Homburg *et al.*, 2013; Hwang and Han, 2014). Brands should focus on their uniqueness  
22  
23 and prestige to evoke customer need for identification and belongingness. In addition, brands are  
24  
25 required to build their identities by conducting frequent brand audit that includes analysis and  
26  
27 refinement the brand positioning, maintaining direct and personalized communication channels,  
28  
29 providing unique value propositions, and focusing on originality elements. A brand with strong  
30  
31 and inimitable identity is likely to attract more identification from customers. At the same time,  
32  
33 brands must maintain a role in supporting peer identification among their customers. Peer  
34  
35 identification can be driven by ensuring more opportunities for engagement and interconnectivity  
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37 among customers and forming brand communities (e.g. Bagozzi *et al.*, 2012; Carlson *et al.*,  
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39 2008; Ho, 2015).  
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45 In social-based markets, managers are required to create and support the formation of  
46  
47 social communities around their brands. Brands have a novel role of community builders to  
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49 encourage relationships between customers and facilitate the formation of peer identification.  
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51 The more structured and customer centric communities a brand can build, the more it is likely to  
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53 foster peer identification and benefit from the relationships formed among customers to enhance  
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3 value co-creation that can improve customer experience, drive customer social influence in favor  
4 of the brand, and increase brand performance. Building customer communities around the brand  
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6 entails brands to motivate higher customer engagement, increase brand social presence, listen to  
7  
8 customers, and take their feedback into consideration.  
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12 Brands capable of creating relationships with customers based on the power of oneness  
13  
14 will be get the chance to build additional barriers against opponents through the hate customers  
15  
16 who identify with brand hold against competitors. Based on customer identification, brands are  
17  
18 able to gain additional advantage when competing with rivals. This is an additional consequence  
19  
20 of customer identification that brands need to build on in their competition with their rivals.  
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22 Marketing campaigns created by brands aiming at driving customer identification need to  
23  
24 highlight the importance of *oneness* created with customers. The campaigns need to  
25  
26 communicate with customers that it is not about the exchange relationship between customers  
27  
28 and brands only, but more importantly about belongingness between customers and the brand. In  
29  
30 their communications with customers, brands are encouraged to use sensation-rich and  
31  
32 idiosyncratic experiences to boost customer identification (Kumar and Kaushik, 2020).  
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38 Brands are encouraged to focus on the identification created between customers. For that,  
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40 brands need to start looking into the need to manage not only their relationships with customers,  
41  
42 but also the relationships among customers for the benefits such relationships hold. The brands  
43  
44 should encourage customers to congregate by using assembly and unity cues between customers.  
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46 For example, signage cues can be used to encourage customer groups to get together (e.g. we are  
47  
48 a family restaurant) (e.g. Martin, 1996). In addition, the campaigns need to stress on the point of  
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50 ‘We’ or ‘Us’ between customers and brands as well as between customers. In addition, the  
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52 campaigns should underscore the concept of ‘We’ or ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ to drive the antagonism  
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3 of customers against competing brands. For example, brands can emphasize the ‘We’ notion by  
4 standing with the local communities and help them tackle social, environmental, and political  
5 issues (e.g. natural and economic crises), and by supporting ways to unite customers. A brand is  
6 required to take all opportunities possible to unite customers. This shows customers the  
7 importance of the ‘We’ notion to the brand. For example, brands should work with charities or  
8 other non-profit, as a mean of cause marketing, to provide solutions to problems facing the  
9 society. Brands need not to just contribute through money but to incorporate social good directly  
10 in their mission. Moreover, brands need to focus on personal and engaging interactions with  
11 customers to increase their dependence on a given brand and its other customers.  
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24         Transparent and personalized communication through all possible touchpoints with  
25 customers should also be considered by brands. Most encounters with the customer will count  
26 toward increasing or decreasing her or his belongingness. Service brands are required to work on  
27 their servicescape in a way that encourages interactions between customers to favor value co-  
28 creation. Moreover, brands needs to think about creating and supporting brand offline and online  
29 communities to increase social interactions and cooperation between the customers and  
30 strengthen their efforts to co-create value together. In the case of restaurants, many digital tools  
31 (websites, social networking sites, mobile apps) can be utilized to encourage interaction between  
32 customers. For example, restaurants can follow the Chipotle brand strategy that includes getting  
33 friends to play “The Scarecrow” game produced by the brand. This can support identification  
34 between customers and enhance the consumption experience of customers and will drive  
35 collective service consumption facilitated by belongingness. Brands should recognize and listen  
36 to customers who highly identify with other customers. The power of social identification makes  
37 it clear that it is for the power of the group, which for brands in not the brand-customer group  
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3 only, but includes other customers who are key actors in a social and dynamic consumption  
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5 context.  
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8 While the study recommends that brands focus on building identity-based relationships  
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10 with and among their customers to drive better outcomes, brands can also organize their  
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12 marketing strategies to directly evoke competitor brand hate of their customers by means of  
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14 directly engaging customers in their competition with rivals. Brands need to communicate with  
15  
16 their customers that they can support them in their market competition. Again, marketing  
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18 campaigns should provide cues of identification among customers and the brand and underscore  
19  
20 the ‘We’ or ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ notion to drive customer hate toward rivals. Brands can benefit  
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22 from *comparative* marketing with their rivals as well as from the heated conversation between  
23  
24 brands on social networks sites and other media channels. As an example, Chipotle created a  
25  
26 television show “Farmed & Dangerous” to demonstrate their competition with other restaurants  
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28 and to highlight the uniqueness of its brand compared to competitors as well as the greater value  
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30 provided by its offerings. The competition a brand faces should be communicated with  
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32 customers who identify with the brand since they are likely to exert hate toward rival brands and  
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34 avoid them leading those customers to support the brand they identify with by creating content  
35  
36 and discussions to influence others including their friends to buy from the brand.  
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42 Brands need to communicate the important role customers play in supporting the value  
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44 co-creation strategies in place through the value customers can co-create with other customers by  
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46 means of participation, citizenship, and pro-social behaviors. This is important since some  
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48 customers don’t understand well the imperative role they can play as co-creators of value with  
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50 the brand as well as other customers. This is why brands need to observe and reward customers  
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52 who engage in value co-creation with other. Such acts are likely to highlight the appreciation and  
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3 importance of customers' efforts in supporting each other co-create value for their mutual  
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5 benefits. Furthermore, brands are required to work on their customer engagement strategies that  
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7 enhance customer participation in the different steps of the customer journey.  
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10 Customer-to-customer value co-creation is an important dimension of overall value co-  
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12 creation that leads to an increase in experiential hedonic value. Brands should expand on the  
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14 benefits co-created among customers to deliver improved service experience to customers.  
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16 Customer-to-customer value co-creation is about the extended experience of customers with  
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18 brands and has the power to drive customers to engage in social influence because it offers them  
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20 further social content to share based on the interactive experience they have with brands and  
21  
22 fellow customers. Furthermore, customer repurchase intentions increased when value co-creation  
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24 is evidenced among customers. This emphasizes the importance of other or fellow customers in  
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26 the purchasing decision process and the role of social gist in the overall service process.  
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28 Customer who co-create value with other customers are also marketers of brands' offerings.  
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30 While different perspectives exist on who takes role in creating value and how value is created  
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32 (Gummerus, 2013), exchanges among customers should be regarded as a major component of  
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34 value co-creation or destruction, with customer actions targeting peer customers for common  
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36 advantage. Brands need to think about customers as co-creators of value, not only with the  
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38 brands but also with other customers.  
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44 Although hate is generally an undesirable emotional state, this study shows that brands  
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46 experiencing strong competition should be interested in having their customers hold hate feelings  
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48 toward rival brands. This is because competitor brand hate drives favorable customer outcomes;  
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50 specifically, an increase in customer social influence and repurchase intentions. While the study  
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52 confirms that customers dine out at restaurants for hedonic needs (e.g. Hwang and Ok, 2013;  
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3 Ryu and Han, 2011), the results show that customers are motivated to revisit a given restaurant  
4 because of the hatred they have toward competing restaurants and when opportunities of co-  
5 creating value with other customers exist. This perspective suggests that the new strategies that  
6 some restaurants have recently begun implementing (e.g. Burger King's "Burn That Ad"  
7 campaign) can be effective if accompanied by increased feelings of hate toward rival brands. It is  
8 recommended that these strategies need to be accompanied by building identity-based  
9 relationships at the customer level.  
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19 Brands can increase competitor brand hate by building customer relationships based on  
20 social identification and sense of oneness. Competitor brand hate drives customers to engage  
21 more in customer social influence in favor of their chosen brand and to have higher customer  
22 repurchase intentions as they avoid buying from competitors. The fear of threat to customer  
23 one's self-concept leads customers who identify with a given brand to view rival brands as a  
24 potential cause of failure to their favorite brand and extended identities. For that reason, brands,  
25 especially restaurants, need to pay more attention to the role of customer identity and to move  
26 toward identity-based marketing, consumer behavior, and branding (e.g. Burmann *et al.*, 2009;  
27 Reed *et al.*, 2012).  
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40 Brands have to move toward implementing new tactics that can increase hate feelings  
41 their customers have for rivals. For example, a successful strategy could be to start social media  
42 competition with rivals and to get customers to engage in such virtual wars. This strategy is  
43 utilized by the social media team of Wendy's against their major competitors McDonald's and  
44 Burger King. During social media wars, customers are willing to engage and exert their social  
45 influence in favor of their brand and to defend it from competitors. The present study reveals that  
46 customer hate for competing brands is separated from the fun and enjoyment they experience  
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3 with their own brand since no relationship between competitor brand hate and experiential  
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5 hedonic value was found.  
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### 7 **Limitations and future directions**

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10 The data for this study was collected from diners. While the restaurant industry is representative  
11  
12 of other related service industries, future studies are encouraged to retest the relationships in new  
13  
14 contexts. Industries and contexts such as education (e.g. universities), sports (teams), and  
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16 technology (mobiles manufacturers) do drive high customer involvement and some of these  
17  
18 contexts exists in more socially condensed settings, which make it highly suitable for further  
19  
20 examination of some of the relationships and constructs in this study. It could be said that the  
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22 absence of empirical support for some of the relationships hypothesized in the study is due to the  
23  
24 specific nature of the study's context.  
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29 The technique implemented required customers to choose any restaurant which they had  
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31 a dining experience with during a specific time period. While this method permits greater  
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33 generalization within the restaurants context, it is important for future studies to examine specific  
34  
35 brands as well as targeted competitors of those brands. In this study, no endogeneity problem  
36  
37 was found because the competitor restaurant brand that respondents selected was not the one  
38  
39 they necessarily disliked but one of the competing brands to the brand they selected when  
40  
41 starting the survey. As shown in the Method section, the study took into consideration specific  
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43 survey design procedures that separated the naming of the competitor brand from the measure of  
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45 competitor brand hate. The descriptive statistics, including the means and standard deviations of  
46  
47 the latent constructs, demonstrate the suitability of the method applied.  
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52 In this study, the individualism construct was operationalized at the individual level and  
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54 as a single continuum that includes collectivism at the other pole (Hofstede, 1984; Hofstede and  
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3 Bond, 1988). Future research could examine the construct from various perspectives by  
4  
5 investigating the role of horizontal and vertical dimensions of individualism and collectivism  
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7 (e.g. Singelis *et al.*, 1995). Moreover, researchers are encouraged to conduct comparative studies  
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9 in culturally distinct countries. This may provide further understanding of the effects of customer  
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11 brand identification and peer identification as well as the moderating role of individualism.  
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15 Customer-to-customer value co-creation and competitor brand hate are two new  
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17 constructs introduced and examined in this study. Both constructs have role in the marketing  
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19 literature and should be examined in future research. While a quantitative approach was utilized  
20  
21 to address the relationships hypothesized, future studies may benefit from qualitative or mixed  
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23 methods approach to address related research questions. Finally, the measure of customer  
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25 repurchase intentions was based on subjective data. It is recommended that objective measures  
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27 (e.g. customer monthly spending) to be used to reexamine the consequences of customer-to-  
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29 customer value co-creation and competitor brand hate on brand performance.  
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Figure 1. Summary of customer identification main studies and research gaps

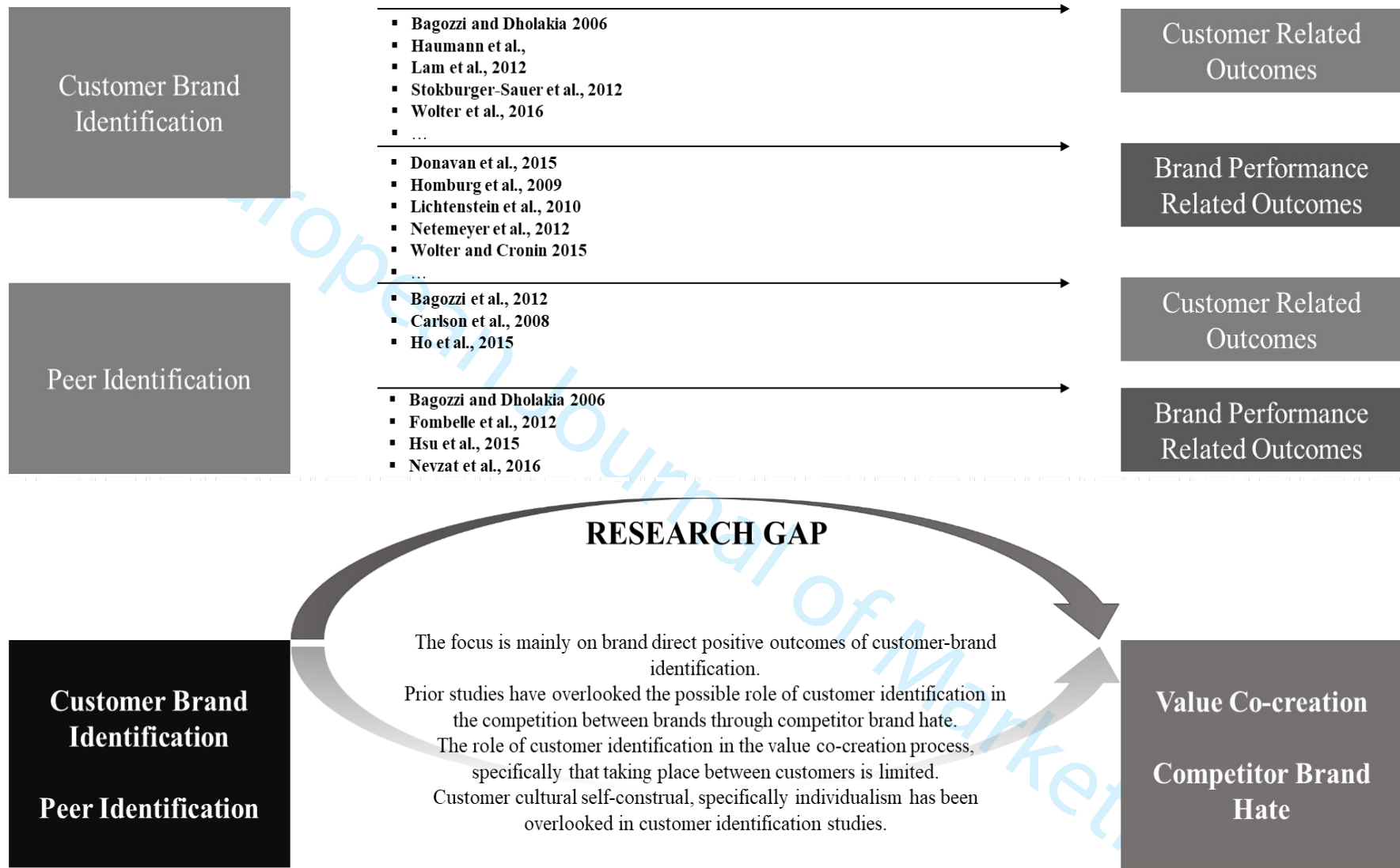
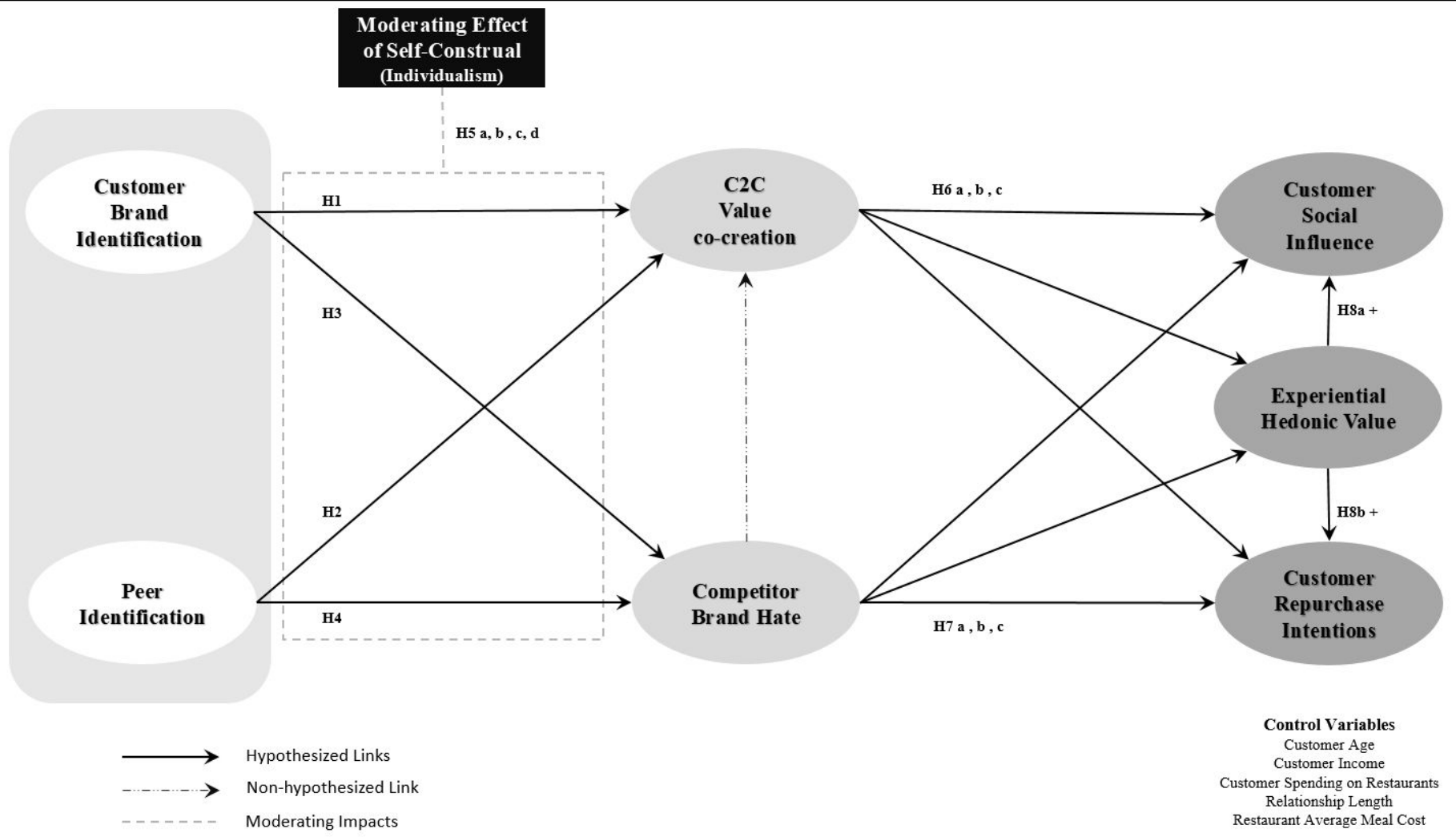
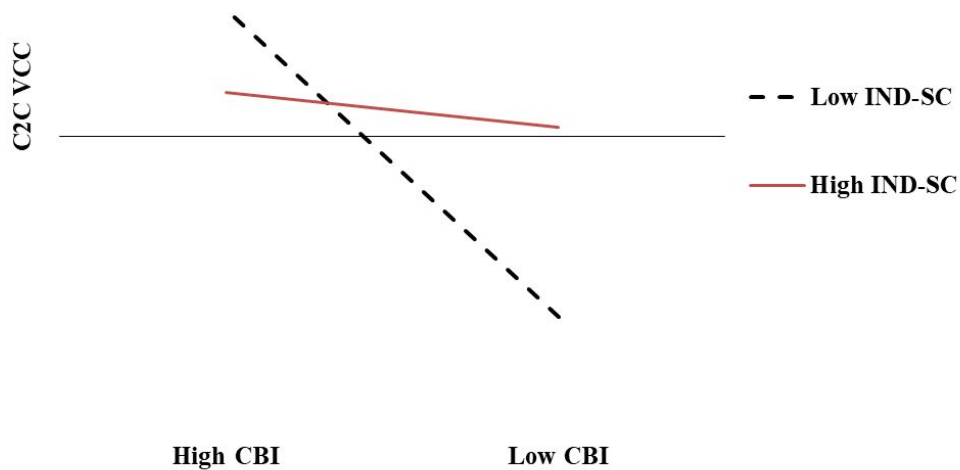


Figure 2. Conceptual model



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Figure 3. Moderating impact of individualism on the relationship between CBI & C2C VCC

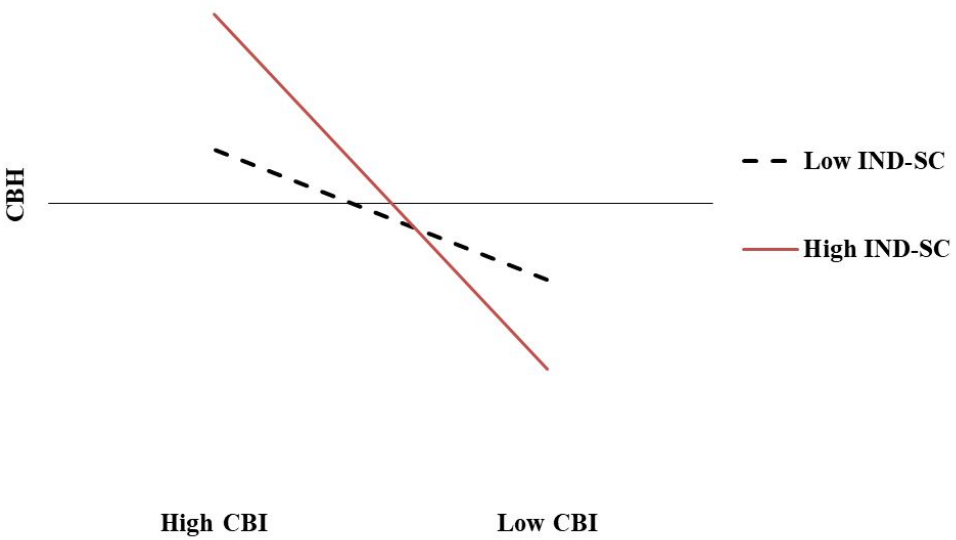


CBI: Customer brand identification  
 C2C VCC: Customer-to-customer value co-creation  
 IND-SC: Individualism self-construal

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Figure 4. Moderating impact of individualism on the relationship between CBI & CBH

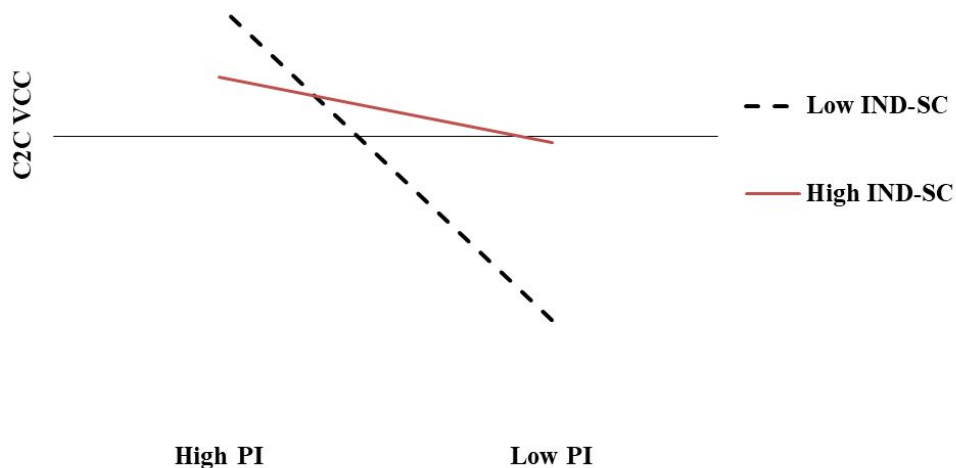


CBI: Customer brand identification  
 CBH: Competitor brand hate  
 IND-SC: Individualism self-construal

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Figure 5. Moderating impact of individualism on the relationship between PI & C2C VC-C



PI: Peer identification  
 C2C VCC: Customer-to-customer value co-creation  
 IND-SC: Individualism self-construal

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Table 1. Constructs and definitions

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Customer brand identification	The sense of oneness customer has with a brand (e.g., Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Mael and Ashforth, 1992)
Peer identification	The sense of oneness customer has with other customers of a given brand (e.g., Bagozzi et al., 2012; Fombelle et al., 2012; Mael and Ashforth, 1992)
Customer-to-customer value co-creation	Refers to behaviors such as, participation, citizenship, and pro-social behaviors that customers take and targeted toward co-creating value with other customers (e.g., Heinonen et al., 2010; Yi and Gong, 2013)
Competitor brand hate	An intense emotional reaction customers have toward competitors of a given brand (e.g., Hegner et al., 2017)
Individualism self-construal	A cultural orientation that defines one's self as independent, different from other, and self-sufficient (e.g., Hofstede, 1984; Markus and Kitayama, 1991)
Experiential hedonic value	The value customer experiences from gratification, excitement, fun, and enjoyment during the different consumption stages (e.g., Babin et al., 1994; Zhang et al., 2017)
Customer social influence	A form of customer engagement based on social persuasion that aim to influence positive attitudes and behaviors of current and potential customers in favor of enhancing the outcomes of the brand (e.g., Kumar et al., 2010; Thakur, 2018)
Customer repurchase intentions	The customer's intentions to buy again a service or product from the same brand (Hellier et al., 2003).

Table 2. Correlations and descriptive statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>1</b> <i>Peer identification</i>	.78											
<b>2</b> <i>Customer brand identification</i>	.66**	.78										
<b>3</b> <i>C2C value co-creation</i>	.55**	.41**	.80									
<b>4</b> <i>Competitor brand hate</i>	.21*	.53**	.21**	.89								
<b>5</b> <i>Experiential hedonic value</i>	.20**	.13*	.19**	.01	.79							
<b>6</b> <i>Customer social influence</i>	.48**	.47**	.57**	.26**	.32**	.77						
<b>7</b> <i>Customer repurchase intentions</i>	.24**	.22**	.33**	.17**	.34**	.44**	.73					
<b>8</b> <i>Income</i>	.08	.02	.12*	-.06	-.02	.03	.02	—				
<b>9</b> <i>Age</i>	-.04	-.08	-.03	-.12	.11*	-.20**	.12*	-.05	—			
<b>10</b> <i>Relationship length</i>	.05	.07	.03	-.07	.04	-.03	.14**	-.03	.18**	—		
<b>11</b> <i>Average restaurant meal cost</i>	.18**	.12*	.22**	.02	-.06	.15*	-.01	.20**	-.04	.01	—	
<b>12</b> <i>Customer average monthly spending</i>	.20**	.19**	.20**	.03	-.11*	.17**	.01	.41**	-.07	.08	.54**	—
<i>Mean</i>	3.63	3.42	4.07	3.92	5.76	4.51	5.47	64277	37.98	9.16	18.38	184.9
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	1.31	1.33	1.39	1.55	.96	1.32	1.01	41093	12.24	6.96	12.17	195.1

Diagonal elements are square roots of factors' average variance extracted. Income, average restaurant meal cost, and customer monthly average spending in restaurants are in \$.

Age and relationship length are in years. — Not applicable.

Significance level: \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01

Table 3. Results

Relationship	Linear effects model	Hypothesized model		
Customer brand identification → C2C VC-C	.27**	.29**		
Customer brand identification → Competitor brand hate	.44**	.41**		
Peer Identification → C2C VC-C	.36**	.32**		
Peer Identification → Competitor brand hate	.05	.06		
Customer brand identification x Ind-SC → C2C VC-C	—	-.23*		
Customer brand identification x Ind-SC → Competitor brand hate	—	.19*		
Peer Identification x Ind-SC → C2C VC-C	—	-.21*		
Peer Identification x Ind-SC → Competitor brand hate	—	.06		
Ind-SC → C2C VC-C	—	.09		
Ind-SC → Competitor brand hate	—	.04		
C2C VC-C → Experiential hedonic value	.24**	.24**		
C2C VC-C → Customer social influence	.58**	.58**		
C2C VC-C → Customer repurchase intentions	.27**	.27**		
Competitor brand hate → C2C VC-C	-.04	-.04		
Competitor brand hate → Experiential hedonic value	-.03	-.03		
Competitor brand hate → Customer social influence	.08*	.08*		
Competitor brand hate → Customer repurchase intentions	.12*	.12*		
Experiential hedonic value → Customer social influence	.26**	.26**		
Experiential hedonic value → Customer repurchase intentions	.27**	.27**		
	<i>Dependent variable</i>	<i>Experiential Hedonic value</i>	<i>Customer Social influence</i>	<i>Customer Repurchase Intentions</i>
<b>Covariate</b>				
Income		.03	-.08*	.03
Age		.10*	-.19**	.08
Relationship length		.02	-.03	.14**
Average spending on eating at restaurants		-.13*	.11*	-.01
Restaurant average meal cost		-.05	-.01	-.07

C2C VC-C = Customer-to-customer value co-creation, Ind-SC = Individualism-self construal.

Significance level: \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01

*Appendix A. Sample characteristics*

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	54.9
	Male	45.1
<b>Age-group (years)</b>	18-25	10.1
	26-35	44.6
	36-45	22.6
	46-55	10.6
	> 56	12.1
<b>Education Level</b>	High school graduate	10.1
	Some college but no degree	19.6
	Associate degree in college	12.6
	Bachelor's degree in college	42.1
	Master's degree	13.6
	Doctoral & Professional degree	2
<b>Income \$/Year</b>	< 20000	10.1
	20001 – 40000	21.8
	40001 – 60000	23.3
	60001 – 80000	18.1
	80001 – 100000	9.1
	> 100001	17.6
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	52.9
	Never Married	35
	Other	12.1
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Asian/Pacific Islander	9.6
	Black	5
	Hispanic	3
	White	80.9
	Other	1.5

## Appendix B. Measures, items' loadings, reliability, and average variance extracted

Measure	Loading
<b>Customer brand identification</b> <i>CR = .86; AVE = .61; Cronbach's alpha = .87</i>	
When someone praises [brand], it feels like a personal compliment	.74
I identify with [brand]	.62
When I talk about [brand], I usually say "We" instead of "It"	.89
[Brand's] success is my success	.76
When someone criticizes [restaurant], it feels like a personal insult	.83
<b>Peer identification</b> <i>CR = .86; AVE = .61; Cronbach's alpha = .85</i>	
I identify with [brand's] customers	.65
When someone praises [brand's] customers, it feels like a personal compliment	.82
To a certain degree, the customers of [brand] explain "who Am I"	.81
When I talk about [brand's] customers, I usually say "we" instead "they"	.84
<i>The customers of [brand] look similar to me</i>	
<b>Customer-to-customer value co-creation</b> <i>CR = .92; AVE = .64; Cronbach's alpha = .92</i>	
When I am at the [brand]...	
...I recommend some food items to other customers	.79
...I help customers choose their food items if they asked for my recommendations	.79
...I work with other customers to have the best dining experience	.72
...I try to interact with other customers if possible	.82
...I engage with other customers to get more benefits and value from eating at [brand]	.81
...I make sure to make other customers happy with the [brand]	.80
...I try to help other customers if possible	.86
<b>Competitor brand hate</b> <i>CR = .95; AVE = .79; Cronbach's alpha = .95</i>	
I don't like the food offered at the [competitor brand]	.75
I do not tolerate the competing [competitor brand]	.84
I hate the [competitor brand]	.97
I am disgusted by what the [competitor brand] provides	.96
The [competitor brand] is awful	.85
The world would be a better place without the [competitor brand]	.95
<b>Customer social influence</b> <i>CR = .86; AVE = .6; Cronbach's alpha = .84</i>	
I love talking about my experience with this [brand]	.88
I actively discuss this brand on different media platforms	.59
I am a part of this brand and mention it in my conversations	.77
I discuss the benefits that I get from this brand with others	.83
<b>Experiential hedonic value</b> <i>CR = .87; AVE = .62; Cronbach's alpha = .85</i>	
While eating at this restaurant, I am able to enjoy my time and forget my problems	.83
I have good time when I eat at this [brand]	.82
I enjoy eating at this [brand], not just for the food it has	.80
I continue to eat at this [brand], not because I had no other choice, but because I wanted to	.69
<b>Customer repurchase intentions</b> <i>CR = .78; AVE = .54; Cronbach's alpha = .73</i>	
I often eat at this [brand]	.75
I have been a customer of this [brand] for long time	.73
I seldom eat at other restaurants that offer similar food offered by this [brand]	.72
<b>Individualism self-construal</b> <i>CR = .86; AVE = .56; Cronbach's alpha = .83</i>	
I'd rather depend on myself than on others.	.83
Being a unique individual is important to me.	.75
I like sharing little things with my neighbors/friends (r)	.69
<i>It is not important to be useful to others.</i>	
I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group (r)	.70
Decisions reached in groups are better than those reached by single individuals (r)	.76

CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted. Items in italic are dropped from the analysis.