The Psychological Impact of University Brand Equity Using Firm Generated EWOM on Students' Satisfaction: The Moderating Effect of Gender

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Abstract— This study uses firm-generated "electronic word of mouth (eWOM)" and students' satisfaction to analyse the effect of university brand equity. Four aspects of brand equity—"awareness, positioning, perceived quality, and trustworthiness"—are examined by the conceptual framework. It also examines how gender influences the relationship between student satisfaction and institution brand equity. At Nile University in Cairo, Egypt, the study used an exploratory survey methodology with a sample of 295 students from its four schools of "business administration, computer science, engineering, and biotechnology". The study found that information shared on internal social media platforms, specifically Facebook Groups of the various schools, is regarded as being more reliable than information shared through conventional communication techniques. Additionally, it demonstrated that of the four components of brand equity, "Brand Trustworthiness" was the most important and best captured the happiness of Nile University students in the content produced by the university. The findings also suggest that "Brand perceived quality" and "Brand Trustworthiness" were affected by gender. It goes without saying that brand equity via company-generated content functions as a differentiator and a potent competitive advantage in the context of universities.

Index Terms—Brand Equity, Firm Generated Content, Students' Satisfaction, Gender.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the Higher Education context, a strong reputation and a positive UniBranding image work together to increase student satisfaction. Student satisfaction is a crucial research area in the competitive environment of university settings. It is necessary for institutions to recognize and take steps to improve the aspects that have a major impact on student satisfaction [1]. Brand Equity's primary dimensions, according to prior studies, are "brand awareness" and "brand image" [2] [3] [4][5]. Universities can use firm-generated eWOM (electronic Word of Mouth) to influence brand equity by including information on each faculty and highlighting the reputation of the various fields of study [6]. Despite the significance of a university's image and the significance of university brand equity, there is still a lack of study on brand equity and its drivers in higher education [2].[3][5] There hasn't been much study done on how eWOM affects university brand equity [8]. There has to be more research done on the "brand image" of universities as a major source of competitive advantage. Analysis of the influence of "brand image" and reputation on the level of student satisfaction across different geographic contexts and samples is required [1]. The impact of sociodemographic parameters like gender was also investigated in recent research on the drivers of brand equity [9]. Few studies have looked at how gender influences perceptions of quality, satisfaction, trust, brand performance, image, and intention linkages in university settings [10]. Thus, this paper aims to study the impact of university brand equity using firm generated eWOM on the level of students' satisfaction. The conceptual framework investigates four dimensions of the brand equity (awareness, positioning, perceived quality, and trustworthiness). It also proposes that the students' gender moderates the relationship between the university brand equity's dimensions using firm generated eWOM and the students' satisfaction. "The authors used an exploratory survey applying quantitative approach to collect data from a random sample of 295 university students with focus on students from the four years across the four schools (Business Administration, Computer Science, Engineering, and Biotechnology) at Nile University – Cairo, Egypt. This paper is structured into three main sections. At first, a review of the

literature presents relevant elements concerning university brand equity". The methodology and conceptual framework, results and statistical analysis are presented in the following part. The paper ends with the discussion and conclusion highlighting the research contributions and limitations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. University Brand Equity as a competitive advantage

The development and role of Brand Equity (BE) in the service context is way important than tangible products, especially due to the difficulty to evaluate its quality prior to utilization. What adds to its complexity is the difficulty to evaluate even after the service is delivered [7][11] classifies BE using different aspects such as "brand value, brand valuation, brand loyalty, and brand strength [12] and [13] focused on brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand associations". Moreover, [14] developed a service branding model with focus on brand communication and customer experience. In order to stand out in a competitive environment, universities are increasingly focusing on creating and controlling their "brand image" [15]. Brand equity's primary dimensions, according to earlier research, are "brand awareness" and "brand image" [2].[3][4] [5]. "Brand awareness" is the outcome of communication, promotion efforts, marketing initiatives, and word-of-mouth, and "brand image" is frequently acknowledged as a crucial factor in determining brand equity [2].

Brand Equity in Higher Education is one of the most significant services offered in any economy [2]. Universities are growing their investments and even assigning more competent resources to better manage their images [16]. One of the key strategic directions for universities to standout in a competitive landscape is to create a unique "brand image" to consequently influence potential students and university students' experience [14]. UniBranding is a contemporary marketing approach that aspires to attract, engage, and retain students and create a differentiating position for universities in higher education environment [17][10]. A mix of a good "brand image" and sound reputation will eventually contribute to students' satisfaction and brand loyalty, which contribute to universities competitive advantage.

B. eWOM and University Brand Equity

As stated by [18], word-of-mouth can be viewed as the dissemination of information about a product to other consumers. eWOM refers to when this occurs in the electronic context. In the literature, various forms of eWOM have been identified, including weblogs, discussion forums, social networking sites, rating websites, email, and websites for online reviews [19] [20]. "In terms of eWOM, it is essential to define the distinction between Firm Generated Content (FGC) and User Generated Content (UGC). FGC is communication that is controlled by a brand, whether it is a marketer or a brand representative" [21]. UGC is communication that users make themselves. As a result, the brand has no authority over it [22]. "FGC is best defined as the direct sharing of information created by businesses through their official social media sites in any format [23]. This technique seeks to create a communication channel between the brand and a new market of consumers as well as to provide conversation starters that could foster bonds between the brand and its new customers as well as between the consumers themselves [24]. Students in Higher Education Institutes (HEI) are increasingly using social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook. They perceived firm-generated eWOM as being more reliable and reputable than user-generated eWOM [8]. Marketers must realize how FGC affects consumer behavior and gain insights into how brand presentation affects consumer perceptions and behavior" [24] [25].

Universities are consistently working to improve their brand equity. The usage of social media channels mixed with traditional channels will support promoting performance factors, satisfaction, trust, and university performance and image, thus achieving positive behaviors from the different target segments [26] [27]. Previous research has overlooked the eWOM of higher education institutions as such this research fosters the importance of firm generated eWOM on the creation and leverage of universities brand equity.

C. Brand Equity's dimensions using eWOM

"Brand awareness" and "brand image" are the two main components of brand equity, per previous studies. [2][3][4][5] The result of communication, promotion activities, marketing campaigns, and word-of-mouth

advertising in higher education is "brand awareness" [2] [12] [13] [28]. The creation of the appropriate communication tool is vital to enhancing the university's brand position and managing its brand equity [29]. To affect brand equity, universities can leverage eWOM produced by businesses. Efforts to promote the eWOM produced by the company may be made by the faculties' and universities' marketing departments [6]. According to [30] the accessibility of information about the university influences awareness and, consequently, perceptions of the university brand.

According to research on brand equity, factors influencing "brand image" include social image, and market position [12]. The significance of brand positioning strategy, promotion and brand identity for Brand Equity in the Higher Education context was underlined by [31]. "brand image" also includes the perceived service quality [12] which is considered a crucial factor influencing Brand Equity [29][30][32] the five underlying aspects of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy should be used to measure service quality overall [33]. An important element that influences the university's overall "brand image" is service quality. Universities must focus on the quality of the services they provide to build a favorable reputation for the institution and raise student satisfaction levels in a market that is fiercely competitive [1]. Brand loyalty and perceived quality are strongly impacted by firm-generated eWOM [22][34]. The use of social media can improve the appeal and image of a brand [35]. The reputation and image of universities have been established as significant determinants of how consumers perceive the "brand image" [2]. A strong reputation and a positive UniBranding image work together to increase student satisfaction, which eventually encourages brand loyalty [1].

"The level of trust that the institution exudes toward its students is another important factor that can contribute to the creation of a positive "brand image". According to [36] trust in the context of brands refers to the consumer's confidence in the brand's ability to live up to his expectations in terms of consumption". Additionally, it is the conviction that an institution will behave in the interests of the customer and that it is reliable [37] [38]. Students' perceptions of trust in the setting of universities are influenced by the degree of confidence that students have in the administration, instructors, and staff to meet their expectations. Universities with competent teachers and staff, dependable services, and responsive employees have higher levels of student trust in the university's resources [39]. Information on social media is seen by consumers as being more trustworthy than information distributed through conventional commercial communication methods [40][41].
Most students use student blogs and social media sites like Facebook and YouTube to learn more about what it's like to be a student [42]. For instance, [8] have demonstrated how customer perceptions of authenticity are used to filter university promises made on social media sites. HEIs are urged to offer more information and help to prospective students given that negative eWOM may have greater detrimental effects on the pre-purchase stage than the post-purchase stage. [6]. The conceptual framework and research hypotheses presented in the following section were deduced from the literature review. Additionally, gender was revealed as a significant moderating factor between the relationships of performance, value, intention, satisfaction, and loyalty in the service context [43] [44]. Recent research on the determinants of brand equity examined the effect of sociodemographic factors like gender [9]. Few studies have looked at how gender influences perceptions of quality, satisfaction, trust, brand performance, image, and intention linkages in university settings [10]. Hence, the conceptual framework also proposes that the students' gender moderates the relationship between the university brand equity's dimensions using firm generated eWOM and the students' satisfaction.

III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the research is to study the impact of university brand equity's dimensions (awareness, positioning, perceived quality, and trustworthiness) using firm generated eWOM on the level of satisfaction of Nile University's students. It also explores the moderating effect of gender in the relationship between university brand equity and students' satisfaction. The researchers used an exploratory survey applying quantitative approach to collect data from a sample of 295 university students with focus on students from the four years across the four schools ("Business Administration, Computer Science, Engineering, and Biotechnology") at "Nile University – Cairo, Egypt. Sample was randomly selected from the four schools".

A. Data Collection Method

The survey was conducted at Nile University addressing the four schools, as previously explained across the four years of study. The survey was announced via the social platforms of Nile University. 325 questionnaires were filled but reduced to 295 as will be explained in the analysis section.

B. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (figure 1) is developed based on literature review on Brand Equity in relation to Higher Education Institutes to test the hypotheses that university brand equity reflected in firm generated eWoM positively affects student satisfaction. According to this literature review, the university brand equity includes four main dimensions: awareness, positioning, perceived quality, trustworthiness. The conceptual framework also proposes that the students' gender moderates the relationship between the university brand equity's dimensions using firm generated eWOM and the students' satisfaction.
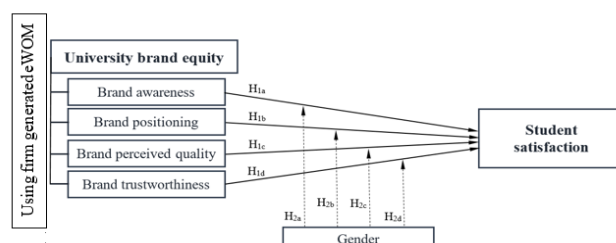

Fig. 1 Conceptual framework developed by the authors

Research hypothesis

H1: University brand equity using firm generated eWoM positively affects student satisfaction

H1a: University "brand awareness" using firm generated eWoM positively affects student satisfaction

H1b: University brand positioning using firm generated eWoM positively affects student satisfaction

H1c: University brand perceived quality using firm generated eWoM positively affects student satisfaction

H1d: University brand trustworthiness using firm generated eWoM positively affects student satisfaction

H2: Student's gender moderates the relationship between university brand equity using firm generated eWoM and student satisfaction

H2a: Student's gender moderates the relationship between university "brand awareness" using firm generated eWoM and student satisfaction

H2b: Student's gender moderates the relationship between university brand positioning using firm generated eWoM and student satisfaction

H2c: Student's gender moderates the relationship between university brand perceived quality using firm generated eWoM and student satisfaction

H2d: Student's gender moderates the relationship between university brand trustworthiness using firm generated eWoM and student satisfaction

C. Research Analysis

A total of 325 undergraduate Nile University students participated in the study. No missing values with reported in the dataset, yet for data cleaning purposes and to eliminate suspicious response patterns (i.e., straight-lining) sample was reduced to 295 observations [45][46]. Accordingly, the authors have run the statistical analysis using 295 unit as valid sample size. The descriptive analysis is presented in Table (I):

TABLE I

PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Demographic Variable	Total sample $n = 295$	
	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	153	51.9
Female	142	48.1

Year of Study		
Freshman	55	18.6
Sophomore	80	27.1
Junior	96	32.5
Senior	64	21.7
Schools		
Business Administration	184	62.4
Engineering and Applied Sciences	44	14.9
Biotechnology	51	17.3
Information Technology and Computer Science	16	5.4
Information Source		
Internal social media platforms (Facebook Groups)	148	49.2
University Website	59	19.6
University Instagram page	43	14.3
University LinkedIn page	16	5.3
Friends and relatives	17	5.6
Email	7	2.3
University YouTube channel	4	1.3
University staff	4	1.3
WhatsApp groups	3	1.0

As observed in Table (I) almost half of the respondents are male (51.9%). Students from all academic levels have participated; out of which almost a third (32.5%) are juniors. The four schools of the undergraduate programs were represented (Business Administration, Engineering & Applies Sciences, Biotechnology, and Information Technology and Computer Science) with the majority of participants (62.4%) being Business Administration students. Finally, with regards to information source used as university generated content; internal social media platforms (i.e., Facebook Groups) are considered the most important source of information about Nile University from the students' perspective.

Assessment of measurement model: *"In order to test the research hypothesis and to assess the measurement model assessment, the partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to estimate the path model using the statistical software SmartPLS, version 3.2.9 [47]. Table (2) shows the PLS statistical findings related to the constructs' measurement model"*.

TABLE III

PLS RESULTS FOR THE MEASUREMENT MODEL

Constructs and indicators	Convergent validity			Internal consistency reliability	
	λ	λ^2	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha
"brand awareness"			0.719	0.885	0.805
Awareness_1	0.839	0.704			
Awareness_2	0.870	0.757			
Awareness_3	0.835	0.697			
Brand positioning			0.65	0.881	0.822
Positioning_1	0.781	0.610			
Positioning_2	0.824	0.679			

	λ	λ²	AVE	CR	
Positioning_3	0.809	0.654			
Positioning_4	0.810	0.656			
Brand perceived quality			0.772	0.871	0.705
Quality_1	0.870	0.757			
Quality_2	0.887	0.787			
Brand trustworthiness			0.825	0.904	0.789
Trustworthiness_1	0.896	0.803			
Trustworthiness_2	0.920	0.846			
Student satisfaction			0.723	0.887	0.810
Satisfaction_1	0.871	0.759			
Satisfaction_2	0.864	0.746			
Satisfaction_3	0.815	0.664			
Note(s): λ stands for outer loadings; λ² denotes indicator reliability; AVE refers to average variance extracted; and CR is the composite reliability					

The results in Table (II) confirm the internal consistency reliability of all the measures as the composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha are greater than 0.70 for all constructs [48].

"The findings also reveal that all outer loadings (λ) exceed the threshold value of 0.708. All indicators reliability (λ^2) are above the required minimum level of 0.50 [45][46]. The indicator "Positioning_1" (outer loading: 0.781) has the smallest indicator reliability with a value of 0.610, while the indicator "Trustworthiness_2" (outer loading: 0.920) has the highest indicator reliability with a value of 0.846".

Moreover, the "average variance extracted (AVE)" for all constructs are greater than the generally accepted value of 0.50. These results provide clear indication of the convergent validity of the constructs included in the model [45][46]. Moreover, one item, Positioning_4, has been dropped from the "Brand positioning" scale due to having outer loadings below the accepted value of 0.708, and the deletion of this item increased the average variance extracted and composite reliability of its respective construct [49]. The structural and measurement models' final estimates are shown in Figure (2).
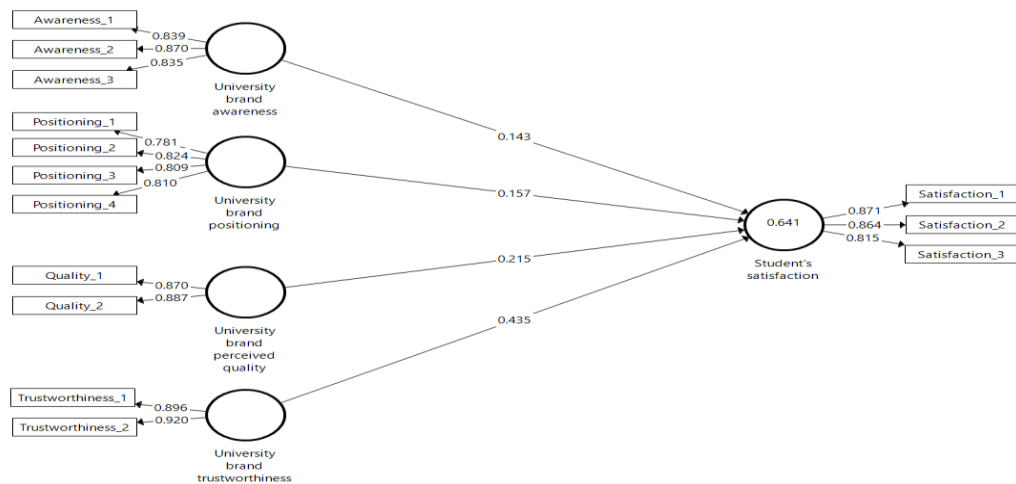

Fig. 2 Structural and measurement model's final estimates

"Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, as shown in Table (III), with the square root of the constructs' AVE on the diagonal and the correlations between the constructs in the lower left triangle. The square roots of the AVEs for constructs are all higher than the correlations of these constructs with other latent variables in the path model. Accordingly, results support the discriminant validity of the constructs [50]".

TABLE IIIII

PLS RESULTS OF FORNELL-LARCKER CRITERION AND CORRELATION MATRIX OF CONSTRUCTS

	Awareness	Positioning	Perceived quality	Trustworthiness	Satisfaction	AVE
Awareness	0.848					0.719
Positioning	0.645***	0.806				0.650
Perceived quality	0.412***	0.462***	0.879			0.772
Trustworthiness	0.553***	0.599***	0.664***	0.909		0.825
Satisfaction	0.574***	0.609***	0.635***	0.751***	0.850	0.723
Note(s): The square root of AVE values is shown on the diagonal; nondiagonal elements are the latent variable correlations, *** Correlation coefficient is significant at $p < 0.001$						

Descriptive Statistics: Table (IV) represents the mean and standard deviation values of all variables under study. As shown all research constructs have mean values that significantly differ from the neutral option of the 5-point Likert scale (i.e., 3) at $p < 0.001$. These results imply that, on average, undergraduate Nile University students surveyed have positive attitudes derived from the firm generated content (NU) along the four dimensions of the brand equity (i.e., awareness, positioning, perceived quality, and trustworthiness) and are also satisfied with their university.

TABLE IVV

Research sample attitudes toward variables under consideration

Research variables	One-Sample Statistics		One-Sample Test (Test value = 3)			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	Std. Error	*t*-value	*p*-value
"brand awareness"	3.539	1.053	0.539***	0.061	8.792	< 0.001
Brand positioning	4.048	0.905	1.048***	0.053	19.902	< 0.001
Brand perceived quality	3.595	1.088	0.595***	0.063	9.394	< 0.001
Brand trustworthiness	3.381	1.151	0.381***	0.067	5.692	< 0.001

Student satisfaction	3.653	1.004	0.653***	0.058	11.168	< 0.001
Note(s): *** Mean difference is significant at the 1% level						

Moreover, Based on the correlation matrix shown in Table (III), the results revealed a strong positive and significant relationships at p < 0.01 between each of the four dimensions of the university brand equity (i.e., awareness, positioning, perceived quality and trustworthiness) on one hand and student satisfaction on the other, $r > 0.49$ [51].

On the other side, we can detect that of the four dimensions of the university brand equity, "Brand trustworthiness" correlates the most with student satisfaction. Therefore, it is expected that this dimension will best predict Nile University students' satisfaction.

Looking at the independent variables (i.e., awareness, positioning, perceived quality, and trustworthiness), we can deduce that the highest correlation is between "Perceived quality" and "Trustworthiness", which is significant at a 0.01 level ($r = 0.664$, $p < 0.001$).

Assessment of the structural model and hypotheses testing results: As suggested by [52] and [46] and to evaluate the structural model, the researchers relied on a systematic approach as a reliable and valid measurement model.

At the beginning, the researchers assessed collinearity among the predictor constructs (i.e., awareness, positioning, perceived quality, and trustworthiness) using the "Variance Inflation Factor, VIF, as shown in Table (V). All VIF values are below the threshold of 5; accordingly, collinearity among the predictor constructs does not constitute a problem in the structural model" [49].

TABLE V

Variance inflation factor for collinearity assessment

Constructs	VIF
"brand awareness"	1.850
Brand positioning	2.015
Brand perceived quality	1.811
Brand trustworthiness	2.332

Furthermore, the structural model path coefficients have been measured using the bootstrapping procedure with 5000 subsamples [52]. Table (VI) indicates the PLS results for the structural model and sum up the first hypothesis testing (H1) results.

TABLE VI

PLS results for structural model

Hypotheses	Path	Path coefficient	Standard error	$|t|$ value	p-value	R^2	f^2	Rank	Hypotheses testing results

H_{1a}	Awareness	—	Satisfaction	0.143***	0.050	2.852	0.004		0.031	4	Supported
H_{1b}	Positioning	—	Satisfaction	0.215***	0.057	3.798	0.000		0.034	2	Supported
H_{1c}	Perceived quality	—	Satisfaction	0.157***	0.055	2.837	0.005		0.071	3	Supported
H_{1d}	Trustworthiness	—	Satisfaction	0.435***	0.054	8.059	0.000		0.225	1	Supported
								0.641			

Note(s): *** Path coefficient is significant at the 1% level.

Moreover, the second hypothesis investigates if there is a significant impact of the four dimensions of university brand equity (i.e., awareness, positioning, perceived quality, and trustworthiness) on student satisfaction based on gender. By comparing PLS path models estimates across the two sub-groups of gender (Male/ Female) as a categorical moderator. To do so, we depended on the Multigroup Analysis (MGA), a modified version of the two independent-samples t-test [49]. Table (VII) shows PLS-MGA results for the second hypothesis (H2).

Table VII
Multigroup Analysis (MGA) results

Hypotheses	Path			Path coefficient		Male vs Female		
				Male	Female	Path coefficient difference	*p*-value	Hypotheses testing results
H_{2a}	Awareness	—	Satisfaction	0.192	0.064	0.128	0.191	Not Supported

H$_2$b	Positioning	$\rightarrow$	Satisfaction	0.110	0.195	-0.086	0.402	Not Supported
H$_2$c	Perceived quality	$\rightarrow$	Satisfaction	0.122	0.385	-0.263**	0.019	Supported
H$_2$d	Trustworthiness	$\rightarrow$	Satisfaction	0.504	0.315	0.189*	0.088	Supported
Sample size				153	142			
Note(s): ** and * refer to statistical significance at the 0.05 and 0.10 levels, respectively.								

The central criterion for evaluating the structural model is the coefficient of determination R². The results displayed in Table (VI) reflect a moderate R² for student satisfaction with a value of 0.641 [53]. Such R² values verify the model's predictive accuracy because it is greater than the recommended 0.10 [54].

Regarding the first hypothesis (H1), the results shown in Table (VI) indicate that "Brand trustworthiness" has the strongest significant positive effect on "Student satisfaction" (path coefficient= 0.435, t= 8.059, p < 0.001), which confirms (H1d). This result is followed by "Brand positioning" (path coefficient= 0.215, t= 3.798, p < 0.001), which supports (H1b) followed by "Brand perceived quality" (path coefficient= 0.157, t= 2.837, p < 0.01), which supports (H1c). However, ""brand awareness"" (path coefficient= 0.143) shows the lower path coefficient, with a t value of 2.852 and a significance level of p < 0.01, which supports ((H1a). Hence, these findings fully validate the first hypothesis (H1).

Finally, we evaluated the effect size f² which affirms the key role of "Brand trustworthiness" on "Student satisfaction" (f²= 0.225) which is considered medium [51][52].

With regards to the second sub-hypothesis (H2), the results in Table (VII) show that the effect the students' gender differ significantly specially with "Brand perceived quality" (path coefficient difference= -0.263, p < 0.05) where it has a higher effect on female student satisfaction. This result supports (H1c) and confirms the effect of the gender as a moderating factor between brand perceived quality and Nile University students' satisfaction. Moreover, the same results shown in Table (VII) reveal that the effect of "Brand trustworthiness" on "Student satisfaction" varies significantly based on the student's gender (path coefficient difference= 0.189, p < 0.10). That is, brand trustworthiness has a higher effect on male student satisfaction. This result supports (H1d) and provides evidence for the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between brand trustworthiness and Nile University students' satisfaction.

Contrary, no evidence was found to support the moderating variable representing the gender as shown in Table (VI) mediating the relationship between university "brand awareness" and positioning from one side and the student satisfaction from the other side. These results lead to rejecting (H1a) and (H1b). Hence, the second hypothesis (H2) was partially substantiated regarding the moderating effect of gender on the relationships between brand perceived quality and brand trustworthiness one side and students' satisfaction from the other side.

CONCLUSION

Research investigating the importance of university image and the determinants of Brand Equity within the context of Higher Education is still scarce [2][3][5]. Moreover, little has academically investigated the relationship between e-WOM and universities brand equity aside the work of [8]. The purpose of this research is to study the impact of university brand equity using firm generated eWOM on the level of satisfaction of Nile University students. University Brand Equity was reflected in the four dimensions (Awareness,

positioning, perceived quality, trustworthiness). It also explored the moderating effect of gender in the relationship between university brand equity and students' satisfaction.

As stated by [8] students in Higher Education institutions perceive firm-generated eWOM as being more reliable and reputable than user-generated eWOM. In addition, [25] and [24] argue that marketers must recognize the effect of FGC and how it influences consumer behavior and perception. This is aligned with the research findings where internal social media platforms namely Facebook Groups of the different schools (Business Administration, Engineering & Applies Sciences, Biotechnology, and Information Technology and Computer Science) within Nile University are considered the most important source of information from the students' perspective (Firm Generated Content). It is also supported by the output of [35] stating that the use of social media can improve the appeal and image of a brand.

Moreover, the work of [40] and [41] stating that information on social media is perceived as being more trustworthy than information communicated through traditional commercial communication methods is confirming the results detecting that of the four dimensions of the university brand equity, "Brand trustworthiness" was the most significant and best predict Nile University students' satisfaction through eWOM and firm generated content. The same is supported by the work of [8] who revealed how customer perceptions of authenticity are used to filter university promises made on social media sites. In addition, [36] revealed that the level of trust that the institution emanates toward its students is another important factor that can contribute to the creation of a positive "brand image".

The research results also showed a high correlation between "Brand positioning" followed by "Brand perceived quality" on students' satisfaction which is aligned with the work of [22][34] stating that Brand loyalty and perceived quality are strongly impacted by firm-generated eWOM. The results suggest that the gender also moderated both "Brand perceived quality" and "Brand Trustworthiness". It was deduced that "Perceived Quality" has a higher effect on female student satisfaction, and "Brand Trustworthiness", has a higher effect on male student satisfaction as communicated by firm-generated eWOM. From the four dimensions of BE results showed that "brand awareness"" appears to have the lower impact.

Consequently, a strong reputation and a positive "brand image" impact positively students' satisfaction, which aligns with the results of [1]. Investing in university brand equity and giving high attention to eWOM through firm generated content affects students' satisfaction and acts as a differentiator and powerful competitive advantage. This research has some limitations, out of which the sample is deduced from one university, further development could support a larger group and wider institutions. As initially showed in our results, gender acts as a differentiator with two of the dimensions of Brand Equity which can be further explored on a larger sample. Moreover, extending the sample to prospective students can be further explored.

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