CO-CREATION OF BRANDS: A BIBLIOMETRICS ASSESSMENT OF

EXISTING LITERATURE

CO-CREATION OF BRANDS: A BIBLIOMETRICS ASSESSMENT OF

EXISTING LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the theoretical foundation of literature and describe research trends and themes on the topic of co-creation of branding. To do so, we introduce a bibliometrics assessment of current literature. With bibliometrics software we analyze a dataset retrieved from the Scopus database. The results suggest that the foundation of the literature can be traced to ideas that challenge previous fundamental views in marketing and value creation. Alongside the theoretical foundations we are through bibliographic coupling able to identify four coherent themes within the field of research, (1) The shift from traditional to online marketing, (2) Stakeholder engagement, (3) Experience and Value Co-creation, and (4) Co-creation through social media. The study is an introductory bibliometrics assessment which will allow further research on the topic.

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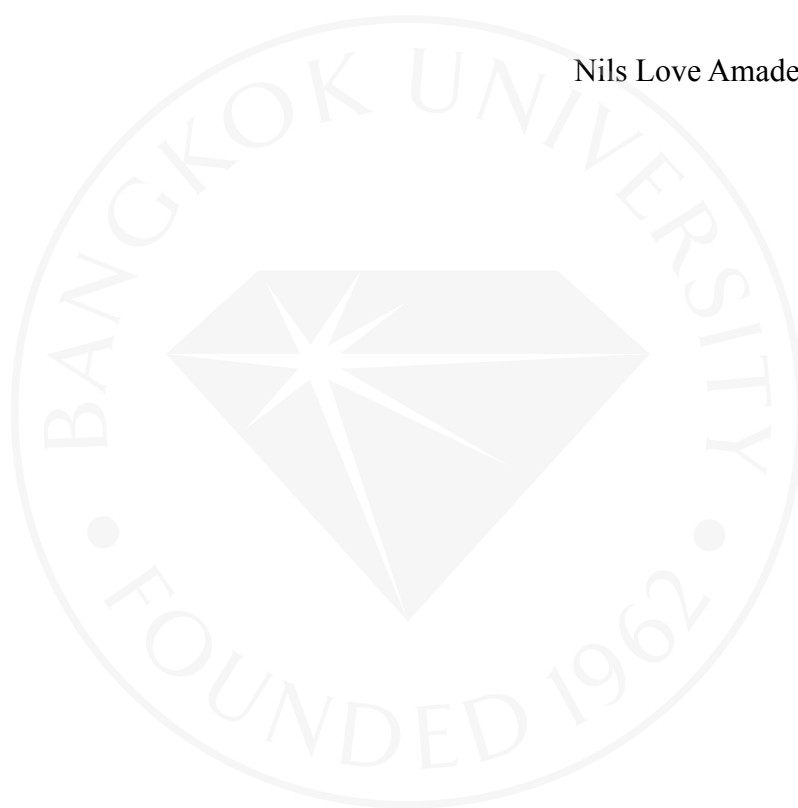
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The term bibliometrics was was introduced by Prichard (1969). A bibliomteric analysis uses statistical methods to examine publications and the method has gained a large amount of traction since it was introduced. Until now, no bibliometrics assessment on the topic of co-creation of brands has been conducted. The closest related publication is a bibliometrics assessment on co-creation of value in business (Alves H, Fernandes, Raposo, 2016)

Since the early 2000s, when co-creation of value was introduced by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2002, 2004), it has become a popular topic in management literature. During the same period, Vargo and Lusch (2004) introduced the concept of service-dominant logic suggests that value in business is now co-created by companies and customers. Value co-creation applied to branding is just one application among others, such as marketing, innovation, retail, and service (Thomas, Hammedi, & Poncin, 2016) to name a few. Kumar and Kandoi (2018) describes co-creation as open innovation for consumers and argues that brands who implement it gains a competitive advantage.

This study is introducing a bibliomterics assessment on the topic co-creation of brands and is focusing on finding the theoretical foundation and describing the research trends and themes.

1.2 Problem Statement

Embarking on research in any topic and in our particular case the topic of co-creation of brands require a literature review. Literature reviews describing the foundation of literature and trends in the research area are time consuming to perform. With the introduction and release of bibliometrics software there are now tools and methods to complement and speed up the process of literature reviews. In addition, with these software tools, researchers are now able to describe and visualize the existing literature in ways which were not possible before. In many cases, researchers are not aware of these tools that are freely available to them and the benefits they can bring to their research.

1.3 Intention of Study

The study is intended to work as an introduction and a foundation for future and more extensive bibliometric studies within this field of study which hopefully will identify areas for future research efforts on the topic of co-creation of brands.

1.4 Research Objective

The research objective of this independent study is to introduce a bibliometrics assessment of existing literature on the topic co-creation of brands. The study will focus on describing this relatively new field of study based on identifying theoretical foundations of the literature through co-citation networks and introducing the most

impactful documents and authors. The study also seeks to describe trends and themes of the literature based on bibliographic coupling.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to systematically perform the study, there are two main research questions that we try to answer.

1. Which authors and documents have laid the theoretical foundations within the field of study?

2. What are the research trends and themes within the field of study?

1.6 Scope of Study

This bibliometric study will cover documents available through the Scopus database, which is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature in the world (www.scopus.com). Additionally, the study will take advantage of two freely available softwares to perform the bibliometrics assessment. The first software is Bibliometrix, which is a tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis through Rstudio (www.bibliometrix.org). The second software is VOSviewer, which is a tool developed by researchers at Leiden University in Netherlands to construct and visualize bibliometric networks (www.vosviewer.com).

1.7 Benefits of Study

This study will benefit researchers with an interest in co-creation of brands. Similar to a literature review this study will be able to describe the existing literature on the topic, the foundation of the field and the trends within the field of study. This will make it easier for researchers to effortlessly identify documents relevant to their research, impactful documents and the foundation within the field of research. There is also an explicit intention of this study to introduce the concept of bibliometrics assessment to fellow researchers by illustrating the software tools available and the possibilities researchers have to utilize these tools within their own research.

1.8 Limitations of Study

The study will not cover search results from academic databases other than Scopus, such as Web of Science or Google Scholar. The bibliometric study also is limited to the search query selected by the author. Therefore, any decisions taken by the author to limit the search query or exclude documents can be questioned. This also includes the keywords used in the search query, where there might be arguments for inclusion of synonyms or other related words and terms.

The study is also limited by being an independent study, hence the intention for this study to be a foundation and starting point for a more extensive bibliometric study on the topic.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brands

Brand and branding definitions by brand scholars have constantly evolved during the last century. In modern times, prominent brand scholar Aaker (1996) defined a brand as a set of assets and liabilities linked to a brands name or symbol that adds or subtracts value in consumers minds. While marketing author Philip Kotler and the international leader in the study of brands Kevin Lane Keller describes it as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (Kotler, & Keller, 2006).

However, these views of brands as just identifiers have more recently evolved. Brand scholars have now started to consider more dynamic processes of branding with an increasing focus on stakeholders other than the companies themselves Merz, He, Vargo, 2009). Ballantyne and Aitken (2007) states that brands are now dynamically formed through social interactions and the value of a brand is in consumers minds. Research on brand communities around popular brands have also emerged, (Merz et al., 2009) indicating that the image surrounding brands are now formed through co-creation with brand communities.

2.2 Co-creation

Co-creation is a joint and collaborative process of value creation between stakeholders. This study however, will not focus on the definition of co-creation, but co-creation of value as a concept. The concept of value co-creation was first popularized in management literature by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2002, 2004). They argued that there was a shift in consumer attitudes, the willingness to influence companies in every part of the business system. With an increasing number of channels and tools for interaction consumers are now able to and want to co-create value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). This idea of company-centric value creation moving towards personalized co-creation experiences developed a new paradigm in management literature (Galvagno & Dalli, 2014).

In parallel, Vargo and Lusch (2004) introduced service-dominant logic as a concept as opposed to goods-dominant logic. This logic suggests that value in business is increasingly being co-created by companies and stakeholders. They emphasized a shift in marketing through resource exchanges by all stakeholders. These two contributions has heavily influenced marketing scholars since their introduction.

2.3 Co-creation of brands

Several scholars discuss stakeholders as being co-creators in the brand building process of companies. Research is pointing in the direction that consumers play increasingly important and active roles in this process. Merz et al., (2009) are among

the most prominent scholars to discuss co-creation of brands. Based on the ideas from Vargo and Lusch (2004) that marketing is evolving to a new service-dominant logic, they apply this to branding. This evolving brand logic would mean that the value of a brand is now co-created between a company and its stakeholders. Merz et al., (2009) demonstrates this with four brand eras (1) 1900s-1930s: Individual Goods-Focus Brand Era, (2) 1930s-1990s: Value-Focus Brand Era, (3) 1990s-2000: Relationship-Focus Brand Era, and, (4) 2000 and Forward: Stakeholder-Focus Brand Era. They argue that brand literature has moved from an output focus to a process focus.

Furthermore, Hatch and Schultz (2010) are establishing connections between Prahalad and Ramaswamy's work and builds connections with branding literature. They find that stakeholders engagement is increasing, which will ultimately lead to a new paradigm of brand governance.

Ind and Bjerke (2007) also discuss co-creation in their book on brand governance and the importance of viewing customers as equals and not subordinates. However, they highlight that there are problems since co-creation means sharing the control of the brand.

2.4 Bibliometrics assessment

Bibliometrics assessments have been undertaken since the early 1970s since the term bibliometrics was coined by Prichard (1969). Many scholars have undertaken bibliometrics assessments covering numerous fields of studies. However, only a very limited number of studies cover bibliometrics assessments related to co-creation and branding. Through Scopus we find two studies that are relevant to this study.

Alves et al., (2016) performes a bibliometric analysis to identify the contexts of the usage of the term co-creation of value in business and management. They conclude that co-creation is a driver of business innovation in e.g. new product development and brand experience. Additionally, they conclude that there are gaps in the existing research. The second document we find through the Scopus database is Pohlmann & Kaartemo (2017). They conduct a bibliometric analysis describing the trajectories associated with service-dominant logic. Their research reveals four trajectories of research within the service-dominant logic domain (1) value co-creation, (2) Resources, (3) Brands, & (4) Innovation. They also support these findings with empirical findings from service-dominant logic scholars obtained from interviews.

By widening the scope and focusing only on bibliometrics assessments in the co-creation domain and removing branding from the equation we find an additional 13 documents. The earliest published in 2013. Indicating that there is room for further bibliometrics assessments on many variations of topics related to co-creation, not only branding.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Method

A bibliometric review method for collecting data from the Web of Science (WoS) database outlined by Kovacs, Van Looy, & Cassiman, (2015) also adapted and cited by Van Oorschot, Hofman, & Halman, (2018) is followed for the document selection of this bibliometric study. Although we are collecting data from the Scopus database the different steps remain relatively the same. The method is as follows:

1.   Determine search query

2.   Evaluate documents

3.   Analysis in Bibliometrix (RStudio) and VOSviewer

4.   Interpret results

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Determine a search query	Evaluate documents **Manually scan** • Titles • Keywords • Abstracts in all clusters	**Bibliometric Analysis** **Bibliometrix (RStudio)** • Annual Scientific • Production Impactful Authors & Documents • Most Relevant Sources **VOSviewer** • Co-citation Analysis • Bibliographic Coupling	Interpret results
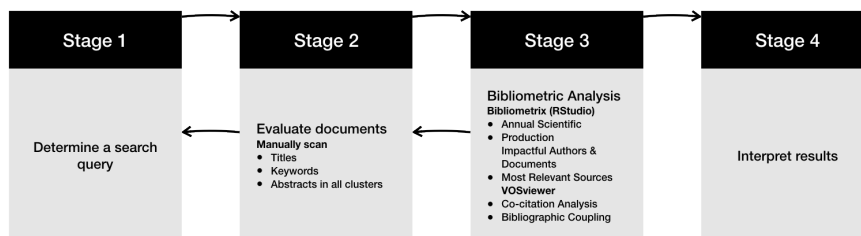
Figure 3.1: Bibliometric Review Method

After the selection of a search query during the first stage the process moves to stage two which is the evaluation of the documents. The documents will first be evaluated based on manually scanning the titles of all downloaded documents and second by extracting all the keywords with Bibliometrix (RStudio). If the evaluation of the documents after these two processes is not satisfactory the search query will be adjusted to achieve better results and the evaluation process will be repeated. The third evaluation which includes scanning the abstracts of all clusters can only be done after bibliometric analysis has been performed in stage three. After the bibliographic coupling in stage three all documents that are clustered are therefore evaluated based on their abstracts. We evaluate only the clustered documents since these are the documents that are most relevant to this study. If the clusters include documents that are not satisfactory within the domain of study the search query will be adjusted and the entire process will be repeated again. When results are satisfactory after stage three they will be interpreted for this independent study.

3.2 Search Query

The goal of the selected search query was to be broad in order to get a substantial pool of results but not so broad so that it would include synonyms or other related words to the search terms we are interested in. The systematic review of the documents is based on the PRISMA statement from Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, (2009). However, we do not have to consider all aspects of the PRISMA flow diagram. The considerations we ignore is the duplication stage, since we only retrieve

documents from one database. We also ignore the assessment of full-text articles since the dataset is too large for the scope of this independent study and in addition the full-text articles are not available to us through Scopus. The search query that is developed include different spelling variations of co-creation as well as alternative endings for both co-creation and brand. The initial search query for the Scopus database therefore is as follows, "co-creat*" OR "cocreat*" OR "co creat*" AND "brand*". Titles, abstracts and keywords are included in the search. The dataset was collected on May 31, 2019 and results were downloaded in .csv and .bib files. Results are downloaded in a .csv format to be interpreted and analyzed by VOSviewer, while the .bib format is used for Bibliometrix (RStudio).

A first result from the search gave 514 document results as seen in figure 3.2. The earliest document from the data set is published in 2003 and the latest in 2019. To narrow the search to relevant documents the search was further limited to subject areas of research including Business, Management and Accounting, Social Sciences, Economics, Econometrics and Finance, Computer Science, Arts and Humanities, Decision Sciences, and Psychology. The search query was also limited to only documents published in English, to only include documents that have been double peer reviewed, document types were limited to articles and conference papers which have been published in journals and conference proceedings. Lastly documents that have been published during 2019 were excluded, this since the data would be incomplete for some analyses. The final number of documents ended at 314.
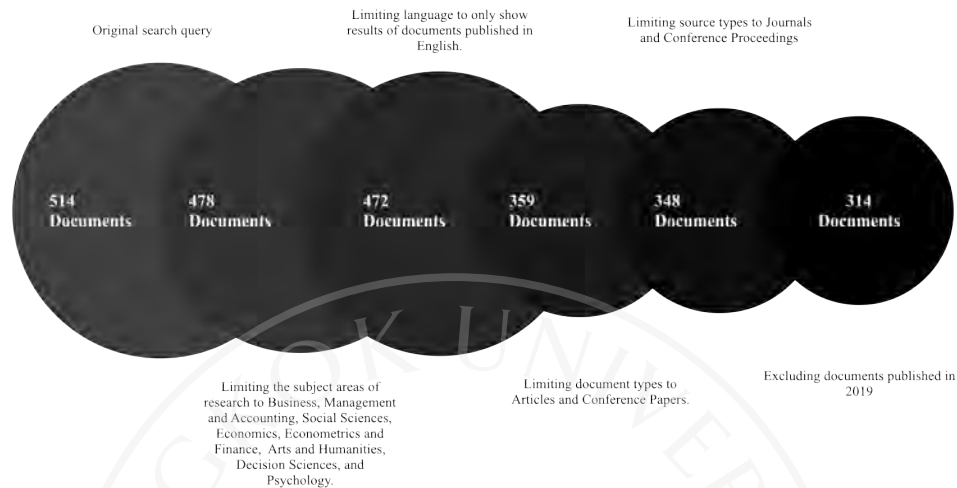
Figure 3.2: PRISMA Flow Diagram (Systematic Review of Documents)

The final Scopus search query was: (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("co-creat*") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("co creat*") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("cocreat*") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("brand*")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ARTS") OR LIM-IT-TO (SUBJAREA , "DECI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "PSYC")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "cp")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j") OR LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "p")) AND (EXCLUDE (PUBYEAR , 2019))

Table 3.1: PRISMA Flow Diagram (Systematic Review of Documents)

		Limitations & Exclusions	Documents
1	**Original search query**	None	514
2	**Subject areas**	After a first unsuccessful data extraction based on keyword evaluation documents were limited to subject areas of Business, Management and Accounting, Social Sciences, Economics, Econometrics and Finance, Arts and Humanities, Decision Sciences, and Psychology.	478
3	**Language**	Documents were limited to only show results published in English for the data to be understood by the researcher.	472
4	**Documents types**	Documents were limited to only include Articles and Conference papers to only include results that are peer-reviewed.	359
5	**Source types**	Documents were limited to only include results from Journals and Conference proceedings to exclude duplications if a document has been published in another source e.g. as a book chapter.	348
6	**Publication year**	Since the year 2019 is not completed, we exclude documents that are published after 2018. This since some of our analysis e.g. Annual Scientific Production requires documents from a complete year to be interpreted.	314

3.3 Evaluate Documents

This step ensures that the documents exported from Scopus to the dataset for the bibliometrics assessment are relevant to the co-creation of brands field of study. The process includes a manual scan of the keywords of all documents within the dataset. This process led to a revision of a previous initial search query which included the subject area of computer science which proved to have documents which were irrelevant to this bibliometrics assessment.

3.4 Analysis in Bibliometrix (RStudio) and VOSviewer

The third step includes analysing the Scopus data with Bbliometrix (RStudio) and VOSviewer.

Bibliometrix (RStudio) is developed by the Department of Economics and Statistics at University of Naples Federico II in Italy and builds data matrices from

imported bibliographic data. Bibliometrix (RStudio) is in this study used to create figures and tables to get an overview of the Scopus dataset. The study uses Bibliometrix (RStudio) to export data for the annual scientific production, the most cited documents and the documents with the highest average citations per year, and information about the top journals in the field. It is also used to export the most frequently used words in the abstracts of each cluster in order to build wordclouds to describe the clusters built by VOSviewer.

VOSviewer is used to visualize bibliometric networks from the Scopus dataset. The study uses VOSviewer to visualize and analyze the theoretical foundation of the field of study by co-citation networks of references. The study also uses VOSviewer to discover trends and themes through bibliographic coupling. Through the bibliographic coupling VOSviewer creates clusters of documents which are manually analysed and exported for further analysis to better describe these clusters.

3.5 Interpret Results

The fourth and final step is to analyze and interpret the outputs from Bibliometrix (RStudio) and VOSviewer, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Annual Scientific Production

Figure 4.1 shows the annual scientific production since 2003. The annual growth rate is 32.24%, indicating that the field of research is in a or reaching a maturing phase. From 2003 to 2008 the annual number of publications were less than ten. Between 2009 and 2014 the annual number of publications averaged 17.17 documents. By 2016 the number of publications increased to 55 documents and the number of annual publications have been stable since, which might indicate a maturing phase.
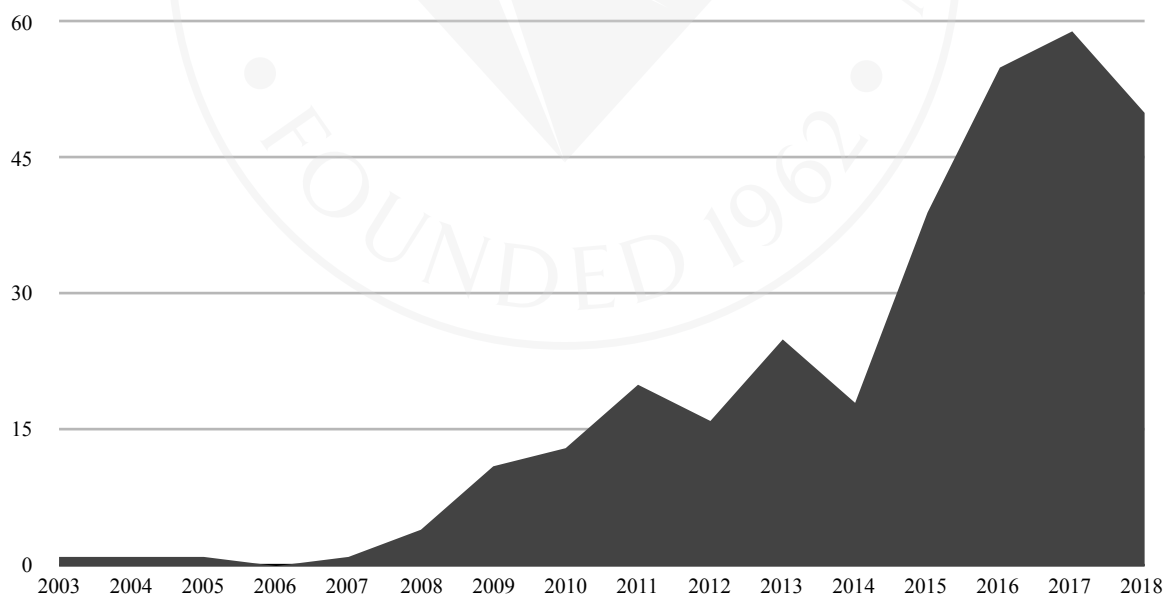

Figure 4.1: Annual Scientific Production

Table 4.1: Annual Scientific Production

Year	2003	2004	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Articles	1	1	1	1	4	11	13	20	16	25	18	39	55	59	59

4.2 Impactful Authors and Documents

The total 314 documents in the dataset have an average of 29.79 citations. Even though 203 of the 214 documents have been published during the past four years, only 36 of the 314 documents (11.46%) have not yet been cited. Table 4.2 shows the documents with the 10 most cited articles and the 10 articles with the highest citations per year.

Table 4.2 Total Document Citations (Top 10 Documents)

	Document	Title	Total Citations
1	**van Doorn J et al., 2010**	Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions	803
2	**Brodie R.J et al., 2013**	Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis	740
3	**Ostrom A.L et al., 2010**	Moving forward and making a difference: Research priorities for the science of service	689
4	**Hanna R et al., 2011**	We're all connected: The power of the social media ecosystem	547
5	**Brown S et al., 2003**	Teaching old brands new tricks: Retro branding and the revival of brand meaning	515
6	**Merz M.A et al., 2009**	The evolving brand logic: A service-dominant logic perspective	293
7	**Nambisan S et al., 2009**	Virtual customer environments: Testing a model of voluntary participation in value co-creation activities	292
8	**Fournier S et al., 2011**	The uninvited brand	281
9	**Payne A et al., 2009**	Co-creating brands: Diagnosing and designing the relationship experience	273
10	**Tynan C et al., 2010**	Co-creating value for luxury brands	220

In table 4.3 we can see that nine of the ten most cited documents also enter the list of the highest average citations annually. This indicates that with the exception of Kamboj, Sarmah, Gupta, and Dwivedi, (2018) there have not been any major breakthroughs in the field. In fact all ten most cited documents and nine out of ten documents with the highest average citations annually have been published by 2013 or prior. This is another indication that the field of study is experiencing a maturing phase,

which should maintain if there are no new important discoveries that gain research interest.

The ten most impactful documents together accumulate 4,670 citations which is an immense 49.94% of the total 9,353 citations of the dataset. This is especially notable since these ten documents only account for 3.18% of the documents within the dataset. This also explains why other documents have difficulties entering the list the ten documents with the highest average citations annually.

Table 4.3: Average Document Citations Per Year (Top 10 Documents)

	Document		TC	TC per Year
1	**Brodie R.J et al., 2013**	Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis	740	123.333
2	**van Doorn J et al., 2010**	Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions	803	89.222
3	**Ostrom A.L et al., 2010**	Moving forward and making a difference: Research priorities for the science of service	689	76.556
4	**Hanna R et al., 2011**	We're all connected: The power of the social media ecosystem	547	68.375
5	**Kamboj et al., 2018**	**Examining branding co-creation in brand communities on social media: Applying the paradigm of Stimulus-Organism-Response**	**47**	**47**
6	**Fournier S et al., 2011**	The uninvited brand	281	35.125
7	**Brown S et al., 2003**	Teaching old brands new tricks: Retro branding and the revival of brand meaning	515	32.188
8	**Merz M.A et al., 2009**	The evolving brand logic: A service-dominant logic perspective	293	29.3
9	**Nambisan S et al., 2009**	Virtual customer environments: Testing a model of voluntary participation in value co-creation activities	292	29.2
10	**Payne A et al., 2009**	Co-creating brands: Diagnosing and designing the relationship experience	198	28.286

4.3 Most Relevant Sources in the Field

There are a total of 165 sources that have published documents in our Scopus dataset. Table 4.4 provides the top ten sources that have published the most articles within the field.

Additionally, Bibliometrix (RStudio) allows us to analyse the sources through Bradford's law. Bradford's law is a tool to objectively select the most central information sources in a field (Hjørland and Nicolaisen, 2005). The results from the analysis shows that the top ten sources with the most articles published are also the core sources.

Table 4.4: Most Relevant Sources

Source	Articles
Journal of Business Research	28
Journal of Product and Brand Management	17
Journal of Marketing Management	10
Industrial Marketing Management	9
Business Horizons	8
Journal of Brand Management	8
European Journal of Marketing	7
Marketing Intelligence and Planning	7
Marketing Theory	7
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	5

4.4 Co-citation Analysis of References

To analyze the foundation of literature within the co-creation of brands domain a bibliometric network based on co-citation analysis of references is visualized with VOSviewer. A co-citation analysis measures how frequently two documents are cited together (Small, 1973). VOSviewer displays output in distance-based maps. Distance-based maps are used to visualize relationships between items from a dataset, where a closer distance represents a stronger relationship (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). Within the Scopus dataset of 314 documents there are a total of 17,613 cited references. Since we are only interested in the most impactful references we restrict

the bibliometric visualization to only show references with a minimum of ten citations. With this restriction, 41 references meet the threshold and are visualized in Figure 4.2.
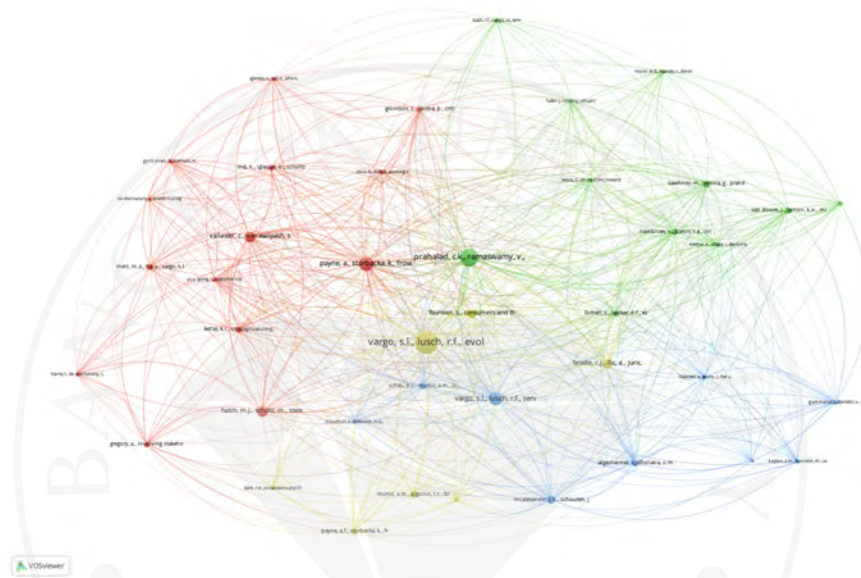
Figure 4.2: Co-citation Analysis of References

In Figure 4.2, every circle represents a document that is referenced a minimum of ten times by all documents from the Scopus dataset, the size of each circle represents how often a document is referenced by the documents from our dataset (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). The closer the distance between two circles represents the likelihood of these two documents being co-cited (Kovacs et al., 2015). Additionally, according to Kovacs et al., (2015) the optimization algorithms in VOSviewer's places the documents with most connections in the center of the visualization while less con-

nected documents are found in the periphery. Therfore, we focus on the documents that are located in the central area of the visualization.

4.4.1 The Theoretical Foundation of the Field

It is eminent that not a single author or publication has laid the foundation of the field of study as seen in figure 4.2. From the few documents which appear to have laid the foundation, two clearly stand out. These are a publication on service-dominant logic from Vargo and Lusch (2004), which has had a strong impact in terms of citations and central location in the network visualization. Along with a publication on co-creation experiences from Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004). A document on co-creating brands from Payne, Storbacka, Frow, Knox, (2009), is also centrally located in the visualization but since it is included in our Scopus dataset we will ignore this document since we want to focus on documents from outside of our dataset. Fournier (1998) talks about consumer research and also has a central location but lacks impact in terms of citations in relation to the previously mentioned publications. The most impactful foundation is therefore traced to the emergence of the concepts of service-dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) and personalized co-creation experiences (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). What these two documents have in common and what might describe why they have had more impact than others is the fact that they both challenge a traditional models and systems while proposing alternative solutions. Here follows two excerpts from the abstracts of both papers:

"Marketing inherited a model of exchange from economics, which had a dominant logic based on the exchange of goods, which usually are manufactured output. The dominant logic focused on tangible resources, embedded value, and transactions. Over the past several decades, new perspectives have emerged that have a revised logic focused on intangible resources, the cocreation of value, and relationships." (Vargo & Lusch 2004)

"The traditional system of company–centric value creation (that has served us so well over the past 100 years) is becoming obsolete. Leaders now need a new frame of reference for value creation. In the emergent economy, competition will center on personalized co–creation experiences, resulting in value that is truly unique to each individual." (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004)
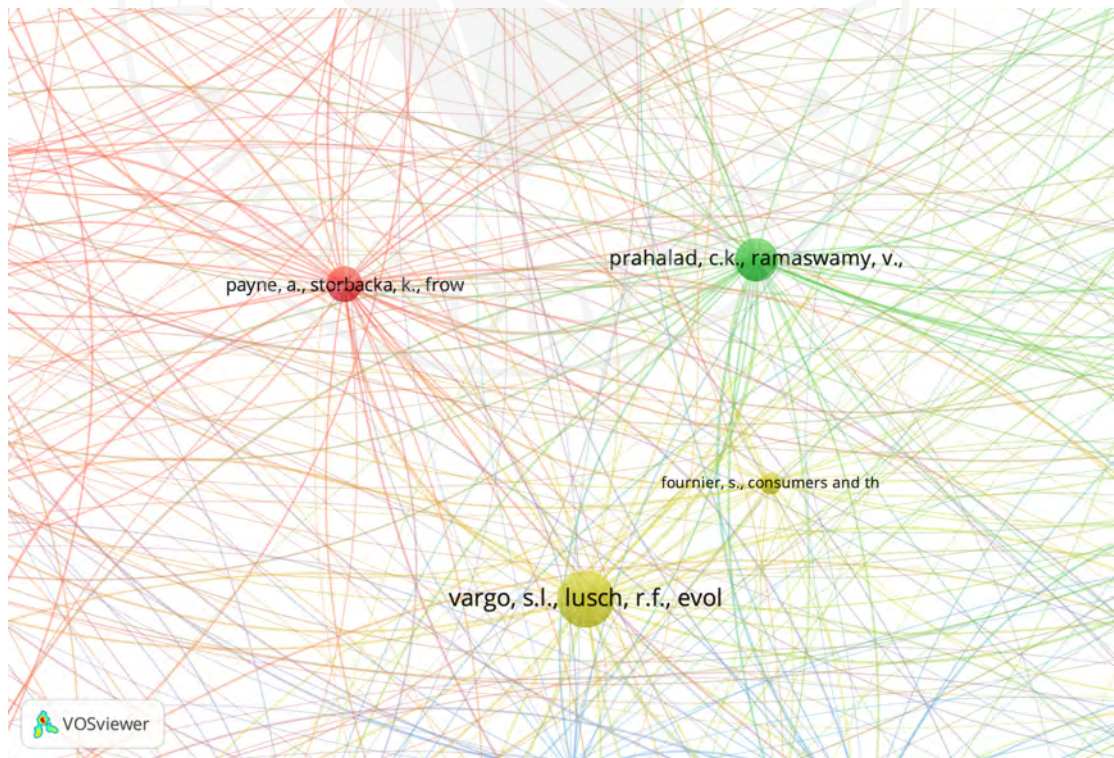

Figure 4.3: Co-citation Analysis of References (Zoom)

4.5 Bibliographic Coupling

Bibliographic coupling of documents is used to interpret the research trends of the all the documents within the Scopus dataset. Bibliographic coupling is a concept which indicates a relationship between two scientific documents. The relationship is established when two papers share one reference (Martyn 1964). The bibliographic coupling is performed with VOSviewer and in order to organize the documents in clear and identifiable clusters, we set a restriction of a minimum of 25 citations to limit the amount of documents in the visualization and create clear clusters. Out of the 314 documents, 67 meets this threshold. The largest set of connected documents is 66, which is what is visualized in Figure 4.4. The result of the bibliographic coupling is four clusters. Cluster 1 (red) and cluster 2 (blue) are relatively coherent, while cluster 3 (blue) and cluster 4 (yellow) have some overlap and are slightly less coherent than cluster 1 and 2. As seen in cluster 4, 2 documents, Fournier and Avery (2011) and Hanna R, Rohm A, Crittenden, (2011), both published in the journal Business Horizonz, are placed relatively distant from the other documents in the cluster.
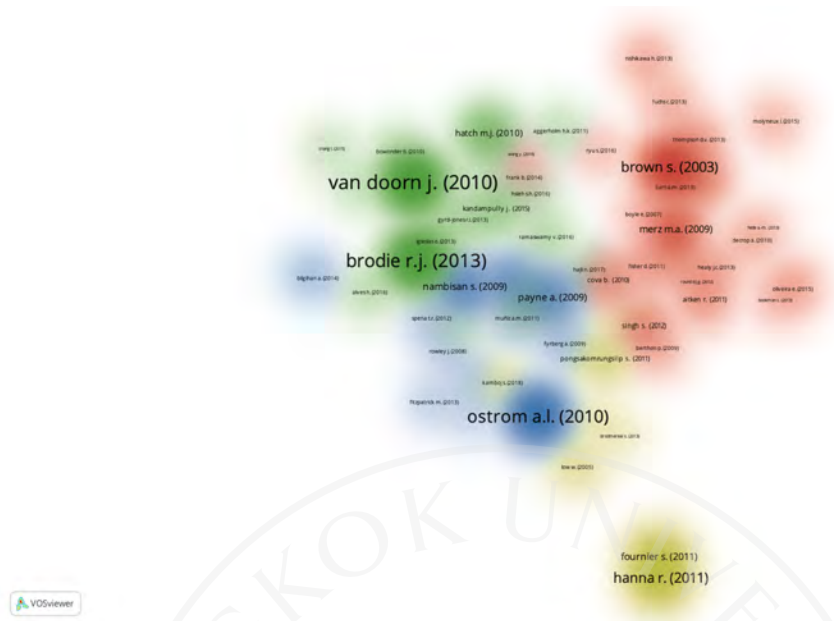
Figure 4.4: Bibliographic Coupling of Documents (Cluster Density)

4.5.1 Naming the Clusters

In order to better understand the clusters visualized by VOSviewer and name them differently we follow a process of three steps; (1) theme identification based on document titles within the VOSviewer visualization, (2) wordclouds based on frequently used words from document abstracts, and (3) cluster analysis based on document abstracts.

During the first step we identify themes based on the visualization of documents by looking at the titles of the papers. When we can see indications of themes we label these areas on the visualization with keywords. The goal of this first step is to get a wider understanding of different themes within the complete bibliographic coupling network before describing the clusters individually. Figure 4.5 shows which

keywords and themes that were identified within the visualization by looking at the titles of the documents.
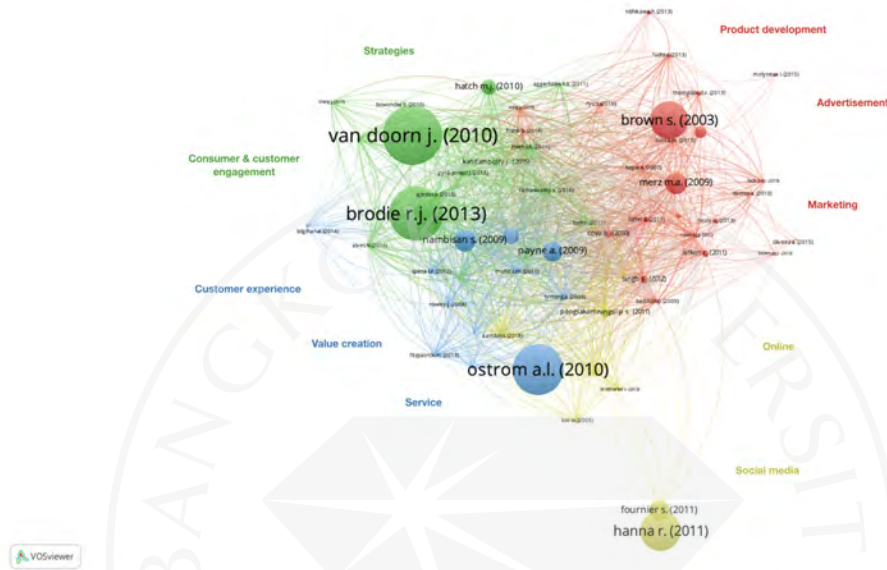
Figure 4.5: Bibliographic Coupling of Documents (Title Themes)

The second step of the process is a method inspired by Alves et al., (2016) where we extract the most frequently used words from the abstracts with Bibliometrix (RStudio). We choose the most frequently used words from the abstracts since it is readily accessible for export through Bibliometric (RStudio) and results from extract-ing the author's keywords do not give us enough variety to describe the clusters. After the most frequently used words from the abstracts are exported for each cluster we eliminate words based on our scopus search query, which means all words that fall under brand*, co-creat*, co creat* and cocreat*. We also eliminate academic words that are common across the clusters Alves et al., (2016) such as paper, study, article

and findings. We eliminate both the words from the search query and the academic

words in order to get a better understanding of the clusters since these words would

overcrowd the wordclouds and making them less distinguishable. After the elimina-

tion of these words we select the 100 most common words in every cluster for the

wordclouds. The wordclouds are created using a wordcloud website (www.word-

clouds.com) and the scale is set to negative 25 for all clusters in order to display all

words within each cluster.
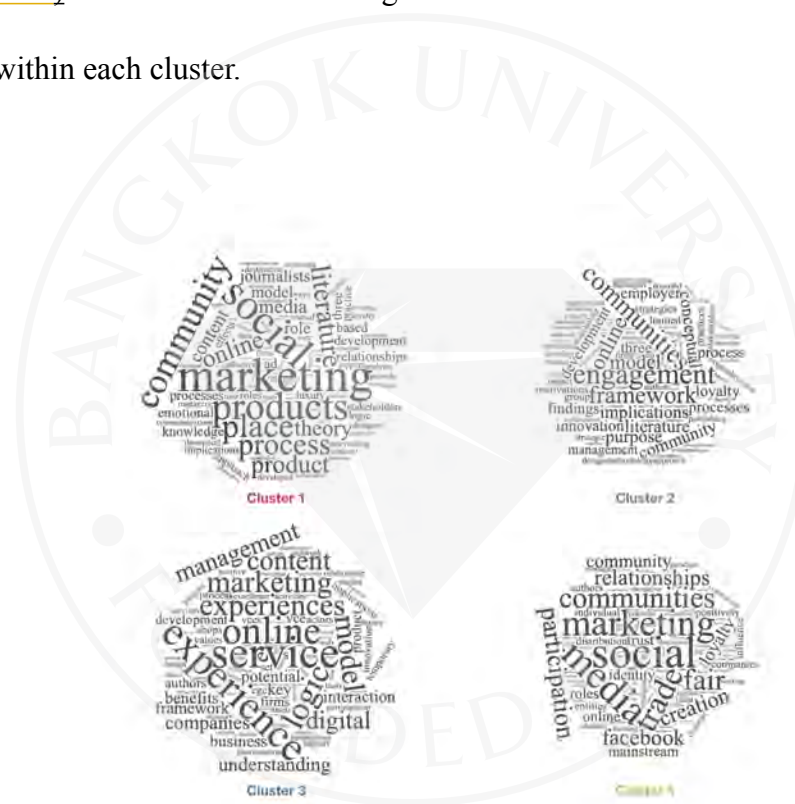

Figure 4.6: Cluster Wordclouds

The third and last step before naming each cluster is to analyze the abstracts of

the documents in all clusters to confirm and validate the themes exposed from the

previous steps.

4.5.2 Cluster 1: The Shift from Traditional to Online Marketing (26 documents)

This cluster is named 'The shift from traditional to online marketing', since a majority of the documents, especially the most impactful ones have a strong focus on marketing and products (Boyle, 2007; Merz et al., 2009; Berthon, Pitt, Campbell, 2009; Cova & White, 2010; Decrop & Derbaix, 2010; Fisher & Smith, 2011; Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011; Round & Roper, 2012; Nishikawa, Schreier, & Ogawa, 2013; Thompson & Malaviya, 2013; Fuchs, Prandelli, Schreier, & Dahl, 2013; Turri, Smith, & Kemp, 2013; Medway & Warnaby, 2014; Wang, Hsiao, Yang, & Hajli, 2016). In addition, 16 of the 26 documents are published through marketing journals. Other documents discuss co-creation and brand management in terms of brand essence, storytelling and advertising (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003; Micu & Plummer, 2010 Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012;), authenticity and legitimacy in brand communities (Kates, 2004), (Aitken & Campelo, 2011) discusses brand essence and authenticity within the area of place branding and co-creation.

We describe this cluster as 'The shift from traditional to online marketing' since we can clearly see a trend in the bibliographic coupling that articles located higher in the cluster in figure 4.4 are more concerned with product specific attributes and traditional marketing. As we analyse the documents that are located lower in the spectrum towards cluster 4 we can see a clear focus shift to online and social media marketing. The first paper to discuss marketing and communities in an online environment is (Cova & White, 2010) and is followed by (Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012; Healy & McDonagh, 2013; Turri et al., 2013; Molyneux & Holton, 2015; Oliveira &

Panyik, 2015; Wang et al., 2016). The shift might also be described by how marketing

has changed during the last sixteen years when the first document in the dataset was

published. The more recent the documents are the more likely they are to feature the

online and social media aspects of marketing and brand management. 40% of the

documents published since 2012 has some focus on online or social media while three

out of four documents published since 2015 has the same focus. We also need to take

into account that the bibliographic coupling was limited to only include documents

with a minimum of 25 citations, we therefore have no documents in this cluster pub-
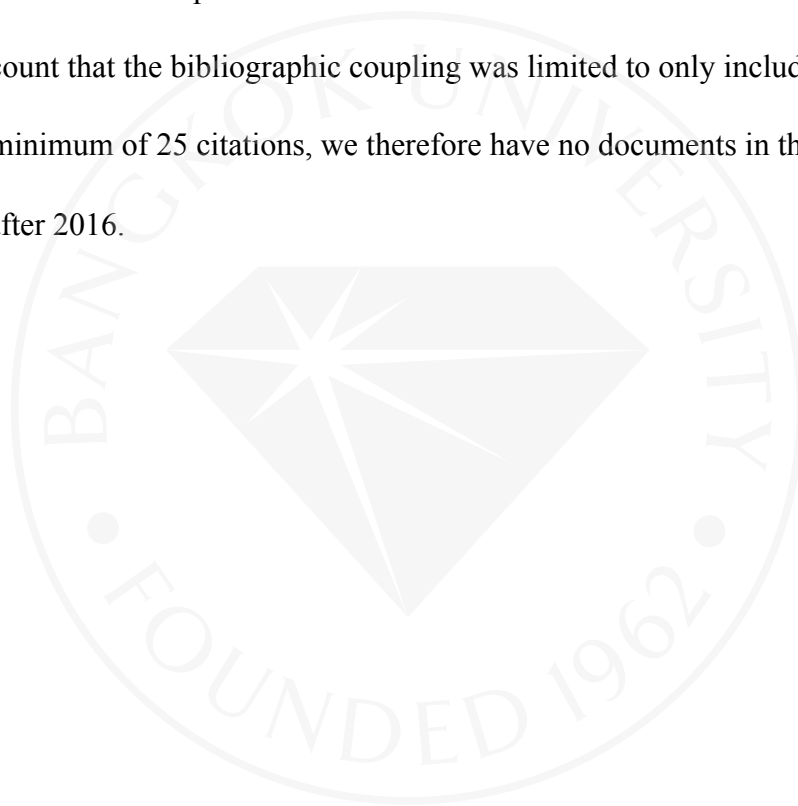
lished after 2016.

Table 4.5: Cluster 1 (Documents)

Authors	Title	Cited by
Brown et al., 2003	Teaching old brands new tricks: Retro branding and the revival of brand mean-	516
Merz et al., 2009	The evolving brand logic: A service-dominant logic perspective	293
Kates, 2004	The dynamics of brand legitimacy: An interpretive study in the gay men's community	163
Singh and Sonnenburg, 2012	Brand Performances in Social Media	116
Cova and White, 2010	Counter-brand and alter-brand communities: The impact of Web 2.0 on tribal marketing approaches	109
Aitken and Campelo, 2011	The four rs of place branding	92
Fisher and Smith, 2011	Cocreation is chaotic: What it means for marketing when no one has control	75
Volcic and Andrejevic, 2011	Nation branding in the era of commercial nationalism	73
Healy and McDonagh, 2013	Consumer roles in brand culture and value co-creation in virtual communities	62
Nishikawa et al., 2013	User-generated versus designer-generated products: A performance assessment at Muji	62
Thompson and Malaviya, 2013	Consumer-generated ads: Does awareness of advertising co-creation help or hurt persuasion?	61
Fuchs et al., 2013	All that is users might not be gold: How labeling products as user designed backfires in the context of luxury fashion brands	57
Berthon et al., 2009	Does brand meaning exist in similarity or singularity?	52
Molyneux and Holton, 2015	Branding (Health) Journalism: Perceptions, practices, and emerging norms	44
Oliveira and Panyik, 2015	Content, context and co-creation: Digital challenges in destination branding with references to Portugal as a tourist destination	43
Micu and Plummer, 2010	Measurable emotions: How television ads really work: Patterns of reactions to commercials can demonstrate advertising effectiveness	42
Decrop and Derbaix, 2010	Pride in contemporary sport consumption: A marketing perspective	41
Boyle, 2007	A process model of brand cocreation: Brand management and research impli-	37
Medway and Warnaby, 2014	What's in a name? Place branding and toponymic commodification	35
Turri et al., 2013	Developing affective brand commitment through social media	33
Frank et al., 2014	Affect versus Cognition in the Chain from Perceived Quality to Customer Loyalty: The Roles of Product Beliefs and Experience	31
Ryu and Kim, 2016	A typology of crowdfunding sponsors: Birds of a feather flock together?	31
Wang et al., 2016	The impact of sellers' social influence on the co-creation of innovation with customers and brand awareness in online communities	29
Bookman, 2013	Branded Cosmopolitanisms: 'Global' Coffee Brands and the Co-creation of 'Cosmopolitan Cool'	26
Hede and Watne, 2013	Leveraging the human side of the brand using a sense of place: Case studies of craft breweries	26
Round and Roper, 2012	Exploring consumer brand name equity: Gaining insight through the investiga- tion of response to name change	25

4.5.3 Cluster 2: Stakeholder Engagement (18 documents)

The 18 documents in cluster 2 represents the theme named "Stakeholder engagement". This cluster is very coherent in terms of the themes of documents. Cluster 2 includes the two most cited documents in our dataset, both of which focus on customer or consumer engagement (van Doorn et al., 2010; Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013). The document from van Doorn et al., (2010) with 813 citations focuses on the concepts of customer engagement behaviors beyond the purchase, towards brands. Brodie et al., (2013) with 749 citations introduces a literature review exploring consumer engagement in an online brand community environment. In addition to these two impactful articles, Hatch and Schultz (2010) uses a case study from one of the most well-known examples of brand co-creation which is LUGNET, LEGO Group's online brand community. From this case, Hatch and Schultz (2010) recommends company and stakeholder engagement as a central concern of brand co-creation. Another article that discuss the case of LEGO is Gyrd-Jones and Kornum (2013), they conclude that firms should be open to input from all stakeholders to maximize co-creation of a firm or brand.

Kandampully, Zhang, and Bilgihan (2015) discuss the evolving role of engaged customers and the impact it has on customer loyalty towards a brand. The role of multiple stakeholders in co-creation of brand meaning is discussed by Vallaster and von Wallpach (2013), the study sheds a light on "the social dynamics that characterize multi-stakeholder brand meaning co-creation in a virtual environment." Cova, Pace, and Skålén (2015) investigates how companies can engage customers to volunteer and

offer unpaid contributions to brands. Other documents that discuss engagement in terms of brand, customer/consumer, and management includes (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2016; Hsieh & Chang, 2016; Nysveen & Pedersen, 2014; France, Merrilees, & Miller, 2015; Skålén, Pace, & Cova, 2015; Zhang, Kandampully, & Bilgihan, 2015)

Table 4.6: Cluster 2 (Documents)

Authors	Title	Cited by
van Doorn J et al., 2010	Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions	813
Brodie et al., 2013	Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis	749
Hatch and Schultz, 2010	Toward a theory of brand co-creation with implications for brand governance	214
Kandampully et al., 2015	Customer loyalty: A review and future directions with a special focus on the hospitality industry	106
Vallaster and Wallpach, 2013	An online discursive inquiry into the social dynamics of multi-stakeholder brand meaning co-creation	84
Gyrd-Jones and Kornum, 2013	Managing the co-created brand: Value and cultural complementarity in online and offline multi-stakeholder ecosystems	68
Iglesias et al., 2013	The organic view of the brand: A brand value co-creation model	60
Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016	Brand value co-creation in a digitalized world: An integrative framework and research implications	53
Alves et al., 2016	Value co-creation: Concept and contexts of application and study	44
Bowonder et al., 2010	Innovation strategies for creating competitive advantage	42
Aggerholm et al., 2011	Conceptualising employer branding in sustainable organisations	36
Hsieh and Chang, 2016	The Psychological Mechanism of Brand Co-creation Engagement	35
Hajli et al., 2017	Branding co-creation with members of online brand communities	34
Iglesias and Bonet, 2012	Persuasive brand management: How managers can influence brand meaning when they are losing control over it	34
Nysveen and Pedersen, 2014	Influences of co-creation on brand experience: The role of brand engagement	34
France et al., 2015	Customer brand co-creation: a conceptual model	31
Skålén et al., 2015	Firm-brand community value co-creation as alignment of practices	30
Zhang T et al., 2015	Motivations for customer engagement in online co-innovation communities (OCCs): A conceptual framework	27
Cova et al., 2015	Brand volunteering: Value co-creation with unpaid consumers	26

4.5.4 Cluster 3: Service Experience and Value Co-creation (13 documents)

Cluster 3 includes 13 documents and the research theme is named as "Service experience and value creation". A majority of the documents in cluster 3 are focusing on the service aspect of brands. The most impactful document in the cluster from Ostrom et al.,, (2010) is identifying ten research priorities on the science of service. Among the research priorities are enhancing the service experience through co-creation, enhancing service design, stimulating service innovation, and effectively brand and sell services to name a few. Gabbott, Tsarenko, and Mok (2011) use the concept of customers as co-creators of their own service experience and examines the role of emotional intelligence within this concept.

Vargo and Lusch's (2004) paper on service-dominant logic, which has in this study been identified as having a fundamental impact on the field of the study has also had a huge impact in this cluster of documents. Fyrberg and Jüriado (2009) seek to increase the "understanding of networks within the service-dominant logic and demonstrate the importance of interaction between network actors as a driving force behind the co-creation process." They argue that by highlighting the importance of networks, they expand the debate on service-dominant logic and co-creation of value. Two other documents that focus on service-dominant logic are FitzPatrick, Davey, Muller, and Davey (2013) and Payne et al., (2009). The former presents "service-dominant logic as a framework for advancing the understanding of intangible assets within the hotel industry" (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013). While the latter outlines a conceptual model for managing and designing customer experience in the context of co-cre-

ation and service-dominant logic (Payne et al., 2009). The paper builds the conceptual model upon the work of both documents identified as the foundation of the field of research, Vargo and Lusch, (2004) and Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004). Payne et al., (2009) was also identified as the paper with the most impact through our co-citation analysis but was disregarded due to the fact that it was included in our dataset.

Tynan, McKechnie, and Chhuon (2010) develop a theoretical framework that identifies processes of value creation of different types of value for luxury brands, based on service-oriented research and Prahalad and Ramaswamy's (2004) notion that companies are shifting from company-centric value creation to personalized co-creation experiences.

Edvardsson and Enquist, (2011) develop a framework known as 'The Service Excellence and Innovation Model' based on the case of IKEA. The model is focusing on how to create and manage resources that "enable, support, and direct customers in value co-creation and service exchange" (Edvardsson and Enquist, 2011).

Table 4.7: Cluster 3 (Documents)

Authors	Title	Cited by
Ostrom et al., 2010	Moving forward and making a difference: Research priorities for the science of service	692
Nambisan and Baron, 2009	Virtual customer environments: Testing a model of voluntary participation in value co-creation activities	296
Payne et al., 2009	Co-creating brands: Diagnosing and designing the relationship experience	273
Tynan et al., 2010	Co-creating value for luxury brands	226
Fyrberg and Jüriado, 2009	What about interaction?: Networks and brands as integrators within service-dominant logic	64
Muñiz and Schau, 2011	How to inspire value-laden collaborative consumer-generated content	58
Spena et al,. 2012	Store experience and co-creation: The case of temporary shop	50
Gabbott et al., 2011	Emotional intelligence as a moderator of coping strategies and service outcomes in circumstances of service failure	43
Rowley, 2008	Understanding digital content marketing	38
Bilgihan et al., 2014	Online experiences: Flow theory, measuring online customer experience in e-commerce and managerial implications for the lodging industry	36
Bilgihan et al., 2016	Towards a unified customer experience in online shopping environments: Antecedents and outcomes	34
FitzPatrick et al., 2013	Value-creating assets in tourism management: Applying marketing's service-dominant logic in the hotel industry	34
Edvardsson and Enquist, 2011	The service excellence and innovation model: Lessons from IKEA and other service frontiers	30

4.5.5 Cluster 4: Co-creation through Social Media (8 documents)

Cluster 4 only includes 8 documents and it is named "Co-creation through social media." Six out of eight documents focus on brands ability to utilize value and content co-creation through social media and online communities. Pongsakornrungsilp and Schroeder (2011) provides insight in consumers roles in the value co-creation process of brand culture through an online football community. Luo, Zhang, and Liu (2015) investigate whether value co-creation practices on social media have positive effects in regards to brand loyalty and community commitment. Similarly, Kamboj et al., (2018) examine motivations of consumer brand co-creation on social

media and finds that brand trust and brand loyalty influence participation in branding co-creation on social media.

Fournier and Avery (2011) explore what they call open source branding on and identify marketing strategies aimed at customer engagement for brands on social media. The most cited paper in the cluster by Hanna et al., (2011) argue that customers are taking active roles as co-creators of marketing content on social media and conceptualize that brands should treat social media as part of an ecosystem of both digital and traditional. Finally, Brodmerkel and Carah (2013) review regulatory aspects of co-creation of content on social media through the case of alcohol brands.

Table 4.8: Cluster 4 (Documents)

Authors	Title	Cited by
Hanna et al., 2011	We're all connected: The power of the social media ecosystem	550
Fournier and Avery, 2011	The uninvited brand	285
Pongsakornrungsilp and Schroeder, 2011	Understanding value co-creation in a co-consuming brand community	129
Low W and Davenport, 2005	Has the medium (roast) become the message?: The ethics of marketing fair trade in the mainstream	78
Kamboj et al., 2018	Examining branding co-creation in brand communities on social media: Applying the paradigm of Stimulus-Organism-Response	50
Luo et al., 2015	The effects of value co-creation practices on building harmonious brand community and achieving brand loyalty on social media in China	39
Black and Veloutsou, 2017	Working consumers: Co-creation of brand identity, consumer identity and brand community identity	33
Brodmerkel and Carah, 2013	Alcohol brands on Facebook: The challenges of regulating brands on social media	26

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This independent study provides an introductory bibliometrics assessment of the topic co-creation of brands. Through our initial literature review we confirmed that the topic itself is relatively unique and there has not been a bibliometrics assessment performed on specifically co-creation of brands in order to assess the domain. A previous bibliometrics assessments has however defined branding as one cluster in the co-creation of value domain.

This bibliometrics assessment covers documents published between 2003 and 2018. Research on co-creation of brands has experienced steady growth during the period analysed with a growth rate of 32.24% but production has plateaued since 2016 and approximately 50 documents are published each year. The ten highest cited documents in the dataset account for a highly significant 49.94% of the total citations of all documents. Nine of the highest cited documents also make the top ten list of the documents with the highest average citations annually.

With a co-citation analysis of references the study trace the theoretical foundation of the research topic to two papers published in 2004 (Vargo and Lusch 2004; Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004). Both of these documents had transformative ideas that challenged old perceptions which is believed to be the reason for the fundamental impact these papers have had. These two documents were also highly impactful in our

initial literature review, present in literature related to both co-creation and co-creation of branding.

Through bibliographic coupling the study is able to identify four coherent clusters of literature. (1) The Shift from Traditional to Online Marketing, (2) Stakeholder Engagement, (3) Service Experience and Value Co-creation, and (4) Co-creation through Social Media. These clusters identifies clear indications of past trends within the domain and the documents associated with these trends. Through the bibliographic coupling we were also able to distinguish some indication of trends over time, by being less restrictive with the selection criteria on number of quotations new emerging trends might have formed.

These results provide basic insights to what previously was a gap in the research. The study is limited by the fact that it is an independent study and should therefore be treated as such. However, the findings in the study can work as a foundation for further studies or the method itself might be valuable to scholars.

Because of the limitations there are a number of possibilities for future research. Future research on the topic could include datasets from databases other than Scopus for a greater selection of documents. Because of scope and time limitations, future research should also be more meticulous in regards to manually scanning the documents. This study only scanned keywords, abstracts of documents in clusters, and full-text of only a few necessary documents relevant to the study itself. Future research could also be more generous with regards to restrictions during the analysis in VOSviewer to include more documents in the bibliographic coupling. This could

lead to new clusters forming, which could open the doors for future research with a focus on the emerging trends of the co-creation of branding domain. In addition, future research could compare the results from the bibliometrics assessment to empirical findings and qualitative insights, similar to bibliometrics assessments discussed in the literature review.

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