From Scrollers to Superfans: How Customer Satisfaction Fuels Brand Loyalty on Instagram

*¹**Shahida Parveen**
²**Ayesha Hussain**
³**Rahat Nadeem**

*¹*Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Government College Women University Faisalabad, Faisalabad, Pakistan.*
²*Lecturer, Department of Economics, Government College Women University Faisalabad, Faisalabad, Pakistan.*
³*Greater Manchester Business School, University of Greater Manchester, Bolton, United Kingdom.*

¹shahidaparveen@gcwuf.edu.pk, ²ayesha@gcwuf.edu.pk, ³rahatnadeem75@gmail.com

Abstract

This study highlights the relationship of Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty, with the moderating effect of customer satisfaction. The online shopping platform's success is associated with the loyalty and satisfaction of its consumers. Using Instagram as a marketing platform can strengthen customer loyalty and, in turn, influence consumer buying behavior in today's modern era. The impact of Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty with the moderator effect of customer satisfaction is accentuated in this study using SPSS and AIMOS software. This study is conducted on the basis of 4 hypotheses which are designed according to the relationship between different variables included in the research. The questionnaire is designed keeping in mind the dependent variable brand loyalty and independent variable; Instagram marketing activities with customer satisfaction as a moderator. Clothing brands consumer buying behavior has been selected as the target population with 300 sample size has been kept 300. The researchers have conducted many researches using social media marketing activities and brand loyalty but no one has ever conducted any research using Instagram marketing activities as variables with customer satisfaction as a moderator. The previous researches have worked on different products but clothing brand has been left untouched and unexplored. This is a research gap and in order to fill this research gap, this study has delved into highlighting the relationship between these variables so that it can pave the way for the future researchers and add to the existing legacy of research.

Keywords: Instagram marketing activities, brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, clothing brands.

1:   INTRODUCTION

In this dynamic digital landscape, where people are being easily distracted and have many options, brand loyalty is not only dependent on price or quality. Instead, brand loyalty is a strong and long-lasting relationship with customers through engaging platforms. This change leads towards how the young generation is connected with brands, and how they prefer digital ads and interactions, without being annoyed. With these digital platforms, Instagram has a powerful channel which has impact in shaping customers attitudes and preferences which ultimately leads towards brand loyalty (Efendioğlu & Durmaz, 2022, Aydin Ünal et al., 2023).

Social media marketing has been prominent in the past decade for customer relationships (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). With respect to social media marketing, Instagram media marketing is an activity done through the Instagram platform, which includes entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, informativeness, personalization and word of mouth (Kim & Ko, 2012, Yadav & Rahman, 2018). Instagram marketing activities include, collaboration, stories, posts, contents, and different campaigns by brands to gain Customers trust and satisfaction. Not only does a platform seek customer attention, they are characterized by emotional attachment of community to gain and retrieve the sense of belongingness (Jayasinghe, 2021, Zhang, 2024).

Drawing on Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), there must be an external stimulus that leads towards an emotional and cognitive state known as organism, which leads towards behaviors called response. According to (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), Instagram marketing activities (IMAs) is an external stimulus that has an impact on Customers emotional and cognitive state, customer satisfaction, acts as an organism, which drive behavioral outcome of brand loyalty. This study explains customer satisfaction as a psychological organism which moderates the Instagram marketing activities stimuli and convert into the behavior of brand loyalty.

Evaluation of product and services by customers according to their own expectations are known as customer's satisfaction (Oliver, 2010). Social media leads towards customer satisfaction which changes consumers perception and also their willingness to keep and maintain their long-term relationships with different brands (Yulisetiarini et al., 2024), especially how Instagram affects customers happiness which is helpful for brands to make their new plans (Minal N, 2024). Prior research shows that with quality and services, different social media interaction specifically Instagram enhances customer satisfaction which leads towards brand loyalty (Rahayu & Yahya, 2019, Muskan et al., 2022). Many Instagram features like community engagement and geo tagging are linked with customer satisfaction which make brand experience more interactive and personalized (Dewi et al., 2022, Listyarti et al., 2023).

Instagram adds new offers and paths for engagement to loyalty by customer satisfaction (Siburian et al., 2023). Post strategy to make customers loyal to spread positive word of mouth by generating valuable and beneficial user content (Jacob & Bindal, 2018). Prior studies reveal social media marketing, especially Instagram marketing activities that improve brand loyalty in different sectors (Fetais et al., 2022). These findings emphasize the brand loyalty, as a psychological commitment, unfolds through digital experience (Sukmaningrum & Indrawati, 2022).

Moreover, the unique environment of Instagram demands different strategies for its visual elements to attract audience interest. Influencers, collaborations and their posts, perceptions have an impact on engagement and loyalty to gain trustworthiness and

authenticity (Jayasinghe, 2021, Gross & von Wangenheim, 2022).

It is important for brands how different strategies can shape customers perception as they explore things in the digital landscape (Efendioğlu & Durmaz, 2022, Zhang, 2024). As the digital world changes, brands switching different psychological mechanisms for Instagram marketing activities, which is important for both marketers and researchers (Siburian et al., 2023, Yulisetiarini et al., 2024).

Ali et al. (2024) suggested that the moderating role of customer satisfaction should be further considered in exploring the relationship of social marketing activities and brand loyalty, with the particular focus on specific social media Platform. With the growing use of Instagram for marketing, different brands struggle to achieve loyalty from customers. There is an ambiguity about how Instagram molds customer's perception, particularly customer satisfaction as a moderating role. The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of Instagram marketing activities on brand loyalty with the moderating role of customer satisfaction.

2:   LITERATURE REVIEW

Instagram Marketing Activities (IMAs) as Stimulus

Instagram as an important visual platform supports different types of marketing activities like interactivity, personalization, trendiness, customization, entertainment and electronic word-of-mouth all act as a stimulus in S-O-R theory framework (Nguyen et al., 2024, Wei et al., 2025). SMMAs includes interactivity, trendiness, personalization, word-of-mouth, informativeness which is the requirements for customer satisfaction (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). Miah et al. (2024) explains the emotional attachment of Instagram campaigns and their impact on Customers behavior and perceptions. Gen Z's behavior and social attachment, influenced by loyalty through Instagram's authentic content is studied by Vidyanata et al. (2024). Shafaat and Tariq (2024), confirmed that the baking sector and fashion industry is mainly captured by influencers through their content creations, and trust towards brands which ultimately increases engagement and equity. Similarly, Shaheen (2025), explains the social media marketing research and its analysis. Digital marketing is investigated by different performance indicators through surveys (Golzadeh & Gharachorloo, 2021). Students of university and their perception through SMMAs are checked which shows students satisfaction is based on SMMAs and also their social identification (Kethüda & Bilgin, 2023).

Brand Loyalty as the Response (Outcome)

The response in the S-O-R model is brand loyalty, which looks like repeat purchasing and advocacy. Prior studies reveal that Instagram activities include entertaining, emotional resonance and personalized, causing an increase in loyalty (Nguyen et al., 2024, Ali et al., 2024). Brand credibility leads towards a Brand attitude which ultimately increases brand loyalty (Haq et al., 2022). The emotional satisfaction and loyalty are a result of innovative culture, which increases digital interaction like Instagram reels which drive long-term loyalty (Dai et al., 2025). Wang and Yang (2024) contribute online brand communities which create content for brands identification, all social media campaigns especially Instagram campaigns create a sense of ownership and belonging which sustain loyalty. Satisfaction, perceived value, image are loyalty triangles, particularly important for different industries using Instagram (Cankül et al., 2024; Tahir et al., 2024). Social media marketing activities are positively influenced by brand loyalty through different brand experiences (Nguyen et al., 2024). On the basis of this, the study hypothesized:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty.

Organism (Internal State)

Customer satisfaction is an organism response to stimuli (Instagram). According to the S-O-R model, emotional and cognitive evaluation is translated through behavioral outcomes (Irimia-Diéguez et al., 2023, Nguyen et al., 2024). Customers satisfaction predicts their behavior like advocacy and repeats purchase (Mittal et al., 2023). Hallencreutz et al. (2024) Added responsiveness, trust, and transparency increased satisfaction in different contexts. Service robots are also used for customer satisfaction (Guo et al., 2024). Customer services through chatbots are also useful for customer satisfaction (Huang et al., 2024). Agag et al. (2024) investigate the real-time analysis which enhances customer's agility and shows how Instagram's feedback changes attitudes. Customer journey mapping suggests that satisfaction is influenced by customers' interaction with brands (Okeke et al., 2024). Hochreiter et al. (2023) and Wei et al. (2025) explain satisfaction's mediating role in trust which shows how Instagram explains emotional responses that predict behavior. Accordingly, this study hypothesized:

H₂: There is a Positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

H₃: There is a positive relationship between Instagram marketing activities and customer satisfaction.

H₄: Customer satisfaction moderates the positive relationship between Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty such that the positive relationship is Strengthen when customer satisfaction is high.

All the prior mentioned studies are aligned with the S-O-R model, Instagram marketing activities a stimulus, customer satisfaction an organism, brand loyalty a response. Emotional engagement and value through Instagram increase loyalty (Nguyen et al., 2024). Instagram marketing activities act as stimulus which increases customer satisfaction which strengthens brand loyalty (Shaheen, 2025). This model integrates through the Stimulus-Organism-Response model.
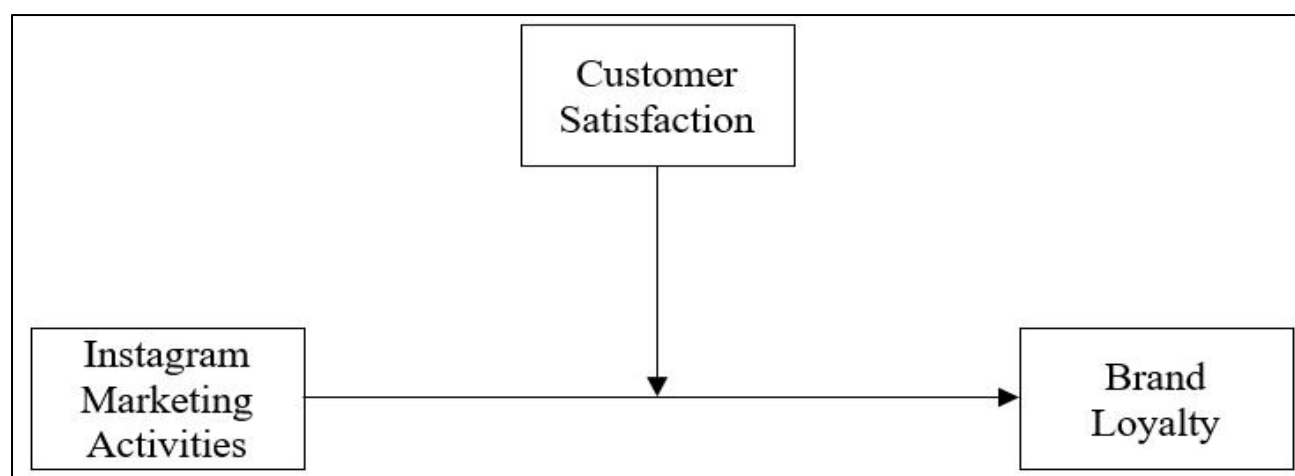
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3:　　RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study explains the Relationship of Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty in Consumer Buying Behavior: Moderating effect of customer satisfaction by conducting quantitative research through questionnaires. The researchers have benefited from the works, research, and findings of the previous researchers by reviewing a comprehensive

and detailed literature review. The literature review has enabled the researchers to comprehend the S-O-R theory. The questionnaire has been designed using the knowledge gained through literature review. The pilot testing is done to check its reliability. The sample size of 300 has been selected for conducting this research. The data is collected through the questionnaire filled by the users of the Instagram social media users. The collected data has been analyzed by employing different analysis techniques i.e. frequency distribution, reliability analysis, descriptive analysis, CFA, Correlations and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). These analysis techniques have helped to examine the relationship between variables and the hypothesis under test. After examining this relationship, the results are interpreted using the S-O-R theory and the results highlight the role of Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty with the moderating effect of customer satisfaction. It is impossible to collect data from the whole population or different sectors in order to check the role of Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty with the moderating effect of customer satisfaction. That's why this study has selected the clothing brand consumers as the target population to collect data. The researchers have distributed the questionnaire to the sample size of 300 respondents but the number of respondents who have responded to the questionnaire are 253. So, the sample size of this study is 253.

The instruments developed by prior researchers is used to assess this study. A 5-likert scale is applied, ranging from 1 to 5 (1=Strongly Disagree and 5= strongly agree) to analyze each measure. Instagram marketing activities are analyzed by 6-items scale introduced by Kim and Ko (2012). These items include, At Clothing brand Instagram, it's possible to communicate with other user, it is fun to use Clothing brand Instagram, the contents on Clothing brand Instagram are up-to-date, etc. Brand loyalty is analyzed by 3-items scale introduced by Tran and Strutton (2019). These items include, I prefer specific clothing brand's products/services over other alternatives, I am loyal to specific clothing brand, and Specific clothing brand is my first choice for the product/service category they offer. Customer satisfaction is analyzed by 4-items scale introduced by Ribbink et al. (2004). These items are, I am generally pleased with Instagram social media, I enjoy using Instagram social media, I am very satisfied with the services of Instagram social media, I am happy with Instagram social media.

4:   DATA ANALYSIS
Descriptive Analysis

Means and standard deviations are used to depict descriptive statistics (Table 1) for all variables and participant responses. The standard deviation figures show the degree of data variability, while the mean values show the respondents' pleasant and disagreeableness degrees. The table below contains the computations for means and standard deviations. The results show that independent variable Instagram marketing activities that the mean of different items is 4.18, 4.19, 4.20, 4.24, 4.26 and 4.27. Whereas, the mean of dependent variable i.e. Brand Loyalty is 4.02, 4.05 and 4.09. The mean of moderator variable Customer satisfaction is 4.19 to 4.24. Largely descriptive analysis indicates, that the mean of the role of Instagram marketing activities is 4.22. Whereas the mean of customer satisfaction is 4.20 and brand loyalty has mean of 4.05.

Table 1:   *Descriptive Statistics*

Description	Mean	SD
Instagram Marketing Activities		
At Clothing brand Instagram, it's possible to communicate with another user.	4.20	0.735
The contents of Clothing brand Instagram are interesting.	4.26	0.697
It's fun to use Clothing brand Instagram.	4.19	0.841
The Clothing brand Instagram provides customized information.	4.27	0.782
The contents on Clothing brand Instagram are up-to-date.	4.24	0.781
The information shared on Clothing brand Instagram is trendy.	4.18	0.791
Brand Loyalty		
I prefer Specific Clothing brand's products/services over other alternatives.	4.02	0.811
I am loyal to Specific Clothing brand.	4.09	0.831
Specific Clothing Brand is my first choice for the product/service category they offer.	4.05	0.846
Customer Satisfaction		
I am generally pleased with Instagram social media.	4.19	0.779
I enjoy using Instagram social media.	4.19	0.760
I am very satisfied with the services of Instagram social media.	4.24	0.725
I am happy with Instagram social media.	4.19	0.753
Overall Mean		
Instagram Marketing Activities	4.22	0.576
Brand Loyalty	4.05	0.706
Customer Satisfaction	4.20	0.634

Reliability Analysis

The target sample size of the study is 300 questionnaires and the researcher has received 253 responses with a response rate of 84.3%. This response rate is satisfactory to draw conclusions and to test the hypotheses in order to check the roles of Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty in consumer buying behavior. The study employs Cronbach's Alpha to determine the reliability for analyzing the responses (see Table 2). The scale is considered reliable when the Cronbach's Alpha value come across the reliability level for the items. This study has carried out the reliability analysis employing the SPSS. The table given below shows the reliability analysis of Cronbach's Alpha. The results show that greater Cronbach's Alpha values reveal stronger reliability. The study shows, that the range of reliability coefficients is from 0.811 to 0.862, which fall fit within the standard threshold. As clear from the table, all variables have alpha values greater than the recommended minimum level of 0.70, representing adequate internal consistency.

Table 2:   *Reliability Analysis*

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Instagram marketing activities	6	0.841
Brand loyalty	3	0 .811
Customer satisfaction	4	0. 862

Correlation Analysis

The correlation coefficient (Table 3) shows how intensely the two variables are associated. In studies comprising several constructs, it is crucial to test correlations along with descriptive statistics for example means and standard deviations to get an impeccable understanding, in

what way the variables act together. As correlation values range from –1.0 to +1.0, measuring the statistical significance of respective relationship of variables. The above table illustrates the significant and positive relation among Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty with the moderating influence of customer satisfaction. The premier positive correlation is examined among Instagram marketing activities and customer satisfaction, (r =.737, p<0.01). The correlation between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty is (r =.629, p<0.01) and the correlation between brand loyalty and Instagram marketing activities is (r=.626, p<0.01). The findings advocate that all variables are significantly correlated with one another.

Table 3:   *Latent Variable Correlations*

Variables	Instagram marketing activities	Brand loyalty	Customer satisfaction
Instagram marketing activities	1.000		
Brand loyalty	0.626	1.000	
Customer satisfaction	0.737	0.629	1.000

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To confirm the relationships between the variables CFA analysis (Table 4 and Figure 2) is carried out. It is a statistical analysis which is used to examine whether the theoretical model aligns with the set of observed variables or not. Factor loadings of 0.5 or higher are acceptable, representing satisfactory convergent validity of the measurement items. Table 5 below shows the factor loadings for all variables incorporated in the study, ratifying that each item satisfactorily represents its corresponding construct. Additionally, the correlations between the latent variables show discriminant validity, presenting that the constructs are distinctive from one another and evaluate separate concepts. Factor loading should be 0.5 or more to be acceptable which shows convergent validity and the following table is showing the factor loading of the variables of this study. The correlation between latent variables shows discriminant validity.
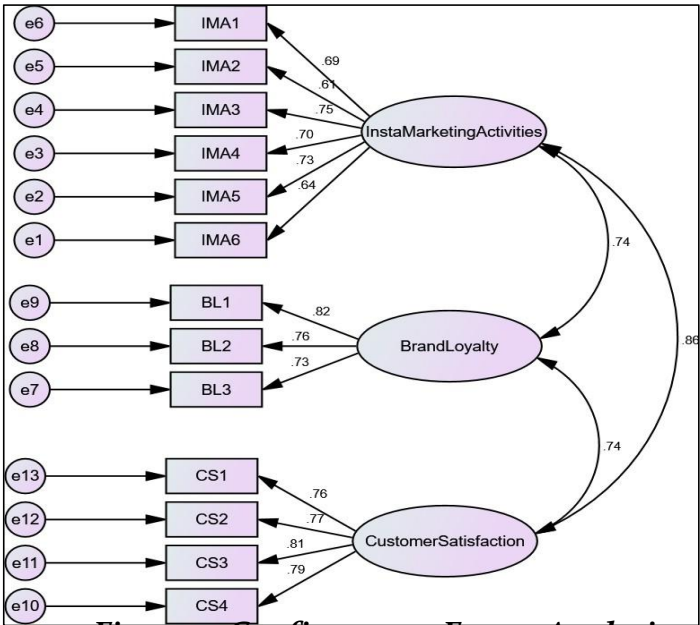

Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 4:   *CFA Results*

Model	ΔX²	df ΔX²/df	RMSEA	CFI	GFI
First level multi factor model	170.365	62 2.748	0.083	0.934	0.948

Note: RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, CFI: Comparative Fit Index, GFI: Goodness of Fit Index

Table 5:   *Validity of Model*

Variables	CR	AVE
Instagram Marketing Activities	0.842	0.500
Brand Loyalty	0.814	0.594
Customer Satisfaction	0.864	0.613

Structural Model Analysis

It is depicted in Table 6 (see Figures 3 and 4) that the estimated standardized effect of customer satisfaction on brand loyalty is 0.383. The effect of Instagram marketing activities on brand loyalty is 0.371. The p-value of correlations are significant. Accordingly, customer satisfaction has a moderator effect in the relationship of Instagram marketing activities and brand loyalty. Hence, all the hypothesis of the study are accepted.

Table 6:   *Structural Model Analysis*

Regression Weights

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
ZBL	<---	ZIMA	.371	.069	5.359	***
ZBL	<---	ZCS	.383	.070	5.508	***
ZBL	<---	Mode	.050	.034	1.489	.137

Covariance

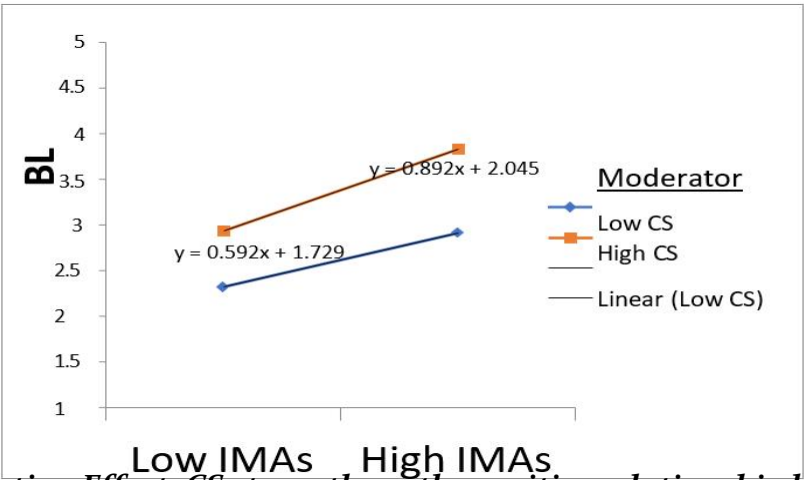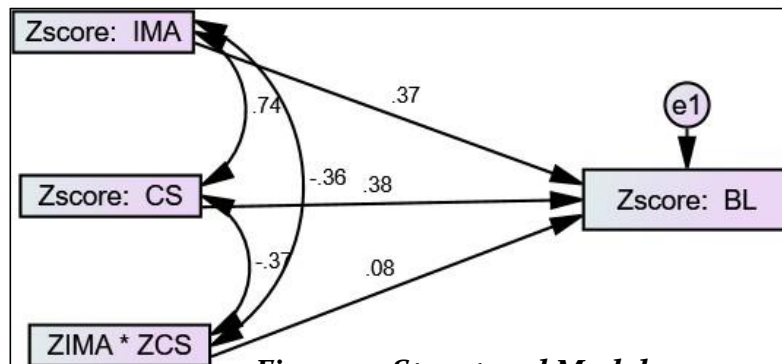| Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
ZCS	<-->	ZIMA	.734	.078	9.416	***
ZCS	<-->	Model	-.554	.100	-5.550	***
ZIMA	<-->	Model	-.534	.099	-5.377	***

Figure 3: Moderation Effect: CS strengthens the positive relationship between IMAs and BL

Figure 4: Structural Model

The results of this study contribute expressively to the progressing discourse on digital marketing's role in forming consumer-brand relationships. The study ratifies a strong and interconnected relationship among Instagram marketing activities, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty, whereas also familiarizing the nuanced role of a moderating variable.

The relationship between Instagram marketing activities and customer satisfaction ($r = .737$) suggests that effective Instagram marketing leads to satisfied customers. This finding is supported by research from Kim and Ko (2012). It was revealed that luxury brands' social media marketing struggles, containing visual platforms, considerably enrich customer value and satisfaction. The substantial relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty ($r = .629$) confirms beliefs of marketing theory. Such as suggested by Oliver (1999), customer's satisfaction is an important antecedent of brand loyalty. The outcomes of this study confirm that this preliminary correlation holds strong in the Instagram context.

There exists a significant correlation among brand loyalty and Instagram marketing activities ($r = .626$). The result shows that loyal customers are vigorous contributors in the brand's Instagram network. The customers incline to interact more by commenting, sharing, and posting appraisals about the brand. This generates an influential sequence. Loyal customers shape the brand's social media demonstration, which invites more followers, as noted by Gummerus et al. (2012). The results of the structural equation model analysis have demonstrated the values as $\beta = 0.371$, $p < 0.05$), $\beta = 0.383$, $p < 0.05$ and $\beta = 0.075$, $p < 0.05$ which shows the significant moderated effect.

5:   CONCLUSIONS

This study explores how brand loyalty is affected by Instagram marketing activities with the moderating effect of customer satisfaction. The results illustrates that Instagram marketing activities and Brand Loyalty have a positive relationship with Customer Satisfaction. These results are supported by Structural Equation model (SEM), which reveals that an increase in Instagram marketing activities positively impacts brand loyalty. The findings are consistent and relevant, as demonstrated by descriptive analyses and reliability, which validate the noteworthy positive influence of these parameters on brand loyalty, moderated by customer satisfaction.

Theoretically, the present study confirms the applicability of traditional marketing models i.e. S-O-R and loyalty hierarchy in the social media territory whereas supporting more multifaceted, moderated models. The study confirms that Instagram is important than other channels and it is a platform which influence the customers behavior.

Managers should not use Instagram to get customers, but to enthusiastically identify and involve loyal activists, turning them into co-creators of brand. To maximize impact of Instagram, brands must classify their important consumer segments and shape content and business strategies consequently. Lastly, customer service in clothing brands should mobilize effective customer service that should address the complaints of the customers as soon as possible.

Despite the fact that this study provides valuable insights, there are several limitations to consider, firstly, the study's sample size is sufficient, but it is restricted to clothing brand, which could limit how broadly the results can be applied to other contexts or sectors of the economy. Secondly, the cross-sectional design captures relationships at a single point in time, limiting causal inferences. For more strongly establish causal links, longitudinal research would be required. Moreover, exploring new prospective moderator as cultural context and mediators like brand trust and brand love would provide a more affluent understanding of the mechanisms.

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