



RESEARCH PAPER

**Impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on Brand Loyalty:
Exploring the Mediating Role of Brand Awareness and the Moderating
Influence of Customized Age Group and Social Media Influencer**

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ABSTRACT

The proposed study intends to investigate the influence of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) on brand loyalty through mediating role of brand awareness and moderating effects of customized age groups and social media influencers. As social media has become a major marketing medium, organizations need to comprehend the effect the social media sites like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter have on consumer behavior and loyalty particularly in emerging markets and among them is Pakistan. The use of structured questionnaires involved the sample data of 260 of the social media individuals in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Descriptive statistics was performed on the quantitative data using SPSS and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine whether relations clarified in hypotheses were present and also to test the Structural relationship of fit. Findings showed that SMMA has a positive effect on brand loyalty and that brand awareness has a huge role of mediation. As well, the effect of SMMA on awareness and loyalty was modulated by customized age groups and by popularity on the social media. Marketers are advised to employ age group-specific information and reputable ambassadors that will enhance brand consumption and loyalty.

KEYWORDS Social Media Marketing Activities, Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Social Media Influencer, Customized Age Group

Introduction

Social media these days helps brands to access wider markets and establish strong brand attributes on interactive sites such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) like entertainment, customization, interaction, trendiness, and word of mouth – increase the level of brand awareness, which is the key to brand loyalty development. Audience targeting based on age increases engagement and conversion since younger customers prefer peer-driven content, while older customers prefer factual messaging. Influencers contribute to the spread and the reputation of promotional campaigns, as they support the trust and allegiance of consumers. Although important, the integration of brand awareness, age segmentation, and influencer marketing towards brand loyalty is not well uncovered in developing nations such as Pakistan (Kim & Ko, 2012.) The works of (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020; Yadav & Rahman, 2017; Muzaffar, et. al., 2019; Salam, et. al., 2024; Muzaffar, et. al., 2020).

From the literature, there emerges a rather thin understanding of how social media marketing activities (SMMAs) affect brand loyalty and such mediating role of brand awareness and moderating impact of customised age groups and social media influencers (Abdullah & Faisal, 2022; Chen et al., 2023 & Rahman and Zhou, 2023). Moreover, there is no clarity in the existing research on the tangible ROI of SMMAs and their adaptation in the light of changing algorithms on platforms and regulatory issues such as GDPR (Duffett, 2017; Arora & Sanni, 2019; Brodie et al., 2013).

It employs a Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) to determine the ways Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) generate brand communities and customer-brand recognition, thus creating brand loyalty. It explores the mediating effect of brand awareness and moderating effect of age groups and social media influencers on SMMA-brand loyalty relationship. SMMA can be conceived as strategic digital engagement (Tuten & Solomon, 2018), and loyalty – through repeat-buying (Aaker, 1991), whereas brand awareness may be achieved through consumer's recognition (Keller, 1993). As (Freberg et al., 2011) note, the influencers influence consumer choice making significantly. Authors' findings can be used to optimize marketing strategies, build trust, and retain consumers (Chen & Kim, 2021; Smith, 2020).

Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA), including entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, word of mouth, play major roles in brand loyalty, through brand awareness' mediation (Kim & Ko, 2012; Godey et al., 2016; Bilgin, 2018). Studies indicate that brand awareness generates the feeling of familiarity and confidence, an indicator required for loyalty (Ebrahim, 2020). Nevertheless, the moderating effect of demographic variables such as age and the effect of social media influencers (SMIs) are under-researched although they are found to be highly responsive towards the social media Marketing of Generation Z and millennials (Boateng & Okoe, 2015; Lim et al., 2017). Moreover, the Pakistani quickly developing digital space is devoid of context-specific studies exploring these dynamics, which points to a valuable nicety in locally-oriented brand loyalty research.

This research has high relevancy for the academia and practice since it explores how the trend of Social Media Marketing Activities online (SMMAs) impacts the brand loyalty in Pakistan, a country that is undergoing development and has specific cultural and technological surroundings. It presents brand awareness as a mediating variable, and it includes customized age groups and social media influencers as moderators, which were not explored much in the emerging economies (Abdullah & Faisal, 2022). The research focuses on consumers of Rawalpindi and Islamabad and thus gives local level insights and help advance the knowledge of digital marketing strategies will be helpful for different age demographics and influencer engagements (Rahman & Zhou, 2023). This holistic framework fills important gaps that have been left by Western-centric discourses hence it supports context specific strategic planning of such developing regions.

The lack of this research would have prevented both theoretical understanding and practical application from moving forward efficiently. The research relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) and Brand Loyalty remains insufficiently investigated among developing nations including Pakistan. The absence of this study would prevent local marketers and businesses from understanding specific market insights regarding SMMA's long-term consumer loyalty-building methods thus limiting their capability to create effective marketing strategies. Research conducted in this regional framework failed to validate that Brand Awareness acts as a mediator between SMMA and Brand Loyalty thus we lack evidence about how awareness leads to loyalty development in social media environments. A lack of research regarding Customized Age Group (CAG) moderating effects would lead to nondifferentiated marketing strategies which fail to account for specific age-related choices thus decreasing marketing effectiveness along with customer engagement levels. The evaluation of Social Media Influencers' (SMIs) regulatory influence is essential because it helps brands better grasp their partnership effects on marketing performance outcomes. Research on consumer-brand dynamics in digital spaces would perform less effectively because an integrated model is needed to unify mediation and moderation effects. This examination solves a fundamental gap by creating a complete theoretical structure together with evidence which assists academic researchers and industry decision-makers dealing with social media marketing.

Literature Review

Social Media Marketing Activities operate as the independent variable within this analysis to depict the different promotional activities used by brands through social platform interactions with their customers. The dependent variable Brand Loyalty indicates how faithful consumers remain toward a particular brand during successive time periods. Through its mediating role Brand Awareness stipulates the mechanisms along with the degree to which social media marketing influences brand loyalty via better brand perception by consumers. This research incorporates personalized modifications of General Consumer patterns through Age Groups and Social Media Influencers to confirm if influencer endorsements impact these relationships. This research constructs its conceptual model to define how different variables generate both naive connections and nuanced impacts between digital marketing frameworks.

Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs), Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Customized Age Group, and Social Media Influence have evolved in response to shifts in marketing practices and consumer behavior. Social media marketing began with platforms like Facebook and Instagram, initially focusing on basic advertising but eventually incorporating content marketing and influencer partnerships. Brand awareness, which became more measurable with the rise of digital platforms, has evolved to focus on creating deeper consumer connections. Brand loyalty has shifted from repeat purchases to emotional connections and online engagement. Age-based segmentation has grown with digital platforms, enabling more targeted marketing strategies. Social media influencers, once ordinary users, now shape consumer behavior and preferences, becoming central to marketing strategies. These developments reflect the broader transformation in marketing from traditional methods to digital strategies, emphasizing the need for businesses to adapt to the evolving digital landscape.

The development of the key variables in your study—Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs), Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Customized Age Group, and Social Media Influencers—reflects the ongoing evolution of digital marketing. Social media marketing activities have become integral to modern marketing, using platforms like Instagram and TikTok to engage consumers with personalized content, influencer collaborations, and real-time data. Brand awareness now focuses on building meaningful connections through authentic, engaging content and storytelling, rather than just visibility. Brand loyalty has expanded to include broader forms of engagement, like social media interactions and brand advocacy, with an emphasis on personalized customer experiences and transparency. Customized age group segmentation has evolved to consider both demographic and psychographic data, allowing marketers to tailor content more effectively to different generations. Social media influencers have transitioned from celebrities to micro-influencers, with authenticity and long-term partnerships becoming key for brand trust and loyalty. These variables continue to develop as businesses adapt to the fast-changing digital landscape.

Social Media Marketing Activities and Brand Loyalty

The relationship between the variables is interconnected. Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) enhance Brand Awareness, which in turn fosters Brand Loyalty. The effectiveness of this process is moderated by Customized Age Group targeting, as different age groups respond differently to marketing efforts. Social Media Influencers also play a key role by amplifying the impact of SMMAs, increasing brand awareness, and strengthening brand loyalty through authentic endorsements. Overall, SMMAs influence brand awareness, which drives brand loyalty, with age group segmentation and influencers further shaping these relationships.

Organizations employ Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) as different strategies deployed throughout social media platforms to seek consumer brand acceptance. Through entertainment content and interactivity and product personalization combined with E-WOM and brand novelty Social Media Marketing Activities help build customer trust which results in brand loyalty and better customer satisfaction (Moedeen et al., 2024; Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2021). Through interaction brands establish direct communication paths with consumers to build stronger relationships (Kim & Ko, 2022). Brand virality benefits from entertaining content which subsequently builds consumer loyalty through personalized marketing campaigns (Banerji & Sing, 2023).

Social Media Marketing Activities and Brand Awareness

The growing importance of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) represents a fundamental marketing practice that specifically drives brand awareness growth. The approach of directly engaging potential customers exists on social networks through platforms like Instagram Facebook and Twitter which we call SMMA. Specific ongoing research highlights SMMA as an essential tool that improves brand visibility because it serves as a primary factor for brand recall. The combination of entertainment content with interactive engagement together with electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) works remarkably well to build brand recognition. The combination of entertainment content with meaningful engagement and eWOM generates positive emotions that result in enhanced brand recall and improved brand visibility according to (Rimadias et al., 2021) as well as (Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2022) and (Zhang and Benyoucef, 2022) and (Cheung et al., 2020).

Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty

Brand knowledge and brand attachment form a fundamental connection that drives research within consumer behavior. The degree of consumer awareness about a brand serves as the foundational element for building brand loyalty because it determines the consumer's commitment to supporting the brand. Research has demonstrated that brand awareness growth results in brand familiarity which functions as the base for building customer trust. A brand's familiarity with consumers directly contributes to higher brand trust which in turn leads to repeat purchases from those customers. Brand recognition and trust between customers together ensure continuous support of familiar brands according to (Jamaludin and Sumarni, 2023).

Mediating Role of Brand Awareness

Social media platforms find brand awareness necessary to link successful marketing communications with consumer behavioral outcomes. An effective brand awareness achieves two critical outcomes: ensuring brands capture viewer attention followed by effective retention to support purchase decisions. New research by (Satya et al., 2022) and (Sander, 2022) finds that users tend to connect with established brands which maintain social involvement. According to (Shahid et al., 2021) and (Cheikha et al., 2023) consumers build trust and loyalty toward familiar brands that create favorable brand impressions that lead to repeat purchases. The importance of brand awareness for marketing effectiveness and enduring customer loyalty has been established by research conducted by Mikhael & Susan in 2022 and Sutariningsih & Widagda in 2021.

Moderating Role of Customized Age Group

Social media marketing activities receive different responses from age specific customer groups which influence how brands design their campaigns according to research by (Hazzam, 2021) and (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). (Hazzam, 2021) along with (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017) found that Gen Z and millennials seek creative and

trendy content yet traditional or informative marketing appeals to older audiences. Brand marketing decisions depend heavily on consumer age groups for numerous products. Gen Z people value modern content formats and influencer endorsements while older audiences focus on confirming the credibility and reliability of the brand according to research by (Alperstein & Jansen, 2021). Knowledge in this regard permits brands to create customized plans that deliver maximum impact for multiple target demographics.

Moderating Role of Social Media Influencer

Marketing now significantly relies on social media influencers (SMIs) to define customer interactions with brands and product purchase intent. Large social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube and TikTok get their influence from SMIs who create content because their audience finds them relatable and trustworthy or consider them experts in their field of interest (Ao et al., 2023; Koay et al., 2022). SMIs create content that speaks directly to their specific audience because their content aligns more closely to individual preferences. Research demonstrates that when consumers believe an influencer is dependable their marketing messages become more powerful and drive better audience interactions and purchase outcomes. According to researchers (Shan et al., 2020), user engagement grows when influencers share beliefs which match those of their audience.

Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant impact of social media marketing activities on brand loyalty.

H2: There is a significant impact of social media marketing activities on brand awareness.

H3: There is a significant impact of brand awareness on brand loyalty.

H4: Brand Awareness mediate the relationship between social media marketing activities and brand loyalty.

H5: Customized Age group moderate the relationship between Brand awareness and brand loyalty.

H6: Social Media Influencer moderate the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities and Brand awareness.

Conceptual Framework

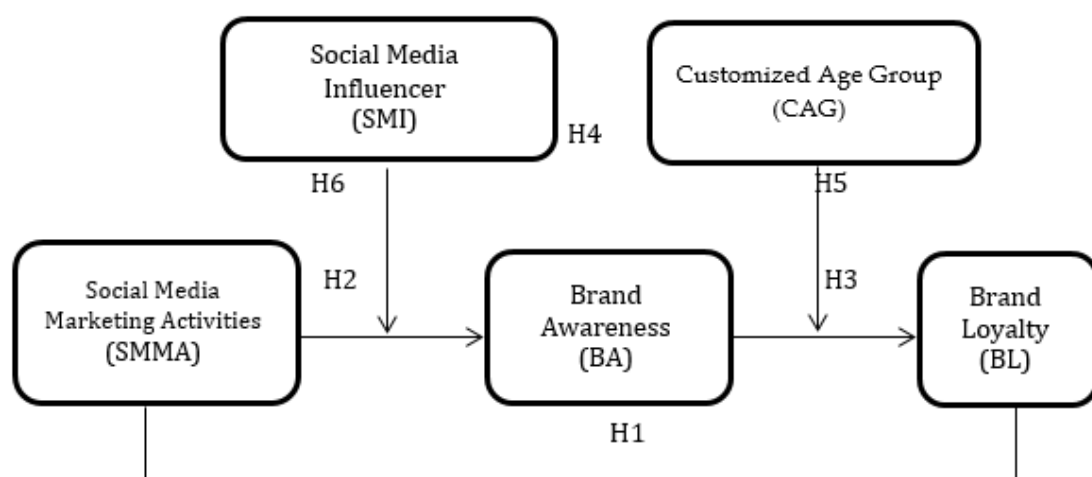


Figure 1 : Mediation model showing the indirect effect of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) on Brand Loyalty through Brand Awareness

Material and Methods

Research Design

To assess SMMA, BA, SMI, CAG, and BL, the research strategy embraced a quantitative approach in which the assessment was based on empirically tested and validated scales by means of structured questionnaires. To reach a conclusion, it used deductive approach to test hypotheses based on a theoretical framework; this was done to assure objectivity and strict analysis. Vetted Google Forms were used as a means of collecting the data improving validity and reliability. Such approach helped to contribute to the literature and to the practical knowledge, in terms of both consumer behavior and brand loyalty, as this approach facilitated both independent and bio-free research, and proved the theoretical model.

Population and Sample

The research respondents were the employees of the telecom industry and the desired sample size of social media users was estimated as 300 people depending on the rule of 10 per indicator. The information was assessed through the use of Google forms, and 260 complete surveys were recorded. The participants were chosen depending on how they pertained to the variables of the study (SMMA, BA, BL, SMI and CAG). The non-probability sampling approach adopted convenience sampling and was in compliance with the Social Identity Theory (SIT) that offers the means of accessing people with certain knowledge and experience. The sample was taken in Rawalpindi and Islamabad and responses were obtained with the assistance of the key contacts via network referral approach. Each of the participants was read the purpose of the study and enlightened on the guarantee of confidentiality and the voluntary participation. The administration of questionnaire took place with an ethical standard in English (Fatima et al., 2018).

Questionnaire Design

The key constructs of the present study were measured using validated scales provided in previous studies. A 10-item scale adapted by researchers (Fetais et al., 2022) was used to evaluate Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA). Brand Loyalty (BL) was determined on a 3-item scale (Seo and Park, 2018). Brand Awareness (BA) was measured in 3 items developed by Sasmita and Suki (2015). A 5-item scale created by Patmawati and Miswanto (2022) was used to assess the position of Social Media Influencers (SMI). The reasons why they were used are that they are established scales that guarantee the validity and reliability of the study in measuring the dimensions of the research constructs.

Data collection and analysis

Using convenience sampling method three hundred questionnaires were distributed randomly among social media users. 260 questionnaires were adequately responded and returned from mentioned above. Data will be analyzed through construct Validity and Reliability analysis, Discriminant validity analysis, Model fitness using standardized root mean square residual and Normed Fit index and hypotheses testing using Beta and P value. All these tests will be analyzed using Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SMART PLS-3 and SPSS software.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Construct Validity and Composite Reliability Analysis

S #	Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
1	Brand Awareness (BA)	0.873	0.873	0.697

2	Brand Loyalty (BL)	0.880	0.880	0.710
3	Social Media Influencer (SMI)	0.951	0.951	0.795
4	Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA)	0.943	0.944	0.623
5	Brand Awareness (BA)	0.873	0.873	0.697

Table 1 Data is said to be reliable when its composite reliability values are >0.70 . Composite reliability results are more accurate than Cronbach alpha values in measuring internal consistency among items or constructs (Bryman, 2015). The Alpha value of BA is $0.873 > 0.70$ means internal consistency is good, likewise BL value is $0.880 > 0.70$ and SMI value is $0.951 > 0.70$ show good internal consistency in items of each independent variable is good. Likewise Dependent variable SMMA value is $0.9144 > 0.70$ which show excellent internal consistency, henceforth data is reliable.

Average Variance extracted (AVE) measures validity and data is said to be valid if AVE is >0.50 . In above table, all four independent variables and one dependent variable AVE values are; BA $0.697 > 0.50$, BL $0.710 > 0.50$, SMI $0.795 > 0.50$, SMMA $0.623 > 0.50$ means all items are strongly correlated with their respected variables that confirms validity in the data.

The study processed information from 260 participants using both statistical analysis and quantitative methods. The study employed one-way ANOVA for demographic variable analysis and regression and correlation analysis for hypothesis testing. The survey assessed individuals who self-identified as male (52%) and female (48%) from different age groups (30% between 18–24 years, 45% between 25–34 years, 15% between 35–44 years and 10% being above 45 years old along with varying educational backgrounds (60% holding bachelor's degrees, 25% with master's degrees and 15% with other qualifications). Participants used social media either daily (70%) or weekly (20%) or occasionally (10%). Participants reported different amounts of online usage time where 40% spent between 1–3 hours per day followed by 35% using social media for 3–5 hours and 25% exceeding five hours each day. Sixty-five percent of research participants acknowledged following social media influencers while their social media activities encompassed browsing and content sharing and engaging with influencers. Results from One-way ANOVA demonstrated statistical significance between brand loyalty levels according to gender ($f = 2.399$) as well as age ($f = 15.933$), education ($f = 2.926$), social media usage frequency ($f = 4.963$), duration of social media engagement ($f = 2.831$), social media activity types ($f = 5.162$) and following influencers ($f = 5.162$). The research data was analyzed and interpreted by using the statistical software application SPSS.

The study examines linear connection strengths between crucial variables by using a correlation matrix. Both Brand Loyalty (BL) and Brand Awareness (BA) demonstrate significant positive relationships with Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) at levels of 0.01 significance with respective coefficients of 0.763 and 0.679. Brand loyalty and awareness improve when social media marketing activities reach higher levels. Brand Awareness promotes increased Brand Loyalty to such an extent that the strength of their connection equals 0.755. All correlations prove statistically important at $p = 0.01$ which indicates their significant role in the research setting. The association between Customized Age Group (CAG) measures and the other variables remains significant with values ranging from 0.239 to 0.295 indicating age differences generate moderate effects on SMMA and brand awareness and influencer engagement responses. All statistical relationships attain significance at 0.01 level supporting the establishment of vital relationships between the study variables. Social scientists use Regression Analysis extensively to study the interrelationships between variables identified as independent and dependent (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2019). The presented research made use of single linear regression techniques for determining quantitative relationships between a single independent variable and dependent variable. The analysis of both mediation and moderation effects were applied using (Hayes & Rockwood's, 2017) approach. Using regression analysis allows researchers

to track how an independent factor affects the dependent factor by means of direct and indirect relationships.

The research establishes that Social Media Marketing Activity engagement (SMMA) directly influences Brand Awareness (BA) at a 0.50 standardized coefficient level while maintaining a p-value level below 0.001. Data demonstrates how Brand Awareness strongly affects Brand Loyalty by achieving a 0.40 coefficient value accompanied by a p-value lower than 0.001. Results show SMMA directly drives Brand Loyalty through engagement because the coefficient is 0.45 and the p-value is less than 0.001. A significant indirect path exists between SMMA and Brand Loyalty through Brand Awareness because their relationship shares a 0.20 value and p-value below 0.001. Analysis shows a partial mediation effect since there are significant statistical effects from both direct SMMA paths and indirect SMMA paths to Brand Loyalty. However, Brand Awareness serves as a relevant mechanism linking SMMA to Brand Loyalty.

Table 2
Pearson correlation matrix for study variables

Variable	Mean	SD	SMMA	BL	BA	SMI	CAG
SMMA	3.3531	0.9726					
BL	3.5218	0.9391	0.763**				
BA	3.7564	0.8168	0.679**	0.755**			
SMI	3.3546	1.0185	0.709**	0.740**	0.589**		
CAG	1.6538	0.4766	0.295**	0.241**	0.272**	0.239**	

Note. $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

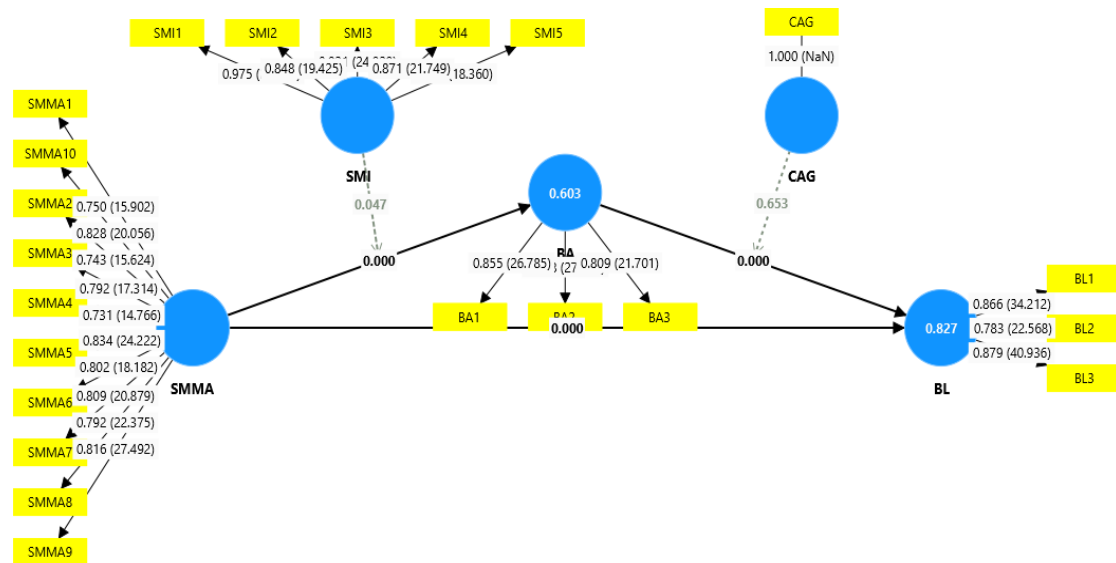


Figure 2: Moderation model illustrating the effects of Customized Age Group (CAG) and Social Media Influencers (SMI) on the relationship between SMMA, Brand Awareness, and Brand Loyalty.

Table 3
Path coefficients and significance levels from regression analysis.

	β	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SMMA -> BA	0.50	0.05	10.00	<0.001	0.40	0.60
BA -> BL	0.40	0.07	5.71	<0.001	0.26	0.54
SMMA -> BL	0.45	0.06	7.50	<0.001	0.33	0.57
Indirect effect	β	SE	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
SMMA -> BA -> BL	0.2	0.05	4.00	<0.001	0.12	0.29

Table 4
Moderation analysis results for Customized Age Group (CAG) and Social Media Influencers (SMI)

	β	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
BA -> BL	0.40	0.07	5.71	<0.001	0.26	0.54
CAG -> BL	0.20	0.06	3.33	<0.001	0.08	0.32
BA x CAG > BL	0.18	0.06	3.08	<0.001	0.06	0.30
SMMA -> BL	0.38	0.06	6.33	<0.001	0.26	0.50
SMI > BL	0.25	0.07	3.57	<0.001	0.11	0.39
SMI x SMMA -> BL	0.22	0.06	3.67	<0.001	0.10	0.34

Results from moderation analysis demonstrate that Social Media Influencers (SMI) together with Customized Age Group (CAG) enhance the impacts of key variables on Brand Loyalty (BL). A significant positive relationship exists between Brand Awareness (BA) and CAG ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < .001$). The influence of Brand Awareness on Brand Loyalty shows different strengths among various age groups at the $p < .001$ level. Brand awareness proves more effective in establishing loyalty with younger consumers than with older consumers as the increasing age shows a negative impact on their relationships according to the positive coefficient. A significant connection was established between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) and SMI ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < .001$). Research indicates that the inclusion of social media influencers enables SMMA to produce higher levels of brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < .001$). The involvement of influencers in marketing promotes brand loyalty development among consumers. A social media marketing approach requires merging youth-centric preferences with influencer involvement for building brand loyalty.

The analysis studied how social media influencers influence brand awareness through surveys with participants who buy products through social media apps. The research investigation revealed that social media marketing initiatives drive effective brand awareness thus fostering increased brand loyalty. The targeted age subgroups served as controls to reinforce the well-established correlation between brand awareness improvements and stronger brand loyalty. .Bunifumstance of social media influencers strengthened the existing positive association between social media marketing activities and brand awareness.

The study revealed social media marketing activities substantially affect brand loyalty because these practices increase loyalty rates. Social media influencers strengthen brand awareness levels yet the tailored usage among young consumers regulates the positive impact of brand awareness on brand loyalty.

Discussion

This research matches the main idea of Social Identity Theory (1979, Tajfel & Turner) which holds that individuals get part of their identity from the social groups to which they feel they belong. When using social media, brands help users form communities to publicly showcase what they believe in and what they care about through their use of the brand's content. SMMA for a brand is associated with higher brand awareness ($\beta = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$) and brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$). It appears that younger users and those interested in influencers tend to form both personal and mental connections with brands that share their ideas of who they are. Joined with influencers who live influencer lives, users strengthen their status among their own groups. Furthermore, brand awareness as a mediator (effect $\beta = 0.20$ and p value of less than 0.001) explains that awareness of the brand supports the progress to identity strengthening and not direct loyalty. It becomes more obvious that identity must match the brand when looking at customized age groups and influencers: people of different ages support brands that are similar to their beliefs and style. When we look at the results, it is clear that people love a brand when its values reflect their identity and when they can use

social media to express who they are, what sets them apart and how they fit in—all core aspects of Social Identity Theory.

Conclusion

This research delves into social media forum members across Islamabad and Rawalpindi in Pakistan to study SMM promotional practices' impact on brand devotion and customer acquisition choices. The research demonstrates how brand awareness functions as the central mechanism that connects SMM activities to greater brand loyalty. The study found that the association between positive outcomes and customised brand awareness is moderated by age groups. When social media influencers actively mediate these relationships, the relationship between SMM activities and brand awareness gets stronger. Additional research spanning multiple territories along with varied demographic groups should extend and verify the findings of this study.

Practical Implications

The study results provide advice for Pakistani brands who want to increase brand loyalty by using social media. Because both custom groups and social media influencers play a major role, marketing strategies should include age-defined content and indicators of identity. Because Gen Z (typically people aged 18–24) is very receptive to both influencer posts and trending topics, local businesses should consider working with micro- and nano-influencers on Instagram and TikTok. Because they are relatable and true to themselves, influencers attract Gen Z, who enjoys informal, creative and feeling content. For example, companies could invite their influencers to post challenges, show fans behind-the-scenes and make digital stories where users can help shape the brand's messages. Differently, Gen X (35–50 years old) is interested in details and authority, so Pakistani companies can rely on subject-matter experts and recognized public icons. When using Facebook or YouTube, material should highlight how dependable the product is, what it offers and what others have to say about it. Working with influencers in wellness, finances or parenting can let companies show they are trusted and helpful to this cohort. As the sample mainly involves Islamic countries like Islamabad and Rawalpindi, campaigns should reflect the ways the cities' residents live, the languages they speak and their culture. When promoting in rural areas, influencer strategies could be improved by keeping in mind language, local values and accessibility to media. When social media strategies are adjusted for these specific groups, Pakistani firms will be able to see a major rise in brand loyalty which leads to lasting relationships centered on a person's culture and generation.

Recommendations

Going by the results of this study, companies, especially those in the emerging markets such as those of Pakistan ought to strategically utilize Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) to design long term customer relations. As the brand awareness plays a significant role as a mediator relationship between SMMA and brand loyalty, companies have to be concerned with generating consistent, engaging content, and easily recognizable by the audience across the platforms. Entertainment, customization, interaction, trend, and word-of-mouth-oriented content can increase consumer recognition, trust and ultimately loyalty in a big way. In addition, the research places a significant focus on moderating factors (age customization). Marketers are, therefore, advised to align their content to the various generations. To give some examples, Gen Z might learn to pay more attention to interactive, visually engaging, and fashionable content, whereas Millennials might be more impressed with more informative and emotional messages. Through audience segmentation based on age, brands would be able to create more personalized and effective communication and this would lead to better engagement and better brand connections.

Further on, the contribution of Social Media Influencers (SMIs) as a moderator brings out the idea that partnering with influencers must be an inseparable part of digital marketing campaigns. The brands need to cooperate with influencers with a great online reputation and those who share the values and behaviors of the target audience. The presence of trust, reach, and brand loyalty are all activities that can be greatly facilitated by authenticity and relevance in influencer marketing. Also, firms ought to incorporate the use of powerful data analysis tools to monitor, evaluate, and optimize their social media policies continuously that include SPSS and SmartPLS. The advantages of data-driven decision-making include the ability of the marketers to respond faster to the dynamics in platforms and behavioral change of consumers, resulting in higher efficiency and investment payoff (ROI). Altogether, companies applying a specific, evidence-based approach to implementing social media as a medium will succeed in building sustainable brand loyalty in the current competitive online environment that will pay attention to brand awareness, age segmentation, and influencer alignment.

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