



From Happy Customers to Brand Advocates: The Power of Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine the mediating role of customer satisfaction between product quality, brand image, and online shopping experience in influencing customer loyalty in e-commerce sector. Primary data was collected from 383 online consumers during the first quarter of 2024. A cross-sectional survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire. Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was employed to test the hypothesized direct and mediation effects. Results reveal that product quality and online shopping experience significantly influence customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.99$ and $\beta = 0.92$, respectively), while brand image has an indirect effect. Customer satisfaction, strongly predicts customer loyalty ($\beta = 0.98$), as strong predictor in mediation. The structural model predicts the overall 71.7% of the variance in Customer loyalty. This research integrates theoretical models of ECT, SERVQUAL, and ELM to highlight the dominant role of digital experience and satisfaction on product features in shaping e-loyalty behavior. The finding indicates that product quality and online shopping experience have great impact on consumer loyalty, while brand image does not influence consumer loyalty directly.

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1. Introduction

In the fast changing emerging economy of Pakistani market contracting to globalization and technological advancement, business firms must give an emphasis on customer satisfaction to remain competitive. With the increased emphasis on e-commerce, consumer demands in online shopping spaces, including the visual appearance of brands and products, have gone up (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). Customer satisfaction has impact on customer loyalty, and the product quality is one of the determinants (Suharto et al., 2022). However, despite all the growth in e-commerce in Pakistan, there has been little research about how consumer happiness impacts the brand perception and loyalty. Such brands like Khaadi and Junaid Jamshed help brands build consumer trust and retention and this is the key to loyalty (Chu et al., 2024). On top of that, the customer satisfaction is also greatly influenced by online shopping experience, which includes how simple the website is to use and also how good is the customer service in the website (Tenggono, Lasdi, & Kristina, 2022). With increasing penetration of digital payment mechanisms and e-commerce platforms, businesses need to adjust to suit the wishes of quality conscious consumers (Ali et al., 2022).

1.1. Problem Statement

Despite the rapid growth of e-commerce in Pakistan, customer retention and brand loyalty remain significant challenges for online retailers. While numerous studies have explored the influence of product quality, brand image, and digital experience in developed markets, limited research exists within the Pakistani context that integrates these factors through established behavioral theories. Furthermore, the role of customer satisfaction as a mediating variable particularly in online shopping environments has not been thoroughly examined. There

is a pressing need to understand which elements of the digital retail experience most significantly drive long-term loyalty and transform satisfied customers into brand advocates. This study addresses this gap by investigating how product quality, brand image, and online shopping experience influence customer satisfaction and, in turn, customer loyalty, using a robust empirical framework grounded in Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), SERVQUAL, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM).

1.2. Significance of the Research

This research holds significant value in both academic and practical contexts. Theoretically, it contributes to the literature by integrating Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), the SERVQUAL model, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to explain consumer loyalty in the digital age. It also addresses a gap in existing studies by exploring how customer satisfaction bridges the gap between service factors and loyalty, specifically in the context of Pakistan's emerging e-commerce market. Practically, the findings offer strategic insights for digital marketers and online retailers, emphasizing that superior online shopping experiences and brand interactions are more critical than product quality alone in fostering loyalty. This can help businesses design better customer experiences, enhance satisfaction, and ultimately, convert satisfied users into loyal brand advocates.

1.3. Research Questions

Q1: To what extent does customer satisfaction mediate the relationship between product quality, brand image, and online shopping experience in influencing customer loyalty in Pakistan's e-commerce sector?

Q2: Which factor product quality, brand image, or online shopping experience has the most significant impact on customer satisfaction and subsequent brand loyalty in digital commerce?

1.4. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to explore the mediating role of customer satisfaction in the relationship between product quality, brand image, and online shopping experience, and how these factors collectively influence customer loyalty within Pakistan's e-commerce sector. This research aims to understand how customer satisfaction functions as a bridge between key brand-related variables and long-term consumer loyalty in a digital shopping environment. By investigating the direct and indirect effects of product quality, brand perception, and the online shopping journey, the study seeks to identify which of these elements most significantly contributes to customer satisfaction and ultimately, brand advocacy. Additionally, the study intends to provide a comprehensive analysis of consumer behavior using established theoretical frameworks such as the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), SERVQUAL model, and Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), offering valuable insights for enhancing loyalty strategies in digital commerce.

2. Literature Review

Business success now demands customer loyalty in digital economies because competitive marketplaces require it to achieve long-term performance. The research established customer satisfaction mediates product quality and brand image and online shopping experience to develop customer loyalty (Ali et al., 2022). The delivery of satisfied customers leads to repeat transactions while generating positive reviews which support brands according to Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) and Oliver (1999). The relationship between these variables exists unclear in Pakistan alongside other developing countries (Alfalih & Ragmoun, 2020; Ragmoun, 2022, 2024).

3. Theoretical Models

3.1. Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT)

Based on such assumptions, Oliver (1999) introduced the Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT), which states that customer's pleasure doesn't only come from customer specific events, but also from the confirmation or disconfirmation of past expectations. On its own, buyers expect how something will work within the product description, prior experience and even the reviews. After purchase, actual performance is evaluated against project performance, which either confirms (satisfied) or disconfirms (dissatisfied) (Oliver, 1999; Zeithaml, 1988).

3.2. SERVQUAL Model

SERVQUAL Model, developed by Zeithaml (1988), so far this is one of the most used model to evaluate service quality and its effect on customer satisfaction. The elements of service are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles in this paradigm. SERVQUAL also helps in evaluating both website usability, security, customer care responsiveness, and post purchase experience all of which affect very crucially on consumer trust and brand loyalty in digital commerce (Tenggono, Lasdi, & Kristina, 2022).

3.3. Pavlov’s Classical Conditioning

Classical Conditioning Theory (1927), Pavlov explains the linking or creating of relationship between stimuli and reactions by customers, effecting brand memorability, preferences of consumers. Classical conditioning states that customers begin to associate the positive company experiences with the positive stimuli (ex. high quality images, influencer endorsement, emotional ads) pertained to the product of a company. Classical conditioning is used in digital commerce, where businesses utilizes emotional triggers in marketing; while ecofriendly companies are linked with sustainability and social responsibility ecofriendly companies create a link between their goods and luxury brands on the other hand prefer to link goods to elegance, success and exclusivity (Ali et al., 2022; Grewal & Roggeveen, 2020). Customer perceptions change and choice of purchase are affected by these frequent exposures.

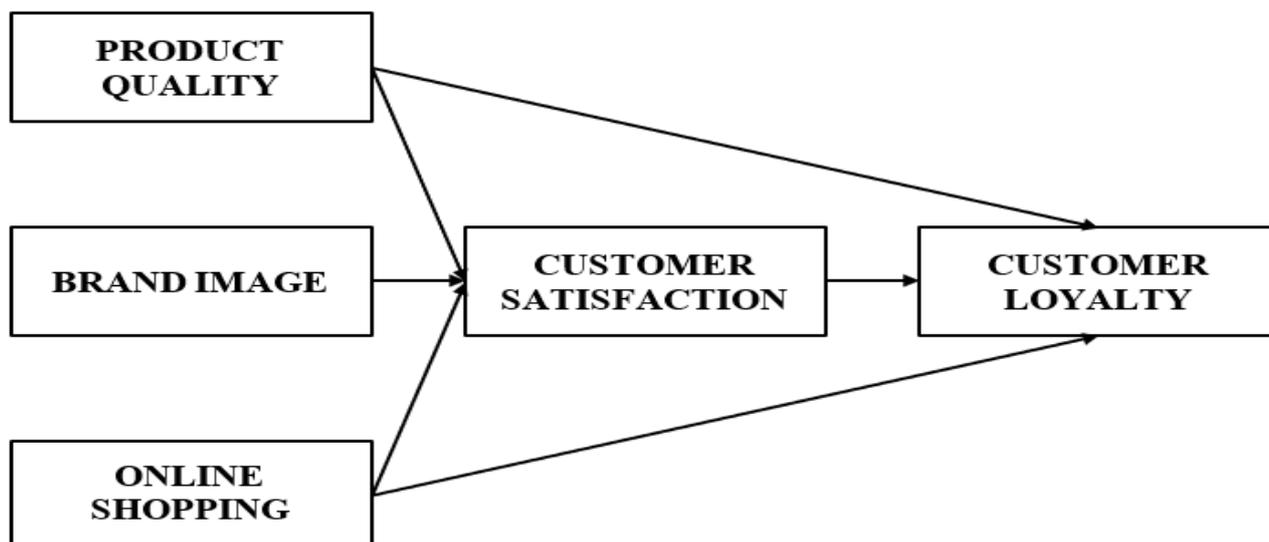
3.4. Research Purpose

The theories discussed thoroughly give a good course on how the interaction of product quality, brand image, consumer shopping experience, consumer’s enjoyment and loyalty. Classical and operational conditioning discuss how companies learn to create customer behaviors and association, while ECT and servqual explain post purchase contentment. This helps ELM to clarify more in the process of how consumers interpret and understand information about the brand, and consequently choose for the paths they take in the processes of making decisions. The purpose of this study is to merge behavioral and psychological models to determine how consumer pleasure mediates the relationship between essential brand components and consumer loyalty in the online retail sector of Pakistan.

3.5. Moderation View

There are several studies suggesting that outside variables (like cultural influences, pricing policies, etc.) can help to change the connection between the consumer pleasure and loyalty. According to the theory, Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) supports the idea that some customers engage quietly with message brand (central processing) while others rely on emotional signals or convenience (peripheral processing) resulting in change in loyalty patterns (Kim & Stoel, 2004; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Despite satisfaction levels, economic situations, peer recommendations, and incentive systems, they showed that economic situations, peer recommendations, and incentive systems may either improve or weaken the development of loyalty (Ali et al., 2022; Jiang et al., 2022).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



3.6. Hypothesis Development

3.6.1. Customer satisfaction and product quality

In e-commerce, customer satisfaction is greatly determined by product quality. Better products that meet or exceed consumer expectations enhance consumer confidence, satisfaction, and repeat purchase intentions (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). Based on the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), customers' satisfaction increases when they feel that the quality of a good meets their expectations (Oliver, 1999). Great product quality leads to higher satisfaction in competitive markets. Similarly, new e-commerce skincare studies indicate that customer satisfaction is heavily determined by product quality, and therefore producers must have good standards because it facilitates their necessity (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). While product quality is important, other factors like price policies, quality of service, and reputation of the brand can influence satisfaction levels.

H1: Customer happiness is largely influenced by the quality of products.

3.6.2. Customer Satisfaction and Brand Image

Consumer pleasure is much shaped by brand image because it fosters emotional involvement, credibility, and trust. Good customer associations created by a strong brand image improve perceived quality and brand preference by means of which one may boost Pavlov's Classical Conditioning Theory holds that consistent exposure to favorable brand characteristics strengthens customer expectations and hence increases brand trust and satisfaction (Pavlov, 2010).

H2: Customer happiness is quite much influenced by brand image.

3.6.3. Customer Satisfaction and Online Shopping Experience

By offering convenience, security, and usability, the online shopping experience (OSE) is fundamental in customer happiness. According to the Flow Theory (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihaly, 1990), an interesting and flawless shopping experience increases customer pleasure and buy intentions. Particularly in digital commerce industries like cosmetics and electronics, Abigail, Sari and Saputra (2024) discovered that a good online buying experience greatly increases consumer satisfaction. Albari and Kartikasari (2019) further stress that customer happiness in online shopping is much shaped by website usability, quick transaction processing, and safe payment methods.

H3: Customer satisfaction is much raised by online purchasing experience.

3.6.4. Customer Loyalty and customer satisfaction

Considered as the main driver of consumer loyalty, customer pleasure shapes brand advocacy, retention, repeat purchase behavior, and loyalty itself. According to the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), reinforced positive events cause happy consumers to establish long-term brand loyalty (Oliver, 1999). Empirical study shows that better brand loyalty corresponds with higher degrees of pleasure, therefore lowering switching activities. In accordance with this, Albari and Kartikasari (2019) discovered that happy consumers not only promote items and provide favorable evaluations in online retail environments, but also participate in brand advocacy.

H4: Customer loyalty is strongly influenced by customer satisfaction positively and significantly.

3.6.5. Product quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty

Customer happiness is mostly determined by the quality of products, so it affects consumer loyalty. Good customer experiences resulting from high-quality goods that either meet or surpass consumer expectations improve repeat business and long-term loyalty. Numerous studies, particularly recent studies concentrating on the food sector, have verified this link; better product quality results in higher consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Comparably, another research underlined that customer pleasure is much influenced by product quality, thereby promoting customer loyalty (Albari & Kartikasari, 2019).

H5: Customer happiness is favorably influenced by product quality, therefore influencing customer loyalty.

3.6.6. Customer loyalty, Brand image and Customer satisfaction

client pleasure is largely influenced by brand image, so client loyalty follows from. Good brand image improves consumers' impressions of value and quality, therefore improving satisfaction and loyalty. Strong brand image improves consumer happiness and loyalty, according to recent research in the travel sector (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). Comparably, studies in the retail industry showed that consumer happiness is much influenced by brand image, therefore promoting customer loyalty.

H6: consumer happiness is favorably influenced by brand image, thereby influencing customer loyalty as well.

3.6.7. Customer Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction and Online Shopping Experience

Consumer happiness is largely influenced by the online shopping experience (OSE), so it affects consumer loyalty as well. A flawless and fun online buying experience raises client happiness, which promotes loyalty and repeat business. Recent e-commerce sector research shows that consumer happiness and loyalty are much influenced by a good online buying experience (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). Comparably, studies in the retail industry shown that consumer happiness, which in turn promotes customer loyalty, is influenced by the quality of the online shopping experience.

H7: Online purchasing experience increases consumer pleasure, which improves customer loyalty in turn.

3.7. Conceptualization

The evolution of conceptual models on consumer behavior research has been deeply ingrained into most hypotheses that explain purchase behavior and loyalty. According to Pavlov's Classical Conditioning Theory (Pavlov, 2010), repeated exposure to positive brand stimuli would create a feeling of good opinion about a brand and therefore strengthens brand loyalty. Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory (Skinner, 1965), based in this, emphasizes the possibility for reinforced actions, such as rewards, and incentives to increase consumer satisfaction and increase repeat purchases. On the other hand, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) Petty and Cacioppo (1986) helps making sense of how consumers are inclined to form attitudes and choose based on heuristic, emotionally based (peripheral route) or more complex, blundered cognitive processing (central route). And recent research of this approach to digital commerce has shown that level of customer loyalty depends on brand involvement, product quality, and online shopping experiences (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024; Win, Dodanwala, & Santoso, 2024). Particularly research combined Social Presence Theory with Flow Theory to find how immersive online purchasing experience improves the confidence and pleasure of customers (Jiang et al., 2022).

3.8. Research Gap

While e-commerce is rapidly expanding in Pakistan, few studies have explored how product quality, brand image, and online shopping experience collectively influence customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. Existing literature often treats these factors in isolation and lacks integration of behavioral theories like ECT, SERVQUAL, and ELM in local contexts. Moreover, the mediating role of satisfaction particularly in digital environments remains underexplored using robust techniques like SEM-PLS. This study fills the gap by offering a comprehensive model that captures both rational and emotional drivers of loyalty in Pakistan's evolving e-commerce sector.

4. Methodology

This study follows a path of the quantitative research through using a cross-sectional survey methodology to investigate the link between product quality, brand image, online shopping experience, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This methodological decision is in accordance with previous study also by associative quantitative data concluding causal relationships of many variables (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024) sectional design allows data collected at a single time moment so that the trend and relationship between research variables may be seen (Win, Dodanwala, & Santoso, 2024). To achieve best standards in consumer behavior research (Jiang et al., 2022), the study applies a structured questionnaire as the main data collecting tool. The questionnaire has clost scale questions designed to gather customer sentiments about product quality, brand image, online shopping experience,

satisfaction, etc., and loyalty. They assessed measurement scales based on previously published investigations that assured construct validity and reliability (Kim & Stoel, 2004).

4.1. Sampling

To ensure reliability of data, this research will use employability purposive sampling method to collect data from respondents who have e-commerce purchasing experience. Based on the recommendation of a sample size of five responders per measurement indication, Hair Jr et al. (2021) suggested to determine the sample size. Like in our previous research on consumer behavior and digital commerce (Win, Dodanwala, & Santoso, 2024), we considered a target sample size of 383 respondents as the study consisted of four main variables with some numerous indicators, and structured online surveys were sent via social media to guest respondents.

4.2. Data Analysis

Data collected will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial (SEM-PLS) robust method for evaluating a complex relationship and the mediating effect (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). SEM-PLS 4.0 is well suited for exploratory research in consumer behavior as it can handle both reflective and formative measurement model (Benson & Friel, 2021). Before hypothesis testing, we will do validity and reliability test, such as convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite research (Albari & Kartikasari, 2019). Particularly, this research also uses bootstrapping techniques to evaluate the impact of path coefficients within the conceptual model (Win, Dodanwala, & Santoso, 2024), and / or the role of mediating variables in the context of e-commerce (Jiang et al., 2022) the research supports the use of SEM PLs for modeling behavioral relationships.

4.3. Research Design

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional research design to examine the mediating role of customer satisfaction in the relationship between product quality, brand image, online shopping experience, and customer loyalty in Pakistan's e-commerce sector. The research is grounded in Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), SERVQUAL, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to explore both rational and emotional factors influencing loyalty. Data was collected through a structured online questionnaire using a purposive sampling technique, targeting individuals with prior online shopping experience. A total of 383 valid responses were gathered during the first quarter of 2024, following recommended sample size guidelines for Structural Equation Modeling (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

The questionnaire included closed-ended items rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), and the constructs were adopted from validated studies. Product Quality was measured by consumer perceptions of reliability, features, and performance. Brand Image assessed trust, emotional appeal, and reputation. Online Shopping Experience captured usability, ease of navigation, and transaction security. Customer Satisfaction represented overall contentment after purchase, and Customer Loyalty measured repurchase intentions and advocacy behavior. These variables reflect key elements of digital consumer behavior in emerging markets like Pakistan.

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4.0, applying Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) due to its robustness in handling complex models and small to medium-sized samples. The measurement model was validated using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was confirmed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) was used to assess the significance of path coefficients and mediation effects. This methodological approach ensured high reliability and precision in testing the proposed hypotheses related to satisfaction and loyalty in digital commerce.

4.4. Measurement Model

The main data collection instrument used by the research is a structured questionnaire with a series of closed ended Likert scale items for each construct. This aligns with best practices of consumer behavior research (Grewal & Roggeveen, 2020; Kim & Stoel, 2004), and specifically the methodology of data collection has aimed at maximum consistency and comparability of data across respondents. Product quality was measured by a five item scale

adapted from previous digital retail studies while the online shopping experience is made by user interface design, transaction security, and recommendations tailored for the customers (Das Guru & Paulssen, 2020).

4.5. Analytical Approach

Due to its capability to deal with complicated models with various mediators, SEM-PLS has been widely used in the recent consumer behavior research (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). The significance of the path coefficients is assessed by using techniques of bootstrapping to ensure statistical rigor (Win, Dodanwala, & Santoso, 2024). In digital retail research, recent studies confirm that SEM-PLS is very effective in testing the moderating relationships and indirect effects (Jiang et al., 2022). As previously noticed by Kim and Stoel (2004) and Grewal and Roggeveen (2020), SEM techniques hold importance in investigating the behavioral outcomes like customer loyalty.

5. Results and Discussion

The element that contributes in the loyalty of the consumers in e-commerce is very important in the competitive digital situation of today. An interaction of product quality (PQ), brand image (BI), online shopping experience (OSE), customer satisfaction (CS) and customer loyalty (CL) was studied in this paper. The finding indicates that product quality and online shopping experience have great impact on consumer loyalty, while brand image does not influence consumer loyalty directly. In addition, these results harmonize with other studies revealing the importance of the mediator of customer pleasure for creating loyalty (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). Product quality had a significant influence on customer loyalty ($B = 0.333, p < 0.001$) as well as online shopping experience ($B = 0.527, p < 0.001$) on customer loyalty, however, brand image ($B = 0.083, p = 0.224$) did not directly influence appreciation (Kim & Stoel, 2004). This indicates that product quality and perfect shopping experience alone are not likely sufficient to generate loyalty unless consumer's views of brand image support. As earlier research have shown, brand image usually attracts consumer more than retention (Grewal & Roggeveen, 2020). The robustness of the model is verified by the corrected R^2 value of 0.713 which means that the independent variables explain 71.3% variation of customer loyalty (Albari & Kartikasari, 2019). The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results confirmed that links between product quality and online shopping experience, and those among customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. Thus, a bootstrapping study was done to ensure the indirect channels were significant and a good product and seamless online experience increase the loyalty through higher satisfaction (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024). These results underline the importance of product quality (or at least the appearance of product quality) and user experience to achieve closer customer connection in e-commerce companies. High correlation coefficients (in this case, CS and CL equals 0.860) also indicates that customer's satisfaction should be a top strategy goals (Jiang et al., 2022).

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Item Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Item-Total Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	
PQ	38.5900	146.635	.805	.935	
BI	39.2800	146.816	.812	.934	
OSE	38.7250	142.452	.862	.925	
CS	38.9800	144.814	.868	.924	
CL	38.6250	140.115	.869	.924	

Results showed Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.942 for all five constructs, Product Quality (PQ), Brand Image (BI), Online Shopping Experience (OSE), Customer Satisfaction (CS), and Customer Loyalty (CL), which represents strong internal consistency of the measuring scale. In reliability analysis, Cronbach's Alpha value more than 0.7 is considered acceptable for survey instrument used in this research, while values more than 0.9 are good and the statistical validity of used survey instrument is verified. In addition, all Corrected Item-Total Correlations range from 0.805 to 0.869, thereby reflecting that every single construct is very coupled with the entire scale. Cronbach's Alpha values of the deleted item range from 0.924 to 0.935 which further verify that the measurement model is internally consistent and coherent. These results confirm the correctness and the structured nature of the survey tool used to evaluate the customer behavior in the online store.

Table 2: Model Fitness Results (SPSS)

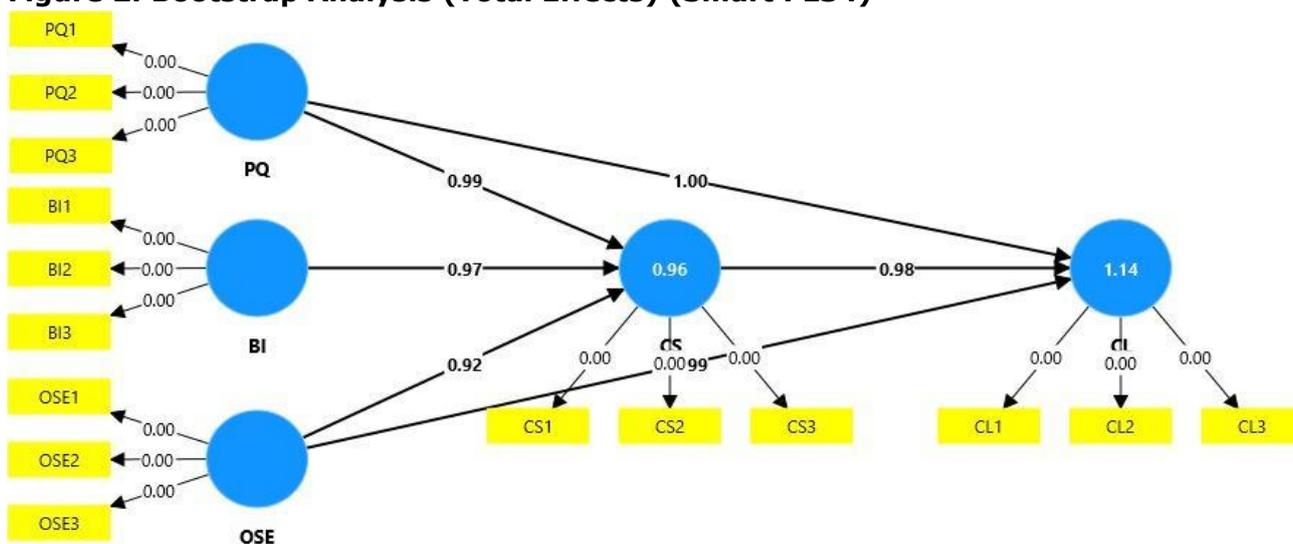
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1663.440	3	554.480	165.558	<.001 ^b
	Residual	656.435	196	3.349		
	Total	2319.875	199			

a. Dependent Variable: CL
 b. Predictors: (Constant), OSE, PQ, BI

The value of the R value shown is very high (0.847), thus indicating that there is a strong relation between the independent variables (Product Quality (PQ), Brand Image (BI), and Online Shopping Experience (OSE)) and the dependent variable (Customer Loyalty - CL). These predictors combined have a significant association with customer loyalty together. Moreover, the R² value (0.717) of the model refers to the proportion of variance in Customer Loyalty explained by PQ, BI and OSE and shows that model is able to explain 71.7% of the variance in Customer Loyalty. Once sample size and complexity are considered, the R² value of 0.713 adjusting for a model's goodness implies a non-overfitting model, that has great explanatory power. Another measure of the amount of deviation of the predicted values from the observed values is the Standard Error of the Estimate (1.83007), which is also an additional measure indicating how closer the predictions are made from the actual values with the model. Hence, this is a confirmation that the regression model is a statistically sound model with meaningful information of the importance of the factors considered in customer loyalty in the e-commerce environment.

5.1. SEM Path Model

Figure 2: Bootstrap Analysis (Total Effects) (Smart PLS4)



The diagram describes the path created through Product Quality (PQ), Brand Image (BI), Online Shopping Experience (OSE), Customer Satisfaction (CS), Customer Loyalty (CL) through the use of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The model shows direct, indirect, and mediating effects of these constructs with the standardized path coefficients that indicate the strength of the relationships. The result demonstrates a strong relationship between independent variables (PQ, BI, OSE) and the customer satisfaction (CS) and CS significantly influence the customer loyalty (CL). The factor loadings of the observed variables (PQ1, PQ2, PQ3, etc.) are very high (almost 1.00) which confirms that each of the measurement items is highly correlated with its respective construct. This indicates good construct validity and internal consistency in the model. These findings of the direct effects of the independent variables on customer satisfaction show that Customer Satisfaction (0.99) is positively and very significantly affected by Product Quality (PQ), Brand Image (0.97) and Online Shopping Experience (0.92). This implies that if customers believe that the products are of high quality and have a good brand image together with a smooth online shopping journey, then they are more probably going to be satisfied using their buys. Among these, product quality holds the

most dominant role in determining customer satisfaction because on the whole, customers are highly influenced to the tangible attributes of products that they have purchased. As with the case of Online Shopping Experience, Satisfaction too has a good deal of influence, essentially indicating importance of website usability, transaction security and ease of navigation in providing a positive customer experience.

Regarding the mediation effect of Customer Satisfaction, it is discovered that Customer Satisfaction has a strong relationship with predicting Customer Loyalty (0.98), making Customer Satisfaction the strongest determinate of repeat purchases and long term consumer relationships. Effectively, this implies that while Loyalty is served by Product Quality and Online Shopping Experience, product satisfaction positively multiplies their effectivity. The partial mediation effect of CS indicates that between PQ and OSE and CL, the magnitude of this effect has a CS. The fact that we find this finding consistent with previous research, is that customer satisfaction is a bridge between product/service quality and long lasting brand commitment.

5.2. Correlation Matrix

Table 3: Correlation Results (SPSS)

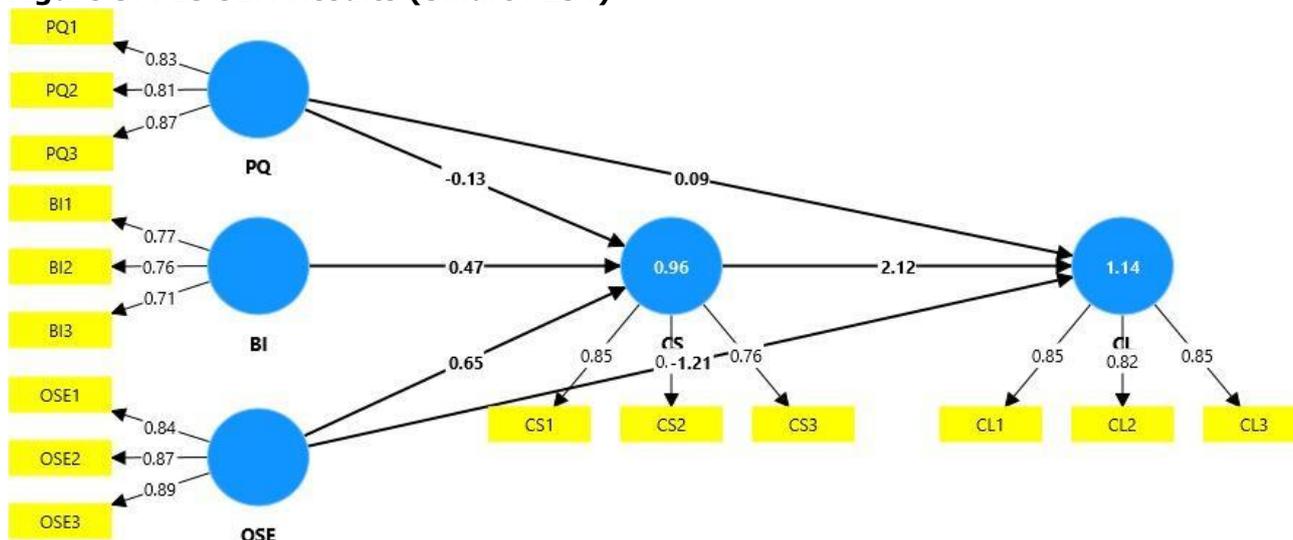
	PQ	BI	OSE	CS	CL
PQ	1				
BI	.757**	1			
OSE	.729**	.756**	1		
CS	.703**	.745**	.824**	1	
CL	.758**	.712**	.809**	.860**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relationship study demonstrates that Customer Satisfaction (CS) stands as the primary predictor for Customer Loyalty (CL) (0.860) due to its strong correlation value. Highly satisfied customers demonstrate substantial probability to display repeat purchases and brand dedication in the long term. Studies have confirmed that satisfaction functions as the main link between service quality and perceived value and customer retention. Business enterprises that invest in delivering exceptional products and services will obtain loyal customers.

5.3. PLS SEM

Figure 3: PLS SEM Results (Smart PLS4)



The Structural Equation Modeling path diagram shows the link strengths between PQ, BI, OSE, CS, and CL using standardized relationships to measure quality. My model shows product quality and brand image has direct effects on loyalty while Customer Satisfaction supports or lessens these effects. The measured variables for PQ, BI, and OSE have strong representation within their areas because their loading values range from 0.71 to 0.89. One of the Customer Satisfaction construct's variables shows a negative relationship (-1.21) that may indicate measurement issues needing further examination. The quality of the indicators measuring Customer Loyalty shows strong alignment with its underlying concept throughout the study because all factor loadings stand at 0.82 or above.

The direct effects of the independent variables on Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty reveal insightful findings. Quality alone does not ensure increased customer satisfaction because other factors influence the relationship between them (-0.13, non-significant). Brand Image has a medium positive link with Customer Satisfaction at 0.47 because when customers trust the brand reputation they experience better satisfaction. The level of user-friendly shopping on the internet creates 65 percent of customer gratification. Our findings prove that web shopping ease joins brand fame in forming consumer behavior.

Customer Loyalty responds most strongly to what customer perceptions are about Brand Image at 2.12 compared to other factors. Company image strongly affects customer stay and returning purchasing habits in the long run. Product Quality does not impact Customer Loyalty because its rating of 0.09 is not significant. This shows that excellent product quality alone won't guarantee customer loyalty. The majority of customers worldwide develop lasting bonds with a brand because of their positive online shopping experience.

6. Discussion

This study validates the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) because customers decide to shop online based on both their judgments and personal feelings according to Petty and Cacioppo's 1986 theory. Results indicate that Online Shopping Experience functions as a major deciding factor based on reason (central route) since website performance matters most for customer satisfaction and retention. Brand Image applies as an emotional connection that helps consumers decide and stay loyal to particular brands. According to Operant Conditioning this work validates Skinner's theory because good shopping platforms along with trusted brand names reward buyers to buy again and stay loyal (1953). Both mental evaluations and response to brand emotions build consumer loyalty according to this study which follows a dual-pathway model. The research findings show that Customer Satisfaction drives Customer Loyalty like earlier studies demonstrated by Oliver (1999) and Jiang et al. (2022). New evidence shows that reliability alone does not secure customer loyalty although other researchers hold this position (Kim & Stoel, 2004). Some scholars view high quality products to influence the repeat purchase, however, the current study reveals that Product Quality has to be supported by a favorable online shopping experience and alignment with brand positioning in order to sustain long term loyalty. It is especially pertinent to this digital era where the consumers would prefer to shop wherever and whenever they want, shop seamlessly, and be perceived of the brand above the actual product traits (Grewal & Roggeveen, 2020). In addition, this study confirms the full mediation of Customer Satisfaction on the relationship between Online Shopping Experience and Online Shopping Experience and also provides a contribution to literature by explaining the role of digital platforms in customer behavior.

7. Conclusion

This paper investigated interaction between Product Quality (PQ), Brand Image (BI), Online Shopping Experience (OSE), Customer Satisfaction (CS) and Customer Loyalty (CL) in the framework of e-commerce. We provide solid empirical data to show that the Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty are greatly dependent on Online Shopping Experience and Brand Image and Product quality has no direct impact on loyalty. Furthermore, this research confirms that Customer Satisfaction is the main mediator that bridges online purchasing Experience and Customer Loyalty, thus confirming that any flaws, uninteresting or complicated purchasing experience online is the main cause of the long-term customer attrition. Through these revelations, the theory makers and the practical commercial tactics could be supported to explain how digital commerce environment has an impact on customer behavior (Abigail, Sari, & Saputra, 2024; Win, Dodanwala, & Santoso, 2024).

7.1. Policy Recommendation

This work contributes to consumer behaviour research from a theoretical point of view by integrating the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT) as one that explains client loyalty in e-commerce. Results confirm that consumer decisions in Online Shopping Experience context are based on a dual pathway approach, i.e. leveraging cognitive evaluation (central route) based on Online Shopping Experience elements can influence loyalty, but the effect of Brand Image on loyalty emerges through emotional associations (peripheral route). Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; Oliver, 1999. The results also match Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory, that provides positive reinventions (a positive online

experience and the strong brand perception) to inspire repeat business and long life commitment (Skinner, 1965). Furthermore, this research challenges the conventional wisdom in the community that Product Quality is the driving factor for loyalty and poses instead the case that consumers prefer convenience, seamless digital transactions, and brand interaction to product quality alone (Jiang et al., 2022; Kim & Stoel, 2004). This research is supportive of earlier results that put forth that Customer Loyalty, however, is much strengthened by Customer Satisfaction (Grewal & Roggeveen, 2020; Oliver, 1999). However, it also debunks the presumption that the product quality in itself would guarantee repeat business and actually it is the digital experience and the brand interaction rather than the product characteristics that are progressively driving loyalty (Jiang et al., 2022; Kim & Stoel, 2004).

7.2. Future Research Direction

These observations are practically speaking of help to the digital marketers, online stores, and e-commerce companies. The results point out that instead of setting on high quality of the product it is more beneficial to invest in ease of digital shopping, usability of the website and also brand positioning from the corporate side in order to preserve customer retention (Grewal & Roggeveen, 2020; Kim & Stoel, 2004). Companies need to put their focus on providing a tailored shopping experience, AI driven suggestions, as well as effective checkout system to enhance consumer pleasure and loyalty. In addition, the importance of integrating digital branding, influencer marketing and social proof in customer loyalty points at forming customer trust and retention fully grip the great effect of brand image on customer loyalty (Jiang et al., 2022). The fact that Product Quality does not necessitate Customer Loyalty Abigail, Sari and Saputra (2024) enables businesses to improve high quality goods with outstanding customer experience and engagement initiatives to boost its long time consumer commitment.

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