

BRAND TRUST SATURATION AND IMAGE-DRIVEN LOYALTY: EVIDENCE FROM CONSUMER SATISFACTION PATHWAYS

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to examine the effects of brand image and brand trust on customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction as a mediating mechanism among soft drink consumers. The study contributes by uncovering a saturation effect in brand trust, where trust functions as a baseline condition with limited incremental impact on loyalty, while brand image drives loyalty through both direct and satisfaction-mediated pathways. Using a quantitative design, data from 197 consumers were analyzed using PLS-SEM to test direct and indirect relationships. The findings show that brand image significantly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty, with satisfaction partially mediating this relationship. In contrast, brand trust positively affects satisfaction but does not significantly influence loyalty, either directly or indirectly. These results highlight asymmetric roles of brand constructs, suggesting that strengthening brand image remains critical for loyalty formation, while trust serves as a foundational but non-differentiating factor in mature markets.

Keywords: Customer Loyalty; Brand Image; Brand Trust; Customer Satisfaction; Trust Saturation

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INTRODUCTION

Customer loyalty has become increasingly fragile in contemporary consumer markets, particularly in product categories characterized by low differentiation, high substitution, and heightened exposure to social and ideological pressures. In such environments, loyalty is no longer a stable outcome of habitual purchasing but a dynamic construct shaped by continuous consumer evaluation of brand meaning, relational credibility, and public positioning. Recent studies demonstrate that consumer patronage is increasingly influenced by broader contextual factors, including brand activism, reputational signals, and value alignment, which can either reinforce or weaken attachment depending on how consumers interpret brand behavior (Francioni et al., 2025; Kim & He, 2025). This condition positions customer loyalty as a critical yet unstable strategic asset, especially for globally visible brands operating in socially sensitive markets.

Within marketing theory, brand image has long been recognized as a fundamental determinant of consumer loyalty because it structures the associations, meanings, and symbolic value attached to a brand. Brand image operates as a cognitive schema that simplifies decision-making and shapes expectations regarding product performance and experiential outcomes. Empirical evidence consistently shows that a strong brand image enhances both customer satisfaction and loyalty; however, its effect is not always direct or uniform (Tahir et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2022). Rather, the influence of brand image often depends on whether consumer expectations are confirmed through actual consumption experiences, suggesting that image alone is insufficient without evaluative reinforcement.

Parallel to this, brand trust is conceptualized as a relational mechanism that reduces perceived risk and fosters confidence in a brand's reliability and integrity. Traditional perspectives assume that trust directly leads to loyalty by stabilizing consumer-brand relationships. However, emerging research indicates that trust may function differently in mature or highly familiar markets, where it becomes a baseline expectation rather than a distinguishing factor (Villagra et al., 2021; Monfort et al., 2025). In such contexts, variations in trust may exert limited direct influence on loyalty, instead operating indirectly through evaluative constructs such as satisfaction and perceived value. This raises important theoretical questions regarding whether trust remains a primary driver of loyalty or merely a foundational condition that enables other mechanisms to operate.

Customer satisfaction provides a critical lens for resolving these inconsistencies. As a post-consumption evaluation comparing expectations with actual performance, satisfaction represents the point at which cognitive perceptions and affective responses converge into behavioral intentions. Prior studies emphasize that satisfaction serves as a key mediator linking brand-related antecedents to loyalty outcomes, yet its role is not universally consistent across constructs (Uzir et al., 2021; Gao & Shen, 2024). This suggests that loyalty formation may follow asymmetric pathways, where some antecedents influence loyalty directly while others require evaluative mediation. Such asymmetry becomes particularly relevant in socially dynamic contexts, where external pressures may alter consumer perceptions but do not uniformly disrupt established consumption patterns (Madani et al., 2021).

These dynamics are especially evident in the Indonesian context, where global brands such as Coca-Cola operate within evolving socio-cultural and political landscapes that influence consumer attitudes. Despite exposure to external pressures and public discourse, many consumers continue to demonstrate consistent purchasing behavior, indicating that loyalty is shaped not only by symbolic perceptions but also by accumulated consumption experiences. This provides an empirical setting to examine whether satisfaction acts as a stabilizing mechanism that sustains loyalty even when external conditions fluctuate.

Against this background, the present study examines the influence of brand image and brand trust on customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable among consumers of PT Coca-Cola Indonesia products in Makassar City. This study offers three key contributions. First, it advances the customer loyalty literature by introducing an asymmetric mediation perspective, challenging the assumption that all brand-related constructs influence loyalty through a uniform mechanism. Second, it differentiates the roles of brand image and brand trust, clarifying whether both constructs operate as direct drivers or whether their effects are contingent upon evaluative processes. Third, it situates loyalty formation within a socially dynamic

consumption context, thereby extending existing theoretical models beyond stable market assumptions and highlighting the conditional nature of consumer-brand relationships.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Brand image remains a central construct in explaining customer loyalty because it organizes the network of associations through which consumers interpret product quality, symbolic value, and expected experience. A favorable brand image reduces evaluative uncertainty and increases the likelihood that consumers will convert recognition into satisfaction and repeated patronage. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that brand image strengthens both customer satisfaction and loyalty, although its influence is often contingent on whether expectations are confirmed through actual consumption (Tahir et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2022). This suggests that brand image does not operate merely as a pre-consumption signal but as a cognitive frame that shapes how consumers evaluate their experiences, thereby exerting both direct and indirect effects on loyalty formation.

Brand trust, while closely related, represents a distinct relational mechanism grounded in consumers' confidence in a brand's reliability and integrity. Traditional relationship marketing perspectives position trust as a direct antecedent of loyalty because it reduces perceived risk and enhances commitment. However, recent studies indicate that the role of trust is more conditional than previously assumed. In mature markets and for highly familiar brands, trust often becomes a baseline expectation rather than a differentiating factor, thereby limiting its direct influence on loyalty (Villagra et al., 2021; Monfort et al., 2025). Instead, trust tends to operate through indirect pathways, reinforcing satisfaction and perceived value, which subsequently shape behavioral outcomes. This shift challenges the assumption of a universal trust–loyalty linkage and highlights the need to examine intervening mechanisms more carefully.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides a relevant theoretical lens for understanding these dynamics by explaining how beliefs and perceptions translate into behavioral intention. According to TPB, behavior is preceded by intention, which is shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of branding, brand image and trust contribute to the formation of consumer attitudes and beliefs, while satisfaction represents a post-consumption evaluative process that strengthens or weakens these predispositions. Contemporary extensions of TPB in consumer research further emphasize that brand-related beliefs rarely translate directly into behavior; rather, they operate through evaluative and attitudinal mechanisms that convert perception into sustained intention and loyalty (Fayyaz et al., 2025). This perspective supports the view that loyalty is not an immediate outcome of perception but a structured process mediated by experience.

Customer satisfaction therefore emerges as a critical mediating construct in the relationship between brand perception and loyalty. Satisfaction reflects the consumer's evaluation that a brand has met or exceeded expectations, serving as a bridge between cognitive perception and behavioral commitment. Prior research shows that satisfaction plays a central role in transforming favorable brand evaluations into long-term loyalty, although the strength of this mediation varies across contexts (Uzir et al., 2021; Gao & Shen, 2024). Importantly, recent evidence suggests that loyalty formation follows asymmetric pathways, where some antecedents, such as brand image, exert both direct and mediated effects, while others, such as brand trust, rely more heavily on indirect mechanisms (Troiville, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). This asymmetry becomes particularly salient in the context of established brands, where trust may be normalized and satisfaction becomes the key differentiating factor in sustaining loyalty.

Hypothesis Development

Brand image functions as a cognitive and symbolic framework through which consumers interpret product meaning, expected quality, and relational value. It reduces decision ambiguity and embeds the brand within consumers' evaluative memory structures, thereby increasing the likelihood of preference formation and repeated patronage. Empirical evidence consistently shows that brand image enhances customer loyalty by shaping both attitudinal commitment and behavioral repetition, particularly when symbolic expectations align with actual consumption

experience (Tahir et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2022). However, recent studies suggest that this relationship is not purely direct, as brand image often requires experiential validation to translate into stable loyalty (Troiville, 2024). This indicates that brand image operates as both a direct and experience-contingent driver of loyalty.

H1: Brand image has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

Brand trust reflects consumers' confidence in a brand's reliability, integrity, and ability to consistently deliver on its promises. Within relationship marketing, trust has traditionally been positioned as a direct antecedent of loyalty because it reduces perceived risk and stabilizes long-term exchange relationships (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Yet contemporary research reveals a more nuanced pattern, particularly in mature markets where trust becomes a baseline expectation rather than a source of differentiation (Villagra et al., 2021; Monfort et al., 2025). In such contexts, variations in trust may not directly translate into stronger loyalty, suggesting that its effect is conditional and potentially mediated by evaluative mechanisms.

H2: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

Brand image also plays a critical role in shaping customer satisfaction by influencing expectations prior to consumption and framing how performance is interpreted afterward. A favorable image increases the likelihood that consumers will evaluate their experiences positively, as perceived quality and symbolic value align with expectations. Empirical findings confirm that brand image significantly enhances customer satisfaction, reinforcing its role as a determinant of post-consumption evaluation (Tahir et al., 2024; Chen, 2024). Thus, brand image operates not only as a perception-based construct but also as a driver of evaluative outcomes.

H3: Brand image has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Brand trust contributes to customer satisfaction by reducing uncertainty and reinforcing confidence in expected outcomes. When consumers perceive a brand as reliable and consistent, they are more likely to interpret their experiences positively, even in the presence of minor performance variations. Prior research indicates that trust strengthens satisfaction by stabilizing expectations and enhancing perceived value (Uzir et al., 2021; Hsu & Lin, 2023). This positions trust as an important antecedent of satisfaction, even when its direct effect on loyalty is less pronounced.

H4: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction represents the evaluative outcome of consumption, reflecting the extent to which expectations are met or exceeded. It serves as a key mechanism linking perception to behavior, as satisfied consumers are more likely to develop commitment, engage in repeat purchases, and resist competitive alternatives. Extensive empirical evidence supports satisfaction as a strong predictor of loyalty across various consumption contexts (Gao & Shen, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). Accordingly, satisfaction is expected to directly influence customer loyalty.

H5: Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

The relationship between brand image and customer loyalty is often mediated by satisfaction, as image-based expectations must be validated through consumption experience to produce stable behavioral commitment. Brand image shapes initial perceptions, but it is satisfaction that converts these perceptions into enduring loyalty. Recent studies emphasize that satisfaction partially mediates this relationship, highlighting its role as a conversion mechanism from symbolic evaluation to behavioral outcome (Troiville, 2024; Tahir et al., 2024).

H6: Brand image has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction.

In contrast, the influence of brand trust on loyalty is more likely to operate indirectly, particularly in contexts where trust is already established and normalized. In such cases, trust enhances satisfaction, which subsequently drives loyalty. Empirical evidence supports this mediated relationship, showing that trust contributes to loyalty primarily through its effect on

evaluative processes rather than through a direct behavioral pathway (Villagra et al., 2021; Monfort et al., 2025).

H7: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative, explanatory design using variance-based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships between brand image, brand trust, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. PLS-SEM is appropriate for this study because it enables simultaneous estimation of complex relationships involving multiple latent constructs, including mediation effects, while prioritizing prediction and theory development (Hair et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022). In contrast to covariance-based SEM, PLS-SEM does not require strict multivariate normality and is well suited for exploratory-predictive research contexts and non-probability sampling designs (Hair et al., 2022).

The population comprises consumers residing in Makassar City, Indonesia who have experience purchasing and consuming products from Coca-Cola. Because the total population size is unknown, the minimum sample size was initially estimated using a conservative approach based on proportion estimation with a 95 percent confidence level and a margin of error of 10 percent, yielding a minimum of 197 respondents. However, to enhance statistical power and improve the stability of parameter estimates, the final sample consisted of 197 respondents. This exceeds commonly accepted thresholds in PLS-SEM, including the “10-times rule” and more recent recommendations emphasizing statistical power and model complexity considerations (Hair et al., 2022; Kock & Hadaya, 2018). The use of a 10 percent margin of error is justified by the predictive orientation of PLS-SEM, where the emphasis lies on estimating structural relationships rather than precise population inference.

A non-probability accidental sampling technique was employed due to the absence of a formal sampling frame and the heterogeneous nature of the target population. Respondents were selected based on their accessibility and eligibility at the time of data collection. To ensure data relevance and validity, respondents were required to meet three criteria: they had to reside in Makassar City, be at least 17 years of age to ensure cognitive capacity for decision-making and have purchased and consumed Coca-Cola products within the past three months. These criteria ensure that respondents possess recent and meaningful consumption experience, thereby enabling accurate evaluation of the constructs under investigation.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed to capture perceptions of brand image, brand trust, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. Measurement items were adapted from established scales in prior literature and contextualized to fit the research setting. All constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), which is widely used in behavioral research for capturing attitudinal responses (Hair et al., 2022). Prior to full deployment, the instrument was reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and content validity. In addition to primary survey data, secondary data from academic publications and industry reports were used to support theoretical grounding and contextual interpretation.

Data analysis was conducted using PLS-SEM following a two-stage approach comprising measurement model (outer model) evaluation and structural model (inner model) assessment (Hair et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022). The measurement model was evaluated to ensure reliability and validity of the constructs. Convergent validity was assessed through outer loadings, with acceptable thresholds above 0.70, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which should exceed 0.50. Internal consistency reliability was examined using composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha, both expected to surpass 0.70. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, where the square root of AVE must exceed inter-construct correlations, and the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, which should remain below 0.90. These procedures ensure that each construct captures a distinct conceptual domain without empirical overlap (Hair et al., 2022).

The structural model was evaluated by examining path coefficients, coefficients of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance. The significance of relationships was tested using bootstrapping procedures with resampling, allowing robust estimation of standard errors and

confidence intervals. Mediation effects were assessed by examining indirect effects and their statistical significance, as well as the magnitude of mediation using the Variance Accounted For (VAF) approach. An indirect effect is considered significant when the t-value exceeds 1.96 at a 5 percent significance level, consistent with standard inferential thresholds (Hair et al., 2022). This analytical procedure enables a comprehensive assessment of both direct and indirect relationships, ensuring that the proposed mediation model is evaluated rigorously and transparently.

RESULTS

The analysis begins with the evaluation of the measurement model to ensure that all constructs meet the required standards of reliability and validity prior to structural model assessment. This step is critical in PLS-SEM to confirm that the indicators adequately represent their respective latent variables and that the constructs are empirically distinct. Convergent validity is assessed through outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while internal consistency reliability is examined using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. The results of these assessments are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Measurement Model Evaluation

Constructs	Items	Loading	AVE	CR.	Cr. Alpha
Brand Image (X1)	BI.1	0.868	0.742	0.92	0.884
	BI.2	0.894			
	BI.3	0.884			
	BI.4	0.793			
Brand Trust (X2)	BT.1	0.896	0.784	0.936	0.908
	BT.2	0.909			
	BT.3	0.895			
	BT.4	0.842			
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	CS.1	0.845	0.678	0.913	0.881
	CS.2	0.782			
	CS.3	0.878			
	CS.4	0.851			
	CS.5	0.752			
Customer Loyalty (Y1)	CL.1	0.882	0.771	0.943	0.925
	CL.2	0.857			
	CL.3	0.908			
	CL.4	0.843			
	CL.5	0.892			

Note: All outer loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating adequate indicator reliability. AVE values are above 0.50, confirming convergent validity. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values exceed 0.70, demonstrating strong internal consistency (Hair et al., 2022).

Source: Processed primary data using PLS-SEM (2025).

Table 1 demonstrates that all constructs satisfy the criteria for convergent validity and reliability. The outer loadings of all indicators exceed the minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that each item contributes meaningfully to its respective construct. The AVE values, ranging from 0.678 to 0.784, confirm that the constructs explain more than half of the variance of their indicators. Furthermore, Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values across all constructs surpass the recommended cutoff of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency. These results confirm that the measurement model is robust and suitable for further structural model evaluation.

Following the validation of the measurement model, the next stage involves evaluating the structural model to examine the hypothesized relationships among constructs. This assessment focuses on the significance and strength of direct and indirect effects using path coefficients, t-values, and p-values obtained through bootstrapping procedures. In addition, the explanatory power of the model is evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2) for endogenous constructs. The results of the structural model evaluation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Structural Model Evaluation

Hypothesized Paths	Effects	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1. Brand Image -> customer satisfaction	0.261	2,151	0.032	Accepted
H2 Brand Trust -> customer satisfaction	0.743	7,631	0.000	Accepted
H3. Brand Image -> customer loyalty	0.759	3,582	0.000	Accepted
H4. Brand Trust -> customer loyalty	0.055	0.265	0.791	Rejected
H5. Customer satisfaction -> customer loyalty	0.357	1,847	0.065	Accepted
H6. Brand Image -> customer satisfaction -> customer loyalty	0.277	2,131	0.042	Accepted
H7. Brand trust -> customer satisfaction-> customer loyalty	0.265	1,866	0.062	Rejected
Construct	R Square	Adj. R Square		
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	0.856	0.863		
Customer Loyalty (Y1)	0.684	0.673		

Note: Path significance is determined using bootstrapping with a critical t-value of 1.96 at $\alpha = 0.05$ (Hair et al., 2022). R^2 values indicate substantial explanatory power for both endogenous constructs, with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty explained at 85.6% and 68.4%, respectively.

Source: Processed primary data using PLS-SEM (2025).

The results indicate a differentiated pattern of relationships among the constructs. Brand image and brand trust both significantly influence customer satisfaction, confirming their role as primary antecedents of evaluative responses. However, their effects diverge when predicting customer loyalty. Brand image demonstrates a strong and significant direct effect on loyalty, while brand trust shows no significant direct influence, suggesting that trust operates as a baseline condition rather than a differentiating driver. To provide a clearer visualization of these relationships, the structural model results are illustrated in Figure 1.

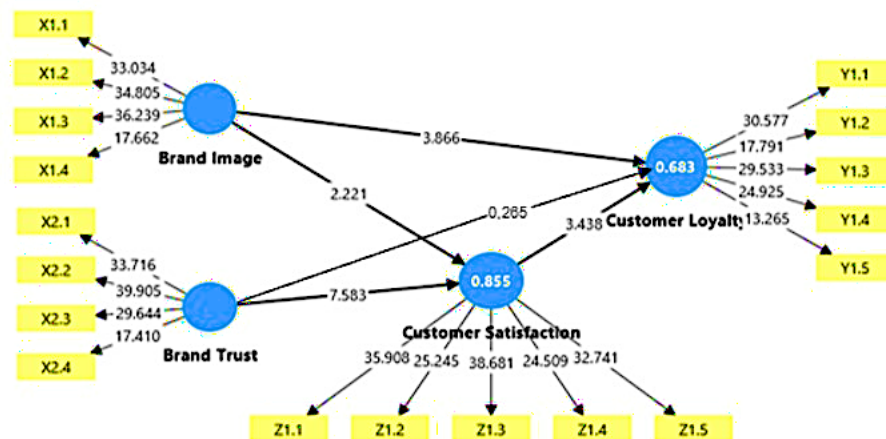


Figure 1. PLS-SEM Presentation

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that brand image significantly enhances customer satisfaction, confirming its role as a primary cognitive frame through which consumers interpret consumption experiences. A favorable brand image establishes expectations regarding quality, symbolic value, and emotional resonance, which subsequently guide post-consumption evaluation. This aligns with expectation–confirmation logic, where satisfaction emerges when perceived performance is consistent with pre-existing beliefs about the brand (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Rather et al., 2022). More recent studies further suggest that brand image operates as a meaning-making mechanism that shapes not only expectations but also how experiences are cognitively processed and emotionally interpreted, thereby strengthening satisfaction outcomes in highly recognizable brands (Iglesias et al., 2023; Foroudi et al., 2024). In this context, brand image functions as both a predictive and interpretive structure, reinforcing satisfaction through alignment between symbolic expectations and actual consumption.

Similarly, brand trust demonstrates a strong positive effect on customer satisfaction, indicating that reliability and perceived integrity remain critical in shaping evaluative judgments.

Trust reduces uncertainty and stabilizes expectations, allowing consumers to interpret consumption outcomes more favorably even under minor performance inconsistencies (Aljarah et al., 2020; Rather & Camilleri, 2019). However, contemporary literature suggests that the effect of trust is increasingly contingent on context. In mature product categories, trust tends to become institutionalized, serving as a minimum threshold rather than a source of differentiation (Keiningham et al., 2020).

In contrast, brand image exerts a strong and direct influence on customer loyalty, highlighting its continued relevance as a strategic driver of long-term consumer commitment. This supports the view that symbolic and experiential brand associations play a central role in sustaining preference, particularly in low-involvement consumption contexts where habitual behavior and brand familiarity dominate decision-making (Keller, 2023; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Brand image, in this sense, transcends functional evaluation and operates as a relational anchor that maintains continuity in consumer choice.

Conversely, brand trust does not exhibit a significant direct effect on customer loyalty, indicating a structural shift in the role of trust within established markets. While traditional models position trust as a key determinant of loyalty, recent evidence increasingly shows that its influence diminishes once a brand achieves high familiarity and widespread acceptance (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Keiningham et al., 2020). In such conditions, trust becomes a “hygiene factor” rather than a competitive advantage, meaning that its presence is expected but does not actively drive consumer commitment.

Unexpectedly, customer satisfaction does not significantly influence customer loyalty, challenging one of the most established assumptions in marketing literature. While satisfaction is widely regarded as a key predictor of loyalty, emerging research indicates that this relationship is context-dependent, particularly in habitual or low-involvement product categories (Oliver, 2014; Rather et al., 2022). In such contexts, satisfaction may become normalized, losing its discriminative power as a driver of behavioral commitment. The findings suggest that consumers may continue purchasing based on familiarity, availability, or brand attachment rather than evaluative judgment alone, thereby weakening the direct satisfaction–loyalty linkage.

The mediation analysis further reveals that customer satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between brand image and customer loyalty, confirming its role as an evaluative mechanism that converts perception into behavior. Brand image shapes expectations, which are then validated through consumption, resulting in satisfaction that reinforces loyalty. This aligns with contemporary models of consumer behavior that emphasize the importance of experiential validation in transforming cognitive perception into long-term commitment (Rather et al., 2022; Iglesias et al., 2023). However, this mediation is not absolute, indicating that brand image retains a direct influence on loyalty beyond satisfaction, particularly through symbolic and affective pathways.

In contrast, customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between brand trust and customer loyalty, further supporting the argument that trust operates as a baseline condition in mature markets. When trust is already established and stable, variations in trust do not generate sufficient evaluative differences to influence satisfaction or loyalty outcomes. This finding contributes to the growing body of literature suggesting that the role of trust in loyalty formation is conditional rather than universal (Keiningham et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STUDY

This study shows that customer loyalty in mature consumer markets develops through asymmetric rather than uniform mechanisms. Brand image is the most consistent determinant because it strengthens loyalty both directly and through customer satisfaction. This finding confirms its strategic value in sustaining long-term consumer commitment. Brand trust improves satisfaction but does not directly or indirectly increase loyalty, suggesting that consumers regard trust as a basic expectation rather than a source of differentiation. Customer satisfaction also has no strong direct effect on loyalty, indicating that evaluative judgments may have limited behavioral influence in habitual, low-involvement consumption contexts.

This study is limited by its cross-sectional design, non-probability sampling, focus on urban consumers in Makassar, and examination of a single established brand. These conditions restrict causal interpretation and broader generalization while reducing variation in trust and satisfaction.

Future research should use longitudinal or mixed-method designs, compare brands across different levels of market maturity, and incorporate emotional attachment, brand identification, social influence, and actual purchasing behavior. Managers should prioritize a distinctive and consistent brand image while treating trust and satisfaction as essential foundations that must be supported by stronger emotional and identity-based mechanisms.

ETHICAL DISCLOSURE

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical standards for research involving human participants. All respondents participated voluntarily and were informed of the purpose of the study prior to data collection.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflicts of interest pertaining to this study.

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