The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing and Brand Trust – applied on mobile phone sets brands in Egypt

العلاقة بين التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وثقة العلامة التجارية ــ بالتطبيق على العلامات التجارية لأجهزة الهاتف المحمول في مصر

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Abstract:

In today's digital age, social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, shaping how we connect, communicate, and consume information.

For brands, especially in the highly competitive mobile phone sets market, social media marketing has emerged as a powerful tool to engage consumers, build awareness, and drive sales. However, beyond its ability to promote products, social media marketing has a significant impact on building and maintaining brand trust. As consumers increasingly turn to online platforms for product recommendations, reviews, and peer opinions, their trust in a brand is heavily influenced by how it interacts with them on social media. This article explores the growing influence of social media marketing on brand trust within the mobile phone industry, examining how brands leverage online engagement to foster credibility, strengthen consumer relationships, and ultimately boost market share.

In this paper the researcher investigates the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand trust in Egypt in mobile phone sets sector, examined the reliability of the questionnaire by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient using SPSS 20. Data collection took place between January 2024 and November 2024. Notably, most participants completed the survey using smartphones, which are the most widely used devices for accessing the internet and social media platforms in Egypt. Our econometric estimation results show that, there is a positive and significant relationship between social media marketing and Brand Trust. Therefore, Sub-Hypothesis 1, which suggests that social media market points of sale are the main determinants of mobile money service use.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Brand trust

المستخلص:

في عصرنا الرقمي، أصبحت وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي جزءًا لا يتجزأ من حياتنا اليومية، إذ تُشكل كيفية تواصلنا وتفاعلنا واستهلاكنا للمعلومات. بالنسبة للعلامات التجارية، وخاصةً في سوق الهواتف المحمولة شديد التنافسية، برز التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة فعّالة لجذب المستهلكين، وبناء الوعي، وزيادة المبيعات. ومع ذلك، فبالإضافة إلى قدرته على الترويج للمنتجات، يُحدث التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تأثيرًا كبيرًا في بناء ثقة العلامة التجارية والحفاظ عليها. فمع تزايد لجوء المستهلكين إلى المنصات الإلكترونية للحصول على توصيات المنتجات، ومراجعاتها، وآراء أقرانهم، تتأثر ثقتهم بالعلامة التجارية بشكل كبير بكيفية تفاعلها معهم على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. تستكشف هذه المقالة التأثير المتزايد للتسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على ثقة العلامة التجارية في قطاع الهواتف المحمولة، وتبحث في كيفية استفادة العلامات التجارية من التفاعل الإلكتروني لتعزيز مصداقيتها، وتوطيد علاقاتها مع المستهلكين، وفي نهاية المطاف، زيادة حصتها السوقية. في هذه الورقة، يبحث الباحث في العلاقة بين التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وثقة العلامة التجارية في مصر في قطاع أجهزة الهاتف المحمول، وفحص موثوقية الاستبيان من خلال حساب معامل ألفا كرونباخ باستخدام برنامج 20. SPSS. تم جمع البيانات بين يناير ٢٠٢٤ ونوفمبر ٢٠٢٤. والجدير بالذكر أن معظم المشاركين أكملوا الاستبيان باستخدام الهواتف الذكية، وهي الأجهزة الأكثر استخدامًا للوصول إلى الإنترنت ومنصات التواصل الاجتماعي في مصر. تُظهر نتائج تقديرنا الاقتصادي القياسي وجود علاقة إيجابية وهامة بين التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وثقة العلامة التجارية. وبالتالي، فإن الفرضية الفرعية الأولى تشير إلى أن نقاط البيع في سوق وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي هي المحددات الرئيسية لاستخدام خدمات الأموال عبر الهاتف المحمول.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، ثقة العلامة التجارية

I. <u>**Introduction**</u>

In recent years, the increasing reliance on social media for marketing purposes has prompted businesses to leverage platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to engage with their target audiences. Social media marketing (SMM) has become a pivotal strategy in shaping customer perceptions, engagement, and brand trust. Brand trust refers to the confidence that consumers place in a brand to deliver on its

promises, provide quality products or services, and act in the best interests of its customers.

For example, in the study of Handayanib*, Musnainic, Yohanes Totok Suyotod (2022) aimed to determine the effect of social media marketing activities on brand trust, brand equity and brand loyalty in social media, using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method with SPSS 3.3.3 software with a sample of 450 respondents determined by the simple random sampling method who had experience of using social media for at least six months. Data was obtained by distributing online questionnaires using google form). The use of social media or social media usage is a pattern of behavior carried out online, both active use of social media and passive use of social media Verduyn et al., (2017). Active behavior is characterized by feedback between users, such as liking each other, giving comments, sharing posts, sending messages and other things that have direct involvement between users. Another study Faizan Ali, Luana Nanu (2024) clears aims to examine the interrelationships between social media marketing activities, self-brand connections, brand equity, trust and loyalty. A total of 402 valid responses were collected from Amazon MTurk, and the data were subjected to partial least squares structural equation modeling and fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA). Findings indicate that social media marketing activities strongly and positively influence self-brand connection, brand equity and brand trust.

This applied study aims to investigate how brand trust mediates the relationship between social media marketing efforts and brand trust. By exploring this dynamic, the study seeks to provide valuable insights for marketers aiming to optimize their social media strategies and build long-term, loyal customer bases.

1- Literature review

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing has emerged as a critical tool for building brand trust. Studies highlight that effective SMM strategies, including engaging content, personalized interactions, and strategic advertising, foster stronger relationships between brands and consumers Godey et al.,(2016). Kaplan and Heinlein (2010) emphasize that social media platforms enable brands to create communities that promote loyalty through sustained engagement Although social media provide new opportunities and benefits for brand management Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010), one of the persistent challenges – despite growing scholarly interest – is the difficulty with measuring the impact of social

media marketing activities on key brand success measures Schultz and Block, (2012,) Schultz and Peltier, (2013). Scant evidence is available on of how social media marketing activities influence brand equity creation and consumers' behavior towards a brand. These relationships have been explored by analyzing pioneering brands in the luxury sector. Finds that SMMEs have a significant positive effect on brand equity and on the two main dimensions of brand equity: brand awareness and brand image. Burberry, Dior, Gucci, Hermès, and Louis Vuitton (2016).

Brand Trust

Brand trust is foundational for long-term brand-consumer relationships. SMM strategies that emphasize transparency, authenticity, and consistent interaction significantly enhance trust, and this in turn reinforces loyalty Chaudhuri & Holbrook, (2001).and another study emphasize how social media can benefit (or harm) consumer-brand engagement. As more branding activity goes social, marketers are not always welcome in all social media space Don E. Schultz(2020). Another study integrates the relationships among social media marketing elements and brand trust.

2- Data Cleaning procedures

A total of 516 valid survey responses were collected through online platforms using the Google Forms service to design and administer the questionnaire. The survey was distributed across various Facebook groups and pages to reach the target audience. Data collection took place between January 2024 and November 2024. Notably, most participants completed the survey using smartphones, which are the most widely used devices for accessing the internet and social media platforms in Egypt. This highlights the central role of smartphones in engaging with digital surveys, reflecting rapid technological advancements and the evolving behavior of digital consumers.

3- Assessment of the Internal Consistency Reliability

This section examines the reliability of the questionnaire by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient using SPSS 20. Cronbach's alpha is a widely used measure of internal consistency reliability, determining how consistently the items on the questionnaire measure the same construct. A value exceeding 0.60 is typically considered acceptable, with higher values indicating stronger consistency across the items. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the questionnaire was found to be 0.935, indicating a high level of reliability. This result suggests that the questionnaire items are well-correlated and that

the instrument provides consistent and reliable results, covering all aspects of the research comprehensively.

Table (1): Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Scale for the Entire Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.928	20

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Finally, a correlation test was performed to examine the relationships among all dimensions of social media marketing (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth) as well as their relationships with brand trust. The findings revealed that all correlation coefficients were statistically significant at the 0.05 level, demonstrating positive and significant associations between the dimensions and with brand trust. Despite the significance of these correlations, the values remained within an acceptable range, confirming that the instrument effectively measures distinct constructs. Hence, the instrument exhibits strong validity and reliability.

Table (2): test of Correlations

		Entertainment	Interaction	Trendiness	Customisatio	word of mouth	Brand trust
Entertainment	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	515					
Interaction	Pearson Correlation	.656**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	515	515				
Trendiness	Pearson Correlation	.625**	.602**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	515	515	515			
Customization	Pearson Correlation	.509**	.521**	.553**	1		

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	515	515	515	515	
word of mouth	Pearson Correlation	.587**	.630**	.562**	.526**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	515	515	515	515	515
Brand trust	Pearson Correlation	.697**	.634**	.651**	.550**	.594**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	515	515	515	515	515

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

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

4- Descriptive statistics

This section describes the demographic profile of the participants, including gender, age, smartphone type, and income level. It proceeds with a description of the participants' attitudes toward the constructs under study and concludes with the correlations among these constructs.

Table (3): participants' distribution according to their gender

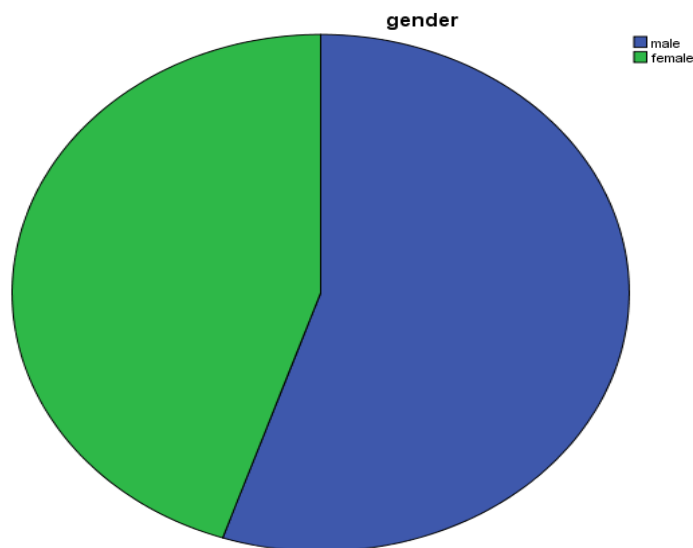| Gender	Frequency	Percent%
Male	284	55.1
Female	231	44.9
Total	515	100

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Figure (1): participants' distribution according to their gender

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Table (3) and Figure (1) illustrate the distribution of participants based on gender. The table shows that the percentage of males in the sample is 55.1%, while females represent 44.9%.

Table (4): participants' distribution according to their age

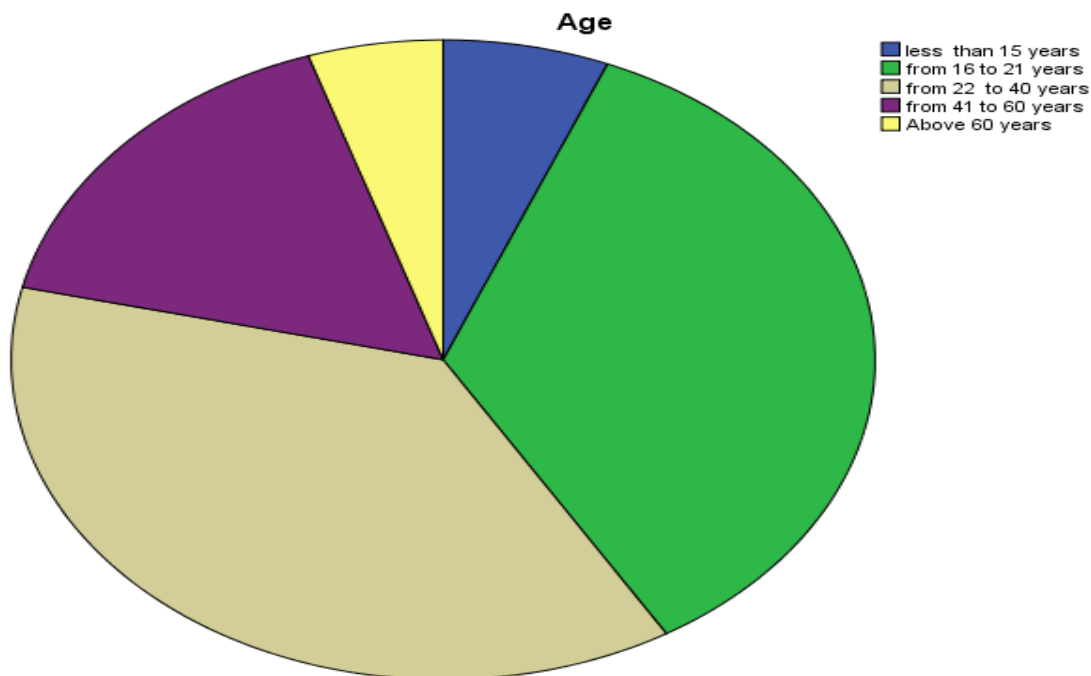| Age	Frequency	Percent%
less than 15 years	32	6.2
16 to 21 years	181	35.1
22 to 40 years	192	37.3
41 to 60 years	84	16.3
Above 60 years	26	5.0
Total	515	100

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Figure (2): participants' distribution according to their age

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Table (4) and Figure (2) illustrate the distribution of participants based on age. The age group with the highest representation is between 22 and 40 years, accounting for 37.3%, followed by the age group from 16 to 21 years at 35.1%.

Table (5): participants' distribution according to their mobile device brand

mobile device brand	Frequency	Percent%
Apple - iPhone	96	18.6
Xiaomi	86	16.7
Samsung	186	36.1
Oppo	69	13.4
Huawei	44	8.5
Other	34	6.6
total	515	100

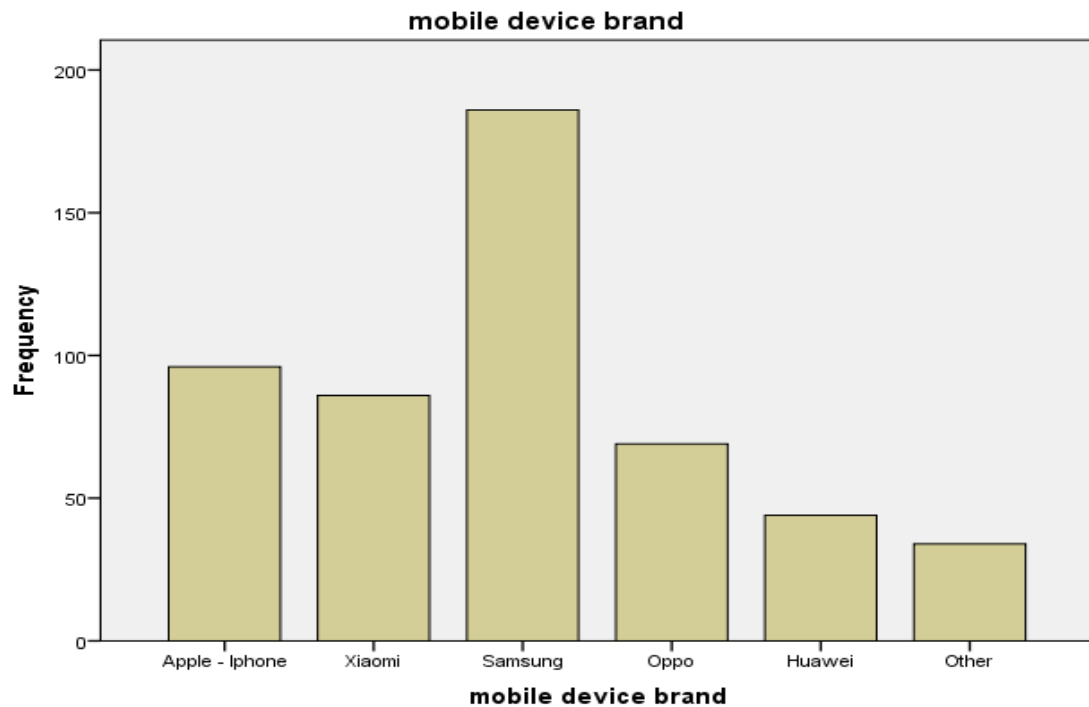Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Figure (3): participants' distribution according to their mobile device brand
Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Table (5) and Figure (3) indicates that the largest group of mobile phone users in the sample uses Samsung phones, with a percentage of 36.1%.

Table (6): participants' distribution according to their mobile Income Level

Income level	Frequency	Percent%
less than 5000 EGP	192	37.3
5000 to 10000 EGP	123	23.9
10000 to 20000 EGP	113	21.9
20000 to 50000 EGP	43	8.3
Above 50000 EGP	41	8.0

| other | 3 | 0.6 |
| total | 515 | 100 |

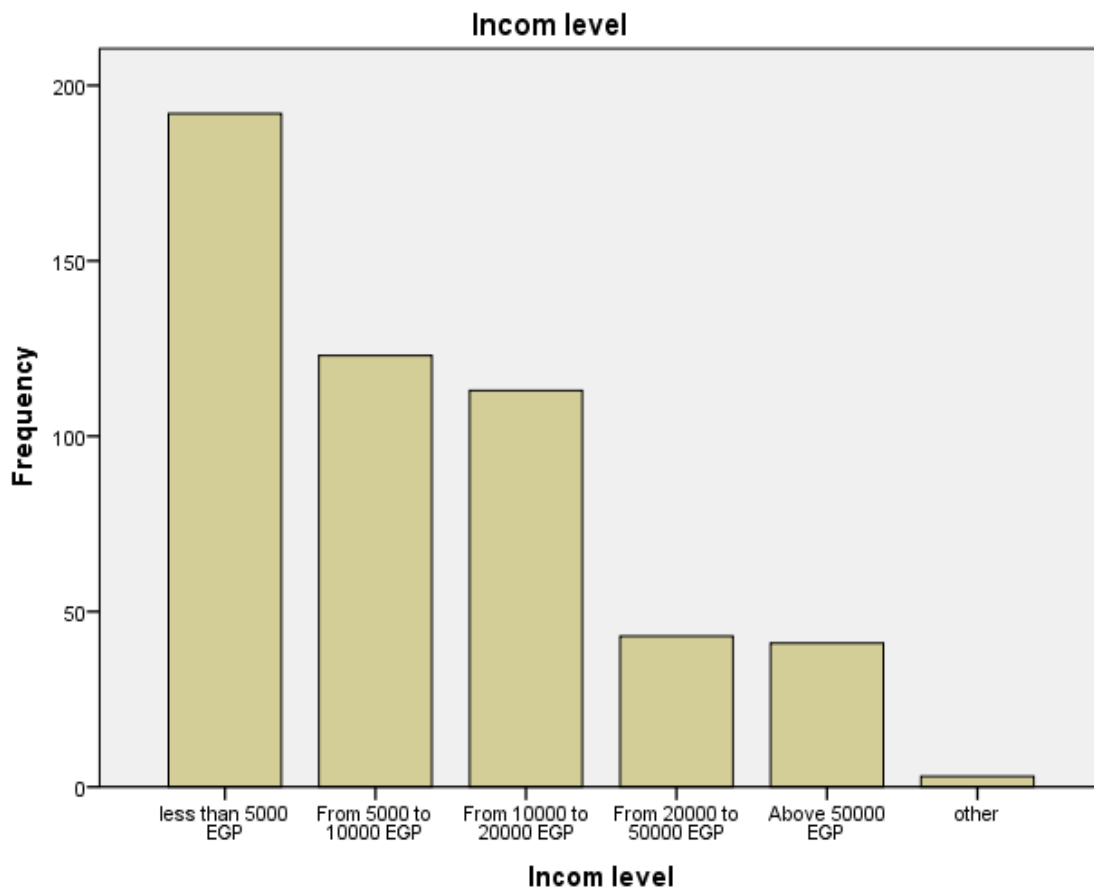Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20.

Figure (4): participants' distribution according to their Income Level.
Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20.

Regarding income distribution, the results show that the largest percentage of the sample (37.1%) has an income of less than 5000 EGP, followed by those with an income between 5000 and 10000 EGP, representing 23.9%.

5- Hypothesis Testing

To test the research hypotheses, the researcher employed a combination of simple linear regression, multiple linear regression, these methods were selected to align with the study's objectives and ensure accurate testing of the relationships between social media marketing dimensions, and brand trust.

for the first set of sub-hypotheses, simple linear regression was conducted to examine the relationship between each dimension of social media marketing (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth) and brand trust. Following this, multiple linear regression was applied to evaluate the combined effect of all social media marketing dimensions on brand trust. This two-step approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of how individual and collective dimensions of social media marketing influence brand trust.

By employing these methods, the study ensured a rigorous and detailed analysis of the proposed hypotheses, as reflected in the subsequent sections and tables. H1: The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing and Brand Trust

The first main hypothesis (H1) investigates the positive relationship between social media marketing and brand trust, with five sub-hypotheses focusing on the dimensions of entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth (WOM). Initially, simple linear regression analysis was conducted for each dimension separately, followed by multiple regression analysis to assess the combined effect of all dimensions on brand trust.

Hypothesis 1-1: The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing (Entertainment) and Brand Trust

For the first sub-hypothesis (H1-1), the analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between entertainment and brand trust, as indicated by a correlation coefficient of 0.697. Additionally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) demonstrated that 48.6% of the variation in brand trust could be explained by entertainment, confirming its significant role. The ANOVA results showed a statistically significant model with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the observed effect is not due to chance. Furthermore, the regression coefficient for entertainment was statistically significant, emphasizing its direct and positive impact on brand trust.

These findings support the first sub-hypothesis and highlight the critical role of entertainment in social media marketing strategies, contributing significantly to building consumer trust in the brand. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table (7).

Table (7): Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis between the Entertainment Dimension and Brand Trust:

R	R Square	F	Sig.
.697a	.486	485.884	.000b
Model		t	Sig
(Constant)		14.493	000
Entertainment		22.043	.000

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Hypothesis 1-2: The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing (Interaction) and Brand Trust

The second sub-hypothesis (H1-2) examines the relationship between interaction, as a dimension of social media marketing, and brand trust. The simple linear regression analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between interaction and brand trust, with a correlation coefficient of 0.634. The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicated that 40.2% of the variation in brand trust can be explained by interaction, highlighting its significant role as an effective marketing element in building trust.

The results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showed that the model is statistically significant at a significance level of 0.000, indicating that the observed effect is unlikely due to chance. Furthermore, the regression coefficient for interaction was statistically significant, confirming its direct and positive impact on brand trust.

These findings support the second sub-hypothesis, emphasizing the importance of interaction as a key component in social media marketing strategies to enhance consumer trust in the brand. The results are summarized in Table (8).

Table (8): Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis between the Interaction Dimension and Brand Trust

R	R Square	F	Sig.
.634a	.402	344.710	.000b
Model		t	Sig
(Constant)		20.434	000
Interaction		18.566	.000

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Hypothesis 1-3: The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing (Trendiness) and Brand Trust

The third sub-hypothesis (H1-3) investigates the relationship between trendiness, as a dimension of social media marketing, and brand trust. The simple linear regression analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between trendiness and brand trust, with a correlation coefficient of 0.651. The coefficient of determination (R^2) showed that 42.4% of the variation in brand trust can be explained by trendiness, demonstrating its significant role as a marketing element in building trust.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results indicated that the model is statistically significant at a significance level of 0.000, confirming that the observed effect is not due to chance. Additionally, the regression coefficient for trendiness was statistically significant, supporting its direct and positive impact on brand trust.

These findings validate the third sub-hypothesis, highlighting the importance of trendiness as a key dimension in social media marketing strategies for enhancing consumer trust in the brand. The results are summarized in Table (9).

Table (9): Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis between the Trendiness Dimension and Brand Trust

R	R Square	F	Sig.
.651a	.424	377.106	.000b
Model		t	Sig
(Constant)		19.590	000
Trendiness		19.419	.000

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Hypothesis 1-4: The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing (Customization) and Brand Trust

The fourth sub-hypothesis (H1-4) examines the relationship between customization, as a dimension of social media marketing, and brand trust. The simple linear regression analysis revealed a moderate positive relationship between customization and brand trust, with a correlation coefficient of 0.560. The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicated that 31.4% of the variation in brand trust can be explained by customization, reflecting its moderate but significant impact on building trust in the brand.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results confirmed the statistical significance of the model at a significance level of 0.000, indicating that the observed effect is unlikely to be due to chance. Moreover, the regression coefficient for customization was statistically significant, further supporting its direct and positive influence on brand trust.

These findings validate the fourth sub-hypothesis, emphasizing the role of customization as an essential dimension in social media marketing strategies for enhancing consumer trust in the brand. The results are summarized in Table (10).

Table (10): Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis between the Customization Dimension and Brand Trust

R	R Square	F	Sig.
.560ᵃ	.314	234.974	.000ᵇ
Model		t	Sig
(Constant)		23.567	000
customisation		15.329	.000

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Hypothesis 1-5: The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing (Word of Mouth) and Brand Trust

The fifth sub-hypothesis (H1-5) explores the relationship between word of mouth (WOM), as a dimension of social media marketing, and brand trust. The simple linear regression analysis demonstrated a moderate positive relationship between WOM and brand trust, with a correlation coefficient of 0.594. The coefficient of determination (R^2) showed that 35.3% of the variation in brand trust can be attributed to WOM, indicating a notable, though moderate, impact on building consumer trust in the brand.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) confirmed that the model is statistically significant, with a significance value of 0.000, suggesting that the relationship between WOM and brand trust is unlikely to be due to chance. Additionally, the regression coefficient for WOM was statistically significant, further highlighting its positive and significant effect on brand trust.

These findings support the fifth sub-hypothesis, emphasizing the importance of word of mouth as an influential component of social media marketing strategies in strengthening consumer trust in the brand. The results are summarized in Table (11).

Table (11): Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis between the Word of Mouth (WOM) Dimension and Brand Trust

R	R Square	F	Sig.
.594a	.353	279.641	.000b
Model		t	Sig
(Constant)		22.120	000
word of mouth		16.722	.000

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

Hypothesis H1: The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing and Brand Trust

The main hypothesis (H1) examines the relationship between social media marketing, represented by its dimensions entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth and brand trust. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the combined effect of these dimensions on brand trust. The analysis revealed a strong positive relationship, with a correlation coefficient of 0.779. The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicated that 60.7% of the variation in brand trust can be explained by the five dimensions, emphasizing their significant collective contribution to building trust in the brand.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) confirmed the statistical significance of the overall model, with a significance value of 0.000, ensuring that the combined effect of the five dimensions on brand trust is unlikely to be due to chance. Furthermore, the coefficients table showed that all dimensions were statistically significant (Sig < 0.05), indicating that entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth each have a direct, positive, and significant impact on brand trust.

These findings strongly support the main hypothesis (H1), highlighting that social media marketing, through its various dimensions, plays a crucial role in strengthening consumer trust in the brand. The results of the analysis are presented in Table (12).

Table (12): Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis between social media marketing and Brand Trust

R	R Square	F	Sig.
.779a	.607	157.029	.000b
Model		t	Sig
(Constant)		10.629	.000
Entertainment		7.927	.000
Interaction		3.228	.001

Trendiness	5.917	.000
word of mouth	3.023	.003
customisation	3.617	.000

Source: Researcher's analysis using SPSS 20

After conducting simple linear regression analyses for each dimension of social media marketing (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth) with brand trust, it was found that each dimension individually has a significant positive relationship with brand trust. Subsequently, a multiple regression analysis was performed to examine the combined effect of all the dimensions of social media marketing on brand trust. The results of this multiple regression model show that the overall relationship between social media marketing and brand trust remains strong and positive, confirming Hypothesis 1. All dimensions of social media marketing contributed significantly to brand trust, with each of their p-values being less than 0.05, indicating statistical significance.

6- Research Results:

1. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Trust. Therefore, Hypothesis 1, which suggests that social media marketing enhances customer trust in the brand, was accepted.
2. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Entertainment as an aspect of social media marketing and Brand Trust. Therefore, Sub-Hypothesis 1, which suggests that social media marketing (entertainment) enhances customer trust in the brand, was accepted.
3. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Interaction as an aspect of social media marketing and Brand Trust. Therefore, Sub-Hypothesis 2, which suggests that social media marketing (interaction) enhances customer trust in the brand, was accepted.
4. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Trendiness as an aspect of social media marketing and Brand Trust. Therefore, Sub-Hypothesis 3, which suggests that social media marketing (trendiness) enhances customer trust in the brand, was accepted.
5. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Customization as an aspect of social media marketing and Brand Trust. Therefore,

Sub-Hypothesis 4, which suggests that social media marketing (customization) enhances customer trust in the brand, was accepted.

6. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Word of Mouth (WOM) as an aspect of social media marketing and Brand Trust. Therefore, Sub-Hypothesis 5, which suggests that social media marketing (WOM) enhances customer trust in the brand, was accepted.

7- Research Recommendations

1. Develop engaging and entertaining content, such as short videos and interactive challenges, to enhance the entertainment dimension and strengthen customer engagement with the brand.

2. Improve the brand's responsiveness to customer comments and inquiries on social media platforms, and organize interactive events and competitions to foster engagement and build stronger relationships with the audience.

3. Stay updated with the latest social media trends and integrate them into the products or services offered, while collaborating with digital influencers whose content aligns with the brand's identity.

4. Provide personalized experiences for customers by tailoring content, targeted advertisements, and messages to meet the specific needs and preferences of individual consumers.

5. Encourage customers to share their positive experiences with others by creating loyalty programs and incentives that motivate them to recommend the brand.

6. Conduct comparative studies to explore the impact of social media marketing on brand trust across different sectors or countries, providing broader insights.

7. Analyze the variations in the effect of social media marketing dimensions across different platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, to identify the most effective platform for achieving specific marketing goals.

8. Explore the relationship between social media marketing dimensions and other variables, such as customer satisfaction or purchase intentions, to enrich the understanding of digital marketing impacts.

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