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## EXAMINING THE ROLE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION, AND BRAND EXPERIENCE ON BRAND LOYALTY: THE MEDIATIONAL ROLE OF BRAND LOVE

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### Abstract

In today's competitive landscape, organisations must prioritise customer retention to ensure long-term success. Identifying the factors that facilitate the development of emotional connections with consumers is crucial. This study examines the impact of marketing communication, brand credibility, and brand experience on brand love and brand loyalty. A cross-sectional research design was employed to investigate these relationships. Data was collected by distributing a questionnaire to customers of telecom sector companies in KSA. The questionnaire utilised a Likert scale format and was distributed to customers through a simple random sampling method, achieving a response rate of 72.67%. Smart PLS was used as the analysis tool for this research. The findings revealed that brand credibility, brand experience, and brand love profoundly influence customer loyalty. Additionally, brand experience and marketing communication are critical in shaping brand love. The study offers a thorough analysis of both theoretical and practical implications.

*Keywords:* Brand Love; Brand Loyalty; Brand Experience; Brand Credibility; Communication.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Brand loyalty is crucial for the long-term success of any organisation. It holds significant importance for the decision-makers of organisations (Le et al., 2024). Previous research on brand loyalty (BLOY) has indicated that loyal customers tend to spend more than non-loyal customers. Thus, devoted patrons prove to be a significant advantage for the organisation (Alzaydi, 2024). Many organisations are prioritising strategies to cultivate customer loyalty, with the aim of boosting long-term profitability and gaining a competitive edge. In the past, BLOY has been extensively studied across various industries

and product categories. If a brand meets the expectations of its customers, it will earn their loyalty. Understanding the brand boosts its popularity and fosters customer loyalty (Cardoso et al., 2022). Brand love (BL) demonstrates the enduring relationship between the brand and its customers. Previous research indicates that Customers' emotional connections with a brand significantly shape brand loyalty. This emotional attachment fosters a consistent commitment to the brand, resulting in repeat purchases and sustained patronage. Furthermore, customers often exhibit a willingness to pay a premium for products associated with the brand, driven by its distinguished reputation and perceived value in the marketplace. The idea of BL is a compelling one, where customers form strong emotional bonds with brands. This emotion fosters support and dedication (Ghorbanzadeh, 2024). Gaining a deep understanding of BL is crucial for fostering lasting customer relationships and driving business success (Coelho, Bairrada, & Peres, 2019). Marketing communication (MCOM) plays a vital part in determining the success of a business and is a fundamental component of marketing strategies. Quayson et al. (2024) state that... MCOM provides information to potential customers. It helps consumers to recognise and comprehend the characteristics of the product. The MCOM of the brand offers a deep understanding and expertise. Effective communication plays a vital role in convincing both potential and existing customers about the advantages of a particular product or service. The MCOM platform enhances the customer experience by effectively reminding potential customers about the advantages of making a purchase or addressing their specific needs. In addition, MCOM is an effective method for converting potential customers into actual customers and fostering long-term loyalty (Othman et al., 2021). The customer's brand experience (BEXP) plays an important role in influencing their purchase decisions for specific products and services. Organisations must ensure that they offer positive experiences in order to cultivate lasting impressions. Customers are more likely to repurchase the brand if they have a good experience (Ali, 2021). They are unlikely to switch to the brand's competitor. To capture consumers' interest, the brand's management should prioritize the brand's contact point and ensure it offers emotional attributes to customers. Factors such as the customer's experience, engagement, satisfaction, and visual appeal influence the differentiation in their interaction with the brand. Thus, the design of a brand is crucial in creating a lasting impression on customers. A well-executed design not only captures attention but also communicates the brand's identity and values, thereby enhancing customer recognition and recall. (Rahman & Susila, 2022)}. When evaluating a brand, customers typically consider factors such as credibility, benefits, personality, and attributes. These factors are crucial for creating a favourable brand experience. Therefore, it is crucial for organisations to cultivate a favourable brand image and leverage the brand's credibility to impact customer satisfaction and loyalty. Establishing credibility is crucial for organisations. Businesses recognise that the effectiveness of their products hinges on customer loyalty and satisfaction. Further, a brand's trustworthiness and credibility significantly influence customer loyalty (Vikaliana et al., 2021). Consequently, there has been a growing emphasis on brand credibility (BCR) in recent years. Organizations must prioritize the enhancement of their brand's credibility to establish customer trust and foster long-term loyalty. Additionally, they should exercise caution to avoid actions that could undermine the brand's credibility (Anum, Khan, & Azmat, 2023)}. This study explored the impact of MCOM, BL, BEXP, and BCR on BLOY. This research is conducted within the framework of telecommunication organisations in KSA.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Brand Love (BL): Relationship with Brand Loyalty (BLOY)

Researchers have described loyalty as a behavioural response that is influenced by customers and expressed during the decision-making process over a period of time (Singh, 2021). Conversely, loyalty is defined by Oliver (1999) as a commitment to maintain purchasing a brand within the same

organisation in the future. Customer loyalty is the dedication and trust that a company earns from its customers when they make decisions about their products. Customer loyalty cannot be established without actively participating in the purchasing process. The loyalty of customers is established through their experience with and the quality of the product (Nasib et al., 2021).

However, one of the crucial elements that influences customer loyalty is BL. Love is often described as a profound emotion that surpasses mere preference for any particular brand. In literature, BL is often described as the deep emotional relationship and intense enthusiasm that customers develop for a particular brand. According to Palusuk, Koles and Hasan (2019), BL is rooted in feelings of positivity, favourable assessment, a strong connection, and enthusiasm for the brand. BL encompasses various elements, such as the customer's attitude towards the product, that contribute to the overall image of the product (Rodrigues & Rodrigues, 2019). Experts have noted that the BL has a positive impact on consumer behaviour. Over the past few years, scholars have been examining the connection between BL and BLOY. The BLOY factor is a result of BL. The brand's loyalty is determined by two factors: attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty. The customer's loyalty is strengthened when they develop a deep attachment to a particular brand (Le, 2021). The level of loyalty is determined through a deep emotional connection. A strong and enduring relationship is not simply guaranteed through personal preferences or liking. The brands that are highly regarded have a very dedicated following (Babić-Hodović, Mujkić, & Arslanagić-Kalajdžić, 2023). In a study conducted by Anim-Wright and Amartey (2024), it was found that the idea of BL created an emotional connection between customers and brands, fostering loyalty. Previous research suggests that customers form brand affinity through their previous interactions and experiences. According to Zhang et al. (2020), the conversion of customer participation into brand loyalty is highlighted. In a similar vein, the research conducted by Song, Wang and Han (2019) demonstrated the significant impact of BL on BLOY.

**HI:** BL has a significant relationship with BLOY.

## 2.2. Marketing Communication: Relationship with Brand Love & Brand Loyalty

The concept of MCOM in literature refers to the transmission of messages to customers through various media channels, with the aim of increasing their understanding and familiarity with a brand (Suhendra et al., 2024). The purpose of MCOMs is to inform or convince customers, either directly or indirectly, about the organization's products. It is anticipated that MCOM will modify the behavioural, emotional, and intellectual aspects of a customer.

Effective communication is the foundation for building strong connections between individuals. Sharing, organising, and expanding knowledge is vital for the growth and development of any brand. According to Kim and Lee (2020), effective communication is fundamental in generating business interest and enhancing customer awareness. Moreover, MCOM is pivotal in cultivating brand equity. A study by Porcu et al. (2019) demonstrated that the implementation of MCOM strategies led to improved performance in the hotel sector. Promotional activities are essential for successfully engaging consumers and facilitating brand visibility within the MCOM framework. The tools of promotion encompass publicity, personal selling, sales promotion, and advertisement. When utilising the tool of advertisement, information is disseminated impersonally through mass media about various shops, businesses, brands, or products. Due to the MCOM, the customer's attitude and image are greatly impacted (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018). Researchers have conducted empirical research to establish the relationship between MCOM and BL. A well-executed marketing mix will foster strong customer loyalty by creating personalised and consistent interactions among customers (Kim & Lee, 2020). According to previous research, BLOY demonstrates customer repurchase behaviour. According to research, showcasing and presenting brand-related content can have a profound impact on brand loyalty. In addition, fostering a stronger

connection between the brand and the customer has a favourable impact on brand loyalty (Liu et al., 2020)1E6D26}. The study found that discussing brands on social media pages fosters loyalty and trust among employees. These factors play a significant role in the development of BLOY. In simple terms, utilising social media pages for MCOM aids in the growth of BLOY (Ercis, Hos, & Deveci, 2020).

**H2:** MCOM has a significant relationship with BL.

**H3:** MCOM has a significant relationship with BLOY.

In their study, Kushwaha et al. (2020) emphasised the importance of effective communication in conveying the benefits and values of products to customers. Consequently, the potential customers experience an emotional reaction. In certain instances, it can also foster a favourable perception of the product. Positive brand perception, characterised by a profound emotional connection and affection from customers, is the foundation for the development of brand loyalty (BL). Enhancing the bond between the customer and the product is instrumental in fostering increased brand loyalty (Ahuvia, Izberk-Bilgin, & Lee, 2022). As a result, MCOM not only serves the purpose of educating customers about the brand, but it also fosters a sense of affection among customers for the brand. In a later study, this BL is found to be a predictor of BLOY (Mahlke, Lahmeyer, & Roemer, 2020). Thus, BL plays a considerable role in maintaining a connection between brand communication and loyalty.

Prior studies have examined the role of BL as a mediator. The study conducted by Ferreira, Faria and Gabriel (2022) found that BL plays a crucial role in mediating the correlation between BEXPs and brand equity. In a similar vein, Hafez (2021)D26} also discussed the role of BL as a mediator between SM marketing and brand equity. In line with the mediating conditions proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986), the study conducted by Kim and Lee (2020) demonstrates the positive impact of brand communication on BL. Moreover, Song et al. (2019) found that communication has a profound influence on meeting the second condition of BLOY. According to Ercis et al. (2020), the third condition for the connection between brand communication and loyalty is met. Thus, we hypothesise that

**H4:** BL mediates the association between MCOM and BLOY.

### 2.3. Brand Experience: Relationship with Brand Love & Brand Loyalty

Kharat and Kharat (2017) have defined BEXP as the internal response of consumers. These behavioural responses are generated by stimuli related to the brand. Various factors contribute to the generation of these responses, such as the surrounding environment, effective communication, brand identity, and design. The customer-brand relationship is enhanced through BEXP (Na et al., 2023). The service or product experience also represents the BEXP. There are both positive and harmful experiences. In addition, certain BEXP activities are completed swiftly, while others require more time. Over time, customers remember their experience with BEXP, which influences their purchasing decisions. The experience is facilitated through various customer activities (Godovykh & Tasci, 2020).

There are certain expectations that individuals have when purchasing a brand. If the value provided by the brand exceeds expectations, customers will have a positive experience. Furthermore, the brand experience is enhanced by the strong connections and emotional ties that customers develop with the brand. The claim is backed by the findings of Santos and Schlesinger (2021), who highlight the substantial impact of BEXP on BL. Thus, when consumers form a strong and lasting connection to a brand, it is seen as an indication of their affection for the brand (Eklund, 2022).

The study conducted by Beig and Nika (2022) highlights the direct impact of BEXP on BLOY. The experience is the result of external factors that foster enjoyment and enthusiasm. As a result, customers choose to engage in the same experience more frequently. The BEXP should have a considerable influence on customer satisfaction and future loyalty, rooted in their past experiences and judgements. Therefore, it is highly probable that customers who have a good experience will be more tended to make repeat

purchases of the product. They will cultivate enduring connections with the brand and foster customer allegiance (Mostafa & Kasamani, 2021). Customer satisfaction can vary based on their experience. If the customer is satisfied, there is a possibility of a strong emotional connection between them and the product. The study carried out by Akoglu and Özbek (2022) found empirical evidence supporting the profound impact of BL on BLOY. Similarly, the results of Mostafa and Kasamani's (2021) research indicated a significant connection between experience and customer loyalty. In a recent study by Eklund (2022)EF-8D00-C9CEFC20BFAD}, it was found that BEXP has a notable impact on BL.

**H5:** BEXP has a significant relationship with BL.

**H6:** BEXP has a significant relationship with BLOY.

Customers undergo an experience when they make a purchase. This experience can either meet the customer's expectations or fall short of them. If the experience exceeds the customer's expectations, they will be satisfied and form a positive connection with the product (Hoyer et al., 2020)26}. This bond is formed through a deep emotional connection with the brand. This connection that forms between individuals and the brand creates a sense of attachment, as noted by Shetty and Fitzsimmons (2022). Experts have noted that the focus of BLOY is primarily seen in BL. A customer who develops brand loyalty based on experience will develop a strong attachment to the brand (Joshi & Garg, 2021). These customers will continue to buy this product consistently, choosing it over the competition. The relationship is becoming stronger, leading to increased brand loyalty. Therefore, BL serves as a connection between BEXP and BLOY.

Furthermore, BL has been examined as a mediator in studies conducted by Polat and Çetinsöz (2021) and Trivedi and Sama (2021), both of which highlight its positive impact. However, a study conducted by M. T. Le (2021) found that BL has a positive impact on BLOY. Additionally, Mostafa and Kasamani (2021) demonstrated a significant relationship between BEXP and loyalty, while Eklund (2022) highlighted the significant influence of BEXP on BL. All of these studies meet the criteria to be considered as a mediating variable.

**H7:** BL mediates the association between BEXP and BLOY.

#### **2.4. Brand Credibility: Relationship with Brand Love & Brand Loyalty**

BCR plays a pivotal role in shaping the long-term reputation of the brand. It indicates the brand's commitment to maintaining a strong reputation with its customers. The concept of BCR in literature refers to a brand's ability to establish trust and credibility through the accurate and consistent dissemination of product information. This includes justifying claims and consistently delivering the promised quality (Nasir & Guvendik, 2021). The concept of BCR is rooted in three key factors: magnetism, aptitude, and dependability.

The credibility of the brand has a direct impression on the organization's market share and customer base. One of the key elements that plays a significant role in the success of the brand is BCR, as highlighted by Rather et al. (2022). Customers can easily differentiate between the competing brands based on the reputable brand. BCR is seen as the general customer perception of the brand, spanning from before the purchase to after the purchase. According to a recent study by Reitsamer and Brunner-Sperdin (2021), BCR plays an important role in shaping consumer response. BCR plays a vital role in the decision-making procedure of the customer. The BCR offers various advantages to both customers and brands, including the development of BL. BCR instills trust in customers regarding the brand's qualities and fosters development (Bairrada, Coelho, & Coelho, 2018). The customer's decision is also affected by the BCR and plays a significant role in shaping BL (Han et al., 2022).

A strong connection is formed between customers who view it as a trustworthy brand and the brand itself. The loyalty is later influenced by reliable information (Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2021). For

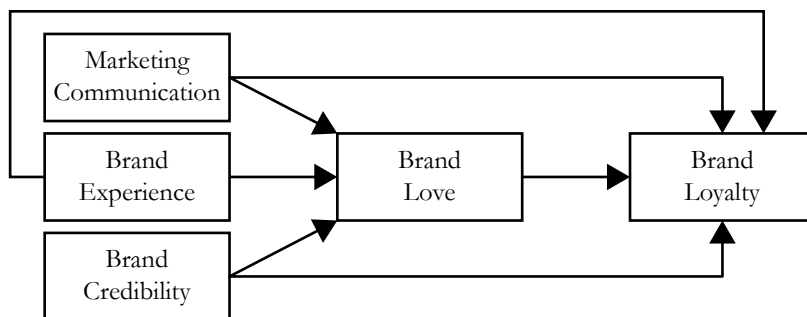
customers, it is easier to make a purchase decision when considering a reputable brand, particularly in the service sector (Jun, 2020). BCR significantly reduces the risk associated with the product. As a result, the purchase intention is positively influenced by the BCR. When a brand has a strong reputation, more people are likely to buy their product. Previous research has indicated that the reputation of a brand significantly influences customer loyalty (Haq et al., 2020). A reputable brand cultivates a stronger sense of loyalty among its customers. Thus, it is contended that the correlation between BCR and BL has a significant impact on BLOY.

**H8:** BCR has a significant relationship with BL.

**H9:** BCR has a significant relationship with BLOY.

BCR plays a crucial role in fostering BL among customers. When a customer utilises a product and views it as dependable and trustworthy, they regard it as a reputable brand. The credibility established in this context fosters an emotional bond between the customer and the brand, serving as the basis for BL (Sauqi & Hidayat, 2023) and Consumer Satisfaction Toward Consumer-Based Brand Equity (Consumer-Nu Skin on Social Media. Given the increasing prominence of BL, it is crucial to prioritise brand loyalty. Customers are more likely to remain loyal and develop a strong affinity for the brand when they perceive it as credible. They consistently opt for a reputable brand over a rival brand. BL further strengthened the link between BCR and loyalty. Therefore, BL serves as the link between credibility and loyalty. In addition, a recent study conducted by Aljumah, Nuseir and El Refae (2022) explored the role of BL as a mediator. Similarly, Le (2021) also demonstrated a noteworthy mediating effect of BL. Contrary to that, Han et al. (2022) found that BCR had a beneficial impact on BL. A study carried out by Haq et al. (2020) revealed that BCR has a noteworthy impact on loyalty. Additionally, Song et al. (2019) demonstrated a substantial correlation between BL and loyalty.

**H10:** BL mediates the association between BCR and BLOY.



**Figure 1:** Framework.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research methodology. Sekaran (2016) explains that quantitative research follows a well-organised and methodical structure right from the beginning of the study. This study employed a simple random sampling method, where the sample was selected randomly from the study population. This research collected data from customers of telecom organisations in KSA. The study had a sample size of 285. The questionnaire was created to gather the feedback from the participants. The questionnaire was created using a 7-point Likert scale format. This study utilised



207 valid responses from the participants. The response rate of the study was 72.67%. The collected questionnaire was evaluated using the PLS-SEM approach. This tool allows for exploration and prediction of methods based on limited data conditions (Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, 2022). In addition, the analysis of data in this research was carried out using Smart PLS software. There are numerous benefits to utilising Smart PLS. This software is capable of handling a modest sample size. In addition, it has the ability to handle intricate models.

The items of BL were derived from a study conducted by Attiq et al. (2022). The items of BLOY were adapted from research by Kataria and Saini (2020)e>. The scale of brand credibility was selected from a study conducted by Atta et al. (2024). The items of BEXP were adapted from a study by Başer, Cintamür and Arslan (2015), and the items of marketing communication were adapted from a study by Grace and O’cass (2005).

#### 4. RESULTS

The analysis began with the use of SPSS to conduct descriptive analysis of the respondents. Based on the initial data, the majority of the respondents were male, while the remaining respondents were female. Contrastingly, 46.24% of the participants fell within the 18 to 30 age range, while 29.67% were between 31 to 40 years old. The remaining respondents were over 41 years old. In addition, a majority of respondents, specifically 61.21%, indicated that they were not married. Focussing on a thorough examination of the population data, this study proceeded to conduct an analysis using smart PLS.

**Table 1:** Factor Loading.

	BCR	BEXP	BL	BLOY	MCOM
BCR1	0.872				
BCR2	0.898				
BCR3	0.915				
BCR4	0.933				
BCR6	0.740				
BEXP1		0.832			
BEXP2		0.822			
BEXP3		0.862			
BEXP4		0.852			
BL1			0.912		
BL2			0.799		
BL3			0.835		
BL5			0.809		
BL6			0.909		
BLOY1				0.800	
BLOY2				0.835	
BLOY4				0.831	
BLOY5				0.819	
BLOY6				0.695	
MCOM1					0.753
MCOM2					0.861
MCOM3					0.859
MCOM4					0.863
MCOM5					0.849

Note: BCR= brand credibility; BL= brand love; BLOY= brand loyalty, BEXP= brand experience; MCOM= marketing communication

**Table 2:** Reliability and Validity.

	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>
BCR	0.921	0.942	0.764
BEXP	0.863	0.907	0.709
BL	0.906	0.931	0.729
BLOY	0.857	0.897	0.636
MCOM	0.893	0.922	0.702

Note: BCR= brand credibility; BL= brand love; BLOY= brand loyalty, BEXP= brand experience; MCOM= marketing communication”

The initial step in Smart PLS analysis is referred to as outer loading. This stage starts with the examination of convergent validity, followed by discriminant validity. Composite reliability and Cronbach Alpha are used to assess the reliability of the data. These tests are critical before conducting hypothesis testing on the data. In order to evaluate the convergent validity, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010)Babin and Anderson (2010 noted that a factor loading of at least 0.50 is considered acceptable. It is important to note that the AVE score should exceed 0.50 for it to be considered acceptable. As indicated in Table 1, the factor loading values of the retained items exceed 0.50. However, the other items were not included for further analysis. In Table 2, you can find the values of AVE. These values exceed 0.50, satisfying the benchmark criteria.

**Table 3:** Fornell and Larker.

	<b>BCR</b>	<b>BEXP</b>	<b>BL</b>	<b>BLOY</b>	<b>MCOM</b>
BCR	0.874				
BEXP	0.233	0.842			
BL	0.184	0.658	0.854		
BLOY	0.254	0.670	0.759	0.798	
MCOM	0.141	0.657	0.680	0.605	0.838

Note: BCR= brand credibility; BL= brand love; BLOY= brand loyalty, BEXP= brand experience; MCOM= marketing communication”

In addition, the Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability values, as suggested by Hair Jr et al. (2014), exceed 0.70. The values of these figures in Table 2 exceed 0.70. Subsequently, this study performed the necessary tests to verify the discriminant validity, ensuring that there was sufficient differentiation in each variable. There are two different approaches used to assess Discriminant validity: Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) approach and the HTMT approach. The discriminant validity test starts with the Fornell and Larcker approach, where the diagonal values of the matrix should be higher than the other values in the matrix. As indicated in Table 3, the values along the diagonal of the matrix are greater than the other values. Therefore, all the requirements have been met.

**Table 4:** HTMT.

	<b>BCR</b>	<b>BEXP</b>	<b>BL</b>	<b>BLOY</b>	<b>MCOM</b>
BCR					
BEXP	0.256				
BL	0.199	0.743			
BLOY	0.287	0.772	0.853		
MCOM	0.154	0.747	0.755	0.683	

Note: BCR= brand credibility; BL= brand love; BLOY= brand loyalty, BEXP= brand experience; MCOM= marketing communication.”



As per the research conducted by Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2015), it is crucial for the matrix values to be below 0.90 in order to meet the HTMT criteria and establish discriminant validity. The values in Table 4 indicate that this criterion is met, as all values in the HTMT matrix are below 0.90.

**Table 5:** Direct Results.

	Beta	SD	T SC	P SC	Decision
BCR -> BL	0.037	0.061	0.611	0.271	Rejected
BCR -> BLOY	0.087	0.046	1.873	0.031	Accepted
BEXP -> BL	0.362	0.078	4.667	0.000	Accepted
BEXP -> BLOY	0.261	0.077	3.385	0.000	Accepted
BL -> BLOY	0.530	0.075	7.058	0.000	Accepted
MCOM -> BL	0.437	0.074	5.924	0.000	Accepted
MCOM -> BLOY	0.060	0.074	0.820	0.206	Rejected

Note: BCR= brand credibility; BL= brand love; BLOY= brand loyalty, BEXP= brand experience; MCOM= marketing communication.”

Later this study moved to hypothesis testing under inner loading. For this purpose, the bootstrapping approach was used as recommended by Sarstedt et al. (2021). The proposed hypothesis was accepted based on P values and t values. As per the results of the study in Table 5, BL has a significant positive effect on BLOY (Beta= 0.530, t= 7.058), therefore hypothesis is accepted. Likewise, MCOM has a considerable effect on BL (Beta= 0.437, t=5.924), supporting the proposed hypothesis. The results of the study show that BCR has a direct effect on brand loyalty (Beta=0.0837, t= 1.873). Moreover, brand experience has a direct profound effect on BL (Beta= 0.362, t=4.667) and BLOY (Beta=0.261, t= 3.358). Whereas the results of the study indicate that MCOM does not have a direct effect on BLOY (Beta= 0.060, t=0.206). Likewise, according to statistical results, BCR has no considerable effect on BL (Beta= 0.037, t=0.611). In the following section, Table 6 of the study explores the role of BL as a mediator between the independent variables and BLOY. Based on statistical data, there is a correlation between BL, BEXP, BLOY (Beta=0.192, t=4.064), as well as MCOM and BLOY. Therefore, both hypotheses are accepted. However, BL does not facilitate communication between BCR and BLOY. Therefore, the proposed hypothesis is not supported.

**Table 6:** Indirect Results.

	Beta	SD	T SC	P SC	Decision
BCR -> BL -> BLOY	0.020	0.033	0.598	0.275	Rejected
BEXP -> BL -> BLOY	0.192	0.047	4.064	0.000	Accepted
MCOM -> BL -> BLOY	0.232	0.049	4.740	0.000	Accepted

Note: BCR= brand credibility; BL= brand love; BLOY= brand loyalty, BEXP= brand experience; MCOM= marketing communication.

In the present study, the R square value is also assessed to demonstrate the impact of the proposed independent variables on the dependent variables. According to the findings presented in Table 6, marketing communication, brand credibility, and brand experience have a significant impact on BL (54.3%) and BLOY (63.6%).

**Table:** R Square.

	R-square
BL	0.543
BLOY	0.636

BL,= brand love; BLOY= brand loyalty.

## 5. DISCUSSION

It is significant for businesses to maintain a loyal customer base. Retaining current customers is more cost-effective than acquiring new ones. If organisations are able to maintain their existing customer base, they can optimise their profits. In addition, customers who engage in repurchasing or reusing a particular brand tend to share positive feedback about it. Consequently, the brand has managed to attract a significant number of potential customers. Customers play a pivotal role in the telecom sector of KSA. There has been a noticeable rise in the number of customers in this sector. Therefore, it is imperative for the decision-makers in this sector to prioritise the factors that foster customer loyalty. Based on statistical findings, BL has a notable impact on BLOY. One possible explanation for these findings is that customers perceive their current telecom brand as excellent. This brand consistently delivers reliable service quality. In addition, when individuals use this brand, it evokes a positive emotional response. Users experience a strong positive emotional attachment to the brand and derive joy from its usage. Based on customer feedback, using this telecom brand brings them great satisfaction and a sense of being valued by the brand. Due to their strong affinity for this brand, these customers are likely to become repeat customers. In addition, these customers will share positive feedback about the brand through word of mouth. Previous research by Zhang et al. (2020) also confirmed these findings. In addition, the study's results indicate that BCR has a notable and favourable impact on BLOY. Prior research by Haq et al. (2020) yielded similar results. In the telecom sector, the credibility of a brand is crucial for customers when deciding whether to continue using its services. The brand's credibility is established when customers consistently receive the promised services from the telecom sector. According to the research respondents, the telecom firm has fulfilled all of their promises. Their services consistently maintain a high level of quality. Further, individuals can have confidence in the services provided by the telecommunications industry. In addition, they believe that the telecom organisation only makes commitments that they can fulfil for their customers. They only provide the services they can deliver. In addition, customers have found that their experience with the telecom organisation has instilled confidence in the organization's ability to fulfil its commitments. The brand consistently provides excellent value for the price. Their services are reasonably priced. Hence, customers are encouraged to use the brand's services again in the future.

Similarly, the study results indicate a positive bond between BEXP, BL, and BLOY. Simply put, BEXP fosters BL among customers, leading to their loyalty. The customer's experience is influenced by external stimuli, which are also referred to as external factors. These stimuli give rise to emotions or cognition, ultimately leading to positive responses. Customers in the telecom sector express high levels of satisfaction with the services provided by telecom companies. Customers believe that the brand's packaging strongly impacts their visual perception. In addition, the brand also engages customers through their other senses. It signifies that the advertisements and other promotional activities possess an appealing quality. The respondents also mentioned that the telecom firm considers the customers' sentiments. The telecom brand prioritises customer beliefs when developing products and delivering services. Consequently, individuals form an emotional connection with the brand, fostering brand loyalty. These customers serve as strong supporters for the brand, sharing positive feedback and repeatedly utilising the telecom services. The study conducted by Akoglu and Özbek (2022) in literature also yielded similar results. The study's results highlight the significance of MCOM. MCOM is essential for raising product awareness and maintaining customer engagement over time. Based on statistical data, MCOMs have a notable impact on BL and BLOY. Marketing activities foster an emotional bond among brand customers. The customer stated that the telecom brand is efficiently utilising marketing tools. Other factors that may have contributed to these findings include the respondents' positive reception of the telecom

brand's promotions and advertisements. Since the customer has expressed a favourable response to the brand's promotional activity, it can be concluded that the customers' reaction is in support of the brand. Several respondents expressed a favourable opinion about the advertisement, stating that they found it informative and effective in conveying information about the brand. As a result, they have a favourable and optimistic perception of the brand. They also believe that the telecom brand is excelling due to its effective advertisements and strategically planned promotional campaigns. The marketing activities of the brand are carefully crafted to align with the preferences and expectations of the customers and target audience. Therefore, both potential and current customers widely embrace the telecom brand. Previous research by Ercis et al. (2020) also reported similar findings. The study's findings further supported BL's role in mediating the relationship between marketing activities and BLOY, as well as between BEXP and BLOY. However, the findings indicated that there is no mediation effect of BL between BCR and BLOY. Therefore, the confirmation of the mediating role of BL aligns with the findings of previous studies conducted by Polat and Çetinsöz (2021).

### 5.1. Limitations

Several limitations exist in this study. First and foremost, this study investigated the impact of BEXP, MCOM, and BCR on BLOY, both directly and indirectly through the mediation of BL. The author of this research suggests utilising indirect mechanisms to investigate their impact on BLOY. Additionally, the objective of this study is on the customers within the telecom sector of KSA. The author suggests employing a comparable model and examining it within the framework of the higher education sector of KSA, as it would be intriguing to explore these factors in this particular context. Additionally, the study's proposed model delved into the mediating role of BL between several independent variables and a dependent variable. It is recommended that future research could consider incorporating the influence of digital marketing strategies in the initial stages of the model, specifically between the independent variables and mediating variables.

Additionally, the study's R square values indicate that the independent variables have a significant impact on both the mediator and dependent variable, with percentages of 54.3% and 63.6% respectively. Thus, it is suggested that future studies incorporate additional independent variables such as CSR and CRM in order to enhance the R square values. In addition, this study utilised Smart PLS 4 and SPSS for the analysis of collected data. The study's author suggests utilising PROCESS macros for conducting additional analysis on the data. Ultimately, future research may utilise the demographic information of participants to establish connections between study outcomes and IVs.

### 5.2. Theoretical and Managerial Implications

This study has significant implications for both theory and practice. There is a limited amount of research that has examined the role of BL in relation to BCR. The majority of previous studies have focused on examining BCR in relation to brand trust. This study addresses the gap in research by examining the role of mediation between BCR and loyalty. In addition, there is a limited amount of research that has investigated the effects of MCOM and BEXP as independent variables within the same model. The proposed model of the present study also aims to address this gap. Ultimately, the origins of BLOY are examined within the framework of East Asian or European nations. There is a limited amount of research that has examined factors of BLOY in the context of KSA. This gap is also addressed by the proposed model and its application in the telecom sector of KSA.

The present study emphasises the significance of BL in fostering BLOY among customers in the telecom sector, with important implications for managers. Marketing managers should prioritise fostering a strong emotional relationship between customers and the organisation. In addition, the research highlights the

significance of brand credibility in fostering customer trust and encouraging repeat purchases. In addition, the study also highlights the importance of MCOM and BEXP for telecom sector firms in building lasting relationships with customers. Ultimately, these findings prove to be valuable for those in the academic fields of marketing and management sciences, aiding them in their future research endeavours.

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**Table: Details of Items of Variables**

S.N	Variables	Item	Reference Number
	Brand love	1. This is a wonderful brand.	(Attiq et al., 2022)
		2. This brand makes me feel good.	
		3. I love this brand!	
		4. This brand is totally awesome.	
		5. This brand makes me very happy.	
		6. This brand is a pure delight.	
	Brand loyalty	1. I will purchase my current brand next time I purchase from this product category	(Kataria & Saini, 2020)
		2. I plan to continue purchasing my current brand	
		3. I believe the quality of my preferred brand is superior to others	
		4. I am willing to pay a higher price for brand regardless of similar quality from competitor	
		5. I will prescribe this brand to my acquaintance	
		6. When asked about this product category, the name of my brand comes to mind immediately.	
	Brand credibility	1. This brand has the ability to deliver what it promises	(Atta et al., 2024)
		2. This brand's product claims are believable.	
		3. This brand has a name you can trust.	
		4. This brand doesn't pretend to be something it isn't.	
		5. Overtime, my experiences with this brand have led me to expect it to keep its promises, no more and no less.	
	Brand experience	1. This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	(Başer et al., 2015)
		2. I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.	
		3. This brand does not appeal to my senses.	
		4. This brand induces feelings and sentiments.	
		5. I do not have strong emotions for this brand.	
		6. This brand is an emotional brand.	
		7. I engage in physical actions and behaviours when I use this brand.	
		8. This brand results in bodily experiences.	
		9. This brand is not action oriented.	
	Marketing communication	1. I like the advertising and promotions of this (service).	(Grace & O'Casey, 2005)
		2. I react favourably to the advertising and promotions of this (service).	
		3. I feel positive toward the advertising and promotions of this (service).	
		4. The advertising and promotions of this (service) are good.	
		5. The advertising and promotions of this (service) do a good job.	
		6. I am happy with the advertising and promotions of this (service).	