

Exploring the factors influencing brand loyalty for the online food ordering sector in Vietnam



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ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the impact of social media advertising and e-brand experiences. Specifically, it examines how e-brand satisfaction and trust, acting as mediator variables, influence e-brand loyalty among online food customers in Vietnam. The research uses a quantitative method, collecting data from 469 valid responses via a survey questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using statistical tools such as Cronbach's alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) through SPSS and AMOS software. The results show that e-brand experience, satisfaction, and trust are essential for developing and sustaining long-term relationships. Consequently, managers should focus on integrated activities to enhance consumer experience and satisfaction.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, social media marketing is an effective tool that leads to a brand's success (Hawkins and Vel, 2013) since most people spend many hours on social working sites (Kotler et al., 2016). They share their thoughts and specific experiences related to brands (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012; Edwards et al., 2011; Heinrichs and Heinrichs, 2011). More and more marketing managers intend to use social media as a primary communication strategy (Dwivedi et al., 2015) and to connect and interact with potential consumers. In fact, they spend an enormous marketing budget on social media marketing (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013; Saxena and Khanna, 2013) compared to conventional marketing. In 2023, the number of active social media users has dramatically increased to 4.9 billion and is expected to continue growing rapidly in the coming years. The market value of social media reached USD 49.09 billion in 2022 and is projected to grow by approximately 26.2% over the next seven years. Additionally, 77% of social media advertising aims to reach customers, 90% of users follow at least one brand, and 76% make purchases. Therefore, social

media marketing is a crucial and powerful tool in the era of 4.0 technology.

More people are conducting studies to examine advertising on social media (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013). In detail, prior studies focused on describing the adoption of online advertising, the frequency of advertising on social media (Knoll, 2016; Parsons, 2013), and the acceptance attitude towards advertising on social media (Liu et al., 2019; Sashittal et al., 2015; Chu, 2011). Several studies examine social media advertising in various forms, such as e-WOM (electronic word of mouth) (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Rezvani and Safahani, 2016), brand fan pages (Nobre and Silva, 2014; Muk, 2013; Parsons, 2013; Lipsman et al., 2012; De Vries et al., 2012), online review (Tran, 2020), user-created content (Hutter et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2012; Santos, 2022), and firm-created content. In addition, different studies provide a deeper understanding of social media advertising; they mention the effect of social media on consumer behavior (Pashkevich and Haftor, 2013; Nelson-Field et al., 2013). There is extensive research on social media advertising from various perspectives; however, studies on the impact of e-brand satisfaction and e-brand trust on e-brand loyalty are limited.

Additionally, brand communication through social media platforms offers useful features such as livestreams and online reviews. These platforms provide detailed information about the brand, visual product features, and special coupons, and facilitate

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direct interactions between sellers and buyers in a convenient and cost-effective manner.

These remarkable characteristics of social media platforms are integrated with positive marketing programs at each touch point to create a customer experience (Brakus et al., 2009; Iglesias et al., 2011). Based on the specific brand strategy, customers perceive different brand experiences. Positive experiences influence customer decisions throughout the shopping journey (Koay et al., 2020; Hwang et al., 2019). Many studies on cyberspace show that brand experience is an antecedent variable having an impact on brand love, customer satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty (Pu et al., 2023; Chen and Qasim, 2021; Ridhwan et al., 2021) separately. Most research on brand experience in cyberspace is conducted in developed countries. Currently, there is little research on the integrated online brand experience, including brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty, in the online food ordering sector in Vietnam.

Online food ordering is a fast-growing market with great potential for future growth (Shroff et al., 2022; Pillai et al., 2022; Troise et al., 2021; Kang and Namkung, 2019) in Viet Nam (Hoang and Lam, 2020). However, few studies show consumer's initial adoption and purchasing intention (Nguyen et al., 2023a; 2019; Su et al., 2022; Nguyen and Mai, 2022). Few studies have been conducted to improve consumer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty in the context of online food ordering. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the factors that affect consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty, as this contributes to the literature and helps develop long-term strategies for maintaining consumers.

Additionally, no studies have examined the combined effects of social media advertising and e-brand experience on e-brand loyalty, with e-brand trust and e-brand satisfaction as mediators. To address this gap, this study investigates the importance of social media advertising and e-brand experience in building e-brand trust, e-brand satisfaction, and e-brand loyalty. This research not only expands the theory of social media advertising and e-brand experience but also assists managers in selecting and prioritizing strategies to maintain and develop brand sustainability.

2. Theoretical background and hypothesis development

2.1. Social media advertising

Social media is a group of online applications (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010), including platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram that allow users to create content, interact, and share thoughts and feelings (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012). It was found that Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and blogs are the main platforms used for advertising purposes generally. In fact, a growing number of managers use social platforms as brand communication tools to introduce and promote their

brands around the world (Alalwan et al., 2017; Duffett, 2015; Kapoor and Agarwal, 2017; Shareef et al., 2017; Barreda et al., 2016; Lee and Hong, 2016; Swani et al., 2017; Palla et al., 2013) since the unique advantages of social media advertising such as multi-interaction from different sources (firm, consumer, stakeholder, communities) at the same certain time and at anywhere; the viral information comes quickly to many people with low cost (Carmichael and Cleave, 2012).

2.2. E-brand experience

Brakus et al. (2009) stated that brand experiences are the stimuli a brand provides to its customers. Through interacting with a specific brand, customers express their feelings, thoughts, and responses. The functional and emotional qualities of a brand offer a unique experience (Berry et al., 2002; Morrison and Crane, 2007; Haeckel et al., 2003). Therefore, brand experience is the integration of customer experiences at the touch points from all channels where customers can interact with brand even before, during and after using a specific brand (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020; Alloza, 2008; Ambler et al., 2002) through multisensory perception (Brakus et al., 2009; Schmitt, 1999) both online and offline environment (Yu et al., 2021; Safeer et al., 2021; Mostafa and Kasamani, 2021; Følstad and Kvale, 2018). In the online context, brand experience is called e-brand experience (Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013). E-brand experience is the consumer's awareness of a specific brand product and service as well as their evaluation and comment about anything related to the brand (Nysveen et al., 2013). Particularly, e-brand experience implied online customer experience (Rose et al., 2012), website experience (Constantinides, 2004; Lin et al., 2012), brand experience on the web (Ha and Perks, 2005), consumers' online flow experience (Van Noort et al., 2012), virtual experiential marketing (Luo et al., 2011), and online purchase experience (Jin and Park, 2006).

2.3. E-brand satisfaction

Satisfaction is an important emotional response to a series of previous experiences (Ganesan, 1994). Customer satisfaction comes from their perceptions and feelings about the convenience, atmosphere, location, and overall interaction with the brand (Devesa et al., 2010; Anselmsson, 2006). In other words, customer satisfaction focuses on their emotions and is described as an individual experience that creates a positive reaction to the brand, whether or not it meets their initial expectations (Iglesias et al., 2011; Baker and Crompton, 2000). In this study, e-brand satisfaction refers to the customer's pleasure with a specific brand that provides its products and services on social platforms.

2.4. E-brand trust

In marketing, trust is the customer's willingness to believe in and engage with a brand (McKinney and Benson, 2013; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Another aspect of brand trust is the customer's positive expectations about the value and benefits the brand provides (Lin and Lee, 2012). Therefore, brand trust means the brand consistently keeps its promises and communicates honestly with customers (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003; Doney and Cannon, 1997; Ganesan, 1994; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). E-trust signals quality and reduces uncertainty in the virtual market (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Thus, in this study, e-brand trust refers to the customer's belief in the brand's ability to meet their demands.

2.5. E-brand loyalty

Brand loyalty is an important concept that represents a long-term, high-quality relationship between a brand and its customers (Chen and Myagmarsuren, 2011). It implies that consumers have a positive attitude and are willing to repurchase a specific brand, even when competitors offer attractive marketing programs (Jacoby et al., 1978; Oliver, 1999). Brand loyalty provides various benefits to businesses (Chaudhuri, 1999). Additionally, brand loyalty extends to the online environment, known as e-brand loyalty. Cyr (2008) argued that e-brand loyalty is a commitment to continue visiting a brand's website and repurchasing from it. E-brand loyalty can be different from traditional brand loyalty, though it shares some similarities (Horppu et al., 2008; Corstjens and Lal, 2000). In this study, e-brand loyalty refers to customers' willingness to repurchase a preferred brand and share positive things about it on Internet platforms.

2.6. Framework

2.6.1. Social media advertising and consumer behavior

In today's technological age, social media advertising plays a crucial role in influencing customer's awareness, attitudes, and behavior that whether enterprises have no presence in the internet marketplace, especially social networks, it will be hard to survive (Zhang et al., 2020; Jiang et al., 2019; Denizci Guillet et al., 2016). An increasing number of enterprises have applied social media advertising in many different forms and methods to interact and build customer and stakeholder relationships (Koay et al., 2020; Chen and Qasim, 2021; Yadav and Rahman, 2017; 2018). Consequently, social media advertising is a mainstream research object in the recent technology era. In several empirical studies, it indicated that social media advertising has significantly impacted

on consumer perception, purchasing behavior, and e-brand equity, such as e-brand satisfaction, e-brand trust and e-brand equity (Chen and Qasim, 2021; Nikolinakou and Phua, 2020; Seo and Park, 2018; Sikandar and Ahmed, 2019; Yadav and Rahman, 2018; Murillo-Zegarra et al., 2020; Cheung et al., 2020; Lim et al., 2020; Nobar et al., 2020; Zollo et al., 2020). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed for online food ordering.

H1: Social media advertising has a positive influence on e-brand satisfaction.

H2: Social media advertising has a positive influence on e-brand trust.

H3: Social media advertising has a positive influence on e-brand loyalty.

2.6.2. E-brand experience and consumer behavior

In the conventional market, entrepreneurs put the emphasis on creating and selling an attractive differentiated brand experience since customers prefer a brand that provides outstanding unique experiences (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010) and is willing to engage with that brand (Abou-Shouk and Soliman, 2021). In the empirical studies, brand experience is proven to be the antecedent variable that creates consumer satisfaction (Brakus et al., 2009; Ha and Perks, 2005) and encourages consumer repurchase behavior (Brakus et al., 2009; Fullerton, 2005). Brand experience is considered a main element in building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers (Kang et al., 2017) that can positively influence consumer satisfaction, brand trust, and loyalty (Akoglu and Özbek, 2022; Hwang et al., 2021; Huang, 2017; Ha and Perks, 2005). In the internet environment, e-brand experience can create a good impression that stays in customers' minds (Arya et al., 2019) that creates e-brand trust (Ridhwan et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2016; Ashley and Leonard, 2009; Ha and Perks, 2005), e-brand satisfaction and lead to consumer's brand loyalty (Quan et al., 2020; Pu et al., 2023; Rizvi et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2016). Therefore, the hypotheses were posed in the online food ordering as follows:

H4: E-brand experience has positively influenced e-brand satisfaction.

H5: E-brand experience has positively influenced e-brand trust.

H6: E-brand experience has positively influenced brand loyalty.

2.6.3. E-brand satisfaction, e-trust, and e-brand loyalty

Customer satisfaction is a core value that enhances brand-consumer relationship quality in the long term (Chen and Myagmarsuren, 2011) and plays an important role in the success of enterprises (Nam et al., 2011).

There is a significant correlation between brand satisfaction and brand trust, even in the offline and online markets (Hwang et al., 2021; Erciş et al., 2012; Yoon, 2002). Moreover, several studies show that brand satisfaction is an antecedent variable of brand loyalty (Suharto et al., 2022; Song and Kim, 2022; Hwang et al., 2021; Rizvi et al., 2020). Therefore, the hypotheses are proposed following.

H7: E-brand satisfaction has positively influenced e-brand trust

H8: E-brand satisfaction has positively influenced e-brand loyalty

Brand trust plays an important role in building long-term relationships with consumers (Urban et al., 2000; Fournier, 1998), especially in the internet environment. Several studies have shown that brand trust is a key factor influencing consumers' brand choices, particularly in repurchasing and brand loyalty (Nguyen et al., 2023a; Huang, 2017; Sahin et al., 2011). This applies to both physical stores and online marketplaces (Akoglu and Özbek, 2022; Ridhwan et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2016; Cyr et al., 2008). Therefore, e-brand trust might influence e-brand loyalty in the food ordering sector. Hence, the hypothesis is proposed as follows.

H9: E-brand trust has a positive effect on e-brand loyalty.

3. Methodology

3.1. Refined measurement

The measurement to estimate online social brand communication/social media advertising was developed based on Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016), with four items denoted SOC. E-brand experience (EXP) measurement includes five items that are inherited from Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou (2013). The four measurement items of e-brand satisfaction named SAT were adopted from Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) and McKinney et al. (2002). E-brand trust scales were modified by Nguyen et al. (2023a) and Tran (2020) with four items named EBT. Finally, e-brand loyalty items were modified by Khan et al. (2016) and Hwang et al. (2021). All measurements of the research concepts are applied to the Likert scale with seven points from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

3.2. Data collection

Based on previous studies, the first draft of the questionnaire was created. This initial draft was discussed with both experts and online food-ordering customers to refine and complete the survey questions. The questionnaire was then tested with 15 online food-ordering customers to check its response level. After that, minor adjustments were

made to the wording, content, and structure to finalize the survey questionnaire.

The final survey was distributed from April 1, 2023, to August 15, 2023, using convenience sampling in Vietnam. A total of 505 questionnaires were collected, with 469 being valid. According to Hair et al. (2010), at least 263 valid responses are needed for analyzing structural equation models at a significance level of 0.05, with item intercorrelations not exceeding 0.3 for 20 items. Therefore, the sample size of 469 is sufficient for this study. The key demographic characteristics of the respondents are as follows: 73.6% are female, 54.6% are aged 18-26, 70.8% have a university education, and 40.3% have an income of less than 500 USD per month (Table 1).

4. Data analysis results

All the observation variables were checked for reliability and validity using Cronbach's alpha, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the concepts are all above 0.830, which is highly acceptable. The average variance extracted (AVE) for the research concepts ranges from 0.676 to 0.767, and the construct reliability (CR) ranges from 0.749 to 0.832 (Table 2). The measurements met the requirements of Hair et al. (2012) and were used to test the hypotheses using SEM. The SEM analysis results showed that the proposed research framework fits the marketplace according to Hair et al. (2012) criteria, with $X^2(161)=329.837$ ($p=0.000$), Chi-square/df=2.049, GFI=0.936, TLI=0.974, CFI=0.978, and RMSEA=0.047 (Fig. 1). From the SEM analysis, all the hypotheses for the online food ordering marketplace in Vietnam were accepted, except for H1 and H3 (Table 3). Since H1 and H3 were rejected, short qualitative research was conducted to explore consumer insights and expert opinions. It was found that while customers trust and are somewhat satisfied with social media advertising from online ordering platforms, they sometimes experience issues with product quality and service, leading to dissatisfaction and a lack of loyalty to the brand. Table 4 shows the specific direct and indirect relationships among the variables in the framework.

5. Discussion and implications

The findings show that social media advertising and e-brand experience significantly impact e-brand satisfaction, trust, and loyalty in the online food ordering market. Notably, e-brand experience plays a crucial role in creating long-term customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Specifically, e-brand experience influences e-brand satisfaction by 0.71, e-brand trust by 0.49, and e-brand loyalty by 0.17. In contrast, social media advertising has a minor effect on e-brand trust at 0.09 and no impact on e-brand satisfaction and loyalty.

These results suggest that e-brand experience is essential for creating customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty in the online food ordering market in Vietnam. Additionally, e-brand satisfaction and trust are key factors in e-brand loyalty, aligning with findings from Hwang et al. (2021), Rizvi et al. (2020),

Nguyen et al. (2023b), Akoglu and Özbek (2022), and Khan et al. (2016). The research also shows that e-brand satisfaction has a more significant impact on e-brand loyalty than e-brand trust, highlighting the importance of customer satisfaction in maintaining long-term relationships.

Table 1: The sample characteristics

Attributes of sample		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	124	26.4
	Female	345	73.6
Age	Under 26	256	54.6
	26-41	172	36.7
	42-56	40	8.5
	Over 56	1	.2
Education	College and less	10	2.1
	Bachelor level	332	70.8
	Postgraduate	127	27.1
Income	Under 500 USD	189	40.3
	>500 – 1000 USD	122	26.0
	> 1000 – 1500 USD	128	27.3
	Over 1500 USD	30	6.4

Table 2: The results from the data analysis; X is a specific brand of the online food ordering platform

Constructs and items	Mean	Loading
Social media advertising: CR = 0.799; AVE=0.694; Cronbach's alpha =0.917		
Social media advertising of X matches my expectations	5.2900	.827
Social media advertising of X is very appealing	5.2644	.864
I can easily come across X's ads through social media	5.3412	.854
In my opinion, social media advertising of X is better when compared to other brands	5.3475	.785
E-brand experience: CR = 0.832; AVE=0.676; Cronbach's alpha =0.880		
The structure of the online food ordering platform is easy to use	5.2580	.709
The online food ordering platform can be navigated easily	5.2217	.823
The online food ordering platform always gives search results very quickly	5.3881	.864
The online food ordering platform is constantly updated to meet customer's demand	5.4009	.879
The online food ordering platform always gives accurate search results	5.2964	.827
E-brand satisfaction: CR = 0.799; AVE=0.715; Cronbach's alpha = 0.830		
I am satisfied with the quality of information provided by the online food ordering platform X	5.4115	.862
I am pleasure with the attributes that the online food ordering platform X offers	5.3838	.905
Purchasing from the online food ordering platform X is my wise choice	5.2942	.864
Overall, I am satisfied with the online food ordering platform services X	5.3433	.877
E-brand trust: CR = 0.780; AVE= 0.767; Cronbach's alpha =0.868		
X provides truthful information about products and suppliers	5.3454	.860
X provides reliable information about products and suppliers	5.3646	.905
X always conduct what they announce and promise	5.4009	.893
I trust in X's social media advertising	5.4755	.843
E-brand loyalty: CR=0.749; AVE=0.757; Cronbach's alpha = 0.912		
I will find and buy X rather than switch to other brands	5.3305	.862
I will continue to use this brand because I am familiar with it	5.3838	.882
I will continue to re-purchase X despite the other competitors' effort	5.3902	.867

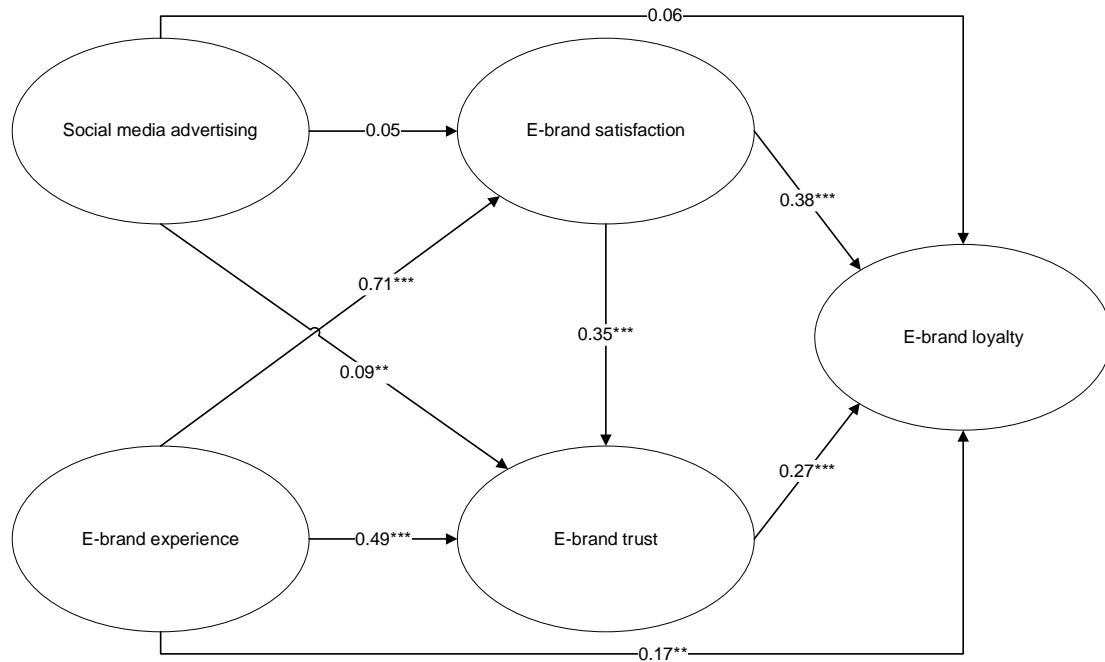
Note: CR=composite reliability; AVE=average variance extracted

Table 3: SEM path results

Paths	Estimate	Standard error	Critical ratio	P-value	Results
H1 SOC → SAT	.045	.036	1.275	.202	Not supported
H2 SOC → TRU	.075	.029	2.540	.011	Supported
H3 SOC → REP	.053	.034	1.565	.118	Not supported
H4 EXP → SAT	.721	.046	15.813	***	Supported
H5 EXP → TRU	.458	.051	9.049	***	Supported
H6 EXP → REP	.169	.064	2.634	.008	Supported
H7 SAT → TRU	.320	.048	6.591	***	Supported
H8 SAT → REP	.368	.059	6.228	***	Supported
H9 TRU → REP	.281	.068	4.159	***	Supported

Table 4: The direct and indirect effect results

		EXP	SOC	SAT	TRU	LOY
SAT	Direct effect	.710	.048	.000	.000	.000
	Indirect effect	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Total	.710	.048	.000	.000	.000
TRU	Direct effect	.491	.087	.348	.000	.000
	Indirect effect	.247	.017	.000	.000	.000
	Total	.737	.104	.348	.000	.000
REP	Direct effect	.171	.058	.379	.266	.000
	Indirect effect	.465	.046	.093	.000	.000
	Total	.637	.104	.472	.266	.000



** : Significant at the 0.01 level; *** : Significant at the 0.001 level

Fig. 1: Standardized estimates results

Although there are increasing studies on e-brand and e-brand experience (Rose et al., 2012), it is important to explore this topic in different contexts with various approaches and different factors and outcomes. This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it extends the role of social media advertising on e-brand satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Second, it expands the understanding of e-brand experience as a factor influencing e-brand satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Third, it presents a unique framework that includes both social media advertising and e-brand experience as factors affecting e-brand loyalty directly and indirectly through e-brand satisfaction and trust. Finally, the model is tested in the online food ordering sector in developing countries, which adds valuable insights to the literature.

For practical implications, brand managers should allocate a reasonable marketing budget and plan effective marketing strategies.

- Brand managers should focus on enhancing e-brand experience to improve e-brand satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. This includes creating an easy-to-use and flexible platform, responding quickly to customer feedback, and providing updated and accurate information.
- Marketing managers should pay attention to social media advertising, as it positively affects e-brand trust. They should create attractive advertising programs that match consumer expectations and are easy to access.
- Practitioners in the online food ordering sector should enhance e-brand satisfaction to build e-brand trust and loyalty. They should deeply understand and meet consumer demands and provide effective features.

- Administrators need to build e-brand trust to increase customer loyalty by delivering truthful information about the brand and suppliers and fulfilling brand promises.

6. Conclusions

The research results provide a deep understanding of the role of e-brand experience and social media advertising in creating e-brand satisfaction, trust, and loyalty in the online food ordering industry. In the online business context, e-brand experience is crucial for building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers. While this research makes significant academic and practical contributions, further studies are needed in different aspects and contexts.

First, this study focused only on customers who have ordered food online. Future research should include customers who have repurchased from a specific online food brand platform. Second, the survey used in this study was mainly distributed through personal relationships and targeted mostly Vietnamese people. Future research should expand the geographical scope and use probability sampling methods for a more comprehensive view.

Additionally, this study only considered the customer perspective in online food ordering platforms. Future research should include customers from other industries to increase the generalizability of the results. Finally, this study only explored the effects of e-brand experience and social media advertising on e-brand loyalty, with e-brand satisfaction and trust as mediators. Future research should consider adding or changing antecedent variables, mediating variables, or outcome variables to further expand the literature.

Compliance with ethical standards

Ethical considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. Participation in the survey was voluntary, and respondents were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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