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The Impact of Customer-Centric Marketing Strategies on Consumer Loyalty: Analytical Study in Erbil of Kurdistan Region Government- Iraq

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Abstract: This study examines the influence of customer-centric marketing strategies on consumer loyalty in the context of businesses in Erbil, Iraq. Customer-centric marketing is a popular idea in today's markets, but many businesses find it hard to put it into practice. The study employed a mixed-methods research design to gather data from 250 respondents via structured questionnaires, supplemented by interviews and document analysis. Descriptive findings indicate that essential customer-centric practices—such as personalization, responsiveness to feedback, comprehension of customer pain points, and proficient utilization of customer data—are inadequately executed by the majority of organizations. This poor performance is linked to low levels of customer loyalty, which is shown by weak repeat buying, a lack of emotional connection, low trust, and little brand advocacy. Logistic regression analysis shows that the overall model is statistically significant, but only certain practices—like addressing customer pain points and adapting to customer expectations—are good at predicting higher loyalty scores. The study finds that in order to improve customer loyalty in competitive markets like Erbil, businesses need to use more customer-focused strategies and make decisions based on data. They also need to keep building relationships with customers. There are useful suggestions that can help businesses plan better marketing campaigns that focus on their customers.

Keywords: Customer-Centric Marketing, Consumer Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction, Marketing Strategies, Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

تأثير استراتيجيات التسويق المتمحورة حول العميل على ولاء المستهلكين: دراسة تحليلية في
أربيل بإقليم كردستان - العراق

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قسم إدارة الأعمال-كلية القانون والعلوم السياسية والإدارة/جامعة سوران (SU)، إقليم كردستان، العراق

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المستخلص: تتناول هذه الدراسة تأثير استراتيجيات التسويق المُتمحور حول العميل على ولاء المستهلكين في سياق الشركات العاملة في أربيل، العراق. يُعدّ التسويق المُتمحور حول العميل فكرة شائعة في أسواق اليوم، إلا أن العديد من الشركات تجد صعوبة في تطبيقه عملياً. اعتمدت الدراسة تصميمًا بحثيًا قائمًا على المنهجيات المختلطة (Mixed-Methods) لجمع البيانات من ٢٥٠ مشاركًا عبر استبيانات مُنظمة، إلى جانب مقابلات وتحليل للوثائق. تشير النتائج الوصفية إلى أن الممارسات الأساسية للتسويق المُتمحور حول العميل—مثل التخصيص، والاستجابة للملاحظات/التغذية الراجعة، وفهم نقاط الألم لدى العملاء، والاستخدام الفعّال لبيانات العملاء—لا تُنفذ بالشكل الكافي لدى غالبية المنظمات. ويرتبط هذا الأداء الضعيف بانخفاض مستويات ولاء العملاء، وهو ما يتضح من ضعف تكرار الشراء، وغياب الارتباط العاطفي، وتدني الثقة، وضعف التوصية بالعلامة التجارية أو الدفاع عنها. وتُظهر نتائج تحليل الانحدار اللوجستي أن النموذج الكلي ذو دلالة إحصائية، إلا أن بعض الممارسات فقط—مثل معالجة نقاط الألم لدى العملاء والتكيف مع توقعاتهم—تُعدّ فعالة في التنبؤ بارتفاع درجات الولاء. وتلخص الدراسة إلى أنه من أجل تعزيز ولاء العملاء في الأسواق التنافسية مثل أربيل، ينبغي على الشركات تبني استراتيجيات أكثر تركيزًا على العميل، واتخاذ قرارات مبنية على البيانات، مع الاستمرار في بناء علاقات طويلة الأمد مع العملاء. كما تقدم الدراسة توصيات مفيدة يمكن أن تساعد الشركات على التخطيط لحملة تسويقية أفضل تتمحور حول العميل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق المتمحور حول الزبون، ولاء المستهلك، رضا الزبون، استراتيجيات التسويق، إدارة علاقات الزبائن (CRM).

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Introduction

As marketing changes, businesses have to deal with tougher competition and more picky customers. Old-fashioned ways of focusing on products, like their features, prices, and where to buy them, aren't enough to keep a business going for a long time. In this setting, customer-centric marketing has become a strategic model that focuses on creating and delivering value by really understanding what customers want, need, and do (Shah et al., 2006). This strategy includes making sure that marketing efforts meet customer expectations and encouraging personalized, relevant interactions that lead to long-lasting relationships.

Customer-centric marketing puts long-term relationships ahead of short-term sales. It aims to create value with the customer, not just for the customer (Rust et al., 2004). It uses data-driven insights to make communications, products, and services more personal, with the goal of increasing customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. A customer-centric strategy sees customers as valuable assets whose lifetime value can be maximized through ongoing engagement and meaningful experiences (Blattberg, Getz, & Thomas, 2001). This is different from transactional marketing, which focuses on short-term results. Companies can now measure and respond to consumer behavior with more accuracy than ever thanks to improvements in digital technologies and analytics. This makes this strategy even more relevant.

A key result of good customer-centric marketing is customer loyalty. It means that a customer continues to prefer a brand or organization over time, which often shows up in repeat purchases, advocacy, and resistance to competitors' offers (Dick & Basu, 1994). Loyal customers not only help businesses make money, but they also lower the cost of acquiring new customers and improve the reputation of the brand through word-of-mouth referrals. To build loyalty, you need more than just happy customers; you need to give them consistent emotional and functional value that they can see and appreciate. Studies show that loyal customers are less likely to be affected by price changes and more likely to forgive service mistakes, which makes them even more important strategically (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

Even though it seems like a good idea, many businesses have a hard time putting customer-focused strategies into action. Moving away from models based on products or sales and toward systems based on customers requires big changes in how the company works, how it uses data, how engaged its employees are, and how well different departments work together. Furthermore, assessing the

influence of these strategies on customer loyalty presents methodological difficulties, especially in heterogeneous and evolving markets. This brings up important questions about which parts of customer-centric marketing have the biggest effect on loyalty and how businesses can change their strategies to better meet customer needs.

1- Problem Statement

Many studies have shown that customer-centric marketing has theoretical benefits, but there is still a lack of empirical research that connects certain marketing practices to measurable results like customer loyalty, especially in developing or non-Western markets. Companies often use customer-focused language without changing their processes or ways of thinking, which makes brand promises and customer perceptions not match up. This research aims to tackle the issue of insufficient empirical understanding regarding the influence of customer-centric marketing practices on customer loyalty in practical contexts.

2- Research Objective

The main goal of this study is to **look at how customer-focused marketing strategies affect customer loyalty** by using data from structured questionnaires. The study's objective is to:

- A. Find the most important parts of customer-centric marketing, like personalization, responsiveness, and getting customers involved.
- B. Look at how these things affect customer loyalty metrics, like how likely someone is to recommend a product or buy it again.
- C. Give organizations specific suggestions for how to keep customers by using targeted marketing strategies.

3- Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis is proposed to direct this investigation:

H₀: There exists no statistically significant correlation between customer-centric marketing strategies and consumer loyalty.

H₁: There exists a statistically significant positive correlation between customer-centric marketing strategies and consumer loyalty.

This hypothesis will be evaluated using quantitative data collected from survey respondents, analyzed through statistical methods including correlation and regression analysis.

This research enhances both scholarly literature and managerial practice. It offers empirical evidence that connects theory and practice of customer-centric marketing in affecting loyalty. For professionals, it shows which parts of customer engagement lead to the most loyalty, which helps marketers use their resources more wisely. Also, in markets that are competitive and full, where getting new customers is expensive, making existing customers more loyal is a better way to grow over time.

In today's business world, moving to customer-centric marketing is not just a trend; it's a strategic necessity. As businesses deal with changing customer needs and more competition, it's important to know how customer-focused strategies really work. This study seeks to elucidate the mechanisms through which these strategies influence customer loyalty, thereby facilitating firms in cultivating more robust and lasting customer relationships. The study aims to provide practical and evidence-based guidance for marketers aiming to succeed in a consumer-driven marketplace by analyzing these dynamics through real-world data.

1st: LITERATURE REVIEW

Mittal et al. (2023) investigated customer satisfaction, loyalty behaviors, and corporate financial performance. This study conducts a comprehensive meta-analysis spanning four decades, integrating over 40 years of research that correlates customer satisfaction and loyalty with financial outcomes. The authors demonstrate a robust correlation between satisfaction-driven loyalty behaviors (such as repeat purchases and referrals) and firm profitability, utilizing an extensive

dataset. The study concludes that satisfaction is a critical precursor to loyalty, highlighting the necessity for data-driven, customer-centric marketing.

Saber et al. (2021) investigated customer-centric marketing and customer retention. This study examined 42 five-star Egyptian hotels and utilized surveys to investigate how technology-driven personalization (e.g., customized services, individualized communication) improves customer retention. Guests said that personalized interactions had a big impact on their choice of hotel and their loyalty. The research suggests integrating customer-centricity into employee training and the organizational culture.

Muzumdar and Kurian (2021) examined the customer orientation of salespeople. This empirical study investigates the impact of salespeople's customer orientation—encompassing listening, empathy, and product variety—on customer loyalty. The results indicate that when sales personnel proactively respond to customer needs, repurchase rates and loyalty metrics markedly enhance, demonstrating that frontline employees are crucial in executing customer-centric strategies.

Krataithong & Rakrachakarn (Bangkok, 2020), Relationship Marketing and Millennials, Surveying 440 hotel guests in Bangkok, this research emphasizes the role of trust, communication, and commitment as fundamental components of relationship marketing that cultivate loyalty among millennials. Conversely, conventional courtesy alone proved ineffective, underscoring the significance of profound relational engagements as primary catalysts of loyalty.

Mohammadi et al. (2023), Green Marketing and Consumer Loyalty. This study surveyed employees and managers in food-exporting companies and found that eco-friendly strategies, such as green product design, promotion, pricing, and distribution, have a positive effect on brand loyalty. It stresses that adding sustainability to customer-focused marketing makes the brand-consumer relationship stronger.

Almohaimmeed (2019), "Pillars of Customer Retention: An Empirical Study on the Influence of Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Profitability on Retention." This study analyzes 497 responses from restaurants in Riyadh, employing structural equation modeling to connect customer relationship management (CRM), satisfaction, loyalty, profitability, and retention. The model confirms that loyalty and satisfaction are important parts of keeping customers for a long time. It also shows that CRM is the strategy that holds everything together.

Moretta Tartaglione et al. (2019), A Systematic Mapping Study on Customer Loyalty and Brand Management. This study identifies satisfaction, trust, engagement, and co-creation as primary drivers of loyalty through a systematic review of the literature. It shows how important social media engagement and value co-creation are becoming in building loyalty in terms of attitudes and behavior.

Camilleri & Filieri (2023), Online Reviews and Revisit Intent. This study, which is focused on hospitality, looks at how the quality, credibility, and usefulness of review sites can predict how happy and loyal users will be to those sites. Utilizing a structural model and a survey of 512 participants, it validates that perceived usefulness directly affects loyalty, analogous to customer-centric digital marketing.

Malki et al. (2024). This study, based on relationship marketing theory, examines the influence of social CRM on customer satisfaction (CS) and loyalty (CL) within the automotive industry. Using structural equation modeling on survey data from 314 customers, it finds that both traditional CRM (TCRM) and social media (SM) use positively affect CS, but only TCRM directly impacts CL. CS is an important link between social CRM and loyalty. The research indicates that companies ought to concentrate on the social media platforms predominantly utilized by their customers and improve personalization and value co-creation. It offers new insights by confirming CRM scales in the automotive sectors of developing nations.

Customer satisfaction (CS) and customer loyalty (CL) are closely related. Satisfaction is often a good sign of loyalty, behaviors like buying again and recommending the product to others. Oliver (1999) defines loyalty as a profound commitment that transcends mere satisfaction, whereas

Reichheld and Sasser (1990) demonstrate that heightened satisfaction can substantially enhance retention and profitability. Dick and Basu (1994) underscore the significance of both attitudinal and behavioral elements in cultivating loyalty. Recent research, including Mittal et al. (2023), substantiates that companies prioritizing satisfaction-oriented strategies achieve superior financial outcomes and enhanced customer relations. To keep loyalty, you need to offer consistent value, trust, and emotional connection that goes beyond just meeting expectations.

2nd: MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilizes a case study methodology to analyze the impact of customer-centric marketing strategies on consumer loyalty in Erbil, Iraq. The case study method enables a comprehensive examination of the local business landscape, consumer behavior, and marketing strategies specific to this context.

We will use three main ways to collect data. To learn about the current customer-focused marketing strategies of businesses in Erbil, we will first look at relevant documents from those businesses, such as their marketing plans, customer service policies, brand mission statements, and annual reports. Second, surveys and questionnaires will be sent out to business owners, marketing experts, and customers to get numbers on how people feel about customer-centered marketing and how it affects loyalty. Third, we will do semi-structured interviews with important people, like marketing managers, loyal customers, and local business leaders, to get qualitative information about their thoughts and experiences.

Different groups will use different ways to sample. For business professionals and marketing staff, purposive sampling will be used to make sure that people from different fields (like retail, hospitality, and services) are represented. For consumers, a stratified random sample of about 250 people from different age groups, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds will be used to make sure the sample is representative. When choosing customers, the focus will be on people who buy a lot and people who are loyal to the brand.

We will use both quantitative and qualitative methods to look at the data. Statistical analysis will be employed to discern patterns, correlations, and the significance of relationships between marketing strategies and consumer loyalty. Thematic analysis of interview data will be performed to identify prevalent themes, strategies, and perceptions concerning the efficacy of customer-centered marketing in fostering enduring customer relationships.

It is up to you whether or not to take part in the study, and your privacy will be protected at all times. Participants can leave at any time without any repercussions. One problem with the study is that it only looked at Erbil, which could make it hard to apply the results to other parts of Iraq or even other countries. Furthermore, the dependence on self-reported data creates the potential for bias in responses.

3rd: Result And Discussion

1- Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 in this study shows how the people who answered questions are spread out based on important demographic factors like gender, marital status, age groups, and education. The respondents' gender distribution is almost equal. Out of 250 participants, 126 identified as male (50.4% of the sample) and 124 identified as female (49.6% of the sample). The mean value of 1.50 and a standard deviation (S.D.) of 0.501 suggest that gender was probably coded numerically as 1 for one gender (e.g., Male) and 2 for the other (e.g., Female), with responses nearly evenly distributed between the two.

Of the 250 people who answered the question about their marital status, 126 were single (50.4%) and 124 were married (49.6%). This shows that the two groups were evenly split. Like gender, the mean value of 1.50 and a standard deviation of 0.501 suggest that a binary coding system was used

(for example, 1 = Single and 2 = Married). The answers were also pretty evenly split between the two groups.

There were three age groups for the people who answered. The biggest group was people over 41, who made up 114 of the 45.6% of the total. The second-largest group was made up of 96 people (38.4%) between the ages of 20 and 30. The third-largest group was made up of 40 people (16.0%) between the ages of 31 and 40. There were 250 people who answered this question. The average age was 37.67 years, and the standard deviation was 13.316, which is pretty high. This shows that there were a lot of different ages among the participants.

The educational backgrounds of the 250 people who answered the survey were very different from each other. The biggest group, with 36.0% (90 participants), had PhDs. This was followed by secondary education (18.0%) and diploma holders (15.2%). 10% of the people who took part only had a primary school education, 12.8% had a bachelor's degree, and 8% had a master's degree. The average level of education was 3.99, with a standard deviation of 1.818. This means that the respondents had a wide range of levels of education. This variable was probably coded on a scale (for example, 1 = Primary, 2 = Secondary, 3 = PhD), and the mean shows that people tend to have higher levels of education.

Table (1): Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Customer-Centric Marketing Strategies on Consumer Loyalty

| | Variable | Frequency | % | Mean | S. D |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------|--------|
| Gender | Male | 126 | 50.4 | 1.50 | 0.501 |
| | Female | 124 | 49.6 | | |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | | |
| Marital status | Single | 126 | 50.4 | 1.50 | 0.501 |
| | Married | 124 | 49.6 | | |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | | |
| Age Groups | 20-30 | 96 | 38.4 | 37.67 | 13.316 |
| | 31-40 | 40 | 16.0 | | |
| | More than 41 | 114 | 45.6 | | |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | | |
| Education | Primary | 25 | 10.0 | 3.99 | 1.818 |
| | Secondary | 45 | 18.0 | | |
| | Diploma | 38 | 15.2 | | |
| | Bachelor | 32 | 12.8 | | |
| | MASTER | 20 | 8.0 | | |
| | PhD | 90 | 36.0 | | |
| Total | 250 | 100.0 | | | |

The table here shows data in a more complex way that looks at how customer-focused marketing strategies can help build and strengthen customer loyalty. These data points show a complex review of marketing practices that put the customer at the center of strategic choices, showing both strengths and weaknesses. As we look at this data, we'll use the percentages, means, and standard deviations to figure out the complicated relationship between marketing that focuses on customers and how loyal customers are.

Customer Needs in Marketing Decisions: This variable shows how much businesses take customer needs into account when making marketing decisions. A significant 38.4% of respondents disagreed, while merely 16.8% agreed and 5.2% strongly agreed, indicating that customer feedback is not consistently prioritized in marketing strategy. The average score was 2.57 (out of 5), with a

standard deviation of 1.104. This shows that people tended to disagree and that there was a moderate range of opinions. This means that a lot of businesses may still be thinking about their products or companies instead of making marketing decisions that are directly based on what customers want.

Act on Customer Feedback: This variable shows how well companies respond to feedback from customers. Like the last variable, a large number of people—38.8%—disagreed with the statement, and only 21.2% either agreed or strongly agreed. The mean of 2.55 and the standard deviation of 1.126 suggest that feedback is frequently gathered but inadequately addressed. This disconnect can hurt long-term customer trust and loyalty because customers are more likely to stay loyal to businesses that listen to their feedback and use it to make products or services better.

Personalized Marketing Campaigns: Personalization is a key part of modern customer-centric marketing, but this variable shows that 40% of respondents disagreed with the idea that personalized campaigns are used. Only 20.4% of people agreed or strongly agreed, and the average was 2.52. This shows that personalization is not being used enough. The standard deviation of 1.134 shows that there is some variation in the answers, but not enough to change the overall trend of limited personalization. This could mean that a chance was missed because personalized marketing is known to greatly increase customer engagement and loyalty.

Know What Hurts Your Customers: It's important to understand and fix customer pain points in order to keep them coming back, but 37.2% of respondents disagreed that their company does this well. The average score of 2.51 and the standard deviation of 1.098 support the idea that many businesses don't have this skill. Only 19.2% of people said they agreed or strongly agreed, which means that more needs to be done to really listen to and understand customers. This is an important part of any strategy for building loyalty.

Using Customer Data in Marketing: Even though data-driven marketing is becoming more popular, this variable shows that 42.8% of people disagreed with the idea that their company uses customer data well. The mean of 2.30, which is the lowest of the six selected variables, and the relatively low standard deviation of 0.987 show that there is a consistent lack of focus on using customer data. This indicates a significant deficiency in strategy, as customer data can be utilized to improve personalization, focus marketing initiatives, and ultimately cultivate more robust customer relationships.

Cross-Department Marketing Coordination: This variable shows how well marketing efforts are coordinated between different departments. A high disagreement rate (38.8%) and a low agreement rate (15.6% combined) show that many companies still have silos. The mean of 2.44 and the standard deviation of 1.074 show that coordination is still weak. When departments work together well, they can share customer insights and strategies, which improves the customer experience and strengthens brand consistency, both of which are important for building loyalty.

The table shows that customer-focused strategies are not being used enough, which could make it harder for them to build long-term loyalty. The standard deviations among variables exhibit considerable variation, indicating varying levels of maturity or adoption across organizations.

Table (2): Descriptive Statistics of Customer-Centric Marketing Strategy Variables

| Variables | Frequency | % | Mean | SD | |
|--|-------------------|-----|------|------|-------|
| Customer needs in marketing decisions | Strongly Disagree | 40 | 16.0 | 2.57 | 1.104 |
| | Disagree | 96 | 38.4 | | |
| | Neutral | 59 | 23.6 | | |
| | Agree | 42 | 16.8 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 13 | 5.2 | | |
| Act on customer feedback | Strongly Disagree | 42 | 16.8 | 2.55 | 1.126 |
| | Disagree | 97 | 38.8 | | |
| | Neutral | 58 | 23.2 | | |
| | Agree | 37 | 14.8 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 16 | 6.4 | | |
| Personalized marketing campaigns | Strongly Disagree | 44 | 17.6 | 2.52 | 1.134 |
| | Disagree | 100 | 40.0 | | |
| | Neutral | 55 | 22.0 | | |
| | Agree | 34 | 13.6 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 17 | 6.8 | | |
| Understand customer pain points | Strongly Disagree | 45 | 18.0 | 2.51 | 1.098 |
| | Disagree | 93 | 37.2 | | |
| | Neutral | 64 | 25.6 | | |
| | Agree | 35 | 14.0 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 13 | 5.2 | | |
| Long-term customer relationships | Strongly Disagree | 38 | 15.2 | 2.61 | 1.125 |
| | Disagree | 96 | 38.4 | | |
| | Neutral | 56 | 22.4 | | |
| | Agree | 45 | 18.0 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 15 | 6.0 | | |
| Customer satisfaction > product quantity | Strongly Disagree | 43 | 17.2 | 2.54 | 1.094 |
| | Disagree | 91 | 36.4 | | |
| | Neutral | 69 | 27.6 | | |
| | Agree | 33 | 13.2 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 14 | 5.6 | | |
| Use of customer data in marketing | Strongly Disagree | 53 | 21.2 | 2.30 | 0.987 |
| | Disagree | 107 | 42.8 | | |
| | Neutral | 56 | 22.4 | | |
| | Agree | 30 | 12.0 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 4 | 1.6 | | |
| Focus on customer lifetime value | Strongly Disagree | 38 | 15.2 | 2.61 | 1.125 |
| | Disagree | 96 | 38.4 | | |
| | Neutral | 56 | 22.4 | | |
| | Agree | 45 | 18.0 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 15 | 6.0 | | |
| Cross-department marketing coordination | Strongly Disagree | 48 | 19.2 | 2.44 | 1.074 |
| | Disagree | 97 | 38.8 | | |
| | Neutral | 66 | 26.4 | | |
| | Agree | 26 | 10.4 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 13 | 5.2 | | |
| Adaptability to customer expectations | Strongly Disagree | 38 | 15.2 | 2.61 | 1.125 |
| | Disagree | 96 | 38.4 | | |
| | Neutral | 56 | 22.4 | | |
| | Agree | 45 | 18.0 | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 15 | 6.0 | | |

Repeat Purchase from the Same Brand: This variable looks at how likely it is that customers will keep buying from the same brand. A large 34.4% of people who answered disagreed with this behavior, while only 22.4% agreed or strongly agreed. The average score of 2.60 (on a 5-point scale) and the standard deviation of 1.144 show that most people disagreed, but there was a lot of variation in the answers. This means that the people who were surveyed don't tend to buy the same thing again and again. This could be because the brand isn't different enough, they're not happy with it, or there are better options.

Tell Other People About the Brand: Recommendations from friends and family are a good sign of customer loyalty, but 37.2% of people who took part said they would not recommend the brand to others. Only 24.4% agreed or strongly agreed, and 23.2% stayed neutral. The data show that people aren't very excited about or supportive of the brand, with a mean of 2.62 and a standard deviation of 1.121. This may indicate problems with customer experience, brand identity, or emotional engagement that make it harder for users to promote the brand more.

Brand Loyalty Even When Prices Are Lower Elsewhere: This variable shows how likely it is that customers will stay loyal to a brand even if other companies offer lower prices. A significant 40.4% of respondents disagreed, while merely 22% expressed agreement or strong agreement. The average of 2.54 and the high standard deviation of 1.155 suggest that most customers are price sensitive, but some may stay loyal even when prices go up. This shows how hard it is for brands to keep customers based only on loyalty.

Brand Trust and Loyalty: Trust is the basis of loyalty, but this variable makes things look bad. Almost half (48.4%) of the people who answered said they didn't trust or are loyal to the brand, and only 4% said they did or strongly agreed. The mean score of only 1.96 and the low standard deviation of 0.847 show that the sample as a whole is consistently distrustful or skeptical. This lack of trust really hurts brand loyalty and could mean bigger problems, like bad service, mixed messages, or bad past experiences.

Social Media Engagement with the Brand: This variable looks at how much people talk about the brand on social media. The answers show that there wasn't much interaction: 46.4% disagreed with being engaged, and only 13.6% agreed with it in any way. With a mean score of 2.26 and a standard deviation of 0.981, this shows that people are not very involved in social media. This means that brands may have missed an opportunity to use digital platforms to build stronger relationships and loyalty, which are becoming more and more important in marketing today.

Loyalty Reflects Personal Values: This variable looks at whether how well a brand fits with a person's values affects how loyal they are to it. A large 39.6% disagreed, and only 14.8% agreed or strongly agreed. The responses lean toward disagreement, with a mean of 2.31 and a standard deviation of 1.075. This means that a lot of people don't see the brand as an extension of who they are or what they believe, which is something that modern, purpose-driven brands often try to do to get more loyalty.

Table (3): Descriptive Statistics of Consumer Loyalty

| Variables | Frequency | % | Mean | SD |
|---|-------------------|-----|------|---------------|
| Repeat purchase from the same brand | Strongly Disagree | 43 | 17.2 | 2.60 1.144 |
| | Disagree | 86 | 34.4 | |
| | Neutral | 65 | 26.0 | |
| | Agree | 39 | 15.6 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 17 | 6.8 | |
| Recommend the brand to others | Strongly Disagree | 38 | 15.2 | 2.62 1.121 |
| | Disagree | 93 | 37.2 | |
| | Neutral | 58 | 23.2 | |
| | Agree | 47 | 18.8 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 14 | 5.6 | |
| Emotional connection to brand | Strongly Disagree | 38 | 15.2 | 2.61 1.125 |
| | Disagree | 96 | 38.4 | |
| | Neutral | 56 | 22.4 | |
| | Agree | 45 | 18.0 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 15 | 6.0 | |
| Brand loyalty despite lower prices | Strongly Disagree | 44 | 17.6 | 2.54 1.155 |
| | Disagree | 101 | 40.4 | |
| | Neutral | 50 | 20.0 | |
| | Agree | 37 | 14.8 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 18 | 7.2 | |
| Influence of loyalty programs | Strongly Disagree | 51 | 20.4 | 2.48 1.141 |
| | Disagree | 95 | 38.0 | |
| | Neutral | 52 | 20.8 | |
| | Agree | 38 | 15.2 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 14 | 5.6 | |
| Brand trust and loyalty | Strongly Disagree | 77 | 30.8 | 1.96 0.847 |
| | Disagree | 121 | 48.4 | |
| | Neutral | 42 | 16.8 | |
| | Agree | 6 | 2.4 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 4 | 1.6 | |
| Loyalty from problem resolution | Strongly Disagree | 33 | 13.2 | 2.69 1.118 |
| | Disagree | 89 | 35.6 | |
| | Neutral | 68 | 27.2 | |
| | Agree | 42 | 16.8 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 18 | 7.2 | |
| Social media engagement with the brand | Strongly Disagree | 54 | 21.6 | 2.26 0.981 |
| | Disagree | 116 | 46.4 | |
| | Neutral | 46 | 18.4 | |
| | Agree | 30 | 12.0 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 4 | 1.6 | |
| Provide feedback to your favorite brand | Strongly Disagree | 38 | 15.2 | 2.61 1.125 |
| | Disagree | 96 | 38.4 | |
| | Neutral | 56 | 22.4 | |
| | Agree | 45 | 18.0 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 15 | 6.0 | |
| Loyalty reflects personal values | Strongly Disagree | 60 | 24.0 | 2.31 1.075 |
| | Disagree | 99 | 39.6 | |
| | Neutral | 54 | 21.6 | |
| | Agree | 27 | 10.8 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 10 | 4.0 | |

2- Interpretation of the Logistic Regression Results

We used a logistic regression model to figure out how likely it was that people who answered the survey would fall into the higher category of Q3 based on six independent variables (X1–X6). The results show that the model as a whole is statistically significant, with a chi-square value of 11.96 and a p-value of 0.000. This means that the set of predictors as a whole makes predictions better than chance.

The model's -2 log-likelihood value of 161.32 and Nagelkerke R^2 value of 0.069 show that the predictors explain about 6.9% of the outcome's variance. This is a low level of explanatory power that is common in behavioral data. X4 and X6 were the most important predictors. X4 ($B = 0.4166$, $p = 0.001$) significantly elevates the probability of being classified in category 2 of Q3, with an odds ratio of 1.5167, indicating a 52% increase in likelihood for each one-unit increment in X4. X6 ($B = 0.2676$, $p = 0.031$) also has a big positive effect, raising the chances of being in the higher Q3 category by about 31%. X5 ($B = 0.2516$, $p = 0.066$) is getting close to being significant and may have a small but meaningful effect.

On the other hand, X1, X2, and X3 don't help predict Q3 very much because their p-values are higher and their Wald statistics are lower. The model shows that most predictors don't have much of an effect, but X4 and X6 do have a big effect on the Q3 outcome.

Table (4): Binary Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting

| Variables | Coefficient | Std. Error | Wald Test (z^2) | P-value | Odds Ratio |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Constant | -2.8338 | 0.698 | 16.49 | 0.000 | 0.0588 |
| X1 | 0.1813 | 0.142 | 1.64 | 0.201 | 1.1987 |
| X2 | -0.0748 | 0.136 | 0.30 | 0.581 | 0.9279 |
| X3 | 0.0632 | 0.138 | 0.21 | 0.648 | 1.0653 |
| X4 | 0.4166*** | 0.125 | 11.14 | 0.001 | 1.5167 |
| X5 | 0.2516 | 0.137 | 3.38 | 0.066 | 1.2861 |
| X6 | 0.2676** | 0.124 | 4.68 | 0.031 | 1.3068 |
| -2 log-likelihood | | | 161.32 | | |
| Nagelkerke R^2 | | 0.0690 | | | |
| χ^2 (p-value) | | 11.96 (0.000) | | | |

4th: Discussion

The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of customer-centric marketing strategies on consumer loyalty among customers in Erbil, Iraq. The results show that there is a complicated link between how organizations market themselves and how loyal their customers are. Even though most businesses agree that putting the customer first is important, the descriptive statistics show that many companies are not doing a good job of using these strategies. This inconsistency is directly related to the low levels of customer loyalty seen in the sample and helps explain the statistical results from the binary logistic regression.

Most of the people who answered disagreed with all of the customer-centric variables, such as personalization, use of customer data, responsiveness to feedback, and understanding customer pain points. For example, more than 40% of those who answered said they didn't think their companies used customer data well, and a similar number said they didn't think personalized marketing campaigns were used well enough. These results indicate that numerous enterprises continue to utilize conventional or product-centric marketing methodologies instead of approaches based on customer insights. The lack of coordination between departments makes structural barriers that keep companies from giving customers a smooth experience even more obvious.

These patterns suggest that even though companies may say they use customer-focused language, they don't really follow through on these plans very well. This aligns with prior literature suggesting

that the shift towards customer-centricity necessitates organizational restructuring, cultural transformation, and investment in data analytics, which numerous firms find challenging to accomplish.

The descriptive statistics for loyalty variables show a worrying trend: customers aren't very loyal. A high percentage of respondents indicated that they would not necessarily engage in repeat purchases from the same brand, nor would they endorse brands to others. The weak emotional connection, low engagement with brands on social media, and limited trust—only 4% of respondents said they trusted their favorite brands—show that brand-consumer relationships in this case are still weak.

These loyalty outcomes are directly related to the problems that come up with customer-centric strategies. Brands have a hard time building emotional connections or long-term loyalty when they don't use data-driven personalization, respond to customer needs, or keep building relationships. This supports the argument made in earlier studies that customer loyalty cannot be separated from delivering consistent value, building trust, and having meaningful interactions.

The findings from the binary logistic regression bolster this interpretation. The overall model was statistically significant, but it only accounted for 6.9% of the variance in the dependent variable (Q3). This small effect size shows that the predictors used, which are based on customer-centric marketing, don't do a good job of explaining loyalty-related outcomes when they are used at low levels.

X4 (understanding customer pain points) and X6 (being able to adapt to customer expectations) were two of the most important predictors of a higher loyalty score. These results show how important it is to be responsive and show empathy when trying to change how customers think. In this case, it seems that understanding what makes customers angry and being able to quickly adapt to changing needs are important factors in building loyalty. This is in line with research from around the world that shows that emotional relevance and responsiveness are important parts of effective customer-focused marketing.

Predictors like X1, X2, and X3, which stand for broader or more general efforts to focus on customers, were not significant. This means that shallow or inconsistent customer-focused activities are not enough to build loyalty. X5, which was close to being significant, shows that investing in long-term relationships may have an effect, but stronger implementation is needed to see results.

The results show that Erbil's customer-centered strategies are more common in theory than in practice, and this gap is what makes customer loyalty so low. Customers seem ready to switch brands, don't feel very strongly about businesses, and are sensitive to price changes. These are all signs of transactional rather than relational market behavior. The fact that only a few specific actions—like addressing pain points and meeting expectations—are good indicators of loyalty shows how important it is to use targeted, responsive and dynamic marketing strategies.

These results show that companies that want to keep their customers loyal need to: More personalized experiences thanks to data-driven insights:

- Real concern for how customers feel and what they are upset about
- Always delivering value that meets customer expectations
- Working together and coordinating between departments
- Putting money into building long-term relationships instead of using short-term sales tactics

5th: Conclusion and Recommendations

1- Conclusion

This study sought to examine the impact of customer-centric marketing strategies on consumer loyalty between businesses and their clientele in Erbil, Iraq. The results show that businesses are becoming more aware of how important it is to put the customer first, but they still have a lot of trouble fully putting these strategies into action. A lot of businesses still use old-fashioned, product-focused methods. This is shown by the fact that most people who answered the questions didn't agree with statements about personalization, responding to feedback, understanding customer pain points, and using customer data effectively. Because of this, customer loyalty levels are still pretty low across the sample. Customers don't buy from the same brand again very often, don't trust the brand very much, and don't feel very emotionally connected to it. These patterns indicate that customer-centric marketing is still developing in the area, and to make it work better, departments need to work together more and be more committed.

The logistic regression analysis corroborates these findings, indicating that only particular aspects of customer-centricity—specifically, addressing customer pain points and adapting to customer expectations—significantly forecast elevated levels of consumer loyalty. The overall model was statistically significant, but it only explained a small amount of the variance. This shows that real loyalty needs more consistent and thorough customer-focused practices. These results show how important it is for businesses in Erbil to improve their customer-focused strategies by using customer data better, always being available, and building long-term relationships. By closing the gap between what they want to do and what they actually do, businesses can build stronger, longer-lasting relationships that keep customers coming back in a market that is getting more competitive.

2- Recommendation

This study's results suggest a number of ways that businesses in Erbil can improve their customer-focused marketing strategies and keep their customers coming back. First, businesses should make it a priority to use customer data in a systematic way to help them make marketing decisions. The results showed that a lot of companies don't use data well to personalize or create strategies, which leads to low customer engagement. To make sure that customer insights are consistently collected, analyzed, and used across all marketing functions, businesses should spend money on customer relationship management (CRM) systems, data analytics tools, and staff training. Also, companies should be more responsive to customer feedback by making it easier to collect, evaluate, and act on it. This responsiveness not only makes customers happier, but it also has a big effect on loyalty, as shown by the importance of understanding customer pain points.

Second, companies should work on making the emotional and social parts of customer loyalty stronger. The results showed low levels of trust, weak emotional connections, and little interaction with brands. This means that people in Erbil don't yet feel very connected to the brands they use. Companies should try to earn people's trust by being open, providing consistent service, and solving problems in a reliable way. Also, personalized marketing campaigns and a stronger presence on social media can help improve communication and strengthen the relationship between customers and brands. The importance of being able to adapt to customer needs in order to predict loyalty means that businesses need to stay flexible and keep an eye on how customer preferences change so they can change their products and services as needed. Companies can build a more loyal customer base and gain a long-term competitive edge by focusing on long-term relationships instead of short-term deals.

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