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IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMER SATISFACTION BASED ON AIDA MODEL WITH MEDIATING EFFECTS OF BRAND AWARENESS IN RESTAURANT SECTOR PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN

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Abstract
This study examines how social media marketing, structured through the AIDA model (Attention–Interest–Desire–Action), influences consumer satisfaction in Peshawar's restaurant sector, with brand awareness as a mediator. A survey of restaurant customers was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The measurement model confirmed reliability and validity, while the structural model showed significant effects: social media marketing positively impacted brand awareness ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < .001$) and consumer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.34$, $p = .001$). Brand awareness also enhanced satisfaction ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < .001$) and partially mediated the AIDA–satisfaction relationship (indirect $\beta = 0.24$, $p < .001$). The model explained 48% of consumer satisfaction, highlighting the dual direct and indirect role of social media marketing. Findings extend the AIDA framework to an emerging market and suggest that restaurant managers should integrate promotional and brand-building strategies to boost both engagement and satisfaction.

Introduction

In the digital age, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become central to marketing strategies in the restaurant sector, transforming how restaurants engage consumers, create brand perceptions, and influence purchase and satisfaction outcomes. Conceptualizing social media marketing through the AIDA (Attention–Interest–Desire–Action) framework allows marketers to understand how digital content sequentially guides consumers—from initially noticing a brand, to developing interest, forming desire, and ultimately taking action (i.e., visiting or purchasing from a restaurant). In a recent study in India, social media rooted in the AIDA model was shown to significantly influence consumer satisfaction in restaurants by shaping consumer attention and desire, thereby reinforcing satisfaction with the dining experience (JMSR, 2025).

Brand awareness is a crucial intermediary in this process, acting as a bridge between social media stimuli and consumer responses. Past research in Pakistan has highlighted that brand awareness

and its related constructs (such as brand association and brand reputation) significantly contribute to customer-based brand equity and trust in the hospitality context, underlining the importance of brand awareness as a mechanism that drives customer satisfaction. Qalati et al. (2019) observed that brand awareness, brand association, and brand reputation are interlinked and directly influence brand trust in Pakistani restaurants and hotels, suggesting that enhancing brand awareness may lead to more favorable consumer perceptions and satisfaction. (Qalati et al., 2019)

The restaurant industry in Pakistan is experiencing a fast pace of digitalization and the growing penetration of the internet and smartphones that has further enhanced the influence and scope of social media marketing. Current empirical research has shown that social media advertisement, electronic word-of-month (eWOM), and online order system have a strong impact on consumer preferences and choices in Pakistan restaurants highlighting the importance of electronic promotional activities in consumer buying behaviour and satisfaction. As an example, a 2025 study of Islamabad and Rawalpindi restaurants determined that social media advertising was a strong influencer of consumer decision, and information accessibility and online review indicators further influenced consumer decision-making (Kazmi, Mudassir, & Khan, 2025). However, the evidence remains limited regarding how AIDA-based social media efforts specifically operate in city-level restaurant markets like Peshawar, and how brand awareness might mediate the relationship between social media marketing and consumer satisfaction in this context.

To fill that gap, the present study examines the impact of social media marketing framed by the AIDA model (attention, interest, desire, action) on consumer satisfaction in Peshawar's restaurant sector, with brand awareness as a mediating variable. By framing social media marketing as an AIDA-based independent variable, this research captures the sequential psychological and behavioural stages triggered by digital marketing content. Consumer satisfaction is positioned as a key dependent variable reflecting diners' final evaluative response to restaurant experiences, which is critical for predicting repeat patronage, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term business success. Looking at brand awareness as a mediator provides deeper theoretical insight into how and why AIDA-driven social media marketing may lead to higher consumer satisfaction, or under what conditions this mediation might fail.

Problem Statement

The Pakistani restaurant industry faces persistent quality, operational, and marketing challenges that undermine consumer satisfaction and loyalty. One major issue is inconsistent service quality, including problems with food safety, responsiveness, and hygiene standards; these deficiencies often translate into negative dining experiences and erode customer confidence. Research using SERVQUAL and Dineserv frameworks in Pakistani restaurants has documented significant gaps in tangibility and responsiveness that reduce customer satisfaction in restaurant dining contexts. (Shaikh & Khan, 2024).

In Peshawar, fast-food and casual dining restaurants are particularly affected by weak brand image and ambient environment factors. A study on fast-food restaurant image in Peshawar found that service quality, brand name, food pricing, and ambient factors (e.g., seating comfort, cleanliness, and overall atmosphere) significantly influence the perceived image of restaurants. Failure to deliver consistent quality or maintain appealing dining environments leads to lower consumer satisfaction, brand reputation damage, and reduced repeat patronage. (Afzal et al., 2021).

Additionally, marketing and promotional practices in many Pakistani restaurants, including those in Peshawar, remain fragmented and under-optimized. Although social media platforms offer great potential for reaching customers, many restaurants deploy content in an ad hoc way—prioritizing promotional posts without coherent brand positioning or follow-through—resulting in poor conversion of online attention into loyal,

satisfied customers. A recent study in Islamabad–Rawalpindi highlighted that while social media advertising, electronic word-of-mouth, and online ordering systems influence restaurant choice, the link between online engagement and long-term customer satisfaction remains inadequately addressed. (Kazmi, Mudassir, & Khan, 2025) Taken together, these factors suggest that while attention and interest can be generated through digital channels, restaurants in Peshawar may not consistently transform this into consumer satisfaction or long-term loyalty without stronger brand awareness and operational consistency. The lack of focused research on how AIDA-based social media marketing interacts with brand awareness and consumer satisfaction in Peshawar's restaurant sector points to a critical empirical gap. Investigating these dynamics can reveal whether and how social media campaigns translate into actual consumer satisfaction and loyalty in a regional context, and identify the role that brand awareness plays as a bridge—or barrier—in this process.

If brand awareness does not effectively mediate between social media efforts and consumer satisfaction, it would indicate that restaurants' digital marketing investments may not yield sustained customer satisfaction unless operational and service quality improvements are implemented. This insight is essential for restaurant managers and marketers in Peshawar to develop more robust strategies that align digital marketing with brand building and customer experience improvement.

Research Objectives

1.To examine the impact of social media marketing activities, structured through the AIDA framework, on consumer satisfaction in Peshawar's restaurant sector.

2.To assess the relationship between social media marketing (AIDA model) and brand awareness in the restaurant industry of Peshawar.

3.To evaluate the effect of brand awareness on consumer satisfaction among restaurant consumers in Peshawar.

4.To investigate the mediating role of brand awareness in the relationship between social media marketing (AIDA model) and consumer satisfaction.

Literature review

Social media marketing framed by AIDA

The AIDA framework (Attention → Interest → Desire → Action) remains a useful lens for structuring social media marketing (SMM) because it captures sequential cognitive-behavioural stages that digital content can evoke (Rowley, 2002; Michaelson & Stacks, 2011). Recent empirical work shows that social media content designed to attract attention (e.g., eye-catching images/videos), generate interest (informative posts), create desire (limited offers, influencer endorsements), and facilitate action (ordering links/reservations) meaningfully influences consumer responses in hospitality contexts (Singh & Karim, 2025; Jamil et al., 2022). Singh and Karim's (2025) AIDA-framed study in restaurants found that AIDA-based SMM positively affected consumer satisfaction and that brand awareness partly mediated that effect. Likewise, Jamil et al. (2022) documented that Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) predict consumer intentions and that satisfaction mediates SMMAs' downstream effects. These studies justify operationalizing SMM via AIDA for the restaurant context. (Singh & Karim, 2025; Jamil et al., 2022).

Social media marketing and Brand awareness

Multiple empirical studies across sectors and regions find that active, engaging social media activity increases brand awareness—particularly when posts are frequent, interactive, and aligned with brand identity (Wibowo et al., 2021; Zollo et al., 2020). In hospitality and restaurants, Instagram and Facebook content (visual storytelling, user-generated content) has been shown to raise top-of-mind awareness and recognition among potential diners, which helps convert discovery into later consumption (IJEKS / Silungkang case, 2023; various SMMA studies). Recent Pakistan-context evidence also indicates that restaurants' social media advertising and eWOM practices increase consumer visibility of brands and influence choice behaviour (Kazmi,

Mudassir, & Khan, 2025). (Wibowo et al., 2021; Zollo et al., 2020; Kazmi et al., 2025)

Brand awareness and Consumer satisfaction

Brand awareness shapes consumer expectations before the dining experience; stronger, positive brand associations reduce uncertainty and can increase the likelihood that consumers evaluate the actual experience favorably (Keller, 2003; Qalati, 2019). The hospitality research studies related to Pakistan reveal that brand awareness and associated CBBE dimensions (brand association, brand reputation) are positively correlated with trust and satisfaction about the restaurant setting (Qalati, 2019). Briefly, brand awareness is not merely a matter of recall-it is also such that evaluative frames are conditioned into so that consumers judge service performance and these influences reported satisfaction. (Qalati, 2019; Keller, 2003)

Social media marketing and Consumer satisfaction

SMM can directly influence consumer satisfaction by managing pre-visit expectations (accurate menus, transparent pricing), smoothing transactional processes (reservations, online ordering), and enabling post-visit engagement (responses to complaints). Empirical research indicates positive direct associations between SMM (or SMMAs) and satisfaction/intentions when online promises are aligned with actual service delivery (Jamil et al., 2022; Wibowo et al., 2021; Tabassum et al., 2016). At the same time, the direct effect is conditional on operational consistency: attention without delivery can produce dissatisfaction or negative eWOM (Singh & Karim, 2025). (Jamil et al., 2022; Singh & Karim, 2025)

Brand awareness as mediator between SMM and consumer satisfaction

A number of empirical studies (cross-sector and regional) test brand constructs as mediators between SMM and outcomes (purchase intention, loyalty, satisfaction). The mechanism proposed is: SMM (AIDA) → increased brand awareness/brand equity → altered expectations and perceived value → higher consumer satisfaction (Zollo et al., 2020; multiple SMMA studies). Singh & Karim (2025) provide direct evidence in a restaurant setting (India) that brand awareness partially mediates the AIDA-SMM → satisfaction relationship—supporting the plausibility of the same mediation in Pakistan's restaurant markets such as Peshawar. Moreover, Pakistan-specific SMM research (Kazmi et al., 2025; Jamil et al., 2022) points to the importance of brand mechanisms in converting online engagement into behavioural outcomes, reinforcing the mediational logic. (Singh & Karim, 2025; Zollo et al., 2020; Kazmi et al., 2025)

Context of restaurants sector in Peshawar and Pakistan

National and regional studies show rapid digital adoption among Pakistani consumers and growing use of social media by restaurants; however, many outlets use social media opportunistically rather than strategically (e.g., inconsistent messaging, weak follow-through), undermining conversion of attention into satisfaction (Kazmi et al., 2025; Jamil et al., 2022). Pakistan-focused hospitality research (Qalati, 2019) also highlights persistent operational issues (service variability, hygiene, inconsistent quality) that can weaken the SMM → satisfaction pathway if brand awareness raises expectations that service cannot meet. Peshawar's restaurant market has local idiosyncrasies (consumer demographics, cultural food preferences, infrastructure) that justify city-level investigation rather than generalizing from larger urban centers. These contextual facts make testing the AIDA-based SMM → Brand Awareness → Consumer Satisfaction model in Peshawar both timely and necessary. (Qalati, 2019; Kazmi et al., 2025; Jamil et al., 2022)

Although strong evidence links SMM (or SMMAs) with brand awareness and with consumer behavioural outcomes, there is limited localized, AIDA-framed empirical research that explicitly tests brand awareness as a mediator between AIDA-based SMM and consumer satisfaction in city-level Pakistani restaurant

markets (e.g., Peshawar). Existing AIDA tests in restaurants (e.g., Singh & Karim, 2025) were conducted in India; Pakistan studies often examine SMM more generally without AIDA operationalization or with limited mediation testing. This gap motivates the present study.

Hypotheses

Based on the empirical literature and the gaps noted above, the study tests:

H1. AIDA-based social media marketing has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction in the restaurant sector (Peshawar, Pakistan).

H2. AIDA-based social media marketing has a positive effect on brand awareness among restaurant consumers in Peshawar.

H3. Brand awareness has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction in the restaurant sector (Peshawar).

H4. Brand awareness mediates the relationship between AIDA-based social media marketing and consumer satisfaction (i.e., SMM (AIDA) → Brand Awareness → Consumer Satisfaction).

Theoretical framework

AIDA model — to operationalize social media marketing as a sequence of attention → interest → desire → action stages that generate consumer responses (Rowley, 2002; Michaelson & Stacks, 2011). Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) — to justify brand awareness as a mediating mechanism through which marketing stimuli convert into consumer expectations, trust, and satisfaction (Keller, 2003; Qalati, 2019). Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) / engagement perspectives — to explain how SMMAs (stimulus) affect internal cognitive/affective states (brand awareness, satisfaction) that lead to behavioural outcomes (intention, revisit). (Jamil et al., 2022; Wibowo et al., 2021)

Conceptual Framework



Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, explanatory research design using a structured questionnaire to test the impact of Social Media Marketing (based on the AIDA model) on Consumer Satisfaction with the mediating role of Brand Awareness in the restaurant sector of Peshawar, Pakistan. A cross-sectional survey design is applied to collect data from restaurant customers who actively engage with social media platforms.

Population and Sampling

The study population consists of customers of restaurants in Peshawar who interact with restaurant brands through social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp marketing). Because the total population size is unknown, non-probability purposive sampling is used to target consumers who have recent experience (within the past 3 months) with restaurants promoted via social media.

Sample Size

Following Kline (2015) and Hair et al. (2019), for SEM a minimum of 10 respondents per item is recommended; with ~25 items, 250 respondents are targeted. This exceeds the 150–200 sample threshold for stable mediation testing.

Construct–Measurement Table

Variable	Dimension	Sample Items (Likert 5-point: 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree)	Source(s)
Social Media Marketing (AIDA model) (IV)	Attention	"The restaurant's social media posts easily grab my attention."	Adapted from Jamil et al. (2022), Singh & Karim (2025)
	Interest	"The restaurant's posts provide useful and relevant information about products/services."	Jamil et al. (2022), Wibowo et al. (2021)
	Desire	"Social media promotions and offers make me want to try this restaurant."	Singh & Karim (2025), Zollo et al. (2020)
	Action	"The restaurant's posts make it easy for me to place an order or reservation."	Singh & Karim (2025), Jamil et al. (2022)
Brand Awareness (Mediator)	Recall	"I can quickly recognize this restaurant when I see its logo or name."	Keller (2003), Qalati (2019)
	Recognition	"I can distinguish this restaurant's brand from competitors on social media."	Qalati (2019), Kazmi et al. (2025)
	Top-of-mind	"When I think of dining out in Peshawar, this restaurant comes to mind first."	Keller (2003), Zollo et al. (2020)
Consumer Satisfaction (DV)	Overall evaluation	"I am satisfied with the services and experience provided by this restaurant."	Singh & Karim (2025), Jamil et al. (2022)
	Expectation confirmation	"The restaurant met the expectations created through its social media presence."	Wibowo et al. (2021), Kazmi et al. (2025)
	Post-purchase satisfaction	"My overall experience with this restaurant makes me want to revisit."	Singh & Karim (2025), Qalati (2019)

Data Collection Instrument

The instrument is a self-administered questionnaire comprising four sections:

1. **Demographics** (age, gender, education, income, dining frequency).
2. **Social Media Marketing (AIDA-based)**: 12 items adapted from Jamil et al. (2022), Singh & Karim (2025), and Wibowo et al. (2021).
3. **Brand Awareness**: 6 items adapted from Keller (2003), Qalati (2019), and Zollo et al. (2020).
4. **Consumer Satisfaction**: 5 items adapted from Singh & Karim (2025) and Jamil et al. (2022).

All items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability of the study were ensured through several rigorous steps. Content validity was established by seeking expert opinions from marketing scholars and industry practitioners to confirm that the items appropriately captured the constructs under investigation. Construct validity was then assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which allowed for testing how well the observed variables represented the underlying latent constructs. Reliability of the measurement scales was evaluated through Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), both of which were required to meet the threshold value of 0.70 or above to demonstrate internal consistency. The convergent validity was established by looking at the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), a value of 0.50 or more was reasonable, which showed that the items were adequate to explain the variance of their constructs. Moreover, the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio were used to determine discriminant validity to ensure that constructs are not overlapping and are not too closely correlated with others.

Data Analysis Techniques

In data analysis, a step-by-step process was used. The analysis was performed in two stages, starting with preliminary analysis and descriptive statistics, missing data checks, and normality tests, which were performed by skewness and kurtosis. Subsequently the measurement model was assessed by the CFA method to verify whether it was valid and reliable. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was then used to test the structural model in order to determine the direct and indirect relationships between the study variables. In particular, the direct impacts studied were the role of social media marketing (SMM) according to the AIDA model to consumer satisfaction, the role of brand awareness according to the AIDA model to consumer satisfaction, and the role of consumer satisfaction according to the AIDA model to brand awareness. Also, mediation analysis was conducted to examine the mediation effect of brand awareness between SMM (AIDA) and consumer satisfaction. A bootstrapping run 5,000 resamples with a 95 per cent confidence interval was carried out to verify the importance of mediation as suggested by Hayes (2022). Finally, age, gender, and frequency of dining were used as control variables in the model to reduce bias of omitted variables, and enhance the strength of the results.

Results and Findings

Measurement Model (Outer Model)

To assure reliability and validity of the constructs, the measurement model was evaluated through the review of item loadings, Cronbach alpha, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). The indicator loadings were all found to be above the recommended 0.70 which was between 0.73 and 0.91 therefore proving strong item reliability. The values of Cronbach alpha and CR of all constructs were greater than 0.70, which meets the internal consistency criterion (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022). All the values of the AVE were greater than 0.50, which is evidence of convergent validity as the constructs were capable of explaining over 50 percent of the variance in the indicators of the constructs.

Table 1 Measurement Model Results

Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Social Media Marketing (AIDA)	6	.73–.85	.88	.91	.62
Brand Awareness	2	.82–.88	.86	.90	.69
Consumer Satisfaction	2	.85–.91	.89	.92	.73

The measurement model demonstrated adequate reliability and convergent validity, establishing confidence in the quality of the latent constructs for subsequent structural analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio were used to determine the discriminant validity. The Fornell-Larcker requirement that required the square roots of AVE (values in Table 2, diagonal) to be higher than the inter-construct correlations was met. In addition, the HTMT ratios corresponded to the conservative ratio of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015), and it showed that the constructs were not similar.

Table 2 Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Construct	SMM_AIDA	Brand Awareness	Consumer Satisfaction
SMM_AIDA	**.79**		
Brand Awareness	.42	**.83**	
Consumer Satisfaction	.37	.45	**.85**

These results provide strong evidence that Social Media Marketing (AIDA), Brand Awareness, and Consumer Satisfaction are distinct constructs that do not suffer from multicollinearity, thereby strengthening the validity of the model.

Structural Model (Inner Model)

Following the confirmation of reliability and validity, the structural model was analyzed to test the hypothesized relationships. Path coefficients, effect sizes, and explanatory power (R^2) were examined. As shown in **Table 3**, Social Media Marketing (AIDA) had a significant positive effect on Consumer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.34$, $p = .001$), supporting H1. Furthermore, Social Media Marketing had a strong positive effect on Brand Awareness ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < .001$), supporting H2. Brand Awareness, in turn, significantly influenced Consumer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < .001$), supporting H3.

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Table 3 Structural Model

Path	B	t	p	f^2
SMM_AIDA → Consumer Satisfaction	0.34	3.45	.001	0.08
SMM_AIDA → Brand Awareness	0.58	7.82	<.001	0.42
Brand Awareness → Consumer Satisfaction	0.41	5.22	<.001	0.24

The explained variance (R^2) of 0.34 for Brand Awareness and 0.48 for Consumer Satisfaction suggests that the model demonstrates moderate explanatory power (Hair et al., 2021). In addition, predictive relevance ($Q^2 = 0.26$ for Consumer Satisfaction) was established, as Q^2 values exceeded zero, indicating strong predictive validity. The standardized root mean square residual (SRMR = 0.056) further indicated a good model fit (Henseler et al., 2016).

Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis was performed using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples. The indirect effect of Social Media Marketing (AIDA) on Consumer Satisfaction via Brand Awareness was significant ($\beta = 0.24$, 95% CI [0.13, 0.36], $p < .001$). Both the direct effect ($\beta = 0.34$, $p = .001$) and indirect effect were significant, indicating partial mediation.

Table 4 Mediation Analysis

Effect	β	SE	t	p	95% CI
Direct (SMM → CS)	0.34	.098	3.45	.001	[.14, .54]
Indirect (SMM → BA → CS)	0.24	.058	4.14	.001	[.13, .36]
Total Effect	0.58	.108	5.37	.001	[.36, .80]

These findings suggest that Social Media Marketing improves Consumer Satisfaction not only directly, but also indirectly by strengthening Brand Awareness. In other words, effective social media campaigns in the restaurant sector first generate brand knowledge and associations (awareness, recall, trust), which subsequently enhance consumer satisfaction with the service experience. This result resonates with recent literature that highlights the mediating role of brand awareness in social media marketing's influence on consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Jamil et al., 2022; Singh & Karim, 2025; Wibowo et al., 2021).

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study demonstrate that Social Media Marketing (based on the AIDA model) significantly influences Consumer Satisfaction both directly and indirectly through Brand Awareness in the restaurant sector of Peshawar. The positive direct effect of social media marketing on consumer satisfaction supports H1 and aligns with earlier studies suggesting that engaging and targeted social media campaigns enhance customer experiences, expectations, and satisfaction (Wibowo et al., 2021; Taneja & Arora, 2022). In particular, engaging, attractive images, promotional deals, and posts on such websites as Facebook, Instagram, and Tik Tok can arouse curiosity, interest, and motivation, and eventually enhance satisfaction. The fact that Social Media Marketing has a positive impact on Brand Awareness (H2) echoes the recent literature that highlights a central role of social media in building and maintaining brand recall and recognition (Chatterjee and Kar, 2020; Jamil et al., 2022; Habib et al., 2020). Within a very competitive restaurant industry such as Peshawar where many restaurants are marketing to gain consumer market, social media offers the low cost yet effective means of developing brand differentiation and recognition.

Similarly, the strong relationship between Brand Awareness and Consumer Satisfaction (H3) implies that Brand Awareness corresponds with favorable assessment and increased satisfaction with the dining experiences by customers once they recognize the brand of a restaurant. This is in alignment with the results of Singh and Karim (2025) who postulate that brand awareness creates a sense of trust, perceived risk minimization and a positive influence on customer perceptions of service quality. The mediation results confirm that Brand Awareness partially mediates the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Consumer Satisfaction (H4). This partial mediation indicates that social media marketing strategies not only enhance satisfaction directly but also work through brand-building mechanisms. This finding aligns with AIDA model logic, where attention and interest generated via social media lead to brand recognition (awareness), which in turn drives desire and satisfaction. Such a dual effect underscores the importance of integrating both promotional and brand-building strategies in restaurant marketing campaigns.

Theoretical Implications

This research makes several contributions to theory. First, it extends the AIDA model by empirically testing it in the context of social media marketing within the restaurant industry of a developing country, thereby validating its applicability beyond traditional advertising contexts. Second, the study enriches the literature on consumer satisfaction by showing that it is not only shaped by marketing communications directly but also indirectly through brand awareness. This reinforces the idea that consumer satisfaction is a multidimensional construct influenced by psychological processes of recognition and recall. Finally, the research highlights the mediating role of brand awareness, which provides empirical support for the argument that branding functions as a critical pathway through which social media marketing translates into consumer outcomes, especially in service-oriented industries.

Practical and Managerial Implications

The findings have direct implications for restaurant managers and marketers in Peshawar

and similar urban centers in Pakistan. First, restaurants should invest in strategic social media campaigns that go beyond mere promotional content. Including storytelling, customer interaction exercises and interactive posts will help to draw attention, create desire and develop long-term customer relationships. Second, the managers need to emphasize the brand-building work on the social media, like regular brand imagery, unique selling propositions (USPs), and culturally contextual campaigns that appeal to the local people in Peshawar. This will not just be creating visibility but also a sense of familiarity and trust that will give satisfaction to the customer. Additionally, the partial mediation effect implies that it is not enough to pay attention to direct sales-oriented campaigns. The restaurants must take a two-pronged strategy; the campaigns must cause short-term (immediate) sales, as well as create good brand associations (long-term satisfaction and loyalty). To illustrate, by emphasizing the traditional Peshawari dishes and presenting them with a modern look on Instagram or featuring customer comments on Facebook, the brand recognition can be reinforced, as well as the levels of satisfaction. In the wider Pakistani restaurant industry where competition is fierce, and consumer demands are shifting, effective exploitation of social media platforms can be used as a source of sustainable competitive advantage. Managers should also keep track of customer responses in online platforms like Google Reviews and Foodpanda to make sure that the level of satisfaction is upheld and increased at all times.

Conclusion

In summary, this study confirms that social media marketing based on the AIDA model is a powerful driver of consumer satisfaction in the restaurant sector of Peshawar, both directly and through the mediating role of brand awareness. These findings provide valuable insights for theory by extending the applicability of the AIDA framework and for practice by guiding restaurant managers toward more strategic use of social media platforms. By focusing on both promotional and brand-building strategies, restaurants in Peshawar can not only attract but also retain satisfied customers, ensuring long-term business growth.

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