

Hashtag Power through SNS Advertising: Achieving Brand Loyalty Based on Customer Engagement within the Egyptian Tourism and Hospitality Market

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Abstract

Universally, Over 60% of people use social media platforms daily, which reflect the role of social media "reach" that organizations could have when launching a social media campaign. Including a hashtag in social media campaigns is an approach to increasing reach, as using hashtags helps increase social media audience and interaction. Hence, this paper aims to investigate the power of hashtags to boost hospitality and tourism services, especially after the dominance of social network services (SNS) in digital marketing during the last decade. In addition, the paper aims to explore the role of hashtags in achieving customer loyalty for tourism and hospitality organizations based on their engagement with the hashtag. Using the questionnaire form as a data collection tool, the research sample includes potential customers who use SNS to decide whether to use specific tourism and hostility services within the Egyptian market. All hypotheses

were tested via PLS structural equation modeling. The research findings help tourism and hospitality organizations boost marketing campaigns via SNS and achieve more reach for their marketing campaigns. In addition, the research focuses on exposing the awareness of hashtag value to make marketing more reachable by customers. The research focuses on one of the most successful marketing approaches, which is widely used and achieves high reach percentages that reflect more customer engagement and loyalty.

Key words: *Hashtag, SNS Advertising, Brand Loyalty, Customer Engagement, Tourism and Hospitality*

1. Introduction

In recent years, the advent of social media platforms has revolutionized the way businesses interact with their potential

customers. Social networking sites (SNS) have become instrumental in shaping consumers' perceptions and decision-making processes, particularly in the tourism and hospitality service industries (Kelly et al., 2017). As a result, companies are increasingly leveraging the power of hashtags to enhance their online presence and engage with their target audience effectively (Raggatt et al., 2018). Further, the Egyptian tourism and hospitality service market is a vibrant and dynamic industry, attracting millions of tourists each year. With the rise of social media, potential customers now rely heavily on online platforms to gather information, share experiences, and make decisions regarding their travel and hospitality choices (Larkin et al., 2016). Thus, understanding the factors that influence customer engagement and brand loyalty in this context has become paramount for businesses aiming to succeed in this competitive market. Hashtags have emerged as a powerful tool on social media platforms, enabling users to categorize and discover content related to specific topics or themes (Kostygina et al., 2020). Their widespread use has transformed hashtags into influential elements that can shape users' perceptions and behaviours (Garcia et al., 2018). However, despite the growing interest in hashtags, there is limited research examining their impact on consumer engagement and brand loyalty, particularly within the Egyptian tourism and hospitality service markets.

Engaging potential customers on social media involves three primary dimensions: cognitive, affective, and behavioural engagement. Cognitive engagement refers to the mental processing and active involvement of consumers in understanding and evaluating information (Schmidt, 2016). Affective engagement pertains to the emotional connection and feelings evoked by social

media content, while behavioural engagement relates to the actions and behaviours exhibited by users in response to online stimuli (Zhoc et al., 2019). Investigating how hashtag power influences these three dimensions of engagement is crucial for understanding the mechanisms behind consumer-brand interactions (Ennis et al., 2013). Brand loyalty represents a desirable outcome for businesses, as it encompasses customers' commitment, repeat purchases, and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Yang et al., 2016).

Prior research has identified engagement as a critical mediator that links various marketing stimuli to brand loyalty. Therefore, examining the mediating role of cognitive, affective, and behavioural engagement in the relationship between hashtag power and brand loyalty will provide valuable insights into the underlying mechanisms that drive customer loyalty in the Egyptian tourism and hospitality service market. The main objective of this research is to investigate the influence of hashtag power on cognitive, affective, and behavioural engagement among potential customers in the Egyptian tourism and hospitality service market. Additionally, this study aims to explore the mediating role of cognitive, affective, and behavioural engagement in the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty. The research sample consists of potential customers who use social networking sites (SNS) to gather information and make decisions regarding specific tourism and hospitality services in the Egyptian market.

This research intends to contribute to the existing literature by shedding light on the influence of hashtag power on cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement within the Egyptian tourism and hospitality service market. Furthermore, by investigating the mediating role of these engagement

dimensions in the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty, this study will provide practical implications for companies in their social media strategies for enhancing customer engagement and fostering brand loyalty. In conclusion, understanding the impact of hashtag power on cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement, as well as its mediated effect on brand loyalty, is crucial for businesses operating in the highly competitive Egyptian tourism and hospitality service market. By investigating these relationships, this research aims to provide valuable insights that can guide marketing practitioners in leveraging social media platforms effectively and building long-term relationships with potential customers.

Table 1: Hashtag definitions

Definition	Source
A hashtag can be defined as "a type of metadata tag" that can be used to combine communications with similar tags or to enable an electronic search to return all messages with the same hashtag.	Losh (2019)
Hashtag creates a label by prefixing a word, acronym, unspaced phrase, or hash character (#) with another word. To put it another way, the hash symbol instructs the computer which word or words in a given message should be seen as more significant than others for categorizing purposes.	Dobrin (2020)
A hashtag is a term or topic category used in tweets, denoted by the # symbol. Using hashtags to categorize messages makes it easier to reach the intended audience. They can introduce new viewers to your material and present chances for them to participate in discussions based on common interests. Hashtags double the amount of interaction on tweets compared to those that don't.	Mann (2021)
Hashtags are terms that are designated with the tag (#) in social media to group together related content. It works well on all platforms and is crucial for social media marketing. Posts with at least one hashtag receive 12.6% greater engagement than those without.	Bahrainizad et al., (2024)

Besides being a powerful marketing tool, the hashtag has some negative consequences that must be avoided during the online marketing campaign. According to Kanal (2019), using incorrect or irrelevant hashtags in an attempt to reach a larger audience can backfire. In addition to confusing prospective buyers, this approach undermines the brand's legitimacy. If customers believe particular hashtags were used to mislead them, they can view the brand as being unauthentic. In addition, Utilizing hashtags associated with contentious or delicate subjects may result in unfavorable connotations. For instance, the hashtag #WhyIStayed was originally connected to a

2. Literature review

2.1 The concept of hashtag power

The hashtag has become a vital tool for organizing and promoting information on social media platforms in the era of digital communication. Since its introduction by Twitter in 2007, other social networks such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and TikTok have adopted the hashtag symbol (#) Rauschnabel et al., (2019). Hashtags are terms or phrases that are prefixed with the pound sign (#) that are used to classify material and improve its discoverability for people who are interested in particular subjects Zappavigna (2018). Table (1) summarizes the different definitions of hashtag.

serious conversation about domestic abuse; hence its usage by a brand to market a product was met with widespread criticism (Sanderson et al., 2016). Such errors may cause serious repercussions and irreversible harm to the brand's image.

2.2 Hashtag power and customer engagement

The concept of "hashtag power" was originally built to the ability of hashtags to facilitate engagement and communication on social media platforms. The studies reviewed provide evidence that hashtag use can indeed have a positive influence on affective engagement. Hurwitz et al. (2016) suggest

that trademarking hashtags can significantly increase social media audience engagement, particularly for firms with fewer followers, by amplifying the effects of certain linguistic styles in tweets (Crone and Konijn, 2018).

Similarly, Lee (2017) finds that Instagram hashtags contribute to the formation of both heterogeneous and homogeneous networks, which in turn positively affects online civic engagement (Döveling et al., 2018). Flavián et al. (2016) support the notion that hashtags can enhance student engagement in online discussions, indicating that they can motivate educational activities and foster a sense of community (Goodacre et al., 2018). Moreover, Freiling et al. (2021) illustrate the role of hashtags in social movements, where they serve as a means of empowerment and facilitate discussions on social issues (Tartavulea et al., 2020).

The literature suggests that the use of hashtags can indeed positively influence cognitive engagement. Cheung et al. (2020) indicate that trademarking hashtags can significantly increase social media audience engagement, particularly for firms with fewer followers, by encouraging specific linguistic styles in tweets (Kremen et al., 2019). Similarly, Park et al. (2014) find that hashtags can motivate students in educational activities and support both synchronous and asynchronous communication within a learning community (Gangi and Wasko, 2016). Moreover, Mavrodieva et al. (2019) demonstrate that Instagram hashtags facilitate the formation of both heterogeneous and homogeneous networks, which are associated with informing current events and sharing knowledge, respectively, thereby enhancing online civic engagement (Kim et al., 2016). However, there are nuances to consider. Additionally, Li et al. (2020) point out that despite the potential of hashtags to promote

awareness, inconsistent use can lead to a decline in engagement, as observed with DEI hashtags in oncology meetings (Bhutto et al., 2021).

Additionally, Nguyen et al. (2020) emphasise the complexity of predicting event popularity on social media, indicating that a single hashtag may not fully represent the scope of an event (Choudhury et al., 2013). Freiling et al. (2021) highlight the political and cultural implications of hashtags in Nigeria, showing their role in engaging with power structures (Toubiana and Zietsma, 2017). Lastly, Goodacre et al. (2018) provide insights into the popularity and awareness of hashtag usage among social media users in Pakistan and among health advocacy organisations, respectively (Crone and Konijn, 2018). However, the impact of hashtags is not guaranteed and may depend on factors such as consistent usage, the development of a specific lexicon, and the broader social and cultural context. Given this, the following theories are proposed:

H1a: hashtag power positively influences cognitive engagement.

H1b: hashtag power positively influences affective engagement.

H1c: hashtag power positively influences behavioral engagement.

2.3 The mediating role of customer engagement

The reviewed literature does not directly address the concept of "hashtag power." However, cognitive engagement is a recurrent theme in the context of social media marketing and its influence on brand loyalty. Choudhury et al. (2013) establish that cognitive aspects of customer brand engagement significantly mediate the relationship between social media marketing efforts and brand loyalty in the airline industry. Toubiana and Zietsma (2017) also

emphasise the impact of cognitive engagement on brand loyalty, though they suggest that affective engagement has a stronger effect on brand-related outcomes. Döveling et al. (2018) support the notion that customer engagement, which includes cognitive engagement, has a greater influence on brand loyalty than social media marketing alone. Contradictorily, Kremen et al. (2019) find that customer engagement does not directly influence brand loyalty, suggesting that other factors, such as brand attachment and customer trust, fully mediate this relationship. Similarly, Mavrodieva et al. (2019) indicate that brand trust mediates the effect of brand engagement on brand loyalty, which may imply that cognitive engagement alone is not the sole mediator.

The query concerning the mediation role of behavioural engagement between hashtag power and brand loyalty is not directly addressed in the provided contexts. However, the studies do offer insights into the broader relationship between customer engagement and brand loyalty, which can be extrapolated to understand the potential mediating role of behavioural engagement. The research findings from the papers suggest that customer engagement, which can be considered a form of behavioural engagement,

plays a significant role in influencing loyalty. For instance, Yang et al. (2016) indicate that customer engagement has a greater influence on brand loyalty than social media marketing, suggesting that engagement behaviours could mediate the relationship between marketing efforts (such as hashtags) and brand loyalty (Yang et al., 2016). Similarly, Garcia et al. (2018) confirm the direct impact of customer engagement on brand loyalty, reinforcing the idea that engagement behaviours are closely linked to loyalty outcomes (Gautam et al., 2020). Schmidt (2016) extends this by highlighting the importance of customer involvement as a precursor to behavioural engagement, which in turn influences customer loyalty (Park et al., 2014). Kelly et al. (2017) also support the positive effect of customer engagement on brand loyalty (Kremen et al., 2019). Given this, the following theories are proposed:

H2a: cognitive engagement mediates the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty.

H2b: affective engagement mediates the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty.

H2c: behavioral engagement mediates the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty.

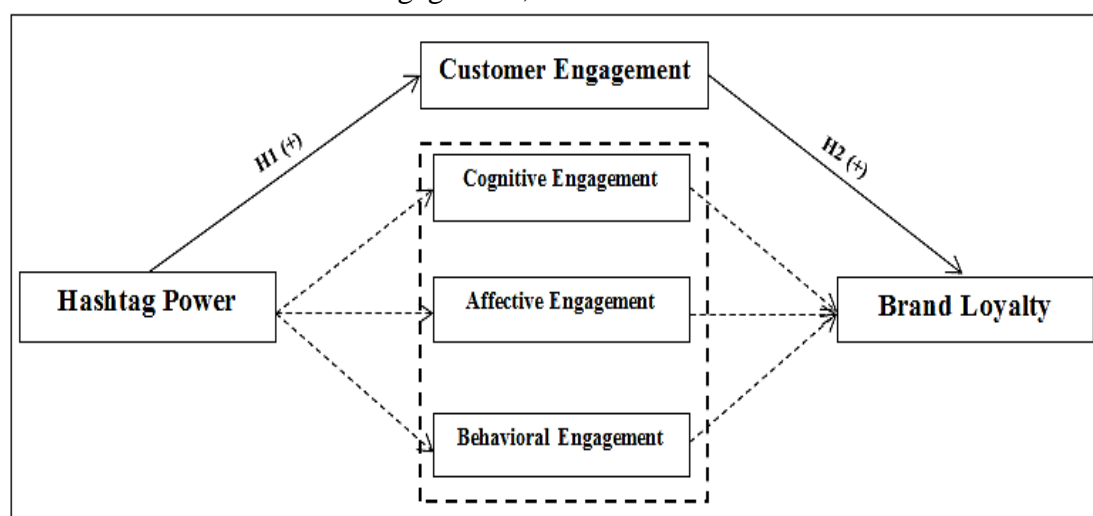


Figure 1. The conceptual framework

3. Methodology

The research evaluated the quantitative approach since a comprehensive examination of how consumers engage with hashtags released by travel and hospitality companies is required. In order to obtain trustworthy data that can be generalized, a quantitative approach is the best way to measure the connection between these variables. According to the allocated methodology, descriptive-analytical research, which is frequently used in hospitality studies, is the most suitable approach to research.

3.1 Sample setting

The convenience sampling technique was adopted from the non-probability sampling approach, including all social platform users who are involved in tourism and hospitality online advertisements. The social platforms include Instagram, Facebook, X, TikTok, and YouTube.

3.2 Instrument and measures

The online questionnaire form was used as a major research tool. It consists of four main sections. The first section is adapted from Pilar et al. (2021) Ta'amneh and Al-Ghazo (2021) and contains 10 questions that measure the power of hashtags regarding customers. The second section is adapted from Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Dwivedi (2015). This section contains 17 items and measures customer engagement depending on three sub-sections that reveal cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement. The third section is adapted from Yoo and Donthu (2001) and Dwivedi (2015). This section consists of seven questions that measure how loyal customers are to the brand, which releases online advertising through social platforms. Lastly, the fourth section contains nine items that ask about demographics. All the questionnaire response range from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Likert-scale=5).

Table 2: Items distribution on the constructs

Surveying sections	Scale development	No. of Items
<u>Section (1)</u> Hashtag Power	Pilař et al., (2021), Ta'amneh and Al-Ghazo (2021)	<u>10</u>
<u>Section (2)</u> Customer Engagement	Hollebeek et al. (2014), Dwivedi (2015)	<u>16</u>
Cognitive Engagement	Hollebeek et al. (2014), Dwivedi (2015)	5
Affective Engagement	Hollebeek et al. (2014), Dwivedi (2015)	5
Behavioral Engagement	Hollebeek et al. (2014), Dwivedi (2015)	6
<u>Section (3)</u> Brand Loyalty	Yoo and Donthu (2001)m Dwivedi (2015)	<u>7</u>
<u>Section (4)</u> Demographics		<u>9</u>
Overall Questionnaire Items		<u>43</u>

Regarding the adaptability of data collection tools with research hypotheses, Table 3 shows

how questionnaires are developed depending on the main research hypotheses.

Table 3: surveying tools adaptability with research hypotheses

Surveying tools sections	Scale development	Hypotheses adaptability
<u>Section (1)</u> Hashtag Power	Pilař <i>et al.</i> , (2021) Ta'amneh and Al-Ghazo (2021)	H1: hashtag power positively influences customer engagement.
<u>Section (2)</u> Customer Engagement	Hollebeek <i>et al.</i> (2014) Dwivedi (2015)	H2: Customer engagement mediates the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty.
<i>Cognitive Engagement</i>	Hollebeek <i>et al.</i> (2014) Dwivedi (2015)	H1a: hashtag power positively influences cognitive engagement.
<i>Affective Engagement</i>	Hollebeek <i>et al.</i> (2014) Dwivedi (2015)	H1b: hashtag power positively influences affective engagement.
<i>Behavioral Engagement</i>	Hollebeek <i>et al.</i> (2014) Dwivedi (2015)	H1c: hashtag power positively influences behavioral engagement
<u>Section (3)</u> Brand Loyalty	Yoo and Donthu (2001) Dwivedi (2015)	H2a: cognitive engagement mediates the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty. H2b: affective engagement mediates the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty. H2c: behavioral engagement mediates the association between hashtag power and brand loyalty.

4. Data analysis and discussion

4.1 Analysis of demographic (N=754)

Table 4: Demographic data presentation

		N	%
Gender	Male	312	41%
	Female	442	59%
Age	Less than 25 years	69	9%
	25 and less than 35	369	49%
	35 and less than 45 years and above	241	32%
		75	10%
Educational Level	High school	51	7%
	University Degree	633	84%
	Masters	70	9%
Social platform you prefer	Instagram	420	56%
	Facebook	182	24%
	X Twitter	98	13%
	TikTok	54	7%
Hashtag Usage	Yes	412	55%
	Maybe	567	35%
	No	75	10%
promote search with a hashtag	Yes	536	71%
	No	218	29%
Travel Type	Business	190	25%
	Leisure	564	75%
Hotel Category	3 star	287	38%
	4 star	396	53%
	5 star	71	9%
		754	100%

The results of the demographics indicate that 59% of the research sample is females who are aged between 25 and 35 years old. With a university educational degree, that biggest market segment frequently uses Instagram as

its main social media platform. Depending on their ability to scroll posts and engage in different popular ads, the respondents indicated that they are involved in hashtags to promote their search and engage with trendy

topics, including visual posts, ads, reels, and shorts. This segment of the market prefers the leisure type of tourism, and that was confirmed by indicating the first and second rank of hotel type that they prefer by four and three stars. The researchers' analysis of demographics is totally computable with

Global Digital Insights (2024). That report assesses the same track that social media platforms have to target their customers by focusing on females and enriching advertisements on Instagram. Table 5 shows the compatible results of the research and Global Digital Insights (2024).

Table 5: Results compatibility with Global Digital Insights (2024)

Results	Research results	Global Digital Insights (2024)
Gender	Female 59%	Female 49%
Age	25-34 Y: 49%	25-34 Y: 15% (1st Rank)
Social media platform	Instagram 56%	Instagram 53%

4.2 Measurement model

The researchers initially examined the measurement model's reliability and convergent validity. Therefore, loadings, composite reliability, Cronbach's α , AVE, and VIF were measured. After that, the loadings were used to determine construct validity (see Appendix). Table 6 presents the CR values, which indicate how well the instrument pieces

explain the instrument. These exceeded the acceptable limit of 0.7 (0.884–0.994), indicating satisfactory internal consistency. The total amount of variance in AVE exceeded the acceptable standard of 0.5 (range from 0.697 to 0.987) (Hair et al., 2016). Furthermore, the bulk of variables had VIF values below 3.3 (ranging from 2.11 to 2.69) (Kock & Lynn, 2012).

Table 6: Reliability and convergent validity

Constructs	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha	AVE	VIF
Hashtag Power	0.921	0.811	0.822	2.11
Cognitive Engagement	0.994	0.823	0.774	2.29
Affective Engagement	0.884	0.977	0.987	2.49
Behavioral Engagement	0.941	0.898	0.697	2.39
Brand Loyalty	0.937	0.987	0.795	2.96

As shown in Table 6, the square roots of AVE were eventually refined and demonstrated satisfactory discriminant validity. A recent evaluation of the Fornell and Larcker (1981) measures concluded that they do not detect a lack of discriminant validity in regular study samples. As a result, Henseler et al. (2015) offered an alternate approach based on the

correlations' HTMT ratio. Table 7 shows the outcomes of using this unique method to verify discriminant validity. If it exceeds 0.85, discriminant validity is a concern (Kock, 2020). The bulk of study constructs have values less than 0.85 (from 0.637 to 0.841), indicating agreeable discriminant validity.

Table 7: Discriminant validity

Fornell-Larcker & HTMT	1	2	3	4	5
1. Hashtag Power	(0.906)	0.637	0.807	0.643	0.838
2. Cognitive Engagement	0.568	(0.879)	0.813	0.769	0.780
3. Affective Engagement	0.356	0.561	(0.993)	0.813	0.752
4. Behavioral Engagement	0.376	0.595	0.657	(0.834)	0.841
5. Brand Loyalty	0.246	0.300	0.225	0.363	0.406

Note. Fornell-Larcker: the values on the diagonal are the square root of the AVEs; and the values on Off diagonal are the

correlation between the constructs; HTMT: ratios are above the diagonal: HTMT ratios are good if < 0.90, best if < 0.85.

4.3 The structural model

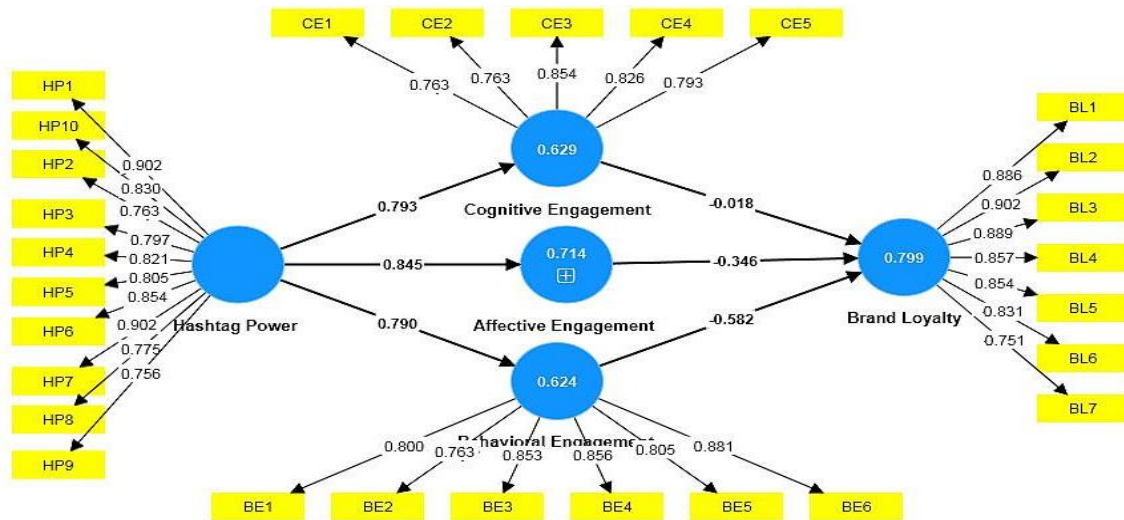


Figure 2. The structure model

Hair et al. (2016) recommended examining GoF indices, such as betas, *t* values, *f*², *R*², and *Q*². Furthermore, they proposed adopting the SRMR as the sole estimated model fit criterion. A zero SRMR value indicates a perfect match, while an SRMR value of < 0.1 is considered appropriate for PLS path models (Kock, 2020). The current study's SRMR of 0.033 indicates an optimal model fit. Table 8 also displays the outcomes connected to the study's hypothesis. The *p* values and betas of the structural model are depicted in Figure 2. Hashtag power is influenced by cognitive engagement ($\beta = 0.38$; $p < 0.01$), affective engagement ($\beta = 0.95$; $p < 0.01$), behavioral engagement ($\beta = 0.62$; $p < 0.01$). As a result, H1a, H1b, and H1c are supported.

Furthermore, customer engagement dimensions accounted for 57% of the variance in brand loyalty ($R^2 = 0.57$). The R^2 values of 0.60 and 0.57 are higher than the 0.26 indicated by Cohen (1988) to indicate a significant model. Furthermore, the effect size (f^2) determines whether the impacts indicated by the path coefficients are small, medium, or large. The typical values are 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 (Cock, 2020). Table 8 shows that all connections had a moderate to substantial effect. Q^2 must be measured in addition to R^2 and f^2 . If Q^2 is positive (i.e., > 0), it shows that the model has predictive relevance for a certain construct, with higher Q^2 values suggesting greater predictive relevance. The Q^2 figure for behavioural intention is 0.348. The Q^2 value for the inner variables indicates their predictive importance.

Table 8. Hypothesis-testing summary

NO	Hypothesis	Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i> -value	Decision	<i>f</i> ²	Confidence intervals	
							2.5%	97.5%
H1a	HP → CE	.380	3.696	0.000	Supported	0.039	0.017	0.497
H1b	HP → AE	.954	1.621	0.000	Supported	0.031	0.614	0.694
H1c	HP → BE	.627	1.035	0.003	Supported	0.069	0.796	0.149

P<0.001, HP= hashtag power, CE= cognitive engagement, AE= affective engagement, BE= behavioral engagement, BL = brand loyalty

As shown in Table 9, customer engagement exhibited a partial mediating effect between hashtag power and brand loyalty. However, behavioral engagement is influenced by cognitive engagement ($\beta = 0.16$; $p < 0.01$),

affective engagement ($\beta = 0.22$; $p < 0.01$), behavioral engagement ($\beta = 0.23$; $p < 0.01$). As a result, H2a, H2b, and H2c are supported.

Table 9. Synopsis of mediation results.

NO	Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	t	P-value	Decision	f ²	Confidence intervals	
								2.5%	97.5%
H2a	HP → CE → BL	0.136	0.166	4.721	0.000	Supported	0.061	0.103	0.339
H2b	HP → AE → BL	0.557	0.224	6.720	0.000	Supported	0.101	0.208	0.376
H2c	HP → BE → BL	0.547	0.236	6.720	0.000	Supported	0.136	0.208	0.376

P<0.001, HP= hashtag power, CE= cognitive engagement, AE= affective engagement, BE= behavioral engagement, BL = brand loyalty

Results from Celuch (2021) revealed that hashtags directly affect users, as social media has arisen as a means of co-creating value and increasing engagement. In particular, the usage of hashtags on social media boosts impressions, raises brand awareness, and helps reach a larger audience (Omena et al., 2020; De-Masi et al., 2016). In the same context, the results match Stathopoulou et al., (2017) as hashtags as a marketing tool for tourism and hospitality organizations. Although understanding more about hashtag usage is important, adding more hashtags may not always increase user engagement this could be due to posts having too many words (Malhotra et al., 2012). This study offers the same perspectives in contrast to past research (Leonhardt, 2015; Tiago et al., 2017) that predicts the efficacy of employing hashtags to promote customer engagement. More specifically, the results imply that users' interactions with the material are influenced by the quantity of hashtags included in a post. That is to say, adding more hashtags to a post does not always compel readers to engage with the content of the post instead, it may only make it easier to find (Hays et al., 2013). According to Feng et al. (2015), initial impressions based on the length of the post could instead have an impact on whether

users engage with the content more closely or less closely.

Regarding brand loyalty, the research results match the results of Fernandes and Moreira (2019). A relatively new idea in marketing, customer engagement has drawn interest from researchers and industry professionals and has the potential to greatly expand our understanding of consumer-brand connections (Dessart, 2017). Customer engagement could assist tourism and hospitality organisations in building an emotionally devoted customer base. It plays a major part in brand management and is becoming increasingly important (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Hollebeek et al., 2018). (Kandampully et al., 2015) results also showed that loyalty includes favourable internal attitudes about the brand in addition to recurrent purchases. According to prior research, client involvement can increase brand loyalty since it fosters favourable perceptions towards the company. Findings also represent that customer engagement creates strong relational links with a brand since it is collaborative and immersive, which consumers may want to maintain in the future (Dwivedi, 2015) through loyalty intentions like advocacy and patronage (Vivek et al., 2012). Accordingly, "the highly engaged

customer's commitment and connection are expected to be influential in their loyalty behaviour" (France et al., 2016, p. 127). On the other hand, the findings of Fernandes and Moreira (2019) stated that there is little empirical data regarding the role that customer engagement plays in loyalty development, despite the expectations that it will predict brand loyalty (Dessart et al., 2015) and increase brand retention (Hollebeek et al., 2014). (So et al., 2016) Considering the backdrop of social media, According to the conclusions of Jahn and Kunz (2012), Hutter et al. (2013), Dessart (2017), and Carvalho and Fernandes (2018), customer participation has a favourable effect on brand loyalty and other loyalty-related outcomes.

5. Conclusion and implications

This study is innovative since it applies practical psychology, digital marketing, and data science to various tourism and hotel ads and focuses on the usage of hashtags on social media. Despite the fact that Instagram hashtags are widely used, there is a noticeable difference in how successful they are at maximizing value. This research has opened up new directions for marketing and management research by placing tourism events and hotel marketing at the center. It extends beyond the range of well-known elements, such as the degree of vividness and informativeness seen in the larger tourism and hospitality sectors (Sallaku and Vigolo, 2024; So and Li, 2020; Yu & Sun, 2019; So et al., 2016). The research conclusion is represented in figure 3.

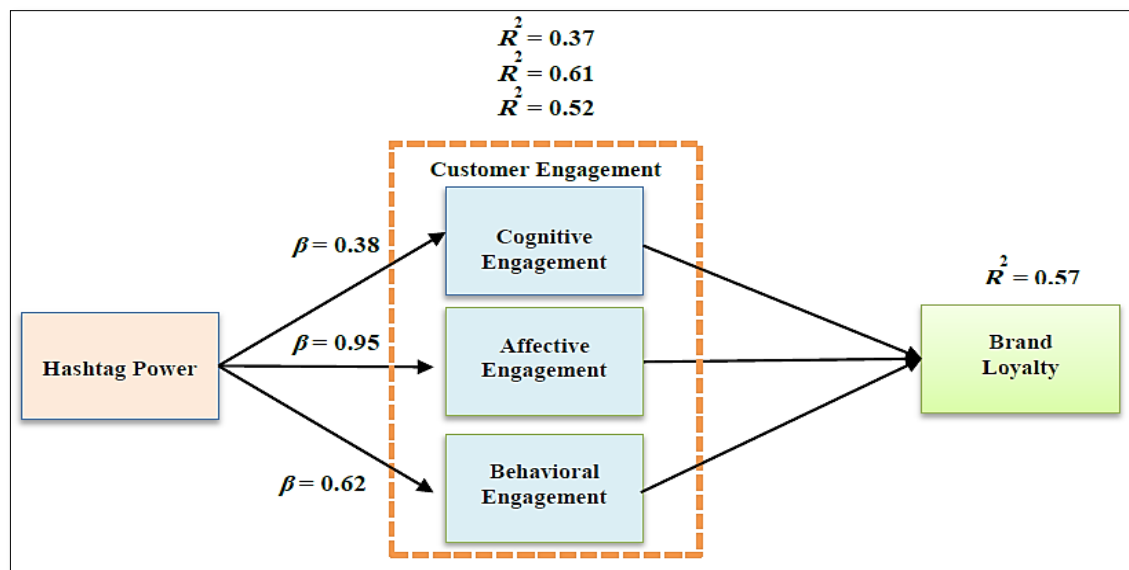


Figure 3. The research conclusion

Regarding the theoretical implication, the research adds to the hospitality marketing literature, as it focused in leveraging consumer engagement to achieve brand loyalty. A message's reach can be expanded by using hashtags, which make it discoverable to a larger audience than just the account's direct followers. This is consistent with

network theory, which states that if messages are connected by shared nodes, they can propagate through a network more extensively. Additionally, when hashtags are used effectively, they make it easy for users interested in a specific topic or trend to share and find content, which increases the likelihood that a message will become viral.

Concentrating on choosing hashtags that work to get the desired results hypothesis: According to this hypothesis, people intentionally look for media that meets different demands than Theory of Social Presence: because hashtags can increase the perceived social presence of a business or advertisement by fostering a feeling of community and shared experience among users. Resulting in increased levels of contact and engagement with marketing collateral and, ultimately, building brand equity

Regarding the practical implications, trending themes and hashtags are effective ways to promote content on social media and acquire leads. The practical implications of the research concentrate on a few specific measures that may be taken to make hashtag management for marketing campaigns easier and more manageable. Tourism and hospitality organizations have to conduct in-depth research to find appropriate hashtags that complement their brand, sector, or target market's interests. Finding popular and trending hashtags is made easier with the use of tools like RiteTag and Hashtagify. Tourism and hospitality organizations have to create an identifiable hashtag unique to their brand or marketing initiative. Branded hashtags facilitate user-generated content creation, aid in brand recognition, and make it simpler for others to find your material. It is imperative for tourism and hospitality organizations to keep abreast of industry trends and happenings by following trending themes. It may raise the visibility of content and draw in leads who are interested in the subject by producing content or participating in

discussions around these trends. Tourism and hospitality organizations have to actively interact with hashtags by utilizing them in posts as well as by using them to communicate with other users. Share, like, and comment on posts from users who are using pertinent hashtags. This interaction fosters relationships with possible leads and raises the exposure of advertisements.

6. Research limitations and further research

The research reviews the importance of hashtags in e-marketing in the last decade, especially after the spread of social media. Through this knowledge, the research hypotheses were determined based on customer engagement and brand loyalty. The research is limited to customers in the Egyptian market who regularly use social media and are influenced by hashtags. Through this process, the customer's engagement through marketing campaigns carried out by tourism and hotel companies is limited. Future research can focus on other variables to achieve integration in understanding the nature of customers related to tourism in Egypt, in addition to identifying real opportunities through which a segment of Egyptian society can be targeted to create marketing campaigns on social media pages. Future research could also focus on studying the same hypotheses in a field other than tourism and hospitality, with the aim of developing Egyptian society more broadly and achieving the sustainable development that the vision of the Egyptian state aims for during the period until 2030.

Appendix. CFA – PLS approach

Construct	Mean	SD	Loadings	P-value	Skewness	Kurtosis
Hashtag Power (HP)						
HP1. Hashtag has been growing as a popular approach to get involved in social networks advertising.	2.241	0.364	0.947	<0.001	-0.369	0.964
HP2. Using hashtags has been emerged as a remarkable method to promote participatory behavior.	3.236	1.947	0.936	<0.001	-0.129	-0.364
HP3. Using hashtags share ideas and suggestions between people, generate content like comments.	3.471	0.691	0.911	<0.001	-0.149	0.947
HP4. Hashtag is the best tool to spread awareness in the modern society.	2.247	0.126	0.822	<0.001	-0.974	0.647
HP5. Hashtag shares interests and collect the views about specific service or product.	3.694	0.694	0.836	<0.001	-0.694	0.479
HP6. Hashtag shares content related to the product or service and initiate conversation with speakers.	3.694	0.967	0.894	<0.001	-0.291	0.964
HP7. Hashtag increases your visibility online, making your posts reach a broader audience.	3.147	1.194	0.857	<0.001	-0.119	0.694
HP8. Hashtags help increase business' social media presence by making content viewable to anyone.	3.369	1.974	0.969	<0.001	-0.987	-0.149
HP9. Using Hashtags makes finding information easier for social media users.	3.047	1.394	0.901	<0.001	-0.998	-0.974
HP10. Hashtag stimulates other people's attitudes and perceptions towards specific service or product.	3.394	0.997	0.800	<0.001	0.789	0.369
Customer Engagement						
Cognitive Engagement(CE)						
CE1. I think a lot about the brand that I belong.	3.694	1.364	0.739	<0.001	-1.694	0.987
CE2. The brand that I belong stimulates my interest	4.497	0.974	0.797	<0.001	-0.974	0.421
CE3. When I use the brand that I belong I forget everything.	3.369	1.339	0.799	<0.001	-0.364	0.364
CE4. Time flies when I interact with the brand that I belong.	3.741	1.479	0.849	<0.001	-0.974	0.694
CE5. It's difficult to detach myself when using the brand that I belong.	3.119	1.497	0.833	<0.001	-0.224	0.749
Affective Engagement (AE)						
AE1. The brand that I belong inspires me.	4.694	1.947	0.967	<0.001	-0.469	0.964
AE2. I am proud of using the brand that I belong.	3.471	1.219	0.933	<0.001	-0.987	0.259
AE3. I use the brand that I belong with total dedication.	3.964	1.117	0.847	<0.001	-0.694	0.947
AE4. Using the brand that I belong makes me happy.	3.978	1.339	0.900	<0.001	-0.497	-0.694
AE5. I feel enthusiastic about the brand that I belong.	3.412	1.947	0.904	<0.001	-0.978	-0.479
Behavioral Engagement (BE)						
BE1. I spend a lot of time using the brand that I belong.	4.479	1.967	0.938	<0.001	-0.859	0.120
BE2. The brand that I belong is one I often use in (Tourism/hospitality).	3.369	1.479	0.994	<0.001	-0.847	0.179
BE3. Within (Tourism/hospitality) I always use the brand that I belong.	3.479	1.449	0.894	<0.001	-0.849	0.391
BE4. I feel like using the brand that I belong.	3.669	1.779	0.911	<0.001	-0.539	-0.449
BE5. I'd like to stick with the brand that I belong despite some problems with it.	3.694	0.221	0.779	<0.001	0.294	0.291
BE6. I spend a lot of time using the brand that I belong.	2.149	0.339	0.777	<0.001	0.429	0.891
Brand Loyalty (BL)						
BL1. I would recommend the brand that I belong to someone who seeks my advice.	4.647	0.694	0.839	<0.001	-0.669	-0.663
BL2. I would encourage friends to do business with the brand that I belong.	3.664	1.954	0.969	<0.001	0.479	0.733
BL3. I would say positive things about the brand that I belong to other people.	3.147	0.559	0.747	<0.001	-0.369	-0.789
BL4. I would do more business with the brand that I belong in the next few years.	4.258	1.947	0.897	<0.001	-0.919	-0.967
BL5. I am faithful to the brand that I belong.	3.951	0.776	0.769	<0.001	-0.900	0.459
BL6. I am a loyal customer of the brand that I belong	3.479	0.339	0.739	<0.001	-0.789	0.967
BL7. I am willing to maintain my relationship with the brand that I belong	3.779	0.978	0.866	<0.001	0.223	0.694

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