

## **Website Appeal's impact on Brand Outcomes, a case in a Quick-Service Restaurant context in the north of Mexico.**

**El impacto del atractivo del sitio web en los resultados de marca: un caso en el contexto de un restaurante de servicio rápido en el norte de México.**

**Christian Reich-López\***

**Salvador Trevino-Martinez†**

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*Fecha de recepción: 23 de julio del 2025*

*Fecha de aceptación: 11 de noviembre del 2025*

*Fecha de Publicación en línea: 31 de enero del 2026*

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**Abstract .** This paper investigates the relationship between website appeal and brand value outcomes (brand attraction, brand loyalty, brand relationship, and brand experience), considering the mediating effect of emotional attractiveness. Data were collected from 221 customers of a quick-service restaurant in Culiacán, Mexico, using an online survey distributed via WhatsApp, following the clients' navigation of the restaurant's website. The study employed PLS-SEM to test the proposed hypotheses and performed 5,000 bootstrapping subsamples to obtain results. The findings indicate that a consistent image, a key component of website appeal, has a statistically significant direct and mediated effect (through emotional attractiveness) on the aforementioned brand outcomes. The study's limitations include the convenience sampling method and the single company client database used for the sample composition. This research contributes to the branding and website quality literature by testing five hypotheses using the Stimuli-Organism-Response theoretical approach in an underexplored context: quick-service restaurants in Mexico.

**Keywords:** Website Appeal, Branding, Emotional Attractiveness, Consistent Image, Website Quality

**JEL:** M10, M31

**Resumen.** Este artículo investiga la relación entre el atractivo del sitio web y los resultados de valor de marca (atracción hacia la marca, lealtad a la marca, relación con la marca y experiencia con la marca), considerando el efecto mediador del atractivo emocional. Se recopilaron datos de 221 clientes de un restaurante de servicio rápido en Culiacán, México, mediante una encuesta en línea distribuida vía WhatsApp, tras la navegación de los clientes

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\* *Tecnológico de Monterrey, México* [reich@tec.mx](mailto:reich@tec.mx) <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4315-9375>

† *Royal Roads University, Canada* [salvador.1trevino@royalroads.ca](mailto:salvador.1trevino@royalroads.ca) <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-8035-5964>



en el sitio web del restaurante. El estudio empleó PLS-SEM para probar las hipótesis propuestas y realizó 5,000 submuestras de bootstrapping para obtener los resultados. Los hallazgos indican que una imagen consistente, componente clave del atractivo del sitio web, tiene un efecto directo y mediado (a través del atractivo emocional) estadísticamente significativo sobre los resultados de marca mencionados. Las limitaciones del estudio incluyen el método de muestreo por conveniencia y la base de datos de clientes de una sola empresa utilizada para la composición de la muestra. Esta investigación contribuye a la literatura sobre branding y calidad de sitios web al probar cinco hipótesis usando el enfoque teórico Estímulo-Organismo-Respuesta en un contexto poco explorado: restaurantes de comida rápida, en México.

**Palabras clave:** Atractivo web, Imagen de marca, Atractivo emocional, Imagen coherente, Calidad del sitio web

## Introduction

In today's digital era, websites have become indispensable tools for businesses to communicate and represent their brands to customers. The design and overall appeal of a website can profoundly impact consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards a brand. Given the increasing importance of an online presence in shaping brand outcomes, it is crucial to understand the factors that influence website appeal and their impact on brand value.

This research paper aims to examine the relationship between consistent image and brand value outcomes and to explore the role that emotional attractiveness plays in mediating this relationship. In recent years, a growing body of literature has explored the impact of consistent image and emotional attraction on brand outcomes. Studies by Kim (2000) have shown that brand personality consistency positively impacts brand equity and consumer behavior. Kim *et al* (2020) found that a consistent brand image leads to positive consumer emotions and purchase intentions. These findings underscore the importance of a consistent image in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors towards a brand.

However, it is not only the consistency of the image that influences consumer perceptions but also the emotional attraction generated by a website. Research by Keller (1993) suggests that emotional attraction can play a mediating role in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors towards a brand.

For the purpose of this study, we define emotional attraction as the response consumers have towards a website, such as pleasure, excitement, or affection. It is crucial for a brand to create an emotional connection with

consumers, as it can enhance brand attachment and increase the likelihood of repeat purchases.

In this research paper, we aim to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between a website's consistent image and brand value by positing a theoretical formulation that includes the mediating effect of emotional attractiveness in this relationship.

An additional contribution relates to the geographic approach; we found no studies assessing these effects in the context of a quick-service restaurant in Mexico or Latin America.

Therefore, the proposed research question is: How does a website's appeal impact brand outcomes, and what is the role of emotional attractiveness in the relationship between consistent image and brand value in a quick-service restaurant in Latin America? To answer this question, we conducted a thorough review of the academic literature and empirical studies to identify the key factors that influence website appeal and their impact on brand outcomes."

This document is structured as follows: First, we explore the theory and antecedents to understand the existing knowledge on the topic, which allows us to propose research hypotheses grounded in a solid theoretical basis. Second, we describe the methods and methodology chosen for this research. We then present the results based on our empirical evidence. Finally, we offer a discussion of the results, conclusions, and potential avenues for future research.

### Literature review

We reviewed various theories related to perception and customer behavior, as our topic is related to a trigger in the form of a website's appealing look and how these sensory inputs may produce attitudes towards a company, known as Brand Outcomes (e.g., Brand Attraction or Brand Loyalty). Some theoretical frameworks were particularly relevant to our research. For example, the Theory of Reasoned Action and Theory of Planned Behavior (Yzer, 2017) aim to predict a person's intention to engage in a specific behavior at a specific time and place. However, our study focuses not on behavior but on attitudes towards the brand, limiting the applicability of this theoretical approach. We also considered the well-known Consumer Decision-Making Model (Stankevich, 2017), which involves the entire process a consumer engages in before, during,

and after a purchase. While this model aligns with consumer theory in the information-seeking phase (such as visiting a website), it does not seem adequate since we are not assessing the purchase and post-purchase processes. Therefore, we found the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory to be a better fit for the development of our research.

### *The Stimuli-Organism-Response Theory*

The Stimulus-Organism Response (SOR) model (Buxbaum, 2016) describes how organisms react to various stimuli, such as light, sound, or in this case, a website and its content. Studying these responses is crucial for understanding how organisms interact with their environment and respond to specific inputs.

Recent research has shown that the stimulus-organism response can significantly impact an organism's behavior.

Thus, it is vital for researchers to continue exploring the effects of stimuli on organismic responses to better understand how organisms interact with their environment. In the current study, this concept is used to explain how a consumer, when exposed to a website, may elicit cognitive and affective responses that lead to attitudes and behaviors toward companies in the form of brand outcomes.

### *Consistent image*

Consistent Image (CI), as defined by Muller (2008), refers to visual cues that maintain a consistent style, tone, and visual elements. These are commonly utilized in branding, advertising, and design to create a recognizable brand identity and convey specific messages to the audience.

Research indicates that consistent images significantly enhance brand recognition and recall. For instance, a study by Fournier and Avery (2011) showed that consumers are more likely to recognize and recall a brand when its visual elements, like logos, colors, and typography, are consistently applied across different media.

Consistent images are equally crucial in product design, where a uniform visual style can improve the perceived quality and value of a product.

These findings highlight the importance of a consistent image as a key factor in branding, advertising, and design. The demonstrated positive effects on brand recognition, recall, advertising effectiveness, and product design

make it a crucial variable in developing research hypotheses to explore our main research question.

### *Emotional attractiveness*

Emotional Attractiveness (EA), as defined by Batra, et al (2012), refers to the affective appeal of a person, product, or brand and is often considered a key factor in decision-making and consumer behavior. Emotions strongly influence an individual's perception of an object or person and can enhance attraction or preference towards certain targets.

Research demonstrates that emotional appeals in advertising can boost brand engagement and foster stronger brand relationships. For instance, Baumeister and Leary (1995) found that brands eliciting positive emotions, such as happiness or excitement, tend to be viewed more favorably by consumers.

Emotional appeals are also effective in product design, where the emotional allure of a product can enhance its perceived value and attractiveness. Batra and Ahtola (1991) discovered that products that evoke positive emotions are more likely to be purchased. Similarly, Berscheid and Walster (1978) observed that individuals are more attracted to others who provoke positive emotions—a principle that extends to products and brands as well.

Emotional attractiveness plays a significant role in consumer behavior, product design, and brand relationships. It can increase brand engagement, strengthen brand relationships, and add to the perceived value and appeal of products.

In the context of website navigation, a consistently positive image experience can trigger responses of emotional attractiveness and significantly impact brand outcomes.

### *Outcome: Brand Attraction*

Brand Attraction (BA) (Keller, 1993) refers to the process of attracting and engaging consumers with a brand, an essential aspect of brand building and management. Several factors contribute to brand attraction, including product quality, brand personality, brand image, and emotional appeals (Aaker, 1996).

Product quality is a significant factor in brand attraction, especially relevant to the website of a company. Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) identified

product quality as a key determinant of brand loyalty and consumer behavior. Further research by Swaminathan, et al (2007) demonstrated that consumers are more likely to be attracted to brands that offer high-quality products and services.

Brand personality, defined as the set of human-like traits associated with a brand, also plays a crucial role in attracting consumers. Aaker (1997) discovered that brands with a consistent and appealing personality are more likely to engage consumers.

Brand image, or the consumers' perception of a brand, further influences brand attraction. Keller (1993) noted that a consistent and positive brand image contributes to brand loyalty and increases consumer attraction to the brand.

Emotional appeals in advertising and marketing significantly impact brand attraction. Batra and Ahtola (1991) found that emotional appeals can enhance consumer engagement and foster stronger brand relationships.

The literature indicates that brand attraction is a pivotal component of brand management, influenced by factors such as product quality, brand personality, brand image, and emotional appeals, which together draw consumers to a brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Given this, brand outcomes are a natural response to the visual and emotional stimuli mediated by the web. Therefore, their inclusion as outcomes in the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model is appropriate.

#### *Outcome: Brand loyalty*

Brand Loyalty (BL) (Oliver, 1980) refers to consumers' repeated purchasing behavior toward a particular brand and is a key element of marketing and brand management. Various factors contribute to brand loyalty, including product quality, brand image, customer satisfaction, and emotional appeals (Malthouse et al., 2013).

Research has consistently shown that product quality is a significant factor in brand loyalty. Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) identified product quality as a key determinant of brand loyalty and consumer behavior, with consumers more likely to remain loyal to brands that offer high-quality products and services, including compelling websites.

Brand image, or the perception of a brand in the minds of consumers, also influences brand loyalty. Keller (1993) found that a consistent and positive

brand image is likely to foster loyalty among consumers, contributing significantly to their continued patronage.

Emotional appeals in advertising and marketing also play a crucial role in brand loyalty. Batra and Ahtola (1991) demonstrated that emotional appeals can enhance consumer engagement and foster stronger brand relationships, including brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty is a fundamental aspect of marketing and brand management. Studies have established that product quality, brand image, customer satisfaction, and emotional appeals are all integral to cultivating consumer loyalty. Therefore, it is crucial for businesses and organizations to consider these factors in developing and managing their brands to enhance brand loyalty.

### *Outcome: Brand relationship*

Brand Relationship (BR) refers to the bond or connection between a consumer and a brand, playing a vital role in marketing and brand management (Homburg et al., 2017). Key factors that contribute to the development of a brand relationship include trust, commitment, and satisfaction (Chen, 2017).

Research highlights trust as a crucial element in building a brand relationship. Morgan and Hunt (1994) found that trust significantly influences consumer behavior and brand loyalty, with consumers more likely to engage with brands they trust.

Commitment, defined as the level of investment or attachment a consumer has towards a brand, is another critical factor.

Understanding the dynamics of brand relationships is essential for effective marketing and brand management. Therefore, it is important for businesses and organizations to consider these factors in their strategies, as they are also pertinent to our proposed research model.

### *Outcome: Brand experience*

Brand Experience (BE) encompasses all interactions, perceptions, and feelings a consumer has with a brand, covering every touchpoint, such as product use, advertising, packaging, customer service, and in this case, website navigation (Brakus et al., 2009).

Recent research underscores the critical role of brand experience in influencing consumer behavior and brand loyalty. Elalfy (2025) demonstrated that positive brand experiences enhance consumer loyalty and that a mediation on satisfaction promote positive word-of-mouth (Reich-Lopez and Terán, 2022). Their findings indicate that consumers are more likely to stay loyal to brands that deliver positive experiences, fostering stronger emotional connections with the brand and being more likely to promote those brands.

Furthermore, Kim and song (2019) observed that brand experience influences consumer emotions and behaviors by shaping perceptions and evaluations. They found that consumers are more inclined to make purchases and remain loyal to brands that offer positive experiences, suggesting that brand experience can serve as a differentiator and provide a competitive advantage, particularly through the website as a stimulus.

These findings highlight the significance of brand experience as a vital component of consumer behavior and a relevant brand outcome. Given its importance, brand experience is a valuable variable to include in our research model.

## **Research model**

Based on the S-O-R framework and the theoretical relations previously stated we come up with the following research hypotheses:

H1: Consistent Image (CI) has a direct and positive influence on Emotional Attractiveness (EA).

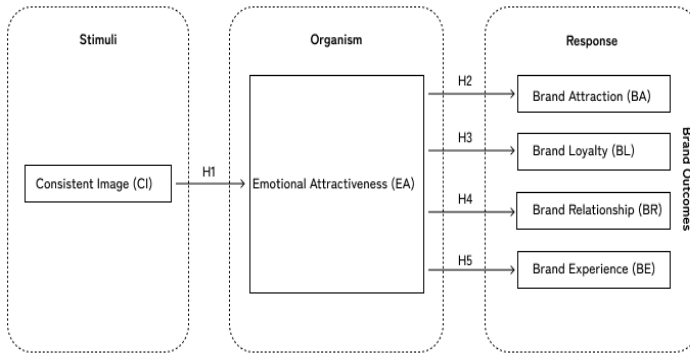
H2: Consistent Image (CI) positively influences Brand Attraction (BA) via Emotional Attractiveness (EA).

H3: Consistent Image (CI) positively influences Brand Loyalty (BL) via Emotional Attractiveness (EA).

H4: Consistent Image (CI) positively influences Brand Relationship (BR) via Emotional Attractiveness (EA).

H5: Consistent Image (CI) positively influences Brand Experience (BE) via Emotional Attractiveness (EA).

**Fig 1. Research framework.**



## Methodology

### *Data collection and sample characteristics*

Data for this research were collected through an online survey. A mobile phone contact customer-based app was used to reach out to potential respondents, debrief them, and obtain their consent. The survey was distributed via email and WhatsApp to all participants from a client database of a quick-service restaurant in Sinaloa, Mexico. Respondents were encouraged to visit and navigate the business's website before answering the questionnaire. The total database contained 224 contacts, all of whom were invited to participate. After collecting the responses, researchers cleaned the database to minimize response bias, resulting in 221 valid cases for the study. This represents a participation rate of 98.6% of the total database.

### *Measures*

The questionnaire was constructed using previously validated scales. Items measuring Consistent Image (CI) and Emotional Attractiveness (EA) were adopted from the seminal scale development work by Loiacono et al. (2002). Constructs such as Brand Attraction (BA), Brand Loyalty (BL), Brand Relationship (BR), and Brand Experience (BE) were drawn from Khan and Rahman (2016). The instrument was then adapted to the Spanish language through a process of back-translation to ensure accuracy.

## Results

### *Descriptive Statistic*

In table 1 we can appreciate the descriptive statistics of each item tested on the sample as well as the redaction of each question.

**Table 1:** Item's descriptive statistic, mean, median, standard deviation

Item	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kurtosis
EA1 I feel happy when I use the Web site	5.694	6	1	7	1.63	0.544
EA2 I feel cheerful when I use the Web site	5.674	6	1	7	1.658	0.363
EA3 I feel sociable when I use the Web site.	5.751	7	1	7	1.749	0.652
BA1 A lot of stuff attracts me to visit this website	5.15	6	1	7	2.027	-0.764
BA2 It has a unique attraction which makes me spend a lot of time on the website	5.845	7	1	7	1.553	1.025
BA3 Among many others, I always go to visit this website first	5.409	6	1	7	1.72	0.108
BL1 It is on top of my priority list to obtain information, resource and service (or product) from this website	5.181	6	1	7	2.006	-0.661
BL2 Among many other websites of the same kind, I still keep the access rate of this website	5.124	6	1	7	2.006	-0.717
BL3 I feel like a loyal consumer of this website	5.244	6	1	7	1.994	-0.517
BR1 I get used to life with this website	4.668	5	1	7	2.027	-1.122
BR2 I'd like to offer my personal information for its development	5.109	6	1	7	2.034	-0.8
BR3 I'd like to become a member of this website (or feel happy to do so)	5.855	7	1	7	1.766	0.819
BR4 I'd like to have my own space on this website (home page, blog, etc.)	4.907	5	1	7	2.064	-0.864
BE1 I feel novel and interesting when browsing the page	5.793	7	1	7	1.669	1.026
BE2 It's exciting to visit this website	5.508	6	1	7	1.664	0.24
BE3 Surfing on this website is a pleasant experience	5.731	6	1	7	1.66	0.766
CI1 The Web site projects an image consistent with the company's image.	6.073	7	1	7	1.677	2.107
CI2 The Web site fits with my image of the company.	6.145	7	1	7	1.703	3.035

## *Structural Equation Modeling*

The method used for this research is partial least square equation modelling (PLS-SEM) performed by PLS-Smart software. This technique is frequently used in social science research, as in many cases, the data will not suit a normal distribution assumption for the use of other parametric techniques, such as linear regression. PLS-SEM allows testing an hypothesis with other resources, such as bootstrapping, in order to overcome this limitation on the data.

## *Measurement model*

Convergent validity or reflective constructs were assessed using Cronbach's alpha, average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR) and factor loading. The suggested thresholds for the Cronbach's alpha and CR are values above 0.7, while for AVE, it's above 0.5. The suggested value for item factor loading is above 0.6 accordingly to Hair et al. (2010). All elements in the measurement model meets the suggested thresholds (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Internal reliability and measurement model**

Construct	Load	Cronbach's $\alpha$	AVE	CR
Emotional Attractiveness (EA)		0.982	0.965	0.988
EA1	0.988			
EA2	0.986			
EA3	0.973			
Consistent Image (CI)		0.977	0.957	0.985
CI1	0.967			
CI	0.984			
CI3	0.983			
Brand Attraction (BA)		0.875	0.798	0.922
BA1	0.906			
BA2	0.927			
BA3	0.844			
Brand Relationship (BR)		0.809	0.64	0.875
BR1	0.641			
BR2	0.820			
BR3	0.872			
BR4	0.846			
Brand Loyalty (BL)		0.916	0.856	0.947
BL1	0.935			
BL2	0.941			
BL3	0.899			
Brand Experience (BE)		0.93	0.877	0.955
BE1	0.928			
BE2	0.935			
BE3	0.946			

*Model fit*

The measurement model returned a good model fit. (Chi Square 813.38, SRMR 0.073, and NFI 0.838). The recommended threshold for SRMR are values from 0.05 to 0.08. In this case, the obtained measure for the model was 0.073; regarding NFI, the recommended value is above 0.9, and the measure obtained was 0.838 NFI, slightly below the suggested value by Hair et al. (2010).

**Table 3: Model fit index**

Statistic	Value	Threshold
SRMR	0.073	Values from 0.05 and 0.08
NFI	0.838	Value > 0.9

The discriminant validity was also supported since the AVE value of the study constructs was greater than the corresponding values of average shared variance (ASV) and maximum shared variance (MSV) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The correlation coefficients among study variables were also less than the square root of the AVE (Table 4).

**Table 4: Discriminant validity**

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.- Emotional Attractiveness (EA)	0.983					
2.- Brand Attraction (BA)	0.652	0.893				
3.- Brand Loyalty (BL)	0.574	0.729	0.925			
4.- Brand Relationship (BR)	0.612	0.736	0.82	0.8		
5.- Brand Experience (BE)	0.74	0.912	0.659	0.705	0.936	
6.- Consistent Image (CI)	0.775	0.647	0.526	0.597	0.725	0.978

Collinearity was also assessed using variance inflation factor (VIF) getting acceptable results, as construct values were in range of recommended values < 3 (Hair et al., 2016), as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Collinearity statistic (Variance inflation factor)**

Variance inflation factor (VIF)	
Emotional Attractiveness (EA)	1.00
Brand Attraction (BA)	1.00

## Website Appeal's impact on Brand Outcomes

Brand Loyalty (BL)	1.00
Brand Relationship (BR)	1.00
Brand Experience (BE)	1.00

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### *Hypothesis Support*

The structural path significance was generated through PLS-Smart's Bootstrapping algorithm. In this procedure, a large number of subsamples (5,000 in this case) are taken from the original sample with replacement to give bootstrap standard errors, which, in turn, gives approximate T-values for significance testing of the structural path in a 95% confidence interval (CI). The bootstrap result approximates the normality of data (Wong, 2013).

Regarding hypothesis testing. H1 suggested that consistent image (CI) has a positive and direct influence to emotional attractiveness (EA) result that was supported ( $\beta=0.775$ ;  $t=15.07$ ;  $p<0.000$ ). H2 suggests that consistent image (CI) positively influences brand attraction (BA) via emotional attractiveness (EA), which was supported ( $\beta=0.506$ ;  $t=7.769$ ;  $p<0.000$ ). H3 suggests that consistent image (CI) positively influences brand loyalty (BL) via emotional attractiveness (EA), which was supported ( $\beta=0.445$ ;  $t=7.549$ ;  $p<0.000$ ). H4 suggests that consistent image (CI) positively influences brand relationship (BR) via emotional attractiveness (EA), which was supported ( $\beta=0.475$ ;  $t=7.493$ ;  $p<0.000$ ). H5 suggests that consistent image (CI) positively influences brand loyalty (BL) via emotional attractiveness (EA), which was supported ( $\beta=0.573$ ;  $t=8.442$ ;  $p<0.000$ ).

The coefficient of determination of the mediation variable EA is  $R^2=60.1\%$ , while the ones regarding the construct on brand outcomes reported a  $R^2=42.6\%$  for brand attraction,  $R^2=33.0\%$  for brand loyalty,  $R^2=37.5\%$  for brand relation and  $R^2=42.6\%$  for brand experience. A Summary of hypotheses testing is shown in table 6:

**Table 6:** *Hypotheses result summary.*

Hypothesis	Effect	T-statistic	P-Value	Result
H1	CI -> EA	15.07	0.001	Supported
H2	CI -> EA->BA	7.769	0.001	Supported
H3	CI -> EA->BL	7.549	0.001	Supported

H4	CI -> EA->BR	7.493	0.001	Supported
H5	CI -> EA->BE	8.442	0.001	Supported

*Discussion*

The findings of this study corroborate previous research on the importance of consistent image in branding, advertising, and design, highlighting their role in enhancing product recognition, recall, and design (Fournier & Avery, 2011). Our results underscore the pivotal role of emotional attractiveness in influencing brand outcomes, such as brand attraction, brand loyalty, brand relationship, and brand experience. This aligns with prior studies on emotional attractiveness in consumer behavior, product design, and relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Berscheid & Walster, 1978). This study further enriches this body of knowledge by demonstrating the mediating role of emotional attractiveness in the relationship between consistent image and brand outcomes, particularly within the context of website appeal.

*Theoretical Implications*

The present study offers significant theoretical implications for understanding the dynamics between consistent image, emotional attractiveness, and brand outcomes within the context of website appeal. By integrating the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory with concepts from branding and consumer behavior research, this study enriches the application of the SOR theory to the digital environment, providing a deeper insight into the complex interplay of these elements.

Firstly, the research extends the SOR theory’s application to the digital realm by examining the roles of consistent image as a stimulus, emotional attractiveness as an organismic response, and brand outcomes as the resulting responses. This extension underscores the relevance of the SOR theory in explaining consumer attitudes and behaviors online, highlighting its utility in digital consumer research.

Secondly, the study illuminates the crucial mediating role of emotional attractiveness in the relationship between consistent image and brand outcomes. It demonstrates how emotional attractiveness acts as a pivotal link, connecting consistent image with brand attraction, brand loyalty, brand relationship, and brand experience. This finding advances our understanding

of the mechanisms through which consistent image can influence brand outcomes, emphasizing the importance of emotional appeal in branding strategies.

Thirdly, by integrating key concepts such as consistent image, emotional attractiveness, and various brand outcomes into a comprehensive theoretical model, the study enhances our holistic understanding of the factors influencing brand outcomes in a digital context. By analyzing these relationships within the SOR framework, the research contributes valuable insights into how these elements interact to shape consumer perceptions and behaviors online.

Finally, the study highlights the importance of emotional appeal in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors online. By demonstrating the significant impact of emotional attractiveness on various brand outcomes, this research emphasizes the need for further exploration into how emotions influence online consumer behavior. It suggests that harnessing emotional appeal could optimize brand outcomes in the digital environment, encouraging researchers to delve deeper into this aspect of consumer studies.

### *Managerial Implications*

This study provides practical implications for managers and decision-makers involved in website design, digital marketing, and brand management. Understanding the relationships between consistent image, emotional attractiveness, and brand outcomes in the context of website appeal allows practitioners to develop more effective strategies for enhancing brand performance in the digital environment.

First, the findings highlight the importance of maintaining a consistent image across all aspects of a company's online presence. Managers should ensure that the design elements of their websites—such as logos, colors, typography, and layout—align with the overall brand identity. This consistency helps forge a strong and cohesive brand image, which, in turn, can enhance emotional attractiveness and improve brand outcomes (Fournier & Avery, 2011).

Second, it is crucial for managers to create emotionally appealing website experiences. This can be achieved by incorporating elements that evoke positive emotions, such as visually appealing images, engaging content, and user-friendly navigation. Enhancing the emotional attractiveness of their website can help companies establish stronger connections with their

customers and improve various brand outcomes, including brand attraction, brand loyalty, brand relationship, and brand experience (Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Berscheid & Walster, 1978; Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Third, managers should consider every aspect of the online customer journey, including website design, social media presence, and customer support, to ensure a consistent and emotionally appealing experience across all touchpoints. Adopting this holistic approach will help reinforce brand values, strengthen customer relationships, and ultimately drive positive brand outcomes.

## **Conclusions and future research**

This research explored the mediating role of emotional attractiveness in the relationship between consistent image and brand outcomes within the context of website appeal. The findings offer empirical evidence of the significant impact of a consistent image on emotional attractiveness, which in turn positively influences brand attraction, brand loyalty, brand relationships, and brand experiences. The results further highlight the importance of emotional appeal in the digital environment and underscore the need for a comprehensive approach to brand management.

The theoretical implications of this investigation enhance our understanding of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory in a digital context, particularly the mediating role of emotional attractiveness between a consistent image and brand outcomes. Additionally, the insights provide practical implications for managers and decision-makers in website design, digital marketing, and brand management, emphasizing the importance of a consistent image and leveraging emotional attractiveness to boost brand performance.

Future inquiries could benefit from exploring additional variables that influence brand loyalty, such as customer satisfaction, trust, and commitment. Integrating these variables into the existing model or developing specific research questions around their impact on brand outcomes could yield a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive brand success in the digital environment.

However, this investigation has limitations, including the use of convenience sampling, which may affect the generalizability of the results.

Additionally, the sample was drawn from a single company's client database, suggesting that future inquiries should consider diversifying sampling sources to enhance representativeness.

By examining the interplay between consistent image, emotional attractiveness, and brand outcomes in the context of website appeal, this research provides valuable insights and practical recommendations for effectively leveraging digital platforms to enhance brand performance. Addressing these research gaps and building on the findings, further studies can continue to enrich the literature on brand outcomes and offer actionable insights for both academia and industry practitioners.

**Acknowledgements:** We extend our deepest gratitude to the business owner who generously allowed us to conduct data collection in his restaurant. We respect his request for anonymity and sincerely appreciate his support in facilitating our research.

*Declaration of interest statement:*

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

*Declaration of AI use:*

The authors used the generative AI assistant Claude (Anthropic, Claude Opus 4.8) solely for accessory tasks, specifically language and style editing and the formatting and verification of references. All AI-assisted output was reviewed, validated, and verified by the authors, who assume full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the content. Artificial intelligence was not used to generate, fabricate, or falsify data, results, analyses, conclusions, references, citations, or images, nor to produce any substantive section of the manuscript presented as original human work.

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