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Exploring the Role of Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction in Shaping Loyalty for Herbal Cosmetic Products

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Abstract **- Brand Image (BRIM) and Customer Satisfaction (CUSF) are important determinants of Customer Loyalty (CULOY), especially in sectors like herbal cosmetics, where consumer trust & perception are crucial. A good BRIM not only attracts customers but also promotes satisfaction, resulting in long-term loyalty. This research looks at the relationships between BRIM, CUSF, and CULOY in the Malappuram district herbal cosmetics industry. To obtain data, a standardised questionnaire was sent to 384 herbal product customers.**

Analysis with SPSS and AMOS revealed a significant positive relationship between "BRIM" and "CUSF" ($\beta = 0.893$, $p < 0.05$), as well as between "BRIM" and "CULOY" ($\beta = 0.690$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, "CUSF" had a notable impact on CULOY ($\beta = 0.707$, $p < 0.05$) and acted as a partial mediator between BRIM and "CULOY" ($\beta = 0.251$, $p = 0.017$). The findings underscore the importance of building a strong BRIM and enhancing CUSF to cultivate lasting CULOY in the highly competitive herbal cosmetics market.

Keywords: **BRIM, CULOY, Herbal Cosmetics, CUSF**

I. INTRODUCTION

Cosmetics have been playing an important part in human history for thousands of years, going back to early civilisations, Cosmetics may be traced back to the Egyptians, who used natural oils and lotions to preserve their skin from the hard environment, as well as washing and scenting their bodies, which was typically done by Roman slaves. As civilisations matured, the use of cosmetics became more widespread, with both men and women recognising the advantages and need of these goods. The importance of Cosmetics in human existence grew throughout time, and their shapes and functions evolved to satisfy society's changing wants and aspirations. The fast growth of cosmeceuticals, or cosmetic-pharmaceutical hybrids, signified a major progress in the cosmetic business after 1990. These products were created to promote both health and attractiveness by modifying the skin's biological texture and function, with the promise of more than simple surface changes (Süt et al., 2020). However, as the advertising of these goods escalated, customers often fell victim to marketing strategies, sometimes overlooking the relevance of natural components (Hien et al., 2020). Over time, it became apparent that while cosmetics are essential, their benefits are most effective when derived from natural sources.

Herbal cosmetics often include plant-based substances with nourishing effects, such as saffron (kesar), ashwagandha, as well as sandalwood (chandan). Consumers value these products not just for their effectiveness, but also for their commitment to a pure and holistic approach to beauty (Nikbin et al., 2022). Herbal medicines include a vast variety of products derived from both organic and inorganic components, demonstrating a rich legacy of natural skincare. In terms of marketing, BRIM, customer happiness, and loyalty intention are all important influences on consumer behaviour and corporate results. These aspects have been subjected to extensive investigation in a wide range of industries, including the cosmetics industry, both on a global scale and in specific national contexts. With a particular emphasis on the herbal cosmetics business, the current study analyses the intricate connections that exist between BRIM, CUSF, and the desire to remain loyal to a brand. The connection between these qualities and the herbal cosmetics business calls for more investigation, despite the fact that these characteristics are frequently employed as benchmarks for measuring the performance of corporations and the effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

An essential component that plays a big role in influencing the choices that consumers make is the BRIM, which may be characterised as the subjective image consumers have for a product or service. As a substitute, relying just on BRIM does not ensure that the consumer will be satisfied with the services they get. When it comes to having an effect on the BRIM that customers have, CUSF is the biggest significance. A client who is pleased with the service they get is more likely to have a favourable impression on the brand, which in return has the impact of enhancing the consumer's faithfulness to the company (Alverdi, 2017). In order to establish a solid and favorable image for the company, it is essential to make certain that the clients are happy with the services they get. This is highlighted by the interaction between the two.

Furthermore, clients who are pleased with the service they get are more likely to demonstrate loyalty via actions such as making additional purchases and positively recommending the business to others through word of mouth (Tiasanty & Sitio, 2020). According to the results of the research, there is a substantial correlation between satisfaction and loyalty. This shows that the degree of contentment that consumers feel is a crucial role in the establishment of brand loyalty from potential customers. To a certain degree, however, the extent to which the image of a brand effects the pleasure and loyalty of customers, especially in the area of herbal cosmetics, is a topic that is still open to investigation (Danaei & Sourani, 2016).

Several studies have shown that a robust BRIM may have a favourable impact on the desire of customers to remain loyal to a particular brand. This is particularly true when the consumers perceive the brand to provide advantages that are social, symbolic, or functional. A prime example of this would be the fact that customers are more likely to stay loyal to a firm if they believe that their involvement with that brand affords them a considerable number of societal advantages (Jacksen & Putra, 2021). Moreover, a significant association exists between CUSF as well as brand loyalty. This is because delighted clients are more inclined to maintain loyalty to a certain firm. Given that the relationship among various elements in the herbal cosmetics sector remains inadequately explored, more study is necessary to fully understand the complexities of these relationships.

The key goal of this research is to ascertain the sentiments of delighted consumers of a certain cosmetics company about the brand, as well as their intentions towards brand loyalty. The previously mentioned brand is renowned for its utilisation of botanical ingredients and is preferred by consumers who are mindful of their financial circumstances. It is a substantial repository of information that provides insights into the intricate dynamics of consumer behaviour. Consumers make significant choices when selecting a cosmetic brand, since it influences their loyalty and (Al Kurdi et al., 2020) satisfaction. The cosmetic company struggles to establish a strong reputation or get repeat business if it fails to meet client expectations. This is especially evident in the highly competitive cosmetics industry, where several competitors for consumer attention via diverse pricing methods, marketing approaches, and advertising initiatives. Considering that cosmetic firms are increasingly appealing to both genders, the significance of BRIM as a distinguishing factor cannot be overstated in the present market landscape. The market for cosmetics is consistently expanding due to the high value of physical attractiveness and beauty in contemporary culture. To attain success, new market entrants must traverse an environment, where customer happiness and BRIM are paramount. To distinguish their goods from competition, firms must prioritise using the advantages of a robust BRIM.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Brand Image (BRIM)

The concept of BRIM is essential for marketing since it significantly influences consumer perceptions and sentiments towards a brand. Several scholars have offered definitions and perspectives on the subject of BRIM and its influence on consumer behaviour (Dam & Dam, 2021). An image is defined as, "the collection of views, thoughts, along with impressions that a person holds concerning an object" in the dictionary. Image, according to this definition, is subjective since it depends on the thoughts and feelings that consumers have about a brand after interacting with it.

Expanding on this, (Martin & Nasibm, 2021) BRIM may be defined as the aggregation of beliefs and perceptions that consumers have towards a brand. These concepts and perceptions are formed by the associations individuals create with the brand in their individual recollections. This perspective posits that the term of BRIM encompasses not only an isolated contact, but rather a collection of associations and recollections retained inside the customer's memory. This underscores the importance of the cognitive including emotional connections customers possess with the brand, influenced by their prior experiences and the advertising campaigns they have engaged with (Sanny et al., 2020) Furthermore, a BRIM may be defined as an assemblage of connections, often organised in a systematic fashion. These connections are not only arbitrary ideas; they are organised perceptions that customers form gradually, frequently connected to the brand's characteristics, principles, and image.

(Arif, 2019) BRIM is the collection of characteristics and connections that buyers link to the brand name. This concept emphasises the brand name as a symbol that evokes many features and connections in the consumer's mind. The brand name acts as a mental shortcut, eliciting a variety of ideas, feelings, and expectations depending on what the brand symbolises. Biel sees the brand name as a key component of BRIM, with the ability to conjure a variety of meanings as well as experiences.

In contrast, the practical part of BRIM should be emphasized, and it should be stated that "an effective BRIM enables consumers to comprehend how their requirements, preferences, and aspirations can be fulfilled by utilizing a specific brand." This notion places a focus on the pragmatic role of BRIM, which is to guide people to understand how a company could fill their own requirements. According to Hsieh and his colleagues, the image of a brand is very significant in the process of differentiation, as it assists consumers in distinguishing one firm from its competitors. The likelihood that consumers will choose a particular brand over others, that are in competition with it increases in proportion to the degree to which the BRIM is distinctive and convincing. Furthermore, they argue that a strong BRIM "increases the likelihood of consumers acquiring the brand," stressing the obvious connection that exists between

consumers' perceptions of a brand and the decisions that they make.

2.2. Customer Satisfaction (CUSF)

The level of satisfaction among customers is a key measure of how well a product or service meets or exceeds the demands of the consumer (Al Kurdi et al., 2020). CUSF is a crucial metric that demonstrates a business's capacity to meet client expectations. Additionally, it has a high correlation with customer retention, brand loyalty, and overall business performance. (Davidians & Gelard, 2017). The main element influencing a customer's level of satisfaction with a product or service is how well the actual experience it provides meets the customer's expectations. Numerous elements affect CUSF, such as the calibre of the company's overall services, the experience of completing a purchase, the degree of participation shown by sales people, and the quality of the product. Many factors, such as the particular product feature, the convenience of the purchasing procedure, the professionalism of the sales staff, and the assistance offered after the sale, may influence the degree of satisfaction that a customer has. Each of these elements influences the general degree of pleasure, which in turn influences the possibility that customers will return and refer the brand to others (Khairawati, 2020).

One of the most important factors influencing the client's level of satisfaction is how well the product or service really performs in relation to the consumer's expectation. When a product meets or beyond the firm's expectations, there is a greater chance that the consumer will be pleased and have a positive opinion of the brand (Mirabi & Farahmad,2017). Conversely, (Lim et al., 2020) A product's failure to meet consumers' expectations might cause them to feel disappointed, which can lead to emotions of discontent and the potential for bad word-of-mouth to spread. CUSF is a dynamic metric that may fluctuate over time due to things like shifting consumer expectations, changing market circumstances, and changes in the options accessible to customers. Hence, it is important for organisations to consistently oversee and enhance customer happiness via the collection of feedback, analysis of consumer data, and implementation of required modifications to their goods and services. By using these strategies, firms may strengthen their competitive edge, cultivate consumer loyalty, and achieve sustained financial success. (El-Adly, 2019).

Furthermore, consumer happiness is intricately connected to client loyalty. Customers who are content are more inclined to make repeat purchases, endorse the company to others, and demonstrate a greater degree of brand loyalty. Loyalty is essential for continuing corporate growth, particularly in competitive marketplaces where retaining customers is critical for preserving market share. Companies that place a high importance on ensuring CUSF are in a better position to establish long-term relationships with their consumers, which is ultimately results in higher customer lifetime value and enhanced profitability.

2.3. Customer Loyalty (CULOY)

CULOY is essential to a business's long-term success because loyal customers are more inclined to buy from the firm again, tell others about the brand, and refuse to buy from competitors (Zhou et al., 2021). Loyalty intention is determined by a range of elements, such as psychological, economic, technical/functional, & contractual rationales. Psychological elements include the emotional bond that a consumer develops with a brand, which is often influenced by favourable encounters, brand principles, and personal alignment with the brand. For instance, a consumer who has a deep emotional connection with a brand may demonstrate unwavering devotion, even when presented with cheaper alternatives or competing items. Economic factors relate to the perceived value of the product or service, including pricing, discounts, and overall cost-effectiveness. Customers who perceive a brand as offering superior value for money are more likely to remain loyal, especially if the brand consistently meets or exceeds their expectations (Dülek & Aydin, 2020). Technical or functional elements pertain to the product's efficacy, dependability, and user-friendliness. Products that continually demonstrate superior performance and effectively fulfil the functional requirements of consumers are likely to cultivate CULOY.

In the current fiercely competitive industry, the significance of client loyalty has increased significantly. (Jafarova & Tolon, 2022) In light of the wide range of options accessible to customers, companies must distinguish themselves not just by their goods and services, but also by the complete customer experience (Vazifehdust & Farahmand, 2017). Companies who are able to establish and sustain CULOY are more likely to prosper in the long run. This is because they can depend on a loyal and dedicated client base that generates constant income and profitability. By understanding and effectively managing these elements, companies can create a powerful brand presence, satisfy their customers, and build long-lasting relationships that contribute to their overall success in the marketplace.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

BRIM is a critical component of consumer perception, reflecting how a brand is perceived and remembered by its audience. According to (Gaberamos & Pasaribu, 2022) BRIM refers to the collective impression of a brand that is shaped by customer experiences and information. Brand perception refers to the collective connections and opinions that people have about a brand, which directly impact their choices when making purchases.

Supardin & Tamansiswa, (2022) Further, BRIM is a representation of both customer comprehension and confidence in the brand. This impression is formed by direct contacts with the brand, including its goods, services, and marketing messages. (Indratno et al., 2021) enumerates several factors that contribute to the establishment of BRIM. The first dimension refers to the benefit of brand association, where positive features and advantages of a brand fulfil

customer requirements and aspirations. This dimension highlights the significance of how customers perceive the value of a product or service in influencing a favourable brand reputation.

Upamannyu & Sankpal, (2014) The historical development of cosmetics throughout many civilisations, showing how they have changed from being luxurious old indulgences to necessary goods. Their art highlights how important and necessary cosmetics have always been to investigate the history, uses, and advantages of herbal cosmetics with an emphasis on plants, shrubs, roots, and leaves. They make the case for the rising significance of herbal cosmetics in the modern day and emphasise the benefits of using herbal components. This study looks on teens' perceptions and levels of cosmetic usage. The survey dispels myths about the general college student population and offers information on views and cosmetic use habits.

Majeed et al., (2022) emphasises the significance of BRIM in retaining a competitive advantage and attaining sustainability. According to the findings of a study of 200 consumers conducted using SPSS, brand impression is the most important element affecting purchasing choices, followed by brand familiarity & loyalty.

Muralidhar et al., (2023) The cosmetics sector has seen substantial evolution in recent decades, transitioning from luxury to need. This literature study investigates the emergence of herbal cosmetics in reaction to the negative effects of chemical goods. It investigates the evolution of customer perceptions and attitudes towards herbal cosmetics using a variety of statistical studies. The impact of customers' brand experiences on customer equity as well as lifetime value, specifically via social media. Their research demonstrates that both utilitarian and hedonic values have an influence on brand experiences, which subsequently effect attachment to brands, trust, and equity drivers. Their findings highlight the influence that social media has on increasing consumer justice by building a relationship between brand loyalty and trust, which ultimately results in a greater customer lifetime value.

Supardin et al., (2023) conducted an investigation on the link between the citizens of Yogyakarta's intentions to purchase herbal medicine and three different factors: price, the image of the brand, and trust. Based on the results of the study, the most significant factors in deciding whether or not a consumer intends to make a purchase were the price, the degree to which they trusted the brand, & the image of the brand. One hundred people took part in the study, which used a quantitative methodology. SPSS was used in the setting of multiple linear regression analysis. Another factor that emphasises the importance of these factors in consumers' decision-making process is the fact that they influence consumers' intentions to make purchases collectively.

Research conducted (Zephaniah et al., 2020) highlights the significance of guest experiences in shaping the levels of enjoyment, equality, and loyalty within the hotel sector. Research indicates that emotional experiences, particularly the sensation of emotional fulfilment, significantly influence happiness; however, cognitive experiences, including the capacity for reasoned assessment, have a stronger correlation with equality. Social and behavioral variables are seen as vital contributors to diversity and equality. Even while equity does play a function in mediating the link between pleasure and loyalty, it is particularly notable that joy has a more substantial influence on CULOY than equity does.

The research conducted (Vishnoi et al., 2019) explores the role that advertising intelligence (AI) plays as a significant component in the entire operation of a business. By doing so, it demonstrates that artificial intelligence improves the success of businesses by having an impact on the interactions, satisfaction, and loyalty of individual customers. The relevance of efforts that are driven by data in the process of maintaining a competitive advantage is brought into focus by this phenomenon.

Cuong, (2020) was to evaluate the ways in which the credibility of a brand including the perceived value of the brand in the fashion sector influence the pleasure of consumers and their willingness to make a purchase. Febriati & Respati, (2020) Credibility of a brand is a vital component in the process of boosting customer happiness as well as perceived value, which in turn has a significant influence on the intention to make a purchase choice. boosting consumer happiness and perceived value is a necessary step in the process. These findings are in line with more comprehensive theories of consumer behaviour, which demonstrate that the amount of long-term customer participation is determined by both cognitive and emotional evaluations of a brand.

In the meanwhile, (Lee & Park, 2019) places particular focus on the relevance of marketing communication strategies in the banking business with regard to the promotion of CULOY. On the other hand, direct marketing has been shown to be less effective in predicting the loyalty of customers. This suggests that financial institutions that are active in developing nations need to place a greater emphasis on marketing communication tactics that are more traditional in order to establish stronger relationships with their clients.

3.1. Research Gap

The literature review highlights a critical gap in understanding the specific mechanisms by which BRIM impacts consumer satisfaction and loyalty intentions. While there is consensus on the importance of BRIM in influencing consumer behaviour, particularly in shaping perceptions and driving purchase decisions, the exact processes remain underexplored. The direct impacts of BRIM on CULOY are the subject of a great number of research; however, the possible involvement of CUSF as a mediator in this connection is investigated by a much smaller number of studies. Because of this, there is a vacuum in our knowledge of how contentment may turn a favourable BRIM into loyal customer behaviour.

In addition, the majority of study tends to concentrate on certain businesses, such as the fashion industry, the hotel industry, and the cosmetics industry, which restricts the results' capacity to be generalised. In addition, there is a dearth of comprehensive research that investigates the ways in which the link between BRIM, satisfaction, and loyalty intentions is influenced by changing market dynamics. These dynamics include the impact of social media, data-driven marketing methods, and the expectations of contemporary consumers. It is important for future study to explore the mediating impact of customer pleasure as well as the ways in which new elements, such as technical breakthroughs or cultural transformations, affect the relationship between BRIM and CULOY across many different sectors.

3.2. Problem Statement

Companies are placing a greater focus on creating a strong and positive BRIM in order to compete in today's very competitive market. In conclusion, the aim is to increase CUSF and CULOY. However, it is still not entirely known how exactly a brand's image affects customer happiness and loyalty intentions. Further investigation is necessary on the complex nature of the link among BRIM, CUSF, and CULOY. Brand loyalty is not an easy connection to cultivate, even if many companies are making efforts in this direction. Additionally, the potential mediating effect of customer happiness in linking the impression of the brand to the desire to stay loyal to the firm is not well described.

3.3. Aim & Objectives

This study aims to address the gap by investigating how "Brand Image" directly impacts "CUSF", and how both "Brand Image" and "CUSF" influence "CULOY". Understanding these dynamics is crucial for businesses looking to enhance customer retention and foster long-term loyalty. Through a thorough analysis, this research seeks to provide insights into the role of CUSF in shaping the connection between BRIM and CULOY, offering valuable guidance for marketers aiming to optimize brand strategies for sustainable CULOY. The research is structured to satisfy below objectives:

- To analyse the influence of BRIM on CUSF.
- To explore how BRIM Drive's CULOY.
- To assess the effect of CUSF on fostering CULOY.
- To examine the mediating role of CUSF in the relationship between BRIM and CULOY Intention.

Hypothesis

- Hypo1: BRIM have positive impact on CUSF.
- Hypo2: BRIM positively influences CULOY.
- Hypo3: CUSF positively effects the CULOY.
- Hypo4: "CUSF mediates the relationship between BRIM and CULOY."

Conceptual Framework

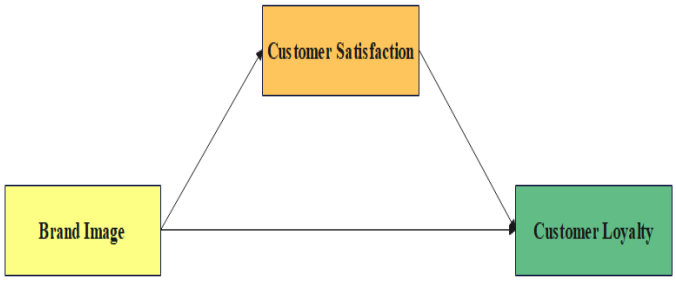

Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study used a causal research technique to evaluate the links between BRIM, CUSF, & the desire to stay loyal to a particular brand. The research focused on a cosmetic brand in Malappuram. To do this, a survey approach was employed to gather data. This strategy provided a structured way to obtaining insights from the target audience. The goal of this research was to look at how a company's image affects CUSF, which in turn impacts consumer loyalty intention (Fig. 1). Furthermore, the research sought to evaluate the function of CUSF in affecting both brand perception and brand loyalty.

4.1. Population & Sample Size

The study was carried out on a sample population of one thousand clients from ten herbal product enterprises in the Malappuram region to ensure diversity and representation of the public. The research was conducted over four weeks, during which thirty to fifty clients were surveyed every day, with each organisation providing four to five customers each day. This sampling technique not only expedited data collection but also enabled a thorough comprehension of customer preferences and behaviours regarding herbal products. A comprehensive analysis of CUSF, loyalty, and perceptions of herbal products, including beauty & health-related items, was conducted via the successful acquisition of responses from 384 participants out of the 1,000 consumers targeted for the research.

Sample Size Calculation

To calculate the sample size from a population of 1,000 herbal product consumers, Equation 1 is the formula for sample size (SS) is used:

$$SS = \frac{Z^2.P.(1-P)}{d^2} \quad (1)$$

Where:

Z = Z-score (1.96 for 95% confidence)

p = estimated proportion (assumed to be 0.5 for maximum variability)

d = margin of error (0.05)

Calculate initial sample size (SS) assuming an infinite population.

$$SS = \frac{(1.96)^2.0.5.(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16 \quad (2)$$

From equation 2, the adjusted sample size from a population of 1,000 consumers is approximately 384.

4.2. Data Collection

To evaluate the connections among BRIM, CUSF, as well as CULOY, with a focus on a cosmetic brand. A sample size of 384 participants, comprising herbal product consumers from various firms across Malappuram district.

In this study, data collection was primarily conducted using a structured questionnaire, a widely utilized tool for consumer research. The researcher conducted personal visits to herbal product firms, directly engaging with each participant to ensure clarity and encourage accurate responses. The purpose of each question was explained thoroughly, allowing participants to respond confidently. Additionally, questionnaires were also distributed via email to broaden reach and convenience for respondents. In total, responses were obtained from 384 consumers, and all completed questionnaires have been preserved for future research. Following data collection, the responses were analysed using SPSS and AMOS to gain insights into consumer preferences, satisfaction, and loyalty in the herbal product sector.

4.3. Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

- Participants aged 30 and above.
- Customers (both males and females) of herbal product firms of varying sizes and service types.
- Residents of Malappuram district.
- Individuals with a history of purchasing and using herbal products.

Exclusion Criteria

- Participants below the age of 30.
- Firms and customers located outside Malappuram district.
- Individuals without a history of purchasing or using herbal products.

4.4. Data Analysis

After collecting data through random sampling, we analysed the influence of various factors using structural equation modelling. Below, we provide a concise overview of SEM

Structural Equation Modelling

SEM is a multivariate technique, which is driven by hypotheses and focusses on the causal linkages between different variables. It uses a structural model to describe these relationships.

This equation 3 may be used to provide a concise summary of the statistical framework of standard SEM.

$$x = Px + v \quad (3)$$

where u is being a $n \times s$ structure of zero-mean the Gaussian deviation factors that drive the simulated system, and y is a $n \times s$ matrix of n time series that are exclusive to the region with s scans. A is a $n \times n$ route coefficient matrix. The distinction between the observable and simulated covariance matrices is minimised to achieve parameter estimation. $\sum$. Transforming the equation allows you to calculate $\sum$. regardless on the particular mix of characteristics.

$$x = (J - P)^{-1} v \quad (4)$$

$$\sum = xx^T$$
$$= (J - P)^{-1} vv^T (J - P)^{-1^T} \quad (5)$$

The identity matrix is denoted by "J". The initial equation may be seen as a generative model that explains how the functioning of a system is influenced by its structural connections. The observed time series, denoted as y, is generated by accomplished through adding an equation of the interregional connection matrix, which is denoted by the letter u, $(J - P)^{-1}$ to the Gaussian innovations.

V. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

5.1. Demographic Variables Descriptive

TABLE I DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTIVE

Demographic		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
What is your age	Under 18	53	13.8	13.8
	18-25 years	91	23.7	37.5
	26-35 years	103	26.8	64.3
	36-45 years	76	19.8	84.1
	46-55 years	35	9.1	93.2
	56 years and above	26	6.8	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	
What is your gender	Male	97	25.3	25.3
	Female	287	74.7	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	
What is your Occupation?	Student	89	23.2	23.2
	Employed	65	16.9	40.1
	Self-employed	71	18.5	58.6
	Unemployed	80	20.8	79.4
	Homemaker	79	20.6	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	
What is your highest level of Educational?	High School Diploma or equivalent	71	18.5	18.5
	Associate degree	82	21.4	39.8
	Bachelor's Degree	72	18.8	58.6
	Master's Degree	85	22.1	80.7
	Doctorate Degree	74	19.3	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	
What is your monthly income level?	Less than 20,000	53	13.8	13.8
	20,000 - 39,999	57	14.8	28.6
	40,000 - 59,999	68	17.7	46.4
	60,000 - 79,999	74	19.3	65.6
	80,000 - 99,999	73	19.0	84.6
	100,000 and above	59	15.4	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	
What is your marital status?	Single	144	37.5	37.5
	Married	175	45.6	83.1
	Divorced	65	16.9	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	
Which area do you currently reside in?	Urban	207	53.9	53.9
	Rural	177	46.1	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	
How often do you purchase herbal cosmetic products?	Once a month	99	25.8	25.8
	2-3 times a month	93	24.2	50.0
	Once a week	109	28.4	78.4
	More than once a week	83	21.6	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	

Table I shows the demographic information provided by the respondents. The demographic table contains a detailed description of all of the people who participated in the research on how BRIM along with CUSF influence CULOY towards herbal cosmetic goods. The age distribution shows a well-proportioned representation; the age group 26–35 has the largest percentage (26.8%), followed by the age group 18–25 (23.7%), the age group 36–45 (19.8%), the age group under 18 (13.8%), the age group 46–55 (9.1%) and the age group 55 and above (6.8%). In terms of gender, 74.7% of respondents to the study identified as female, which is the majority of respondents, while 25.3% of the respondents are male. According to the occupation of the respondents, most of the respondents are students (23.2%), 20.8% are unemployed, 20.6% are Homemakers, 18.5% are Self-employed and 16.9% are employed. According to the education level, most of the respondent's level of education was Master's degree (22.1%), followed by Associate degree (21.4%), Doctorate degree (19.3%), Bachelor's degree (18.8%), and High School Diploma or equivalent (18.5%). Although there is variation in the distribution of monthly income, the majority of people make more than INR 60,000-79,999 (19.3%), followed by those who earn between INR 80,000 and INR 99,999 (19.0%), INR 40,000 and INR 59,999 (17.7%), INR 100,000 and above (15.4%), INR 20,000 and INR 39,999 (14.8%), and less than 20,000 (13.8%). Most of the respondents participated in the study are Married respondents (45.6%), 37.5% are single and 16.9% are

Divorced respondents. According to their location most of the respondents are from Urban area (53.9%) and 46.1% from Rural area. The frequency of shopping for herbal cosmetic products reveals diverse purchasing behaviour. Most of the respondents 28.4% buying products once a week, 25.8% buying products once a month, 24.2% are buying 2-3 times in a month and 21.6% of the respondents buying products more than once a week.

5.2. Reliability

TABLE II OUTCOMES OF RELIABILITY

Variables	No. of Items	Mean	Cronbach's alpha
BRIM(BRIM)	7	3.774	.871
CUSF (CUSF)	6	3.801	.823
CULOY (CULOY)	9	3.780	.879

Table II determine the internal consistency of the variables used in this research. The Cronbach's alpha, is a generally used statistic in social science research, was made for this specific objective. Within the field of social psychology research, a reliability coefficient that surpasses 0.7 is generally considered to be satisfactory. More precisely, the alpha values varied between 0.820 and 0.880.

Abbreviations for Indices

GFI	Goodness of Fit
RFI	Relative Fit Index
NFI	Normed Fit Index
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
RMR	Root Mean Square Residuals
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Residuals Approximation
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure
AVE	Average Variance Extracted

5.3. Measurement Model Results

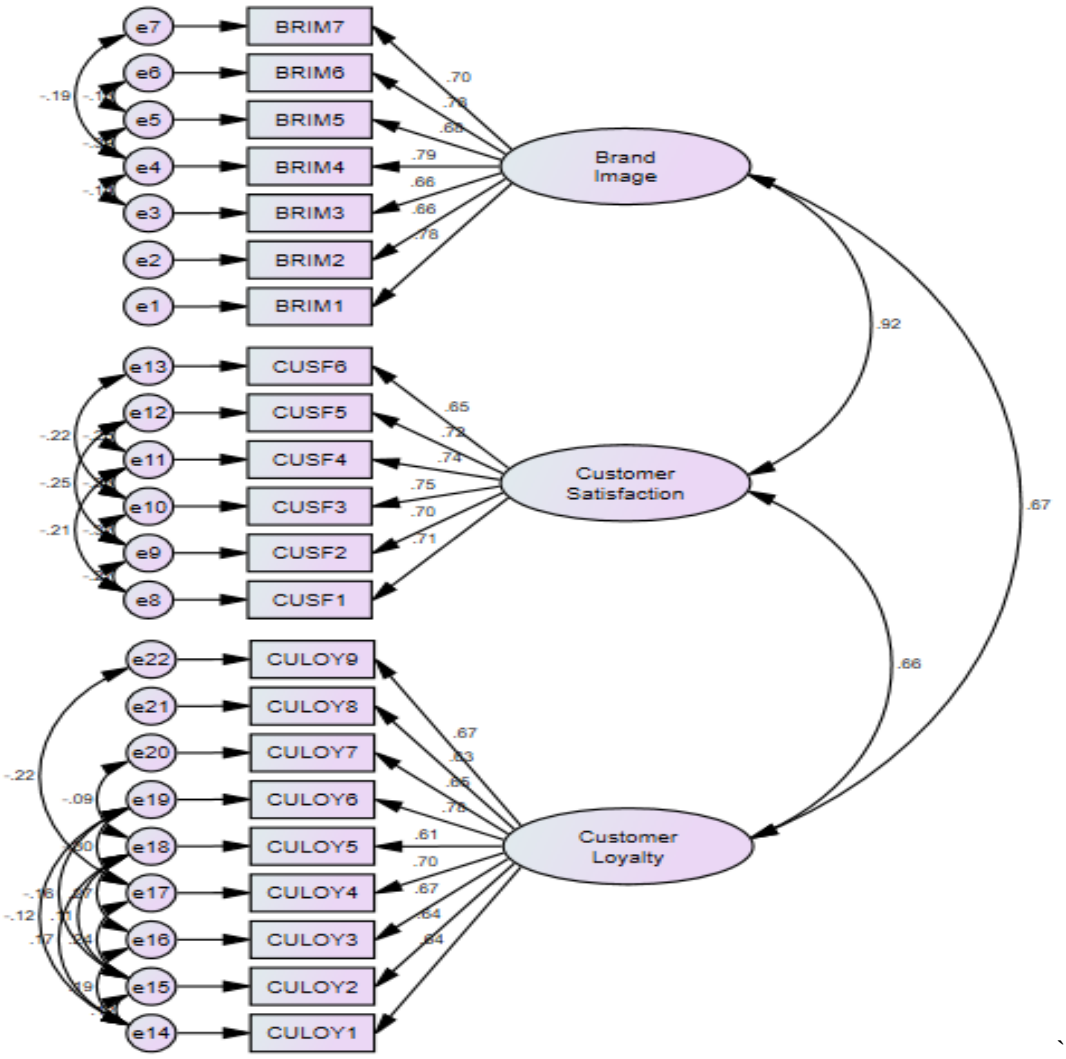

Fig. 2 CFA Model

TABLE III REGRESSION WEIGHTS OF THE VARIABLES BRIM, CUSF, CULOY

	Estimate	Std. Err	C.R	P
BRIM1 <--- Brand Image	1.000			
BRIM2 <--- Brand Image	.727	.054	13.463	***
BRIM3 <--- Brand Image	.863	.065	13.335	***
BRIM4 <--- Brand Image	1.048	.064	16.410	***
BRIM5 <--- Brand Image	.883	.065	13.651	***
BRIM6 <--- Brand Image	.888	.054	16.376	***
BRIM7 <--- Brand Image	.837	.059	14.270	***
CUSF1 <--- CUSF	1.000			
CUSF2 <--- CUSF	.813	.072	11.333	***
CUSF3 <--- CUSF	1.005	.075	13.343	***
CUSF4 <--- CUSF	.914	.075	12.241	***
CUSF5 <--- CUSF	.917	.070	13.038	***
CUSF6 <--- CUSF	.826	.070	11.884	***
CULOY1 <--- CULOY	1.000			
CULOY2 <--- CULOY	.989	.092	10.799	***
CULOY3 <--- CULOY	1.071	.088	12.173	***
CULOY4 <--- CULOY	1.050	.098	10.751	***
CULOY5 <--- CULOY	.919	.083	11.130	***
CULOY6 <--- CULOY	1.348	.118	11.464	***
CULOY7 <--- CULOY	.937	.088	10.618	***
CULOY8 <--- CULOY	.968	.093	10.430	***
CULOY9 <--- CULOY	1.008	.094	10.711	***

TABLE IV MODEL FIT SUMMARY

CMIN	DF	CMIN/DF	p-val	RFI	GFI	IFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	RMR
370.624	184	2.014	0.068	.902	.919	.954	.913	.954	.051	.043

Table III & IV demonstrate the data had a strong fit, with NFI, IFI, GFI, RFI, and CFI, considerably above 0.90. Similarly, the values RMR and RMSEA are less than the crucial threshold of 0.080. The results revealed a good fit for the model provided, including RMSEA, RMR, GFI, and CFI.

5.4. Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Table V used to represent the KMO and Bartlett's tests to determine the appropriateness for factor analysis. The resulting KMO value was 0.946, suggesting great sample adequacy, and the Bartlett's test was extremely significant (P = 0.00), confirming the factor analysis.

TABLE V KMO, BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.946
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4186.458
	df	231
	Sig.	.000

We employed CFA to rigorously examine the validity of our instrument.

TABLE VI POST CFA FACTOR LOADINGS, CRONBACH ALPHA AND AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED

Variables with items	Cronbach alpha	Factor loadings of post CFA	Average Variance Extracted
BRIM(BRIM)	0.871		0.519
BRIM1		0.777	
BRIM2		0.656	
BRIM3		0.658	
BRIM4		0.788	
BRIM5		0.677	
BRIM6		0.778	
BRIM7		0.697	
CUSF (CUSF)	0.823		0.503
CUSF1		0.705	
CUSF2		0.697	
CUSF3		0.746	
CUSF4		0.737	
CUSF5		0.719	
CUSF6		0.649	
Customer Shopping Loyalty (CULOY)	0.879		0.513
CULOY1		0.640	
CULOY2		0.635	
CULOY3		0.671	
CULOY4		0.695	
CULOY5		0.612	
CULOY6		0.776	
CULOY7		0.647	
CULOY8		0.631	
CULOY9		0.666	

TABLE VII DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

	BRIM	CUSF	CULOY
BRIM	0.720		
CUSF	0.701	0.709	
CULOY	0.669	0.660	0.716

Table VI represents the factor loadings for each individual item surpassed the 0.6 criterion, demonstrating the instrument's capacity to precisely assess the targeted structures. This result demonstrates the resilience of our measuring methodology. To examine the scale's internal consistency, we calculated AVE. Table VI & Fig. 2 shows the post-CFA outcomes, including Cronbach's alpha and AVE. When compared to other variables, the square root of a variable's AVE exceeds its correlation values, indicating Discriminant validity. Table VII shows the gathered results, which help to determine the Discriminant validity.

5.5. Assessment of Structural Model

Hypo1: BRIM has positive impact on CUSF.

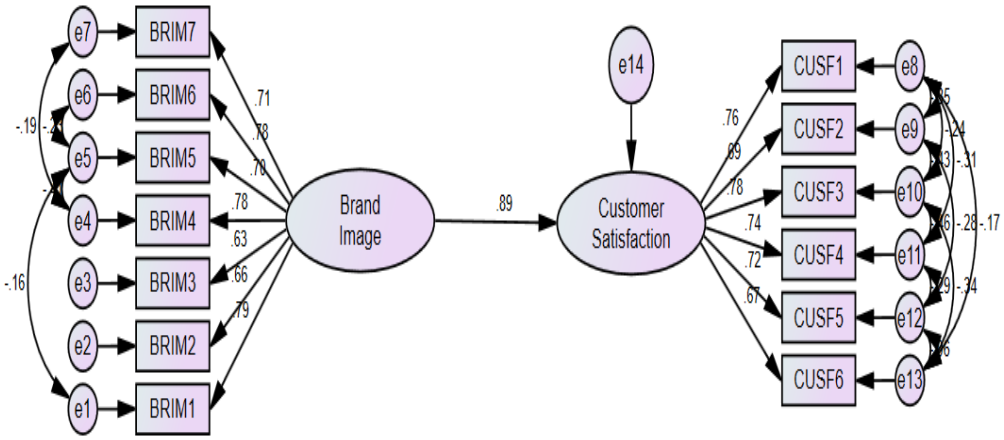

Fig.3 Impact of BRIM on CUSF

TABLE VIII REGRESSION WEIGHTS OF BRIM AND CUSF

Paths	Unstandardized	Std. Err.	Standardized	C.R.	P
CUSF<---BrandImage	.890	.063	.893	14.203	***
BRIM1<---BrandImage	1.000		.789		
BRIM2<---BrandImage	.714	.053	.655	13.518	***
BRIM3<---BrandImage	.815	.063	.630	12.924	***
BRIM4<--- Brand Image	1.017	.062	.777	16.380	***
BRIM5<---BrandImage	.902	.067	.704	13.510	***
BRIM6<---BrandImage	.875	.053	.779	16.550	***
BRIM7<---BrandImage	.836	.057	.707	14.649	***
CUSF1<---CustomerSatisfaction	1.000		.756		
CUSF2<---CustomerSatisfaction	.754	.066	.694	11.469	***
CUSF3<---CustomerSatisfaction	.978	.074	.778	13.268	***
CUSF4<---CustomerSatisfaction	.854	.069	.739	12.448	***
CUSF5<---CustomerSatisfaction	.853	.065	.718	13.177	***
CUSF6<---CustomerSatisfaction	.800	.068	.675	11.771	***

Table VIII & fig. 3 displays an analytical structural equation model that demonstrates the interconnectedness of two factors: “Brand Image” and “CUSF”. CUSF is regarded the dependent variable, whereas BRIM is regarded as the independent variable.

For the path from "Brand Image" to "CUSF" the standardized coefficient is (β=.893, P<0.05), suggesting a strong positive relationship between both the variables. The C.R. values are all quite high, indicating that these relationships are statistically significant. The fit indices show that the model fit well, with factors of statistical significance at p-values greater than 0.05 (as shown in Table IX). Seven different fit indices were utilized to evaluate the whole model fit, which revealed a significant strong positive relation between BRIM and CUSF.

TABLE IX MODEL FIT SUMMARY

CMIN	DF	CMIN/DF	p-val	RFI	GFI	IFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	RMR
132.173	50	2.643	0.072	.918	.948	.967	.948	.966	.066	.033

Table IX shows the data had a strong fit, with NFI, IFI, GFI, RFI, and CFI, considerably above 0.90. Similarly, the values RMR and RMSEA are less than the crucial threshold of 0.080. The results revealed a good fit for the model provided, including RMSEA, RMR, GFI, and CFI.

Hypo2: BRIM positively influences CULOY intention (Fig 4).

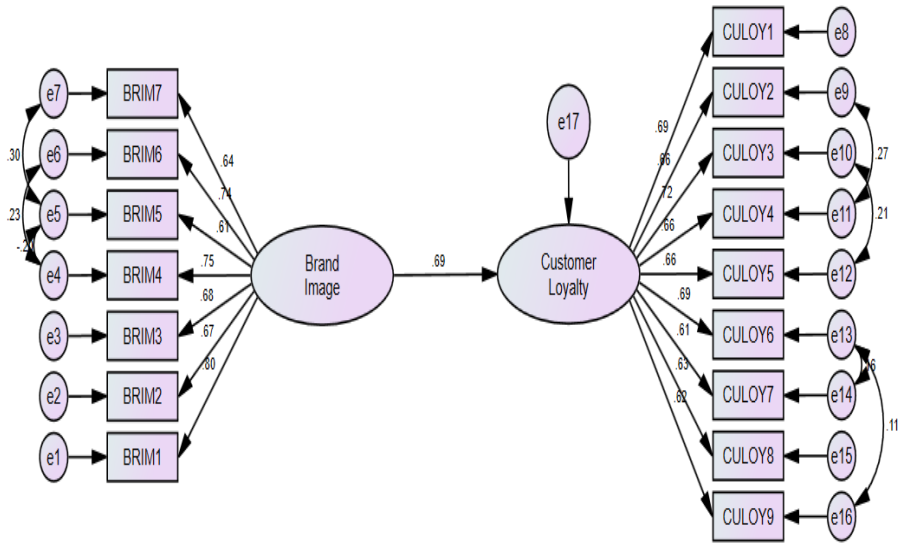

Fig. 4 Impact of BRIM on CULOY

TABLE X REGRESSION WEIGHTS of BRIM AND CULOY

Paths	Unstandardized	S.E.	Standardized	C.R.	P
CULOY<--- Brand Image	.589	.057	.690	10.372	***
BRIM1<---Brand Image	1.000		.798		
BRIM2<---Brand Image	.719	.054	.666	13.243	***
BRIM3<---Brand Image	.865	.064	.676	13.473	***
BRIM4<---Brand Image	.977	.066	.752	14.876	***
BRIM5<---Brand Image	.771	.066	.606	11.664	***
BRIM6<---Brand Image	.828	.056	.745	14.792	***
BRIM7<---Brand Image	.744	.060	.636	12.459	***
CULOY1<---CULOY	1.000		.686		
CULOY2<---CULOY	.957	.084	.659	11.445	***
CULOY3<---CULOY	1.067	.086	.719	12.363	***
CULOY4<---CULOY	.934	.081	.665	11.535	***
CULOY5<---CULOY	.920	.081	.657	11.362	***
CULOY6<---CULOY	1.114	.094	.691	11.899	***
CULOY7<---CULOY	.822	.077	.610	10.661	***
CULOY8<---CULOY	.903	.081	.633	11.082	***
CULOY9<---CULOY	.868	.081	.617	10.766	***

Table X presents a hypothetical SEM demonstrating the interdependence of two factors: Independent and dependent variables, “BRIM” & “CULOY”.

For the path from "Brand Image" to "CULOY" the standardized coefficient is (β=.690, P<.05), suggesting a positive relation between both the variables. The C.R. values are all quite high, indicating that these relationships are statistically significant. Because the factors are of statistical significance at p-values that are more than 0.05, the fit indices indicate that the model fits well. This is seen in Table XI, which can be found here. Seven fit indices were utilized to evaluate the overall model fit, and the results demonstrated that positively influences the relation between the BRIM and CULOY.

Table XI Summary of Model Fit

CMIN	DF	CMIN/DF	p-val	RFI	GFI	IFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	RMR
216.246	96	2.253	0.083	.904	.930	.956	.924	.956	.057	.048

In table XI, the data had a strong fit, with NFI, IFI, GFI, RFI, and CFI, considerably above 0.90. Similarly, the values RMR and RMSEA are less than the crucial threshold of 0.080. The results revealed a good fit for the model provided, including RMSEA, RMR, GFI, and CFI.

Hypo3: CUSF positively affects the CULOY Intention

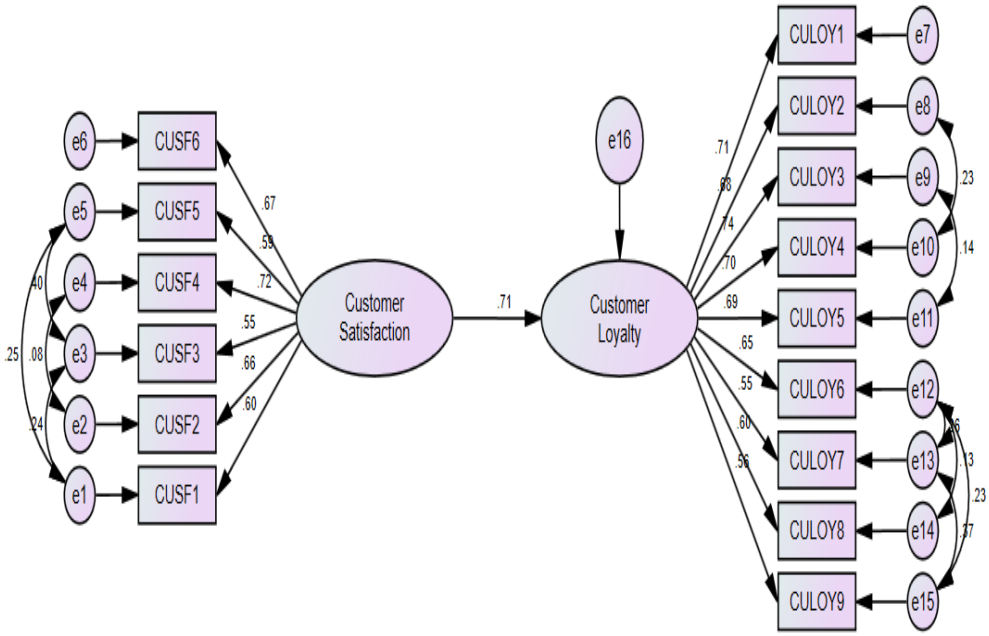

Fig. 5 Impact of CUSF on CULOY

Table XII Regression Weights of CUSF and CULOY

Paths	Unstandardized	S.E.	Standardized	C.R.	P
CULOY<---Customer Satisfaction	.800	.094	.707	8.476	***
CUSF1<---Customer Satisfaction	1.000		.597		
CUSF2<---Customer Satisfaction	.913	.100	.662	9.135	***
CUSF3<---Customer Satisfaction	.881	.091	.553	9.714	***
CUSF4<---Customer Satisfaction	1.055	.109	.719	9.660	***
CUSF5<---Customer Satisfaction	.881	.086	.585	10.229	***
CUSF6<---Customer Satisfaction	1.015	.105	.675	9.623	***
CULOY1<---CULOY	1.000		.707		
CULOY2<---CULOY	.956	.080	.679	11.939	***
CULOY3<---CULOY	1.064	.083	.739	12.873	***
CULOY4<---CULOY	.951	.078	.697	12.254	***
CULOY5<---CULOY	.942	.078	.692	12.095	***
CULOY6<---CULOY	1.009	.088	.647	11.415	***
CULOY7<---CULOY	.714	.073	.546	9.735	***
CULOY8<---CULOY	.832	.078	.601	10.696	***
CULOY9<---CULOY	.767	.077	.561	9.997	***

Table XII & Fig. 5 represents a hypothetical SEM demonstrating the interdependence of Independent and dependent variables: “CUSF” and “CULOY”.

TABLE XIII MODEL FIT INDICES

CMIN	DF	CMIN/DF	p-val	RFI	GFI	IFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	RMR
143.990	79	1.823	0.061	.920	.953	.972	.940	.972	.046	.043

For the path from "CUSF" to "CULOY" the standardized coefficient is (β=.707, P<.05), it positively influences the relationship between both the variables. The C.R. values are all quite high, indicating that these relationships are statistically significant. Because the factors are of statistical significance at p-values that are more than 0.05, the fit indices

indicate that the model fits well. This is seen in Table XIII, which can be found here. Seven fit metrics were used to assess overall model fit, & the findings showed that CUSF has a large and positive influence on CULOY.

The data had a strong fit, with NFI, IFI, GFI, RFI, and CFI are mentioned in Table XIII, considerably above 0.90. Similarly, the values RMR and RMSEA are less than the crucial threshold of 0.080. The results revealed a good fit for the model provided, including RMSEA, RMR, GFI, and CFI.

Hypo4: CUSF mediates the relationship between BRIM and CULOY intention.

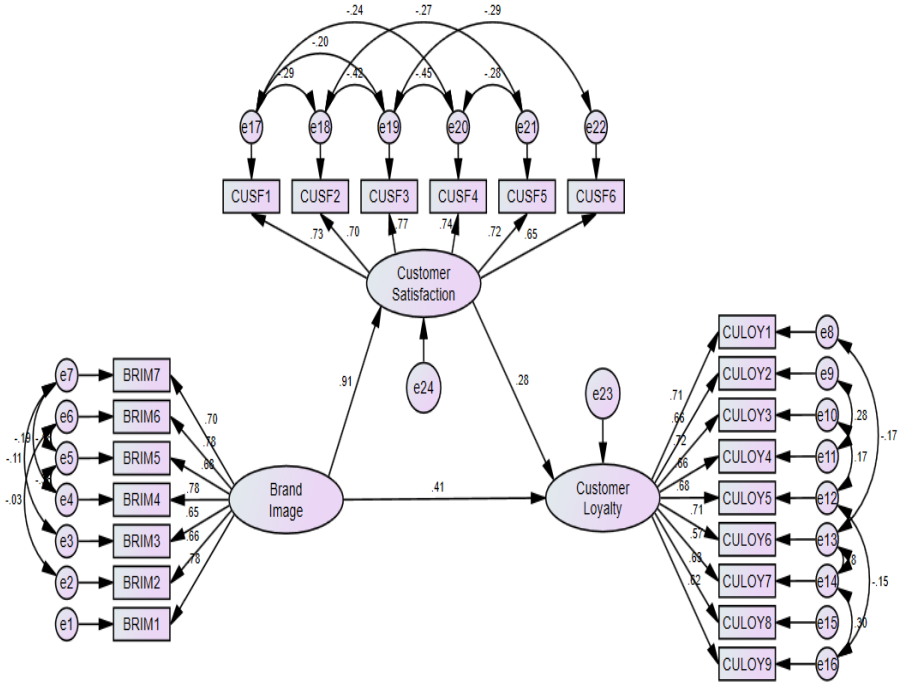

Fig. 6 Mediating Effect of CUSF

We used SEM to observe the relation of BRIM and CULOY by considering mediating factor CUSF (Fig. 6).

TABLE XIV REGRESSION WEIGHTS OF BRIM, CUSF AND CULOY

Paths	Unstandardized	Std.Err	Standardized	C.R.	P-val
CUSF<---BrandImage	.886	.064	.908	13.858	***
CULOY<---BrandImage	.368	.123	.409	2.991	.003
CULOY<---CustomerSatisfaction	.255	.123	.276	2.069	.039
BRIM1<---BrandImage	1.000		.778		
BRIM2<---BrandImage	.730	.054	.659	13.458	***
BRIM3<---BrandImage	.852	.064	.650	13.247	***
BRIM4<---BrandImage	1.035	.064	.779	16.279	***
BRIM5<---BrandImage	.883	.064	.677	13.696	***
BRIM6<---BrandImage	.887	.054	.778	16.331	***
BRIM7<---BrandImage	.846	.059	.704	14.428	***
CULOY1<---CULOY	1.000		.705		
CULOY2<---CULOY	.928	.080	.656	11.656	***
CULOY3<---CULOY	1.039	.082	.719	12.623	***
CULOY4<---CULOY	.909	.077	.664	11.792	***
CULOY5<---CULOY	.921	.078	.676	11.831	***
CULOY6<---CULOY	1.120	.095	.712	11.743	***
CULOY7<---CULOY	.749	.074	.574	10.183	***
CULOY8<---CULOY	.870	.078	.627	11.210	***
CULOY9<---CULOY	.841	.077	.616	10.942	***
CUSF1<---CustomerSatisfaction	1.000		.730		
CUSF2<---CustomerSatisfaction	.784	.068	.698	11.471	***
CUSF3<---CustomerSatisfaction	1.009	.077	.773	13.105	***
CUSF4<---CustomerSatisfaction	.883	.071	.740	12.423	***
CUSF5<---CustomerSatisfaction	.886	.067	.719	13.209	***
CUSF6<---CustomerSatisfaction	.796	.066	.647	11.985	***

Table XIV represents the structural equation model evaluating the relationship between "BRIM" & "CULOY", with a mediating variable "CUSF", is shown in Table XIII. This approach tests all important paths and incorporates measurement errors as well as feedback directly into the model. The model fits well with statistically significant factors (p<0.05). By using global fit measures model fit was estimated, including seven different fit indices and 'r' values, to determine the coherence between the hypothesized model and the available data. Findings from the table XIV, states that CUSF mediates the relation of BRIM and CULOY significantly. The path coefficient from BRIM to CULOY is 0.409, as well as the association is significant (p-value < 0.05). The path coefficient from BRIM to CUSF is 0.908, and the association is significant (p-value < 0.05). The path coefficient from CUSF to CULOY is 0.276, and the association is significant (p-value < 0.05).

Mediating Analysis

TABLE XV DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECT TABLE

Relationships	Direct Effect of BRIM	Indirect Effect of BRIM	Confidence Interval		P-Val
			LB	UB	
CustomerLoyalty<--CustomerSatisfaction<--BrandImage	.409 (.023)	.251	.002	.560	.017

The study tested the effect of CUSF as mediator on the relation of BRIM and CULOY. The findings unveiled a noteworthy indirect effect, indicating that the CUSF mediates the relation of BRIM and CULOY (β = 0.251, p = .017). The direct effect of BRIMin the presence of the mediator on CULOY, was also observed to be significant (β = 0.409, p = 0.023). Therefore, it can be concluded that the relation of BRIM and CULOY was mediated by CUSF. The results of indirect and direct effects are outlined in table XV.

TABLE XVI MODEL FIT SUMMARY

CMIN	DF	CMIN/DF	p-val	RFI	GFI	IFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	RMR
367.311	187	1.964	.055	.902	.919	.956	.914	.955	.050	.046

The data had a strong fit, with NFI, IFI, GFI, RFI, and CFI are discussed in Table XVI, considerably above 0.90. Similarly, the values RMR and RMSEA are less than the crucial threshold of 0.080. The results revealed a good fit for the model provided, including RMSEA, RMR, GFI, and CFI.

VI. Discussion

This research investigates how BRIM and CUSF contribute to CULOY for Herbal cosmetic products. The research is structured to explore four hypotheses:

- "BRIM have positive impact on CUSF."
- "BRIM positively influences CULOY intention."
- "CUSF positively effects the CULOY Intention."
- "CUSF mediates the relationship between BRIM and CULOY intention."

6.1. Demographic Insights

The demographic information presented in the study displays a well-distributed representation of the respondents across various age groups, with a significant female majority, representing, the primary customer base for herbal cosmetic products. Respondents with different occupational backgrounds and educational level, indicating a broad appeal of these products among students and professionals. The monthly income levels are varied, with a presence of middle to upper middle-class customers, reflecting their capability to invest in herbal cosmetics. Furthermore, the nearly equal depiction of urban and rural residents provides a balanced view of the market in Malappuram District. This diversity of perspectives offers a robust foundation for understanding the factors influencing brand image, CUSF and CULOY within the herbal cosmetic industry.

6.2. Reliability and Validity

The reliability study, performed utilizing Cronbach's alpha, verifies strong internal consistency for all variables, with values above the 0.7 criterion. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) findings provide further validation for the measurement model, demonstrating robust factor loadings and elevated AVE values. The KMO & Bartlett's tests confirm that the data is suitable for factor analysis, which strengthens the reliability of the study's instruments.

6.3. Hypothesis Testing and Structural Model Analysis

- **Hypothesis 1:** The research reveals a significant positive relation between the "Brand Image" and "CUSF", with a standardised regression coefficient (β = 0.893, p < 0.05) indicates that the strong BRIM enhances CUSF.
- **Hypothesis 2**: The research demonstrates a significant and positive relation between the BRIM and CULOY (β = 0.690, p < 0.05), demonstrates that the favourable BRIM promotes higher CULOY.
- **Hypothesis 3**: The research demonstrates a significant and strong positive relation between the CUSF and CULOY (β = 0.707, p < 0.05), demonstrates that the satisfied customers are more likely to exhibit Loyalty.
- **Hypothesis 4**: The mediating study demonstrates that "CUSF" serves as a partial mediator in the relation between "Brand Image" and "CULOY" and is statistically significant (β = 0.251, p = 0.017). This

implies that while BRIM directly impacts loyalty, and also CUSF plays a crucial mediating role.

6.4. Model Fit and Statistical Significance

The model fit indices for all the studies suggest a satisfactory fit, with the NFI, IFI, GFI, and CFI all having values more than 0.90. RMR and RMSEA values are both lower than the essential criterion of 0.08. This provides further confirmation that the model adequately represents the data.

6.5. Implications

The statistics suggest that enhancing BRIM might significantly elevate CUSF and loyalty. Firms in the herbal cosmetics sector should focus on cultivating a strong brand identity and enhancing CUSF to elevate consumer loyalty. The intermediary function of CUSF highlights the need for initiatives that tackle both brand perception & customer experiences.

VII. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide vital insights into the relationships between BRIM & customer pleasure, specifically consumer loyalty in the herbal cosmetics industry. According to the findings, a strong BRIM is a critical component in the process of enhancing CUSF, which leads to a significant rise in consumer loyalty. According to the research, although BRIM has a direct effect on loyalty intentions, customer happiness significantly increases that influence. This emphasizes the significance for businesses to concentrate on developing a favourable BRIM and providing great customer service in order to foster long-term loyalty. The study emphasizes the interdependence of these aspects, suggesting that strategic investments in brand management & customer experience are critical for maintaining CULOY and attaining commercial success in the competitive herbal cosmetics sector.

Suggestions

The statistical analysis indicates that companies in the herbal cosmetics industry must prioritise enhancing their BRIM to boost CUSF and loyalty. The brand's image directly influences consumer satisfaction; thus, it is essential to focus on transparent communication about the product's benefits, environmental sustainability, and authenticity. Due to the fact that CUSF plays a mediating role, it is of the utmost importance to provide great customer experiences that are in accordance with the expectations of the customers, hence strengthening the perceived value of the brand.

Brands should also prioritise customised marketing campaigns that are geared to certain populations, as seen by the research's varied range of respondent backgrounds. It is possible to increase CULOY to a brand by tailoring goods and services to meet the needs of both urban and rural consumers. Trust and long-term consumer involvement may be reinforced by continuing to monitor and use customer input to improve both the goods and advertising techniques. This will help to enhance both of these areas of the relationship. Businesses who apply these tactics may ensure long-term growth and competitiveness in the ever-changing herbal cosmetics sector.

Future Scope

The future scope of this research might involve looking at the effect of emerging digital marketing trends like influencer marketing, social media engagement, including eco-conscious branding on CULOY in the herbal cosmetics industry. Another issue that requires more examination is the impact that sustainability measures have on a company's image and consumer faith in its brand. Understanding how consumers view brands in various cultures may also help firms expand into foreign markets. Finally, researching the long-term advantages of CUSF initiatives on loyalty, particularly via technological developments like as artificial intelligence and personalised marketing, is a promising future strategy.

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