

# The Role of Social Media Engagement on Donor Loyalty in Charity Marketing Campaigns. Evidence from Saudi Arabia

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## Abstract:

**Introduction:** The study aimed to analyse the role of social engagement on donors' loyalty in the case of Saudi Arabia's charity marketing campaigns. The study also analysed how donors' loyalty differs across engagement patterns, including silent donors, occasional engagers, and advocates.

**Methods:** The study adopted a primary quantitative research design, in which a survey was conducted on a sample of 250 different types of donors using a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire. The data was analysed using EFA, regression, and one-way ANOVA.

**Results:** The level of donor loyalty among advocates was found to be much higher than that of silent donors and occasional engagers, with the difference in means significant. A positive and significant predictive relationship between Informational Content and donor loyalty was found, supporting the idea that Social and Emotional Gratifications had a strong positive relationship with donor loyalty. Brand Trust was found to be the strongest predictor of donor loyalty among the observed variables.

**Conclusion:** The study unveiled targeted strategies for diverse donor types, including advocates, occasional, and silent donors. This study adds to the literature on non-profit marketing by providing an empirical analysis of how informational content, social and emotional gratifications, and Brand Trust influence donor loyalty during charity campaigns.

**Keywords:** Social media engagement, donor loyalty, silent donors, advocates, occasional engagers, uses and gratifications theory.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Non-profit and charity activities represent a crucial aspect of the social development strategy in Saudi Arabia and form the foundation of civic unity and the Vision 2030 objective of enabling participation in the economy. Over the last several years, the charity sector in Saudi Arabia has grown at a very fast pace, and the non-profit ecosystem has brought more than SAR 100 billion (\$26.6 billion) to the national economy in 2024, which is 3.3% of GDP, which demonstrates the wide participation of the community in the giving and volunteering process (King Khalid Foundation, 2025).

Although this is a strong growth trend, Saudi charities face major challenges with donor loyalty and engagement, which

negatively affect their long-term sustainability. At first, the history of donor participation shows that there is a high dependency on episodic donations, especially during high-profile national movements such as Ramadan drives, where millions of people make one-time donations, but retaining donors on a regular basis is not very high at other times (Gannon, 2025; WATHIQ, 2025). As indicated by (Supsongserm *et al.*, 2023; and Pinto, 2023), such an episodic model dilutes relationships between donors and non-profits, thereby restricting the long-term support required to achieve a permanent impact. Second, (Alrayees & Alhidari, 2021; and Alessa, 2022) suggest that, despite the increased volume of digital donations among small-scale micro-philanthropists and higher-level benefactors, uneven participation among

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donor groups makes it difficult to customize strategies to retain them. Third, (Gannon, 2025; and Pinto, 2023) report that the level of public participation in volunteering 23%, and donation 47% is comparatively high, but there are signs of reduced intensity of engagement and loyalty when immediate reporting or impact feedback reduces a gap indicative of ineffectiveness in managing the relationship with donors and inconsistent communication. Combined, these concerns raise concerns about disjointed patterns of engagement that do not favour the development of lifelong supporters who could make sustainable donations to charities.

Within the context of these systemic problems, the use of social media becomes a critical tool for increasing donor loyalty to the organisation, providing avenues for interactivity, transparency, and community development. According to investigations into the effects of social media on engagement behaviours in health-related donation systems conducted in previous studies, such as (Almuqrin & Mutambik, 2021; and Hidayat & Rafiki, 2022), frequent and meaningful social media contacts are associated with increased retention and continued online involvement in charitable situations. Using Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat enables charities to maximise their exposure, democratize giving channels, and boost relational Brand Trust as a mechanism of enhancement that is urgently required in the Saudi Arabian digital philanthropy ecosystem.

Although the potential of social media has been acknowledged, gaps in the research have been noted, especially regarding empirical studies that connect engagement patterns with donors' loyalty to the charity in Saudi philanthropic settings and the division of donors by their online engagement patterns. These loopholes warrant investigation; therefore, this study aims to explore how social media engagement influences donor loyalty in Saudi charity marketing campaigns. This is conducted using a hybrid approach, involving Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to develop the constructs and regression modelling. Further, ANOVA is applied to analyse the unique donor groups, including silent donors, advocates, and occasional engagers, and the relationship of engagement with donors' loyalty. The research is valuable as it provides empirical evidence on donor relationship strategies, contributes to Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) in the Non-profit marketing literature, and has practical implications for informing specific engagement strategies for Saudi charities as they formulate their charity marketing campaigns.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Theoretical Framework

The current research is based on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which holds that individuals are active media users who deliberately use media to fulfil particular cognitive, affective, and social needs (Han *et al.*, 2023; Khoddami *et al.*, 2021). Instead of using UGT as a rhetorical tool, the paper uses the theory as an analytical tool by directly mapping its fundamental categories of

gratification onto the operationalised aspects of social media involvement in charity marketing. Thus, it provides a clearer insight into how the engagement is converted into donor loyalty. In this context, (Anderson *et al.*, 2024; and Wahid & Gunarto, 2022) argue that charities' dissemination of informational content on social media is theorised to fulfil donors' cognitive and information-seeking gratifications, such as awareness, transparency, and understanding of charitable impact needs. Simultaneously, (Chen, 2018; and Toon, 2025) also indicate that social and emotional gratifications are related to the affective and social-integrative requirements of UGT. This means that donors seek emotional connection, moral validation, and a sense of group by engaging with the informational content, images, and others related to charitable activities.

Notably, Brand Trust is not conceptualised as gratification, but as the result of relationships that arise out of the recurring fulfilment of gratification. In line with (Hartati *et al.*, 2025; and Kunigita *et al.*, 2023), long-term outcome-related variations in UGT are associated with the maintenance of satisfaction with informational and socio-emotional needs, which in turn contribute to a positive cognitive appraisal of charities, thereby strengthening perceptions of credibility, integrity, and reliability. These relational consequences serve as mediating variables that convert engagement into donor loyalty. UGT also offers a conceptual framework for dividing donors into silent donors, occasional engagers, and advocates. As reflected in previous studies by (Liu *et al.*, 2025; and Veriansyah, 2024), differences in engagement levels reflect variances in the primary gratifications required and gained through social media use. Within the Saudi charity context, where participation is voluntary and value-based, the UGT provides a logical explanation of the relationships among social media engagement, satisfaction fulfilment, relational performance, and donor loyalty.

### 2.2. Empirical Review

(Bilgin & Kethuda, 2022) found that although various dimensions of the charity's social media marketing influence Brand Trust, only awareness has a direct relationship with donation intention. In terms of UGT, this result implies that donors are mainly interested in the charity content to receive informational gratification. In the long term, deeper relational consequences can be achieved to the extent that such engagement meets cognitive and emotional needs. Nevertheless, the study uses brand-related mediators, which limits the ability to gain first-hand insight into loyalty behaviour, thereby creating a conceptual gap between engagement and long-term donor outcomes.

(Li & Yu, 2020) expanded this debate by demonstrating that participatory and feedback communication contribute significantly to emotional attachment and loyalty, which, in turn, increases intent to donate. The results here are quite consistent with UGT in that they show how social and emotional gratifications generated during interaction

stimulate repetition during engagement. However, the moderating role of price consciousness reveals a weakness: engagement does not necessarily result in loyalty across all donor segments.

(Klafke *et al.*, 2021) deepened this argument and demonstrated that the posts with informational content are more likely to draw more attention than those that capture it with promotional requests. It confirms UGT's statement that users are eager to find content that meets their informational requirements. As per (Kunigita *et al.*, 2023), their engagement metrics are interaction-based, regardless of methodological rigor, and they provide little information about long-term donor loyalty. All these studies together are pointing out that the emergence of donor loyalty is seen when social media interaction is always satisfied with the fulfilment of the gratifications to the donors. Though current literature does not sufficiently subdivide donors into those driven by gratification.

The use of social media has emerged as a key process by which non-profit-making organisations enhance donor loyalty, especially by influencing heterogeneous engagement patterns, including advocacy, silence, and infrequent contact. Uses and Gratifications Theory puts forward this heterogeneity by proposing that donors actively choose modes of engagement in line with informational, emotional, and social gratifications. According to (Chell *et al.*, 2024), social norms, psychological participation, and content created by firms that facilitate self-disclosure affect online advocacy. On the UGT front, (Wahid & Gunarto, 2022) found that advocacy satisfies expressive and social identity needs, allowing donors to publicly indicate that they are morally upright and belong to a group. Although it has made such contributions, the study also possesses significant methodological weaknesses. The analysis is based on cross-sectional survey outcomes and advocacy intentions rather than actual behaviour, which limits its capacity to establish a pathway to enduring donor loyalty. Also, its narrow focus on millennials limits generalization and ignores differences in gratification-seeking across age groups. Nevertheless, the study used unidimensional engagement scales and self-report attention measures, which limited the ability to determine latent engagement patterns. The lack of behavioural segmentation impedes understanding of long-term loyalty among silent donors; therefore, there is a need to adopt multidimensional analytical methods to reveal concealed engagement patterns.

Information acquisition, monitoring organisational credibility, and assessing campaign effectiveness are both examples of instrumental gratifications obtained by the silent donor without seeking social-expression gratifications, that is, commenting, sharing, and advocacy. This differentiation is decisive because UGT knows that users who are selective fulfil certain needs and do not generally look for visibility or interaction. Most previous non-profit studies, such as (Han, 2021; and Klafke *et al.*, 2021), also reveal that most donors

prefer not to engage publicly. Although they are cognitively and financially inclined, which is a choice in favour of the private, but not the expressive, involvement. Therefore, there is a possibility that silent donors are loyal due to informational utility rather than emotional or social reinforcements. This view explains why silent and occasional donors tend to experience similar levels of loyalty, as both satisfy instrumental needs, with the only notable distinction being expressive behaviour. It supports the theoretical soundness of donor segmentation without equating visibility with commitment. Though the research fails to draw a clear distinction between occasional and unremitting silent donors, it highlights a gap in its methodology for categorizing the intensity of engagement over time.

As postulated by UGT (Diaz, 2025; Moriuchi & Murdy, 2022) claim that crisis-related changes in the prioritization of gratifications are predetermined by increased emotional and informational needs. However, their case-study approach does not allow for causal conclusions or for distinguishing between temporary engagement due to a crisis and long-term donor loyalty. The lack of donor-level segmentation prevents knowing whether the engagement driven by gratification persists after contextual shocks. Other researches support the heterogeneity of engagement. (Li *et al.*, 2022) grouped the non-profit's followers into information seekers, community builders, and action-oriented users, which are very similar to silent donors, occasional engagers, and advocates. (Ho *et al.*, 2021) stated that engagement is the only predictor of loyalty when the perceived value is maintained. However, these studies are mostly descriptive, as they rely on platform metrics rather than donor behavioural segmentation.

Based on the above literature, certain research gaps have been identified. To illustrate this, although there is increased interest in exploring the use of social media in a non-profit setting, existing studies, such as (Bilgin & Kethuda, 2022), tend to focus on the intention to donate rather than long-term donor retention. In addition, a one-dimensional construct of engagement has been commonly used in (Chell *et al.*, 2024; and Klafke *et al.*, 2021), despite its multidimensionality in terms of informational, social, and emotional gratifications. Scientific studies by (Chen, 2018; and Veriansyah, 2024) on how these dimensions affect specific groups of donors, including silent donors, infrequent participants, and advocates, are uncommon, particularly in the Middle East, where institutional and cultural variables may alter online interaction behaviour. Also, the majority of (Hidayat & Rafiki, 2022) research has not combined the Uses and Gratifications Theory with behavioural segmentation to elaborate on the processes linking engagement to loyalty outcomes. Thus, there is a resounding necessity for the study to disaggregate social media usage, explicitly linking it to loyalty towards donors and to how the various patterns of engagement operate within a cultural particular setting. This study seeks to address this gap by operationalising three engagement dimensions and empirically testing their effects across different donor groups in Saudi charity campaigns.

### 3. METHODS

#### 3.1. Research Design

The research design used in this study is a quantitative, cross-sectional study, which is suitable for investigating the relationship between social media engagement and donor loyalty and for comparing tendencies across donor groups. Quantitative designs are recommended, as proposed by (Ghanad, 2023), when it is necessary to test the relationship between variables using statistical methods and to infer results for a specific population. The data were collected using a close-ended, Likert-scale questionnaire, with items measured on a 5-point Likert scale and comprising 15 statements, as indicated in the Appendix A. As recommended by (Hutchinson *et al.*, 2023), this type of questionnaire is suggested for use when perceptual constructs, such as engagement and loyalty, are captured and when multivariate analysis is needed.

In this study, the social and emotional gratification has been taken as a combined construct. Even though social and emotional gratifications are theoretically dissimilar in the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The choice to merge the two concepts in the current study is supported, methodologically, by the findings of the exploratory factor analysis proposed by (Moriuchi & Murdy, 2022). The items associated with social interaction and those associated with emotional satisfaction loaded onto the same factor, indicating convergence in the empirical results in the current dataset. Relational constructs that are close to each other are frequently used as a single dimension in exploratory research when there are strong patterns of coherence and overlap in factor loadings. It is also regarded as methodologically appropriate for exploratory modelling, as indicated by (Sangra & Sharma, 2024).

The conceptual and operational clarity and rationality are established in this study to define donor engagement patterns. Silent donors are people who primarily watch charity-related content on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and TikTok but do not interact, comment, or share. It means they are mostly instrumentally gratified, but the excessively social-expressive aspect is absent (Han, 2021; Li & Yu, 2020). Intermittent engagers exhibit moderate levels of social and emotional satisfaction and do not engage consistently; they selectively choose to engage on the newsfeed, liking, commenting, and sharing content (Moriuchi & Murdy, 2022; Sangra & Sharma, 2024). The advocates are active content posters and sharers, which is why they exhibit a high-gratification equilibrium. It is a combination of affective and social satisfactions and relational commitment that leads to engagement transfer into donor loyalty (Bilgin & Kethuda, 2022; Veriansyah, 2024). Such differences combine empirical thresholds with theoretical concepts grounded in UGT, enabling PCA-generated factors' informational content, social and emotional gratifications, and Brand Trust to be productively related to observed behaviours.

As suggested by (Chen, 2018; Han, 2021; and Klafke *et al.*, 2021) Engagement segmentation was operationalised

through Likert-scale threshold values, which is frequently applied and methodologically conservative in social media and non-profit engagement studies. The scores for individual engagements were calculated as the average rating across behavioural, emotional, and informational engagement items. The respondents were then placed into silent donors, occasional engagers, and advocates based on predefined thresholds of the scale, rather than relative sample means. The method allows finding substantively meaningful engagement patterns without the construction of distribution-sensitive cut-offs and artificial aggregation. As in (Alessa, 2022), these thresholds are heuristic rather than deterministic, acknowledging that engagement is on a continuum rather than in discrete categories.

Significantly, such a segmentation approach is analytically conservative, as it minimises overfitting, does not inflate between-group differences, and reduces the likelihood of Type I error in subsequent group comparisons, thereby increasing clarity, reproducibility, and methodological consistency. The target group consisted of individual donors who were actively registered with charity organisations in Saudi Arabia. In order to minimise selection bias, it was necessary to use a random sampling technique, which, according to (Ahmed, 2024) guarantee an equal probability of selection and an equal probability of non-selection. The official email databases were accessed with the consent of various charity organisations.

The sample size was estimated using the Z-probability technique, which is commonly recommended when conducting a survey in a large or unknown population (Qing & Valliant, 2025). The computation was based on a 95% confidence level, a maximum variability proportion of 0.50, and an acceptable error of 6%. Based on these assumptions, the required sample size was approximately 267 respondents. Aligned with the suggestions of (Habib *et al.*, 2023), given feasibility constraints and the need to maintain high data quality, the final usable sample size was determined to be exactly 250 respondents. It exceeds the minimum levels recommended for EFA, regression, and ANOVA analyses.

A random sample of 500 donors was contacted through email invitations with the link to the survey. Of them, 280 questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 56%, which is acceptable in the context of organisational survey research. Following screening for missing values, straight-lining, and multivariate outliers using the Mahalanobis distance, 30 questionnaires were excluded, leaving a final sample of 250 valid responses. The responses are randomly divided into two subsamples for sequential analytical purposes. 40% (n = 100) were assigned to the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to construct the latent constructs of social media engagements. The case-to-item ratio in the given sample is low (12 items to 100 cases), but the given subsample provides an initial view of the factor structure and minimises the risk of overfitting in subsequent studies. The remaining 60% (n = 150) were analysed using regression and ANOVA, and statistical power was calculated using Cohen's  $f^2$  formula, yielding a power of 0.82 with three

predictors and  $\alpha = 0.05$ , which exceeds the traditional 0.80 value. This division is critical because the construct development and hypothesis testing are methodologically independent but provide sufficient power to conduct predictive and group-comparison tests.

To address non-response bias, (Kumari *et al.*, 2023) compared early (n1 = 30) and late (n2 = 30) respondents using independent-samples t-tests. There were also no significant differences, indicating minimal non-response bias. The mitigation was a random sampling approach across a number of charity organisations to eliminate selection bias. As indicated by (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2024), a Harman single-factor test was used to assess Common Method Bias (CMB), as the first factor explained less than 40% of the total variance, suggesting no severe CMB.

To study donors' loyalty within groups, respondents were grouped into three engagement categories: silent donors, occasional engagers, and advocates, based on their responses to questionnaires on social media engagement. A composite engagement score was calculated as the mean of the engagement items. Respondents with mean scores below 2.00 were considered silent donors, indicating little interaction and exposure to content related to charitable activities on social media. Means between 2.00 and less than 3.75 were classified as occasional engagers, indicating intermittent, selective behaviour such as viewing, liking, or occasional sharing. Those who scored 3.75 or higher were considered advocates, indicating high engagement, defined by frequent interaction, sharing, and supportive behaviour. The lax advocate conditioning helps reduce the threat of social desirability bias by mitigating the need to achieve near-monolithic agreement on all items, while still achieving substantively meaningful advocacy-oriented engagement. It is a data-driven design that achieves construct clarity, reproducibility, and analytical rigor in conducting ANOVA to test differences in donor loyalty across engagement patterns. Each category was assigned a frequency to confirm the adequacy of the group-by-category design, as well as to provide statistics for comparisons.

The data analysis was conducted in three steps. First, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Axis Factoring was conducted to establish the underlying dimensions of social media engagement. This method fits well in situations when theoretical structures are in the process of formation and dimensional reduction is needed to expose latent trends in survey items. Second, regression analysis is applied to test the predictive value of the identified engagement dimensions for donor loyalty, and this is appropriate for evaluating directional relationships in cross-sectional designs, as (Phahom & Mano, 2023) also suggest in non-profit social media engagement research. Lastly, as supported by (Mohammadi & Khorrami, 2023), the one-way ANOVA was applied to test differences in donor loyalty across the engagement patterns of silent donors, occasional engagers, and advocates, allowing differentiation of the groups without overly defining clusters.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Demographics Analysis

The results of the demographic profile analysis, depicted in Table 1, indicate that among the total (n=250) participants, 60% were males and 40% were females. In addition, regarding age, 28% of the participants were 26-35 years old, 26% were 36-45 years old, 22% were 46-55 years old, and 24% were 56+ years old. In addition, the average monthly income of participants was 5,001–10,000 (50%) and 10,001–20,000 (30%). Lastly, regarding the donor's category, 24% were silent donors, 36% were advocates, and 40% were occasional engagers.

Table 1. Demographics profile.

Demographic Category		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	150	60.00%
	Female	100	40.00%
Age Range	26-35	70	28.00%
	36-45	65	26.00%
	46-55	55	22.00%
	56+	60	24.00%
Monthly Income (SAR)	<5,000	50	20.00%
	5,001–10,000	125	50.00%
	10,001–20,000	75	30.00%
Donation Frequency / Type	Silent Donors	60	24.00%
	Advocates	90	36.00%
	Occasional Engagers	100	40.00%

### 4.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis

According to Table 2, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.790 indicates that the sample data is highly appropriate for further analysis. As applied by (Thao *et al.*, 2022), since it exceeds the suggested value of 0.6, it is quite possible that the correlations between the variables are robust enough to yield meaningful factors. Moreover, the Bartlett Test of Sphericity yielded a chi-square of 1019.508 with 66 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix. It means that the variables are sufficiently correlated, and the observed relationships are significant. All these findings confirm the suitability of conducting an EFA to establish constructs.

**Table 2. KMO and bartlett's test.**

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.790
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1019.508
	Df	66
	Sig.	0.000

**4.3. Rotated Component Matrix**

Table 3 shows the Rotated Component Matrix to provide a clear understanding of the factor structure and item convergence. Therefore, based on these threshold values, the elements in component 1 include Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11, and Q12, which have strong loadings above the acceptable level and provide an understanding of Social and Emotional Gratifications, showing that relational satisfaction is based on social media interactions. Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q7 represent the Informational Content aspect of Component 2 because these items focus on information-seeking behaviour, knowledge about charitable activities, and knowledge acquisition through the consumption of the content. Moreover, Q4, Q5, and Q6, with strong loadings above the acceptable level and gives the understanding of Brand Trust. Lastly, the Q13, Q14, and Q15, with robust factor loadings, as indicated in Table 3, illustrate the donor loyalty and provide a clear understanding of the Donor Loyalty construct of the study. All of these items are used to describe donors'

perceptions of the organisation's credibility, reputation, and confidence, as created by the organisation's social media presence. Past cross-loadings were determined by retaining only large loadings, which enhanced interpretability and scale consistency for later regression and ANOVA results. In general, the results of the exploratory factor analysis yield four theoretically consistent and empirically distinct constructs: Informational Content, Social and Emotional Gratifications, and Brand Trust, which can be used to test hypotheses and provide consistency in measurement, analysis, and theoretical construction. Even though Q7 and Q9 had relatively lower factor loadings (0.56 to 0.58), they were retained, as they well exceeded the cutoff for exploratory factor analysis *i.e.*, above 0.50. (Gebremedhin *et al.*, 2022) and contributed conceptually to covering the construct. In addition, (Sharma *et al.*, 2012) indicated that a loading of 0.40 or above would be satisfactory and methodologically justifiable, which also substantiates retention, whereas other researchers, such as Qi *et al.* (2022), suggested more stringent cut-offs. By keeping those items, it can provide a comprehensive representation of the constructs while being a balance between methodological rigor and concept completeness. Holding such items is methodologically defensible in exploratory research when their moderate loadings reflect strong relationships with the underlying construct. Also, both items provide valuable conceptual coverage of engagement behaviours and ensure that the measure's construct captures a wider range of engagement patterns among donors in the social media setting.

**Table 3. Rotated component matrix.**

Item	Component 1: Social and Emotional Gratifications	Component 2: Informational Content	Component 3: Brand Trust	Component 4: Donor Loyalty
Q1	-	0.729	-	-
Q2	-	0.838	-	-
Q3	-	0.661	-	-
Q4	-	-	0.818	-
Q5	-	-	0.893	-
Q6	-	-	0.682	-
Q7	-	0.578	-	-
Q8	0.608	-	-	-
Q9	0.565	-	-	-
Q10	0.817	-	-	-
Q11	0.885	-	-	-
Q12	0.871	-	-	-
Q13	-	-	-	0.658
Q14	-	-	-	0.752
Q15	-	-	-	0.851

**4.4. Total Variance**

Table 4 indicates the Total Variance Explained, which is the amount of data variance explained by each extracted component. The first component (Component 1) accounts for 43.299 of the variances, making it the most significant factor in explaining the structure of the responses. Their components 2, 3, and 4 explain 15.191, 9.684%, and 8.76% of the variance, respectively. The first 4 components collectively explain about 76.939% of the total variance and as such, the first three components hold significant portions of the underlying dimensions, thus necessitating their application in subsequent analyses.

**4.5. Hypotheses**

**H1:** Informational Content through social media has a significant positive relationship with donor loyalty in charity marketing campaigns in Saudi Arabia.

**H2:** Social and Emotional Gratifications derived from interacting with charity-related content on social media have a significant positive association with donor loyalty.

**Table 4. Variance.**

Total Variance Explained		
Component	Initial Eigenvalues	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings
	Total	% of Variance
1	5.196	43.299
2	1.823	15.191
3	1.162	9.684
4	1.093	8.765

**Table 5. ANOVA.**

Multiple Comparisons				
Dependent Variable: Donor Loyalty				
(I) Engagement Patterns		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Silent	Occasional	-0.18	0.11	0.214
	advocates	-0.45	0.12	0.004
Occasional	Silent	0.28	0.11	0.012
	advocates	-0.31	0.13	0.021
advocates	Silent	0.45	0.12	0.004
	Occasional	0.31	0.13	0.021
F-statistics		5.420		

**H3:** Brand Trust developed through charity social media engagement have a significant positive predictive association with donor loyalty.

**H4:** There is a significant difference in donor loyalty among silent donors, occasional engagers, and advocates based on their social media engagement patterns.

**4.6. ANOVA Analysis**

The results of ANOVA, Table 5 signify a statistically significant difference in donor loyalty within diverse engagement patterns comprising silent, occasional and advocates. The level of donor loyalty of advocates is much higher than that of silent donors, as well as occasional engagers as the difference in means is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The dissimilarity in the loyalty of donors between silent donors and the occasional engagements is, also statistically significant. The results indicate that the more active and advocacy focused social media engagement, the stronger donor loyalty is linked to passive or intermittent engagement, which results in relatively lower levels of donor loyalty. Lastly, the F-statistic ( $F = 5.420$ ) shows that the group effect is statistically significant, which proves differences in the loyalty to donors, specifically between advocates and less active donors depending on the pattern of engagement.

**4.7. Preliminary Diagnostics**

Before proceeding with the inferential statistics, it is mandatory to check issues of multicollinearity through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and normality through scatter plots. The results of VIF are depicted in Table 6. It can be observed that the value of VIF is found to be between 1.704 and 2.043 which is below the threshold value of 5 and indicates there is no issue of multicollinearity. In addition, normality is also tested using Shapiro-Wilk test, shown in Table 6. It can be observed that the significant values of Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test are higher than 0.05 ( $P > 0.05$ ) which fails to reject the null hypothesis and concludes that, the data is normally distributed.

Table 6. Normality test.

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic	df	Sig.	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
Informational Content	0.051	250	0.185	0.992	250	0.321
Social and Emotional Gratifications	0.039	250	0.2	0.995	250	0.642
Brand Trust	0.055	250	0.092	0.988	250	0.118
Donor Loyalty	0.044	250	0.2	0.991	250	0.287

**4.8. Cronbach’s Alpha for Reliability Testing**

The reliability of the constructs in the model of the study is tested through Cronbach’s Alpha, in which, as suggested by (Phahom & Mano, 2023) threshold value of 0.7 is considered. The results are specified in Table 7.

Table 7. Reliability analysis.

Reliability Statistics		
-	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Informational Content	0.826	4
Social and Emotional Gratifications	0.898	5
Brand Trust	0.821	3
Donor Loyalty	0.91	3

Table 8. Inter-items correlation.

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix												
-	EE1_1	EE1_2	EE1_3	EE3_1	EE3_2	EE3_3	EE2_1	EE2_2	EE2_3	DL1	DL2	DL3
EE1_1	1.000	0.658	0.540	0.292	0.342	0.329	0.551	0.492	0.427	0.504	0.384	0.475
EE1_2	0.658	1.000	0.621	0.227	0.316	0.352	0.505	0.497	0.355	0.398	0.351	0.353
EE1_3	0.540	0.621	1.000	0.254	0.390	0.309	0.378	0.465	0.426	0.427	0.377	0.362
EE3_1	0.292	0.227	0.254	1.000	0.643	0.455	0.216	0.180	0.243	0.253	0.243	0.196
EE3_2	0.342	0.316	0.390	0.643	1.000	0.615	0.228	0.237	0.337	0.317	0.269	0.248
EE3_3	0.329	0.352	0.309	0.455	0.615	1.000	0.327	0.300	0.307	0.221	0.282	0.227
EE2_1	0.551	0.505	0.378	0.216	0.228	0.327	1.000	0.738	0.638	0.495	0.505	0.513
EE2_2	0.492	0.497	0.465	0.180	0.237	0.300	0.738	1.000	0.756	0.514	0.558	0.575
EE2_3	0.427	0.355	0.426	0.243	0.337	0.307	0.638	0.756	1.000	0.469	0.494	0.509
DL1	0.504	0.398	0.427	0.253	0.317	0.221	0.495	0.514	0.469	1.000	0.801	0.729
DL2	0.384	0.351	0.377	0.243	0.269	0.282	0.505	0.558	0.494	0.801	1.000	0.784
DL3	0.475	0.353	0.362	0.196	0.248	0.227	0.513	0.575	0.509	0.729	0.784	1.000

As it can be observed from the results depicted in Table 7, the Cronbach’s Alpha value of all developed construct is found to be above 0.7 which confirms reliability of the constructs in the study.

**4.9. Validity Testing-Inter-Item Correlation**

In addition to reliability, inter-item correlation was used to test the instrument for validity. The matrix reveals that items from each specific construct (Informational Content, Social and Emotional Gratifications, Brand Trust, and Donor Loyalty, as depicted in Table 8 have moderate to high positive significant correlations with one another (between 0.38 and 0.81), cover a major portion of the same underlying concept or constructs confirming internal consistency. The correlations of items from different constructs are relatively low in support of discriminant validity. These correlations validate that all 4 item sets capture similar constructs but are not tainted by conceptual confusion. Therefore, it proved provided preliminary evidence of the construct validity, meaning that variables on which the instrument was built up properly measure this theoretical construct in this research.

**4.10. Regression Analysis**

Regression results depicted in Table 9, all three dimensions of social media engagement have a significant association with donor loyalty hence the H1, H2, and H3 are accepted. The positive and significant relationship of Informational Content with donor loyalty is ( $\beta = 0.203, p = 0.002$ ) in favour of H1. H2 is also supported by the fact that Social and Emotional Gratifications have a statistically significant but weak predictive relationship with donor loyalty ( $\beta = 0.055, p = 0.003$ ), but the effect size is relatively

smaller. The strongest predictor ( $\beta = 0.466, p = 0.000$ ) is Brand Trust which is a strong predictor in favour of H3. These findings highlight the importance of Brand Trust and information towards improving donor loyalty. Also, the regression model illustrates a considerable percentage of variance in donor loyalty ( $R^2 = 0.42$ ), which indicates that 42% of loyalty variation is predicted by informational content, social and emotional gratifications, and brand trust. Also, the overall model is found to be statistically significant ( $F = 59.41$ ), which also validates that the predictors jointly influence donor loyalty.

**Table 9. Predictive analysis.**

Coefficients						
	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.322	0.189	-	7.002	0	-
Informational Content	0.183	0.057	0.203	3.206	0.002	1.704
Social and Emotional Gratifications	0.06	0.076	0.055	2.659	0.003	2.032
Brand Trust	0.428	0.064	0.466	6.714	0	2.043
R-square	0.42					
F-statistics	59.41					

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Donor Loyalty

**5. DISCUSSION**

**5.1. Hypothesis Discussion**

**5.1.1. Informational Content and Donor Loyalty**

The acceptance of H1 indicated that Informational Content is an important factor in increasing donor loyalty in Saudi charity marketing campaigns. This is consistent with (Bilgin & Kethuda, 2022), who concluded that the sources of awareness and informativeness in charity social media posts make donations intentions stronger, and (Klafke *et al.*, 2021), who established that informational posts motivate people to engage in Brazilian NPOs. In Saudi Arabia where religion and cultural setting focus on transparency and accountability in charity donations, the donors seek the specific updates on how the funds are used and the project outcomes. In practise, these findings implies that Saudi charities are required to provide correct, clear, and complete information regarding existing charity projects and fiscal responsibility. This kind of content meets the informational needs of the donors besides enhancing an apparent credibility, which encourages recurring donations and loyalty (Liu *et al.*, 2025). The fact that granular digital content improves engagement further confirms that the level of social media updates required in Saudi donors' expectations needs is structured and of high quality.

**5.1.2. Social And Emotional Gratifications and Loyalty of Donors**

The results of the study also led to acceptance of H2, which means that social and emotional gratifications with social media participation have a statistically significant but weak predictive relationship with loyalty of donors. This aligns with (Li & Yu, 2020), who identified emotional attachment and participatory interaction motivation as what leads to further intentions of donation and (Chell *et al.*, 2024), who emphasised engagement as the crucial factor in online advocacy among millennials. The emotional gratification and social recognition are other benefits of social media in the collectivist culture of Saudi Arabia, where the recognition of the charity by society gives the social identity and ethical status.

Nonetheless, in this research, the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = 0.055$ ) shows that these gratifications are not only significant but their relationship with the loyalty of donors is rather weak as compared to Brand Trust. This implies that emotional and social interaction is a supportive and not a supportive loyalty driver. Having been shown to augment emotional involvement as illustrated by (Sangra & Sharma, 2024), it is possible that online interactions due to crisis can best motivate silent or intermittent donors to become active donors. However, such affective gratifications are not sufficient to create loyalty on their own, but work optimally

when combined with plausible information and sign of Brand Trust, which supports the theoretical stance that relationship outcomes cannot interfere with underlying Brand Trust-based motivators of donor loyalty.

### 5.1.3. Brand Trust and Loyalty of Donors

H3 has been accepted highly, as the statistically significant association of Brand Trust with loyalty of donors. According to (Bilgin & Kethuda, 2022), the mediation between donation intention and Brand Trust and brand perception was confirmed, and the increase in perceived credibility through social media activity was also confirmed by (Hartati *et al.*, 2025). The institutional reputation, religious orientation and transparent reporting are also of great interest to the donors in Saudi Arabia and transparency is one of the key factors that define the highest levels of loyalty. According to UGT theory, this falls under cognitive and value-based gratification where media consumption is used as a way of certifying organisational reliability and moral standing. The findings made by (Veriansyah, 2024; and Liu *et al.*, 2025) also support the idea that content based on Brand Trust generates long-term commitment, which means that Saudi NGOs and charitable organisations are required to consider the inclusion of Brand Trust-building factors in all their social media campaigns, making sure that the messages are culturally suitable and acceptable to donors in terms of the ethical conduct of their organisations.

### 5.1.4. Donors Loyalty Across Different Engagement Patterns

The findings of the study also led to acceptance of H4, depicting that loyalty of donors differ between the engagement patterns. For instance, advocates were found with donor loyalty than those who remain silent and those who occasionally engage. In similar arguments, (Gosal *et al.*, 2022; Sangra & Sharma, 2024) observe that the distinction between active sharing and participation and inactive observers is one of high-loyalty donors. Within a collectivist and reputation-seeking culture and within a tightly-knit community, advocates serve as social evidence in a Saudi context and therefore they strengthen moral identity and social status. According to UGT, this can be described as a conglomeration of social, emotional and value fulfilments because the advocates fulfil the recognition, belonging and moral fulfilments need by engaging in their interactions. (Chell *et al.*, 2024) also imply that advocacy-oriented campaigns have a more significant relationship with long-term commitment, which means that segment-control approaches requiring engagement patterns are essential to maximising loyalty among the entire base of donors in Saudi charity marketing. This fact illustrates that intermittent contact is not enough to make these donors loyal and the need to plan and initiate these donors through special interventions to get them to be more involved. The study identifies the non-significant differences, which shows that not all segments are equally differentiated in their loyalty to give a more specific and subtle insight into the behaviour of donors in Saudi charity campaigns.

### 5.1.5. Theoretical Contributions to Uses and Gratifications Theory

The research integrates the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) to understand the relationship between various types of social media interactions and charity communication settings and donor loyalty. Its results indicate that Brand Trust is considered as a relational product and not as a key satisfaction. In this regard, it seems that trust is built over time as donors constantly gain informational and socio-emotional satisfaction with charity content. This meaning is generally aligned with previous studies such as (Bilgin & Kethuda, 2022; Hartati *et al.*, 2025) that have suggested that trust is likely to be developed during long-term and perceived credibility during the process of non-profit communication.

The findings also reveal that the advocacy-based donors are characterised by a relatively high level of loyalty compared to silent and occasional participants. Instead of understanding advocacy as a high level of engagement frequency, the findings indicate that advocacy can be disposed of a more stable state of satisfaction based on recurrent engagement experiences. The same trends have been observed in research indicating that expressive and relational motivations play a significant role in becoming maintained participants in the online community (Chen, 2018; Chell *et al.*, 2024).

Also, the insignificant difference between silent and occasional donors suggests that less intensive levels of engagement do not necessarily imply dissatisfaction levels. Rather, it might be that both groups represent rather narrow or episodic satisfaction of engagement-related motivations. These interpretations should be approached with caution because of the exploratory nature of the study but to a limited degree they offer a small piece of information concerning how different degrees of engagement can be related to donor loyalty in the context of charity marketing through social media.

## CONCLUSION

This study has discovered that engagement with social media importantly influences donor loyalty in Saudi charity marketing but the interactions differ depending on the engagement and type of donor. Informational Content improves loyalty by fulfilling the cognitive needs, focusing more on clarity and responsibility, which is of great concern in culturally and religiously sensitive environment. Social and Emotional Gratifications bring about affective relationships, but not as strong, which underscores the fact that emotional appeal is not a guarantee of long-term loyalty in the absence of Brand Trust. Brand Trust become the leading force, as it is the Brand Trust in the organisation that makes the donors rely on the credibility of the organisation during the digital interaction. Also, discrepancies between advocates, intermittent engagers, and silent donors demonstrate that active advocacy-based behaviour can substantially enhance loyalty whereas passive engagement can sustain the minimum level of commitment without further commitment.

The results highlight the fact that successful charity campaigns should be approached through a complex combination of credible information, emotional appeal, and Brand Trust, as well as be vulnerable to the cultural values of Saudi society. This subtle interpretation of the theory and practise of non-profit digital marketing.

### LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This research paper has a number of limitations that not only represent the methodological constraints but also a subject of future research. The survey design used, first, is cross-sectional, and therefore, it does not allow making causal inferences because they cannot determine temporal change in the variables of donor engagement and loyalty; longitudinal design and panel design in future research should yield dynamic relationships. Second, the use of self-reported Likert-scale data implies the possibility of social desirability and common method bias, making it potentially worthwhile to use behavioural data, such as, raw social media interactions or donation history, to authenticate answers. Third, the sample was selected using official charity email lists, and thus, informal or digitally inactive donors are overlooked, which can limit the generalizability; future studies can use multi-channel recruitment to include more donor groups. Fourth, the methodology of split-sample testing of EFA and regression can be considered methodologically cautious, whereas the restriction of stability of factors can be introduced; further research can capitalise on bigger samples and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test the hypothesised relationships with greater strength across cultural and organisational settings. Lastly, another major limitation of the study is simply relying on regression-based predictive analysis which often overlooks concurrent analysis of measurement as well as structural association among variables of the study. Therefore, future investigations are suggested to apply Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) which would enable for more robust analysis and validation of latent constructs and analyse both direct and indirect effects in the unified framework. It will also allow to enhance causal interferences and offer in-depth insights within engagement dimensions and loyalty of donors.

### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The results provide practical advice to charity stakeholders in Saudi Arabia. At first, the organisations need to focus on the clear and informational content posted on the social media to meet the cognitive needs of the donors and build loyalty. Secondly, the campaigns must incorporate both social and emotional aspects including storytelling and interactive posts in order to appeal to the donors on an emotional level and encourage advocacy, especially among millennials and digitally active cohorts. Third, it is important to maintain a robust Brand Trust; the charities need to update on their progress regularly, financial responsibility, and alignment to the cultural and religious values. Lastly,

engagement-based segmentation of donors helps to implement target strategies by concentrating resources on advocates and grooming occasional and silent donors.

### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CMB</b>	=	Common Method Bias
<b>EFA</b>	=	Exploratory Factor Analysis
<b>KMO</b>	=	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
<b>UGT</b>	=	Uses and Gratifications Theory
<b>VIF</b>	=	Variance Inflation Factor

### AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

I.K. has contributed to conceptualization, idea generation, problem statement, methodology, results analysis, results interpretation.

### ETHICAL STATEMENT & INFORMED CONSENT

All procedures were conducted in compliance with the guidelines of the institutional research ethics committee and adhered to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the study. To protect participant confidentiality, all data were anonymized at the time of collection, and no personally identifiable information was recorded.

### REPORTING STANDARDS

STROBE guidelines are followed.

### AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

The data will be made available on reasonable request by contacting the corresponding author [I.K.].

### FUNDING

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### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise.

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Declared none.

### DECLARATION OF AI

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author used ChatGPT for language polishing. After utilizing this tool, the author carefully reviewed and refined the content as necessary and accept full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the published work.

**APPENDIX A**

**Demographics**

Demographic Variable	Options (Tick One)
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 26–35 <input type="checkbox"/> 36–45 <input type="checkbox"/> 46–55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56+
Monthly Income (SAR)	<input type="checkbox"/> <5,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001–10,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001–20,000 <input type="checkbox"/> >20,000
Donation Frequency / Type	Silent Donors
	Advocates
	Occasional Engagers

**Survey Questionnaire: Social Media Engagement and Donor Loyalty**

**Scale:** 1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statement
1	Viewing charity posts, stories, or updates on social media helps me understand the organisation’s activities, campaigns, and objectives.
2	Social media content shared by charities provides factual information that improves my awareness of their programs and initiatives.
3	The information presented in charity social media posts (such as updates, statistics, or reports) helps me stay knowledgeable about their work.
4	I observe charity content on social media to evaluate the credibility and reliability of the organisation.
5	Liking, commenting, or reacting to charity posts reflects my confidence in the charity’s integrity and initiatives.
6	Sharing charity posts or campaigns enhances my Brand Trust in the organisation and my willingness to support it consistently.
7	I use charity social media pages primarily as a source of information about ongoing projects and organisational activities.
8	Engaging with charity posts on social media gives me personal satisfaction and enjoyment.
9	Interacting with charity content online makes me feel emotionally connected to the organisation and its cause.
10	Observing others’ likes, comments, or shares on charity posts enhances my sense of social belonging and participation.
11	Social media interactions with charity content make me feel involved and valued as part of the donor community.
12	I engage with charity social media to experience emotional gratification and social connection, beyond just receiving information.
13	I intend to continue supporting this charity in the future, even when other charitable options are available.
14	I feel a sense of commitment to this charity and would prioritise donating to it again.
15	I would recommend this charity to others as a Trustworthy organisation worthy of long-term support.

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