

Does promoting student satisfaction factors, and experience via social media enhance their loyalty? The mediating role of positive eWOM and university's image

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ABSTRACT

Given that social media (SM) has become an integral part of the daily lives of university students and their main window to communicate with the world around them, higher education institutions can no longer help but adopt it as a major part of their marketing strategy and as a major communication channel to enhance their ability to retain their current students and attract new students. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the role of Social Media Marketing (SMM) in promoting student satisfaction factors at Al-Ahliyya Amman University (AAU) and improving their experience, which must have a significant successive impact, starting from enhancing the university's image, to expanding the spread of positive eWOM, and ultimately, increase students' loyalty to the university. To create a practical framework for building a marketing strategy that invests in SMM to enhance student loyalty, relevant literature was evaluated. Business school students were surveyed using a paper questionnaire distributed to students to increase interest and accuracy in answering, to extract conclusions from the data and model variables, a structural equation modelling using Smart-PLS was used. The survey results indicate that (AAU) has not invested sufficiently in promoting some of the satisfaction factors of its students and improving their experience. But in general, it affected somewhat positively the loyalty of its students. The research has important theoretical and practical implications.

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1. Introduction

SMM has become one of the most important promotional activities in light of the intensification of competition, especially in educational institutions, where it is assumed that its important role in linking customers(students) to brands (Okazaki et al., 2015), achieving behavioral responses such as satisfaction and enhancing it, and creating long-term relationships with current students (Sano, 2014) and attracting new students (Ashburn, 2007). But at the same time, many universities are experiencing a special kind of conflict related to the existence of two generations, one of which is represented by university administrations that view information technology as a new phenomenon, and the millennial generation (today's students) who grew up during the development of information technology, especially SM, which they live in their daily lives. Many university administrations may not pay much attention to it, and if they do, they use it, but with the contents and tools of traditional media. Hence, we can only acknowledge that SM has become an integral part of the daily lives of university students and is the main communication channel that affects them. Therefore, no university can ever neglect to invest in it as a main promotional tool because of its credibility, high trust,

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breadth and speed of spread, and effectiveness, especially among the younger generation. and low costs. When it invests it, but in an ineffective way, not only will that university lose one of the most effective tools to influence the behavior of its current students in its favor and to attract new students, but it will also allow competing universities to be the only ones to exploit it to attract more new students to its advantage. The other side of the problem is that these university administrations perhaps still view universities as producers of educational services and not as creating an experience that a student wants to live at the university, as satisfaction is a complex concept in education because it consists of several dimensions (factors) (Richardson, 2005). It is not limited to educational quality; Other factors are no less important and desired by young students today. Therefore, some universities may spend huge sums of money in vain because they promote some factors that may not constitute the decisive factors in deciding to join the university for many new students and do not ultimately enhance the sufficiency of the loyalty of current students, especially if we know many private universities are similar in terms of the quality of their teaching service. In the context of the role of SM as a marketing tool, most previous studies focused on their impact through its marketing dimensions in general (such as entertainment, interaction, modernity, customization, and word of mouth...), on some variables such as its direct impact on achieving customer loyalty (Ebrahim, 2020; Sharawneh, 2020; Nabi et al., 2021). Other research has examined its impact on various other variables, such as its direct impact on brand awareness (Seo & Park, 2018; Bilgin, 2018; Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2018), brand image (Heskiano et al., 2020; Kazaishvili & Khmiadashvili, 2022), word of mouth (Jackson, 2011; Akhtar, 2011) and its impact on loyalty through brand image (Heskiano et al., 2020). In this study, another approach was followed, based on showing and highlighting the factors of student satisfaction that constituted the decisive factors in their decision to choose the university and studying the role of SMM in carrying out promotional activities that aim to enhance those factors to retain current students and attract new students, which was not studied by previous studies on the one hand, and studying the effect of this promotion in improving the student experience and thus creating an impact and interaction between the university image and positive eWOM and loyalty to the university on the other hand. Therefore, the problem of the study can be summarized in the following question: Has the SMM at Al-Ahliyya Amman University (AAU) succeeded in broadcasting attractive and convincing promotional messages that highlight and enhance student satisfaction factors in their minds and improve their experience, thus enhancing the university's image in their perception and what this ultimately represents in terms of reflections on expanding the scope of positive eWOM and enhancing student loyalty? Accordingly, this research contributes to adopting a new approach to highlighting the important role of SMM in universities to enhance students' loyalty to the university by improving their satisfaction factors and increasing its attractiveness in their minds, and hearts through attractive content supported by Images and videos, which enhance the student's university experience, whether on the rational or emotional side. This is reflected in the reputation and image of the university in their minds, and all of this creates the collective emotional impact of the university community that ultimately expands the spread of positive eWOM about the university.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The activities that take place online to create marketing content and share it on social media are called (SMM) (Ibrahim et al., 2020). But for educational institutions to achieve the marketing goals of SM, they must be creative in creating updated content, that is relevant, reliable, interesting, and entertaining with high-quality videos and images to attract students to view the page (Seo & Park, 2018). Facilitates interaction, content sharing, and collaboration with its students encouraging them to spread positive eWOM on SM among their peers (Erdoğan & Cicek, 2012). On the other hand, student satisfaction is considered one of the most important reasons for universities to maintain their markets and the main reason for the success of their business (Austin & Pervaiz, 2017), as it enables them to achieve profits and expand their markets. Achieving student satisfaction is often considered a necessary condition for achieving their loyalty (Suyanto et al., 2019; Chandra et al., 2019), forming a good basis for expanding positive eWOM about the university directly (Alwi & Kitchen, 2014), also affects improving the student experience and the university's image (Alhaza et al., 2021; Dehghan et al., 2014). Therefore, there is an urgent need for universities - especially those operating in highly competitive markets - to work to achieve distinction from competitors and constantly enhance their competitive advantage by achieving the satisfaction of their students to retain them and attract new students. As mentioned previously, satisfaction in the context of education is a complex concept because it consists of several dimensions (factors). Therefore, in this research, we have benefited from the results of previous research to determine the factors of student satisfaction in private universities, we considered them the basis for conducting an exploratory study through several focus groups to determine the nature of the factors of student satisfaction in Business school at (AAU), this is in preparation for revealing the promotional role of SM in enhancing it and its repercussive effects on a group of relevant variables as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Results of the exploratory research

Sequence	Results of the exploratory research	Results of previous research
1	Economic factors	(Haron et al., 2017; Connie et al., 2022)
2	Education Quality	(Alhaza et al., 2021; Gao et al., 2021).
3	University Reputation	(Rudhumbu et al., 2017; Connie et al., 2022; Huong & Khoa, 2019).
4	University life	(Ali & Ahmed, 2018; Santoso et al., 2019).
5	Administrative Service Quality	(Hanssen & Solvoll, 2015; Alhaza et al., 2021; Ali & Ahmed, 2018)

2.1. Promoting satisfaction factors via SMM and improving enhanced student experience due to SM promotion

Economic factors (The tuition fees): The student expects to get the highest return for the money, effort, and time he spends during his studies (Sharabi, 2013), so it plays an important role in determining and influencing his level of satisfaction with his studies at the university (Dao & Thorpe, 2015). Study costs extend to a range of financial aspects beyond tuition fees, including scholarships, loans, grants, etc... that are also considered to be of high importance to students (Dunnett et al., 2012; Rodic et al., 2012). Therefore, many previous studies have found a significant impact of study costs on the level of student satisfaction, (Connie et al., 2022). As for **education quality**, most private universities in Jordan strive to improve the quality of education, but we cannot notice the existence of large differences between them, with some exceptions. Many of the administrations of these universities agree that it is the most important factor in attracting students (Rutkauksiene et al., 2010), an important indicator for creating satisfaction among students (Karna & Julin, 2015). Regarding **university reputation**, it reflects a set of images about an organization, created over a long period based on its identity, performance, and how consumers perceive its activities (Argenti & Drunkenmiller, 2004). Due to increasing competition and the absence of differences in quality, price, and benefits, some consider the factor that has the greatest impact on the consumer's decision-making process to be the positive image and reputation of the organization's brand (Barich & Kottler, 1991). Therefore, much research has found that the university's reputation plays an important role in achieving student satisfaction and thus students choose the university (Kusumawati, 2013; Qazi et al., 2021). Furthermore, **university life** is located within the framework of an external physical environment represented by (parks, sports facilities, etc.) and recreational facilities (theatres, restaurants, buffets, etc.), and within the framework of a social environment as Well, all of which play a significant role in achieving their satisfaction (Hanssen & Solvoll, 2015), is no less important than the quality of education. Therefore, many successful universities invest in this factor and work to enhance it by activating extra-curricular activities. Events recreational activities, implementing it in a modern and creative way that mimics the lifestyle of the younger generation so that it helps build more positive relationships between students and the university, thus maximizing their cognitive and emotional development, so previous research revealed a relationship between students' university life and satisfaction (Agrey & Lampadan, 2014). They also found a fundamental impact of university life on the university's image (Alhaza et al., 2021; Powers et al., 2019) and the student's university experience (Kim et al., 2016; Powers et al., 2019). On the other hand, **administrative service quality** is represented by the activities carried out by university employees to deal with students' requirements and answer their inquiries to facilitate their academic activities. Successful universities invest in information technology to facilitate, accelerate, and raise the quality of services provided to students, which leaves a positive impression on their minds about their university (Sidrat, 2019). Therefore, many studies have found an impact on the quality of administrative services provided to students to their satisfaction with the university (Ali et al., 2016; Wong et al., 2016). According to what was mentioned above, in general, many researchers have found a noticeable impact of student satisfaction on improving their experience, including (Alhaza et al., 2021; Dehghan et al., 2014), as it was revealed that there is an impact of SM on the student experience (Ayoub & Balawi, 2022). Based on this, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: *There is a statistically significant impact of promoting Economic factors via SMM in improving enhanced student experience due to SM promotion.*

H2: *There is a statistically significant impact of promoting education quality via SMM in improving enhanced student experience due to SM promotion.*

H3: *There is a statistically significant impact of promoting university reputation via SMM in improving enhanced student experience due to SM promotion.*

H4: *There is a statistically significant impact of promoting university life via SMM in improving enhanced student experience due to SM promotion.*

H5: *There is a statistically significant impact of promoting the quality of administrative service via SMM in improving enhanced student experience due to SM promotion.*

2.2. Improving enhanced student experience due to SM promotion, University's image, Positive eWOM, and Student's loyalty

Experience as a marketing concept aims to create a unique, enjoyable, and unforgettable experience. It occurs when the customer communicates directly or indirectly with the organization and is reflected in the formation of his sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational values (Rojas et al., 2021). It is only an internal and subjective response resulting from this communication (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). It accompanies the student from his first contact with the university and continues even after graduation. It is linked to all his communication and interactions that take place with all the university's services and the university's physical and social environment, which affects the course of his daily life there. The importance of managing the student experience lies in its impact on their loyalty (Rojas et al., 2021) and creating a competitive advantage that is not easy to imitate due to its comprehensive nature through the student's journey within multiple and complex touchpoints (Salviotti et al., 2021), as that customers want not products but satisfactory experiences, thus with the increasing use of SM in the world, companies have begun to make efforts to enhance the customer experience through SM platforms and websites in general (Rose et al., 2011), as

this experience has a social and cultural character and also has a sensory appeal, as the pages contain images and videos related to various factors of student satisfaction, leading to increased student engagement and improving their university experience (Kim et al., 2021), encouraging them to share them with audiences outside the university including prospective students (Jacobson et al., 2020). The key technique here is how to deliver it in a way that promotes improving the student experience (Nagy & Hajdu, 2021; Pütter, 2017). Accordingly, previous research revealed that there are several effects of the experience on a group of variables, including the image of the brand (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Liu et al., 2021), eWOM (Rehman et al., 2022; Pandey & Deshwal, 2018), and student loyalty to the university (Magasi & Bwemelo, 2022; Borishade et al., 2021; Wangania et al., 2022). Based on this, we hypothesize:

H₆: *There is a statistically significant impact of the enhanced student experience due to SM promotion, on the university's image.*

H₇: *There is a statistically significant impact of the enhanced student experience due to SM promotion, on Positive eWOM.*

H₈: *There is a statistically significant impact of the enhanced student experience due to SM promotion, on Student's loyalty.*

2.3. University's image, Positive eWOM, and Student's loyalty

Most literature agrees that image is a cognitive phenomenon that is formed by rational and emotional interpretation and has cognitive components, beliefs, emotional components, and feelings (Cachón-Rodríguez et al., 2019). Therefore, university image is considered a function of the cumulative effect of student satisfaction (Fornell, 1992). Thus, Appio et al. (2013); Ali and Ahmed (2018): found that when students are satisfied, their perception of the university improves, which positively influences the university's corporate image in society. Successful universities exploit an important SMM role to attract student's attention to the university's unique student satisfaction factors, to enhance them and always be in their minds, to improve the university's image and enhance their loyalty to it (Erdogmus & Ergun, 2016), therefore many researchers have found that a positive university image has a strong impact on students' loyalty to the university (Bilgin, 2018; Ebrahim, 2020; Heskiano et al., 2020). Therefore, it will have the ability to retain its students and prevent their dropout (Badeggi & Muda, 2021). by increasing its competitiveness and establishing its presence in the highly competitive education market (Chandra et al., 2019;). The positive image of the university helps students increase their possibility of obtaining unique job opportunities in the labor market (Polat et al., 2016), and thus the positive eWOM about the university will be expanded (Cachón-Rodríguez et al., 2019; Casidy & Wymer, 2015), as studies revealed that the image strongly affects eWOM (Nguyen et al., 2021; Schlesinger et al., 2023), thus, increasing the attraction of new students to the university (Nguyen, 2016). Based on this, we propose the following hypotheses:

H₉: *There is a statistically significant impact of the university's image on positive eWOM.*

H₁₀: *There is a statistically significant impact of the university's image on student's loyalty.*

2.4. Positive eWOM, and Student Loyalty

Several studies have reported that student satisfaction increases the impact and spread of word of mouth (Sumartias & Nuraryo, 2017; Mahmoud et al., 2017), as well as SM compared to traditional tools (Hudson et al., 2015; Teng et al., 2017), where consumers can post visual elements such as photos and videos that allow other consumers to understand the information better (Erkan & Evan, 2016). Companies have begun investing through SM in turning consumers into promoters by motivating them to spread eWOM in their favor (Ismail, 2017). Consumers have become active influencers and have a leadership role in marketing. Thus, some of the powers of brands have been transferred directly to consumers via SM. Therefore, eWOM influences the formation of potential customers' attitudes (Martin & Lueg, 2013) and pushes them to make compatible purchasing decisions with eWOM is a trustworthy source (Berger, 2014). Previous research findings have revealed that eWOM affects brand loyalty (Hossain & Sakib, 2016; Bong, 2017; Suhud, 2021). Based on this, we hypothesize:

H₁₁: *There is a statistically significant impact of positive eWOM on student's loyalty.*

2.5. Student's loyalty

The university's loyalty is achieved by building an exclusive and positive image in its students' minds. It consists of two types: behavioral loyalty, which is represented by repurchasing (registration for graduate studies), and attitudinal loyalty, which is represented by creating an emotional attachment to the brand (Mandhachitara & Poolthong, 2011). The importance of loyalty increases considering highly competitive education markets, as it protects the university from the dropout of its students and increases the attraction of new students (Calvo-Porrall & Lang, 2015; Sasmita & Mohd Suki, 2015). Thus, it increases its market share at lower costs (Althuwaini, 2022), and achieves more profitability for the university (Abdullaeva, 2020) and all because of loyalty. It must more than enhance student satisfaction and improve the image of the university (Arasli et al., 2005) and also lead to the expansion of positive eWOM about the university among its current students and alumni (Bilgin, 2018) and, as a result, must ultimately lead to a growth in its competitive position in the market and provide a kind of strategic competitive advantage for the university (Yan, 2017). SMM activities affect brand loyalty (Ibrahim 2021; Ibrahim 2019). It affects consumers' experiences

and strengthens their relationship with service providers, leading to improving their behavioral responses, which is represented by brand loyalty (Laroche et al., 2012). Finally, in addition to what was previously mentioned about the effect of eWOM on loyalty, many other studies have found that there is also a positive effect of student loyalty on the spread of positive eWOM (Sumartias & Nurryo, 2017; Rehman et al., 2022) because if a student is loyal to his institution, he will spread positive word about it.

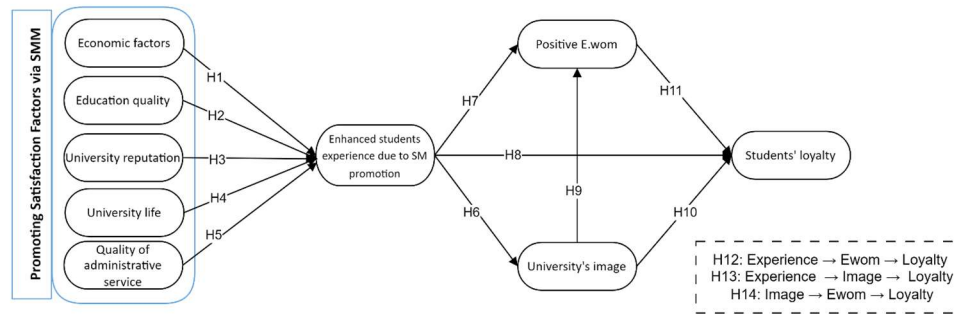


Fig. 1. Proposed research model

H12: Positive eWOM mediates the relationship between enhanced student experience due to social media promotion and student's loyalty.

H13: University's image mediates the relationship between enhanced student experience due to social media promotion and student's loyalty.

H14: Positive eWOM mediates the relationship between university image's and student's loyalty.

3. Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method approach, beginning with exploratory research followed by a quantitative survey. The initial exploratory phase involved conducting focus groups to determine the most effective promotional factors on social media that enhance students' experiences. These focus groups allowed for in-depth discussions among participants, yielding five key promotional factors: Economic Factors, Education Quality, University Reputation, and University Life, along with Administrative Service Quality. The insights from this phase informed the subsequent quantitative phase. Following the exploratory research, a structured survey was distributed to students at the Business School of Al-Ahliyya Amman University. The survey was conducted between May 26, 2024, and June 9, 2024. A total of 218 students were randomly selected, with the questionnaire distributed physically on campus. The questionnaire comprised two sections: the first collected demographic information, including age, gender, and academic year; the second section measured the study's variables using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). The results of the respondents are represented in (Table 2: respondents' profile). Thereafter we conducted the data analysis, Smart-PLS was used to assess both the measurement model and the structural model.

Table 2
Respondents' profile

Age Group	18-20	102	46.8%
	21-23	66	30.3%
	24-26	38	17.4%
	27 and above	12	5.5%
Gender	Male	122	56.0%
	Female	96	44.0%
Academic year	First	76	34.9%
	Second	52	23.9%
	Third	53	24.3%
	Forth	37	17.0%

The respondent profile in Table 2 showed that the majority of participants are aged 18-20 (46.8%), with smaller proportions in the 21-23 (30.3%), 24-26 (17.4%), and 27 and above (5.5%). The gender distribution is relatively balanced, with 56.0% male and 44.0% female students. In terms of academic year, the largest group is from the first year (34.9%), followed by the third year (24.3%), second year (23.9%), and fourth year (17.0%).

4. Analysis

In the analysis, a two-step approach was employed, assessing first the measurement model to validate the constructs, followed by the structural model to test the hypothesized relationships, as recommended by Hair et al. (2019).

Table 3

Convergent validity

Factors	Items	Loadings	α	CR	AVE	Mean
Quality of administrative service	Admn1	0.78	0.83	0.89	0.66	2.86
	Admn2	0.845				
	Admn3	0.836				
	Admn4	0.79				
Economic factors	Eco1	0.848	0.80	0.88	0.71	2.84
	Eco2	0.839				
	Eco3	0.844				
Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion	Exp1	0.82	0.82	0.88	0.64	2.95
	Exp2	0.725				
	Exp3	0.856				
	Exp4	0.8				
University's image	Img1	0.842	0.83	0.89	0.67	2.89
	Img2	0.866				
	Img3	0.803				
	Img4	0.749				
University life	Lif1	0.76	0.75	0.86	0.67	3.03
	Lif2	0.827				
	Lif3	0.864				
Student's loyalty	Loy1	0.785	0.86	0.90	0.65	2.84
	Loy2	0.766				
	Loy3	0.847				
	Loy4	0.806				
	Loy5	0.823				
Education quality	Qual1	0.742	0.82	0.88	0.65	2.94
	Qual2	0.838				
	Qual3	0.856				
	Qual4	0.775				
University reputation	Rep1	0.81	0.85	0.89	0.63	3.01
	Rep2	0.754				
	Rep3	0.759				
	Rep4	0.81				
	Rep5	0.825				
Positive eWOM	ewom1	0.798	0.84	0.89	0.68	2.77
	ewom2	0.834				
	ewom3	0.843				
	ewom4	0.813				

Table 3 presented evidence of convergent validity across several factors. All Cronbach's alpha (α) values exceeded the threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010), indicating acceptable reliability for all constructs. Furthermore, composite reliability (CR) values for each factor also surpass the commonly recommended minimum of 0.70. The average variance extracted (AVE) values range from 0.63 to 0.71, exceeding the 0.50 threshold (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Additionally, factor loadings for all items exceeded the recommended value of 0.70. Finally, the mean scores across all factors range from 2.77 to 3.03, indicating moderate responses on the Likert-type scale used in the study. Overall, these results support the constructs' convergent validity based on the item loadings, reliability, and AVE values.

Table 4

Discriminant validity (Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT))

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Quality of administrative service									
2. Economic factors	0.39								
3. Education quality	0.53	0.59							
4. Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion	0.38	0.51	0.45						
5. Student's loyalty	0.19	0.25	0.34	0.26					
6. University life	0.35	0.32	0.17	0.27	0.08				
7. University reputation	0.48	0.44	0.48	0.43	0.30	0.32			
8. University's image	0.30	0.34	0.34	0.24	0.46	0.20	0.30		
9. Positive eWOM	0.19	0.27	0.28	0.22	0.50	0.12	0.16	0.45	

As shown in Table 4 HTMT values were below the commonly accepted threshold of 0.85 (Hair et al., 2010) implying that discriminant validity was established, in other words, the constructs in the model are distinct from one another and measure different underlying concepts as intended.

Table 5
Direct hypothesis

	Path	VIF	β	STDEV	T value	P value	Result
H1.	Economic factors → Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion	1.40	0.232	0.076	3.059	0.002	Accepted
H2.	Education quality → Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion	1.53	0.166	0.077	2.156	0.032	Accepted
H3.	University reputation → Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion	1.37	0.170	0.066	2.579	0.010	Accepted
H4.	University life → Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion	1.15	0.076	0.064	1.181	0.238	Rejected
H5.	Quality of administrative service → Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion	1.39	0.074	0.076	0.973	0.331	Rejected
H6.	Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion → University's image	1.00	0.215	0.071	3.004	0.003	Accepted
H7.	Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion → Positive eWOM	1.05	0.116	0.065	1.800	0.072	Rejected
H8.	Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion → Student's loyalty	1.06	0.114	0.070	1.634	0.103	Rejected
H9.	University's image → Positive eWOM	1.05	0.356	0.067	5.327	0.000	Accepted
H10.	University's image → Student's loyalty	1.20	0.247	0.068	3.629	0.000	Accepted
H11.	Positive eWOM → Student's loyalty	1.19	0.316	0.070	4.524	0.000	Accepted

In Table 5. The variance inflation factor (VIF) test was analyzed, and the results ranged from 1.00 to 1.53, all well below the commonly accepted threshold of 5.0 (Hair et al., 2010), meaning that multicollinearity was not a concern in the model. As for the direct hypotheses testing; hypotheses H1 through H3 were accepted, “Economic factors” ($\beta = 0.232$, $p = 0.002$), “Education quality” ($\beta = 0.166$, $p = 0.032$), and “University reputation” ($\beta = 0.170$, $p = 0.010$) all had positive and significant effects on “Enhanced students' experience due to SM promotion”. In contrast, H4 and H5, which examined the influence of “University life” ($\beta = 0.076$, $p = 0.238$) and “Quality of administrative service” ($\beta = 0.074$, $p = 0.331$) on “Enhanced students' experience due to SM promotion.” were rejected due to non-significant p-values.

For H6 through H8, mixed results were found. For H6, the impact of “Enhanced students' experience due to SM promotion” on “University's image”, was accepted ($\beta = 0.215$, $p = 0.003$), showing a significant positive effect. However, H7 and H8, which explored the effect of “Enhanced students' experience” on “Positive eWOM” ($\beta = 0.116$, $p = 0.072$) and “Student's loyalty” ($\beta = 0.114$, $p = 0.103$), were rejected, as their p-values were above the 0.05. Finally, hypotheses H9 through H11 were all accepted. “University's image” positively affected both “Positive eWOM” ($\beta = 0.356$, $p < 0.001$) and “Student's loyalty” ($\beta = 0.247$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, “Positive eWOM” had a strong positive effect on “Student's loyalty” ($\beta = 0.316$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 6
Mediation hypotheses

	Path	β	STDEV	T value	P value	Result
H12.	Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion → Positive eWOM → Student's loyalty	0.04	0.02	1.59	0.11	Rejected
H13.	Enhanced students experience due to SM promotion → University's image → Student's loyalty	0.05	0.02	2.32	0.02	Accepted
H14.	University's image → Positive eWOM → Student's loyalty	0.11	0.03	3.33	0.00	Accepted

In examining the mediation hypotheses Table 6 revealed varied outcomes. Hypothesis H12, which proposed that an enhanced student experience due to social media promotion would positively influence electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and subsequently enhance student loyalty, was rejected ($\beta = 0.04$, $p = 0.11$). In contrast, H13, showed that an enhanced student experience, mediated by the university's image, would positively impact student loyalty, was accepted ($\beta = 0.05$, $p = 0.02$). Similarly, H14, which hypothesized that the university's image would positively affect e-WOM and, in turn, influence student loyalty, was also supported ($\beta = 0.11$, $p = 0.00$), with the strong significance of the results ($p < 0.01$) reinforcing this mediated relationship. Regarding the nature of mediation, the direct effect of enhanced student experience on student loyalty was non-significant, indicating that the relationship between these variables is fully mediated by the university's image. In other words, the student experience influences loyalty exclusively through its effect on the university's image, which aligns with the conditions for full mediation as described by Baron and Kenny (1986). On the other hand, hypothesis H14 is considered to be partial mediation, as the university's image significantly influences positive eWOM, as well as affecting student loyalty.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Perhaps the importance of this research lies primarily in shedding light on an issue or problem that either the senior university administrators do not pay any attention to, or deal with as a secondary topic, and in most cases, it is dealt with in a spontaneous and unscientific manner. The other side of the problem is the failure of senior management to shift to the fact that students seek to live an unforgettable university experience and not just a high-quality educational service. Therefore, this study investigated an important issue related to the important role of SMM (AAU) in promoting its students' satisfaction factors, enhancing their awareness and evaluation of them, and demonstrating their essential impact in improving their university experience, which in turn will leave a significant cascading effect starting from improving the university's image, to expanding the spread of positive eWOM, and finally enhancing student loyalty to the university. It reached a series of important results, with theoretical and practical

implications. According to hypotheses 1 to 3, they all led to a positive and significant improvement in the student experience due to promotion via SM. They are consistent, respectively, with the study (Connie et al., 2022) regarding the impact of the economic factor, with the study (Karna & Julin, 2015) regarding the impact of education quality, and with the study (Qazi et al., 2021) regarding the impact of the university's reputation. This result indicates the success of the university's SM, whether in terms of the topics that formed the promotional content for these factors or in terms of the creation and presentation of this content, which enabled it to reinforce them in the minds of students, which contributed to enhancing their experience. In contrast, H4 and H5 were rejected, showing no significant impact on improving student experience, which is not consistent with the Study (Kim et al., 2016; Powers et al., 2019) for the impact of university life, and is not consistent with the Study (Wong et al., 2016) for the impact of administrative service quality, respectively. The absence of the impact of these two factors means that the university's SM either did not find or succeed in choosing the influential topics that formed the promotional content or failed to create and present them, or for both reasons together, which led to their inability to contribute to enhancing the student experience. For H6 through H8, mixed results were found. For H6, the impact of "Enhanced students' experience due to SM promotion" on "University's image," was accepted. It is consistent with the study (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Liu et al., 2021). This result can be interpreted as the success of the university's SM in enhancing the students' experience due to the quality of the content related to topics that have a greater impact on the university's image (such as the quality of education, the university's reputation, etc.), and thus it was able to enhance this image in the minds of students. However, Hypotheses H7 and H8 were rejected, as the enhanced student experience improvement due to SM promotion did not impact positive e-WOM, which is inconsistent with the study (Rehman et al., 2022). This result can be explained by the fact that the university's SM did not succeed in creating or highlighting promotional content in terms of the content topic, especially what is more related to students' daily lives at the university, as well as their positive and loving interaction with university staff, etc., or due to the poor quality of content creation, design, and presentation style, or for all reasons together, which did not motivate students to participate and interact more with each other, as well as with university staff and other parties outside the university, and thus did not motivate the spread of positive e-WOM. Likewise, improving the student experience did not directly affect students' loyalty to the university, it is not consistent with the study (Magasi & Bwemelo, 2022). Finally, all hypotheses from H9 to H11 were accepted. "University image" positively affected both "positive e-WOM" which is consistent with the study (Nguyen et al., 2021; Schlesinger et al., 2023). and "student loyalty" which is consistent with the study (Ebrahim, 2020; Heskiano et al., 2020). In addition, "e-WOM" had a strong positive effect on "student loyalty" which is consistent with the study (Hossain & Sakib, 2016; Bong, 2017; Suhud, 2021). Regarding the mediation hypotheses, diverse results were revealed. Hypothesis H12, which suggested that improved student experience due to SM promotion would positively influence e-WOM and thus enhance student loyalty, was rejected. This result is not consistent with the study (Rehman et al., 2022; Bong, 2017; Suhud, 2021). As a result of the reasons explained previously and related to the lack of effect of the student experience on stimulating positive e-WOM among students, the latter was unable to enhance the effects of the student experience on student loyalty. In contrast, H13 showed that improved student experience, mediated by university image, would positively influence student loyalty, and was accepted and consistent with the study (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022; Heskiano et al., 2020). This can be explained by saying that due to the positive impact of enhancing the student experience in improving the university image in the minds of students that was previously mentioned, the latter worked to support the effects of the student experience on their loyalty to the university. Similarly, H14, which assumed that university image would positively influence e-WOM and thus influence student loyalty, was supported and is consistent with the study (Schlesinger et al., 2023; Bong, 2017; Suhud, 2021). This means that the mediating variable, e-WOM, was able to support the effect of the university's image on student's loyalty to the university.

5.1 Theoretical implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the existing literature because we have pointed out the essential role that previous studies have not noticed, which can be played by promotion through university SM in enhancing the satisfaction factors of current students, which reflect their motivations and constitute the decisive factors for their decision to join the university, thus enhancing their experience and loyalty to the university, which has very positive and influential repercussions in attracting new students. She also pointed out the need for the emergence of a new administrative thought among university administrations by shifting from the short-sightedness of focusing on what they provide to students as merely a product (education service) and moving to what should be provided to students as a broader than that and is an integrated university experience, as our study revealed a change in the behavior of today's millennial students through their rearrangement and emphasis on the factors critical to their decision to enroll in university, expanding it to more than just focusing on the quality of education, the possibility of finding job opportunities after graduation, and tuition fees, to other factors that are no less important and lead them to Live an unforgettable university life experience, especially if we know that students do not find significant differences in the perceived quality of education among many private universities in Jordan. This study also contributes to revealing the essential role today in enhancing the experience of current students (the millennial generation) due to its ability to create significant rebound effects, starting from enhancing the university's image among current students and motivating them to spread positive eWOM, all the way to improve their loyalty to the university, which plays a very important role in influencing the decisions of new students to enroll in the university. In addition, this study worked to shed light on a pivotal administrative issue related to higher education institutions and related to the existence of a gap between traditional university administrations and young students of the information

technology generation regarding the promotional content of student satisfaction factors in terms of the nature of its topics and the method and style of its presentation, which was supposed to be consistent with What the younger generation (students) want to see and through the university SM platforms that are most suitable for them. This study revealed the very important role that SM can play in higher education institutions, such that it cannot be considered a mere supportive activity that falls outside the university's marketing strategy, but rather it has become an important integral part of it, and therefore the necessity of managing SM platforms scientifically and allocating all the resources necessary for their success in preparing their plans, implementing them, monitoring them, and evaluating their results through a specialized and competent cadre. Ultimately, this study contributes to highlighting the shortcomings in the university administration officials' view of the content produced by users (students) as independent contributors to the promotional activities of the university's SM sites, while there is a need to transform them into partners who are managed, directed and motivated indirectly by the university administration so that their efforts are invested in serving the marketing objectives of the university's SM sites in a more disciplined and effective manner.

5.2 Practical implications

University administration must realize that digital technologies have become integral to students' daily lives and that they think, learn, and communicate differently than their predecessors. Therefore, SMM has become an important means for universities to communicate and interact with students to achieve a range of marketing goals, including enhancing the satisfaction and loyalty of current students, which will positively reflect on attracting potential students and effectively answering their questions, why should they choose the university? This will positively affect its revenues (Demircioglu et al. 2021). For this and other reasons, university administration officials should consider SMM an important component of their marketing strategy. Based on this, the (AAU) administration should first work to determine the satisfaction factors of current students, which form the basis of the decisive motivations and incentives for their enrollment in the university and distinguish the university from other competing universities from their point of view, Therefore effective promotion of it via SM must positively reflect on enhancing the experience of current students, the image of the university in their minds, and their loyalty, and expanding the positive eWOM. At the same time, it will lead to motivating, and arousing, motivations among potential students to study at the university, as many studies have proven, including the study by Galan et al., 2015, that information and reviews on SM greatly affect the latter. Social media (AAU) must focus its direction on promoting those factors that students see as important factors for their satisfaction with the university and their sense of belonging to it, which are university life, and the quality of administrative services, that they did do not feel or realize through social media (AAU) and all of that by creating attractive and interesting content for them, especially through videos so that it addresses topics in the same context that lead to their feeling and sense of pleasure and entertainment, and to Feel comfortable Respected and Loving when interacting with university employees and access to services. Administrative and thus stir their feelings of longing for their university, which enhances within them and keeps a wonderful and unforgettable university experience in their minds. First and foremost, when campus tours show students happy and enjoying together in all the university's facilities, starting with their presence in the picturesque and cheerful green environment, buffets, restaurants, gym halls, and dormitories for female students...etc. Additionally, posting "day in the life" videos that show students engaged in the daily pursuit of being students gives viewers a real and realistic preview of life at the university and, will appear more authentic and engaging than written student testimonials. Showcasing the stories and testimonials of current students and alumni, highlighting their growth journeys, challenges, and learnings, is a powerful way to connect emotionally with university SM followers, whether through humor, inspiration, or pride, including stories of alumni success in their post-graduation life and their acquisition of great job opportunities. Event and celebration videos should also be presented as a significant event of personal and professional achievement and should successfully convey a sense of joy, happiness, and a desire to participate in it, such as a welcome party for new students, a festival, an open day, charitable and community events, a graduation ceremony, etc. Extracurricular activities such as competitions, shows, sports, cultural and academic matches, and concerts are also important, which show the university as a place full of activity, fun, and entertainment, and enhance students' sense of participation. The AAU administration should also focus on displaying videos that show how easy and smooth it is for students to complete their transactions and receive advice and answers to their inquiries from university staff working in a quality, comfortable physical work environment equipped with all advanced information technology equipment. It is also necessary to create videos that focus on the nature of the relationship based on respect, friendliness, and love between students and university staff. Finally, when AAU encourages sharing photos and testimonials of faculty and staff members on the university's SM, it will be great material to engage students and show campus staff as more connected to their students. In this context, social media (AAU) must realistically realize that it targets the young generation, which is characterized as a visual generation that is attracted to and focuses its attention on content transmitted through images and to a greater extent through videos, especially short ones, with a fast pace, creative and innovative ideas, and directed and photographed in a professional, influential and spontaneous manner at the same time, as they enjoy greater credibility and trust from their point of view, especially when presenting university life for students, the way university employees deal with them, and the quality of administrative services provided by them. Therefore, it will be able to present these topics in a way that arouses emotions, tells stories, creates a sense of authenticity, and clarifies concepts in a way that text or even images simply cannot match, thus leading to an increase in the sensory experience. All of this is through SM platforms compatible with this purpose, which are Instagram, Instagram Stories and Reels, YouTube, YouTube Shorts, Facebook (Galan et al. 2015), and TikTok,

but the latter is legally prohibited in Jordan. To get the desired impact from videos, they must be brief, engaging, relevant to the content, and achieve a balance between informative content and visual appeal, taking into account the process of optimizing these videos to suit different platforms and also accompanied by music and sound effects that enhance the mood and evoke feelings and emotions related to the content. What distinguishes visual information is that it gives the viewer a sense of authenticity and allows him to experience reality in the virtual world and display the real experiences of others, which increases trust and credibility in it and that students perceive, recognize, and remember it faster and better than textual information, and at the same time provides social interaction features such as commenting, liking, sharing and following, which allows students to interact with each other and with those responsible for social media (AAU) and express themselves as well. Videos are also the best way to enhance the experiences of current students and shape the expected experiences in the minds of new students, which gives them a sense of authenticity and trust and evokes strong feelings of empathy and closeness toward the university. In addition, AAU should not neglect student-generated content and manage it effectively and take advantage of it to display authentic experiences and testimonials so that these honest comments from students attract more attention to the university, enhance the sense of belonging to the university among current students, and attract more potential students who consider it more credible than traditional university-generated content. To increase the effectiveness of such content, AAU should create a hashtag specific to the university and encourage students to use it on their SM accounts. Thus, the university can locate and integrate this content into its platforms. It should also take advantage of influencers' effect so that the influencer chosen type is consistent with AAU's goals and audience, whether they are graduates or current students, etc. At the same time, to grow the university's presence on SM, it needs to interact with its audience, including graduates. Therefore, it should ensure that it is at the forefront of responding to direct messages, comments, and mentions on its platforms, while at the same time taking advantage of artificial intelligence to increase effectiveness and impact. Finally, AAU must evaluate How successful it is in achieving its goals of enhancing the satisfaction and loyalty of its current students and attracting new students by regularly tracking a set of performance indicators (such as open rates, click-through rates, engagement, view rates, etc.) and making strategic improvements and enhancing the relevance of its campaigns.

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