



VILNIUS UNIVERSITY
BUSINESS SCHOOL

Study programme: Digital Marketing

El Abbasy Reda

THE FINAL MASTER THESIS (PROJECT)

TITLE Evaluating the Effectiveness of Personalized Email Marketing in lead Nurturing and Customer Experience.	TITLE Personalizuotos el. pašto rinkodaros efektyvumo vertinimas potencialių klientų puoselėjimo ir klientų patirties srityse.
--	---

Academic supervisor: Mikael Forsström

Table of Content

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1. Background to the Study	4
1.4. Objectives and Aims of the Study.....	5
2. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK	7
2.1. Relationship Marketing Theory	7
2.2. Trust–Commitment and Relationship Quality	8
2.2.1 Relationship Quality: Multidimensional Construct	9
2.2.2 Digital Relationship Marketing and Permission-Based Communication	10
2.3 Customer Experience in Personalized Email Marketing	11
2.4 The RACE Framework and Customer Journey	14
2.6 Research Gaps and Theoretical Contributions	17
2.7 Theoretical Integration Summary	20
3. METHODOLOGY OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF EMAIL PERSONALISATION ON TRUST, SATISFACTION AND CUSTOMER JOURNEY PROGRESSION IN B2C E-COMMERCE	22
3.1 Introduction to the Methodology	22
3.2 Research Design and Approach	22
3.4 Data Collection Methods.....	24
3.5 Measurement Scales	25
3.6 Data Collection Process and Sampling	27
3.7 Pilot Testing	28
4. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH	34
5. COMPREHENSIVE CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS.....	50
SUMMARY.....	56

6. REFERENCES	60
7.APPENDIXES	68
Figure 1: RACE Framework for E-Marketing Campaign Analysis.....	14
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Evaluating Perceptions of Generic vs Personalised Emails	18
Figure 3. Boxplot Personalization A	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 4. Boxplot Personalization B	43
Figure 5. Boxplot Trust A	44
Figure 6. Boxplot of Trust B.....	45
Figure 7. Boxplot Satisfaction A.....	45
Figure 8. Boxplot Satisfaction B.....	46
Figure 9. Journey A	48
Figure 10. Boxplot Journey B	49
Table 1. Cronbach’s alpha for study constructs.....	34
Table 2. Age distribution of respondents	34
Table 3. Monthly fashion spending among respondents.....	35
Table 4. Frequency of checking email	35
Table 5. Overall email preference.....	36
Table 6. Paired-samples t-test comparing Email A and Email B across constructs .	36
Table 7. Descriptive statistics for Email A and Email B across constructs	37
Table 8. Overall email preference.....	38
Table 9. Reasons for email preference	38
Table 10. Cross-tabulation of email preference by reason for preference.....	39

1.INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the principal research aims and the rationale which has prompted the undertaking of this investigation. This chapter provides a historical background of B2C e-commerce and email marketing and their interrelation; discusses the current state of the art in B2C e-commerce and email marketing, with a special focus on personalisation; identifies the research gaps in the current studies on B2C e-commerce email marketing personalisation; and outlines the research problem and questions. This chapter outlines the purpose of the research and sets out the precise goals of the project. It explains how this study will add to the body of knowledge as well as enhance real-world applications. The construction of the theoretical framework and empirical research in these chapters is based on these essential aspects.

1.1. Background to the Study

Although social media is acquiring more subscribers, email marketing is the principal method which the internet marketing industry utilises to interact with clients and so reach its conversion targets. By using tailor-made email marketing campaigns, companies are able to tailor the material they send out in their emails, enabling them to build stronger relationships with their customers. A direct link to their audience is maintained by companies through targeted advertising campaigns which are devised by the use of information regarding the demographics of their audience and data analysis.

Industry and previous research has largely focused on metrics such as email open rates and click-through rates. However, these metrics fail to adequately measure customer perceptions of the value and the emotional connection or trust that is built through personalised email communication. According to research conducted by Mailchimp, an organisation which focuses on email, three customer-oriented factors are crucial in determining the success of an email campaign. These factors are the connection which an email establishes with its customer emotionally, its value and trust the customer has in the sender's identity. This study looks at customers of business to consumer internet commerce who have opted to receive emails offering them tailored discounts and other promotional offers. The subjects in the study comprised people who had been sent marketing e-mails over the preceding six months. Researchers are able to study the actual behaviour of customers in digital-first retail environments through the use of email marketing to people who have opted to receive emails from the business.

1.2 Research problem

It remains unclear how different levels of personalisation in B2C e-commerce campaigns affect customer trust and satisfaction. This study aims to address this gap. Research question: In what ways do customers benefit and see different levels of personalization of B2C e-commerce email programs, and how did it impact their trust, satisfaction, and feeling of progression through the Convert and Engage steps of their customer journey?

1.3. Research Gaps

While many studies of email have looked at the effect of email personalisation on business performance, not many have investigated the recipient's perception of this personalisation, despite both factors being expected to influence client trust and satisfaction.

Research studies predominantly employ a firm-based approach in assessing the success of promotional campaigns through the use of established performance metrics rather than looking at how consumers process personalised messages.

The industry operates under performance metrics which include open rates and clickthrough rates but these metrics do not demonstrate how customers experience trust and satisfaction and their journey progression (Klaus & Maklan, 2013; Homburg et al.,2017). Therefore, nothing is yet clear regarding how email programs change customers' relational and experiential outcomes during the Engage and Convert stages.

The research addresses these knowledge gaps through its analysis of customer perceptions about personalization and its effects on trust development and satisfaction and perceived development at different stages of the customer journey.

1.4. Objectives and Aims of the Study

The research aims to investigate customer interactions with various levels of personalization in B2C e-commerce email campaigns to determine their impact on customer trust and satisfaction and their advancement through the Engage and Convert stages of the customer journey.

Objectives:

To design and administer a survey using example of B2C e-commerce marketing emails with varying levels of personalisation, and collect customer ratings of perceived personalisation, trust, satisfaction, and journey progression using Likert scales.

To statistically analyse the survey responses to determine how different levels of personalisation influence customer trust, satisfaction, and perceived movement through the Engage and Convert stages.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The research fills an essential knowledge gap in digital marketing through its combination of relationship marketing and customer experience theories to study email system effects on customer trust and satisfaction.

2.THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

The research findings from this chapter support the theoretical framework. The chapter begins by explaining Relationship Marketing Theory through its core elements which include trust and commitment and relationship quality before it explains Customer Experience theory for email marketing customization. The RACE framework operates as an online customer journey system which centers its structure around the Convert and Engage stages. The research combines different viewpoints to create a conceptual framework which demonstrates how personalization affect customer experience quality and trust and satisfaction and journey progression perception. The chapter ends by showing research deficiencies before it establishes its empirical research structure with its suggested theoretical models.

2.1. Relationship Marketing Theory

Principles of Foundation and Evolution

This section introduces the foundations of Relationship Marketing Theory and explains how relational constructs such as trust and commitment underpin personalised email communication.

The marketing practice has evolved through Relationship Marketing (RM) which now focuses on building relationships instead of traditional transactional methods. Berry (1983) first introduced "relationship marketing" in his services marketing research to describe the process of building and maintaining customer relationships. Morgan and Hunt (1994) expanded upon Berry's work to establish relationship marketing as all marketing efforts which develop and maintain profitable business relationships. The cost of obtaining new customers exceeds the cost of keeping existing customers because customers generate much higher value throughout their entire business relationship (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990; Rosenberg & Czepiel, 1984).

Organizations can build successful customer relationships through their use of personalized email marketing strategies according to the relationship marketing framework. Personalized email marketing methods enable businesses to build lasting customer relationships through their ability to send continuous relevant content which provides value to customers. The method operates through RM principles because it builds ongoing important relationships with customers which create trust and commitment that lead to long-term customer satisfaction (Palmatier et al.,2006; Kumar & Reinartz, 2016).

2.2. Trust–Commitment and Relationship Quality

The following section explains two essential RM constructs which are trust and commitment and shows their effects on digital relationship results.

The trust-commitment model became the primary relationship marketing theory because Morgan and Hunt (1994) validated it and Palmatier et al. (The research of Garbarino and Johnson (1999) and Singh and Sirdeshmukh (2000) and Garbarino and Johnson (1999) and Singh and Sirdeshmukh (2000) supported the model's practical application. The model shows that trust and commitment act as essential elements which predict relationship success and length when customers use personalized email contact instead of direct face-to-face interaction with businesses.

Morgan and Hunt (1994) describe how trust develops when parties demonstrate their ability to keep their promises and follow ethical standards which builds confidence in their exchange relationships. The two types of trust according to Ganesan (1994) and Kumar et al. (1995) include competence trust which demonstrates faith in a partner's delivery capabilities and benevolence trust which shows belief in a partner's commitment to protect the trustor's interests. The research by Mayer et al. (1995) build upon this concept by adding integrity as a third essential element together with ability and benevolence. The dimensions of trust in personalized email marketing function as customer evaluation criteria for content quality and value delivery and privacy protection and promise fulfillment which means trust emerges from communications meeting customer expectations instead of just sending messages.

The study of Moorman et al. (1992) and Morgan and Hunt (1994) defines commitment as a long-term wish to preserve important relationships which affects customer reactions to marketing campaigns. Allen and Meyer (1990) identified two separate commitment types through their research which they labeled affective commitment and continuance commitment. Customers build affective commitment through their multiple interactions with useful email marketing content but they develop continuance commitment when they must dedicate time or effort to remove themselves from communication lists.

Academic researchers have studied trust-commitment relationships through various studies. Morgan and Hunt (1994) proved through their study that trust development leads to commitment which Garbarino and Johnson (1999) showed results in a reciprocal relationship between trust and commitment in business relationships. The research of Palmatier et al. (2006). Demonstrates that business relationships between organizations and their customers

develop trust and commitment patterns through customer characteristics and partnership length which demonstrates that customer perceptions and experiences drive trust and commitment development.

The delivery of useful content that matches subscriber expectations at scheduled times through email marketing leads to trust development. The development of trust occurs through beneficial reminders and recommendations and appropriate details which Verhoef et al. (2010) and Kumar & Reinartz (2016) support. The implementation of digital communication channels introduces fresh trust-related difficulties because organizations need to build credibility through digital channels instead of personal meetings (Hoff & Bashir, 2015; Rust & Huang, 2014). Organizations need to understand customer behavior patterns and preferences to send messages that match individual expectations during appropriate times (Wedel & Kannan, 2016).

The process of building trust through digital communication systems operates differently than how people establish trust when interacting with each other. The development of trust in email systems depends on three essential elements which consist of delivery reliability and tone consistency and data protection perceptions (Hoff & Bashir, 2015; Rust & Huang, 2014). Customers keep their trust in brands but they remain unsure about email authenticity because they receive unpersonalized messages at times that are not convenient for them. The system trust model operates through three core elements which determine customer satisfaction levels that shape their future interaction behaviors (McKnight et al., 2002; Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015).

2.2.1 Relationship Quality: Multidimensional Construct

The following section explains how relationship quality exists as a complex system which affects email communication processes.

Relationship marketing defines relationship quality through multiple elements which extend past trust and commitment. The research of Crosby et al. (The study by Oliver (1990) defined satisfaction as the core factor which determines relationship quality but researchers later added communication quality and mutual understanding as additional relationship quality elements (Palmatier et al., 2006; Wulf et al., 2001).

People develop relationship satisfaction through different social exchanges yet transactional satisfaction emerges from direct face-to-face contact between two people (Anderson et al., 1994; Fornell et al., 1996). The satisfaction level which customers

experience in email marketing depends on their interactions with content quality and timing and personalization according to Chittenden & Rettie (2003). Email marketing leads to higher customer satisfaction because it sends personalized content at the right time instead of sending unwanted or bothersome messages.

The quality of relationships depends on communication quality which consists of credibility and accuracy and adequacy and timeliness according to Anderson and Narus (1990). The system meets these requirements because it delivers customized content to users through complete messages which it sends at particular times (Chittenden & Rettie, 2003; Merisavo & Raulas, 2004).

The system learns customer preferences through time according to Selnes (1998) which leads to better relationship quality. Email marketing achieves this through personalized content which uses customer history and interests and behaviors to create a sense of relevance and consideration (Vesänen, 2007; Peppers & Rogers, 2011). The development of customer relationships depends on how customers understand consent and personalization and data usage when digital communication replaces human contact.

2.2.2 Digital Relationship Marketing and Permission-Based Communication

The following section explains how digital channels implement relationship marketing principles through consent acquisition and individualized approaches and proper data management practices.

Digital marketing uses relationship marketing principles to send emails and digital messages to customers only after they give their consent for communication. Users actively choose to subscribe through permission-based marketing which establishes the base for email relationships (Godin, 1999; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

The delivery of expected content which matches individual needs at appropriate moments through email messages creates relational value according to Chaffey & Smith (2017). Email personalization success for customers depends on their understanding of how businesses manage their customer data information. Research shows that customers build trust through customized communication because they assess the worth of their experience and how well their personal data gets managed (Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015; Martin et al., 2017).

The quality of email-based relationships depends on both personalization and consent management and customer perceptions about these interactions within their brand

experience. The delivery of excessive emails during inappropriate times leads to customer fatigue because customers experience their interactions as impersonal system interactions (Davenport et al., 2001; Rust & Verhoef, 2005). The delivery of correct information at suitable moments results in positive customer interactions which establish trust relationships and lead to higher customer satisfaction (Buttle & Maklan, 2019; Chaffey & Smith, 2017).

When email marketing campaigns send excessive messages that feel intrusive to customers it results in negative relationship value because it produces impersonal interactions and makes customers feel they have lost control (Homburg et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2017).

The research shows personalization functions as a relationship-building tool according to Vesanen (2007) and Peppers & Rogers (2011) yet it produces mixed results. The personalization paradox according to Aguirre et al. (2015) occurs when customized content improves relevance, yet customers become worried about privacy because they lack understanding of data usage. The research by Martin et al. (2017) demonstrates that customers lose trust when they perceive their data is being misused even though this perception contradicts the goal of building trust. The lack of understanding about email segmentation processes leads customers to perceive these

communications as invasive instead of valuable. The achievement of positive relational outcomes depends equally on transparency and control perception as well as content relevance.

The connection between permission-based communication and relationship quality stems from customer experience theory which examines how customers assess the functional and emotional and relational value of their brand interactions throughout multiple touchpoints (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Klaus & Maklan, 2013; Verhoef et al., 2009).

2.3 Customer Experience in Personalized Email Marketing

This section outlines Customer Experience theory and clarifies how functional, emotional, and social experience elements apply to digital email touchpoints.

Customer Experience (CX) theory emerged from the recognition that customer relationships extend beyond transactions, encompassing sensory, emotional, cognitive, and relational responses to brand interactions (Schmitt, 1999; Verhoef et al., 2009). The experience economy theory developed by Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999) introduced

experiences as a distinct value source while Lemon and Verhoef (2016) demonstrated that customer experience forms through various touch points throughout the customer journey.

From the customer's perspective, the whole experience encompasses every interaction which happens whether it is in email or through any other marketing medium. The quality of customer brand relationships depends on the relevance of e-mail communications. Where emails are well timed and relevant they build up positive opinions of a brand, whereas unwanted messages can be detrimental to the brand customer relationship. These latter stages, namely Convert and Engage, as described by Lemon and Verhoef (2016), are most significantly impacted by email open rates. This is because they require customer decision-making and the maintenance of a customer relationship.

Customer experience quality comprises functional, emotional, and social dimensions (Klaus & Maklan, 2013; Lemke et al., 2011).

A) Functional quality: The three key factors that lead to customer satisfaction include reliable delivery of products and services and the delivery of relevant content and clear information value (Zeithaml et al., 1996). The system maintains both consistency and exact timing through automation according to Chittenden and Rettie (2003).

B) Emotional quality: The study by Bagozzi et al. (1999) and Westbrook & Oliver (1991) shows that personalized messages create positive emotional responses in customers which lead to satisfaction. The use of positive emotional cues builds trust and satisfaction, but generic or invasive personalization methods decrease emotional connection with customers.

C) Social quality: The perceived social value and sense of belonging represent the core elements of customer equity (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). The email campaigns help to maintain community membership and shared values by delivering personalized content and loyalty messages to customers (Escalas & Bettman, 2003).

While digital communications can certainly lead to more fulfilling connections with others, they cannot guarantee a worthwhile experience. While a company can meet a customer's functional needs by providing accurate product information, it needs to go further to meet the customer's emotional and relational needs. This can be achieved by showing customers that you understand their feelings and are genuinely interested in them. Depersonalization can occur through email marketing when timing, tone or relevance are not aligned with customer expectations (Buttle and Maklan, 2009). According to Klaus and Maklan (2013), experience quality should be assessed on the basis of the customer's

perception, not on the intended outcomes of the service provider. If the system gives the customer relevant information, but does so in a way that is seen as insensitive or inconsiderate, then the customer will not be favourably disposed towards the organisation, even if the information is factually correct.

As Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) point out, email marketing functions as a vital communication tool that aids businesses in creating a good customer experience. The consistency between the various points of contact that customers have with a company should be maintained according to the orchestration theory. This consistency should be across all the communication channels that are used by the business. By means of tailored communications via email marketing, businesses are able to maintain a consistent corporate voice (Hennig-Weltendorf et al., 2017; Patrício et al., 2011). Through integrated data analysis email marketing communications can synchronise with other marketing channels and deliver personalised content at the appropriate time (Keller, 2009; Kumar & Venkatesan, 2005; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

This connection extends beyond the transaction and builds an on-going relationship with subscribers when an opt-in email newsletter is received. Those who opt to receive newsletters expect to be provided with information relevant to their needs, treated with respect and to receive material that is of value. Educational and inspirational, informative and supportive email content, is vital in keeping subscribers interested while establishing a trust relationship that develops following multiple email contacts. (2017).

The theory of customer experience describes how email marketing systems create perceptions about functional reliability and emotional connection and social belonging during the Convert and Engage stages. The framework enables the study to assess how personalized content affect customer trust and satisfaction and their sense of journey advancement according to their individual experiences.

Meanwhile The RACE framework builds on the principles of Customer Experience by highlighting the various touch points at which customers interact with a brand. Customer experience theory helps explain how customers perceive their interactions with an organisation while the RACE planning framework, is a useful tool for marketers to use when structuring their customer marketing activities. This study combined the two methodologies with a primary emphasis on the Convert and Engage stages to examine the impact that email marketing has on the emotional and social aspects of customer relationships and to show how customers' perceptions of trust are influenced by the personalisation tactics used at these particular stages of the customer buying process.

2.4 The RACE Framework and Customer Journey

This subsection introduces the RACE framework as a structural model for mapping customer touchpoints across the journey.

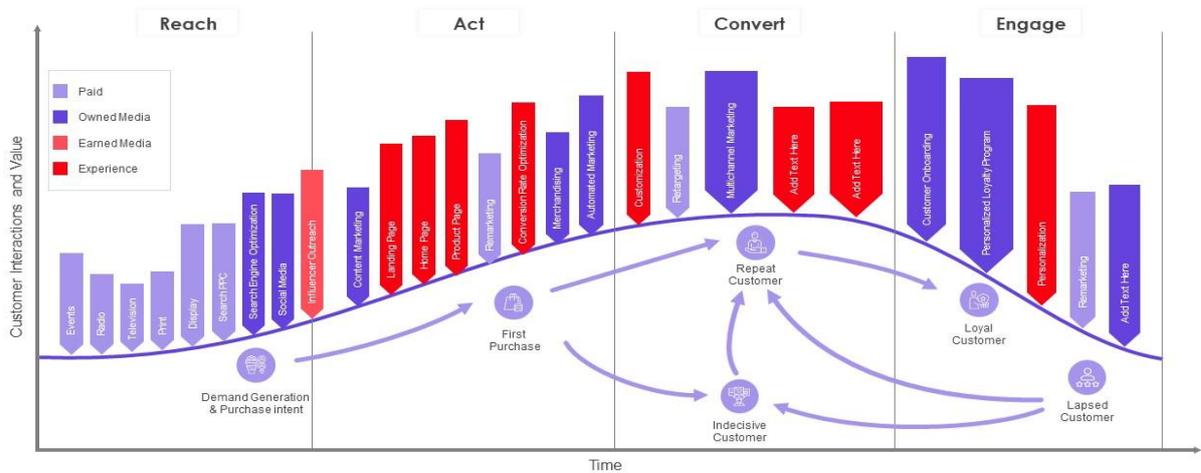
The RACE framework (Reach, Act, Convert, Engage) organizes digital customer journeys through marketing activities which follow relationship goals to show email marketing progression from awareness to long-term engagement.

Figure 1: RACE Framework for E-Marketing Campaign Analysis

RACE Framework illustrating the four stages of customer journey (Reach, Act, Convert, Engage) with corresponding marketing activities, channel touchpoints, and customer progression from demand generation through loyal, repeat, indecisive, and lapsed customer segments

RACE Framework for E-Marketing Campaign Analysis

This slide focuses on the RACE framework for e-marketing campaign analysis that covers stages of customer interaction and value with the passage of time.



This slide is 100% editable. Adapt it to your needs and capture your audience's attention.

Source: Adapted from Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019)

The RACE framework for e-marketing campaign analysis includes standard channel activities and email touchpoints as described in Smart Insights (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick).

Given its significant impact on customer satisfaction and long-term relationship quality, research is focused on the convert and engage phases of email marketing. The first stages of a consumer's lifecycle are Reach and Act. The Reach and Act stages are

employed to get permission from customers to interact and to start this interaction with the brand.

The conversion stage of email nurturing programmes equips clients with supportive information which includes comparisons, customer endorsements and incentives to reduce the customer's uncertainties and push forward their buying decisions. Personalized messages delivered at the right time have a greater relevance and increase a company's perceived competency. This in turn increases the functional and emotional value of a customer's experience.

However, progress is not always linear or in accordance with a pre-determined marketing strategy through the conversion process. Verhoef et al (2015) point out that the customer journey path is non-linear, being influenced by the customer's prior experiences and their level of 'readiness'. Differing perceptions of the same message can result when two people, who are sent the same direct marketing, have different expectations, varying levels of brand awareness or divergent views on privacy. Segmentation assumes progression, but standardized message timing does not account for hesitation, loops, or disengagement. In organisations where customer journey mapping is in use, the customer journey map may not mirror the actual customer experience due to the influence of internal agendas and process perspectives.

In the engagement stage, regular communication is used through onboarding sequences, loyalty messages, and targeted recommendations via post purchase emails to keep customers satisfied and maintain trust. Building a relationship at this point in the process keeps the bond of affection existing from previous stages and converts satisfaction felt into a lasting relationship.

The RACE model supports Customer Experience theory by establishing the systematic process which experiences follow. The model connects the operational communication sequence (Convert → Engage) to the experience-based results of trust and satisfaction and progression. The combination of personalization and timing and relevance enables marketing emails to evolve from basic transactional tools into relationship-building instruments that create customer experiences.

2.5 Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

The theoretical framework of Relationship Marketing and Customer Experience and RACE framework enables the autor to study email marketing effects on B2C e-commerce

customer trust and satisfaction and their journey progression. The three perspectives offer separate yet harmonious views to explain personalized value creation and customer experience (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

What remains under-examined is how personalized email marketing mediates the relationship between theoretical perspectives. Personalization may operationalize Relationship Marketing principles (Peppers & Rogers, 2011; Palmatier et al., 2006), but it only contributes to Customer Experience when it is interpreted as relevant and respectful by recipients (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015). Meanwhile, the RACE framework explains campaign sequencing but not the emotional or perceptual meaning customers attach to email marketing touchpoints (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). This highlights the necessity of integrating experience theory to understand perceived progression, not only behavioural engagement.

Research within the theory of Relationship Marketing demonstrates why it is of importance that relationships are developed. Enduring relationships have underlying core elements which, according to Morgan & Hunt (1994) and Palmatier et al. (2006), are based on the development of trust and the growth of commitment. The relevance and reliability of a communication and its capacity to supply benefits influence a customer's desire to maintain a relationship with a company, claim Verhoef et al. (2006). Customer loyalty is shown to reduce the customer acquisition costs by Kumar et al. (2007), and Kumar & Reinartz (2016). By personalising the operations of relationship marketing, companies can demonstrate to their clients that they have knowledge of the clients' needs and preferences as Vesanen (2007) and Peppers and Rogers (2011) pointed out.

Customer Experience theory describes how customers evaluate their interactions with brands through all contact points. The theory examines how customers react emotionally and socially while making cognitive judgments about their brand interactions (Verhoef et al., 2009; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The development of trust and satisfaction emerges through personalized messages which match customer expectations and establish a feeling of continuity and relevance and respect (Klaus & Maklan, 2013; Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015). The Convert and Engage stages of the journey serve as essential moments for building customer experience quality through multiple valuable interactions (Chaffey & Smith, 2017).

The RACE framework the process structure of RACE (Reach, Act, Convert, Engage) connects the relational and experiential dimensions of the digital journey according to Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019). Email marketing functions as a system which advances

customers from their initial awareness stage (Reach and Act) to build relationships (Convert and Engage).

The RACE model converts relationship marketing concepts and customer experience knowledge into digital workflow steps which show when trust and satisfaction occur and how they drive ongoing customer interaction (Ellis-Chadwick & Doherty, 2012; Chaffey & Smith, 2017).

Collectively, these three theoretical perspectives establish a unified model where: Personalization (as relationship mechanism) influence Customer Experience Quality (functional, emotional, and social dimensions). Enhanced experience quality increases Trust and Satisfaction (relationship outcomes) (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Palmatier et al., 2006). Trust and satisfaction reinforce Perceived Journey Progression in the Convert and Engage stages (behavioral and emotional continuity) (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).]

The integration demonstrates how email marketing connects relationship development to experience management by showing that effective communication requires customer-perceived value and journey continuity (Kumar et al., 2019; Homburg et al., 2017).

2.6 Research Gaps and Theoretical Contributions

The research investigates multiple essential gaps in email marketing research that limit understanding of how personalization, trust, and customer experience interact within digital relationship contexts.

Research studies have studied relationship marketing and customer experience independently from each other although Lemon & Verhoef (2016) and Kannan & Li (2017) and Kumar & Reinartz (2016) have made some connections between them. The current research requires a complete understanding of personalization and its relation to trust and experience quality because the existing studies analyze these elements separately from each other. The research requires a unified framework which combines relationship mechanisms with experiential mechanisms to examine how personalized email communications are perceived in terms of trust, satisfaction, and functional, emotional, and social value.

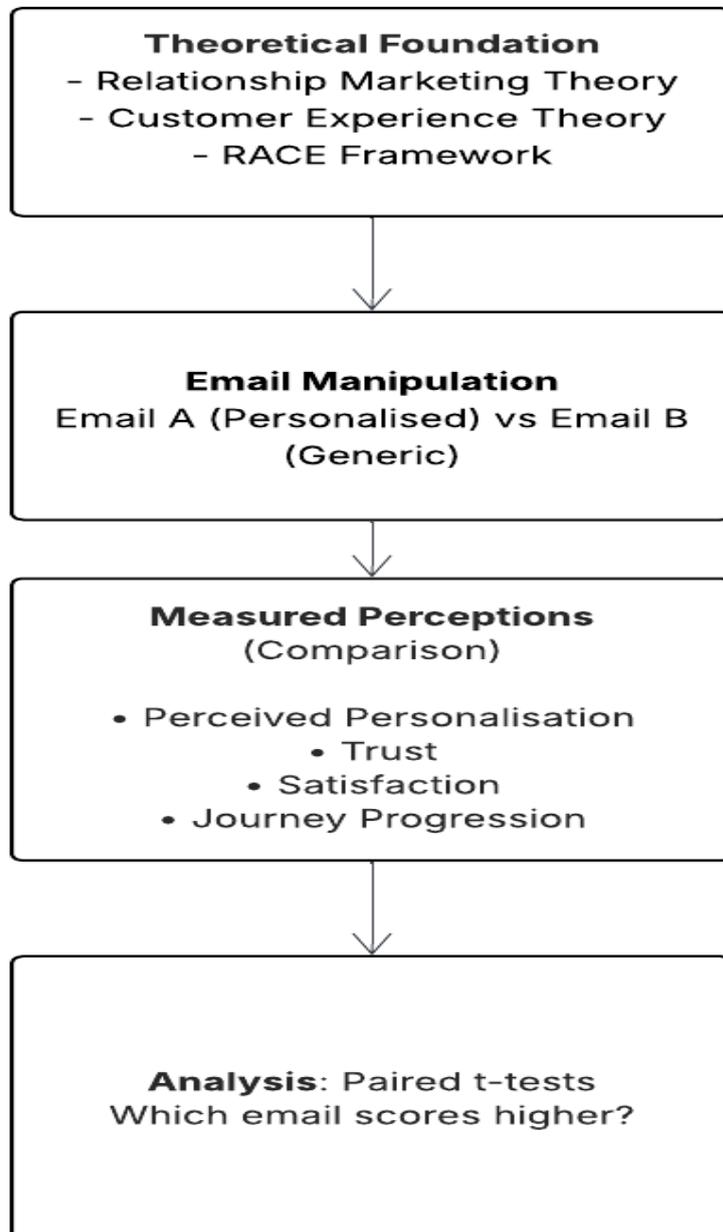
Previous research about digital marketing has not fully captured the time-dependent and customer-journey-based aspects of marketing. The literature lacks research about how

personalization and relevance are experienced by customers at different points during their journey from prospect to customer (Verhoef et al., 2015; Bolton, 1998). The research conceptually considers the Convert and Engage stages of the RACE framework to illustrate how trust and satisfaction are interpreted during the customer lifecycle, offering a more nuanced perspective on customer relationships.

Another gap concerns the focus on marketer-side metrics such as open rates and click-through rates rather than on customer-side perceptions and attitudes. The research field maintains its focus on behavioral results while neglecting to study how customers feel about trust and satisfaction and their perception of relevance (Klaus & Maklan, 2013; Homburg et al., 2017). The research builds upon existing knowledge by assessing relationship quality and experience outcomes through customer perspectives which focus on psychological and perceptual processes instead of basic engagement metrics.

Current research is further constrained by limited contextual scope. Many investigations are conducted within narrow industries or single-market settings, restricting the generalizability of findings (Harrison & Reilly, 2011; Chaparro-Peláez et al., 2022). By focusing on the B2C e-commerce context, this study enhances theoretical applicability to contemporary digital markets where personalization is deeply embedded in customer interactions.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Evaluating Perceptions of Generic vs Personalised Emails



Source: Author's own elaboration

The conceptual model illustrates the key constructs examined in the context of B2C email marketing: perceived personalisation, trust, satisfaction, and perceived customer journey progression. Perceived personalisation represents the customer's evaluation of how well the email content matches their interests, needs, and previous interactions. Drawing on relationship marketing principles, personalised communication is viewed as a relational cue

that customers may interpret in terms of relevance, confidence, and overall experience, which together shape their perceptions of the email content.

In this model, perceived personalisation is considered alongside two key relationship-related constructs: trust and satisfaction. Trust reflects the customer's confidence in the brand's honesty, reliability, and responsible handling of communication. Satisfaction captures the customer's overall positive evaluation of the email experience. Both constructs are widely recognised as central relational elements that help describe customer responses and behavioural tendencies.

Finally, the model includes trust and satisfaction as constructs that are examined together with perceived customer journey progression, which is defined as the customer's sense of advancing through the Convert and Engage stages of the RACE framework. In this way, the model provides a conceptual basis for understanding how personalised and non-personalised email communication may be associated with different perceptions of movement toward purchase and ongoing engagement. The elements represented in the model correspond to the constructs assessed in the study and guide the comparative evaluation of the two email versions.

2.7 Theoretical Integration Summary

The research framework established in this study delivers three essential benefits for studying email marketing success according to MacInnis (2011) and Yadav (2010). The framework unites Relationship Marketing and Customer Experience theories to provide a comprehensive view of customer trust, satisfaction, and engagement processes, which each theory examines from different angles (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Kumar & Reinartz, 2016). The framework connects relational elements of trust, commitment, and relationship quality with experiential aspects such as functional, emotional, and social experience quality (Batra & Keller, 2016).

The framework includes time-based and developmental elements which illustrate how email marketing experiences may differ across customer stages. The model uses the Convert and Engage stages of the RACE framework (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019) to show how trust and satisfaction are interpreted within different points of the customer journey, reflecting how customers make sense of ongoing brand communication (Verhoef et al., 2015; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

The framework tackles two main issues which are methodological and conceptual problems in current digital marketing research. Most of the previous research has focused on marketer-side performance indicators such as open rates and ROI but has neglected to study customer experiences and relationship perceptions (Klaus & Maklan, 2013; Homburg et al., 2017). The framework shifts the analytical focus toward how customers perceive email marketing communication, providing a basis for examining how campaigns are experienced in terms of relationship quality.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF EMAIL PERSONALISATION ON TRUST, SATISFACTION AND CUSTOMER JOURNEY PROGRESSION IN B2C E-COMMERCE

3.1 Introduction to the Methodology

This chapter describes the research design and methodology used to examine how personalizing commercial emails influences customer perceptions in the business to consumer e-commerce sector. Moroccan women's behaviour towards tailored email marketing offers as opposed to standard mailshots is the focus of this research. This investigation centres on whether the subjects' progress through the buying process, their perception of the online retailers and how they feel about the firm, are affected by the tailored or standard offers. The study employed an experimental A/B design to examine the responses of participants presented with two different email templates, which varied in terms of the level of personalisation. By comparing customer reactions to generic and tailored email messages, it is possible to use this research methodology to learn about customer reactions. The research design enables the author to find out how customers behave when various levels of personalization are utilised in business to consumer email communications. This is in addition to learning how these variations influence the satisfaction of these customers and their trust and the progression of these clients through to the Engage and Convert stages.

3.2 Research Design and Approach

This research is based on a positivist philosophy as it assumes that customer perceptions can be measured using standardised tools (Saunders et al., 2003). The study of the effectiveness of personalisation of email messages for business to customer retail websites used a quantitative methodology to examine the impacts on customer reaction of varying levels of personalisation by the website. Established principles from relationship marketing and the customer experience together with the RACE model are used to explain the reactions of customers to email marketing campaigns. Studies have found customer relationship development to be influenced by the trust and satisfaction that customers feel as a result of their service journey with a company (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The theoretical base guides the construction of emails and choice of variables to be measured in the study. This is so as to study the factors relevant to academic researchers and marketing practitioners who use e-mail.

The research design uses a within-subjects A/B comparison method which requires participants to assess both email versions according to Creswell & Creswell (2018) and Malhotra & Birks (2021). The research design enables researchers to study how participants perceive different marketing stimuli through controlled experiments. The research study uses email personalization levels as its varying condition by testing generic and personalized email versions. The study measures participant responses through four variables which include perceived personalization and trust and satisfaction and customer journey progression assessment. The study benefits from two essential features of the within-subjects design approach. The research design enables better statistical power because participants serve as their own reference points for comparison (Field, 2018). The design enables researchers to evaluate how participants react to both conditions which suits the analysis of marketing communication subjective effects.

The study controls for all factors other than email personalization levels, keeping other brand elements constant along with the tone and visual design elements of the messages. The study compares the effectiveness of personal (personalised) emails, as demonstrated by Email A, which were tailored to the customer's tastes, via name insertion and recommendations for goods, with standard emails, Email B, which contained standard messages, incorporating basic customisation. These messages are derived from actual B2C emails sent by a Moroccan fashion retailer using MavlyStore, the automated email testing tool. This study used a comparative methodology to determine whether recipients differentiate between the content of standard and customised direct marketing emails. Through comparative and descriptive research methods, the reactions of customers to different email formats are tested to find out which email style customers rate higher and why a particular email design is preferred over others. Standard procedures in consumer research and marketing employ experimental design in order to examine the impact of various promotional elements (Malhotra & Birks, 2021; Bryman, 2016). Conducted through the use of Likert scales for quantitative perception assessment, researchers are able to evaluate in a systematic way which remains objective and allows results to be duplicated.

3.3 Conceptual Focus

The research investigates four essential customer perception elements which determine email marketing success in B2C e-commerce operations: perceived personalization and trust and satisfaction and customer journey advancement perception. The research uses these constructs because they hold essential value for relationship marketing and customer experience studies. The extent to which customers experience personalized communication through digital marketing platforms defines perceived

personalization as a vital construct in modern digital marketing (Vesanen, 2007; Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015). Digital relationship development requires customers to trust brands because they demonstrate reliability and honesty and protect customer data (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Palmatier et al., 2006). The email experience satisfaction rating from customers combines their mental assessment with their emotional response to create a complete evaluation (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Klaus & Maklan, 2013). The perception of customer journey advancement describes how customers experience their relationship progression through the Convert and Engage stages of their digital journey (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

The comparative design enables the researcher to study how customer perceptions change between standard and customized email messages. The study measures identical constructs for Email A and Email B to establish evidence about customer experiences with different personalization levels. The research investigates customer perception patterns through descriptive analysis instead of testing theoretical models or establishing cause-and-effect relationships. The research method allows the researcher to answer the main question about customer reactions to email marketing personalization strategies through data that stems from customer experiences and maintains value for academic research and business practice.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The data is collected through an online survey platform which participants access through the internet. The survey exists only in digital form because it targets email marketing and online consumer behaviour according to Bryman (2016) and Saunders et al. (2019). The survey contains four distinct sections which perform participant screening and present experimental content and obtain feedback and gather participant background details. The online survey method delivers the most reliable results for digital consumer behavior research because it enables researchers to find tech-savvy participants through digital data collection platforms which operate within brand digital communication networks (Bryman, 2016; Hair et al., 2020).

The first part asks screening questions to make sure participants meet the study requirements. The system verifies each participant against all conditions which the study requires. Participants must be female must be 18 years old or older must live in Morocco must have received advertising emails, from clothing or online stores in the three months and must have made one purchase in the last year. The survey becomes available to participants who meet all the requirements that have been established. screening questions

assures that only relevant respondents take part. The screening process helps to improve the accuracy of information that gets collected. The research should continue its investigation of the population which Dillman et al. 2014).

The second section contains the experimental stimuli which follow. The study presents two MavlyStore email examples to participants through a randomized presentation sequence which prevents order-related biases. Participants evaluate each email through Likert-scale assessments which measure their perception of personalization and their trust levels and satisfaction and their understanding of customer journey advancement. The survey contains 5-point Likert scale questions which range from 0 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The experimental design shows each email stimulus separately to participants who need to assess them by using consumer research methods which Malhotra & Birks (2021) describe. The research applies multiple Likert scale items to measure consumer attitudes because this method proven effective in consumer psychology studies (Joshi et al.,2015).

The third section of this research asks participants to share their preferred options together with their motivation for selecting these choices. Participants need to choose which email version they like best after completing their evaluation of both messages. The survey contains pre-set response options which ask participants to select their preference between three statements about their experience with the content. The research design employs pre-determined response options which let participants choose their preferred answer while researchers can study how different message elements affect participants (Krosnick & Presser, 2010).

The fourth section of the survey asks participants to provide their demographic details through three questions about their age range and their average fashion expenses and their email checking habits. The researcher studied these variables to determine participant characteristics while making sure all participants met the required inclusion criteria. The survey design allows for organized data collection through comparative analysis while keeping participants interested through its logical sequence and different question types.

3.5 Measurement Scales

The research uses multiple items from established marketing and consumer behaviour scales to measure each construct. The multi-item assessment method enhances construct validity and internal consistency because it measures different aspects of each

concept (Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 2017). The assessment of perceived personalization enables customers to evaluate their characteristic match with customized content through measurement items from Vesanen (2007) and Bleier and Eisenbeiss (2015). The survey includes three examples which ask participants to assess their customized email experience through evaluation of statements about "The email content shows it understands my personal preferences. "The survey questions help participants show their ability to pick out specific email content which fulfils their needs instead of depending on general information.

The research uses Morgan and Hunt (1994) commitment-trust theory together with Mayer et al. (1995) integrative model of organisational trust to measure trust through derived items. The assessment questions evaluate customer trust levels toward the brand because they assess the brand's ability to provide dependable products and uphold truthful business operations and protect customer data. The survey includes three example questions which assess participant trust toward brand data protection and brand communication transparency and brand promise delivery. The assessment items evaluate both competence trust and benevolence trust which form the base for building brand relationships through digital platforms.

The satisfaction measurement uses items which Lemon and Verhoef (2016) and Klaus and Maklan (2013) developed for customer experience research. The assessment evaluates the complete positive assessment of email interactions. The survey includes three example questions which evaluate email satisfaction through three statements that state "I am satisfied with this email communication" and "This email met my expectations" and "I feel positive about this email experience. "The assessment tools measure both mental evaluation and emotional responses which fulfil the satisfaction measurement needs of relationship marketing.

The RACE framework which Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019) and Lemon and Verhoef (2016) applied to their customer journey research allows to build assessment systems which monitor customer journey progression. The survey questions evaluate participants' views about the email message effectiveness in helping them build their brand relationship at Convert and Engage stages. The survey contains three examples of items which ask participants to what extent the email supports their purchase decision and their brand engagement and their path toward customer loyalty. The survey questions evaluate customer journey development through personal account inquiries which replace direct behavioural data collection.

The calculation of composite scores for each construct needs standard scale construction methods to average item scores (Hair et al.,2020). The study uses Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency which allows researchers to choose only those constructs that reach $\alpha \geq 0.70$ or higher (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al.,2020). The main analysis will use only those constructs which achieve the minimum reliability standard of $\alpha \geq 0.70$.

3.6 Data Collection Process and Sampling

The survey distribution takes place through MavlyStore digital communication channels which include Instagram and WhatsApp customer group messaging. The brand uses these platforms to deliver customer service because they help the company reach its digitally active customer base who receive its email marketing content. The survey runs in English during November to December 2025 for four weeks. The survey link allows all participants to take the survey because they chose to participate without receiving any financial rewards or incentives. The survey maintains GDPR compliance through participant information disclosure about study objectives and protection of personal data and secure storage of responses for academic research purposes only. The digital survey distribution method supports the research goal to study online consumer actions because it enables quick access to the study participants (Bryman, 2016; Saunders et al.,2019).The research investigates how Moroccan female adults shop for fashion items online while they receive fashion brand promotional emails. The research participants make up the main customer group of MavlyStore because they actively receive B2C e-commerce email marketing content from the platform. The research uses convenience sampling to select participants from MavlyStore's current digital user base (Bryman, 2016; Etikan et al.,2016). The research design allows researchers to reach participants who shop online and receive email marketing because it links them with participants who have direct experience with e-commerce and email marketing. The research method of convenience sampling works best for exploratory and comparative studies because it allows the researcher to understand how people in their environment view things instead of attempting to forecast results for the entire population (Saunders et al.,2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The target sampling size consists in 120 participants who will provide valid responses. The study will achieve its goals through 120 valid responses because this number enables to detect medium effect sizes (Cohen's $d = 0.5$) in paired-samples t-tests at a power level of 0.80 and alpha level of 0.05 according to established behavioural research guidelines (Cohen, 1992; Field, 2018; Hair et al., 2020). The determined sample size

provides enough statistical power to identify significant differences between the two email versions when such differences appear in the population.

3.7 Pilot Testing

Prior to commencing the primary data collection, a pilot study was conducted on thirty subjects who represent the target population. This pilot study aimed at assessing the reliability of the proposed methodology in three key areas, that of validating the clarity of items used in the questionnaire, confirming the display of the email stimulus across a range of devices and screen sizes and assessing the reliability of the scale through the use of Cronbach's alpha, in addition to checking the survey platform and the system for collecting responses for any problems. The pilot study will make use of participants of MavlyStore who follow the social media. They will be asked to fill in the questionnaire through the same survey methods that are going to be used in the full study.

As opposed to recruiting subjects by convenience, the evaluation process of the instrument involves actual members of the target population. Following a thorough analysis of the pilots feedback is carried out in order to discover any areas of confusion, ambiguity or technical difficulties. Following further analysis, the survey is revised to address ambiguities in the questions, make improvements to the email notification layout, alter the language to ensure it is suitable for the chosen culture and clear, and make enhancements to the participant's experience overall. The survey instrument has been pilot tested to ensure that the questions are clear and are likely to elicit the required information. The process adopted was that recommended by experts Saunders et al. (2007), which involves testing with the survey with the target population in a series of iterative steps. 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the study of reliability, Cronbach's alpha is employed to determine internal consistency, with a minimum threshold of 0.70 required for multi-item scales to be deemed reliable (Hair et al., 1998). Scales are accepted for the main data collection if their internal consistency is 0.7 or greater. Items that reduce scale reliability or create confusion are either revised or removed. Piloting of the survey instrument was carried out in order to ensure that the finalised tool is reliable and clear to use by Moroccan female consumers of e-commerce, and also that it has got validity at the level of theory with established scales used in measuring relationship marketing and customer experience (Churchill in 1979, DeVellis 2017).

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected via the online survey software has to be processed methodically prior to the analysis of the results. The process begins with preparing the data, which is then followed by descriptive analysis. This is accompanied by checking the data, cleaning it, and making any necessary alterations. After this, comparative testing occurs, and preference analysis is then conducted. This methodological approach provides complete transparency of research and offers strong evidence for the research question through thorough evaluation.

Firstly, missing data are removed, and it is then confirmed that all the remaining participants meet the inclusion criteria. The responses are given numerical values, ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) through 4 (neither agree nor disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). These procedures involved taking the mean of the items loading onto each factor to produce the composite score for that factor (Hair et al., 2009). 2020) by taking the average of relevant items. Prior to conducting any statistical analysis, the quality of the data must be evaluated to ensure it is of a suitable quality for use in this way. This involves examining the data for any unusual or unexplained response patterns and outliers. Additionally, you need to check that all assumptions necessary for the application of parametric statistics are met.

For both Email A and Email B, descriptive statistics will be computed for the constructs of trust, satisfaction and journey progression and perceived personalisation. These statistics will include means and standard deviations for each, as well as frequency distributions for the groups who received Email A and Email B. The study will undertake demographic profiling by assessing age range and by a review of monthly fashion expenditure and email opening rates. The data statistical analysis provided full information on the demographic variables of the participants and their first reactions to the study. The findings will be presented through tables with box plots illustrating the difference between Version 1 and Version 2 of emails sent. During the descriptive analysis stage, it becomes evident that the data is appropriate for further statistical analysis of the differences among the groups. The descriptive analysis phase confirms data suitability for parametric tests while showing initial patterns which will guide subsequent inferential testing.

The manipulation check uses a paired-samples t-test to establish that Email A (personalised) receives higher personalization ratings than Email B (generic). The test proves that the experimental manipulation achieved its goal by showing participants could identify the intended personalization difference between the two email versions. The manipulation check serves as a crucial step because it demonstrates that participants viewed the two emails differently which validates their responses in subsequent comparison tests. The study's validity would be compromised if the manipulation check failed to

demonstrate significant differences between the two email versions because participants would not have recognized their personalization differences.

The key findings are derived from paired-sample t-tests. These tests examine the differences in how users assess emails A and B in the four assessment criteria. The first experiment assesses the personalisation effect to determine whether or not the mean ratings between both the standard and the personalised interfaces are statistically different. This evaluation assesses the effect of personalisation on trust by examining whether messages addressed to a specific person are considered more trustworthy and credible than those which are not. In the third test, emails are personalised to ascertain whether such emails influence positive assessments by customers more so than standard emails. The fourth test evaluates the journey's advancement through customers by looking at how personalised emails affect customer progress along the buying process. The procedures used to assess each experimental condition are the same for all tests.

The research uses $\alpha = 0.05$ as its statistical significance threshold to determine if observed results occur by chance less than 5% of the time. The practical extent of differences between groups is measured through Cohen's d effect size which uses 0.2 for small effects and 0.5 for medium effects and 0.8 for large effects (Cohen, 1992; Field, 2018). The combination of effect size measurements with statistical test results enables researcher to understand both the statistical significance and the actual impact of their findings.

The analysis of preference data employs multiple quantitative methods. The frequency analysis determines how many participants chose Email A instead of Email B through percentage calculations which produce a straightforward preference summary. The justification question allows participants to choose from pre-defined answers which include "The content felt more relevant to me" and "It made me feel valued." The analysis of each option uses frequency and percentage calculations to determine which reasons participants choose most often for their email preferences. The cross-tabulation analysis reveals how different message elements affect participant choices through its examination of structured response patterns.

Each multi-item scale was assessed for reliability via an examination of the internal consistency between items within each scale through Cronbach alpha. Internal consistency is typically established when the Cronbach α value exceeds 0.70 (Hair et al., 1998). Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) and as recently as 2020. Each item will undergo a review in order to determine whether it should be modified or eliminated if its reliability standards are not acceptable. The laboratory tests will be conducted following established laboratory

methods in order to get reliable results that can be duplicated.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The research followed the internationally accepted code of ethics for human research which includes the maintenance of confidentiality, respect for persons and beneficence. The process starts with a participants' information sheet detailing the study and explaining their right to refuse to participate, or to withdraw at any stage, without any adverse consequences to themselves. In the instructions provided to participants it is stated that they will assess copies of emails rather than real advertisements. To participate in this study, you must give your informed consent by clicking a button indicating that you agree to take part. The research participants have a complete understanding of the research which ensures that they are participating voluntarily (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman, 2012). 2019).

All parties involved in the project remain anonymous and confidential at every stage of the research. The online survey is conducted in a way that all responses remain anonymous and confidential. Access to the data is restricted to the researcher, and it is stored on a password-protected computer. The handling of our research data is in line with the principles of the GDPR. These include the necessity to limit the processing of any information to what is needed, to avoid collecting more data than is absolutely necessary and limiting data storage to what is required. Following the evaluation and examination of the thesis, all research data will be deleted. It will not be used for any other purpose but in the preparation of this thesis. To inform participants about how their data will be used, an information sheet needs to be provided. This will explain the procedures which will be followed to protect their data.

This study does not pose any risk to participants who take part in it. The survey contains no questions which would cause the respondent to feel uncomfortable or distressed, nor would any information provided by the respondent be personal. Respondents assess marketing emails in the survey and express their views without any risk to their reputation, health or welfare. In the study scenarios used in this research no intent to mislead or deceive exists and the messages are not overly manipulative. In order to avoid misunderstandings about the nature of the study, the survey participants are told that the emails are research tools and not advertisements. Throughout the entire survey participants will be treated with dignity and their autonomy and privacy respected completely. This is in accordance with the rules for ethical research as followed by social scientists (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman, 2012). 2019).

3.10 Limitations of the Methodology

The study is limited by several methodological factors which require consideration. The study's results from female online shoppers in Morocco who use MavlyStore cannot be applied to other contexts because the research used convenience sampling. The findings of this study are generalisable to other populations, places or products but this may not necessarily be the case for all other locations, product lines or different groups in society (Saunders et al., 2007). Research involving probability sampling methods should be implemented to increase the external validity and widen the generalisation.

The study relies heavily on the subjects' personal viewpoints which could be influenced by the social desirability bias and the responses the participants may give. Many people usually say what they think other people wish to hear, rather than stating their true thoughts. This study minimised this potential issue by using established measurement tools and data from participants who were anonymous (Bryman, 2016). Participants are in a simulated condition where they read emails as part of a study, not as they would in a regular inbox. Participants responding to this survey may not accurately represent people who read emails since they are answering questions in a research environment rather than as part of their usual email behaviour. This study has an experimental research design which could be affected by the same key challenge influencing both its effectiveness and its applicability to the real world (Malhotra & Birks, 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Research in this study focuses on a single e-commerce company selling fashion products, thus limiting the broader applicability of findings to different types of businesses or marketing environments. The findings might not be similar due to MavlyStore's unique branding, the client base it has and how the company interacts with its customers. The purchasing choice people make on products is influenced by the specific product range and company image of the business concerned. By looking at a wide variety of companies across different industries it can be determined if the study's findings could be applied to several types of businesses. This study investigates the perceptions of customers as they progress through a campaign of a series of emails. Their perceptions are measured at various stages in order to gain insight into the impact of personalised mail on customer attitudes. Researching customer experiences over a prolonged period through continuous communication, for example via email, would enable the understanding of the impact of these kinds of contacts on the satisfaction and trust of a customer. By using a rigorous methodology to compare consumer reactions to standard and tailored promotional emails in online retail, the research approach overcomes its limitations. This study reveals the impact of digital personalised relationships.

The research evaluates customer perceptions of email personalization in B2C e-commerce through an A/B comparison design. Within-subjects design enables a researcher to determine the effect of both generic and tailored promotional e-mails on customer response. The data from the survey will be examined using paired-sample t-tests and descriptive statistics. In addition, thematic analysis will be used to investigate the qualitative responses to preference. The research design allows the researcher to answer their question effectively in the given time frame by using a method which combines theoretical soundness with practicality and strict methodological standards.

4. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

Prior to conducting the main analysis, the internal consistency of multi-item measures was assessed in order to establish their reliability. The internal consistency of the constructs in both email A and B were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha values for all the constructs were higher than the recommended minimum level of 0.70, thus validating their reliability for use in subsequent statistical analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Nunnally & Bernstein (1994), 2020.

All of the scales had a high degree of reliability according to the Cronbach alpha values obtained for both email A and B. These values ranged from 0.863 to 0.941. These measurements of personalisation, customer trust, customer satisfaction and journey progression have a high degree of consistency when applied internally.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha for study constructs

Scale	Email A	Email B
Personalisation	0.863	0.922
Trust	0.907	0.929
Satisfaction	0.925	0.941
Journey progression	0.928	0.927

Source: Author's own elaboration

The reliability of the measurement tool is acceptable because Cronbach's alpha values exceed .70. The internal consistency of all constructs reached high levels for both email versions.

Sample Description

The research was conducted with 124 individuals who participated in this research project. In order to gather demographic information, the study required that participants disclose their age and the amount they spend on clothing each month as well as their email habits. Understanding the variables in a survey helps the researcher comprehend participants' day-to-day experiences as these elements impact how they respond to advertising mailings.

Table 2. Age distribution of respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
25–34	58	46.8%	46.8%
18–25	32	25.8%	72.6%
35–44	29	23.4%	96.0%
45–55	5	4.0%	100.0%
Total (valid)	120	100.0%	—

Source: Author's own elaboration

The age information from four participants remains unknown. The valid age responses showed that most participants belonged to the 25–34 age range which made up 46.8% of the total.

The study participants consisted of 48.3% people who fell into the 25–34 age bracket and 26.7% people who were between 18 and 25 years old. The study population consists mainly of young adults because only 4.2% of participants fell into the 45–55 age range.

Table 3. Monthly fashion spending among respondents

Monthly spending	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
1,000–1,999 MAD	48	38.7%	38.7%
500–999 MAD	39	31.5%	70.2%
200–499 MAD	17	13.7%	83.9%
2,000 MAD or more	16	12.9%	96.8%
Less than 200 MAD	4	3.2%	100.0%
Total (valid)	124	100.0%	—

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 4. Frequency of checking email

Email checking frequency	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
4–6 times per week	41	35.0%	35.0%
1–3 times per week	32	27.4%	62.4%
At least once a day	26	22.2%	84.6%
Less than once a week	18	15.4%	100.0%

Email checking frequency	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Total (valid)	117	100.0%	—

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 5. Overall email preference

Email preferred	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Email A	108	87.1%	87.1%
Email B	16	12.9%	100.0%
Total (valid)	124	100.0%	—

Source: Author's own elaboration

All participants indicated an overall email preference. The overwhelming majority (87.1%) preferred Email A, the personalised version.

Manipulation Check

To verify the participants believed Email A to be more personal than Email B, a manipulation check was conducted. The t-test for paired samples showed there was a difference in how personal participants thought Email A and Email B were, thus confirming the level of personalisation manipulation. Comparative Analysis of Email A and Email B.

Table 6. Paired-samples t-test comparing Email A and Email B across constructs

Measure 1	Measure 2	t	df	p	Cohen's d	SE d	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Personalisation_A	Personalisation_B	13.69	119	< .001	1.250	0.167	1.009	1.487
Trust_A	Trust_B	11.81	119	< .001	1.078	0.152	0.851	1.302
Satisfaction_A	Satisfaction_B	12.63	119	< .001	1.153	0.155	0.920	1.382
Journey_A	Journey_B	11.95	119	< .001	1.091	0.157	0.863	1.316

Source: Author's own elaboration

T tests. Positive t values indicate higher scores for Email A. Cohen's d values above. The personalised email (Email A) was evaluated more positively than the generic email (Email B) on all four constructs. Participants perceived Email A as significantly more personalised than Email B, $t(119) = 13.69, p < .001, d = 1.25$. Similarly, Email A elicited higher levels of trust, $t(119) = 11.81, p < .001, d = 1.08$, and satisfaction, $t(119) = 12.63, p < .001, d = 1.15$. Journey progression scores were also significantly higher for Email A than Email B, $t(119) = 11.95, p < .001, d = 1.09$. Collectively, these results indicate that the personalised email produced markedly stronger perceptions of personalisation, trust, satisfaction, and movement along the customer journey compared with the generic email.

Descriptive Statistics

Statistical descriptive analysis was conducted on all composite measures including both satisfaction and trust as well as perceived personalisation for email A which contained personalisation and email B with the generic content and then journey progression. The results are presented in terms of the central tendency and variability of participants' responses to the survey questions.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for Email A and Email B across constructs

Construct	Email A (M)	Email A (SD)	Email B (M)	Email B (SD)
Personalisation	3.761	0.881	1.794	1.031
Trust	3.678	0.878	2.011	0.956
Satisfaction	3.867	0.856	2.100	0.973
Journey progression	3.686	0.825	1.911	0.989

Source: Author's own elaboration

The M values represent combined scale scores which result from averaging the individual items within each construct.

The evaluation results show Email A received significantly higher mean scores than Email B across all assessment points. The evaluation results show that participants rated Email A higher than Email B for all assessment criteria including personalization and trust and satisfaction and journey progression before conducting any inferential testing.

Preference Analysis

Table 8. Overall email preference

Email preferred	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Email A	108	87.1%	87.1%
Email B	16	12.9%	100.0%
Total (valid)	124	100.0%	—

Source: Author's own elaboration

The majority of participants (87.1%) chose Email A as their preferred option because it contained personalized content. The remaining 12.9% of participants selected Email B as their preferred choice. The results match the higher ratings which participants provided for all psychological measures.

Preference Reason Analysis

Participants who indicated their preference were also asked to select the main reason for their preference. Table 8 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of these reasons, excluding missing responses.

Table 9. Reasons for email preference

Preference reason	Frequency	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Felt more relevant	5	4.0%	4.0%
Increased my interest in buying	16	12.9%	16.9%
Increased my trust	3	2.4%	19.4%

Preference reason	Frequency	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
It felt more engaging and emotionally appealing	7	5.6%	25.0%
It made me feel more satisfied with the brand's communication	26	21.0%	46.0%
It made the brand feel more trustworthy	11	8.9%	54.8%
It motivated me to continue my shopping or explore the products	23	18.5%	73.4%
Looked better	6	4.8%	78.2%
The content felt more relevant to my style and needs	17	13.7%	91.9%
The email felt more personally tailored to me	10	8.1%	100.0%
Total (valid)	124	100.0%	—

Source: Author's own elaboration

The percentages show the respondents who selected a reason after the respondents indicated the email.

Looking at the data the common reason, for email preference was "It made me feel more satisfied with the brand's communication" (21.0%). The next common reason for email preference was "It motivated me to continue my shopping or explore the products" (18.5%). The third common reason for email preference was "The content felt more relevant to my style and needs" (13.7%). These findings show that satisfaction, relevance and motivation were the reasons, for email preference.

Table 10. Cross-tabulation of email preference by reason for preference

Reason for preference	Email A (n = 108)	Email B (n = 16)	Total (n = 124)
Felt more relevant	3	2	5
Increased my interest in buying	13	3	16
Increased my trust	3	0	3
It felt more engaging and emotionally appealing	5	2	7

Reason for preference	Email A (n = 108)	Email B (n = 16)	Total (n = 124)
It made me feel more satisfied with the brand's communication	23	3	26
It made the brand feel more trustworthy	8	3	11
It motivated me to continue my shopping or explore the products	22	1	23
Looked better	4	2	6
The content felt more relevant to my style and needs	17	0	17
The email felt more personally tailored to me	10	0	10

Source: Author's own elaboration

The values show how many survey participants chose each email preference option through their email responses.

Most participants who chose Email A as their preference selected multiple reasons from the survey. The survey results show that 23 participants who chose Email A (21.3% of that group) found the email content made them more satisfied with brand communication than the 3 participants who selected Email B. The survey results show that 22 participants who chose Email A used stated that stated that it motivated them to continue with shopping and product exploration but only 1 participant who chose Email B did so. The two reasons "The content felt more relevant to my style and needs" and "The email felt more personally tailored to me" were chosen only by participants who selected Email A as their preference. The participants who selected Email B as their preference chose fewer reasons from all categories with lower numbers in each selection.

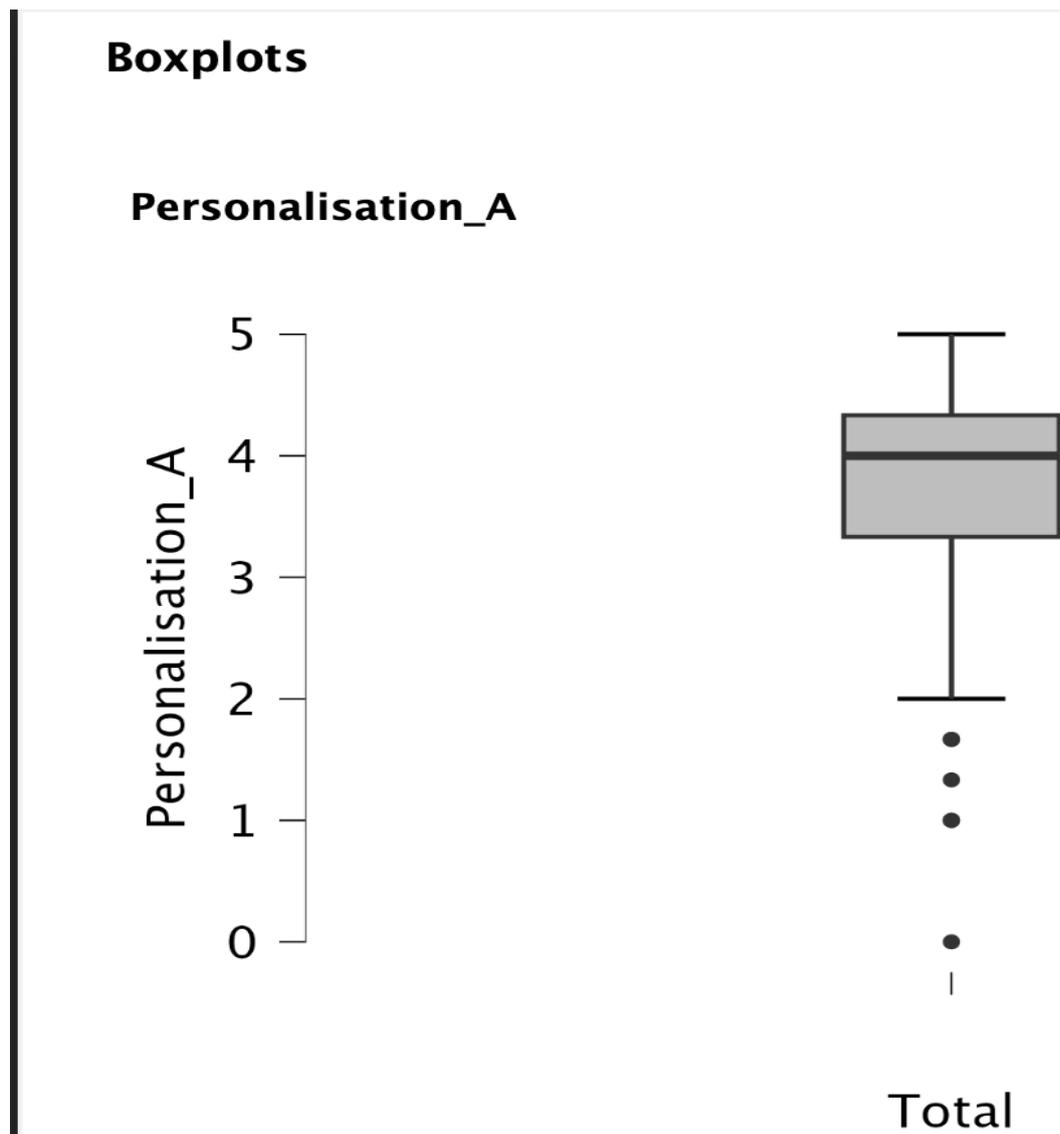
Boxplot Analysis of Key Constructs

The research used visual exploratory methods together with descriptive analyses to study how participants answered questions about all constructs for both email versions. The boxplots showed Personalisation and Trust and Satisfaction and Journey Progression data to display central values and range extent and detect outliers in each variable. The visualizations enable users to compare Email A and Email B through participant

assessments of multiple psychological and behavioral factors. The plots help validate t-test results by showing the extent and pattern of differences between the two email conditions.

Figure 3. Boxplot Personalization A

The boxplot presentation shows Personalisation A scores. The median value in the plot reaches 4.0 while the interquartile range spans from 3 to 4.5 and multiple data points exist below 2. The right-skewed distribution shows most participants rated Email A personalization at high levels.



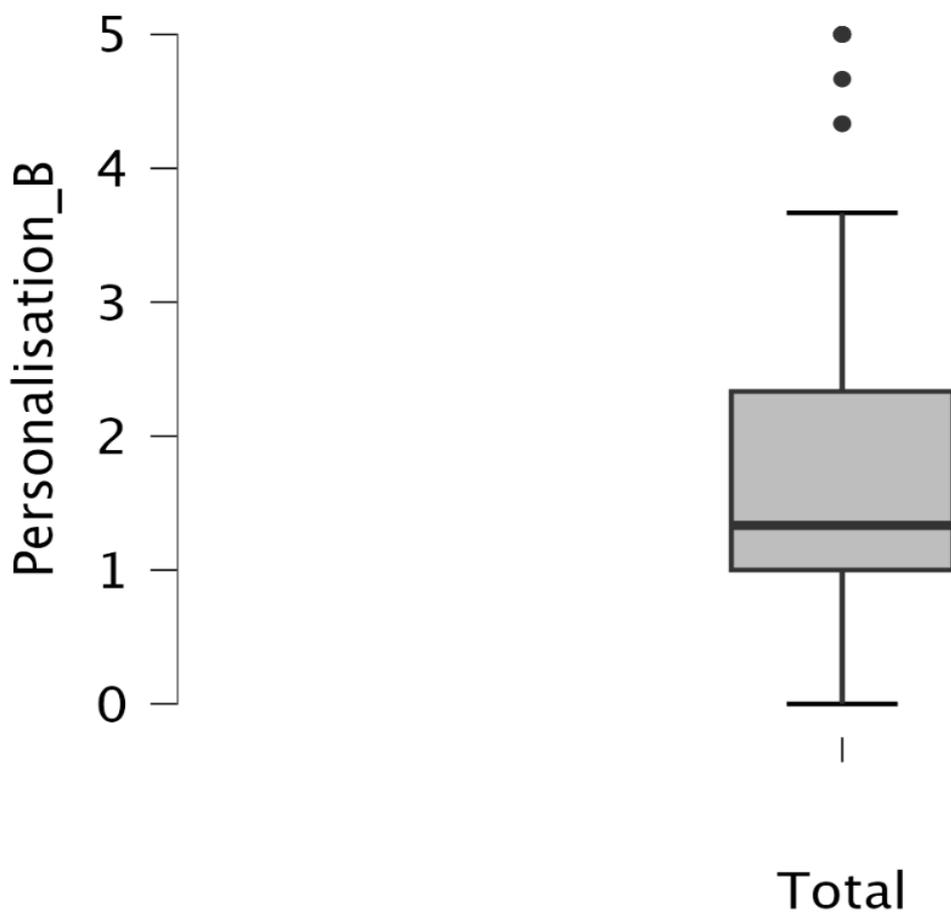
Source: Author's own elaboration

Summary:

The ratings in Personalisation A demonstrated strong central tendency because participants assigned most scores between 3 and 5. The median rating of 4 indicated that Email A received broad recognition for its personalized content features.

Figure 4. Boxplot Personalization B

Boxplot of Personalisation B scores. The median is approximately 1.5, with the interquartile range spanning from about 1 to 2. A number of upper-end outliers are visible above 4, suggesting that while most participants rated Email B low in personalisation, a small group perceived it more positively.

Personalisation_B

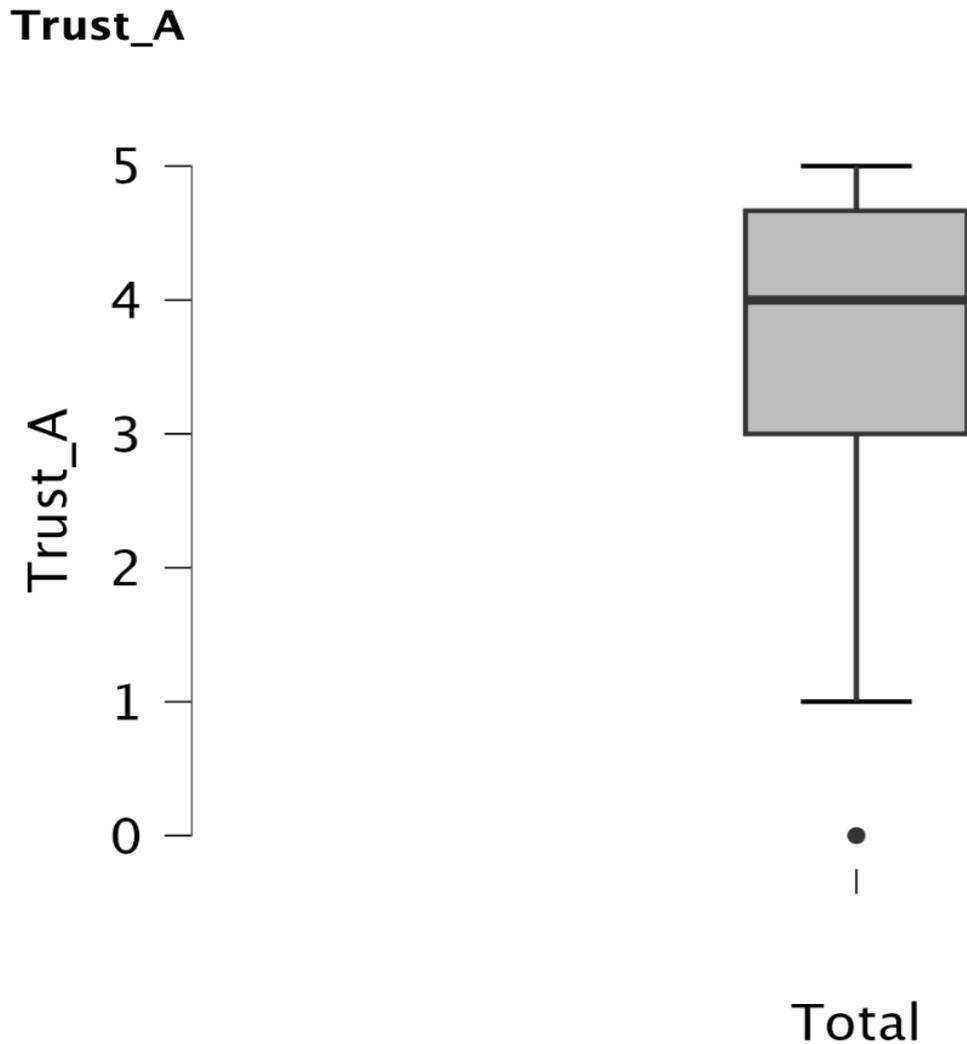
Source: Author's own elaboration

Summary:

Personalisation B ratings were generally low, with most scores between 1 and 2. The distribution was positively skewed with several high outliers, indicating that while the majority found Email B minimally personalised, a small subset perceived it considerably more positively.

Figure 5. Boxplot Trust A

Boxplot of Trust A scores. The median is around 4.0 and the interquartile range ranges from about 3 to 4.5. One lower outlier is visible near 0.5, but most responses reflect high levels of trust for Email A.



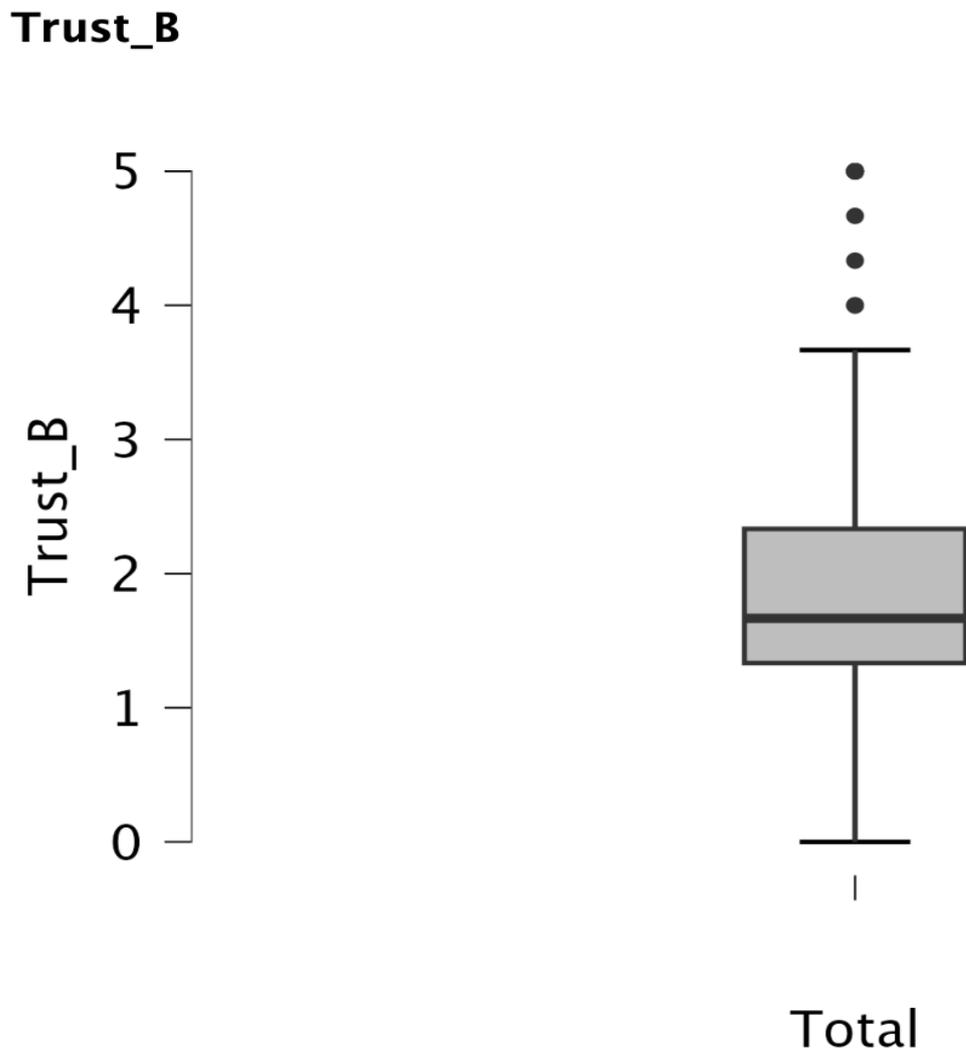
Source: Author's own elaboration

Summary:

Trust towards Email A was high overall, with a median around 4. The distribution showed consistency with few low scores except for a single outlier, suggesting widespread perception of trustworthiness

Figure 6. Boxplot of Trust B

Boxplot of Trust B scores. The median value of 1.5 has an interquartile range that extends from 1 to 2. The data shows three high-end outliers which exceed 3.5 and represent a small group of participants who found Email B more trustworthy than the majority.



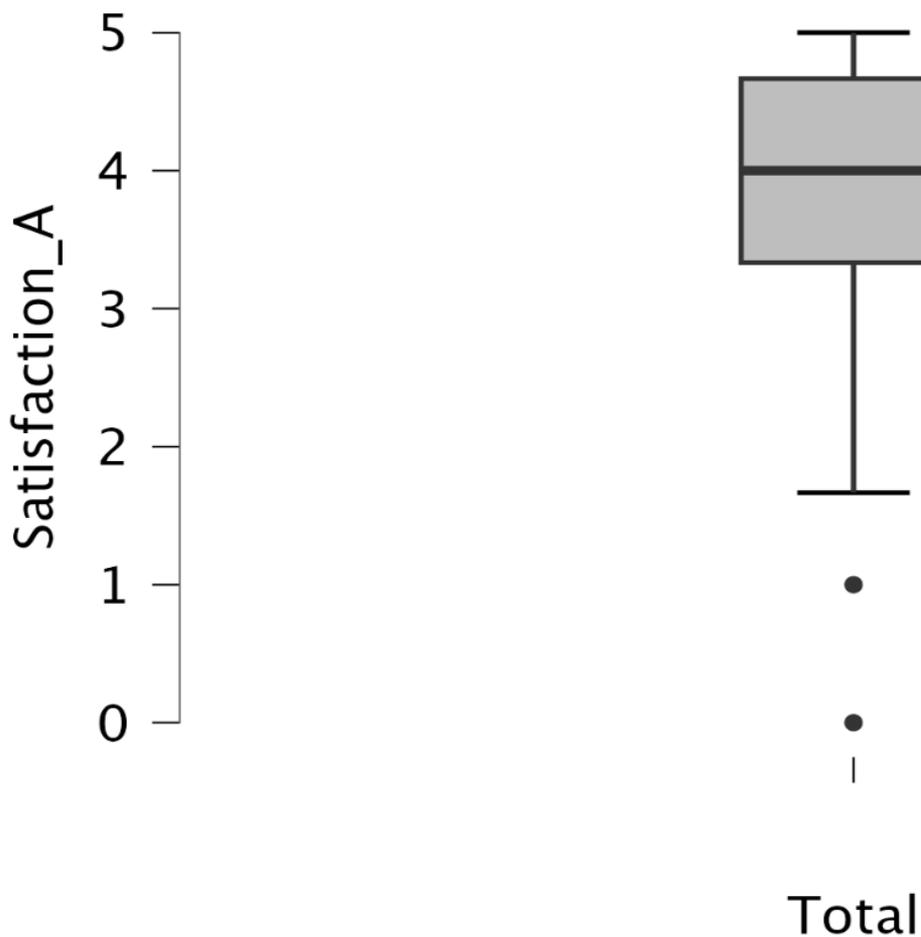
Source: Author's own elaboration

Summary:

The Trust B exhibited minimal central tendency because their median score reached 1.5 which indicated most participants did not find Email B trustworthy.

Figure 7. Boxplot Satisfaction A

Boxplot of Satisfaction A scores. The median appears near 4.0, with the interquartile range extending from around 3 to 4.5. A few lower outliers are present, but overall satisfaction with Email A is consistently high.

Satisfaction_A

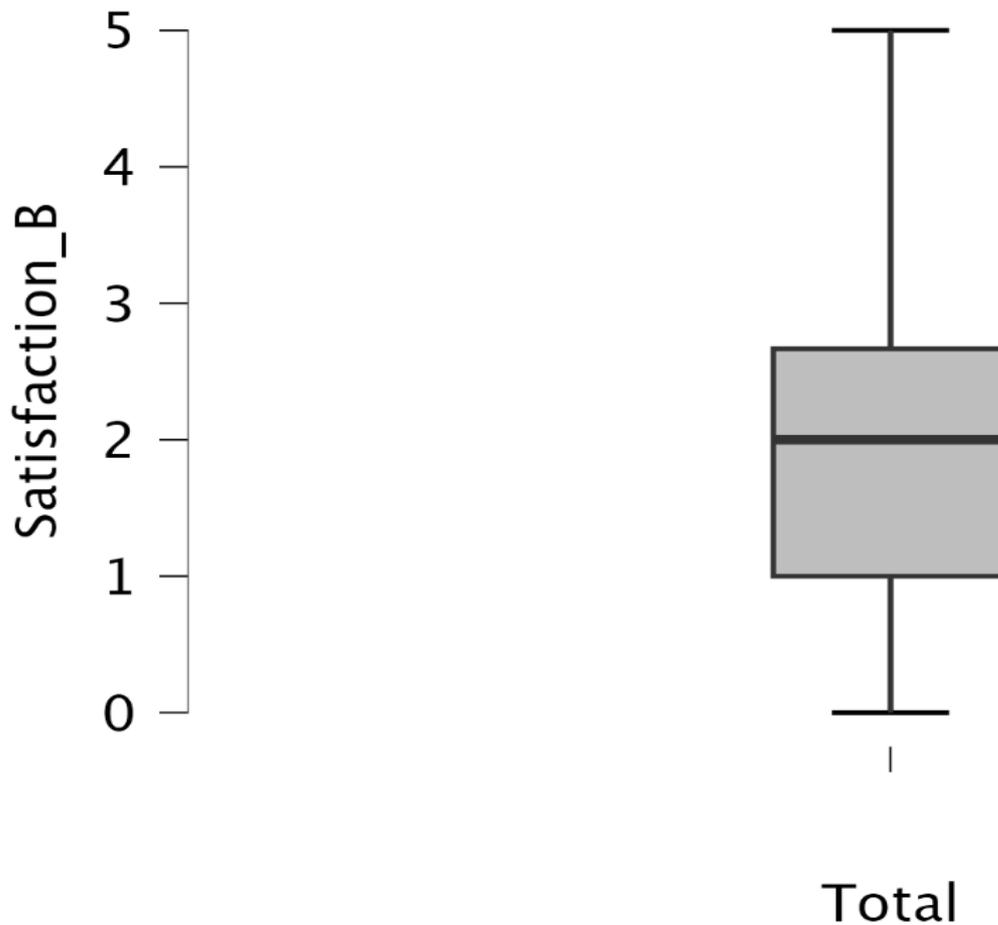
Source: Author's own elaboration

Summary:

Participants reported high satisfaction with Email A, with scores heavily concentrated between 3 and 5. Low outliers were minimal, reinforcing strong positive evaluations.

Figure 8. Boxplot Satisfaction B

Boxplot of Satisfaction B scores. The median is close to 2.0 and the IQR ranges from approximately 1 to 2.5. The distribution shows several upper outliers above 4, suggesting occasional high satisfaction with Email B despite generally low ratings.

Satisfaction_B

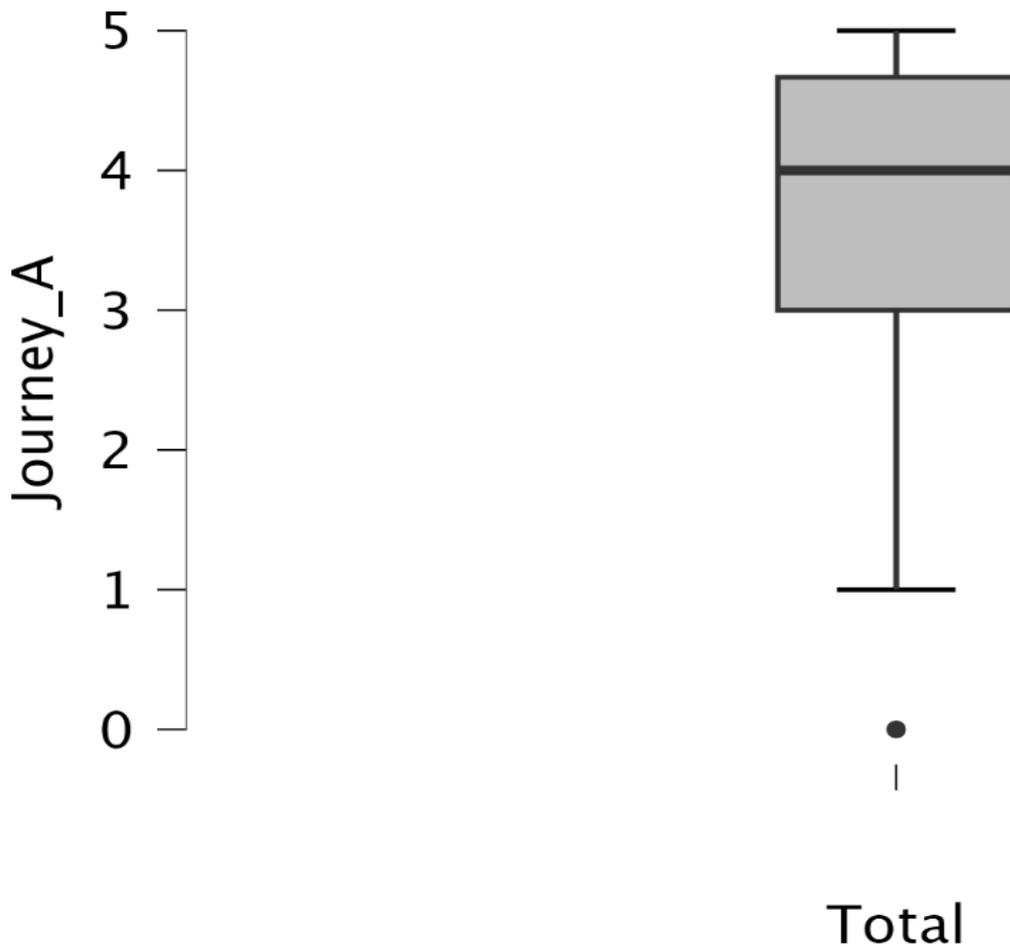
Source: Author's own elaboration

Summary:

Satisfaction B scores were relatively low overall, clustering in the lower range. The presence of high outliers shows that although uncommon, a minority found Email B more satisfying.

Figure 9. Journey A

The boxplot shows Journey A scores. The middle value of the data set is 4.0 while the IQR spans from 3 to 4.5. The data shows one outlier below 1.0 yet most participants gave positive ratings to Email journey progression. A.

Journey_A

Source: Author's own elaboration

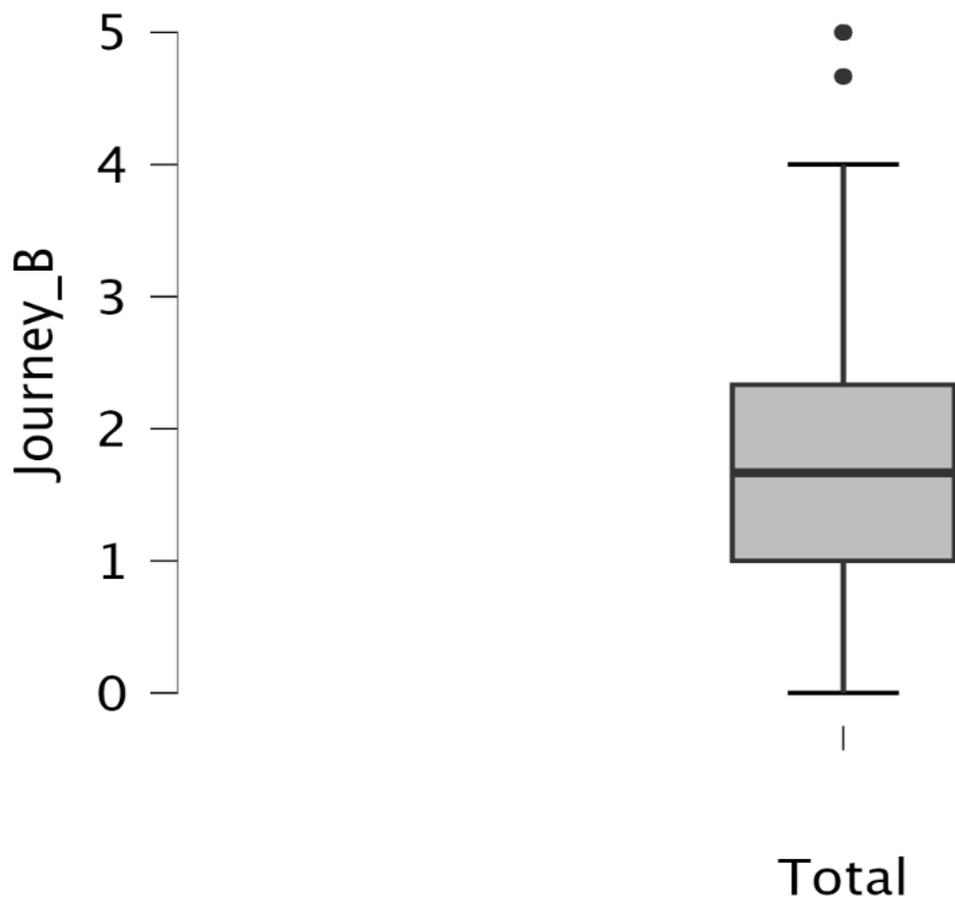
Summary:

Journey A scores indicate that Email A was generally perceived as supporting the customer journey effectively. Most ratings fell in the upper part of the scale with minimal deviation.

Figure 10. Boxplot Journey B

The Boxplot shows Journey B scores. The middle value of 1.7 stands as the median while the IQR spans from 1 to 2. The high outliers above 3.5 show that a small group of users strongly believed Email B enhanced their journey advancement.

Journey_B



Source: Author's own elaboration

Summary:

The Journey B scores demonstrate a low median value and narrow IQR because participants did not experience significant journey development after receiving Email B. The high outliers represent individual positive responses but the overall perception of the journey remained weak.

5. COMPREHENSIVE CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

Overview and Key Findings

The research examined how B2C e-commerce email marketing personalization affects customer trust levels and satisfaction and their shopping journey advancement. The study used a within-subjects experimental design to evaluate 120 female online fashion shoppers in Morocco who received marketing emails from MavlyStore, a Moroccan fashion retailer. The research results demonstrate that personalized marketing approaches lead to significant improvements in customer perceptions regarding all studied factors. The participants evaluated the personalized email as superior to the generic email regarding perceived personalization ($t = 13.69$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.25$) and trust ($t = 11.81$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.08$) and satisfaction ($t = 12.63$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.15$) and journey progression ($t = 11.95$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.09$). The substantial effect sizes (Cohen's $d > 1.0$) show that these results represent significant real-world differences instead of statistical flukes. The participants chose the personalized email over the generic email by 87.1% because they found the brand communication satisfying (21.0%) and the shopping motivation strong (18.5%) and the content relevant (13.7%).

Answer to the Research Question

The research question asked: "In what ways do customers benefit from and perceive different levels of personalisation in B2C e-commerce email programmes, and how do these differences affect their trust, satisfaction, and sense of progression through the Convert and Engage stages of the customer journey?"

The research findings demonstrate that customers obtain advantages from personalized content through three distinct channels which include functional benefits and emotional and relational value. The search process becomes more efficient because personalized content delivers information that matches customer needs. The emotional connection with personalization makes customers feel important while the relational aspect demonstrates brand dedication. The preference data show that personalization creates three distinct advantages which include satisfaction at 21.0% and motivation at 18.5% and relevance at 13.7% thus proving personalization creates a complete customer experience improvement.

The results showed that personalized emails created trust at a significantly higher level than non-personalized emails ($M = 3.68$ vs. $M = 2.01$, $d = 1.08$). The trust-building process of personalization works through two mechanisms which prove competence by delivering correct information and relevant content and benevolence by showing data usage benefits the customer. The combination of name insertion and product suggestions and preference recognition through email content creates trust by showing customers that the company operates with honesty and reliability and serves their interests.

The factor which affected satisfaction the most was personalisation because it received the highest average rating of 3.87 ($d = 1.15$). Customers seem to evaluate email quality through their satisfaction ratings which reach the highest point. The substantial effect size demonstrates that personalization creates positive emotional responses to email content which results in satisfaction ratings that move from neutral to strongly positive.

The Convert and Engage stage progression became more noticeable through personalization according to customer perceptions ($M = 3.69$ vs. $M = 1.91$, $d = 1.09$). Personalization affects both immediate customer perceptions and their long-term relationship development which drives them to buy again and stay involved with the company.

Implications and Recommendations

Personalisation has to become a cornerstone of customer relationship building rather than just an essential operational function it is now. Research has shown that personalized marketing has a considerable effect and companies should invest substantial resources into developing personalized marketing techniques. Businesses should evaluate their email communications to identify opportunities to personalize their standard email messages. Companies need to purchase marketing automation solutions that enable the modification of marketing content in real time. These solutions should also track metrics which gauge how satisfied customers are, customer perceptions and customer actions. The funds earmarked for e-mail marketing should be utilised in the development of personalisation tools across a range of 20 to 30%.

The use of multiple design elements is essential for personalization because they must create content that is both useful and emotionally engaging and signals personal relationships. Organizations need to use advanced recommendation systems which analyze

user behavior and purchase records and contextual elements while performing continuous accuracy tests. The email content needs to include personal names in a natural way while it references previous interactions and uses branding personality to create emotional connections through relevant content. Organizations should divide their customers into groups based on their preferences and use messaging to build stronger relationships by emphasizing common values and shared experiences.

Transparency in data collection and processing is also vital because consumer distrust can result from privacy concerns. Companies must implement explicit consent methods for customers, which provide them with full information on data collection and usage. Businesses must therefore create preference centres where consumers can choose whether their personalisation data is used and also need to embed statements on transparency into their communications to customers in order to establish customer trust through open disclosure.

The type of customer interaction typically determines which personalization strategy a business will use. In the convert stage, customers need to be persuaded to make a purchasing decision. This is facilitated by offering price comparisons and email reviews as well as incentives and reminders about the products they have in their shopping cart. Customer relationships should be nurtured through personal styling advice, product suggestions, exclusive promotions and gratitude. Using reminders of the past alongside invitations to rediscover preferences during re-engagement periods stimulates interest among customers and helps keep them involved.

Organisations need to build strong technological systems to achieve successful personalisation implementation. Organizations need to use Customer Data Platforms (CDPs) which merge information from various sources to create complete customer profiles. Organizations need to use marketing automation platforms with dynamic content features and A/B testing functionality while investing in predictive analytics that can forecast customer requirements beyond basic segmentation methods.

The importance of developing their organisational capabilities alongside their technology investments matters. The success of teams depends on their ability to understand data effectively and their skills in developing personalisation strategies. Marketing teams need to work together with IT departments and data science experts and customer service representatives for successful cross-functional collaboration. The organisation needs to train staff about segmentation logic and A/B testing and data

interpretation and personalised content development while creating ethical standards to determine proper personalisation levels and data management practices.

Organisations need continuous testing to understand customer reactions toward various personalisation components. The organisation needs to perform regular tests on email subject lines and tone variations and content types and recommendation algorithms while using post-email surveys to gather customer feedback and tracking behavioural metrics including opens and clicks through dashboards that connect to perceptual metrics like trust and satisfaction.

Marketing managers need to establish personalization as their top strategic focus while building an organization that prioritizes customer-oriented communication methods. Small and medium e-commerce businesses should start with basic personalization methods that include name integration and purchase history references and simple customer segmentation through affordable automation tools such as Mailchimp and Klaviyo and Sendinblue. Digital marketing agencies need to create flexible personalization frameworks which serve different business sectors while providing multiple service levels from basic name-based personalization to sophisticated behavioral and predictive personalization.

Organisations should use email as their main tool to show customer understanding while building trust and leading customers through their journey within their CRM strategies. Organizations need to establish complete data connectivity between their CRM platform and email management system while developing personalized email campaigns that follow customer relationships and using customer interaction data to identify when relationships need immediate intervention. The personalization strategy should enhance relationship development through content that strengthens customer relationships including birthday wishes and appreciation notes and preference update invitations. The system enables customers to join brand communities which helps them develop stronger social bonds with the brand while aligning their identity with the brand.

Limitations

The research contains various restrictions that affect its results. The study used convenience sampling to recruit participants from MavlyStore's Instagram and WhatsApp channels which resulted in self-selection bias. The survey participants who chose to answer marketing questions might demonstrate higher digital involvement and better brand attitudes than typical consumers. The study participants consisted of MavlyStore followers who already followed the brand so the research results probably stem from dedicated customers

rather than new customers. The study results cannot be applied to different consumer groups because all participants were already following MavlyStore.

The research involved only female fashion consumers who shop in Morocco. The study results about personalization interpretation depend on gender and cultural background and social status of consumers but these findings might not apply to male shoppers or consumers from different cultural backgrounds or age ranges in various markets. The fashion industry likely enhances personalization benefits because fashion products serve identity purposes and emotional needs better than practical items do.

The study's artificial evaluation environment represents a major research constraint. The survey presented participants with email screenshots instead of allowing them to experience actual inbox content. The participants might have focused more intensely on details because they were not processing information in their usual peripheral manner. The within-subjects design allowed researchers to compare personalized emails directly to generic emails which might have created an exaggerated difference between the two. The research only examined one exposure period which prevents scientists from understanding how multiple personalization attempts affect users in the long run.

The research depended solely on participant-reported perceptions through trust and satisfaction and journey progression assessment. The reliability scores reached high levels ($\alpha = .863$ to $.974$) but self-reported data faces multiple biases which include social desirability effects and common method variance and rationalization errors. The study's reliance on perceptual data instead of behavioral metrics like clicks and purchases and visit numbers prevents researchers from drawing conclusions about actual behavioral effects.

The study restricted personalization manipulation to fundamental elements which included name display and recommendation generation and acknowledgment messages. The research team did not evaluate three advanced personalization methods which included predictive personalization and contextual triggers and time optimization. The email displayed products which might not have aligned with every participant's preferences thus creating unintentional differences in their assessment process.

The within-subjects design structure makes it more likely for contrast effects to occur during analysis. The study did not evaluate order effects even though it used randomization for participant placement. The study failed to evaluate how personalization affects outcomes through trust and satisfaction as mediating factors which restricted its ability to show

theoretical cause-and-effect relationships.]

Future Research Directions

Research should investigate how personalization affects different cultural groups to verify if the current findings apply to individualist and collectivist and high-uncertainty-avoidance societies. Research conducted through longitudinal field experiments in actual inbox settings would show if perception improvements lead to behavioral changes and if these effects remain stable or fade away with time.

The assessment of personalization effects requires industry diversification to determine their strength in non-fashion e-commerce sectors. The research should apply Structural Equation Modeling to verify how personalization creates trust which leads to satisfaction and loyalty and advances customer journey progression. The research needs to investigate how privacy concerns and relationship duration and purchase rate and customer demographics affect the results.

The evaluation of predictive analytics and contextual triggers and multi-channel orchestration as advanced personalization methods needs to assess their effects on customer attitudes and actions. Future models need to include privacy concerns as a fundamental element to study how customers react to personalized communication based on their consent levels and transparency preferences.

To conclude research should investigate how personalization impacts prospects and active customers and lapsed customers at different stages of their authentic customer journey because their responses will likely vary bas

SUMMARY

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Study programme: Digital Marketing

Student number: 2431352

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PERSONALIZED EMAIL MARKETING IN LEAD NURTURING AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Master's thesis

Thesis completed – 2025, Vilnius

Paper volume – 73

Number of tables – 10

Number of figures – 10

Number of literature references – 111

As each year passes, digital marketing methods continue to adapt because businesses are increasingly seeking to build customer loyalty through targeted, data-driven campaigns. While more businesses are utilizing the platforms of social media, email marketing continues to stand out as a prime method of consumer engagement in online B2C retail. With the marketing landscape becoming increasingly competitive, businesses are turning to tailored email campaigns as a means of reaching customers with relevant information, so as to build trust and in turn foster customer relationships and guide prospective buyers through the sales process. While previous studies have largely been concerned with metrics that show how well a campaign has performed such as click-through rates and open rates, there has been little consideration of the customer's subjective feelings about the campaign.

The study aims to fill this gap by investigating the effect of various levels of email personalisation on customer satisfaction, trust and the customers' perceived progress through the Convert and Engage stages of the customer relationship. The research uses relationship marketing theory, customer experience theory and the RACE marketing framework to look into how firms personalise their products and services to their customers. Using a quantitative research approach the study implements a within-subject design in which a single group of individuals is studied over two time periods with two different email types being shown to each respondent - a personal and a general type. The researchers examine attitudes towards personalisation, levels of trust, customer satisfaction and customer journey via a Likert scale questionnaire.

The study concentrates on Moroccan women who purchase from businesses to individuals and are users of the internet, with prior experience of receiving email offers for fashion goods. In all the metrics used, the results show that personalized emails are considerably more effective than the standard, mass-produced emails. Customers who receive emails tailored to their interests feel that they have been personally addressed, trust the organisation sending the email and are satisfied with it. Furthermore, tailored emails make it seem like the customer has made more progress along the purchasing process.

Personalisation in e-mail marketing campaigns is found to be linked to effectiveness in marketing; this supports the customer experience and relationship marketing literature by highlighting the customer's experience of personalisation.

This research provides both theoretical and practical contributions by integrating the concept of relationship marketing with methods for evaluating customer experience within a digital email marketing environment. Effective lead nurturing strategies can be developed by marketing professionals who use the study's results to inform their decision-making processes regarding the use of email in long-term customer relationships.

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO VERSLO MOKYKLA**Studijų programa: Skaitmeninė rinkodara****Studento numeris: 2431352****PERSONALIZUOTOS EL. PAŠTO RINKODAROS EFEKTYVUMO VERTINIMAS
POTENCIALIŲ KLIENTŲ UGDYMO IR KLIENTŲ PATIRTIES KONTEKSTE**

Magistro baigiamasis darbas

Darbas parengtas – 2025 m., Vilnius

Darbo apimtis –73

Lentelių skaičius – 10

Paveikslų skaičius – 10

Literatūros šaltinių skaičius – 111

Kasmet skaitmeninės rinkodaros komunikacija toliau vystosi, o organizacijos vis dažniau remiasi duomenimis grįstomis ir personalizuotomis strategijomis, siekdamos kurti ilgalaikius santykius su klientais. Nepaisant augančio socialinių tinklų platformų naudojimo, el. pašto rinkodara išlieka vienu efektyviausių kanalų klientų įtraukimui ir konversijoms skatinti B2C elektroninės prekybos aplinkoje. Didėjant konkurencijai, įmonės vis dažniau taiko personalizuotą el. pašto rinkodarą, siekdamos pateikti aktualų turinį, stiprinti santykius su klientais ir palaikyti potencialių klientų ugdymo (lead nurturing) procesus. Tačiau, nors ankstesniuose tyrimuose daugiausia dėmesio buvo skiriama veiklos rodikliams, tokiems kaip el. laiškų atidarymo ar paspaudimų rodikliai, gerokai mažiau dėmesio skirta vartotojų subjektyvioms patirtims, pasitikėjimo ir pasitenkinimo suvokimui bei suvokiamai pažangai kliento kelionėje.

Šiame tyrime siekiama užpildyti šią spragą, analizuojant, kaip skirtingi el. pašto personalizacijos lygiai veikia vartotojų pasitikėjimą, pasitenkinimą ir suvokiamą pažangą kliento kelionės „Convert“ ir „Engage“ etapuose. Remiantis santykių rinkodaros teorija, klientų patirties teorija ir RACE sistema, tyrime personalizacija nagrinėjama kaip santykinis mechanizmas, formuojantis patirtinius ir santykinius rezultatus. Tyrime taikomas kiekybinis „within-subject“ A/B palyginimo dizainas, respondentams pateikiant dvi B2C elektroninės prekybos el. pašto laiškų versijas – personalizuotą ir nepersonalizuotą – ir matuojant suvokiamą personalizaciją, pasitikėjimą, pasitenkinimą bei kliento kelionės pažangą, naudojant Likerto skalės klausimus.

Empirinis tyrimas orientuotas į Maroke gyvenančias B2C elektroninės prekybos vartotojas, turinčias ankstesnės patirties gaunant reklaminius mados prekių el. pašto laiškus. Tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad personalizuota el. pašto komunikacija reikšmingai pranoksta nepersonalizuotą el. pašto komunikaciją pagal visus tirtus rodiklius. Personalizuoti el. laiškai generuoja aukštesnius suvokiamos personalizacijos, pasitikėjimo, pasitenkinimo ir stipresnio pažangos pojūčio kliento kelionėje vertinimus. Šie rezultatai pabrėžia vartotojo suvokiamos aktualumo ir patirtinės vertės svarbą el. pašto rinkodaros efektyvumui ir papildo esamą santykių rinkodaros bei klientų patirties mokslinę literatūrą, akcentuojant personalizacijos vaidmenį iš vartotojo perspektyvos, o ne vien remiantis organizacijos veiklos rodikliais.

Tyrimas prisideda tiek teoriškai, tiek praktiškai, integruodamas santykių rinkodaros principus su klientų patirties vertinimu skaitmeninės el. pašto rinkodaros kontekste. Tyrimo rezultatai suteikia praktinių įžvalgų skaitmeninės rinkodaros specialistams, siekiantiems kurti efektyvesnes potencialių klientų ugdymo strategijas, stiprinti pasitikėjimą, didinti pasitenkinimą ir palaikyti ilgalaikį klientų įsitraukimą pasitelkiant personalizuotą el. pašto komunikaciją.

6. REFERENCES

1. Aguirre, E., Mahr, D., Grewal, D., de Ruyter, K., & Wetzels, M. (2015). Unraveling the personalization paradox: The effect of information collection and trust-building strategies on online personalization. *Journal of Retailing*, 91(1), 34–49
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2014.09.002>.
2. Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63(1), 1–18. DOI: 10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x.
3. Anderson, E. W., Fornell, C., & Lehmann, D. R. (1994). Customer satisfaction, market share, and profitability: Findings from Sweden. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), 53–66. DOI: 10.1177/002224299405800304.
4. Anderson, J. C., & Narus, J. A. (1990). A model of distributor firm and manufacturer firm working partnerships. *Journal of Marketing*, 54(1), 42–58. DOI: 10.1177/002224299005400103.
5. Bagozzi, R. P., Gopinath, M., & Nyer, P. U. (1999). The role of emotions in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 27(2), 184–206.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070399272005>.
6. *Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>.
7. Batra, R., & Keller, K. L. (2016). Integrating marketing communications: New findings, new lessons, and new ideas. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 122–145.
<https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0419>
8. Berry, L. L. (1983). Relationship marketing. In L. L. Berry, G. L. Shostack, & G. Upah (Eds.), *Emerging perspectives on services marketing* American Marketing Association.
9. Bleier, A., & Eisenbeiss, M. (2015). Personalized online advertising effectiveness: The interplay of what, when, and where. *Marketing Science*, 34(5), 669–688.
<https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.2015.0930>.
10. Bolton, R. N. (1998). A dynamic model of the duration of the customer's relationship with a continuous service provider: The role of satisfaction. *Marketing Science*, 17(1), 45–65.
<https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.17.1.45>.
11. Buttle, F., & Maklan, S. (2019). *Customer relationship management: Concepts and technologies* (4th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351016551>.
12. Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). *Digital Marketing* (7th ed.). Pearson.
13. Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2022). *Digital marketing* (8th ed.). Pearson.
14. Chaffey, D., & Smith, P. R. (2017). *Digital Marketing Excellence: Planning, Optimizing and Integrating Online Marketing* (5th ed.). Routledge.

15. Chaparro-Peláez, J., Hernández-García, Á., & Lorente-Páramo, Á.-J. (2022). May I have your attention, please? An investigation on opening effectiveness in e-mail marketing. *Review of Managerial Science*, 16(7), 2261–2284. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11846-022-00517-9>.
16. Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty. *Journal of Marketing*, 65(2), 81–93. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.65.2.81.18255>.
17. Chittenden, L., & Rettie, R. (2003). An evaluation of e-mail marketing and factors affecting response. *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 11(3), 203–217. DOI: 10.1057/palgrave.jt.5740078.
18. Davenport, T. H., Harris, J. G., & Kohli, A. K. (2001). How do they know their customers so well? *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 42(2), 63–74
19. Ellis-Chadwick, F., & Doherty, N. F. (2012). Web advertising: The role of e-mail marketing. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(6), 843–848.
19. Engel, J. F., Kollat, D. T., & Blackwell, R. D. (1968). *Consumer behavior*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
20. Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2003). You are what they eat: The influence of reference groups on consumers' connections to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(3), 339–348. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327663JCP1303_14.
21. Ganesan, S. (1994). Determinants of long-term orientation in buyer–seller relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(2), 1–19. DOI: 10.1177/002224299405800201.
22. Garbarino, E., & Johnson, M. S. (1999). The different roles of satisfaction, trust, and commitment in customer relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 63(2), 70–87. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299906300204>.
23. Godin, S. (1999). *Permission Marketing: Turning Strangers into Friends, and Friends into Customers*. Simon & Schuster.
- GR& Boza, M.-E. (1999). Trust and concern in consumers' perceptions of marketing information management practices. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 13(1), 5–24.
- Grönroos, C. (1994). From marketing mix to relationship marketing – towards a paradigm shift in marketing. *Australian Marketing Journal*,
24. Gummesson, E. (2002). *Total relationship marketing*. Butterworth-Heinemann.
25. Harrison, R. L., & Reilly, T. M. (2011). Mixed methods designs in marketing research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 14(1), 7–26. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13522751111099300>.
26. Hassan, N., Abdelraouf, M., & El-Shihy, D. (2025). The moderating role of personalized recommendations in the trust–satisfaction–loyalty relationship: An empirical study of AI-

driven e-commerce. *Future Business Journal*, 11, Article 66. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-025-00476-z>

27.Hoff, K. A., & Bashir, M. (2015). Trust in automation: Integrating empirical evidence on factors that influence trust. *Human Factors*, 57(3), 407–434.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018720814547570>.

28.Homburg, C., Jozić, D., & Kuehnl, C. (2017). Customer experience management: Toward implementing an evolving marketing concept. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(3), 377–401. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-015-0460-7>

29.Jefferson, S., & Tanton, S. (2013). *Valuable content marketing: How to make quality content the key to your business success*. Kogan Page.

30.Kannan, P. K., & Li, H. (2017). Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 34(1), 22–45.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2016.11.006>.

31.Keller, K. L. (2009). Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 15(2–3), 139–155.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13527260902757530>

32.Klaus, P., & Maklan, S. (2013). Towards a better measure of customer experience. *International Journal of Market Research*, 55(2), 227–246. <https://doi.org/10.2501/IJMR-2013-021>

33.Kumar, N., Scheer, L. K., & Steenkamp, J.-B. E. M. (1995). The effects of perceived interdependence on dealer attitudes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 32(3), 348–356.

34.Kumar, V., & Reinartz, W. (2016). Creating enduring customer value. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 36–68. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0414>.

35.Kumar, V., & Shah, D. (2004). Building and sustaining profitable customer loyalty for the 21st century. *Journal of Retailing*, 80(4), 317–330.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2004.10.007>

36.Kumar, V., & Shah, D. (2009). Expanding the role of marketing: From customer equity to market capitalization. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(6), 119–136.

<https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.73.6.119>.

37.Kumar, V., Aksoy, L., Donkers, B., Venkatesan, R., Wiesel, T., & Tillmanns, S. (2010). Undervalued or overvalued customers: capturing total customer engagement value. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(3), 297–310. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670510375602>.

38.Lemke, F., Clark, M., & Wilson, H. (2011). Customer Experience Quality: An Exploration in Business and Consumer Contexts Using Repertory Grid Technique. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(6), 846–869. DOI: 10.1007/s11747-010-0219-0 .

39. Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 69–96.
<https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0420>.
40. MacInnis, D. J. (2011). A framework for conceptual contributions in marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(4), 136–154. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.75.4.136>.
41. Mailchimp (n.d.). Lead nurturing through email. Retrieved from:
42. Martin, K. D., Borah, A., & Palmatier, R. W. (2017). Data privacy: Effects on customer and firm performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 81(1), 36–58.
<https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0497>
43. Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 709–734. DOI: 10.5465/amr.2007.24348410.
44. McKnight, D. H., Choudhury, V., & Kacmar, C. (2002). The impact of initial consumer trust on intentions to transact with a web site: A trust building model. *The Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 11(3), 297–323. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0963-8687\(02\)00020-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0963-8687(02)00020-3).
45. Merisavo, M., & Raulas, M. (2004). The impact of e-mail marketing on brand loyalty. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 13(7), 498–505.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/10610420410568435>
46. Moorman, C., Zaltman, G., & Deshpandé, R. (1992). Relationships between providers and users of market research: The dynamics of trust within and between organizations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 29(3), 314–328.
47. Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (1994). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), 20–38.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299405800302>
48. Palmatier, R. W., Dant, R. P., Grewal, D., & Evans, K. R. (2006). Factors influencing the effectiveness of relationship marketing: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(4), 136–153. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.70.4.136>
49. Patrício, L., Fisk, R. P., e Cunha, J. F., & Constantine, L. (2011). Multilevel service design: From customer value constellation to service experience blueprinting. *Journal of Service Research*, 14(2), 180–200.
50. Peppers, D., & Rogers, M. (2011). *Managing customer relationships: A strategic framework* (2nd ed.). Wiley.
51. Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy. *Harvard Business Review*, 76(4), 97–105. <https://hbr.org/1998/07/welcome-to-the-experience-economy>
52. Reichheld, F. F., & Sasser, W. E., Jr. (1990). Zero defections: Quality comes to services. *Harvard Business Review*, 68*(5), 105–111.

53. Rosenberg, L. J., & Czepiel, J. A. (1984). A marketing approach for customer retention. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 1*(2), 45–51. <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb008094>.
54. Rust, R. T., & Huang, M.-H. (2014). The service revolution and the transformation of marketing science. *Marketing Science*, 33(2), 206–221. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.2013.0836>
55. Rust, R. T., & Verhoef, P. C. (2005). Optimizing the marketing interventions mix in intermediate-term CRM. *Marketing Science*, 24(3), 477–489. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.1040.0101>.
56. Selnes, F. (1998). Antecedents and consequences of trust and satisfaction in buyer–seller relationships. *European Journal of Marketing*, 32(3/4), 305–322. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569810204580>.
57. Singh, J., & Sirdeshmukh, D. (2000). Agency and trust mechanisms in consumer satisfaction and loyalty judgments. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28(1), 150–167. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070300281014>.
58. Smart Insights. (2020). RACE planning framework. (Overview of the RACE model as used in practice).
59. Statista (2024). Global marketing automation revenue statistics.
60. Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77(2), 203–220. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359\(01\)00041-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359(01)00041-0).
61. Vargo, S. L., & Lusch, R. F. (2017). Service-dominant logic: Continuing the evolution. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(1), 5–23. [10.1007/s11747-007-0069-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-007-0069-6).
62. Verhoef, P. C., et al. (2009). Customer experience creation: Determinants, dynamics and management strategies. *Journal of Retailing*, 85(1), 31–41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2008.11.001>.
63. Verhoef, P. C., et al. (2015). Customer engagement as a new perspective in customer management. *Journal of Service Research*, 18(3), 261–278. DOI: 10.1177/1094670510375461.
64. Verhoef, P. C., Lemon, K. N., Parasuraman, A., Roggeveen, A., Tsiros, M., & Schlesinger, L. A. (2009). Customer experience creation: Determinants, dynamics
65. Verhoef, P. C., Lemon, K. N., Parasuraman, A., Roggeveen, A., Tsiros, M., & Schlesinger, L. A. (2015). Customer experience creation: Determinants, dynamics and management strategies. *Journal of Retailing*, 91(2), 172–181. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2015.04.001>.
66. Verhoef, P. C., Neslin, S. A., & Vroomen, B. (2007). Multichannel customer management: Understanding the research–shopper phenomenon. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 24(2), 129–148.

67. Verhoef, P. C., Reinartz, W. J., & Krafft, M. (2010). Customer engagement as a new perspective in customer management. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(3), 247–252. DOI: 10.1177/1094670510375461.
68. Vesänen, J. (2007). What is personalization? A conceptual framework. Aalto University. [10.1108/03090560710737534](https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560710737534).
69. Wedel, M., & Kannan, P. K. (2016). Marketing analytics for data-rich environments. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 97–121. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0413>.
70. Westbrook, R. A., & Oliver, R. L. (1991). The Dimensionality of Consumption Emotion Patterns and Consumer Satisfaction. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(1), 84–91. DOI: 10.1086/209243.
71. White, T. B., Zahay, D. L., Thorbjørnsen, H., & Shavitt, S. (2008). Getting too personal: Reactance to highly personalized email solicitations. *Marketing Letters*, 19(1), 39–50. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-007-9027-9>.
72. Wood & Neal, 2007 A new look at habits and the habit-goal interface" (*Psychological Review*, 114(4), 843–863. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.114.4.843>).
73. Yadav, M. S. (2010). The decline of conceptual articles and implications for knowledge development. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.74.1.1>
74. Yengar, S. S., & Lepper, M. R. (2000). When choice is demotivating: Can one desire too much of a good thing? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(6), 995–1006. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.79.6.995>.
75. Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(2), 31–46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299606000203>.

Methodology Section:

76. Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182.
77. Bleier, A., & Eisenbeiss, M. (2015). Personalized online advertising effectiveness: The interplay of what, when, and where. *Marketing Science*, 34(5), 669–688.
78. Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press.
79. Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). *Digital marketing (7th ed.)*. Pearson.
80. Churchill, G. A. (1979). A paradigm for developing better measures of marketing constructs. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 16(1), 64–
73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224377901600110>

81. Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 155–159. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.112.1.155>
82. Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
84. DeVellis, R. F. (2017). *Scale development: Theory and applications* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
85. Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method* (4th ed.). Wiley.
86. Duffett, R. G. (2017). Influence of social media marketing communications on young consumers' attitudes. *Young Consumers*, 18(1), 19–39. <https://doi.org/10.1108/YC-07-2016-00622>
87. Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4.
88. Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2020). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage.
89. Joshi, A., Kale, S., Chandel, S., & Pal, D. K. (2015). Likert scale: Explored and explained. *British Journal of Applied Science & Technology*, 7(4), 396–403. <https://doi.org/10.9734/BJAST/2015/14975>
90. Klaus, P., & Maklan, S. (2013). Towards a better measure of customer experience. *International Journal of Market Research*, 55(2), 227–246.
91. Krosnick, J. A., & Presser, S. (2010). Question and questionnaire design. In P. V. Marsden & J. D. Wright (Eds.), *Handbook of survey research* (2nd ed., pp. 263–314). Emerald Group Publishing.
92. Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 69–96.
93. Malhotra, N. K., & Birks, D. F. (2021). *Marketing research: An applied approach* (6th ed.). Pearson.
94. Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (1994). The commitment–trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), 20–38.
95. Evans, J. R., & Mathur, A. (2005). The value of online surveys: A look at the Internet's impact on survey research. *International Journal of Market Research*, 47(4), 1–25.
96. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (8th ed.). Pearson.
97. Vesanen, J. (2007). What is personalization? A conceptual framework. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(5/6), 409–418. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560710737534>.
98. Boateng, G. O., Neilands, T. B., Frongillo, E. A., Melgar-Quiñonez, H. R., & Young, S. L.

- (2018). Best practices for developing and validating scales for health, social, and behavioral research: A primer. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 6, 149. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2018.00149>.
99. Gelinias, L., Pierce, R., Winkler, S., Cohen, I. G., Lynch, H. F., & Bierer, B. E. (2017). Using social media as a research recruitment tool: Ethical issues and recommendations. *The American Journal of Bioethics*, 17(3), 3–14.
100. Malhotra, N. K., Nunan, D., & Birks, D. (2017). *Marketing research: An applied approach* (5th ed.). Pearson.
101. Peterson, R. A., & Merunka, D. R. (2014). Convenience samples of college students and research reproducibility. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(5), 1035–1041.
102. Regmi, P. R., Waithaka, E., Paudyal, A., Simkhada, P., & van Teijlingen, E. (2017). Guide to the design and application of online questionnaire surveys. *Nepal Journal of Epidemiology*, 6(4), 640–644.
103. Wright, K. B. (2005). Researching Internet-based populations: Advantages and disadvantages of online survey research. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(3). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2005.tb00259.x>
104. Keppel, G., & Wickens, T. D. (2004). *Design and analysis: A researcher's handbook* (4th ed.). Pearson.
105. Montgomery, D. C. (2017). *Design and analysis of experiments* (9th ed.). Wiley.
106. Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Houghton Mifflin
107. Visser, P. S., Krosnick, J. A., & Lavrakas, P. J. (2000). Survey research. In A. E. Kazdin (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of psychology* (Vol. 7, pp. 453–457). American Psychological Association.
108. Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2019). *Using multivariate statistics* (7th ed.).
109. Pearson. Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
110. Gravetter, F. J., & Wallnau, L. B. (2017). *Statistics for the behavioral sciences* (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.
111. Fowler, F. J. (2014). *Survey research methods* (5th ed.). Sage.

7.APPENDIXES

Part 1

Dear respondent we would appreciate your participation as this survey is part of a master's thesis about how customers experience marketing emails from fashion brands.

Your participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time. Your answers are **anonymous**: we do not ask for your name, email address or any information that identifies you personally. The data will be stored securely and used **only for academic research purposes**. Results will be reported in aggregate form (summaries and statistics), not individually.

By continuing, you confirm that you are at least 18 years old, have read this information, and **consent** to take part in the survey.

Questionnaire

Dear respondent we would appreciate your participation as this survey is part of a master's thesis about how customers experience marketing emails from fashion brands.

Your participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time. Answers are **anonymous**: we do not ask for your name, email address or any information that identifies you personally. The data will be stored securely and used **only for academic research purposes**. Results will be reported in aggregate form (summaries and statistics), not individually.

By continuing, you confirm that you are **at least 18 years old**, have read this information, and **consent** to take part in the survey.

Thanks for your participation!

1. Do you consent to take part in this research survey?

- Yes, I consent
- No I do not consent

Are you 18 years old or older?

- Yes
- No

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

Are you currently living In Morocco?

- Yes
- No

2. How often do you shop for fashion (clothing, shoes, accessories) online?

- Never
- Less than once a month
- About once a month
- A few times a month
- At least once a week

3. In the last 3 months, have you received marketing emails from fashion or online clothing brands?

- Yes
- No

Email A Evaluation

Please look carefully at the marketing email below. Imagine you received this email from a fashion brand you know. Then answer the questions about how you experience this email.





We hand-picked these dresses based on your recent browsing

Hi [Your Name],

We noticed you've been exploring summer dresses, so we selected pieces that match your favorite styles and preferred fit. Based on your browsing and previous choices, here are feminine silhouettes, warm tones, and soft flowing fabrics designed for everyday comfort and confidence.

Why We Chose These for You: These pieces were handpicked because they align with your taste for elegant and effortless outfits. You can view your personalized selection and continue building a wardrobe that reflects your style with your preferred size S.

Your Exclusive Benefits: ✓ Free shipping on orders over 300 MAD
 ✓ Easy 14-day returns – shop risk-free
 ✓ Secure payment powered by trusted encryption
 ✓ Your data is protected and never shared

These pieces were chosen to align with your taste for elegant and effortless outfits. You can view your personalized selection and continue building a wardrobe that reflects your style.

[Explore Now](#)



Effortless Evening Style

Handpicked pieces perfect for warm summer nights — chosen to match your preference for elegant silhouettes and soft, feminine lines.

[Shop Now](#)



Timeless Black Classics

Inspired by your interest in sleek, minimal looks. These black essentials combine sophistication with comfort for any occasion.

[Explore](#)



Sun-Kissed Summer Outfits

Curated just for your love of warm tones and flowing fabrics. These outfits bring effortless charm to your everyday style.

[Discover](#)

Ready to Complete Your Look? Click below to explore your curated collection and add these pieces to your wardrobe. We've saved them just for you.

Why Your Privacy Matters: At Mavly Store, we respect your trust. Your browsing preferences help us show you items you'll love, but your personal information stays private and secure. You're in control—update your preferences anytime.


[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)

1. Personalization Email A

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
This email feels tailored to me.						
This email seems relevant to my personal preferences.						
This email feels designed for someone like me.						

2. Trust Email A

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
I trust this brand based on this email.						
This email makes the brand seem reliable.						
The information in this email feels honest.						

3. Satisfaction Email A

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with this marketing email.						
This email leaves me with a positive impression of the brand.						
Overall, I feel pleased with this email.						

4. Journey Progression Email A

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
...more likely to visit the brand's website.						
...more likely to consider buying from this brand.						

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
...closer to making a purchase.						

Email B Evaluation

Please look carefully at the marketing email below. Imagine you received this email from a fashion brand you know. Then answer the questions about how you experience this email.





Discover Our New Season Collection

Step into the new season with our latest fashion collection, designed to bring elegance and versatility to your wardrobe. Each piece is crafted with attention to detail, ensuring that you not only look stylish but also feel comfortable and confident in every setting.

From chic dresses that transition seamlessly from day to night, to accessories that add a touch of sophistication to any outfit, our collection offers something for every occasion. Embrace the change of seasons with styles that reflect your unique personality and taste.

Explore the vibrant colors, luxurious fabrics, and innovative designs that define this season's must-have looks. Whether you're updating your work attire or seeking the perfect ensemble for a special event, our collection promises to inspire and delight.

[Explore Now](#)



Floral Elegance

Embrace the beauty of spring with our exquisite floral dresses, designed to captivate and inspire. Perfect for any occasion, these dresses offer a blend of comfort and style.



Chic Neutrals

Discover the versatility of our neutral blouses, perfect for creating timeless looks. These pieces are essential for a wardrobe that transitions effortlessly from day to night.



Accessorize Boldly

Complete your ensemble with our selection of handbags and sandals, designed to add a touch of flair to any outfit. These accessories are the perfect finishing touch.

[Shop Now](#)

[Explore](#)

[Discover](#)

At Mavly Store, we believe that fashion should be accessible and enjoyable for everyone. Our commitment to style simplicity means that you can effortlessly find pieces that resonate with your personal taste, without the hassle of complicated choices. We curate collections that are not only trendy but also timeless, ensuring that you always have the perfect outfit for any occasion.

Whether you're dressing for a casual day out or a formal event, our diverse range of clothing and accessories caters to every need. Our fashion-forward approach ensures that you stay ahead of the trends while maintaining a classic elegance that never goes out of style.

Shopping with us is not just about finding the right clothes; it's about experiencing a seamless and secure shopping journey. We prioritize your safety and convenience, offering a user-friendly platform that makes browsing and purchasing a breeze. Trust in Mavly Store to provide you with a shopping experience that is as stylish as it is secure.

Explore Our New Arrivals

Step into the world of fashion with our latest collection, designed to elevate your style and bring a fresh perspective to your wardrobe. Our new arrivals are crafted with the finest materials, ensuring both comfort and elegance in every piece.

Whether you're looking for a statement piece or a versatile staple, our collection offers a variety of options to suit your personal style. From vibrant colors to classic silhouettes, each item is thoughtfully designed to enhance your look and boost your confidence.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to refresh your wardrobe with our exclusive new arrivals. Discover the perfect blend of style and sophistication that awaits you.

[Shop Now](#)





1. Personalization email B

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
This email feels tailored to me.						
This email seems relevant to my personal preferences.						
This email feels designed for someone like me.						

2. Trust Email B

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
I trust this brand based on this email.						
This email makes the brand seem reliable.						
The information in this email feels honest.						

3. Satisfaction Email B

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with this marketing email.						
This email leaves me with a positive impression of the brand.						
Overall, I feel pleased with this email.						

4. Journey Progression Email B

Scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
...more likely to visit the brand's website.						

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5
...more likely to consider buying from this brand.						
...closer to making a purchase.						

4. Preference & Reasoning

Overall Email Preference

Question	Response Options
Which email do you prefer overall?	Email A / Email B

5. Main Reason for This Preference

Reason
The email felt more personally tailored
Increased my interest in buying
It made me feel more satisfied with the email
It made the brand feel more trustworthy
The content felt more relevant to my shopping needs
It motivated me to continue my shopping journey
It felt more engaging and emotionally appealing
Looked better

6. Demographics

Age Group
18–25
25–34
35–44
45–55
55+

7. Monthly Fashion Spending

Amount
Less than 200 MAD
200–499 MAD
500–999 MAD
1,000–1,999 MAD
2,000 MAD or more

8. Frequency of Checking Email

Frequency
Less than once a week
1–3 times per week
4–6 times per week
At least once a day

Part 2

Pilot Test Summary

1. Purpose of the Pilot Test

The pilot test was conducted to evaluate the clarity, reliability, and functionality of the survey instrument prior to full data collection. The test aimed to confirm that the email stimuli displayed correctly, assess whether the measurement items were understandable, and ensure that each multi-item construct demonstrated acceptable internal consistency.

2. Participants

A total of **32 pilot participants** completed the full survey. All participants were female online shoppers residing in Morocco, matching the target population of the main study. Participants evaluated both email versions and completed all measurement scales and preference items.

3. Procedure

Participants accessed the survey through an online link and viewed Email A (generic) and Email B (personalised). They rated each email on perceived personalisation, trust, satisfaction, and perceived customer journey progression. They also selected a predefined justification option explaining why they preferred one email version over the other.

4. Findings from the Pilot

A. Survey clarity and usability

All participants were able to view both email stimuli without display issues.

The survey flow was smooth, and no major comprehension problems were reported.

Based on pilot feedback, **additional predefined justification options** were added to better reflect participants' reasoning.

No structural or technical problems were detected.

B. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha)

Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each multi-item construct:

Construct	Email Version	Cronbach's α	Interpretation
Perceived Personalisation	A	0.895	Excellent
Trust	A	0.926	Excellent
Satisfaction	A	0.970	Excellent
Journey Progression	A	0.943	Excellent
Perceived Personalisation	B	0.968	Excellent
Trust	B	0.974	Excellent
Satisfaction	B	0.974	Excellent
Journey Progression	B	0.929	Excellent

All constructs exceeded the acceptable threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$, indicating adequate internal reliability.

5. Adjustments Made After the Pilot

Additional justification options were added to the preference question to more accurately capture participants' reasoning.

Minor phrasing adjustments were made to improve clarity.

No items were removed or modified in the measurement scales, as all constructs achieved acceptable reliability.

6. Conclusion

The pilot test confirmed that the survey instrument was clear, reliable, and suitable for full data collection. All necessary refinements were implemented, and no further adjustments were required.

Part 3

Statistical Analysis Outputs

Reliability statistics:

Cronbach alpha Personalization email A

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.863			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Cronbach alpha Personalization email B

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.922			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Cronbach alpha trust email A

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.907			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Cronbach alpha Trust email B

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.929			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Cronbach alpha satisfaction email A

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.925			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Cronbach alpha satisfaction email B

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.941			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Cronbach alpha Journey progression email A

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.928			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Cronbach alpha journey progression email B

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.927			

Note. The analytic confidence interval is not available for coefficient alpha/lambda2 when data contain missings and pairwise complete observations are used. Try changing to 'Delete listwise' within 'Advanced Options'.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptives

	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
Personalisation_A	120	3.761	1.031	0.094	0.274
Personalisation_B	120	1.794	1.250	0.114	0.696
Trust_A	120	3.678	1.106	0.101	0.301
Trust_B	120	2.011	1.227	0.112	0.610
Satisfaction_A	120	3.867	1.022	0.093	0.264
Satisfaction_B	120	2.100	1.292	0.118	0.615
Journey_A	120	3.686	1.122	0.102	0.304
Journey_B	120	1.911	1.266	0.116	0.663

Contingency / Cross-Tabulation

Contingency Tables

Preference		PreferenceReason										Total
		Felt more relevant	Increased my interest in buying	Increased my trust	It felt more engaging and emotionally appealing	It made me feel more satisfied with the brand's communication	It made the brand feel more trustworthy	It motivated me to continue my shopping or explore the products	Looked better	The content felt more relevant to my style and needs	The email felt more personally tailored to me	
Email A	Count	3.00	13.00	3.00	5.00	23.00	8.00	22.00	4.00	17.00	10.00	108.00
	% within row	2.78%	12.04%	2.78%	4.63%	21.30%	7.41%	20.37%	3.70%	15.74%	9.26%	100.00%
	% within column	60.00%	81.25%	100.00%	71.43%	88.46%	72.73%	95.65%	66.67%	100.00%	100.00%	87.10%
Email B	% of total	2.42%	10.48%	2.42%	4.03%	18.55%	6.45%	17.74%	3.23%	13.71%	8.06%	87.10%
	Count	2.00	3.00	0.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	16.00
	% within row	12.50%	18.75%	0.00%	12.50%	18.75%	18.75%	6.25%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Total	% within column	40.00%	18.75%	0.00%	28.57%	11.54%	27.27%	4.35%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	12.90%
	% of total	1.61%	2.42%	0.00%	1.61%	2.42%	2.42%	0.81%	1.61%	0.00%	0.00%	12.90%
	Count	5.00	16.00	3.00	7.00	26.00	11.00	23.00	6.00	17.00	10.00	124.00
Total	% within row	4.03%	12.90%	2.42%	5.65%	20.97%	8.87%	18.55%	4.84%	13.71%	8.06%	100.00%
	% within column	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
	% of total	4.03%	12.90%	2.42%	5.65%	20.97%	8.87%	18.55%	4.84%	13.71%	8.06%	100.00%

Frequency Tables

Frequency Tables

Frequencies for Preference

Preference	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Email A	108	48.2	87.1	87.1
Email B	16	7.1	12.9	100.0
Missing	100	44.6		
Total	224	100.0		

Frequencies for PreferenceReason

PreferenceReason	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Felt more relevant	5	2.2	4.0	4.0
Increased my interest in buying	16	7.1	12.9	16.9
Increased my trust	3	1.3	2.4	19.4
It felt more engaging and emotionally appealing	7	3.1	5.6	25.0
It made me feel more satisfied with the brand's communication	26	11.6	21.0	46.0
It made the brand feel more trustworthy	11	4.9	8.9	54.8
It motivated me to continue my shopping or explore the products	23	10.3	18.5	73.4
Looked better	6	2.7	4.8	78.2
The content felt more relevant to my style and needs	17	7.6	13.7	91.9
The email felt more personally tailored to me	10	4.5	8.1	100.0
Missing	100	44.6		
Total	224	100.0		

Paired Samples t-Test

Measure 1	Measure 2	t	df	p	Cohen's d	SE Cohen's d	95% CI for Cohen's d	
							Lower	Upper
Personalisation_A	- Personalisation_B	13.69	119	< .001	1.250	0.167	1.009	1.487
Trust_A	- Trust_B	11.81	119	< .001	1.078	0.152	0.851	1.302
Satisfaction_A	- Satisfaction_B	12.63	119	< .001	1.153	0.155	0.920	1.382
Journey_A	- Journey_B	11.95	119	< .001	1.091	0.157	0.863	1.316

Note. Student's t-test.

Part 4:

Raw data link: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1BCL0p0r13Dj1m6Fv6NII-7Ikjqkz-hv9SdbhdgmWC5E/edit?resourcekey=&gid=60749709#gid=60749709>