

## **The Impact of Visual Aesthetics on Instagram Reels on Fashion Brand Loyalty among Generation Z in Sri Lanka's Western Province**

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This study explores the impact of visual aesthetics in Instagram Reels on fashion brand loyalty among Generation Z in Sri Lanka's Western Province. With Instagram's rise as a key social media platform, the research examines how factors such as emotional appeal, informativeness, and content legitimacy influence brand loyalty. It also investigates the role of community engagement—via likes, comments, and shares—and how it amplifies the effects of aesthetic content on loyalty. The study is grounded in existing literature on social media marketing, visual aesthetics, and brand loyalty, providing new insights, particularly in the context of a digitally engaged and culturally diverse demographic.

A quantitative research approach was used, gathering data through a structured survey of 385 active Instagram users aged 15–27 in Sri Lanka's Western Province. These participants were chosen for their engagement with fashion brands on Instagram. Statistical analyses, including regression and mediation tests, were conducted using SPSS to assess both the direct and indirect effects of visual aesthetics on brand loyalty, with community engagement acting as a mediating factor. This methodology offers a comprehensive understanding of the role visual content plays in building loyalty within the fashion industry.

The findings show that visual aesthetics significantly influence fashion brand loyalty, both directly and indirectly through community engagement. High-quality visuals, appealing design elements, and well-organized content were identified as key drivers of emotional and behavioral loyalty. Community engagement enhances these effects, as interactive features foster trust and emotional connections between brands and Gen Z consumers. These results

highlight the importance of visually compelling content in building strong consumer-brand relationships, especially for fashion brands targeting tech-savvy social media users.

The study does have some limitations, particularly its geographic focus on Sri Lanka's Western Province, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different cultural and digital landscapes. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the research means it cannot capture long-term shifts in consumer behavior. The focus on Instagram Reels also means other social media platforms or integrated marketing strategies may not have been fully considered in relation to brand loyalty.

This research contributes both theoretically and practically. It expands the understanding of how visual aesthetics and community engagement shape brand loyalty in the digital marketing landscape. Practically, it provides actionable insights for marketers on creating content that resonates with Gen Z, urging them to focus on visual consistency, emotional storytelling, and interactive elements in their Instagram strategies. Future research could explore multi-platform dynamics and examine the long-term effects of visual content on brand loyalty to further refine strategies for fashion brands in a rapidly evolving digital environment.

**Keywords:** *Aesthetics, Community Engagement, Fashion Brands, Gen Z, Instagram Reels, Visual Marketing*