Zahra. Sheikholeslami Kandelous[1],
Mohammad Javad. Taghipourian[2*],
Shahrbanoo. Gholipour Freydouni[1],
Mehdi. Rouholamini[1]

1   Department of Business Management, Bab.C., Islamic Azad University, Babol, Iran
2   Department of Management, Cha.C., Islamic Azad University, Chalus, Iran

Corresponding author email address:
mj.taghipourian@iau.ac.ir

A Systematic Review of Customer Experience: Exploring Dimensions, Drivers, and Outcomes Using Meta-Synthesis

ABSTRACT

Today, customer experience is one of the vital concepts both in businesses and in customer-focused research. Identifying its dimensions and contextual factors can lead to the development of successful strategies and consequently create differentiation in businesses. Therefore, the present study aims to identify the drivers, dimensions, and outcomes of customer experience using a meta-synthesis method. In this study, the researchers employed a systematic review and meta-synthesis approach, following the seven-step method of Sandelowski and Barroso, and analyzed 254 selected final articles published over the past ten years. As a result, they identified five drivers, five dimensions, and four outcomes of customer experience. To assess the reliability and quality of the research process, the Kappa method was applied to the drivers, dimensions, and outcomes, and the results indicated a desirable level of agreement. The findings of this study revealed that the drivers of customer experience include factors related to communication and information, factors related to providers (human resources), factors related to the branch environment (atmosphere), factors related to the external business environment, and individual factors associated with recipients. The dimensions of customer experience consist of biological, attachment, security, flourishing, and self-esteem dimensions. Moreover, the outcomes of customer experience include behavioral outcomes, financial outcomes, social outcomes, and brand-related outcomes.

Keywords: experience, customer experience, meta-synthesis, experience management

Introduction

Customer experience (CX) has emerged as one of the most critical constructs in marketing, management, and consumer behavior research over the last four decades. The concept moved beyond the traditional understanding of service quality and satisfaction to embrace multidimensional interactions between consumers, service providers, technologies, and environments. Early conceptualizations stressed the experiential aspects of consumption, emphasizing that consumers are not merely rational decision-makers but individuals who derive value through fantasies, feelings, and fun [1]. This experiential perspective expanded in the 1990s through the development of frameworks for experiential marketing, which positioned experiences as strategic tools for differentiation in competitive markets [2, 3]. At the same time, scholars highlighted the connection between experiences and long-term loyalty, proposing that positive customer experiences are antecedents of satisfaction, commitment, and repeat purchase behaviors [4, 5].

With the expansion of digital technologies and service-based economies, managing the "total customer experience" became a managerial priority [6]. Researchers and practitioners argued that experiences span cognitive, emotional,

behavioral, sensory, and relational dimensions, requiring managers to address multiple touchpoints across the customer journey [7]. This comprehensive view was echoed in later integrative frameworks of customer experience management (CEM), which stressed its role in creating value co-creation, sustainable differentiation, and stronger brand–customer relationships [8, 9]. Over time, scholars sought to systematize CX into measurable constructs, such as the Consumer Experience Index, which provided empirical tools for assessing experiential quality [10]. Similarly, research on customer delight and loyalty solidified the understanding that experiences are both affective and behavioral drivers of long-term engagement [4, 5].

The multidimensionality of CX has inspired numerous empirical investigations across sectors. Studies in retailing emphasized its impact on in-store atmospherics and behavioral outcomes [11, 12]. In hospitality and services, CX has been identified as a driver of brand satisfaction and repeat patronage, requiring managers to orchestrate holistic, sensory-rich environments [13, 14]. Recent reviews highlight the growing complexity of CX management, pointing to theoretical, methodological, and cultural challenges in conceptualization and measurement [15]. These challenges are exacerbated by the increasing role of digital platforms, which extend the customer journey into online, omnichannel, and immersive environments [16, 17]. In these contexts, the boundary between physical and digital experiences becomes blurred, requiring managers to integrate service interfaces across touchpoints [18].

The evolution of CX also reflects shifts in consumer expectations. Research highlights how emotional, sensory, and cognitive experiences shape brand equity and loyalty, mediated by satisfaction and commitment [19]. In the online environment, positive and negative experiences significantly affect consumer attitudes and repurchase intentions [20, 21]. Moreover, personalization and hedonic motivations have been identified as central to fostering customer loyalty, particularly in omnichannel retail settings [22]. The acceleration of digital transformation has amplified the role of artificial intelligence (AI), immersive technologies, and social media in shaping experiences. For instance, AI applications in banking have been shown to influence brand preferences through enhanced personalization [23], while immersive technologies contribute to more engaging customer journeys by integrating virtual and physical experiences [24]. These technological enablers suggest that CX is no longer confined to traditional service encounters but increasingly mediated by intelligent systems and digital ecosystems [25, 26].

In banking and financial services, CX has been studied as a determinant of profitability and customer equity. Evidence indicates that customer equity drivers and CX quality jointly enhance customer profitability, with social influence moderating these effects [27]. Similarly, research shows that service variability affects consumer confidence and behavioral intentions, underlining the need for consistent experiential delivery [28]. In the retail sector, both service quality and experiential marketing strategies have been shown to strengthen long-term customer relationships [29]. The role of sensory, emotional, and symbolic experiences in co-creating value has also been recognized as a foundation for customer-centered strategies [7]. More recent evidence demonstrates that digital communities and influencers significantly shape engagement, blending psychometric and behavioral factors into a unified CX framework [30, 31].

At the same time, scholars emphasize the methodological rigor needed in CX research. Meta-synthesis approaches have been proposed to integrate qualitative studies, offering richer conceptual insights [32-34]. Such approaches allow for the identification of dimensions, drivers, and outcomes across heterogeneous contexts, building cumulative knowledge for managers and researchers alike. The role of expected, perceptual, and caring factors has been specifically emphasized in

industries such as banking, where CX management is critical for customer retention [35]. These findings suggest that CX is context-sensitive, requiring both industry-specific and cross-industry conceptualizations.

Importantly, the transformative role of CX extends to strategic innovation, sustainability, and corporate social responsibility. Research highlights how customer engagement behaviors can transfer into broader corporate initiatives, such as sustainability and CSR, demonstrating that experiences transcend immediate consumption and contribute to societal outcomes [36, 37]. Blockchain-based systems, AI-driven personalization, and omnichannel engagement models further illustrate how firms integrate cutting-edge technologies to create seamless, secure, and engaging experiences [26, 37]. These innovations reflect an ongoing shift from product-centric to experience-centric strategies in business models.

In addition to its business implications, CX research underscores the psychological and emotional underpinnings of consumer behavior. Studies demonstrate that delight, trust, and affective commitment act as mediators between experiences and loyalty [5, 38]. The hedonic, symbolic, and relational dimensions of experiences contribute not only to individual satisfaction but also to broader brand communities and social interactions [1, 7]. In this respect, CX operates as both a marketing construct and a sociocultural phenomenon, bridging the micro-level of individual perceptions with macro-level outcomes such as reputation and equity [39].

Despite this progress, the literature reveals persistent gaps. Although frameworks exist for conceptualizing CX, consensus on its dimensions remains elusive, particularly when comparing online and offline contexts [40]. Some approaches emphasize sensory and hedonic experiences, while others focus on functional and cognitive elements [11]. Furthermore, as consumer journeys become increasingly non-linear and technology-mediated, traditional measurement models struggle to capture the dynamic nature of CX [16, 17]. These challenges highlight the need for integrative models that unify diverse perspectives and extend understanding into digital, immersive, and AI-driven domains [23, 24].

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to contribute to the evolving discourse by synthesizing existing research on CX to derive a comprehensive model of its dimensions, drivers, and outcomes. By applying a meta-synthesis methodology, this study integrates findings across industries and contexts, aiming to address the fragmentation in the literature and provide clarity on the core elements of CX. The study identifies five dimensions—biological, attachment, safety, flourishing, and self-esteem—alongside five categories of drivers and four categories of outcomes. In doing so, it bridges theoretical insights with practical implications, offering a holistic understanding of CX that is relevant for scholars and practitioners navigating increasingly complex consumer environments.

Methodology

A clear definition of what meta-synthesis is and what it is not constitutes the first critical step in examining how the meta-synthesis process can serve as an appropriate approach to deepen our understanding of a distinct set of qualitative studies. Meta-synthesis focuses on selecting qualitative studies on a specific body of knowledge and translating their findings into an integrated interpretation that provides a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon (Sherwood, 1999). Several models have been proposed for conducting meta-synthesis research, including those of Walsh and Downe (2006), Sandelowski and Barroso (2007), and Hoon (2013). In the present study, the seven-step method of Sandelowski and Barroso (2007) was applied, which is explained in seven stages as follows.

Stage One: Formulating Research Questions. For this stage, a four-question algorithm was employed, including what, who, when, and how, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Research Questions

Row	Algorithm Question	Research Question
1	What: What is the meta-synthesis study designed to discover?	What are the dimensions, drivers, and outcomes of customer experience?
2	Who: What is the study population?	In this study, the population consists of Persian and English scientific articles.
3	When: What is the time range of the research?	The time range is from 2010 to 2022 Gregorian Calendar (1391–1401 Solar Hijri Calendar).
4	How: How is the study conducted?	Data were collected through the analysis of prior research articles and past literature.

Stage Two: Systematic Review of the Literature. At this stage, the focus was on an exhaustive search of the main research keywords, including "customer experience" and "customer experience management," across reputable scientific databases. Therefore, a systematic search was conducted in recognized domestic and international academic and general resources within the specified time frame using these keywords. Accordingly, the most relevant studies related to "customer experience" and "customer experience management" were reviewed annually in journals indexed in Emerald, Springer, ScienceDirect, Wiley, Sage, JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Taylor & Francis. In addition, Persian-language articles were retrieved from Magiran, the Scientific Information Database (SID), Noormags, and IranDoc.

Stage Three: Searching and Selecting Relevant Literature. At this stage, the quality of the studies must be evaluated. The purpose is to exclude articles whose findings are deemed unreliable. Once the articles were screened for relevance to the study's components, the next step required the researcher to assess the methodological quality of the studies. The goal of this stage is to eliminate articles in which the researcher has insufficient confidence in the presented findings; therefore, it is possible that an article that should be included in the synthesis might be rejected. Based on consultation with experts (university professors with PhD degrees in marketing and marketing specialists with valid publications in the field), the sources identified in the previous stage were examined step by step according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. These criteria included ten questions designed to assess the quality of qualitative research.

The ten questions help the researcher to understand the concept of qualitative research. They focus on the following: Research objectives (whether the article has a clear and defined objective); methodological rationale (what method was used and whether it was the most logical, suitable, practical, or scientific method); research design (whether the researcher has clearly defined the topic, its significance, objectives and questions, methods, instruments, and sources); sampling method (the sample is a portion of the population selected through a predetermined method—thus, it must be clear which sampling method was used and whether it was valid for this research); data collection (whether standard and common instruments in the field were used for data collection); reflexivity (the relationship between the researcher and participants); ethical considerations; accuracy of data analysis; clarity of findings; and research value.

In this stage, the researcher assigned a quantitative score to each of the ten questions and then created a form to record the results. This allowed the researcher to sum the scores assigned to each article and thereby review the set of articles briefly and efficiently, as well as observe the results of the evaluation. After this screening process (as shown in Figure 1), out of 547 articles, 293 were excluded, and 254 articles were selected for data analysis. The screening and review process, based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in summary in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Process of Selecting the Final Articles for the Study
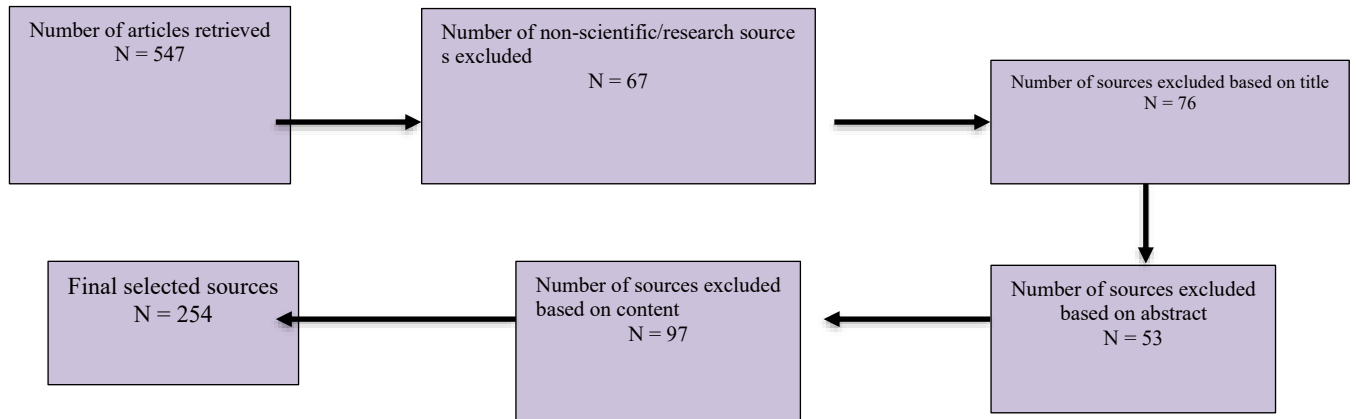
Findings and Results

Stage Four: Extracting Information from the Literature. Extraction of research findings involves classifying the information from articles according to their reference, including the researcher's or researchers' names, article title, and year of publication. At this stage, the final articles were analyzed using the content analysis method. Sandelowski (1995) considers content analysis as one of the methods of analyzing qualitative studies through which data are summarized, described, and interpreted. The results obtained from this stage are shown in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

Table 2.

Dimensions of Customer Experience Extracted from Various Sources

Source	Dimensions of Customer Experience
[11]	Retail experience (measuring in-store and service-based dimensions)
[12]	Holistic retail experience including physical, social, and symbolic factors
[40]	Service experience measurement and assessment dimensions
[17]	Sensory, emotional, and cognitive experiences in online shopping
[15]	Experiential dimensions across cultural and methodological perspectives
[38]	Product experience, outcome-focused experience, and peace of mind
[13]	Customer experience management in hospitality: holistic experiential dimensions
[41]	Analysis of customer experience within marketing literature
[19]	Sensory brand experience dimensions (satisfaction, affective commitment, empathy)
[35]	Expected, perceptual, and caring factors influencing customer experience
[27]	Customer experience quality dimensions in banking
[20]	Positive and negative online shopping experience dimensions
[22]	Hedonic and personalization-driven experience dimensions
[21]	Sensory, emotional, cognitive, physical, and relational experiences in online retail
[42]	Service interface experiences across relationship lifecycle
[24]	Immersive technology–driven experiential dimensions
[23]	AI-mediated brand and service experience dimensions in retail banking
[25]	AI-enabled personalization and digital engagement experiences
[31]	Emotional and cognitive factors shaping brand community experiences
[36]	Brand engagement experiences transferring to CSR-related experiences
[30]	Influencer-driven engagement and experiential dimensions
[26]	AI-powered personalization shaping customer banking experiences
[37]	Blockchain-enabled experiences in customer engagement

Table 3.

Drivers of Customer Experience Extracted from Various Sources

Source	Drivers of Customer Experience
[6]	Managing the total customer experience through cues, context, and process design
[9]	Retail experience management framework: merchandise, price, communication, store environment
[8]	Customer experience creation across the customer journey (determinants, dynamics, strategies)
[14]	Drivers of retail customer experience: personalization, service quality, and employee interaction
[29]	Variability in service delivery as a driver of consumer confidence
[18]	Establishing customer experience through store design and atmospherics
[11]	Retail drivers: service interface, atmospherics, staff behavior
[12]	Holistic framework for retail environment drivers (physical, social, symbolic)
[40]	Drivers for developing standardized CX measurement
[17]	Technology-related drivers: usability, trust, and personalization in online shopping
[15]	Methodological and cultural factors as contextual drivers of CX
[13]	Service environment, employee empathy, and organizational processes as CX drivers
[38]	Service type and customer type as experiential drivers
[41]	Marketing-based drivers: consumer expectations and service interactions
[35]	Expected, perceptual, and caring factors driving CX in banking
[19]	Sensory and emotional drivers: empathy and satisfaction shaping CX
[39]	Organizational and technological factors as CX management drivers
[20]	Online shopping drivers: interface design, convenience, and social influence
[27]	Equity drivers, customer experience quality, and social influence
[22]	Personalization and hedonic motivations as CX drivers
[28]	Service variability and consistency as experiential drivers
[21]	Value co-creation as a driver of repurchase and positive experiences
[42]	Service interface drivers across relationship lifecycle stages
[24]	Immersive technology as a driver of enhanced customer experiences
[23]	AI as a driver of brand preference and experiential personalization
[25]	AI-enabled engagement and customer interaction as key drivers
[31]	Emotional and cognitive factors driving engagement in virtual brand communities
[36]	Brand engagement as a driver of CSR-related customer behavior
[30]	Influencers as drivers of customer engagement and experiences
[26]	AI-powered personalization as a driver of customer behavior analytics
[37]	Blockchain-based systems as drivers of secure engagement and experience

Table 4.

Outcomes of Customer Experience Extracted from Various Sources

Source	Outcomes of Customer Experience
[1]	Experiential consumption outcomes: fantasies, feelings, fun
[5]	Customer delight as a driver of loyalty and positive behavioral outcomes
[4]	Loyalty outcomes: attitudinal and behavioral commitment to brands
[6]	Managing the total customer experience for improved satisfaction and retention
[7]	Value co-creation outcomes: customer satisfaction, loyalty, advocacy
[8]	Customer experience outcomes across the journey: satisfaction, loyalty, engagement
[9]	Retailing outcomes: customer equity, loyalty, repeat patronage
[14]	Retail outcomes: customer retention, repurchase intentions, satisfaction
[29]	Service outcomes: consumer confidence, behavioral consistency
[11]	Retail outcomes: improved customer loyalty and shopping satisfaction
[12]	Retail environment outcomes: emotional responses, perceived value
[40]	Measurement outcomes: linking CX with loyalty and satisfaction
[10]	Customer Experience Index outcomes: satisfaction and behavioral loyalty
[17]	Online shopping outcomes: trust, loyalty, repurchase intentions
[15]	Cultural and methodological CX outcomes: satisfaction, brand attachment
[38]	Outcomes of CX across service types: peace of mind, loyalty, retention
[13]	Hospitality outcomes: brand equity, satisfaction, employee–customer empathy
[41]	Marketing literature outcomes: positioning CX as driver of satisfaction
[19]	Sensory brand experience outcomes: satisfaction, affective commitment, equity
[35]	Banking outcomes: loyalty, satisfaction, retention
[39]	Strategic CX outcomes: customer-centric growth and profitability
[20]	Online shopping outcomes: attitudes, satisfaction, repurchase intention
[27]	Banking outcomes: profitability, customer equity, moderated by social influence

[22]	Omnichannel outcomes: personalization-driven loyalty and hedonic value
[28]	Service variability outcomes: consumer confidence, repeat patronage
[21]	Online retail outcomes: attitude, satisfaction, repurchase intention
[42]	Lifecycle outcomes: evolving CX impacts across relationship stages
[24]	Immersive CX outcomes: enhanced satisfaction, memorability, brand loyalty
[23]	AI-mediated outcomes: brand preference and engagement
[25]	AI-enabled engagement outcomes: customer loyalty, advocacy
[31]	Virtual community outcomes: cognitive and emotional engagement leading to loyalty
[36]	CSR outcomes: transferring brand engagement into corporate responsibility behaviors
[30]	Influencer-driven outcomes: enhanced engagement, loyalty
[26]	Digital banking outcomes: improved personalization, engagement, loyalty
[37]	Blockchain outcomes: secure engagement, sustainability, customer retention

Stage Five: Analysis and Synthesis of Qualitative Findings. In this study, open coding was used to analyze and integrate the qualitative findings. To this end, an open code was first assigned to all factors extracted from prior research. Then, considering the meaning of each code, similar concepts were grouped together. In this way, the study's concepts (themes) were formed. Tables 5, 6, and 7 present the dimensions, drivers, and outcomes, respectively.

Table 5.

Codes and Information on Customer Experience Dimensions

Concepts	Dimensions of Customer Experience
Biological	Functional section / mechanical factors / product variety / product information / core services / employees' rational skills / behavioral experience / physical experience / electronic service tools / online functional environment / minimum service lead time / health experience / performance evaluation / experience quality / customers' rational experiences / service delivery process
Attachment	Human factors / sales promotion and communications / presence of other customers / customer touchpoints / perceptual experience / customer experience monitoring / perceived interactive experience / emotional experience / long-term relationship with the brand / brand experience / service experience / narration / perceived value experience / perceived mindset experience / use of the customer perspective / personnel relevance / customer orientation / relational / social experience / communicative experience / social identity experience
Safety	Unconditional after-sales services / top management involvement / top management participation / practical experience / service process / customer experience execution / perceived usefulness experience / security experience / peace of mind / payment experience / perceived time-spending experience / people (employees and other customers) / experiential
Flourishing	Customer experience design / value-added services / online hedonic atmosphere / entertainment experience / escapism experience / aesthetic experience / perceived hedonic experience / sensory experience
Self-Esteem	Personnel's emotional skills / cognitive experience / intellectual experience / experience acquisition / positive experience / post-consumption experience

Table 6.

Codes and Information on Customer Experience Drivers

Concepts	Drivers of Customer Experience
Factors related to communications and information	Information security / integrated transaction information / access to integrated information / information / information provision / social networks / social bonding / online social environment / sellers' social interactions / new media perception / media feed / television advertising / queuing / peer-to-peer interaction / employee–customer interaction / customer interaction factors / interaction / integrated marketing communications factors / warm and human relationships / proper record-keeping / tools and equipment / business hours / number of counters / textual elements / compositional elements (text–visual) / communications / network experience / familiarity / personal contact
Factors related to providers (human resources)	Responsiveness / agreeableness / conscientiousness / resolving the customer's problem promptly / being compassionate toward the customer's problem / sense of humor / providing specific supports for the customer / customer care / caring factors / psychological and behavioral characteristics / user-interface factors / user experience / employee politeness / needs identification / understanding customer needs / work ethic / employees / efficient personnel / employee competence / subscriber support / manner of interaction / sense of responsibility / trustworthiness / neatness and dress of employees / sense of progress / job image / sense of respect / sense of belonging / flexibility / knowledge / follow-ups / management support / personal identity / peace of mind
Factors related to the branch environment (atmosphere)	Hardware factors / software factors / organizational approach factors / constructive structural factors / micro- and macro-level factors / store atmosphere / favorable ambience / store-space experience / after-transaction services / website / banking facilities / atmosphere
Factors related to the external business environment	Citizenship behavior / breadth of geographical coverage / geographical location / environmental conditions
Individual factors related to recipients (customers)	Online customer experience / experience of other customers / customer expectations / behavioral intention / openness to experience / customer skill / customer dynamism / emotional intelligence / openness to gaining experience / customer experience capacity / customer transcendent experience / customer value culture / consumer value

Table 7.

Codes and Information on Customer Experience Outcomes

Concepts	Outcomes of Customer Experience
Behavioral outcomes	Repurchase intention / repeat visit / continuity intention / purchase decision / brand loyalty / customer satisfaction / behavioral loyalty / customer loyalty / behavioral intention / duty (communication effectiveness) / customer lifetime value (with respect to us) / more recommendations / customer retention / referral advertising / positive word-of-mouth / positive word-of-mouth advertising / customer receptivity behaviors (compliance) / customer receptivity behaviors (participation) / customer receptivity behaviors (feedback) / customer receptivity behaviors (help) / customer mental image in purchasing products / customer commitment / customer receptivity / attitudinal loyalty / perceived quality / utilized value / customer behavior / addictive-like behaviors / customer influence / customer cognition / customer patience / customer engagement / customer delight / repeat purchase
Financial outcomes	Reduced churn rate / financial performance / willingness to pay / share of wallet / revenue generation / increased sales performance / increased profitability / joint investment
Social outcomes	Brand communities / social recognition / persistence in using social media and the brand / stable social relationships / relationship quality / technology or structure (relationship orientation) / health / community employment / improved welfare / reputation / intention to use all channels / customer memories / customer orientation
Brand outcomes	Brand influence / brand expectations / brand satisfaction / brand reputation / brand love / brand credibility / brand fairness / brand trust / emotional outcomes / trust / better perception of brand quality / brand equity / customer attitude / hedonic values / brand perception / attitude toward the brand / image

Stage Six: Quality Control. In this study, efforts were made to use reputable scientific sources, and sources that, based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria presented in Step Two, lacked sufficient scientific validity were excluded from the meta-synthesis process. Furthermore, to maintain the quality of the study, Cohen's kappa index was used, which is explained in the next section.

Stage Seven: Presentation of Results. After reviewing the indicators and classifying the codes with MAXQDA software, open coding and clustering were conducted in the form of concepts and components. Ultimately, five concepts were identified for the dimensions of customer experience, including biological, attachment, safety, flourishing, and self-esteem.

In addition, five drivers of customer experience were identified, including factors related to communications and information, factors related to providers (human resources), factors related to the branch environment (atmosphere), factors related to the external business environment, and individual factors related to recipients (customers).

Moreover, the outcomes of customer experience consist of four types: behavioral outcomes, financial outcomes, social outcomes, and brand outcomes.

In this study, the researchers controlled the extracted concepts from the reviewed studies by comparing their views with those of another expert (holding a PhD in Marketing). For this purpose, a 63-item questionnaire was designed for the dimensions of customer experience, a 91-item questionnaire for the drivers of customer experience, and a 71-item questionnaire for the outcomes of customer experience. Then, the obtained data were analyzed using SPSS software to calculate Cohen's kappa coefficients. The calculation results are presented below. A kappa value of less than 0 indicates poor agreement, up to 0.20 slight, between 0.21 and 0.40 fair, between 0.41 and 0.60 moderate, between 0.61 and 0.80 substantial, and between 0.81 and 1.00 almost perfect (Landis & Koch, 1977). The kappa coefficient for the dimensions of customer experience was 0.430, for the drivers of customer experience 0.439, and for the outcomes of customer experience 0.515, which are all within the range of moderate agreement.

Table 8.

Calculations of the Kappa Coefficient for the Dimensions of Customer Experience

|	Value	Approx. Std. Error	Approx. T Value	Approx. Significance
Kappa Measure	0.430	0.100	5.236	0.000
Number of Valid Cases	63			

Table 9.

Calculations of the Kappa Coefficient for the Drivers of Customer Experience

	Value	Approx. Std. Error	Approx. T Value	Approx. Significance
Kappa Measure	0.439	0.077	6.692	0.000
Number of Valid Cases	91			

Table 10.

Calculations of the Kappa Coefficient for the Outcomes of Customer Experience

	Value	Approx. Std. Error	Approx. T Value	Approx. Significance
Kappa Measure	0.515	0.087	5.924	0.000
Number of Valid Cases	71			

Figure 2.

Customer Experience: Drivers, Dimensions, Outcomes
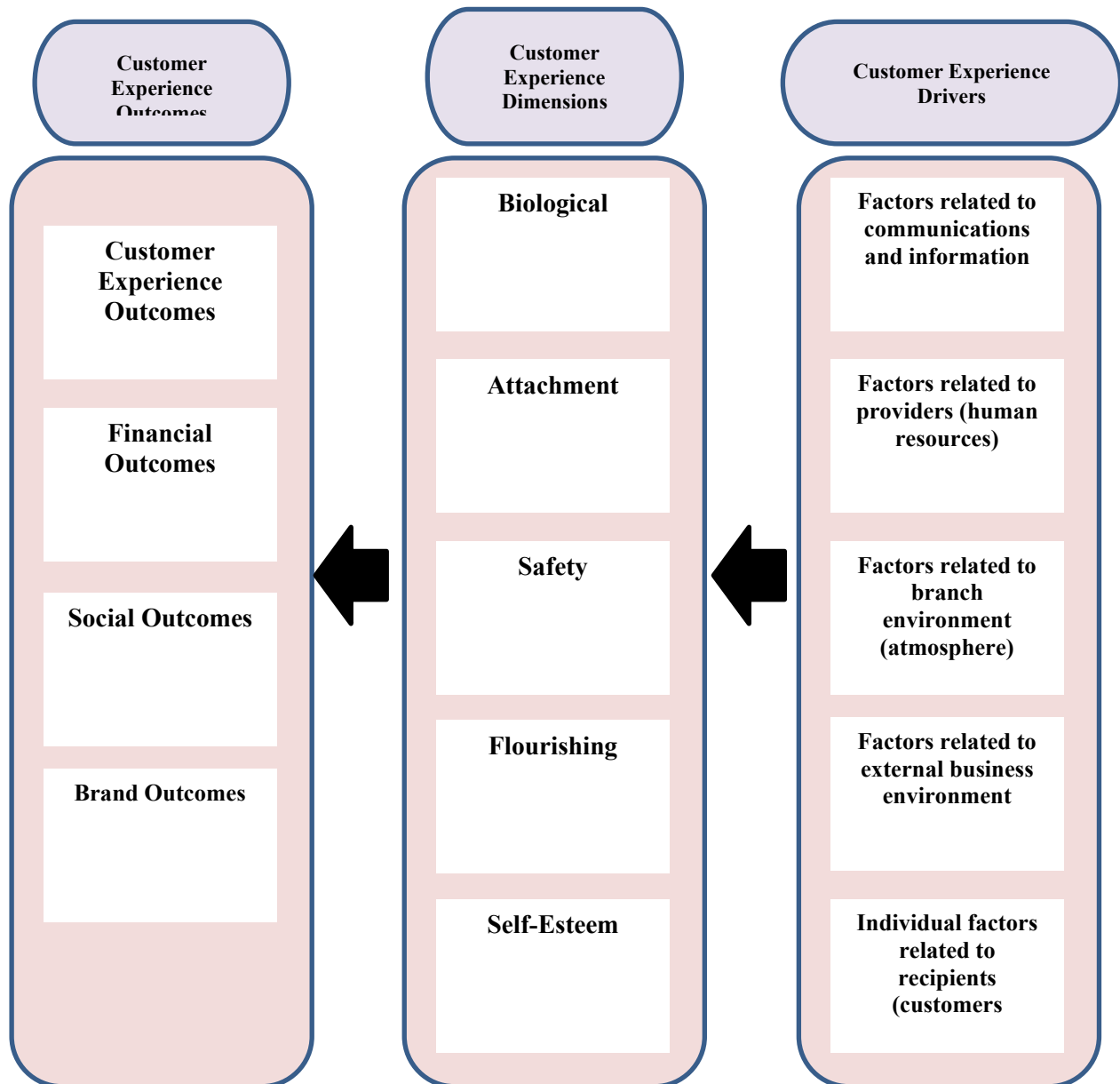
Accordingly, the dimensions, drivers, and outcomes of customer experience were extracted from the existing literature, and through two stages of coding, the concepts were presented. In this model, the dimensions of customer experience include 5 aspects (biological, attachment, safety, flourishing, and self-esteem) with 63 factors. The drivers of customer experience consist of 5 aspects (factors related to communications and information, factors related to providers, factors related to the branch environment, factors related to the external business environment, and individual factors related to recipients) with 91 factors. The outcomes of customer experience comprise 4 aspects (behavioral outcomes, financial outcomes, social outcomes, and brand outcomes) with 71 factors.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to derive a conceptual model of customer experience through a systematic review and meta-synthesis of existing literature. The results revealed three central outcomes of the synthesis: five dimensions of customer experience, five categories of drivers, and four categories of outcomes. The dimensions include biological, attachment, safety, flourishing, and self-esteem, which collectively reflect both functional and emotional aspects of consumer interactions. The identified drivers encompass communication and information-related factors, provider-related factors (human resources), branch environment factors, external business environment factors, and individual customer-related factors. Finally, the outcomes were classified into behavioral, financial, social, and brand-related categories. Together, these findings provide a holistic framework for understanding the mechanisms through which experiences are formed, delivered, and transformed into business and social value.

The identification of five dimensions extends the traditional understanding of customer experience beyond the purely cognitive or emotional domains. The biological dimension highlights the functional and utilitarian aspects of experience, such as product variety, service processes, and performance evaluation. This resonates with prior work emphasizing the role of functional quality and efficiency in shaping experiential satisfaction [10, 11]. Similarly, the attachment dimension captures relational and affective elements, including customer–brand bonds and long-term engagement, aligning with previous evidence that experiences create affective commitment and brand love [4, 19]. The safety dimension highlights customers' search for security, reliability, and confidence in service delivery, which is consistent with findings in banking and financial contexts where trust and risk perception critically mediate customer experience [27, 35]. Flourishing reflects hedonic and symbolic aspects, emphasizing enjoyment, aesthetics, and entertainment value, supporting studies that frame experiences as pathways to hedonic consumption [1, 7]. Finally, the self-esteem dimension captures the empowerment and personal growth that customers derive from experiences, which reflects the broader literature on transformative and transcendent experiences in services [15, 38].

The results regarding the five categories of drivers also reinforce and extend existing frameworks. Communication- and information-related drivers highlight the role of integrated information systems, social networks, and digital platforms in shaping experiences. This is strongly aligned with research on omnichannel retail and online shopping environments, where information quality and transparency significantly influence customer trust and engagement [16, 17]. Provider-related drivers underscore the importance of human resources, such as empathy, responsiveness, and competence, which reflects long-standing evidence that employee interactions are central to customer satisfaction [6, 29]. This finding also resonates with recent calls for enhancing employee empathy as a pathway to customer affective commitment [19]. Drivers related to the

branch environment or atmosphere reinforce the significance of physical and digital service contexts, echoing studies on the role of store atmospherics, design, and service space in shaping perceptions [12, 18]. External business environment drivers demonstrate how broader market, social, and geographic conditions contribute to customer experience, complementing findings that social influence moderates the relationship between customer equity drivers and profitability [27]. Finally, the individual drivers connected to customer characteristics confirm that skills, openness, emotional intelligence, and behavioral intentions significantly shape experiences, consistent with literature emphasizing co-creation and customer engagement behaviors [21, 22].

The classification of outcomes into behavioral, financial, social, and brand-related domains provides a comprehensive mapping of customer experience consequences. Behavioral outcomes such as loyalty, repurchase, and word-of-mouth confirm earlier theories on customer satisfaction and delight as precursors of long-term engagement [5, 8]. Financial outcomes such as profitability, share of wallet, and reduced churn echo findings that CX quality is directly linked to revenue growth and financial performance [9, 40]. Social outcomes including brand communities, customer advocacy, and reputation align with studies on how experiences transcend individual interactions and foster collective engagement [7, 11]. Finally, brand-related outcomes such as brand love, trust, and equity provide strong support for evidence that sensory and affective experiences drive brand value [13, 19]. These results reflect the cumulative influence of CX across micro-, meso-, and macro-level domains, reinforcing its centrality in modern marketing and management research.

The findings also align with the growing emphasis on technology-mediated experiences. The integration of AI into service contexts, as noted in retail banking [23], and in digital markets more broadly [25], supports the role of information and communication drivers in the current model. Similarly, immersive technologies have been recognized as facilitators of rich and memorable experiences, underscoring the importance of hedonic and flourishing dimensions [24]. The role of personalization through AI and omnichannel tools also resonates with evidence that tailored experiences significantly enhance customer loyalty and engagement [22, 26]. These technological findings further validate the model's emphasis on communication and individual-level drivers.

Furthermore, the model supports theoretical perspectives that view CX as a co-creative process between firms and consumers. Previous research emphasized that customers are active participants who engage in value co-creation through interactions and social influence [7, 21]. The attachment and self-esteem dimensions align with this perspective, as they reflect relational and psychological engagement. Studies in online and omnichannel contexts also highlight that co-creation mechanisms strengthen repurchase intentions and long-term loyalty [21, 22]. This supports the interpretation that CX is not simply an outcome of managerial action but a dynamic, interactive process shaped by both organizational and customer resources.

The present findings also advance debates on measurement and conceptual clarity. Previous research critiqued the lack of consensus on CX definitions and dimensions [15, 29]. By integrating evidence through meta-synthesis, this study identifies a unified model that reconciles functional, hedonic, relational, and psychological dimensions. This outcome strengthens calls for holistic measurement tools such as the Consumer Experience Index [10] and experiential scales developed in earlier research [40]. Moreover, the use of qualitative meta-synthesis builds upon prior methodological contributions in the field of nursing and management, demonstrating the utility of this approach for integrating fragmented findings [32-34].

Another important contribution of this study is the explicit identification of social outcomes, which have often been underexplored in CX research. While earlier frameworks emphasized satisfaction and loyalty, the current findings highlight that experiences also create broader societal value through reputation, advocacy, and collective engagement. This finding aligns with recent scholarship on customer brand engagement and its transfer to corporate social responsibility contexts [36, 37]. It also reflects the evolving role of customers as co-creators not only of brand value but also of social and ethical outcomes, which is a significant shift in the marketing literature.

At a strategic level, the results confirm that CX is a multidimensional construct that integrates functional efficiency, emotional resonance, social bonding, and personal growth. This interpretation is consistent with the literature that frames CX as the totality of customer interactions across the journey [6, 8]. It also resonates with frameworks that position CX as central to innovation, competitive advantage, and long-term firm success [9, 13]. The conceptual model developed in this study thus provides both theoretical consolidation and practical direction for organizations seeking to design, deliver, and manage superior customer experiences.

Although this study applied a rigorous meta-synthesis method, it is not without limitations. First, the analysis was limited to published studies in English and Persian, which may have excluded relevant findings from other linguistic and cultural contexts. Second, while the coding process was validated through inter-rater reliability measures, qualitative synthesis inherently involves interpretive judgments that may introduce bias. Third, the focus on the past decade of research, although ensuring contemporary relevance, may have overlooked seminal insights from earlier periods that remain conceptually important. Finally, the study's conceptual model, while comprehensive, may not capture the full dynamism of customer experience in rapidly evolving technological landscapes such as AI-driven platforms or immersive metaverse environments.

Future studies should explore the proposed model in diverse cultural and industry contexts to test its generalizability. Quantitative validation of the identified dimensions, drivers, and outcomes through large-scale surveys and structural equation modeling would provide stronger empirical grounding. Scholars should also examine the longitudinal dynamics of CX, capturing how experiences evolve over time and across the relationship lifecycle. Emerging technologies such as AI, blockchain, and immersive reality warrant deeper investigation, particularly in how they reshape the communication and individual-level drivers identified here. Finally, future research should explore the role of customer experience in advancing sustainability and social outcomes, expanding the construct beyond firm-level performance toward societal value creation.

For managers, the results underscore the importance of adopting a holistic approach to customer experience management. Organizations should focus not only on functional efficiency but also on creating attachment, fostering safety, enabling flourishing, and enhancing customer self-esteem. Investments in employee training, service design, and communication systems are critical to strengthening the drivers of CX. At the same time, managers should recognize that customer experiences yield outcomes across behavioral, financial, social, and brand domains, and strategies should be designed to capture and leverage this full spectrum of value. By aligning internal capabilities with customer needs and leveraging digital technologies for personalization and engagement, firms can establish sustainable competitive advantages rooted in superior customer experiences.

Acknowledgments

Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants. Written consent was obtained from all participants in the study.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

Funding

This research was carried out independently with personal funding and without the financial support of any governmental or private institution or organization.

References

[1] M. B. Holbrook and E. C. Hirschman, "The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun," *Journal of consumer research,* vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 132-140, 1982, doi: 10.1086/208906.

[2] B. H. Schmitt, *Experimental Marketing*. New York. NY: The free Press, 1999.

[3] B. Schmitt, "Experiential marketing," *Journal of marketing management,* vol. 15, no. 1-3, pp. 53-67, 1999, doi: 10.1362/026725799784870496.

[4] R. L. Oliver, "Whence consumer loyalty?," *Journal of marketing,* vol. 63, no. 4_suppl1, pp. 33-44, 1999, doi: 10.1177/00222429990634s105.

[5] R. L. Oliver, R. L. Rust, and S. Varki, "Customer delight; foundations, findings, and managerial insight," *Journal of Retailing,* vol. 73, no. 3, pp. 311-336, 1997, doi: 10.1016/S0022-4359(97)90021-X.

[6] L. L. Berry, L. P. Carbone, and S. H. Haeckel, "Managing the total customer experience," *MIT Sloan management review,* 2002.

[7] C. Gentile, N. Spiller, and G. Noci, "How to sustain the customer experience:: An overview of experience components that co-create value with the customer," *European management journal,* vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 395-410, 2007, doi: 10.1016/j.emj.2007.08.005.

[8] P. C. Verhoef, K. N. Lemon, A. Parasuraman, A. Roggeveen, M. Tsiros, and L. A. Schlesinger, "Customer experience creation: Determinants, dynamics and management strategies," *Journal of retailing,* vol. 85, no. 1, pp. 31-41, 2009, doi: 10.1016/j.jretai.2008.11.001.

[9] D. Grewal, M. Levy, and V. Kumar, "Customer experience management in retailing: An organizing framework," *Journal of retailing,* vol. 85, no. 1, pp. 1-14, 2009, doi: 10.1016/j.jretai.2009.01.001.

[10] S. Kim, J. Cha, B. J. Knutson, and J. A. Beck, "Development and testing of the Consumer Experience Index (CEI)," *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal,* vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 112-132, 2011, doi: 10.1108/09604521111113429.

[11] S. Bagdare and R. Jain, "Measuring retail experience," *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management,* vol. 40, no. 10, pp. 790-804, 2013, doi: 10.1108/IJRDM-08-2012-0084.

[12] A. Petermans, W. Janssens, and K. Van Cleempoel, "A holistic framework for conceptualizing customer experiences in retail environments," *International Journal of Design,* vol. 7, no. 2, 2013.

[13] J. Kandampully, T. C. Zhang, and E. Jaakkola, "Customer experience management in hospitality: A literature synthesis, new understanding and research agenda," *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management,* vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 21-56, 2018, doi: 10.1108/IJCHM-10-2015-0549.

[14] B. Kamaladevi, "Customer experience management in retailing," *Business Intelligence Journal,* vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 37-54, 2010.

[15] J. Hwang and S. Seo, "A critical review of research on customer experience management: Theoretical, methodological and cultural perspectives," *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management,* vol. 28, no. 10, pp. 2218-2246, 2016, doi: 10.1108/IJCHM-04-2015-0192.

[16] T. P. Novak, D. L. Hoffman, and Y. F. Yung, "Measuring the customer experience in online environments: A structural modeling approach," *Marketing science,* vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 22-42, 2000, doi: 10.1287/mksc.19.1.22.15184.

[17] A. Bilgihan, J. Kandampully, and T. Zhang, "Towards a unified customer experience in online shopping environments: Antecedents and outcomes," *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences,* vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 102-119, 2016, doi: 10.1108/IJQSS-07-2015-0054.

[18] D. Luigi, O. Stanciu, M. Tichindelean, and S. Vinerean, "The importance of establishing customer experiences," *Studies in Business and Economics,* vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 56-61, 2012.

[19] O. Iglesias, S. Markovic, and J. Rialp, "How does sensory brand experience influence brand equity? Considering the roles of customer satisfaction, customer affective commitment, and employee empathy," *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 96, pp. 343-354, 2019, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.05.043.

[20] M. Barari, M. Ross, and J. Surachartkumtonkun, "Negative and positive customer shopping experience in an online context," *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,* vol. 53, p. 101985, 2020, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.101985.

[21] K. Anshu, L. Gaur, and G. Singh, "Impact of customer experience on attitude and repurchase intention in online grocery retailing: A moderation mechanism of value Co-creation," *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,* vol. 64, p. 102798, 2022, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102798.

[22] O. Tyrväinen, H. Karjaluoto, and H. Saarijärvi, "Personalization and hedonic motivation in creating customer experiences and loyalty in omnichannel retail," *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,* vol. 57, p. 102233, 2020, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102233.

[23] S. P. S. Ho and M. Y. C. Chow, "The role of artificial intelligence in consumers' brand preference for retail banks in Hong Kong," *Journal of Financial Services Marketing,* pp. 1-14, 2023, doi: 10.1057/s41264-022-00207-3.

[24] M. C. Tom Dieck and D. I. D. Han, "The role of immersive technology in Customer Experience Management," *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice,* vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 108-119, 2022, doi: 10.1080/10696679.2021.1891939.

[25] K. Parsakia and M. Jafari, "Strategies for Enhancing Customer Engagement Using Artificial Intelligence Technologies in Online Markets," *Journal of Technology in Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management (JTESM),* vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 49-69, 05/29 2023, doi: 10.61838/kman.jtesm.2.1.6.

[26] M. Ashrafuzzaman, R. Parveen, M. A. Sumiya, and A. Rahman, "AI-powered personalization in digital banking: A review of customer behavior analytics and engagement," *American Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies,* vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 40-71, 2025, doi: 10.63125/z9s39s47.

[27] L. Gao, I. Melero-Polo, and F. J. Sese, "Customer equity drivers, customer experience quality, and customer profitability in banking services: The moderating role of social influence," *Journal of Service Research,* vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 174-193, 2020, doi: 10.1177/1094670519856119.

[28] C. M. Voorhees, J. M. Beck, P. Randhawa, K. B. DeTienne, and S. A. Bone, "Assessing the effects of service variability on consumer confidence and behavior," *Journal of Service Research,* vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 405-420, 2021, doi: 10.1177/1094670520952145.

[29] A. Palmer, "Customer experience management: a critical review of an emerging idea," *Journal of Services marketing,* vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 196-208, 2010, doi: 10.1108/08876041011040604.

[30] V. Naier, R. Kumar, J. C. Nunally, and I. H. Bernstein, "The role of influencers in customer engagement Psychometric theory," *Journal of Consumer Research,* vol. 51, no. 1, pp. 120-135, 2024. [Online]. Available: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ijcs.70028.

[31] S. Salari, A. Mardani, and A. Sharifi, "Developing a model of customer engagement through emotional and cognitive factors in virtual brand communities," *Journal of value creating in Business Management,* vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 67-91, 2024, doi: 10.22034/jvcbm.2023.425791.1244.

[32] M. Sandelowski, S. Docherty, and C. Emden, "Qualitative meta-synthesis: Issues and techniques," *Research in Nursing & Health,* vol. 20, pp. 365-371, 1997, doi: 10.1002/(SICI)1098-240X(199708)20:4<365::AID-NUR9>3.0.CO;2-E.

[33] G. Sherwood, "Meta-synthesis: Merging qualitative studies to develop nursing knowledge," *International Journal for Human Caring,* vol. 3, pp. 37-42, 1999, doi: 10.20467/1091-5710.3.1.37.

[34] D. Walsh and S. Downe, "Meta-synthesis method for qualitative research: A literature review," *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* vol. 50, pp. 204-211, 2005, doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03380.x.

[35] E. Heshmati, H. Saeidnia, and A. Badiezadeh, "Investigating the effect of expected factors, perceptual factors, and caring factors on customer experience management (Case study: The banking industry)," *Bimonthly Journal of Commercial Reviews,* no. 94 & 95, pp. 40-52, 2019.

[36] J. Li, H. Dong, X. Wang, and Y. Liu, "Can customer brand engagement behaviors be transferred to corporate social responsibility engagement behaviors? A cross-industry study in China," *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 178, no. 1, p. 114092, 2024, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114092.

[37] R. Cerchione, "Design and evaluation of a blockchain-based system for increasing customer engagement in circular economy," *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management,* vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 160-175, 2025, doi: 10.1002/csr.2948.

[38] S. Roy, "Effects of customer experience across service types, customer types and time," *Journal of Services Marketing,* vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 400-413, 2018, doi: 10.1108/JSM-11-2016-0406.

[39] Gartner, "Customer Experience Management Study," 2019.

[40] P. P. Klaus and S. Maklan, "Towards a better measure of customer experience," *International journal of market research,* vol. 55, no. 2, pp. 227-246, 2013, doi: 10.2501/IJMR-2013-021.

[41] M. Mohammadian and M. Naeli, "Analysis of customer experience and its place in marketing literature," *Bimonthly Journal of Business Studies,* vol. 95, no. 94, pp. 85-103, 2018.

[42] S. Aali and S. Nasseramini Jelodarlow, "Modeling the influence of the customer experience on the service interface at different stages of the relationship lifecycle," *Bimonthly Journal of Commercial Reviews,* vol. 20, no. 115, pp. 145-160, 2022.