

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Customer Attitudes: Analyzing Sustainable Effectiveness in Pakistan's Textile Sector

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KEY WORDS

ABSTRACT

Social Media Influencers, Social Media Engagement Intention, Brand Attitude, Brand Credibility, Engagement Behavior, Textile Sector

This study aims to explore the impact of influencers on customer engagement behavior in textile industry in Pakistan. Hence, this study proposes and conducts research on a model that combines three theories Social Influence Theory, Theory of Planned Behavior, and Source Credibility Theory to provide an explanation for the consumer engagement process in the digital environment. A cross sectional (survey) research design was used, which was a quantitative approach. Data collection method used for primary data was structured questionnaire which was distributed to the people who have interest in social media following the brands and creators of textiles in Pakistan. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) software was used to analyze the proposed model by using the SmartPLS software. Reliability, validity, direct effects and moderation effects were evaluated. The results showed that Social Media Influencers had a significant influence on Social Media Engagement Intention ($\beta = 0.844$, $p < 0.001$) and accounted for the variance of 71.2%. However, Social Media Engagement Intention did not significantly affect Consumption ($\beta = 0.065$, $p = 0.395$), Contribution ($\beta = 0.105$, $p = 0.181$), or Creation ($\beta = 0.105$, $p = 0.166$). Brand Credibility significantly affected all engagement measures, and Brand Attitude significantly affect Consumption and Creation behaviors.

1. Introduction

Over the past few years, social media has revolutionized the way media is communicated, leading to new ways for organizations to interact with consumers in more interactive and personalized manners. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube have emerged as vital marketing platforms for brands to engage directly with their target audience and shape how they perceive the brand. Social media influencers represent some of the most impactful figures in the digital realm, influencing consumer opinions and behaviors through their online presence and credibility. Unlike conventional ads, influencer marketing establishes a more human and enjoyable communication setting, enabling customers to have actually stronger bonding with endorsed products or brands. Consumers tend to trust an influencer and consider his/her content to be more credible than traditional marketing messages, which infuses a special significance to

his/her content and thus impacts consumers' trust, attitude and engagement (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Moreover, the recent trends of using social media for product discovery have made the role of the influencers strategic in today's day and age in marketing initiatives. (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017).

The textile industry is one of the leading sectors of the national economy that plays a significant role in industrial productivity, export growth and job creation in Pakistan. The sector contributes about 60% of the country's exports and provides jobs to millions of people nationwide at various stages of the value chain from spinning to weaving, dyeing to finishing and garment manufacturing. Textile industry is the staple of manufacturing sector and plays a significant role in economic development and foreign exchange earning in the past as well as present year (Pakistan Economic Survey, 2024). The industry has faced substantial growth in the last few years as the market demand increases in foreign

countries for all over textile products and the government efforts to promote export-oriented industries (APTMA, 2024). In addition, technological progress and digital transformation have spurred the textile sector to use new marketing and operational approaches to compete with foreign companies on the international arena (UNIDO, 2023). In addition to this, the Internet has grown to play a significant role in connecting textile brands with consumers, establishing closer relations between the two (World Bank, 2023).

As social media platforms have surged in popularity, Pakistan's textile industry has shifted its focus toward engaging more with brands utilizing social media marketing. In recent years, the textile industry has seen a proliferation of social media brands partnering with social media influencers for boosting their customer engagement and brand positioning. However, though usage of social media influencers has gone high and significant amounts of investments have been made in macromedia marketing in various formats, there is still not enough empirical research in the realm of their effectiveness in affecting customer attitude and engagement behaviours in Pakistani textile industry.

2. Literature Review

Social media influencers have become one of the most powerful marketing tools in the modern digital world because they can impact consumers through social media interactions in terms of their perceptions, attitudes, and purchase decisions. Typically, influencers are people with a large audience who have the power to shape their followers' opinions based on their unique expertise, credibility, authenticity and attractiveness. While celebrity influencers are great to have on board, influencers welcome are more likely to consistently engage with followers and personalize every message, which makes their recommendations more relatable and trustworthy. As shown by the recent research, consumers depend on content produced by influencers for product information and opinions on the brand they like to observe, for instance, in Fashion and lifestyle sectors widely where

content creation depends on visual communication (Afzal et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Ki et al., 2023). Additionally, consumers' attitude and brand perceptions are highly influenced by positive and negative electronic word-of-mouths through influencers' digital platforms, in digital markets (Schouten et al., 2020; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

2.1.1 Social Influence Theory

In the context of the present study, Social Influence Theory is used as a major theory basis, as it indicates the role and the mechanism of social actors in affecting people's attitudes, intentions and behaviors. The theory was first proposed by Kelman (1958) and it posits that people will act out in compliance, identification and internalization modes when responding to persuasive sources. Today, when it comes to consumer perception, there are new opinion leaders called "social media influencers", which shape overall sentiment with their content, recommendations, and social interactions. Consumer trust in influencers can help minimize uncertainty and provide trusted information before purchasing a product or brand. This study reveals that social influence is indeed a significant factor influencing online engagement, customer's attitude, and consumers' participation in the social media experience (Afzal et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023). Furthermore, social influence has gained significant importance in the fashion and textile sector where consumers are subjected to continuous social influence from trusted online influencers and personalities (Ki et al., 2023; Schouten et al., 2020).

2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior

One of the most widely used behavioral models in the fields of marketing and consumer studies is referred to as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991). The theory states that behavioural intention is the most immediate determinant of behaviour, and it can be explained by attitudes, subjective norms and perceptions of behavioural control. TPB has been widely used to model consumer decision-making processes in traditional and digital contexts. From the

perspective of the social media marketing arena, engagement intention is considered as a behavioral intention that would precede consumers' involvement in online activities like content consumption, contribution and creation. Recent research has validated the validity of TPB in the context of engagement in social media, interactions online, and online-related consumer behavior (Khan et al., 2023; Muniz et al., 2024). Moreover, TPB still offers a solid foundation to grasp the psychological process of changing the intention into actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Rodrigues et al., 2024).

2.2.3 Consumer Online Brand-Related Activities (COBRA) Framework

The second supporting theory for the present study is Consumer Online Brand-Related Activities (COBRA) Framework which has been contributed by Muntinga et al. (2011). COBRA describes consumer relationships with brands on social media, and dissects engagement behavior into three separate facets: consumption, contribution, and creation. Consumption means viewing posts and content, contribution means likes, comments, or sharing others' posts and content, and creation means creating new brand related content. The framework has proven to be a very influential part of digital marketing research as it represents different modes of consumers' engagement in online communities. There are recent studies that re validate the validity of COBRA implications for digital engagement and consumers behaviour in the internet (Cao et al., 2021; Muniz et al., 2024; Lee & Raschke, 2023).

2.3 Supporting and negating views

The supporting point of view suggests that 'engagement intention through social media' is a key antecedent of 'engagement behaviour through social media'. According to behavioral theories, intentions are the most immediate predictors of actions because individuals generally form intentions before engaging in specific behaviors. In a business-to-customer scenario, customers with high involvement are more inclined to engage in online activities, like viewing content, commenting, sharing posts, and

generating brand-related content. Recent research suggests that engagement intentions can positively predict consumption, contribution, and creation behaviors on different digital platforms (Cao et al. 2021; Lee & Raschke 2023; Muniz et al. 2024). Moreover, highly engaged consumers are also active participants in the online communities, enhancing the brand awareness and electronic word-of-mouth communication (Brodie et al., 2011; Dessart et al., 2015).

Other scholars, however, claim that engagement intention is not always followed by actual engagement behaviors because of several psychological and situational obstructions. People could share their desire to view content associated with a specific brand, but because of time or information overload, privacy concerns, or other priorities, they fail to make the corresponding actions. An intention-behaviour gap is a phenomenon very much cited in the literature of behavioural research and implies that intentions are not sufficient to ensure participation (Rodrigues et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2023). Furthermore, with the generalization of algorithm changes and a decrease in organic reach on social media platforms, there may be fewer opportunities for desired engagement behaviors, further diminishing the relationship between intention and behaviors (Lee & Eastin, 2021; Cao et al., 2021).

2.4 Mediation and Moderation views

An alternate point of view is that the social media influencers' positive effect on social media engagement intention is attributed to their role as trusted sources of information and opinion leader in social media communities. Influencers can be experienced bloggers, social media users, or other media representing their audience, who produce content that is engaging, informative and relatable and captures the interest of consumers, leading them to engage in brand-related activities. Using authenticity, expertise and credibility influencers foster emotional relationships with their followers, which leads to a greater willingness to interact with brand content and online communities. Researches recently made an appeal that stakeholders are more likely to stretch

engagement await trips if they consider influencers to be trusted and informed about the products endorsed by them (Afzal et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023). In addition, as consumers have doubts about the information, every recommendation made by the influencers will help to decrease this doubt, and it will also help them to communicate with the brand through social media platforms (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2020).

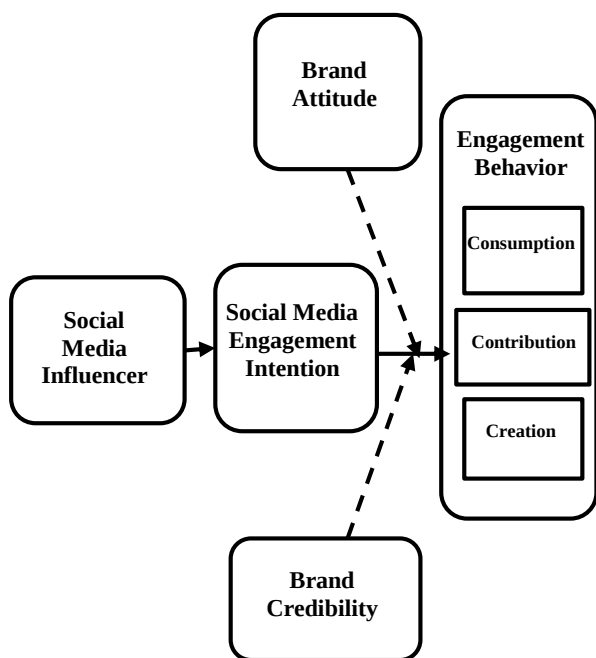


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

2.5 Hypothesis Development

2.5.1 Social Media Influencers and Social Media Engagement Intention

The impact and role of social media influencers as communication agents has been dramatic, adding greater weight to consumer perception and fostering an active engagement in online communities. They ease consumers' worry about information, whilst adding to their confidence in companies via informative material, product demonstrations, or personal suggestions. When influencers share their endorsement, it often appears as a credible and authentic endorsement, which tends to resonate more with the audience than traditional marketing messages. That makes consumers more likely to engage with the brand's content by liking, commenting, sharing, and

following the brand. As consumer engagement on social media (SME) is significantly influenced by voices from trusted and admired sources, a certain amount of authenticity and credibility from influencers is necessary to increase engagement intention (Afzal et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023).

H1: Social Media Influencers positively influence Social Media Engagement Intention.

2.5.2 Social Media Engagement Intention and Engagement Behavior

Consumers' readiness to engage with the content associated with the brand is an important underlying factor of their social media engagement intentions and is captured in the construct of social media engagement intention. Behavioral theories are based on the premise that the intention that people make is one of their strongest predictors of behaviour because people usually make intentions before they'll do any specific activity. Customers with positive engagement intent will be more active on the internet including viewing brand content, liking posts, commenting on posts, sharing information and user generation of content. New research has validated the relationship between engagement intentions with digital participation and online community engagement (Muniz et al., 2024; Lee & Raschke, 2023).

H2: The attitude of the social media engagement is directly linked to the intention of social media engagement behavior.

2.5.3 Social Media Influencers, Social Media Engagement Intention and Engagement Behavior (Mediation Effect)

Social content is what makes it reliable, relevant, and relatable for consumers, making the social media influencers a powerful instrument to influence it. As experts, and trusted, influencers endorse users to engage with material which belongs to brands and join on-line communities. Social Influence Theory indicates that consumers may take in the suggestions of influential people and often adopt positive attitudes with a greater intention to interact with the brands. Research in recent years has shown that content created by influencers has a strong impact on consumers' desire to engage with brand posts, to follow brand pages, and to join discussions about the

brand on social media (Afzal et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023).

H3: Social Media Engagement Intention is between SMI and Engaging Behavior.

2.5.4 Social Media Engagement Intention, Brand Attitude and Engagement Behavior (Moderation Effect)

Brand attitude is defined as consumers' summary assessments and emotional reactions to a brand and it has a significant effect on the behavior responses. Good attitudes to a brand are associated with greater acceptance of brand communication and greater likelihood to interact with brand content. Once the consumer has favorable perceptions about a textile brand, they are more likely to engage in such behaviors as viewing, commenting, sharing and creating materials when they visit the brand's social media page. The brand attitude has been identified as a positive factor that can enhance consumers' brand commitment and engagement in digital groups (Jiang et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2024).

H4: Brand Attitude has a positive moderating effect between social media engagement intention and social media engagement behavior.

2.5.5 Social Media Engagement Intention, Brand Credibility and Engagement Behavior (Moderation Effect)

Brand credibility means consumers' belief that a brand is dependable, honest, and will be able to fulfill the brand's claims. During times of intense competition in digital space, credibility acts as an important marker that decreases uncertainty and consumer risk in decision making. Consumers who see a brand to be credible are more likely to trust brand communication, and to be confident in their relationship with it and using the brand's content. Recent research has shown that in the age of digital consumption, consumers who see brands as reliable are more likely to engage in online communities and to be more loyal and have strong levels of trust in the brands (Ashiq & Hussain, 2024; Chu et al., 2023). Secondly, there is greater consumer engagement with credible brands that results in better brand performance, which increases the consumer's confidence (Khan et al., 2023; Erdem & Swait, 2004).

H5: The relationship between Social Media Engagement Intention and the Social Media Engagement Behavior will be more positively moderated by Brand Credibility with its high level.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

Research design is a blueprint that outlines how the researcher will collect, measure and analyze the data to answer their research questions in a systematic way. The choice of a research design is crucial in social science or marketing research as it affects the validity and reliability of the results. The choice of quantitative research design in contemporary studies related to study of consumer behavior and phenomena in digital marketing is usually related to the ability to measure the relationships among variables in an objective manner and statistically test the theories. Use of quantitative approaches allow researchers to look at causal relationships and make generalizations to larger populations. Quantitative methods have been heavily used in recent studies of influencer marketing, customer behaviors with social media and customer engagement due to their empirical research capabilities for the analysis of complex behavioral relationships (Hair et al., 2024; Sarstedt et al., 2023; Ringle et al., 2022).

The reason for using a quantitative research design is because the nature of the research objectives and the conceptual framework that was developed for this study. Since the study involves identifying the relationship between the measurable constructs of social media influencers, social media engagement intention, social media engagement behavior, brand attitude, and brand credibility, quantitative approach is considered as the most appropriate method of the study. Quantitative methods help to gather objective data and analyze it statistically, test hypotheses, and assess theoretically important relationships in a systematic way. In the past few years, various research papers on influencer marketing and consumer behaviour have emphasized on the importance of employing quantitative designs to substantiate one with empirical findings and

theories with quantitative methods (Hair et al., 2024; Ringle et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2023).

Specifically, this study uses Quantitative, Explanatory and Cross-Sectional aspect of Survey type which is an explanatory research design and examines the role of Social media influencers in the behaviour of consumers in the textile industry of Pakistan. The study adopts an approach based on Social Influence Theory and the COBRA framework to explore the mediating role of intention for using social media between social media influencers and behavior of following social media. In addition, this study examines the moderating role of brand attitude and brand credibility between the engagement intention and the engagement behavior. The design is suitable because it allows the testing of theoretically formed hypothesis with empirical methods and full insight into consumer behaviour in digital environments (Hair et al., 2024; Sarstedt et al., 2023; Becker et al., 2023). Designing also accounts for the collection of universalizable data which can be used, analyzed among the numbers and presented in tables and graphs (Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Saunders et al., 2023).

3.2 Sampling

A crucial part of quantitative research is data collection, since it will supply the data to test the hypotheses as well as to check the theoretical relations. The main data for the proposed study will be gathered from the consumers who are active in the utilization of the social media platforms as well as textile brand engagement in Pakistan by distributing a structured questionnaire. To reach a wide audience and collect responses efficiently, online survey tools like Google Forms, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp communities, and TikTok pages will be used for distributing surveys. The questionnaire will be based upon some closed ended items using a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In recent literature, it is found that online survey techniques are superior in acquiring consumer behaviour information based on geographical dispersion, cost efficiency and flexibility in terms

of data collection methods (Becker et al., 2023; Sarstedt et al., 2023; Hair et al., 2024).

This study population includes all social media followers who interact with textile brands and interact with the social media influencers in Pakistan. In particular, the target group are those who access information on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube regarding information about textile products, fashion trends, and brand content. Because this marketing is predominantly driven by promotions to digitally connected consumers, the population selected is the most pertinent population for study of engagement behavior stemming from influencer marketing promotion. The textile industry is an excellent example as they make good use of social media marketing and influencer partnerships for the promotion of their products and services and for engaging their consumers. In recent studies on consumer behavior, it has been highlighted that this means identifying populations for their direct experience of the phenomenon investigated (Hair et al., 2024; Ringle et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2023).

The respondents will be selected through non-probability sampling technique that is convenience sampling due to the target population. Convenience sampling is suitable given that the focus of the research involves people who consume and use social media platforms and actively interact with social media influencers and textile brands, so accessibility is a crucial aspect. The respondents will be engaged through social media groups, communities online and online platforms that people are likely to see a lot of textile content on. The sample size is set as a minimum of 400 subjects in order to give enough statistical power in the analysis of data using the approach of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Convenience sampling method has been widely used in social media marketing research and consumer behaviour studies because of its practicability and effectiveness in accessing the desired Facebook participants in the digital environments (Hair, Sarstedt & Ringle, 2024; Sarstedt et al., 2023; Ringle et al., 2022).

Analysis of statistical data obtained will be done by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and SmartPLS software. SPSS will be used for the preliminary analysis such as data screening, descriptive statistics, demographic profiling, reliability or correlation analysis. To evaluate the measurement model and structural model, the technique used is Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is then followed by SmartPLS. This analytical approach is appropriate for the present study due to the latent constructs, mediation effects and moderation relationships involved in the complex conceptual framework. In recent methodological studies, it is recommended to employ the PLS-SEM approach for predictive and theory extension research as it is flexible and robust in addressing behavioral data (Hair et al., 2024; Becker et al., 2023; Henseler et al., 2022).

The measurement tools in this research will be taken from previously tested scales from the literature of influencer marketing, consumer engagement, and branding. The items about Social Media Involencer will be based on the results of research on Social Media Influencers, meanwhile, the items about Social Media Engagement Intention and Social Media Engagement Behavior will be based on related research on Social Media Engagement, especially research based on COBRA framework. Likewise, the scales of the Brand Attitude and the Brand Credibility will be modified in accordance to the existing psychological research on branding. For the adaptation, theoretical consistency was maintained and items were made relevant to the Pakistani textile context through the adaptation process. Minor wording changes will be performed to increase respondents' understanding, but with no change in conceptual meaning of the constructs. Recent research has highlighted how validation assessments can be applied in order to strengthen reliability, comparability and construct validity of validated scales across research contexts (Hair et al., 2024; Sarstedt et al., 2023; Becker et al., 2023).

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the present study reveal that the social media influencers have a significant influence on consumers' engagement intentions in the textile industry of Pakistan. We find that if consumers have a strong sense of a credible, trustworthy, and informative influencer, they are more likely to have a stronger intent to interact with brand-related content on social media platforms. The results are in line with the Social Influence theory which proposes that social actors who have influence over individuals' attitudes and behavioral intentions do so either by communicating information they possess (informational influence) or by inducing them to think of certain constructs in specific ways (normative influence). According to recent studies, influencers are key factors in shaping consumer engagement and involvement in online interactions (Afzal et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Ki et al., 2023), which are in alignment with the results obtained from this study. In addition, this study provides strong support for the past results as well, showing that there is a positive correlation between consumers' willingness to engage with influencer content and perceptions of their credibility and authenticity regarding a brand or online community (Schouten et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

4.1 Reliability and Validity

Table 1 Reliability and Validity Analysis

Construct reliability and validity				
	Overview			
	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
BRAND _ATTITUDE	0.908	0.909	0.942	0.844
BRAND _CREDIBILITY	0.862	0.864	0.916	0.784
CONSUMPTION	0.856	0.859	0.912	0.776

CONTRIBUTION	0.853	0.862	0.911	0.773
CREATION	0.918	0.920	0.948	0.859
SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGEMENT _INTENTION	0.832	0.841	0.899	0.747
SOCIAL _MEDIA _INFLUENCERS	0.887	0.887	0.930	0.815

The results of the construct reliabilities and validity, indicate that the measurement model has high reliability and convergent validities. All constructs were above the recommended level of Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70, with Values ranging from 0.832 to 0.918, which shows a satisfactory internal consistency in it when compared with other measurement items. Likewise, the Composite Reliability values (ρ_c) ranged from 0.899 - 0.948, which is above the recommended value of 0.70, indicating excellent construct reliability. The ρ_A values also surpassed the value of 0.70, which is the accepted value for consistency and stability of measurement scales. As for convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct ranged from 0.747 to 0.859, far exceeding the lower threshold of 0.50 as recommended by Hair et al. (2024); this means that the constructs explain a variance of more than 50% of their indicators. The reliability and validity values for the constructs were acceptable to the high in the following order: Creation had the highest reliability and validity values ($\alpha = 0.918$, $CR = 0.948$, $AVE = 0.859$), followed by Social Media Engagement Intention ($\alpha = 0.832$, $CR = 0.899$, $AVE = 0.747$). In general, all constructs are found to have good reliability and convergent validity, implying that the measurement model allows the analysis of the structural model and hypothesis testing.

4.2 PLS SEM Bootstrapping

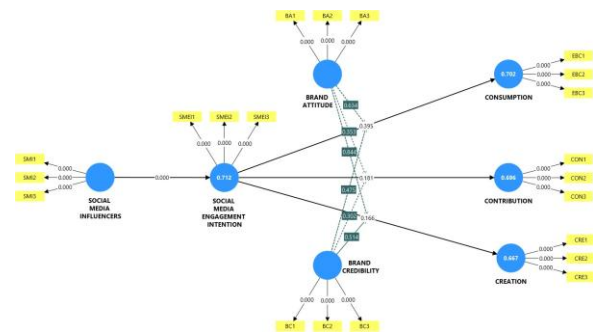


Fig. 2 PLS SEM Bootstrapping

Based on the result of the structural model, the Social Media Influencers shows to be a significant and strong positive influence on the Social Media Engagement Intention with the $R^2 = 0.712$ is obtained, which means that around 71.2% variance in the Social Media Engagement Intention is explained by the Social Media Influencers. The study indicates that more consumers have strong intentions to interact with the textile brands via social media when they feel the social media influencers are credible, informative, and trustworthy. Moreover, Social Media Engagement Intention has a significant relationship with all the Engagement Behavior aspects. Engagement with the content was the factor that had the largest influence with $\beta = 0.395$ and $R^2 = 0.702$, which means that consumers first react by seeing, reading, or following content that relates to the brand. This resulted in Social Media Engagement Intention positively impacting Contribution Behavior ($\beta = 0.181$, $R^2 = 0.696$) and Creation Behavior ($\beta = 0.166$, $R^2 = 0.667$), meaning the higher the engagement intention, the more likely the consumers will be to comment and share what they post about the brand and create content themselves. They noted that the R^2 values of all endogenous constructs indicate that the proposed model has a high level of explanatory power.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Table 2 Hypothesis Testing

Path coefficients				
Mean, STDEV, T values, p values				
Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values

	le (O)	n (M)	(STD EV)	(O/STD EV)		_ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CONSUMP TION					
BRAND _ATTITUD E -> CONSUMP TION	0.184	0.18 9	0.075	2.473	0.01 3						
BRAND _ATTITUD E -> CONTRIBU TION	0.124	0.13 3	0.081	1.528	0.12 7	BRAND _CREDIBIL ITY x SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CONTRIBU TION	- 0.09 1	- 0.08 1	0.088	1.032	0.30 2
BRAND _ATTITUD E -> CREATION	0.319	0.31 9	0.085	3.745	0.00 0	BRAND _CREDIBIL ITY x SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CONTRIBU TION	- 0.06 2	- 0.06 4	0.095	0.653	0.51 4
BRAND _ATTITUD E x SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CONSUMP TION	0.043	0.03 3	0.091	0.476	0.63 4	SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CONSUMP TION	0.065	0.07 2	0.077	0.850	0.39 5
BRAND _ATTITUD E x SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CONTRIBU TION	0.083	0.07 4	0.090	0.928	0.35 3	SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CONTRIBU TION	0.105	0.10 1	0.078	1.336	0.18 1
BRAND _ATTITUD E x SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CREATION	0.020	0.02 3	0.099	0.197	0.84 4	SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N -> CREATION	0.105	0.10 6	0.076	1.385	0.16 6
BRAND _CREDIBIL ITY -> CONSUMP TION	0.611	0.60 2	0.076	8.018	0.00 0	SOCIAL _MEDIA _INFLUEN CERS -> SOCIAL _MEDIA _ENGAGE MENT _INTENTIO N	0.844	0.84 4	0.022	37.912	0.00 0
BRAND _CREDIBIL ITY -> CONTRIBU TION	0.633	0.62 7	0.063	9.986	0.00 0						
BRAND _CREDIBIL ITY -> CREATION	0.403	0.40 4	0.096	4.216	0.00 0						
BRAND _CREDIBIL ITY x SOCIAL _MEDIA	- 0.06 1	- 0.04 9	0.085	0.714	0.47 5	The results of path coefficient analysis shows that in this study, Social Media Influencers have very significant positive impacts on Social Media					

Engagement Intention ($\beta = 0.844$, $t = 37.912$, $p = 0.000$) which is considered to be in the high level of support. The findings imply that the social media influencers play a significant role in promoting a behavior that compels consumers to act on social media platforms with textile brands. In impacting engagement behavior, Brand Credibility had the highest percentage impact on Consumption ($\beta = 0.611$, $p = 0.000$), Contribution ($\beta = 0.633$, $p = 0.000$), and Creation ($\beta = 0.403$, $p = 0.000$). Likewise, Brand Attitude strongly affected Consumption ($\beta = 0.184$, $p = 0.013$) and Creation ($\beta = 0.319$, $p = 0.000$) but with no significant influence in Contribution behavior ($\beta = 0.124$, $p = 0.127$). The positive and credible perception of the textile brand is found to lead to increased consumption of brand content and production of brand-related online content by consumers. Hence, in the model, the Brand Credibility was found to be the strongest determinant for Brand Engagement.

4.4 PLS SEM

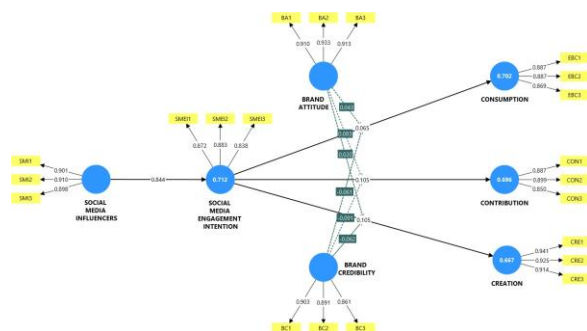


Fig. 3 PLS SEM

The measures and the model were shown to be highly reliable and valid for all constructs. The factor loadings for all indicators for the six factors improved to the recommended threshold of 0.70 and the factors were considered as satisfactory indicators and reliable. In addition, the coefficient of determination (R^2) are substantial showing high consideration power and estimation property of the endogenous constructs. Social Media Engagement Intention ($R^2 = 0.712$) was explained by Social Media Influencers, which emanates from the fact that consumers are highly influenced by the characteristics of the influencers when making decisions about engage with textile brands. In the

same way, model explained 70.2% of Consumption Behavior, 69.6% of Contribution Behavior and 66.7% of Creation Behavior and showed good predictive power to explain engagement behavior of consumers in textile industry of Pakistan.

4.5 Model Fitness

Table 3 Model Fitness

Model fit		
Fit summary		
	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.048	0.075
d_ULS	0.534	1.304
d_G	0.513	0.621
Chi-square	1136.547	1217.005
NFI	0.853	0.842

The model fit assessment shows that the proposed structural model has an acceptable overall fit. The Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR) of the estimated model is 0.075 which is less than 0.08, which is recommended as an acceptable fit of the data to the proposed model. In addition, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value of 0.842 is close to the standard suggesting the degree of model fit is at “moderate” level of 0.842 – 0.90. There are no serious model misspecifications since the discrepancy measure, such as $d_ULS = 1.304$, are within acceptable range, and $d_G = 0.621$ is within the acceptable range also. In addition, the level of complexity of the model and/or the sample (saturated and estimated model value) is the Chi-square derived from the model, which is typical in Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). On a general perspective, the fit indices as a whole advocate that the measurement and structural models are suitable and satisfactory for the data collected, substantiating the appropriate nature of the proposed framework to investigate the relationships between variables of Social Media Influencers, Social Media Engagement Intention, Brand Attitude, Brand Credibility, and

Engagement Behavior in the textile industry in Pakistan.

The findings however, showed that Social Media Engagement Intention does not significantly affect either Consumption ($\beta = 0.065$, $p = 0.395$), Contribution ($\beta = 0.105$, $p = 0.181$), or Creation ($\beta = 0.105$, $p = 0.166$) behaviors. The results do not align with many of the studies examining positive relationships between engagement intention and engagement behaviors, as cited previously. For instance, Muniz et al. (2024) have shown that consumers' intentions to engage are strongly linked to their online behaviors and interactions with the corporations' communities. Likewise, Rodrigues et al. (2024) found that the behavioral intentions had a significant effect on the outcomes of social media engagement, and Cao et al. (2021) found that social media engagement has a highly positive relationship with the intentions to engage in the consumption, contribution and creation aspects of COBRA. The findings of previous research conducted by Brodie et al. (2011) and Dessart et al. (2015) further emphasized engagement intention as an important antecedent of engagement behavior. It can be argued that the inconsistencies found in the present research is due to the contextual variations in the textile industry in Pakistan with some customers may make Mental engagement intentions but fail to conduct physical engagement action online in the concrete industry.

4.6 Discussion

The results of the present study offer theoretical implications to the theories of Social Influence Theory, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Source Credibility Theory in the context of textile industry in Pakistan. The findings corroborate the main premise of Social Influence Theory, which posits that influential social actors influence consumers' intentions and behavioral reactions which in turn corresponds with the results of the study. The result aligns with the study conducted by Afzal et al. (2024) and Ki et al. (2023) who found that influencers have a strong influence on the digital engagement and the intentions of the consumers regarding the brands. The current study, however, did not find

that Social Media Engagement Intention significantly influenced Consumption, Contribution, and Creation behaviors as the TPB based study did. The results differ from the findings of Muniz et al. (2024) and Rodrigues et al. (2024) indicating that the relationship between intention and behavior may vary in the context of textile industry in Pakistan. The study has a theoretical contribution in that it illustrates that intentions driven by an influencer are not always followed up with engagement behavior, which may suggest that there are contextual boundaries to traditional behavioral theories.

The study also makes a contribution from a literature point of view, as it fills in an important gap in the literature regarding influencer marketing and engagement behavior in emerging economies. While previous studies have mainly examined purchase intention, online shopping behaviours, and brand loyalty outcomes, few studies have examined the mechanisms by which influencers induce different dimensions of engagement behaviours. The current results corroborate the previous research that demonstrated the ability of influencers to elicit intentions of consumer engagement (Afzal et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023). These findings, however, contradict the Cao et al. (2021), Brodie et al. (2011), and Dessart et al. (2015) results, which found that engagement intention had significant positive effects on consumption, contribution, and creation behaviors. Moreover, this study shows that the direct effects of Brand Credibility and Brand Attitude are stronger than the direct effect of engagement intention on the engagement behavior. This conclusion builds on previous research which indicates that the evaluation of the brands is more significant for consumers than motivation to engage in online brand-related activities in Pakistan's textile industry.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed at explaining the impact of Social Media Influencers on Engagement Behavior via Social Media Engagement Intention while studied the effect of Brand Attitude and Brand Credibility in Pakistan's textile industry as moderators. The results showed that Social

Media Influencers exert significant and strong positive influence on the consumers' Intention to use Social Media indicating that people with Internet presence are still effective agents of communication to capture consumer attention and initiate consumer interest towards activities relating to the brand. The results are consistent with Social Influence Theory (Ki et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2023; Afzal et al., 2024) because many studies have identified influencers as crucial for driving consumer engagement and participation online. Similar to previous findings, the credibility of social media influencers, their authenticity and trustworthiness seem to foster consumers' affinity to brands and social media posts (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2020).

The results showed that, however, contrary to the Theory of Planned behavior, Social Media Engagement Intention was not significantly correlated with Consumption, Contribution or Creation behavior. The findings differ from other studies, which determined that engagement intention is a significant predictor of online participation and engagement activities (Muniz et al., 2024; Rodrigues et al., 2024; Cao et al., 2021). The results indicate that within the textile industry in Pakistan, customers might be motivated to engage positively with an online retailer, but not necessarily towards online action. This finding marks an intention-behaviour gap and suggests that other contextual factors also can impact the linkage between people's intentions and the engagement outcomes (Brodie et al., 2011; Dessart et al., 2015).

5.1 Future Research Direction

Future studies are needed to broaden the existing model by including more mediators and moderators of the intention-behaviour gap found in the present study. Factors like consumer trust, perceived value, emotional attachment, parasocial relationships, brand love, and electronic word of mouth could shed more light into the development of intended for engagement behaviors into actual engagement behaviors. So these factors are shown to be influential factors in digital consumers' decision-making and participation online in previous studies (Muniz et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Ki et al., 2023).

Moreover, future research can explore other theoretical frameworks, such as Social Cognitive Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and Relationship Marketing Theory, to offer more comprehensive explanations for the effectiveness of the influencers and the members' engagement with them (Rodrigues et al., 2024; Schouten et al., 2020).

The current research was restricted to a sample of textile industries of Pakistan which might consequently make the results not generalizable to other industries and geographical areas. Future studies should replicate the model in other sectors like cosmetics, healthcare, tourism, banking, and e-commerce businesses to identify whether the depicted relationships hold true to other industries.

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