

Effect of Social Media Influencer on Consumer Purchase Intention: A PLS-SEM Study on Branded Luxury Fashion Clothing

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Abstract

By analyzing the purchasing decisions of consumers who have been influenced by social media influencers, marketers have long been concerned with determining the impact of social media influencers on their target audience. A shopper's shopping conduct is the act of making a purchase. In 2001, American researchers began to consider investigating Internet conversations of consumers. The development of questionnaire facilitates data collection for this investigation. In the initial section of the survey, participants were requested to provide demographic information, including their ages, gender, educational backgrounds, income levels, and occupations. Part 2 was a study of the beliefs and behaviors of consumers regarding the influence of celebrities, bloggers/vloggers, micro-influencers, and social networks on their purchasing decisions. The study analyzed the model's fit to the data and its component relationships. The test results obtained through the utilization of the algorithm and bootstrapping. The overview encompasses key elements like p-values, T-values, -values, and evaluations of hypothesis validity. There is no evidence to suggest that celebrity prominence in Pakistan influences consumer behavior. The Pakistani public's aversion or skepticism regarding the veracity of online content must also influence consumers' propensity to spend. Future research may investigate the potential repercussions of using digital social media for marketing purposes to an excessive degree.

Keywords: *Digital Influencers, Consumer Purchase Intention, Luxury Fashion Clothing, social media*

INTRODUCTION

One of the primary concerns of marketers has constantly been assessing the influence of social media influencers on the desired demographic by studying the shopping habits of consumers inspired by those influencers. When a person decides to buy something that is shopping behavior. In 2001, the United States began considering consumer behavior research focused on online discourse. Previous research has shown that consumers' awareness of societal and cultural trends has increased due to their increased exposure to globalization.

It has been noted that social bloggers are essential in influencing consumer behavior, as people tend to follow trends generated by influencer marketing to fit in with society or their social circle. Consumers, it is said, frequently purchase name-brand items to gain social acceptance or to counteract the effects of social deprivation. This shift in purchasing habits has resulted in fierce competition among Pakistan's clothing manufacturers, who benefit from the fact that name brands tend to be more expensive despite sharing many of the same desirable qualities (Zeb et al., 2015). Profits in Pakistan's textile industry are up between 50 and 60 percent from 2016 to 2020 (Memon et al., 2020), they report. Furthermore, Pakistan's textile industries have increased clothing exports by up to 6%, or roughly 5 trillion US dollars. Regarding clothing exports, Pakistan and other Asian countries account for 45 percent of the global market. In addition, Pakistan's economic development needs to be improved by a lack of market analysis, leading to the failure of 30-35% of brand businesses there. Consumers' motivation to shop can be influenced by various factors, including the goals they hope to achieve. According to the literature, branded clothing is a way for consumers to show their wealth and overcome social degradation.

The women may not have strong brand consciousness, Zeb and colleagues. (2015) found that they are likely to be affected by shopping for branded items. This uses inferential statistics to conclude a descriptive analysis. This study can be used as a barometer of the Pakistani market for branded luxury apparel. It will give insight to international brands into the challenges Pakistani consumers have faced when interacting with the branded clothing industry. This research investigated how mainline celebrities, bloggers/vloggers, micro-influencers, and social media affect consumers' intent to buy branded,

high-end fashion apparel in Pakistan. It fills a gap in the literature previously investigated by scholars using the Dunn, W. N. (1983)—analysis of social networks.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Networks Theory

The theory of social networks is a framework for understanding the relationships between people in a given group. According to one definition, a person's social network is "the set of all the known and unknown relationships that person has." The extent to which someone is actively involved in society and has established meaningful connections with others indicates that a person's standing is a more extensive larger social network. Social media's rise in popularity prompted the creation of other online platforms with the same goals: improve communication between users, increase the Journal of Fashion Marketing & Management (JFMM) impact on online purchases, and generalize the reach of the Internet. Ads on social networking sites (SNSs) have a significant positive effect on shopping behaviors, and SNSs help people make purchase decisions by providing easy access to relevant information across multiple digital platforms. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the global retail landscape has shifted dramatically overnight. During the crackdown in various countries, consumers no longer have the option of using the physical retail channel (physical stores), making shopping on digital platforms the "new normal" for consumers worldwide. Digital marketers have quickly adopted social media as a primary point of contact for communicating with their target audience (Ryan et al., 2017). Social media influencers (SMIs) are more present and significantly impact online consumption, especially in China's Guanxi networking society.

Purchase Intention

A consumer's buying behavior, or their "purchase intention," entails their proclivities and actions about a product. It can also refer to a person's deliberate intention to exert effort to complete a desired behavior, such as purchasing a particular brand (Jamil et al. 2023). Some research has shown that well-known people are frequently employed as brand ambassadors or endorsers because of their widespread popularity and name recognition (Jiang et al. 2021). People tend to imitate public

figures with whom they identify, both in their personalities and other positive features, which can influence their propensity to purchase (Miao, M., et al., 2021). Sharing experiences, opinions, and thoughts with others on social media sites can build trust and help consumers resolve their reservations about trying new products, boosting business sales (Khan, S., et al., 2022). Before committing to a purchase, consumers typically learn about, consider, and ultimately appreciate the product or service they plan to buy (Lim et al., 2016). A consumer's intent to purchase while browsing the Internet is now a crucial factor in determining the success of online advertising. An individual's propensity to buy can be proven using PI (Mubarik, M.S., et al., 2021).

Green marketing, marketing of high-end goods, and, last but not least, e-commerce all feature prominently in studies of consumer behavior beyond the context of traditional brick-and-mortar retail (Mubarik, M.S., et al., 2021). About George's (2004) definition, "online purchase behavior" in this study refers to the regularity with which consumers purchase goods via the World Wide Web. Consumers' willingness to carry out behavior can be gauged through their intentions, as stated by Ajzen (1991). User-generated content (UGC), like blogging, can have different impacts depending on the blogger's credibility (Khan, S., et al., 2022). Therefore, bloggers with varying reputation levels will influence readers' perspectives of the related content differently (Imran, Z.S., et al., 2018). A famous blogger may persuade readers to make more online purchases by exerting a prescriptive effect (Khan, S., et al., 2022). According to the social capital perspective, a person's online reputation can significantly impact the acquisition of persuadable knowledge and, in turn, the purchasing decisions of others (Miao, M., et al., 2021). More so, previous research has demonstrated that consumers rely on information from trustworthy sources during decision-making (Mubarik, M.S., et al., 2021). A clear message can sway a reader's opinion of a product or service based on the source's endorsement (Imran, Z.S., et al., 2018).

The term "purchase intention" is used to describe a consumer's propensity to make a future purchase of a given good or service. One of the most critical aspects of influencer marketing is figuring out how to increase Instagram followers' intent to buy.

Celebrity Endorsement

Today's society often looks up to famous people as examples to emulate. Fans will do anything to live like their favorite star (Khan, S., et

al., 2022). This perspective significantly impacts brand-aware consumers and boosts the efficiency of brands (Miao, M., et al., 2021). Though celebrity endorsements do not always sway consumers' decisions, they often improve the public's impression of the products (Khan, S., et al., 2022). The use of celebrity endorsements in advertising has proven effective (Mubarik, M.S., et al., 2021). According to the research of the current market, it has grown necessary for marketing companies to use distinct famous personalities to connect with their brand names in order to create a unique brand identity and to renowned the company's brand or product, which leads to high spending for the business to use that strategic plan (Khan, S., et al., 2022). However, nowadays, it is used as a powerful strategic instrument to get maximum profit. One of the most reliable ways to increase interest in a product is to have a famous person endorse it (Khan and Khan 2022). Customers are more likely to try and buy products endorsed by celebrities because of the credibility and popularity of the celebrities (Ayeh, 2015).

Additionally, in some societies and cultures, celebrities represent important symbolic values. Therefore, through the process that involves a transfer in consumers' buying, they imbue the products and brands they endorse with symbolic meaning (Khan, S., et al., 2022). To boost sales and name recognition, many businesses rely on the endorsement of famous people. When consumers see their favorite celebrities endorsing a product, they are likelier to buy and continue buying it (Mubarik, M.S., et al., 2021). Researchers often use the term "inviter" to describe celebrity endorsers because of their ability to persuade customers to buy the advertised product due to the endorser's unique and trustworthy status (Miao et al. 2022). It has also been emphasized that consumers are more receptive to such advertisements because of the celebrity's attractiveness and credibility, increasing consumers' favorable impressions of the advertised product and motivating them to purchase (Khan, S., et al., 2022). Because of their popularity and allure, celebrities are often used to draw more eyes to advertisements. How suitable Junaid Jamshed will be in ads for toilet cleansers or a male for endorsing women's fairness creams are just two examples of how a celebrity's suitability for an endorsement role goes beyond their widespread fame (Khan et al. 2023).

Similarly, an endorser's physical attractiveness significantly affects how much the general public accepts a product. Thus, celebrity attributes are just as crucial to the product's success as brand attributes (Ghauri et al.

2022). Specifically, Erdogan (1999) argued that the celebrity endorsement technique is more effective because of the credibility and authority of the celebrity's name. Researchers have also looked at the other side of the coin, finding that celebrity endorsement can backfire if the endorsed celebrity behaves unprofessionally or if there is too much of it (Miao et al. 2020). As the number of celebrity brand endorsements grows, the value and sway of individual celebrities inevitably decline. When a celebrity is involved in a scandal, they lose some of their lusters as an endorsement.

H1: Celebrity endorsement has a significant impact on purchase intention through social media Blogger/Vloggers

H2: vlogger/blogger has Video blogging, or "vlogging" as it is more formally known, was coined by M. T. Liu and co-authors (2019) to describe the practice of using personal narratives and other forms of multimedia to spread the word about a good or service on social media. It is helpful to generate electronic word of mouth (E-WOMs), influence people, and disseminate knowledge across social media by categorizing vlogs based on content, such as private life, beauty, strength and conditioning, food, travel, and gaming vlogs (Khan, Khan, and Ahmad 2016). Expertise from famous online video bloggers can boost product recognition. It is adequate to use celebrities who are experts in their field to boost brand recognition—referring to the endorser's level of expertise, which measures their knowledge, experience, and abilities (Jiang et al. 2018). Video blogs (or vlogs) are a form of digital video documentation in which individuals document the acquisition and use of various beauty and fashion products (Mazhar et al. 2022). In recent years, it has become increasingly common to get customer reviews or personal views through vlogs where ordinary people discuss the clothing and makeup they recently purchased. Spreading like wildfire as a form of online WOM (word-of-mouth) information, video blogs (vlogs) are a novel approach to disseminating data via video content.

Vlogs are video blogs in which the posts are primarily video. A vlog is a video blog, as defined by Harnish and Bridges (2016), and another study defines it as a streaming video in which the vlogger's daily life is broken down into several scenes. In the same way that regular people, rather than celebrities, serve as acquaintances and friends to viewers, so do vloggers. Vloggers, in other words, play multiple roles in their videos,

including those of video makers, models, and "friends" on social networking sites (Jiang et al. 2021). Today's most popular YouTubers often serve as influential thought leaders or go-to resources for news and information. Consumers are also impacted by the desirability of sources of information, as was found in a previous study that examines the effects of attractiveness; in general, the more desirable the source of info, the greater the affirmation of the message (Khan et al. 2023). The use of video for interactive communication has grown in popularity, so too have marketing efforts based on the medium. The concept of "sharing" is integral to content because it bridges the gap between producers and consumers (Khan & Sajjad 2013). Previous research has shown that a positive attitude towards content is associated with a propensity to share that content. In turn, consumers will have a more favorable opinion of the product featured in the content. As the popularity of video blogs skyrocketed, Google's 2006 acquisition of YouTube for \$1.65 billion ushered in a new era in blogging (Khan et al. 2022). It made YouTube one of the web's most widely used social media platforms. With YouTube, anyone can create, watch, post, and upload videos about any subject of the day and any product or service they use. It is not just the rest of the world that's seen an increase in social media use in recent years; Pakistan has, too. In early 2017, when video-sharing sites allowed content creators to earn money from their videos, vlogging quickly gained popularity in Pakistan. Digital Global Insights estimates that there are 4.8 billion active social media users (Chaffey, 2023), with well almost 72 million customers in Pakistan and that global and local numbers are still growing. (Kemp, 2023) The term "influential marketing" describes the practice of using a YouTuber's influential status to promote a product, service, or destination without the involvement of the product's manufacturer or distributor.

Micro-Influencers

While according to Mukhofas Al – Fikri, the term "influencer" is generally understood to refer to a familiar figure, such as a friend or family member, the term "perceived influencer" refers to Those who command a sizable following and can persuade them to accept the claims made by a brand's online media because of the conviction with which they present their ideas. In contrast, influencer marketing is simply the process of promoting and selling goods or services through influential individuals (i.e., Brown & Hayes, 2008; Scott, 2015). Influencers, by

definition, provide unique content in the form of posts that demonstrate particular expertise and sway among their contemporaries (Khan, S., et al., 2022). It is common for them to produce niche content that speaks directly to their passions and expertise. According to the literature, unique content is one of the best ways to boost user activity, like comments, likes, and shares (Godey et al., 2016). It has been hypothesized that their most profound desires shape micro-influencers' online personas. Multiple studies showed that when an influencer is genuine, their audience becomes more attached to them and more invested in the brand. There is evidence that consumers view the endorser as a friend due to their frequent interactions with them on social media. When influencers can connect personally with their audience, they have a multiplier effect on both positive word of mouth and sentimental attachment to the brand.

Recent preliminary studies have provided more information to address the growing concern that micro-influencers have emerged as a powerful marketing tool to fortify the bond between brands and consumers and inspire positive actions. Additionally, customers are often more involved in the posts of micro-influencers than those of celebrities for the following reasons: (1) they are enthusiastic in their particular field; (2) they are regarded as genuine; (3) they resemble a relatable human being. The company uses micro-influencers as an effective strategy for fostering emotional attachment to the brand. Furthermore, studies have shown that positive word-of-mouth, purchase intent, an increased brand voice, and more robust consumer connections result from consumer-brand engagement (Islam & Rahman, 2016). In today's modern media landscape, influencers can be found on almost every major social network, as well as on Twitter, Instagram, as well as YouTube, to name just a few (Khan, S., et al., 2022). As White (2014) pointed out, millennials place a higher value on their interactions with and advocacy for brands they enjoy using. Marketers place a premium on understanding what makes for a solid connection between a product and its target audience. When consumers have a positive experience with a brand, it leads to increased sales, decreased price sensitivity, increased brand loyalty, and greater profitability. Consumers with a positive impression of a company are likelier to buy from them again. This calls for more research into the causes and effects of brand admiration, which is an understudied marketing concept. Since consumer opinion is formed gradually over time via exposure, shifts in consumer opinion are

relatively slow (Boone & Kurtz, 2002). However, only a select few academics have examined how influencers affect consumers' perceptions of and intentions to buy a particular brand. Marketers rely heavily on appealing to celebrities or influential individuals on social media to forge a connection between their brand and the target audience.

H3: Micro-influencers have a significant impact on purchase intention through social media.

Social circle

Profoundly, this alters the dynamics of our relationships with one another and with both public and private organizations. Social networks have emerged as a new platform for commercial, social, political, and educational interactions between individuals, businesses, and governments. In order to satisfy psychological, physiological, and social needs, human beings routinely engage in social interactions with their contemporaries (Ward, 1974). As far as I can tell from the literature on consumer socialization, peers are the order to grab the attention of agents outside of the family. Conversations with friends and acquaintances influence consumers' opinions about brands and products. In addition, studies have shown that consumers are influenced by their peers in their reference groups. Previous studies have shown that word-of-mouth among friends significantly affects consumers' shopping attitudes and intentions. Conversations between friends are an excellent way to gather information about future purchases. The opinions and advice of those closest to you, such as family and friends, often influence your purchase decision. Consumers' emotional investment in an item is determined by how well it meets their wants and needs (Zaichkowsky, 1985) and is known as "involvement" (Ogden & Venkat, 2001). People with a wide circle of friends and acquaintances who are easily swayed by the opinions of others are thought to be more open-minded and global in their perspectives. Together, Chan & Prendergast (2007) Consumers seek out luxury brands because of the social status they convey. Consumers with less disposable income buy a few items of high-end clothing each year to blend in with those who are better-off socially.

Recent research, however, has shown that people are more likely to take the advice of well-known family members and friends than they are to follow the advice of celebrities and fashion experts. Recent research has shown that consumer content on social media about fashion brands can

evoke strong emotions and stimulate conversation. People interact with one another online for the sake of a common goal or purpose, like learning more about a particular clothing line. The social network theory states that the number of people in a group and the degree of emotional and physical closeness between them are significant factors in determining how much influence the group has over the individual's decision to spend money on luxury brands.

H4: social circle significantly impacts purchase intention through social media.

Social Media

What we now refer to as "social media" encompasses a wide variety of websites and online groups whose members regularly interact with one another and share their thoughts, opinions, and insights with the rest of the community (Schroeder, 2017). Facebook, weblogs, wikis, Linked In, Twitter, podcasts, and many more are all examples of social media. There is a massive opportunity for businesses to interact with customers on a one-on-one basis via social media. According to Pena (2019), social media is an interactive platform that helps cultivate trust, which is crucial to developing brand equity. Regarding CRM, customer communication, and customer involvement, social media has been recognized as a simple mechanism contributing to the organization's marketing goals and strategies.

Successful online advertising depends heavily on the performance of social networking sites (Irfan et al., 2018). To name a few of the many benefits social media platforms can provide businesses, consider the following: increased brand awareness, streamlined word-of-mouth marketing, and increased revenue—establishing a company-wide culture of open data sharing and customer social support (Naeem, 2019). Contrarily, networking Values with a positive effect on consumer trust are evident on social media. Consumer trust and online shopping intentions are two areas that researchers hope to learn more about as social media and networking services grow in popularity. (Social media may inspire new marketing approaches within businesses using confidence-building mechanisms that influence consumers' intentions to shop online.) Introducing a new era in which commercial enterprises can maximize their potential. Members can also network with one another through platforms that can serve as a reliable social resources. A

company's social media presence can help it appeal to a broader audience, significantly impacting consumers' purchasing decisions (Prendergast et al., 2010). These interactions were made possible by social networking features like online discussion boards, groups, ratings, comments, and suggestions that foster users' social support. This could boost consumers' and sellers' confidence in online marketplaces. In addition, research into social media platforms provides insight into how users shape their virtual relationships with others. It has been found by Liu et al. (2021) that the main components of luxury brand advertising campaigns are customization, prestige, trendiness, interaction, and entertainment, all of which have a substantial effect on consumers' propensity to make a purchase and the value consumers assign to the brand. Community marketing is based on the interactions among events and people's mental states, while products are external user factors. However, even when people are exposed to the same service activities, they may form different impressions of the event due to their unique perspectives and experiences. The use of social media advertising has been shown to increase consumer recall and recognition of brands, especially at the point of sale.

It is common knowledge, however, that some forms of social media are more conducive to promoting famous people than others and that users of some platforms are likelier to engage with those in their social networks. Zhu and Chen's (2015) model classifies social media sites as either profile-based or content-based, depending on the focus of their users' interactions. People-centric profiles are the main attraction on social media sites. Members' primary motivation for using these platforms is to establish meaningful relationships with one another. Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp are all instances of profile-based social media. Content-based social media, of which Snapchat, Pinterest, and YouTube are just a few examples, make up the second group. Users of this platform are most engaged by posts, conversations, and reactions that center around topics of personal interest.

H5: Social media has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Measures

In order to collect information for this study, a questionnaire was created. The first section of the survey asked respondents to provide primary personal data such as their age, gender, level of education, annual income, and current profession. In part two, consumers were surveyed about their attitudes and actions concerning mainstream celebrities, bloggers/vloggers, micro-influencers, and social circles concerning their intent to purchase. Two items from Zhang and Kim (2012) and three were adapted to measure social networks. Three items modified from an existing measure of purchase intent Five indicators of micro-influencers were adopted from a study by Five factors, modified from sun et al., were used to gauge the impact of celebrities (2021). Vlogger/blogger measurement items adapted from Rybaczewska, Sparks, and Chesire's study (2020). Finally, we adapted five pieces of social media. Except for the first section, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement using a five-point Likert scale, from strongly disagreeing ("1") to "disagreeing" ("2") to "neutral" ("3") to "agreeing" ("4").

Sampling and Data

The population of Pakistan who purchases high-end clothing brands will serve as the study's sample. The sample was chosen based on how easy it was to get. Compared to other data collection methods, the questionnaire method is faster, cheaper, and more objective. The survey data was collected using the social media sites Google Forms and WhatsApp. We collected 123 usable responses from a survey sent to 200 people. Many studies can be conducted with a sample size between 30 and 500. Among the respondents, 29.3 percent were between the ages of 19 and 21, and 35.0 percent were between the ages of 22 and 24. About two-thirds of the participants are male, and a quarter is female. From all respondent groups, 27% had completed intermediate schooling, 51% had completed bachelor's degrees, and 11.5 had completed graduate school. Over two-thirds of respondents fall into the student category, and another 11.4 percent work in the business world; this suggests that most respondents firmly intend to buy branded clothing for women, even though women are more likely to be influenced to buy branded clothing items. Additionally, the well-known celebrities, bloggers/vloggers, and other "micro-influencers" on Pakistani women's desire to buy high-end fashion

brands were analyzed. Age, gender, and education data confirm that the respondents are a representative cross-section of the population of interest for this study.

Partially Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the data. One of the primary reasons for structural equation modeling's widespread use in the social sciences is the insight it provides into the interrelationships between ostensibly independent variables. Second, PLS-SEM was chosen because of its benefits, such as the ability and versatility to implement new latent variables and discover different relationships to existing theories. In addition, PLS-SEM has more practical benefits than the covariance-based SEM method, including a limited sample size requirement and the simplicity with which it can be applied to solving complex relationships involving mediators, opinion leaders, friends, and peers. As a result, PLS-SEM was selected as the most suitable method.

Conceptual Framework

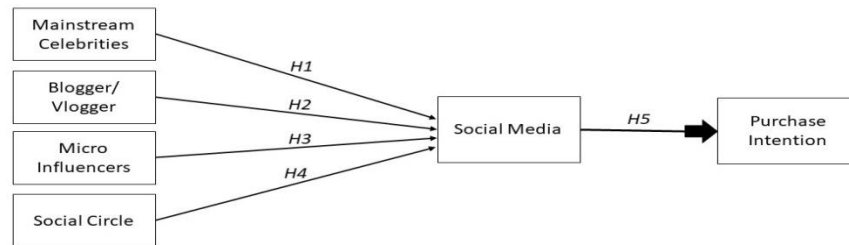


Figure 1: Framework

STATISTICAL RESULTS

Analytical findings, such as descriptive statistics, results from testing the structural equation model and hypotheses, and evidence for the constructs' reliability and validity are presented here.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics like the sample's mean and standard deviation. All item means lie between 2.504 and 3.699. The outcome of the means implies that the participants would choose "agree" or "neutral" with assertions made in the survey, implying that the items analyzed are well associated with this research.

Construct Reliability and Validity

Previous research has used the same set of variables as this one, but those results could be impacted because of cultural differences. For this reason, maintaining construct validity was a necessity to ensure the reliability of the study's findings (Bryman, 2015). Before factor analysis, a conformity test was performed to check for any apparent deviations from the expected distribution. What follows is a table displaying these findings. The skewness values are within the allowable range of 1, and the Kurtosis values are within the allowable range, between -0.484 and 1.359. Consistent with the findings, the study's assumptions of normality were met.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics: Means and Standard Deviations

Measurement items	Mean/ SD
<u>Mainstream Celebrities</u>	
The image of a celebrity affects my decision to purchase from a particular brand.	2.732/1.148
I intend to purchase high-image brands like celebrities	2.650/1.044
I get impressed by the celebrity perception of the brand	2.724/1.107
I tend to pay attention to what celebrities are buying	2.512/1.047
<u>Bloggers/Vloggers</u>	
Blog/vlog viewer's attitude impact my purchase intention.	2.805/1.221
Bloggers/vloggers with the highest reach are more likely to affect my purchase decision.	2.764/1.13
I trust the recommendation of my favorite vlogger/blogger whom I follow.	2.992/1.165
The information provided by vloggers/bloggers is accurate.	2.886/0.973

Bloggers/vloggers with the highest reach are more likely to affect my purchase decision.	2.691/1.141
<u>Micro-influencers</u>	
Online influencers change my purchase decision.	2.789/1.091
Knowledge regarding the brands shared by paid influencers is actual.	2.748/1.056
I get motivated by social influencers to make choices for shopping	2.821/1.067
I confidentially purchase a product recommended by an influencer with the highest reach of followers	2.894/1.125
<u>Social Circle</u>	
I will recommend my selected brand of clothes to my friends	2.740/1.081
I get impressed by the status of a brand's consumer	3.699/0.864
My social circle's perception of that particular brand is essential to me.	2.943/1.107
If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same design and brands that they buy	2.504/1.185
I intend to purchase brands that are recommended by my social circle	3.033/1.051
<u>Social Media</u>	
I am actively involved in the brand's social media site.	3.178/1.028
The quality of the content of the brand's social media site is helpful.	3.488/0.878
My selected site is reliable.	3.626/0.914
I frequently interact with other members of my selected brand's social media sites.	2.976/1.070
I will likely buy products of my selected brand promoted or advertised on social media.	3.358/0.929
<u>Purchase Intention</u>	
I pay attention to the brand I purchase mentioned above	3.545/0.789
I will continue purchasing my selected brand's cloth.	3.398/0.908
I intend to purchase expensive clothing brands.	2.569/0.997

Smart PLS was used to run a PLS algorithm for factor analysis. The construct validity and reliability test results are shown in the table below. All outer loadings are more significant than 0.70, in the 0.494 to 0.869. Cronbach's alpha (CA) values between 0.829 and 0.576 and convergent validity (CR) values between 0.887 and 0.781 are above the cutoff value of 0.70, indicating adequate consistency and reliability. All AVE scores fall between 0.662 and 0.546, indicating that the constructs have internal convergent validity.

To facilitate an in-depth examination of the items, their means and standard deviations are displayed in the table below:

Table 2. Results of Normality Tests

	Mains tream Celebr ities	Vlogger s/ bloggers	Micro- Influencer	Social circle	Social Media	Purch ase Intenti on
N Valid	123	123	123	123	123	123
Missin g	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skewn ess	-0.126	-0.070	-0.075	-0.540	-0.696	-0.404
Kurtos is	-0.484	-0.636	-0.378	0.254	1.266	1.359

Table 3. Measurement Assessment: Outer Loadings, Construct Reliability and Validity

Indicators	Bloggers	Main Stream Celebs	Micro- Influencers	Purchase intention	Social Circle	Social Media
C1		0.778				
C2		0.820				

C3		0.862				
C4		0.792				
MI1			0.724			
MI2			0.853			
MI3			0.732			
MI4			0.852			
MI5			0.869			
PI1				0.834		
PI2				0.734		
PI3				0.637		
SC1					0.494	
SC2					0.730	
SC3					0.850	
SC4					0.697	
SC5					0.774	
SM1						0.755
SM2						0.755
SM3						0.803
SM4						0.738
SM5						0.668
VB1	0.812					
VB2	0.817					
VB3	0.842					
VB4	0.782					
VB5	0.780					
AVE	0.662	0.651	0.654	0.517	0.555	0.546
CR	0.887	0.903	0.904	0.839	0.862	0.781
CA	0.829	0.867	0.867	0.754	0.798	0.576

Table 4. Discriminant Validity: Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio

	Bloggers	Main Stream Celebs	Micro-Influencers	Purchase intention	Social Circle
Bloggers					
Main Stream Celebs	0.798				
Micro-Influencers	0.955	0.762			
Purchase intention	0.611	0.725	0.555		
Social Circle	0.860	0.892	0.855	0.850	
Social Media	0.656	0.568	0.679	0.860	0.775

Table 5. Results of Algorithm and Bootstrapping Tests

	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (STDEV)	P Values	Support
Bloggers -> Social Media	0.103	0.123	0.934	0.351	No
Main Stream Celebs -> Social Media	-0.021	0.111	0.235	0.814	No
Micro-Influencers -> Social Media	0.233	0.138	1.618	0.106	No
Social Circle -> Social Media	0.392	0.121	3.217	0.001	Yes
Social Media -> Purchase intention	0.591	0.081	7.214	0.000	Yes

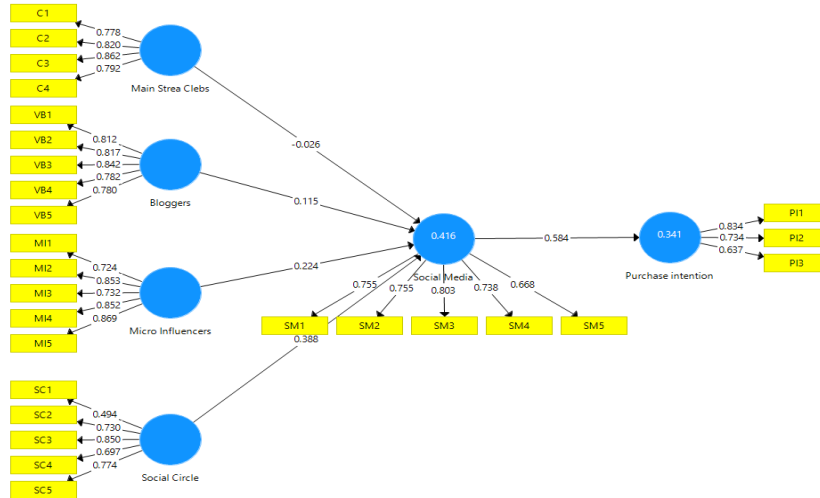


Figure 2. SmartPLS algorithm results

DISCUSSION

After that, we looked at the structural connections and how well the model fits the data. The following table summarises the outcomes of the tests mentioned above using both the algorithm and bootstrapping, including p-values, T-values, -values, and conclusions regarding the validity of each hypothesis. According to the data, no statistically significant correlation exists between mainstream celebrities and Pakistani consumers' intent to purchase (Celebrities Purchase Intention > 0.001). This result contradicts hypothesis (H1).

Bloggers and YouTubers have a negligible impact on Pakistanis' propensity to purchase (e.g., Bloggers and YouTuber's Purchase Intention, p 0.001). A conclusion cannot be drawn from this research. H2. There is a negligible correlation between micro-influencers and Pakistanis' propensity to make a purchase (e.g., micro-influencers purchasing intent, p 0.001). This evidence contradicts H3. In Pakistan, a statistically significant correlation exists between people's social networks and their propensity to make purchases (0.001). This evidence tends to confirm hypothesis 4. The intention to buy is correlated with the use of social media among Pakistanis (e.g., Social media Purchasing

intention, $p < 0.001$). This evidence favors hypothesis 5. Indicators of how well the model fits the data are shown in Table 5 and Figure 2, including the SRMR (0.093), Chi-square (725.977), and NFI (NFI) (0.663). Based on the calculated R square value of 0.341, it can be concluded that the model and the relationship between the independent variable adequately explain the investigated purchase intention of Pakistanis and that SMIs, which include Social circles & Social networks, are the important determinant for the Pakistanis' branded global luxury consumption behavior. The SmartPLS3 software's algorithm output is also depicted in Figure 2.

This study tests five hypotheses about the influence of social media stars on the sales of high-end fashion labels in Pakistan.

Those in the public eye who promote products are often called "inviters" by academics because of their influence on consumers. It has also been emphasized that consumers are much more attentive to such ad campaigns due to the celebrity's attractiveness and credibility, which generates a favorable impression of the advertised product and increases the likelihood that the consumer will make a purchase. Branded social campaigns provide more opportunities for consumers to interact with the brand story throughout the day, which boosts brand loyalty, encourages web users to interact with social media content, and helps business leaders identify patterns in customer feedback. There is a significant connection between social entertainment media and human engagement in perceived brand and purchaser purchasing behavior, suggesting that appealing advertisements in social media can inspire favorable brand associations and subsequent behavioral intentions. Here we see the opposite: a hostile, negligible relationship between social networking entertainment, brand equity, and consumer intent to buy. Brand equity is directly correlated with increased consumer intent to buy, but not all aspects of social communication media are equally practical at building it. When evaluated using the suggested model fit indices, the outcome reaffirms the goodness of fit between the measuring device and structural models. The results also show that one's perspective on blogs is highly predictive of whether or not they will be used. These findings support the reasoned action theory. The study also found the substantial influence of a customer's/blog user's intent to use blogs as a source of information on their intent to buy electronic products. Thus, all of the hypotheses are supported by the data, and a multi-faceted model for analyzing the

factors that influence users' decisions in a blog environment has been developed.

The connection between brand loyalty and intent to buy was also supported. Brands with a positive reputation inspire greater customer loyalty, which drives increased sales. Emphasize investing heavily in customer relationships that can last the long haul. This tactic can encourage customers to keep buying the established brand, but it also has the potential to get them interested in trying out new brands. The findings indicate that shoppers' interest is increased when exposed to a high level of perceived quality. Relative value is one of the aspects of brand equity that has a high correlation to brand loyalty, and research shows that celebrity endorsements can increase a brand's equity in the eyes of its target market. Similarly, Olsen (2002) claims that satisfaction mediates the connection between brand image and brand loyalty and that relative value has a direct relationship with purchasing behavior.

More and more people rely on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to converse with one another due to the rise of digitalization and the web over the past few decades. Moreover, over a third of the world's population used social media in 2017, with 2.46 billion users. Additionally, nearly 75% of internet users regularly engage in social media activity. Moreover, this pattern persists, with the popularity of social media projected to surpass the three-billion mark by 2021. (eMarketer 2017). High interest in electronic word of mouth (eWOM) in consumer behavior results from the proliferation of social media and the increased volume of information spread through it (Babi Rosario et al., 2016). Brands have been encouraged to look for ad campaigns to profit from such new mass media channels of communication because of the enormous time that consumers spend on social media, as well as the fact that recommendations from people they know and consumer viewpoints posted online are very trusting relationships for consumers' decisions and purchase behavior. Product recommendations are a common form of social media marketing. They can have a huge impact, especially when the person promoting the product or brand has many followers on the relevant platform. That is why businesses reach out to celebrities and other "influencers" to spread the word about their wares.

CONCLUSION

This study uses data from 123 respondents across Pakistan to determine the effects of five factors on luxury clothing purchases in Pakistan. There is no evidence that Mainstream Celebrities, Bloggers/Vloggers, or Micro-influencers play a role in purchase intent. At the same time, there is substantial evidence that social circles and social networks significantly influence the intent to buy. The social sense of connection and network interactivities may provide an underlying theory to explain the various connections. The positive and substantial impact on Pakistani consumers' intent to buy branded luxury fashion increases proportionately to the strength of social connections and network interactions. Our study does have some caveats that point to interesting avenues for future study. First, we have yet to tap into the more extensive range of individuals to get feedback because of limitations, such as a lack of time. More people could be reached out to if there is no time limit. This analysis only uses a small set of variables.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

The future of defining Pakistani consumers' intent to buy high-end clothing brands can benefit from including a richer set of independent variables. To focus on domestic shoppers in Pakistan, we ignored Pakistanis living in other countries who might also be interested in the topic since there is a need for more data on the Pakistani consumer; a larger sample size would have allowed for more reliable conclusions about the demographic buying branded clothing in the country. Second, the results of this research concern the relationship between Pakistanis' use of social media and their intent to make a purchase. So, the results should only be extrapolated to other situations with further study. Third, Pakistanis' distaste for or skepticism of the veracity of content shared on social media platforms must also affect their propensity to buy. Research into the downsides of using digital social media for advertising could be pursued in the future.

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