Using Social Media To Impact Consumer Brand Relationship And Consumer Brand Perception In The Fashion Industry- An Empirical Investigation

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Abstract

Today, one of the finest ways for fashion marketers to engage with potential customers is through social media. Fashion brands use social media to strengthen consumer brand relationship and improve consumer brand perception. This research article examines how fashion consumers build relationships and form perceptions about fashion brands by creating a frame of reference for such consumers. A research instrument was developed and survey was conducted on 544 fashion consumers in the age bracket of 18 to 60 years. From the data collected with the research instrument, the four factors of consumer brand relationship and consumer brand perception were retrieved. Factor analysis was used to validate the conceptual model, demonstrating that social media has a positive impact on forming consumer brand relationship and improving consumer perception in the world of fashion. The results of the factor analysis corroborate the findings of the study. This study will enable fashion marketers to make a more informed decision in policy formulation in order to strengthen relationship and improve perception towards fashion brands.

Keywords: Social Media; Social Media Marketing; Fashion Industry; Fashion; Consumer Brand Relationship; Consumer Brand Perception

Introduction

In today's society, everyone is connected to everyone else through the internet's huge network. "The new electronic freedom re frames the globe in the idea of a global village," says Marshall McLuhan, a philosopher of communication theory. It brightens the lives of thousands of people by disseminating information globally and makes us global citizens (Gesualdi, 2019). The social media use (and the willingness of people to be their own media outlets) has changed the way fashion is viewed, recorded and consumed; more significantly, social media has transformed the way fashion is crafted (Durmaz, 2014).With the advent of digitization, the importance of social media marketing has expanded, with many types and sizes of businesses adopting digital marketing techniques around the world (Baltes, 2015). In today's digital age, social media has become a trend-setter for society as peoplegradually spend their time online. Social networking networks are now the main source of

customer information and one of fashion companies' most effective marketing resources. Companies may use social media to create relationships with their consumers (Senders et al., 2013; Maddox, 2015) compared new and existing clients. The social media provides a forum for 'consumers' to be exposed to the best goods at the best price, as well as evaluations and thoughts about the product. Internet forums, weblogs, wikis, podcasts, and video clips are examples of social media that bring people together in a collaborative manner (Sajid et al, 2016). Generation Y 'Boomerang Kids' are seen to be increasingly using social media (Balakrishnan et al., 2014). Young people make up the bulk of social media users, and they are considered the primary target market for social media (Hussain, 2012). This manuscript focuses on identifying the role of social media in building consumer brand relationship and shaping consumer brand perception in the fashion industry. This study attempts to measure the impact of social media on fashion consumers using factor analysis. This research paper focuses on developing a research instrument that fashion brands may use to analyze consumer brand relationship and consumer brand perception of their products. The findings of this study can be used by policy makers to develop ways to improve consumer relationships and consumer perceptions of fashion brands.

Literature Review

Social Media

A range of Internet-based apps that facilitate the creation and exchange of user-generated content is referred to as social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It is a collection of knowledge, expectations, comments, explanations, and forecasts disseminated through networks by humans (Hwang, Lee, & Kim, 2014). As e-commerce, social media has opened up a new vista in the realm of marketing, providing opportunities for marketers to raise product awareness among customers (Acharya, Singh, Pereira & Singh, 2018). People's conduct is influenced by digital or social media (Bilgin, 2018). Social media is successful in expunging time and space disparities (Wachenfeldt, 2021). It has brought people from all around the world together on a common interactive platform where they can exchange their thoughts, reviews, and information (Ahmad, Salman, & Ashiq, 2015; Moran, Seaman, & Tinti-Kane, 2012). Currently, millions of individuals around the world use social media through website-based network apps that allow them to share knowledge, information, and make simple relationships with one another (Back, Stopfer, Vazire, Gaddis, Schmukle, Egloff, & Gosling, 2010; Ellison, Gibbs, & Weber, 2015). It is a well-known tool that improves public relations by cooperating with others. The social media platform gives potential buyers and targeted merchandise a value-added track. It serves as a bridge between the brand and potential customers (Bilgin, 2018; Sharma, Singh, Kujur, & Das, 2021). Social media is expanding its petals in the business sector and has shown to be a great marketing strategy. It also improves consumer relations and encourages purchases. People are using social media to meet a range of demands, particularly in the search for digital material and products (Gosling, Augustine, Vazire, Holtzman, & Gaddis, 2011). It helps people feel good and provides them a favorable self-image, particularly among the younger age groups, who benefit from a rise in self-esteem (Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten, 2006).

Interestingly, various information and social components gathered via social media in the shape of reviews or comments perform wonders in the minds of consumers (Sharma, Singh, Kujur & Das, 2021). In digital environments, social media has many 'consumers' which have an interpersonal exchange of opinions (Norton et al., 2013). When the opinions of others differ and they have reached the same decision, there is a lot of dissimilarity, and instead of increasing confidence, it reduces it (Lamberton et al., 2013).

Fashion Industry

Fashion, which is defined by a continual flux of sense of style, is expressed in the form of clothing and the people who wear it (Entwistle, 2015; Calia, 2021; Welters & Lillethun 2018). Fashion businesses looking to engage consumers actively have become accustomed to using social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube in the digital era. Retailers use social media marketing to deliver live information on new product or service launches via newsfeed, vlogs, tweets, photographs, and posts (Pentina et al., 2018). Fashion marketers gain brand association and increased brand performance through social media interaction (Beitelspacher, Baker, Rapp & Grewal, 2013; Fulgoni, 2015; Habibi et al., 2016; Dessart, 2017). Meanwhile, consumers are encouraged to participate in social media marketing as part of a social media community in order to access and exchange information, learn about the newest fashion trends, and stay up to speed on new goods from a favorite brand as well as event updates (Dessart, 2017; Cao et al., 2021). The fashion industry has a limited life cycle of the product, a wide range of products, dynamic and uncertain demand, and it is now regarded as a high-value-added business with assured high profit per unit and loyal clients (Kim et al, 2010). Fashion firms have increasingly reliant on social media apps for marketing and promotion (Geczy & Karaminas, 2018). In fact, fashion imagery and material, ranging from campaigns to images and videos of models showcasing apparel or products, is increasingly developed with the intention of being shared on various platforms, where users may view, like, re-share, and comment on it. The fashion industry is fast-paced, and consumer shopping habits change frequently. Fashion marketers are always looking for new ways to quickly grasp emerging trends and communicate with consumers in order to retain up with the shifting market (Bendoni, 2017). In this age of digital change, social media networking offers a new way for fashion businesses and retailers to actively engage with customers; it also introduces a unique trend in branding and marketing management strategies for many fashion brands (Kim & Ko, 2012; Phan & Park, 2014).

Consumer Brand Relationship

As is well known, the consumer is king, and the client is the source of any business's long-term viability. Brand associations, in which consumers generate and share brand-related material as well as connect with each other, have become increasingly important to businesses looking to establish a consumer–brand relationship (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Consumer brand relationship grown in popularity over the last few decades, as seen by numerous ideas aimed at improving consumer relationships.

Six commonly accepted relationship variables emerged as a result of the development of interpersonal connection theories (Hon & Grunig, 1999). They are described using the terms 'trust,' 'pleasure,' 'commitment,' 'control mutuality,' 'exchange connection' and 'communal relationship' (Men & Tsai, 2014; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006). The first three parameters have been decided to have been thoroughly explored in terms of an adequate relationship. As a result, these three parameters have been selected to determine the quality of customer-brand interaction in this context. Trust refers to both parties' desire and confidence in one another in a relationship that is open to one another (Kujur & Singh, 2020). Trust has three distinct traits, according to a prior study: 'integrity,' 'dependability,' and 'competence' (Hon & Grunig, 1999). A candidate is characterized as "willing and able to perform what it says it will" if they demonstrate reliability and competency (McKnight & Chervany, 2001). Satisfaction can be a positive emotion directed at the other individual, whom they may value as a result of positive association assumptions (Hung & Lu, 2018). Both candidates' desire to strengthen a relationship is referred to as 'commitment' (Grunig, & Huang, 2000). According to prior study, there are two types of commitment:

'continuance commitment' and 'affective commitment.' The first is defined as an affective commitment to a certain line of work, whilst the second is defined as an emotional attachment to a company (Grunig, & Huang, 2000). These assessments aid in the formation of a general attitude or disposition toward a particular object within a given frame of reference. Brand engrossment, brand reliability, brand conviction and brand engagement are all factors that influence consumer brand relationship, according to the interpersonal connection theory. The determinants of consumer brand relationship can be classified under the headings of brand reliability, brand conviction, brand engagement, and brand engrossment based on the inputs collected from experts, which aids us in presenting the RCEE (reliability, conviction, engagement, and engrossment) model of consumer brand relationship (Figure 1). Figure 1 presents the detailed RCEE model.

**Figure 1. RCEE model of consumer brand relationship**
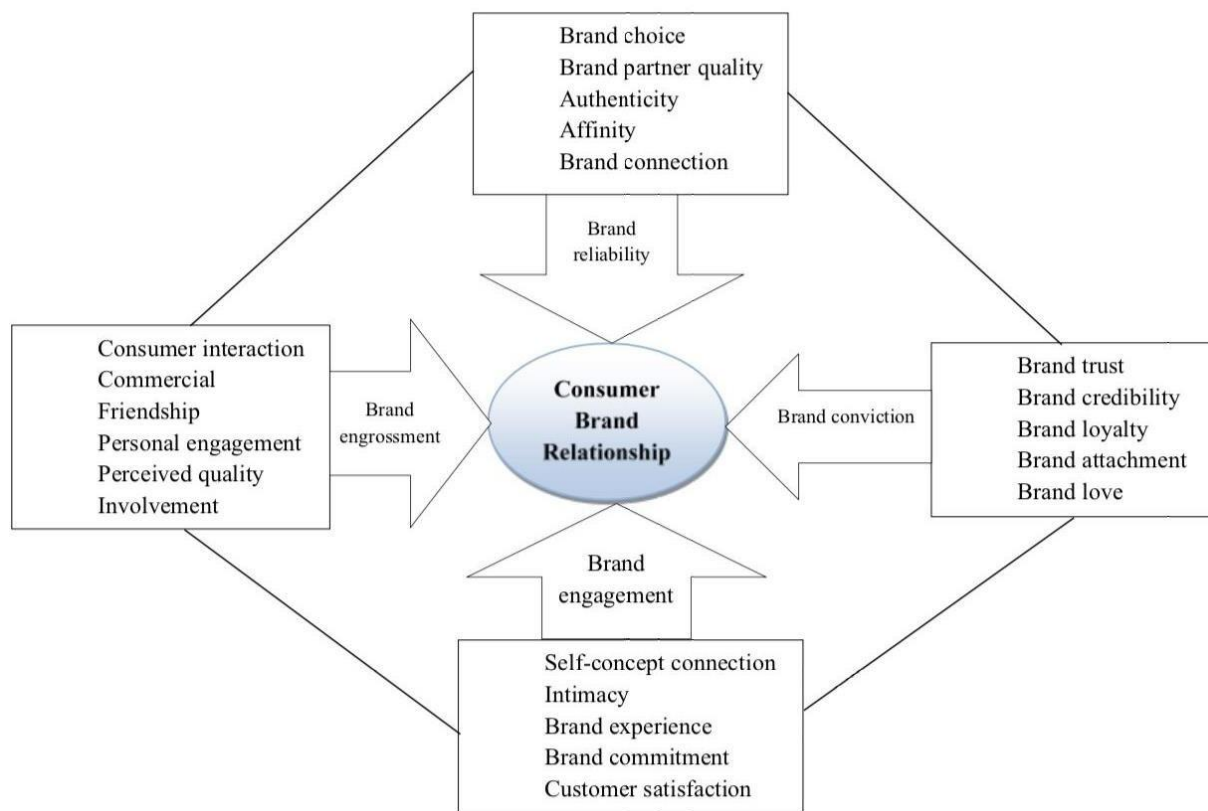
Consumer Brand Perception

A consumer's perception of a brand, product, or organization is referred to as consumer brand perception. It refers to a consumer's knowledge, perception, or impression of a product. Perception is a crucial process through which an individual gathers information about its surroundings and infers this knowledge based on their needs, behaviors, and perspectives (Walters & Bergiel, 1989). While a consumer's perception can be influenced by their previous experiences, beliefs, habits, likes, dislikes, and sentiments, it can also be influenced by advertising and marketing messaging. External stimuli provided through marketing communication can be used by businesses to impact customer mental processes.

Perception is shown as a far more complicated process in a number of other works. A consumer's sensory receptors

acquire a message transmitted by external stimuli, which is then processed, interpreted, and retained by the consumer, and then employed during his decision-making process (Crane & Clarke, 1994; Dubois, 2000; Harrell, 2002). Author's perception is solely a phase of information processing (Loudon & Bitta, 1993; Mowen, 1988). According to reference theory of consumer brand perception, anybody who comes into touch with a stimulus evaluates it in terms of previously held knowledge in terms of behavioral intentions, beliefs, and emotions (Van der Walt's, 1991). These assessments aid in the formation of a general attitude or disposition toward a particular object within a given frame of reference. Brand impression, brand bonding, brand dependability and brand recognition are all factors that influence consumer brand perception, according to the reference theory. The determinants of consumer brand perception can be divided under the areas of brand recognition, brand dependability, brand impression, and brand bonding based on the inputs collected from experts, which aids us in proposing the RDIB model of consumer brand perception (Figure 2). The grouping of consumer brand perception determinants is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. RDIB model of consumer brand perception
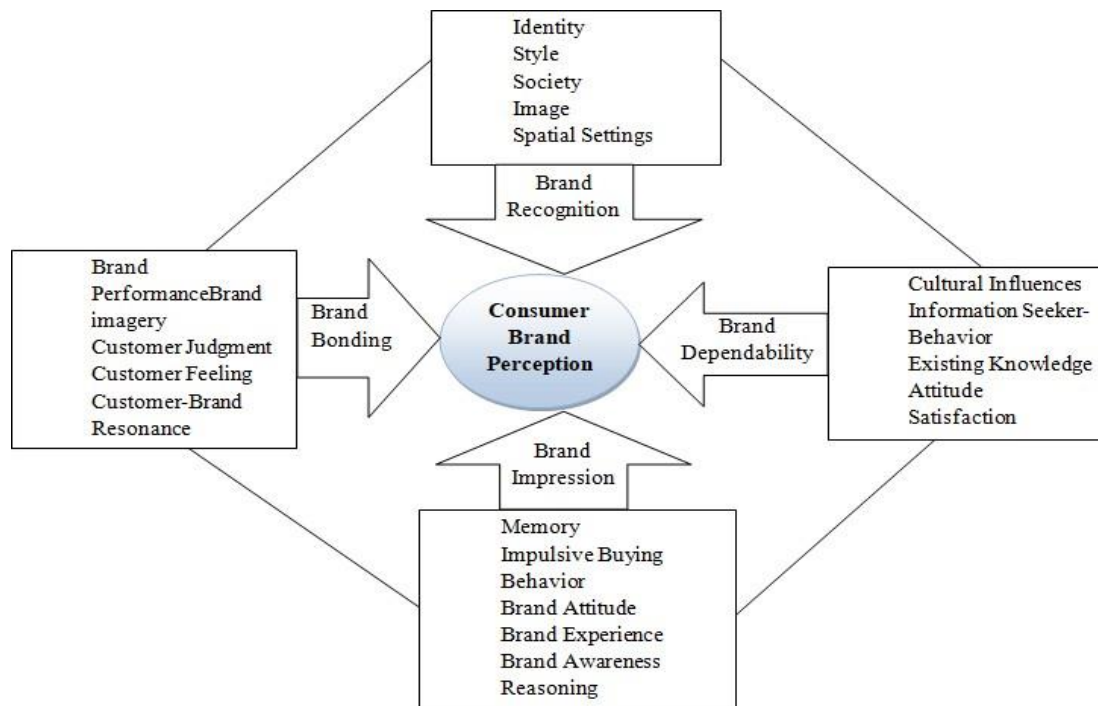
Research Methodology

This section looks at how fashion consumers form relationships with brands and form views about them by constructing a frame of reference. On the basis of an exhaustive literature analysis, a self-designed research instrument was built to examine the function of social media in creating customer brand relationship and changing consumer perception in the fashion sector. The research instrument was put to the test to check if it was reliable. The effect of social media in developing relationships and altering perceptions in the fashion industry was investigated using factor analysis. The data was gathered using a snowball sampling method.

Research Questions

Based on the literature review conducted in this field, we arrive at the following research questions:

- To identify those factors that determine role of social media in building consumer brand relationship in the fashion industry through literature review;
- To identify those factors that determine role of social media in shaping consumer brand perception in the fashion industry through literature review;
- To develop a research instrument based on the factors explored;
- To perform an exploratory factor analysis to authenticate the factors mentioned above on the data collected using the research instrument.

Research Instrument Formulation

An exhaustive assessment of the literature assisted us in developing a questionnaire to investigate the role of social media in building consumer brand relationship and shaping consumer brand perception in the fashion industry. The research instrument was divided into three sections. In order to collect demographic information, the first section was created.The second section and the third section of the questionnaire were structured to research the role of social media in measuring consumer brand relationship and consumer brand perception in the world of fashion.

Assessing Reliability and Validity of Research Instrument

A pretest of the research instrument was conducted on 40 respondents to validate its validity. After pre-testing, three of the initial 42 statements were removed from the second half of the questionnaire, resulting in a total of 39 statements. After pre-testing, four of the initial 34 statements were removed from the third section of the questionnaire, resulting in a total of 30 statements. Summarized metrics are a good indicator of whether or not the respondents' opinions are being met. The scale's elements must all be measuring the same aspect of the construct. The reliability test determines how much of the variation in observed scores is due to genuine score fluctuation. Reliability testing is important because it refers to the accuracy of a measuring instrument across the parts (Taherdoost, 2016). The Cronbach's alpha-test was utilized in this study for both the consumer brand relationship and consumer brand perception constructs, with a score of 0.60 indicating satisfactory scale consistency (Malhotra & Dash, 2016). SPSS software was used to execute the reliability test on a sample of 90 people. The mentioned scale's Cronbach's Alpha (Table 1) for consumer brand relationship was 0.954, with the N of the items at 39, indicating that it has excellent reliability. The indicated scale's Cronbach's Alpha (Table 1) for consumer brand perception was 0.948, with the N of the items at 30, showing that it has outstanding dependability. As a result, the data was gathered using the questionnaire.

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha results for the pilot test on consumer brand relationship and consumer brand perception

Consumer Brand Relationship		Consumer Brand Perception
Cronbach's Alpha	.953	.947

Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	.954	.948
N of Items	39	30

Data Collection

The survey sample for this study consisted of fashion consumers who had been using social media for at least a year. This study is based on primary data, to examine the role of social media in building consumer brand relationship and shaping consumer brand perception in the fashion industry. In order to address the research objectives and gather the data needed for this study, the survey sample was in the form of an online self-completion questionnaire.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The data was collected through snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a technique in which research participants recruit other people to take part in a test or study. The researcher makes online self-completion questionnaire for the group of people who are relevant to the study theme, and then uses the first group's contacts to find more people to interview (Bryman & Cramer, 2012). The respondents ranged in age from 18 to 60 years old. Out of 575 questionnaires, 544 questionnaires were useful for this study.

Data Analysis

SPSS 22.0 was used to analyze the gathered data. Factor analysis was used to reduce the amount of data collected from 544 fashion consumers. The rotated component matrix approach was utilized for data reduction (Table 2(a)-(b)). There were a lot of communalities. As a result, we may confidently infer that the extracted components accurately described the variables. As illustrated in, we were able to effectively decrease the data while keeping the contextual effects of the components (Figure 1). To determine which factor an item would load on, the item's highest loading was employed. Items having a factor loading of 0.5 or above have been kept. Ten elements were removed from (Table 2(a)) because they did not load onto any factor. Two factors with only one item loaded on them were also removed because they did not explicitly represent any factor feature. As a result, 10 items and two factors were eliminated from (Table 2(a)). Seven items were eliminated from (Table 2(b)) because they did not load onto any factor.

Table 2 (a). Rotated component matrix of consumer brand relationship

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Trustworthy	.173	.101	.154	.092	.136	.756
Credibility	.273	.171	.702	.177	.202	.002
Consumer loyalty	.107	.166	.568	.422	.176	.307
I like content	.353	.136	.536	.468	.097	.171
Love the social media content	.251	.325	.582	.379	-.001	.224

I identify myself	.112	.341	.184	.645	.017	.288
Consumer value	.216	.407	.582	.192	.140	.243
Connected	.332	.408	.315	.420	.116	.182
Intimate	.143	.416	.212	.414	.222	.390
Enriching my experience	.284	.330	.472	.442	.029	.178
Feel positive	.408	.345	.478	.392	-.052	-.015
Advertising	.497	.280	.461	.337	.066	-.021
Contact	.298	.503	.234	.283	.160	-.044
Positive ecosystem	.275	.472	.316	.361	.321	-.099
Positive relationship	.289	.430	.435	.174	.352	.142
I feel satisfied	.345	.455	.427	.299	.067	.060
Comparing and evaluating	.340	.667	.228	.263	.098	.080
Authenticity	.243	.541	.317	.197	.201	.094
Consumer affinity	.230	.624	.251	.110	.176	.166
Customer-centered business culture	.302	.495	.504	-.073	.331	.246
Attracting and keeping customers	.113	.605	.310	-.048	.490	.061
Engaged	.323	.557	.190	.298	.038	.332
Dynamic and personal relationship	.521	.453	.231	.188	.179	.246
Commercial friendship	.613	.325	.329	.054	.250	.248
Personal engagement	.741	.150	.331	.062	.171	.140
Excellence and superiority	.591	.138	.345	.113	.265	.169
Develops interest	.446	.650	.080	.351	.161	-.055
Inclined	.550	.343	.137	.241	.166	.245
Belief	.593	.311	.160	.224	.313	.071
Happiness	.264	.062	.316	.653	.097	.146
Following	.158	.172	-.065	.727	.204	.148
Praise my choice of social media content	.553	.233	.320	.200	.128	.216
Trendy and relevant to present day style	.571	.263	.143	.291	.439	.088
Trust	.258	.342	.038	.495	.265	.265
Experiences shared by my peers	.337	.111	.324	.219	.443	.368
Time researching fashion brand	.259	.308	.182	.417	.539	-.141
Good brand advertisements	.335	.198	.255	.552	.203	.140
Good quality social media images	.396	.375	.304	.545	.154	-.115
Search fashion brand products on social media sites	.043	-.060	.185	.637	.226	-.008
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. **Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.** **a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.**						

Table 2 (b). Rotated component matrix of consumer brand perception

	Component			
	1	2	3	**4**
Buying a fashion brand from a social media site makes me feel happy	.201	.276	.711	.110
Peers and family to connect	.249	.190	.647	.239
Cultural influences	.156	.191	.711	.283
Existing information	.417	.218	.615	.227
Influences my mind	.410	.166	.322	.374
Helps me in making my decisions	.495	-.016	.409	.486
I am attracted towards social media content created by a brand	.451	.043	.397	.362
I feel overjoyed with the purchase	.688	.164	.294	.313
If I feel benefited with my brand purchase	.700	.263	.315	.174
Happy memories	.706	.302	.268	.034
If I feel confident about the social media content	.708	.386	.246	.110
Experience with a fashion brand	.639	.278	.164	.303
Satisfied with its content	.434	.277	.366	.378
Preferred brands behaviors and characteristics	.390	.199	.157	.526
Search for my preferred fashion brand	.174	.321	.282	.578
Unhappy to leave my search for my preferred fashion brand	.086	.190	.263	.739
Self-esteem	.227	.651	.189	.275
Makes me feel in sync	.313	.606	.344	.219
Keeps its promises	.401	.573	.059	.254
Impulsive buying of fashion brands	.565	.201	.408	.307
Affinity towards my choice of fashion brand	.391	.433	.125	.473
Improve the quality of its products	.402	.413	.159	.456
Happy memories associated	.669	.062	.250	.285
Personality	.389	.510	.180	.318
Increasing my awareness	.536	.484	.006	.398
Fashion brand I use	.112	.278	.074	.673
Adds to my status	.528	.116	.268	.366
Feel happy when people like the content	.446	.492	.487	.070

Feel happy when people comment	.301	.526	.439	.067
Feel happy when people share the content	.501	.489	.475	.063
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.				

Results

We plotted the fifteen items below after reducing the data using factor analysis (Table 3). The following were the four factors that were discovered: brand engrossment, brand reliability, brand conviction and brand engagement. Each of the four factors contributes to the study of consumer brand relationship of fashion consumers. The following factors have been grouped together based on the aforesaid research review:

- Commercial friendship, personal engagement, perceived quality and involvement shall together group under brand engrossment factor of the model, which establish relationship between brand engrossment and consumer brand relationship;
- Brand connection, affinity and authenticity can collectively group under brand reliability. This forms a relationship between brand reliability and consumer brand relationship;
- Credibility, brand loyalty, brand attachment and brand love will group under brand conviction, which establish a relationship between brand conviction and consumer brand relationship;
- Self-concept connection, intimacy, brand experience and customer satisfaction will group under brand engagement. This forms a relationship between brand engagement and consumer brand relationship.

Table 3. Extraction of factors: Statements that loaded onto the factor 'Brand Engrossment', 'Brand Reliability', 'Brand Conviction' and 'Brand Engagement'

BRAND ENGROSSMENT	
Commercial Friendship	• I feel that social media can help a consumer in building a commercial friendship with a fashion brand.
Personal Engagement	• I feel that social media can help me in building a personal engagement with a fashion brand. • I feel engaged with my preferred fashion brand on social media.
Perceived Quality	• I feel that social media helps me in evaluating the overall excellence and superiority of a fashion brand. • My belief in the brand is strengthened if good social media content is backed by my good experience. • I find fashion brands on social media sites trendy and relevant to present day style.

Involvement	• If social media endorses a fashion brand, I will be favorably inclined towards it. • When my friends praise my choice of social media content posted by a fashion brand, I feel happy.
BRAND RELIABILITY	
Brand Connection	• I can develop contact with my preferred fashion designer on social media. • I feel that social media helps me in developing an even more dynamic and personal relationship with my preferred fashion brand. • I feel that social media develops my interest towards a fashion brand.
Affinity	• I feel that social media helps a fashion brand in building consumer affinity towards it.
Authenticity	• I feel that social media helps me in comparing and evaluating the offerings of the fashion brand. • I feel that social media helps in attracting and keeping customers better than rivals. • I feel that social media helps in building a fashion brand's authenticity.
BRAND CONVICTION	
Credibility	• I feel that social media helps in building a fashion brand's credibility. • I feel that social media helps in building consumer value for a fashion brand. • I feel that social media helps towards a fashion brand in cultivating a customer-centered business culture.
Brand Loyalty	• I feel that social media helps in building consumer loyalty towards a preferred fashion brand.
Brand Attachment	• I feel closer to my preferred fashion brand when I like content posted by it.
Brand Love	• I love the social media content posted by my preferred fashion brand.
BRAND ENGAGEMENT	
Self-Concept Connection	• I identify myself with the fashion brand if I love its social media content.
Intimacy	• Good brand advertisements depicting fashion attract me on social media sites. • Good quality social media images and content posted by a fashion brand make me feel attracted towards it.

Brand Experience	• It is a regular practice in my family to search fashion brand products on social media sites.
Customer Satisfaction	• If my friends post social media content saying that they are happy with a fashion brand, I will also be favorably inclined towards the same fashion brand. • If my friends follow a fashion brand on social media then I will also follow it.

The preceding discussion aids us in developing the following model for our research. Figure 3 depicts our model for measuring consumer brand relationship for fashion consumers (CBR- FC). By examining the level of consumer relationship for users of fashion brands, this model will assist us in determining the level of consumer brand relationship, by studying brand engrossment, brand reliability, brand conviction and brand engagement factors. Brand appeal, brand consciousness, brand value, and self-expressive brand are not taken into account in this model. When establishing marketing strategies for this type of customers, merchants and fashion marketers would benefit from understanding the relationship between brand attributes, risk avoidance, and word-of-mouth (e.g., customer reviews). Variables related to the consumer brand relationship across cultural settings (e.g., collectivist versus individualistcultures) from various brand communities will be investigated as well (De Burgh Woodman & Brace Govan, 2007).

Figure 3. Measuring consumer brand relationship for fashion consumers (CBR-FC)
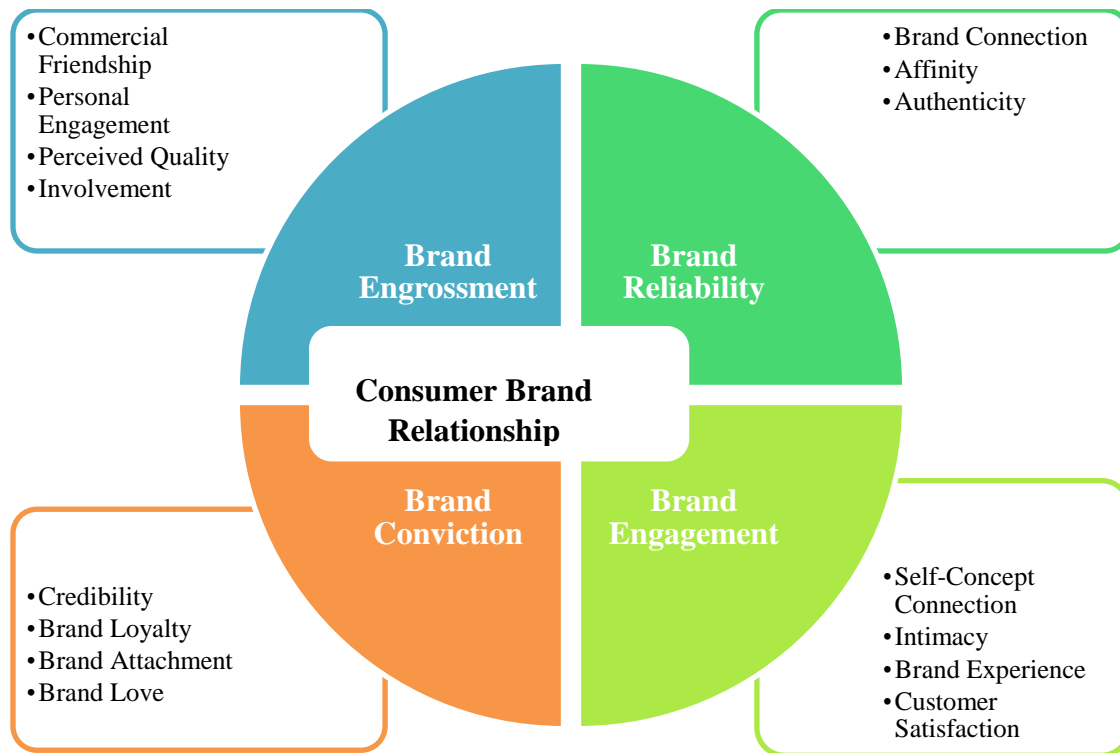
We plotted the twelve items below after reducing the data using factor analysis (Table 4). The following were the four factors that were discovered: brand impression, brand bonding, brand dependability and brand recognition. Each of the four factors contributes to the study of consumer brand perception of fashion consumers. The following factors have been grouped together based on the aforesaid research review:

- Buying behavior, brand experience, reasoning, memory and brand awareness shall together group under brand impression factor of the model, which establish relationship between brand impression and consumer brand perception;
- Customer-brand resonance and authenticity can collectively group under brand bonding. This forms a relationship between brand bonding and consumer brand perception;
- Cultural influences, existing knowledge and satisfaction will group under brand dependability, which establish a relationship between brand dependability and consumer brand perception;
- Image and identity will group under brand recognition. This forms a relationship between brand recognition and consumer brand perception.

Table 4. Extraction of factors: Statements that loaded onto the factor 'Brand Impression', 'Brand Bonding', 'Brand Dependability' and 'Brand Recognition'

BRAND IMPRESSION	
Buying Behavior	• If a brand that I have purchased from social media exceeds my expectations, I feel overjoyed ith the purchase. • If I feel benefited with my brand purchase from social media, then I am delighted with the brand. • Information on social media drives me towards impulsive buying of fashion brands.
Brand Experience	• If I feel confident about the social media content posted by a fashion brand, I will recommend it to others. • If my experience with a fashion brand is good I tend to buy the same brand in the future from the social media site.
Reasoning	• I feel that social media content that I upload about my preferred fashion brand adds to my status. • I feel happy when people share the content that I have uploaded about my preferred fashion brand on social media.
Memory	• If I have happy memories associated with the social media content posted by a fashion brand, I will feel confident about the brand.

	• If I have happy memories associated with my choice of fashion brand on social media, I feel emotionally attached to it.
Brand Awareness	• Social media helps me in increasing my awareness of a fashion brand.
BRAND BONDING	
Customer-Brand Resonance	• Seen good social media content about my preferred fashion brand adds to my self-esteem.
Authenticity	• Seen good social media content about my preferred fashion brand makes me feel in sync with it. • Seen good social media content about my preferred fashion brand makes me feel that it keeps its promises. • When I see social media content about my preferred fashion brand matching my personality I feel good about my choice. • I feel happy when people comment on the content that I have posted about my preferred fashion brand on social media.
BRAND DEPENDABILITY	
Cultural Influences	• I am affected by the cultural influences (qualities of a fashion brand) on social media. • I want my peers and family to connect with the fashion brand I wear.
Existing Knowledge	• I feel that existing information on social media influences my understanding of the nature of the fashion brand.
Satisfaction	• Buying a fashion brand from a social media site makes me feel happy.
BRAND RECOGNITION	
Image	• I am affected by my preferred brands behaviors and characteristics as visible on social media. • I will upload content on social media to inform people about the fashion brand I use.
Identity	• I would like to search for my preferred fashion brand even if social media provides me information about a similar to fashion brand. • I will be unhappy to leave my search for my preferred fashion brand and switch to another brand even if social media provides me information about a similar to fashion brand.

The preceding discussion aids us in developing the following model for our research. Figure 4 depicts our model for measuring consumer brand perception for fashion consumers (CBP-FC).By examining the level of consumer perception for users of fashion brands, this model will assistus in determining the level of consumer brand perception, by studying brand impression, brand bonding, brand dependability and brand recognition factors.

Figure 4. Measuring consumer brand perception for fashion consumers (CBP-FC)
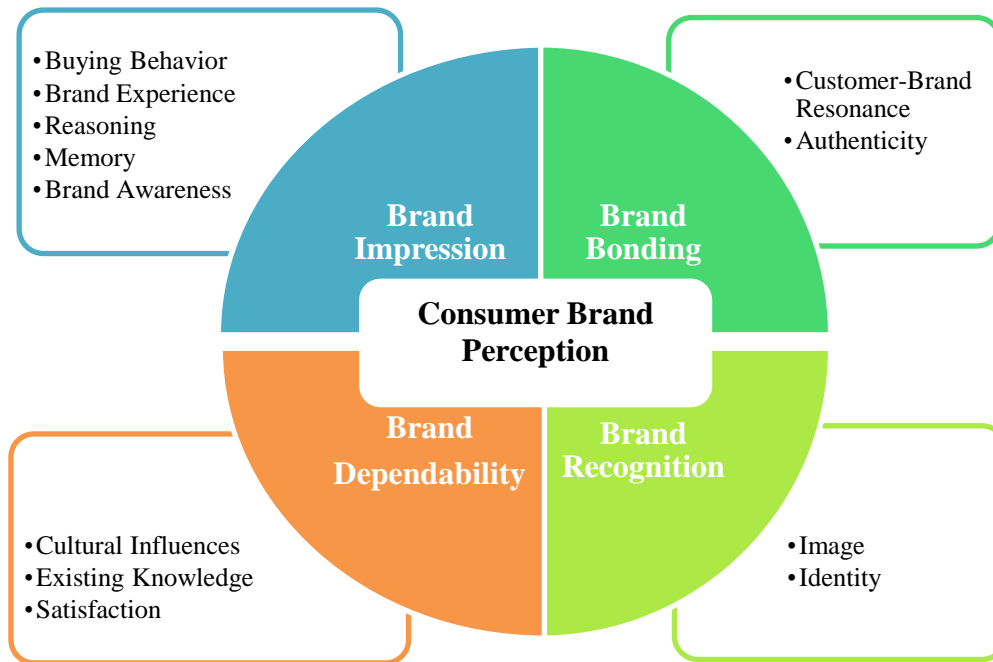
This model neglects the symbols and stimulus depicted in Vand der Walt's model (Van der Walt, 1991), as we are attempting to find a more comprehensive approach to the consumer process of building a consumer perception through this new model. We are not particularly usinga commercial as an input stimulus, but rather the different layers that are involved in building an opinion about a brand/product as a result of consumer prior experiences and information. It's important to remember that this perception process is unique to each person because it's influenced by their specific reference set.

Analysis

We were able to validate our conceptual model by using factor analysis to show that social media has a positive impact on creating consumer brand relationship and changing consumer brand perception in the fashion industry. The following four factors of consumer brand relationship: brand engrossment, brand reliability, brand conviction and brand engagement were discovered as a result of the literature review. The following four factors of consumer brand perception: brand impression, brand bonding, brand dependability and brand recognition were discovered as a result of the literature review. This discussion has also aided inthe development of the research instrument. The four factors of consumer brand relationship and consumer brand perception were extracted from the data obtained using the study instrument. The study is validated by these factor analysis results.

Conclusion

Through factor analysis, we were able to validate that the social media have a favorable impact in building consumer brand relationship in the fashion industry, hence validating our conceptual model. The following factors are listed below:

- Brand engrossment (commercial friendship, personal engagement, perceived quality and involvement)
- Brand reliability (brand connection, affinity and authenticity)
- Brand conviction (credibility, brand loyalty, brand attachment and brand love)
- Brand engagement (self-concept connection, intimacy, brand experience and customer satisfaction)

Through factor analysis, we were able to validate that the social media have a favorable impact in shaping consumer brand perception in the fashion industry, hence validating our conceptual model. The following factors are listed below:

- Brand impression (buying behavior, brand experience, reasoning, memory and brand awareness)
- Brand bonding (customer-brand resonance and authenticity) ,
- Brand dependability (cultural influences, existing knowledge and satisfaction)
- Brand recognition (image and identity)

We can confidently infer that if brands intend to positively build relationship with consumers and influence the perception of consumers in the fashion industry, they need to:

- Influence consumer experiences positively, affect their beliefs, and aid in the improvement of consumer brand knowledge;
- Customize products depending on customer preferences, attitudes, and feelings about environmental issues, and encourage customers to think positively about a brand;
- They must make consumers feel good about connecting with a brand on a social level by studying consumer behavioral patterns and attempting to embed their brands into consumers' regular routines;
- Ensure consumer satisfaction with a brand, trust, and attachment to it, they become more engaged with it, move up the continuum to a level of participation, and then enter into a loyal relationship with it.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This manuscript depicts fashion consumers in India, as well as their relationships with and perceptions of fashion businesses. The scope of this research is limited because it focuses just on a group of fashion consumers who are engaged in social media. Future research could concentrate on individual fashion brands, with a bigger, more generic sample size collected from fashion consumers of various ages and diverse backgrounds. Then, for each brand, comparisons may be made in terms of consumer relationship and perception levels. For each consumer, a consumer relationship and perception score can be produced and empirical tools can then be used to segment the consumers depending on their relationship and perception level. As a result, organizations can use this as a consumer segmentation tool. Furthermore, a composite index can be computed for one brand at a time, and the study's scope can be broadened to include other brands and comparisons.

Managerial Implications

The researcher expects that this study will aid fashion firms, managers, researchers, practitioners, and government

officials in their efforts to better understand fashion consumers and the significance of social media in forming relationships and altering perceptions of fashion brands. Consumer segmentation based on their relationship and perception ratings can have substantial ramifications for consumer marketing methods. To evoke varied consumer responses, brands canestablish a focused approach and target specific consumer segments with specific marketing promotional messaging. Improving the brand's performance across brand engrossment, brand reliability, brand conviction and brand engagement components will enhance consumer brand relationship for fashion consumers in the world of social media. Increasing brand performance across brand impression, brand bonding, brand dependability and brand recognition components will enhance consumer brand perception for fashion consumers in the world of social media. It's critical for businesses to continuously collecting consumer feedback and determining whether they need to improve brand performance in terms of increasing the customer experience or boosting brand loyalty. To ensure that consumers favor the respected fashion brand and have pleasant thoughts for it, companies must focus on increasing consumer brand understanding. Online fashion campaigns will aid in the development of positive customer attitudes about fashion brands, as well as making their adoption a habit and increasing societal acceptance. This research will help managers make more educated policy decisions in the world of social media in order to strengthen consumer brand relationships and perceptions of fashion brands. In addition, this publication aims to contribute to future study in the field of fashion consumers by serving as a future reference resource.

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