



Examining the Influence of Digital Media and Brand Trust on Consumer Purchase Intentions: The Mediating Role of Consumer Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Article History:

Received:	June	21, 2024
Revised:	July	12, 2024
Accepted:	Aug	29, 2024
Available Online:	Sep.	30, 2024

Keywords: Digital Media, Brand Trust, Consumer Engagement, Purchase Intentions

Funding:

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

This study investigates the influence of digital media and brand trust on consumer purchase intentions, with a specific focus on the mediating role of consumer engagement in the textile industry. As digital media becomes a primary platform for brand-consumer interactions, understanding how it shapes consumer behavior is crucial. Grounded in quantitative research, the study surveyed 300 consumers of a well-known textile brand to examine the interconnected roles of digital media influence, brand trust, and consumer engagement. Findings revealed that digital media enhances brand visibility and interaction, but its effectiveness in fostering purchase intentions relies heavily on trust and engagement. Brand trust emerged as essential for reducing perceived risks and encouraging consumer loyalty, while consumer engagement was found to mediate the relationship between digital media and purchase intentions, creating a bridge that deepens brand-consumer bonds. This study's integrated approach underscores the importance of developing cohesive digital marketing strategies that not only attract consumers but also build trust and active engagement. The research provides valuable insights for brands in the textile industry and similar sectors, demonstrating that a comprehensive approach combining digital media, trust-building, and engagement fosters stronger consumer relationships and higher purchase intentions.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61503/ciissmp.v3i3.219>

Citation: Shariq, Z., Nawaz, N., & Hussain, D. (2024). The Influence of Digital Media and Brand Trust on Consumer Purchase Intentions: The Mediating Role of Consumer Engagement. *Contemporary Issues in Social Sciences and Management Practices*, 3(3), 193-206.

1.0 Introduction

Today, we live in a digital age where digital media has capitalized on the opportunity to change how consumers interact with brands; the perception of brand along with their intent to buy. In today's digital world, social media, online advertisements, and brand websites all act as major channels for communication and behaving like a first mode of marketing and brand engagement (Otopah, Dogbe, Amofah, & Ahlijah, 2024). With all that information, images and messages in front of the consumers, brands now have made these unprecedented opportunities to foster stronger relationship with their audiences (Murshed & Ugurlu, 2023). It has also led to higher consumer expectations, who now want authenticity, transparency, value from those brands with which they are interacting. In such a context, brand trust has become a critical factor, because customers are more prone to buy from brands to which they perceive as trustworthy. Consistent, positive interactions and experiences establish trust in a brand rooted from which stronger consumer relationships translate into purchase intentions (Salhab, Al-Amarneh, Aljabaly, Zoubi, & Othman, 2023).

By positing the roles of digital media and brand trust, and by acknowledging consumer engagement as a key linkage between these to purchase intentions, their research has identified the roles of these factors. Consumer engagement is more than interactions; it's how emotional and cognitive a consumer is involved with a brand (Khan, 2023). Engagement has a way to translate into loyalty, advocacy and ultimately purchase intentions since engaged consumers are more likely to purchase from brands, they feel connected to. With digital media now providing so many touchpoints, brands have plenty of ways to foster engagement through interaction with interactive content, social media interactions, and personalized marketing. While its importance is considerable, there is relatively little research on how consumer engagement partially mediates the effect of digital media influence on purchase intentions. Addressing this gap, this study examines how digital media and consumer brand trust affect consumer purchase intentions and how consumer engagement mediates this relationship. It does this by seeking to offer some insights into what makes for effective digital marketing strategies that inspire trust, engagement, and most importantly consumer purchase intentions (Tarabieh, Gil, Galdón Salvador, & AlFraihat, 2024).

In this research, the relationships between consumer behavior and consumer engagement, the effect of digital media; consumer trust in the brand and purchase intention are studied. Social media, websites, digital ads and everything in between has an impact on how the consumer understands a brand, how the consumer interacts with a brand. Brand trust is the extent to which consumers believe a brand is honest and reliable (through experience and clear communication). The emotional and cognitive involvement of consumers with a brand, as expressed in an action of taking a like, sharing or commenting on brand content (Aziz & Ahmed, 2023). The last in list are purchase intentions taken from consumers to decide or purchased a brand who suits them based on their thoughts and how engaged or how much they trust it. Knowing these elements is critical to knowing what role digital media and brand trust play in stimulating purchase intentions through augmented consumer engagement (A. Bilal, Siddique, & Shafiq, 2023).

As digital media continues to grow rapidly, Brands now have an opportunity and capability

to ride this wave to generate greater opportunities and win against competitive challenges of their influence on consumer behavior. Consumers today expect a more transparent conversation from brands, as opposed to pushed marketing are more discerning when it comes to engagement with brands, so you need to have a genuine connection as an organization with consumers today. First, you have the sophisticated touch points to talk to your consumers (and more on that in a moment), second you don't have every touch point that will build trust, engagement or the purchase, as the case may be (Prasetio & Azmi, 2024). Brands today are plagued by too many brand messages online and therefore trust building has become a difficult thing for brands. Further, the creation of trust doesn't mean you've cracked the science of purchase intent without real engagement that piques the consumer's interest and values. However, previous work has separately studied the effects of digital media on consumer perception and the function of trust in brand relationships but has not investigated how this may influence purchase intentions mediated through consumer engagement. Hedgehog believes brands risk over spending on digital strategies that miss at the heart of what it takes to bridge digital media influence and brand trust enough to spark a purchase from consumers (Soleimani, Kazemi, Aghaei, & Ghorbani, 2023). To address this gap, this paper studies how digital media, brand trust and consumer engagement combine to impact purchase intentions, providing brands with a clue as to how to create memorable digital experiences that promote an engaged audience to trust, and trust to purchase.

The importance of digital media, trust in brands, and consumer interaction to positively impact purchase intention are often acknowledged as being important, although a missing piece in our knowledge of how they work together to influence purchase intention. Existing literature tends to study these factors for how much impact digital media has on brand perception, or how brand trust can be a force multiplier in relation to building brand loyalty. However, to our knowledge, no papers examine if the influence of digital media and brand trust separately predicts purchase intention as mediated by consumer engagement. In less actuality though, the subject that the current research rarely deals with are the nuanced mechanics through which engagement performs as a bridge between online engagements and what happens after on the course of actual buy, which are two crucial roles in today's fully digitalized Consumer environment (M. Bilal, Zhang, Cai, Akram, & Halibas, 2024). It's especially relevant, particularly, because of the changing landscape surrounding the types of consumer expectations which now involve engagement that isn't simply interactive, but the depth of personalized connection, and this requires strategic use of digital media and brand trust the long way round. By incorporating a holistic approach to their relationships, brands will gain important insight into how to best take the online transactional relationship and convert them into consumer loyalty and purchasing behavior. The purpose of this study is to address research gap by developing a clear interconnection of digital media, brand trust, and consumer engagement on purchase intention with the effect of these media on purchase intention taken together (Mabkhot & Piaralal, 2024).

Importantly, this study attempts to comprehend the interplay between: digital media influence, brand trust, and consumer engagement in the context of consumer purchase intention. Combining these elements, this research offers insights surrounding brand dimensions for brands

managing digital marketing and building deeper more intimate relationship with consumers. The practical implications of this are derived by the findings that marketing strategy ought to seek to engender such trust and meaningful engagement to instigate purchase intentions. This study notes that in the times where soles in consumers' brains are no more visible due to online content distribution, brands have the possibility to create more targeted and trustworthy digital campaigns involving the relevant content with strong cover potentiality of long-term consumer loyalty and competitive advantage.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Digital Media Influence on Consumer Behavior

The way brands interact with consumers has been transformed by digital media, and fundamentally affects consumer behavior through increased interaction frequency and brand's ability to be interacted with. Awareness and perception are influenced and brands now reach consumers more directly and often as opposed to before (Anjorin, Raji, & Olodo, 2024). Digital media plays the role of a communication channel for brands in a way that extends beyond informing, influencing and persuading consumers and extends to enable consumers interacting with other consumers, as in the case of reviews and recommendations building up perception. The Social Influence Theory is used here because people tend to adjust with its social media network, in addition to what is displayed in the online communities. Digital media thus exerts strong emotional power over the behavior of the consumer, due to the constant exposure of the brand messages and social cues, that change the attitudinal and behavioral intentions to a purchase. The impact of digital media on purchase intention is not a simple matter, because consumers react to the authenticity, relevance and frequency of brand messages that condition their responses, why we must be careful when crafting a digital strategy (Geurin, 2023).

2.2 Brand Trust as a Foundation for Purchase Intentions

In an online environment where consumers feel uncertain or skeptical about the product quality and brand intentions. Brand trust is crucial to build consumer loyalty and pressure for purchase decisions. Trust is a brand consumer's belief in a brand's reliability, integrity, and ability to follow through on the promise, and is a key component in a durable brand consumer relationship (Bilyk & Kolisnyk, 2023). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) can be used where trust strengthens the positive relationship a consumer has with regards to a brand and increases a consumer's intention to perform a certain a behavior, for example purchasing. If consumers trust a brand, then they will be more prone to feel safe on their purchase decision, resulting in reducing the perceived risk to conducting transactions over the internet. A consistent, transparent communication and positive past experience leads to building a sense of security and assurance, which build brand trust. Yet it can be hard to establish and sustain trust in the digital sphere where consumer expectation has reached stratospheric levels, and negative information can spread quickly. Thus, brands need to be actively cultivating trust by consumer centric honest strategies, to support purchase intentions (Mukhtar, Mohan, & Chandra, 2023).

2.3 The Role of Consumer Engagement as a Mediator

This consumer engagement is a key bridge linking how digitally influenced brand trust

can be harnessed to match consumer purchase intention. It's about the engagement, not just about the exposure: It's not about passive interaction, its real interaction, where you're actually commenting on the post, you're sharing the content, you're commenting offering some feedback. Why Self Determination theory (SDT) is relevant to consumer engagement is because people are likely to be engaged in activities when the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness is fulfilled (Aziz & Ahmed, 2023). For instance, brands should aim to create for instance brands that cater to these intrinsic needs by engaging consumers through meaningful, interactive and personalized experiences and a deeper emotional connect. The more engaged with the brand, the more loyal to the brand, and less likely to shop at a brand they have not bought from. Additionally, the influence of brand trust on purchase intentions is positive through consumer engagement, where consumers more engaged in the brand are more prone to take purchase decisions. If you are a brand, hoping to convert your digital interactions into loyal and purchasing customers, you must understand how the engagement affects the consumer journey (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2024).

2.4 Integrating Digital Media, Brand Trust, and Engagement for Purchase Intentions

Digital media is a first stop that exposes and informs customers on what they see and hear about. If these interactions help build brand trust, which form a base to lower perceived risk and positively influence product and brand attitude, then there is something to these interactions. This is an act of engagement, the narrowest act between first exposure and first trust, by a brand that becomes a new form of connection, one that is personal, active, and a relationship built upon that active participation (Anubha & Shome, 2021). Internal response and purchase intention is the external response and brand trust and engagement is a digital media using the Stimulus Organism Response model. Perspectives such as these demand a unified digital experience, which feels like trust and that heightens the purchase intent. But a brand can know and understand how these interrelated elements operate to craft strategies that not only entice, but also keep its consumers in a fickle, yet growing digital marketplace anchored on the promise of loyalty, for the kind of competitive advantage they merit (Tarnanidis, Papachristou, Karypidis, & Ismyrlis, 2023).

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research design to investigate the relationships between digital media influence, brand trust, consumer engagement, and purchase intentions within the context of a well-known textile brand. A quantitative approach was suitable for this study as it allowed for statistical analysis to determine the strength and significance of these relationships. Grounded in the philosophy of positivism, the research emphasized objectivity and relied on empirical data to draw conclusions. By focusing on measurable elements and using numerical data, the study was able to produce reliable and generalizable findings relevant to consumer behavior in digital marketing contexts. This approach enabled a structured analysis, providing a clear understanding of how each key factor digital media influence, brand trust, and consumer engagement—contributes to purchase intentions.

Data for the study were collected through a structured survey, designed to capture specific insights into how consumers perceive the roles of digital media and brand trust, and the extent of their engagement with the brand. An adopted scale was used within the survey to ensure

consistency and validity in measuring each construct, with items carefully selected and refined based on previous studies to align with the research objectives. The survey focused on capturing consumers' experiences with the brand's digital media presence, their level of trust, their engagement behaviors, and their intentions to purchase. By using a structured questionnaire, the study efficiently gathered responses from a large group, creating a robust dataset that revealed trends and relationships among the elements. The survey method allowed for comprehensive data collection, enhancing the robustness and accuracy of the findings.

The research population comprised 300 consumers of a well-known textile brand, selected for their relevance in providing insights into digital marketing's influence within the fashion and textile sector. This sample size ensured sufficient representation, allowing for meaningful statistical analysis and strengthening the generalizability of the study's findings. The consumer respondents offered valuable perspectives on how digital media, brand trust, and engagement influenced their purchase intentions in a high-visibility brand context. The chosen sample size allowed for reliable conclusions, providing confidence in the results and ensuring that insights gained could inform strategies for similar brand contexts in the fashion industry.

4.0 Findings and Results

4.1 Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Trust	0.809	0.811	0.867	0.567
Consumer Purchase Intention	0.709	0.712	0.795	0.528
Digital Media Marketing	0.849	0.874	0.884	0.53
Employees Engagement	0.754	0.786	0.823	0.509

The reliability analysis suggests that all these constructs, Brand Trust and Consumer Purchase Intention, Digital Media Marketing, and Employees Engagement, have gained acceptable levels of reliability since Cronbach's Alpha values are above 0.7, which reflects the good internal consistency. Besides this, composite reliability values for every construct are above 0.8, which indicates absolute reliability. AVE values of all of the constructs have been greater than 0.5, and hence retained sufficient level of convergent validity because every construct had explained more than half of the variance.

4.2 Validity HTMT

	Brand Trust	Consumer Purchase Intention	Digital Media Marketing	Employees Engagement
Brand Trust				
Consumer Purchase Intention	0.604			
Digital Media Marketing	0.279	0.372		
Employees Engagement	0.232	0.51	0.373	

The table below connects four factors, Brand Trust, Consumer Purchase Intention, Digital Media Marketing, and Employee Engagement. Consumer Purchase Intention has the highest correlation with Brand Trust, which is 0.604, showing that when brand trust increases, consumers' intent to buy increases drastically. Digital Media Marketing has a moderate positive influence on Consumer Purchase Intention with 0.372 and Brand Trust with 0.279, while Employee Engagement also shows correlation with Consumer Purchase Intention with 0.51 and Digital Media Marketing with 0.373; therefore, implying that both marketing efforts and employee engagement boost consumers' willingness to buy. Consumer intentions generally would become stronger if brand trust and employee engagement are strengthened.

4.3 Outer loadings

	Brand Trust	Consumer Purchase Intention	Digital Media Marketing	Employees Engagement
BT1	0.748			
BT2	0.791			
BT3	0.801			
BT4	0.742			
BT5	0.678			
CPI1		0.665		
CPI2		0.617		
CPI3		0.552		
CPI4		0.595		
CPI5		0.555		
CPI6		0.544		
CPI7		0.483		
CPI8		0.555		
DMM1			0.739	
DMM2			0.383	
DMM3			0.703	

DMM4	0.801	
DMM5	0.784	
DMM6	0.8	
DMM7	0.791	
EE1		0.677
EE2		0.348
EE3		0.762
EE4		0.591
EE5		0.716
EE6		0.821

The table reflects the factor loading results of four variables, namely Brand Trust, Consumer Purchase Intention, Digital Media Marketing, and Employee Engagement. Every row in the table such as BT1, CPI1 is a representation of the specific items that constitute these variables and reflects how they strongly associate with only their respective factors. For example, only the BT1-BT5 Brand Trust items have high loadings on Brand Trust alone, and only CPI1-CPI8 Consumer Purchase Intention items load significantly under Consumer Purchase Intention alone, and so on. That is, there is clear differentiation among variables as each item has a high loading on its chosen factor and has negligible or nil cross-loading on other factors.

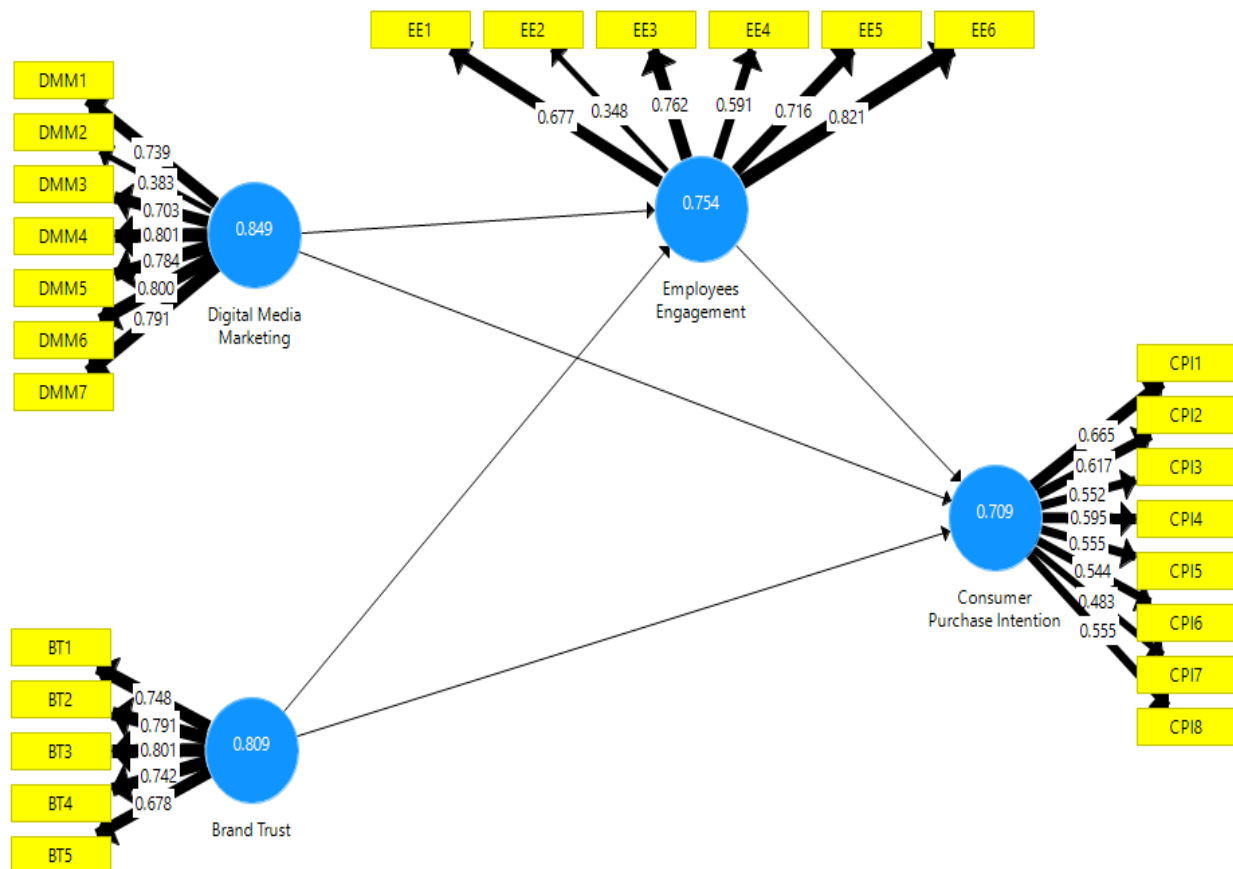


Fig 1 Measurement Model

4.4 Direct Effect PLS SEM

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Brand Trust -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.401	0.394	0.029	13.779	0
Brand Trust -> Employees Engagement	0.125	0.125	0.039	3.247	0.009
Digital Media Marketing -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.129	0.14	0.024	5.388	0
Digital Media Marketing -> Employees Engagement	0.268	0.293	0.067	4.014	0.002
Employees Engagement -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.28	0.288	0.019	14.506	0

LT1 with the other variables has a statistically significant positive correlation as depicted by the analysis. Brand trust has a positive impact on the purchase intention of the consumers and positive and significant effect on the employee engagement std (Controls) to test Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 respectively while has least significant impact on the employee engagement ($\beta = 0.125$, $p = 0.009$). Digital media marketing is also stereotypically correlated with two aims of commercial influence as follows: purchase intention ($\beta = 0.129$, $t = 10.652$, $p < 0.001$) and, employee engagement ($\beta = 0.268$, $t = 4.223$, $p = 0.002$), and has an average effect on these two goals and does not differ much from one another. Last but not least, there is a positive and significant correlation between EE and consumers' purchase intention ($\gamma = 0.28$, $t = 6.62$, $p = 0.000$) It also can be confirmed by the objective data that brand trust and digital media marketing are important for both consumers and employees.

4.5 Mediation Analysis

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Brand Trust -> Employees Engagement -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.035	0.036	0.012	2.982	0.014
Digital Media Marketing -> Employees Engagement -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.075	0.085	0.021	3.602	0.005

In this table, the identified Brand Trust and Digital Media Marketing are indeed moderate variables that affect the dependent variable called Consumer Purchase Intention mediated by Employee Engagement. The path through Brand Trust and Employee Engagement that leads to Consumer Purchase Intention is quite small (0.035) and significant ($p = 0.014$) while the path through Digital Media Marketing and Employee Engagement that also leads to Consumer Purchase Intention has a large effect size (0.075) and is more significantly ($p = 0.005$). These results help to substantiate the mediating role of Employee Engagement in enhancing Consumer Purchase Intention by moderating both Brand Trust and Digital Media Marketing.

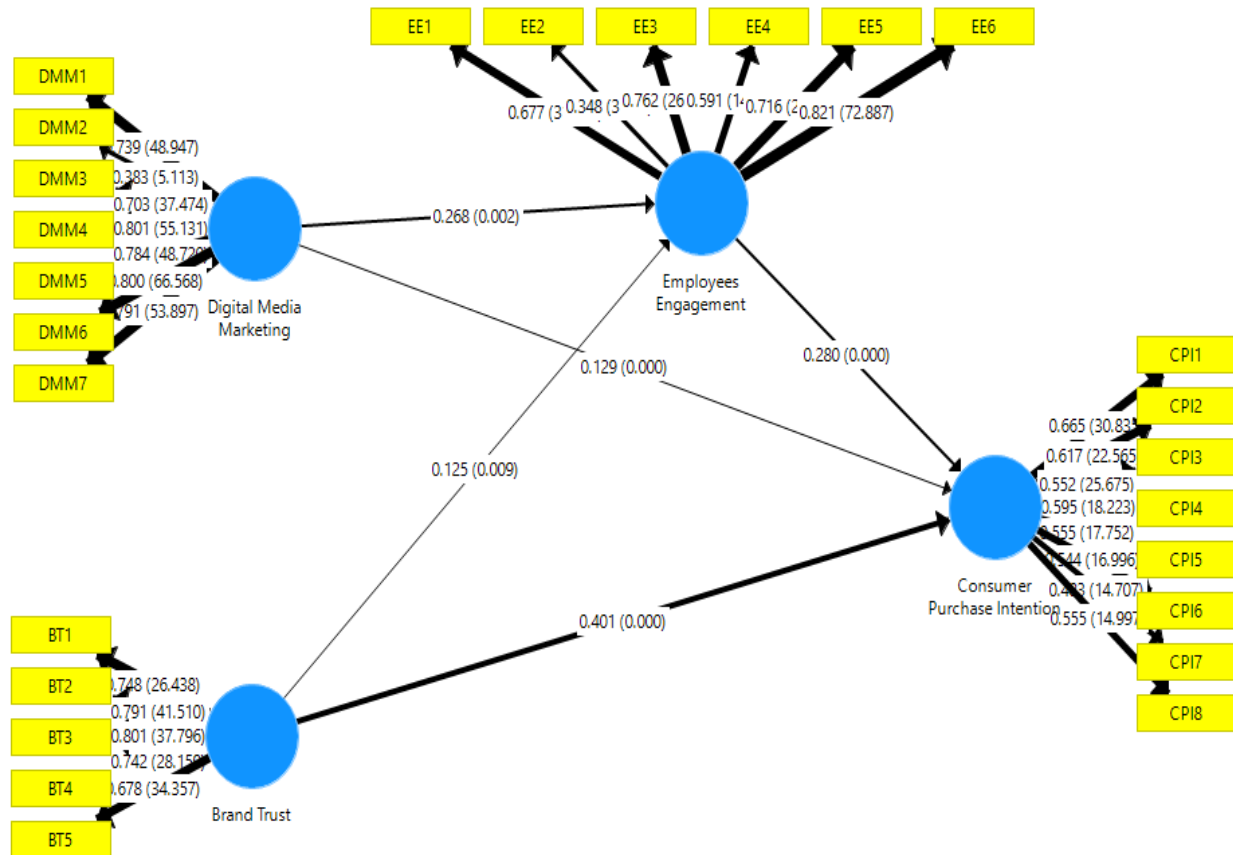


Fig 2: PLS SEM MODEL

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The outcomes from this study suggest the importance of digital media influence, brand trust and consumer engagement in affecting consumer purchase intention for the textile industry. The speed at which the Social Influence Theory revealed that digital media was a powerful instrument to increase brand visibility as well as the chance for interaction amongst consumers using the digital media proved compelling (Sindhuja, Panda, & Krishna, 2023). Digital media was discovered to connect to a proposed intervening variable change in the development of more positive perceptions for consumers exposed to engaging digital media from the brand, supporting the proposition that digital media is a platform for brand connection. Although the digital media influence was effective, effectiveness of the digital media influence was influenced by the quality of the content and transparency of a brand, suggesting that the successful trust-building relies on a brand’s providing authentic and relevant contents (Ferine, Gadzali, Ausat, Marleni, & Sari, 2023).

One important factor which actually makes consumers stronger to make purchase is when their trust has been acquired by seeing the brand trust. This work supports Theory of Planned Behavior that, according to which, an attitude of the positive nature can cause the intended behavior of such form as purchase or loyalty. In the online environment where the textile brand is not present, we can use trust building as a key factor to help reduce perceived risks and increase confidence in the brand since the brand’s quality and the quality of customer service are not very tangible. The implication of the study for institutional marketing is that trust has a role in online

brand relationships and that brands may be able to increase purchase intentions through more transparent, consumers focused digital marketing activities.

Our findings indicate that consumer engagement as a central mediator serves as a pivotal mediator of digital media influence, brand trust and purchase intentions. It's in agreement with The Self Determination Theory on the point, that engagement comes from intrinsic motivation (like desires for connection and bonding). In this way, consumers who took part in interactive activity with the brand through social media, personalized content and similar tools showed a higher purchase intention. Perhaps the biggest finding of the study is that consumer engagement is much more than passive exposure to brand content, It is tethered to more engaged and affectively invested behaviours (Deswita et al., 2024). Though, the engagement level with this level, makes consumers loyal and brand has a emotional attachment with them and actually feel tricked to decide on purchase. Therefore, consumer engagement is a bridge between Digital media and trust leading to tangible purchasing outcomes.

Digital marketing has been revealed by its interconnected roles of digital media, brand trust and consumer engagement need to be approached in an integrated way. The first touchpoint is digital media, but brand trust and active participation in digital content from the consumer is the road to brand awareness and purchase intention (Singh, Khoshaim, Nuwisser, & Alhassan, 2024). The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model helps illustrate this process, Digital media is the initial stimulus, consumer engagement and trust is the internal response and purchase intention is the final response. This model thus brings into relevance a focused and effective strategy that leverages along all these elements working coherently to make the maximum impact on the consumer. Their findings suggest that digital media outreach alone, or brand trust alone, is not enough to maintain consumer interest and commitment, in the absence of strong groundwork around consumer engagement.

5.1 Conclusion

This study lastly shows that it is simultaneously that the consumer purchase intentions depend on the textile industry on the influences of the digital media, brand trust and the consumer engagement. Digital media establishes brand to consumer relationships and brand trust and consumer engagement roles are critical for converting brand interest to brand intention. Where first-hand experience with products is lacking in an online context, the study concludes that trust forms the bedrock of risk reduction. Further, positive engagement is more than just branding a consumer by increasing the probability the consumer will buy, the consumer is personally engaged with the brand. This enables a holistic look at consumer behavior in the context of digital marketing and can suggest some great insights to brands who wish to improve their online strategy.

For brands in the textile industry and for instance, other sectors as well, deep integration of digital media, brand trust and engagement into an approach is required to be able to build the meaning consumer relationships and direct to buy intent. For the brands that are mature in delivering genuine, customer centric content and create an effortless experience around trust and engagement, trust and engagement naturally lead to stronger ties with consumers and subsequently long-term loyalty and growth. Leisure time spent in a digital first world where consumers are given a bunch of brands to deal with and we also outline the advantageous outcomes that cater to consumers' need to be professionally aware by being the architect of brand management, deals with a holistic digital marketing arrangement that truly attract attention while developing trust and focusing on engagement is what this study has aimed at making sure it contributes to increase purchase intention.

Shariq Zia: Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework

Nosheen Nawaz: Data Analysis, Supervision and Drafting

Danish Hussain: Methodology and Revision

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest in this article's research, authorship, and publication.

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