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The Impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on Purchase Intention

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to investigate the marketing activities available through social media platforms that are reflected in the purchase intention of consumers in general. Further, it explores the joint mediation effect of both perceived value (PV) and social brand engagement (SBE) on SMM-PI connection. A convenience sample strategy was employed to gather data from 338 cosmetic product customers in Palestine through a structured online questionnaire survey. Subsequently, the data underwent examination using intelligent (PLS-SEM) analysis. According to the results of the study, there is a positive relationship between marketing activities through social media platforms on consumer's beneficial impact on brand perception (PV), consumer engagement (SBE), and purchase intention (PI). Moreover, PV and SBE exert substantial direct beneficial impacts on PI. As for the intermediate effects, they were all effective, and the mediation impact of PV (Perceived Value) and SBE (Social Bonding Experiences) on the relation between SMM and PI is partially complimentary.

Keywords: Perceived Value, Brand Engagement, Social Media Marketing, Emerging Markets, Palestine
JEL Classification: M

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of technology at all levels has enhanced the support for companies to employ digital platforms in their business, especially social ones, as they play a prominent role in reaching customers and enhancing their decisions and purchasing intentions (Alharafsheh et al., 2023). The importance of consumer behavior and happiness has lately increased for firms aiming to create a market position and enhance profitability (Rao et al., 2021). Through SM, companies are quickly switching from traditional media with conventional unidirectional communication techniques to SM with interactive bidirectional communications, achieving customer satisfaction. SMM has significantly changed how marketers communicate with consumers and has changed how marketing efforts are managed. Interaction is essential to engagement, and SM facilitates this by allowing the sharing of ideas, sentiments, and views about the business and its products (Kumar et al., 2022).

Businesses can cultivate robust relationships with their customers by engaging in a range of social media marketing activities, such as interactive communication, entertaining content, personalized experiences, Continuing to monitor the latest relevant variables in the spoken word between customers electronically (Rahi et

al., 2022). Well-established companies leverage various social media platforms, like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others, to circumvent temporal and spatial limitations and facilitate seamless connection with their existing and prospective customers (Bragg et al., 2020). Prior studies (Hanaysha, 2018) Asserted that the impact of SM on buying choices has significantly increased due to the rise of electronic media as a potent and reliable information source. People use (SM) Share their experiences and interact with a product or service with their "connections" or friends. This includes sharing information, reviews, suggestions, and warnings.

Moreover, engaging in (SMM) can effectively stimulate customers' purchase intention (PI) by improving their level of involvement with the brand on social platforms, also known as social brand engagement (SBE). SBE refers to the emotional responses and attachments that customers develop towards a brand through social media platforms (Yadav and Rahman, 2017). Customers, by utilizing social media, exert a more influential impact on the establishment of companies' brands and actively participate in attracting other potential customers to these products, thereby enhancing their brand equity. Specifically, the desire to make a purchase is influenced by motivation (Ahmad et al., 2022). Social media facilitates extensive brand engagement by facilitating unrestricted social contact among users, as well as between brands and customers. The study conducted by (Liu et al., 2019) discovered that the utilization of social media and the influence of peers among Chinese consumers were important social factors that exhibited a positive correlation with the increasing desire to purchase sustainable clothing.

Furthermore, a recent study on service-oriented research argues that due to the transition from a company- and product-centered perspective on value generation to one that emphasizes personalized brand experiences, both customers and suppliers actively contribute to the production of value (Tynan et al., 2010). The customers' perception of the product benefits can affect their purchase intention. Presently, a company has the ability to enhance its worth by catering to its customers, thereby leading consumers to anticipate organizations to actively involve them in diverse purchase encounters (Kyurova and Koyundzhiyska-Davidkova, 2021). Consequently, firms must enhance the caliber of their products and services in the desired markets by gaining deeper insights into methods for augmenting consumer value (Kaushik, 2012).

Previous research has posited that SMM can have a direct impact on PI, as well as an indirect impact through either PV (Yap, 2022) or SBE (Rahi et al., 2021) However, there is a lack of previous research that has examined both the direct and indirect impacts (via PV and SBE together). Thus, our study enhances the digital marketing literature by filling this research void. In addition, this study utilized the stimuli-organism-response (S-O-R) theory proposed by (Russell and Mehrabian, 1974) According to this theory, external variables operate as stimuli (S) that influence the emotional and cognitive organisms (O), ultimately leading to behavioral reactions (R). The study examines the impact of SMMA activities (S) on customers' cognitive and emotional responses through PV and SBE (O), which subsequently stimulates customers' PI (R) (Verma et al., 2021). This theoretical framework is utilized to analyze and elucidate the pathways through which SMM impacts PV, SBE, and eventually PI.

Furthermore, the literature on digital marketing and advertising (Dash and Sharma, 2022) lacks consistency in the design of the measuring methodology for SMM. (Alshammari et al., 2022) describe SMM as a reflective-formative higher-order construct (R-F-HOC). However, there is no available data about the validity of the measurement model for a formative higher-order construct.

The significance of social media marketing (SMM) on the purchasing intention in Palestine, which is a developing market, cannot be exaggerated. Social media has significantly transformed the manner in which customers in Palestine engage with businesses, granting them an unparalleled degree of involvement and impact. Therefore, utilizing social media has become a crucial element of an effective marketing plan designed to impact customer buying habits. Social media (SM) offers distinct chances for businesses to engage with consumers in a more effective manner, enhancing their visibility and delivering more tailored experiences. One can accomplish this by employing focused advertisements, leveraging influencers, or delivering customized content that caters to individual customers' interests. A study conducted in Palestine has demonstrated that social media campaigns have a direct influence on consumers' intention to purchase, resulting in increased levels of loyalty towards firms that actively engage with them through these channels (AlSondos et al., 2020).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Social Media Marketing (SMM)

SM is referred to as an online interaction platform that enables individuals to exchange information and share knowledge, past experiences, and personal views through different social networks, blogs, and other content platforms (Alqurashi et al., 2023), as defined by (Al-Gasawneh et al., 2024; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011) (SMM) is leveraging social media platforms to facilitate meaningful engagement between brands and consumers. The actions included in this strategy are commonly known as SMM activities (Meena and Kumar, 2022). Currently, (SM) contributes significantly in marketing communication as it enables firms to establish connections and interact with customers at a little expense and round the clock. One of the primary objectives and focal points for different brands is the efficient management and execution of its activities (Hanaysha, 2022). In the present-day dynamic marketplace, prosperous brands have recognized the impact of (SMM) in establishing durable consumer relationships, as well as engaging and communicating with broader client demographics.

The importance of SMM has increased due to its efficiency to interact with customers and influence their procurement tendencies (AlSokkar et al., 2024; Dash and Sharma, 2022). In the current market context, where consumers are highly engaged, relying solely on product characteristics as a marketing approach is not effective for companies. Instead, firms are more likely to build strong customer relationships by delivering exceptional brand experiences. Businesses utilize social media platforms

to effectively accomplish their marketing goals by actively monitoring, enticing, interacting with, and entertaining prospective customers (Pletikosa Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013), Thus, they are able to modify their marketing communications and product offerings in order to influence the attitudes of consumers (Pletikosa Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013). The notion of social media marketing (SMM) campaigns encompasses five aspects/activities: customization, entertainment, interactivity, trendiness, and word-of-mouth (WOM). These elements ultimately influence consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) as per the study conducted by Fox and Longart (2016).

The customization of SMMAs, as opposed to traditional advertising, emphasizes establishing a direct relationship with specific consumers and catering to their specific needs (Omeish et al., 2024). In order to make a long-lasting impression on their clientele, marketers must actively strive to meet their demands. (Liu et al., 2021) reported that a US cosmetics company utilized Social Media Marketing Automation (SMMAs) in the Chinese market to enhance relationship management and brand building. This involved implementing real-time, automated, and tailored communication systems, resulting in increased average purchase values and gaining more comprehensive consumer insights. Marketers have integrated promotional materials with entertaining content on social media platforms to establish a strong emotional bond between the organization and clients, encouraging client involvement by instilling a continuous inclination to utilize the platform (Olusolade Aribake and Mat Aji, 2020). In their study, (Kim and Ko, 2012) highlighted "entertainment" as a vital element during the (SMMAs) endeavors of luxury brands. They found that luxury companies offer users free content to provide amusement. The term "interaction/interactivity" pertains to the utilization of social media platforms by customers to engage with one another, converse, and exchange information concerning brands/products, irrespective of location, time, or medium (Muntinga et al., 2011). This approach has progressively converted conventional unidirectional communication into interactive bidirectional communication by means of information dissemination and exchange of perspectives, resulting in increased interest and fondness towards brands (Kim and Ko, 2012). The term "trendiness" pertains to SM's capacity to offer up-to-date information on a wide range of items and services (Dash and Sharma, 2022). The term "electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)" pertains to online customers' evaluations pertaining to brands. The term refers to the act of spreading information on the internet about a firms (Chen and Cheng, 2023). Social networking platforms are ideal for electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) as they allow users to create and disseminate brand-related content among their relatives, friends, colleagues, and other connections (Chu et al., 2018).

2.2. Perceived Value (PV)

Lately, corporations have been increasingly focused on generating customer value in response to the rapid evolution of consumer needs driven by technological advancements. Presently, a firm has the ability to enhance its worth by cultivating relationships with its clients. Consequently, consumers hold certain expectations for organizations to actively involve them in diverse purchase experiences. A crucial aspect of effective market management is comprehending client preferences, making it imperative to obtain this information directly from them. Organizations should elevate the caliber of their products and services within targeted markets by gaining a profound comprehension of how to enhance client value (Hanaysha, 2018). To establish enduring competitive advantages and enhance client loyalty, numerous firms have been driven to gain a deeper comprehension of the determinants that impact consumer value (Shirkhodaie and Rastgoo-Deylami, 2016). In their study, (Yap, 2022)) examined how different dimensions of PV (monetary, conditional, social, epistemic, emotional, and convenience) impact PI in the context of online hotel booking sites. He discovered that only convenience and conditional values have a high and positive correlation with PI.

2.3. Social Brand Engagement (SBE)

Brand engagement refers to the capacity to establish robust connections with corporate clients, with the aim of influencing their buying choices, improving interactions, and fostering their active participation in shaping a brand's reputation over an extended period (Hanaysha, 2022). According to Bianchi and Andrews (2018), customers might develop strong attachment to specific brands, and exhibit increased readiness to actively engage in brand communities on social media platforms. These communities, as described by (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2018), are known as social brand engagement (SBE). SBE refers to the ongoing exchanges, development, and transmission of the brand between the company and consumers (both current and potential) through the company's social networking platform, with the aim of fostering emotional or physical loyalty to the brand and the company (Choedon and Lee, 2020), Brand attachment is a complex psychological condition that arises from actively connecting with a brand, beyond just making purchases, and is influenced by motivation. Therefore, it comprises components related to social, cognitive, and emotional involvement (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2016).

Engagement in social media is a multifaceted concept that involves three main aspects: consumption, contribution, and creation (Dhingra et al., 2019). These criteria span a spectrum of customer involvement levels, ranging from minimal to significant, and encompass various behaviors taken by consumers associated to a brand. Consumption on social media refers to the passive consumption of brand-related content by customers without taking any action. The phrase "Creation," at the pinnacle of consumer online brand engagement, denotes the act of consumers generating and sharing brand-related material online. An essential consideration is that, depending on the contextual elements, a user may engage with the same brand in many roles such as a customer, contributor, and/or content creator simultaneously or frequently (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2016). Furthermore, the same person may serve as a contributor for one brand and as a consumer for another.

Contented clients are inclined to maintain their loyalty towards the brand and are anticipated to enhance their purchase intention. They contribute to enhancing brand value by consistently sharing positive experience about the brand and endorsing it (Anh, 2015). Conversely, multiple research have demonstrated that SMMAs have an impact on SBE (Social Brand Equity) and PI

(Perceived Image) in the context of luxury products (Kim and Ko, 2012; Sharma et al., 2022). Nevertheless, there is a dearth of research that has examined the impact of social media marketing activities (SMMAs) on purchase intention (PI) through social brand engagement (SBE) in the context of cosmetic brands. This gap in the literature is evident from the limited number of studies conducted by (Akter and Sultana, 2020; Binwani and Ho, 2019; Choedon and Lee, 2020). Thus, this study specifically examines the correlation between cosmetic items.

2.4. Purchase Intention (PI)

PI describes the extent to which a customer is willing to purchase a product or service as stated by (Sharma et al., 2022). The theory of reasoned actions (TRA) posits that customers' intentions have a significant impact on their present behavior (Ajzen AND Cote, 2008). Recent studies indicate that customers' favorable behavior is a result of their good intentions towards a brand or product, which is a part of their cognitive activity (Verma et al., 2021). PI is widely regarded as a reliable indicator of customers' inclination to make a purchase. It measures their level of preparedness to buy (Chakraborty, 2019).

Age and gender serve as intermediaries for the influence of beliefs and cognitive characteristics on PI. As stated by Shankar et al. (2010), the utilization of social media by customers and their (e-WOM) had a beneficial impact on their level of interaction in purchasing decisions. Additionally, online trust plays a crucial role in moderating this relationship. (Yap, 2022) studies indicated that SMM had a positive and significant impact on PI.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Prior studies in marketing research have utilized the S-O-R paradigm across several domains. (Erdoğmuş and Tatar, 2015) employed it to examine the underlying reasons for social commerce. Conceptual framework of the study is presented in Figure 1.

3.1. SMM and PV

The social media (SM) platform fosters active participation and communication among users, leading to individuals being influenced by the website's multimedia, interactive content, and informational material during their browsing experience (Shwartz-Asher et al., 2020). Based on previous studies (Al-Dmour et al., 2019),can utilize Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) to establish an engaging environment that will captivate consumers' attention and emotions, leading them to perceive value. (Abdullah et al., 2016) found that customers' perceptions of value are positively influenced by their sense of website interaction. (Yap, 2022) studies indicate that SMM positively and significantly impacted PV metrics. Nevertheless, the findings of (Hanaysha, 2018) show that although social media marketing (SMM) has little impact on purchase volume (PV), it does have a positive and considerable influence on customer retention. Consequently, the following hypothesis are posited:

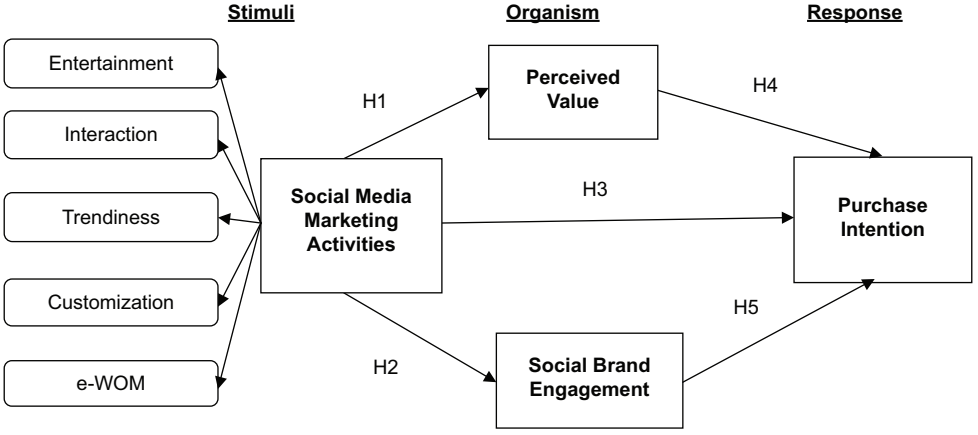
H1: SMM Activities positively affect PV.

3.2. SMM and SBE

In their study, (Hanaysha, 2022) suggested that the characteristics of social media advertising, including perceived relevance, interactivity, informativeness, and entertainment positively influenced brand engagement. Specifically, these characteristics have an impact on the actions and perspectives of consumers, hence affecting their level of involvement with a brand. Furthermore, it has been observed that SM communications significantly impacts brand image, while conventional media having a more pronounced effect on brand awareness, this, in turn, enhances brand awareness and brand knowledge. However, the impact of entertainment and personalization on consumer-brand interaction was shown to be statistically insignificant. Social media marketing (SMM) initiatives enhance consumer interaction with high-end businesses, leading to a favorable response (Binwani and Ho, 2019; Meena and Kumar, 2022) conducted a study including 201 individuals who use cosmetics. Their results revealed that, in contrast to the findings of (Kim and Ko, 2012) in the luxury sector, social media marketing (SMM) has a distinct influence on consumers' views of brand, value, and relationship equity with cosmetic brands. Although the digital landscape offers significant potential for marketers to interact with customers, there have been limited empirical studies examining different marketing strategies to engage consumers in the realm of social media, particularly within the cosmetics business. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: SMM Activities positively affect SBE.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



3.3. SMM and PI

Undoubtedly, social media platforms have revolutionized the marketing communication techniques employed by firms in recent years (Sharma et al., 2022; Youssef et al., 2023). Word-of-mouth (WOM) in social media platforms is an emerging kind of digital communication that plays a crucial role in the sharing and spreading of information regarding products among social media users (Park et al., 2021). A significant number of consumers depend on the luxury experiences shared by others on social media through different platforms. This practice enhances brand evaluation and consequently, the perception index (Al-Gasawneh et al., 2023). Identified that the primary obstacle confronting firms in the digital age is the escalation of customer engagement on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These platforms enable users to articulate their thoughts and opinions through postings, comments, and endorsements of high-end companies within their social network (Reino and Hay, 2016). Additionally, users can engage in communication and exchange their experiences with luxury brands across several platforms, thereby influencing the public image of others. The study conducted by (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012) provides evidence that electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) has a direct and positive impact on purchase intention (PI) in the automotive industry.

In addition, (Khan and Abir, 2022) presented evidence supporting the efficacy of digital influencers in influencing consumers' purchasing intentions in the organic skincare industry. (Rosara and Luthfia, 2020) shown that social media influencers, electronic word-of-mouth, and perceived quality collectively exert a substantial influence on purchase intention. Nevertheless, (Hanaysha, 2018) discovered a negligible impact of social media marketing (SMM) on consumers' buying decisions inside the Malaysian retail industry. The study conducted by (Gani et al., 2023) demonstrated that social media (SM) had a favorable and substantial influence on consumers' inclination to purchase organic beauty products. Moreover, the accessibility of skincare product information in the digital realm can impact consumers' inclination to make a purchase. (Chrisniyanti and Fah, 2022) found that SMMAs greatly enhance the purchasing intentions of Indonesian young adults when it comes to skincare items. (Fernandes et al., 2020) discovered that Instagram, when used as an online advertising platform for social media, positively influences customers' purchase intentions (PIs) and both hedonic and utilitarian shopping motivations for beauty care items and services. Additionally, it was shown that while utilitarian motivation does not impact the interest in buying beauty care products and services, hedonic motivation does influence the customer's inclination to purchase these items. A study conducted by (Akter and Sultana, 2020) revealed that digital marketing communications have the ability to impact consumer behavior throughout the whole shopping process, including information search, brand awareness, buying behavior, and post-purchase communication and evaluation. This influence is particularly significant when it comes to the purchase of branded cosmetics. Given the aforementioned argument, it is crucial to analyze the impact of SMMAs on customers' perception of the intrinsic value of cosmetic items. Consequently, the following hypothesis suggests that:

H3: SMM has a positive impact on PI.

3.4. PV and PI

The customer's perceived value is determined by the interaction between the value generated by each individual experience and the specific preferences of the consumer. Businesses can leverage the experiential value of their consumers to get insights into their preferences and make product modifications that enhance their added value and improve the outcomes of their experiences, hence increasing their performance indicators. The experiential value can be categorized into four distinct sorts: fun, esthetics, service excellence, and consumer return on investment. These types serve as assessment markers for perceived value, as stated by (Chen and Tsai, 2019).

(Mathur and Gangwani, 2021) established a direct correlation between consumers' sense of value and their buying patterns. Additionally, they observed that customers' inclination to purchase a specific product escalated in tandem with the perceived value (PV) of this goods. (Choi et al., 2019) discovered that customers' purchasing decisions and behavioral intents are affected by PV (perceived value) and social awareness factors, which vary across various genders. (Choi et al., 2019) found that the perception of social worth had a favorable influence on the propensity to purchase green-grade cosmetics. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of studies that have examined the impact of PV on the PI of cosmetic companies. According, we propose in the following the hypothesis:

H4: PV has a positive impact on PI.

3.5. SBE and PI

Consumers that actively interact with a brand develop opinions and exhibit positive social media behavior. (Kumar et al., 2022) found that customers who are highly engaged in social media are more likely to have a positive impression of the company and are more inclined to exhibit brand loyalty. Customers' inclination to buy a brand is stimulated by their engagement with touchpoints that are associated with the brand (Algharabat, 2018). Previous research (Hanaysha, 2022) has established a positive correlation between SBE and PI. Brands are enhancing their authenticity by clearly articulating their values and principles to customers, rather than solely focusing on projecting an idealized brand image.

Additionally, (Singh and Verma, 2019) research revealed that brand equity and PI exhibited variations based on levels of participation. In addition, three brand actions (co-creation, trustworthy content delivery, and responsiveness) have a beneficial impact on users' advocacy of brands to other users (Leong et al., 2021). Thus, brand advocacy has a favorable impact on the future performance indicators of brand advocates. (Fernández-Berrocal et al., 2012) similarly found a strong positive correlation between brand attitude and the brand PI. Consumers' purchase decisions are significantly impacted by the product's endorsements circulated by fellow consumers on social media platforms. Consumers have the ability to actively engage and communicate their buying experiences through social media, which can enhance their trust and certainty when making purchasing choices (Aji et al., 2020). Marketers allocate greater financial resources to social media platforms in order to enhance customer involvement. In their study, (Bianchi and Andrews, 2018) found that customers' opinions towards connecting with retail companies on Facebook are influenced by

peer communication, compatibility, and legitimacy. Moreover, there exists a notable association between the intents to engage with a business and the probability of making a purchase from a retail brand's Facebook page. Consequently, it is proposed that:
H5: SBE has a positive impact on PI.

3.6. Mediating effect of PV and SBE

In this study, the SOR framework was employed to categorize SMMAs. According to this framework, SMMAs are considered stimuli (S), while PV and BE are seen as intermediate layers or cognitive processes in consumers' thoughts, referred to as organisms (O). The process's output, PI, is referred to as the response (R). The indirect impact is facilitated by the utilization of hierarchy of effect theories, such as SOR (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021).

(Kunja and Gvrk, 2020) asserted that Facebook fan sites enhance consumer value through electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) communication. In other words, good electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) enhances the perceived value (PV) for potential customers by highlighting the superior quality and benefits of items and services in relation to their price, thereby influencing customer purchase intention (PI). (Guihong and Yu, 2014) discovered empirical support for the notion that PV serves as a mediator in the association between SMMAs and PI. In addition, (Yap, 2022) discovered that both conditional and convenience values play a role in mediating the connection between social media marketing (SMM) and purchase intention (PI) in the context of online hotel booking platforms. The anticipated mechanism, by which PV influences the association between SMM and PI, particularly in the context of cosmetic brands, is of interest. Therefore, the subsequent hypothesis is proposed:
H6: PV mediates the relationship between SMM and PI.

In the present day, social media has become the primary means by which many customers become aware of products. It indirectly affects consumers' purchasing intentions by motivating them to endorse a brand. According to (Chaudhry et al., 2020), the provision of product information and attributes online leads to a rise in customers' personal information (PI), which subsequently fosters and enhances consumers' trust in the brand. These relationships, in turn, contribute to an increase in customers' perceived influence (PI). In addition, (Majeed et al., 2021) discovered a substantial and favorable correlation between social media marketing (SMM) and purchase intention (PI) mediated by brand equity. Using social media platforms to create and oversee websites enables customers to enhance their product awareness and interest, leading to increased brand engagement, which eventually impacts performance indicators (Batra and Keller, 2016). According to (Febrian et al., 2021), customer SBE has a mediating role in the influence of digital content marketing on customers' PI. Businesses should focus on creating website content that is advantageous in order to attract clients and encourage their active and subconscious engagement in the product promotion process.

Branded social media marketing (SMM) initiatives have a substantial influence on customers, hence increasing the probability of improving brand connections with consumers (Majeed et al., 2021). In their study, (Beneke et al., 2016) discovered that negative electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) has a notable adverse effect on both brand equity and purchase intention (PI). Moreover, their research revealed that unfavorable online customer reviews have a greater detrimental effect on the brand equity of high involvement products compared to low involvement products. Their research revealed that high-quality reviews had a more substantial influence on brand equity compared to low-quality reviews. Additionally, the degree of reliability of the e-WOM source does not significantly affect brand equity. Thus, we propose the subsequent hypothesis:
H7: SBE mediates the relationship between SMM and PI.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

4.1. Sample and Procedures

The target participants of this study were those who use cosmetic goods and are actively involved with the SM of cosmetic brands in the Palestinian territories of Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron. This quantitative study primarily utilizes self-reported data obtained from an online survey of 338 individuals who use cosmetic goods in the aforementioned regions of the country. The poll was conducted between September 2022 and February 2023. This aligns with previous research that collected data from consumers of cosmetic brands to assess their attitudes towards these brands (Binwani and Ho, 2019; Chen and Ren, 2022; Choedon and Lee, 2020) as these users demonstrate uniformity in their utilization of social media and online shopping habits when it comes to cosmetic products. Hence, they considered the sample to be suitable for the present investigation.

The researchers employed the convenience sampling technique to choose the sample from the complete intended population (Cheung et al., 2020; Verma et al., 2021). This sampling methodology has gained significant popularity as a non-probability sampling method due to its straightforwardness and ease of usage. In addition, other research employed convenience sampling to collect primary data from comparable participants (Binwani and Ho, 2019; Choedon and Lee, 2020; Dash and Sharma, 2022).

4.2. Variables Measurement

The factors in this study were measured using a collection of items that were previously utilized in other investigations. For instance, a total of 18 elements were utilized to assess SMM Activities. The sources used for this study are (Choedon and Lee, 2020; Kim and Ko, 2012). The specific items collected from these sources are as follows: entertainment (3 items), interaction (4 items), trendiness (2 items), customization (4 items), and e-WOM (5 items). The measurement of PV was conducted using a set of five items that were modified from the works of (Mathur and Gangwani, 2021; Yap, 2022). In addition, five items were derived from (Choedon and Lee, 2020) to evaluate SBE. Regarding PI, (Aji et al., 2020) derived 5 items for its measurement. The study constructs were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree."

4.3. Methods and Instruments for Analyzing Data

The study employed the partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach for data analysis (Abu-Dabaseh et al., 2024; Cooley and Parks-Yancy, 2019). PLS-SEM is a

prominent analysis tool used to analyze the measures of reliability and validity as well as the testing of structural models. Data analysis was conducted using Smart PLS 4.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1. Sample's Demographic Traits

Table 1 presents the statistical summary of the demographic characteristics of the sample. The data indicates that the majority of participants were women (82.2%), between the ages of 25 and 35 (56.2%), married (64.5%), holding an undergraduate certificate (56.2%), employed full-time (74.3%), and earning an average monthly salary of 7500-10000 Israeli Shekel (IS) (45.3%). A total of 178 users, accounting for 52.6% of the sample, purchase a specific cosmetic brand once a week. This is followed by 90 users, representing 26.6% of the sample, who purchase it once every 2 weeks.

5.2. Data Multicollinearity

Testing for technique bias is essential throughout the initial phases of data analysis. Hence, in order to ensure the integrity of the acquired data, an assessment of multicollinearity was performed before to completing the analysis. Various techniques can be employed to compute multicollinearity. Nevertheless, the metric that was predominantly utilized, known as variable inflation factors (VIF), was employed to ascertain the link between a variable and the other variables in the model. When the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) exceeds a value of 5, it indicates the lack of multicollinearity (Cooley and Parks-Yancy, 2019). Table 2 presents the presents the statistical analysis, which confirms the absence of multicollinearity issues. This is indicated by the VIF values in the whole collinearity test being within the permissible range, which is <5.

Table 1: The demographic attributes of the participants, including the overall sample size

Variables	n (%)
Gender	
Male	60 (17.8)
Female	278 (82.2)
Age (years)	
Below 25	14 (4.1)
25–35	190 (56.2)
36–45	108 (31.9)
46–50	20 (5.9)
Above 50	6 (1.9)
Material status	
Single	60 (17.8)
Married	218 (64.5)
Divorced	47 (13.9)
Widowed	13 (3.8)
Education	
Secondary school or below	20 (5.9)
Diploma/technical Cert.	40 (11.8)
Bachelor	190 (56.2)
Master	70 (20.7)
PhD	18 (5.4)
Employment	
Full time	251 (74.3)
Part time	47 (13.9)
Casual employees	32 (9.5)
Unemployed	8 (2.4)
Monthly income	
Below IS 2500	8 (2.4)
2500–5000	34 (10.1)
5000–7500	70 (20.7)
7500–10,000	153 (45.3)
Above IS 10,000	73 (21.5)
Frequency of purchasing a specific cosmetic brand	
More than 1 time/a week	29 (8.7)
1 time/a week	178 (52.6)
1 time/2 weeks	90 (26.6)
1 time/a month	19 (5.6)
1 time/3months	12 (3.5)
1 time/over 3 months	10 (3.0)

Size of 338 individuals. IS: Israeli Shekel

5.3. Evaluation of the Measurement Model

5.3.1. Assessment of first-order measurement model

Once the absence of multicollinearity issues in the gathered data has been confirmed, the subsequent stage in implementing PLS-SEM involves assessing the dependability and accuracy of all the items utilized to assess the first-order constructs (FOC) in this investigation. In this initial appraisal of the first-order constructs, we evaluated the reliability of the instrument using outer loading, Cronbach's alpha, rho A, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). In order to determine the accuracy of the specified measurement items, factor loadings were calculated using the measurement model. As per (Hair et al., 2021), the factor loading values for each item should fall between 0.5 and 1. Based on the data shown in Table 3, two items (one for SBE and one for PI) were excluded from the model due to their factor loading values being below 0.5. In addition, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT (Dijkstra and Henseler, 2015) were employed to evaluate the discriminant validity. The reliability analysis and discriminant validity analysis of the first-order measurement model are displayed in Tables 3 and 4, respectively. These tables indicate that, with the exception of the two eliminated items mentioned earlier, all items measuring the first-order constructs are valid and reliable in terms of convergent and discriminant validity.

Table 2: Displays the statistics related to collinearity

Construct	Item	VIF	Construct	Item	VIF
CUST	CUST1	1.835	ENT	ENT1	1.88
	CUS2	2.004		ENT2	2.216
	CUST3	1.55		ENT3	2.17
	CUST4	2.054	SMM activities	SMM	1.915
TREN	TREN1	1.368	SBE	SBE3	2.776
	TREN2	1.368		SBE4	2.735
e-WOM	EOM1	1.581		SBE5	1.662
	EOM2	1.966	PV	PV1	1.175
	EOM3	1.971		PV2	1.154
	EOM4	1.766		PV3	1.202
	EOM5	1.71		PV4	1.371
INT	INT1	1.956		PV5	1.266
	INT2	1.616	PI	PI1	1.588
	INT3	1.856		PI2	2.755
	INT4	1.074		PI3	2.376
				PI4	2.395

VIF: Variable inflation factors, e-WOM: Electronic word-of-mouth, SBE: Social Brand Engagement, CUST: Customization, ENT: Entertainment, INT: Interaction, PV: Perceived Value, PI: Purchase intention, TREN: Trendiness, e-WOM: Electronic-word of mouth, SMM: Social media marketing

5.3.2. Evaluation of a Measurement Model at the Second-order Level

It is crucial to acknowledge that each of the primary SMM dimensions possesses unique conceptual significance. Collectively, these five elements constitute the comprehensive conceptual significance of SMM. If any first-order construct is removed, the conceptual meaning of SMM will consequently be altered. Based on this interpretation, causality moves from a lower/first order construct (L/FOC) to a higher order construct (HOC). For the purpose of measurement, SMM is considered a higher order construct, namely a reflective-formative, second-order, Type-2 construct, based on its first-order construct dimensions. The specifications of the measurement model simplify the path model by reducing the number of paths in the structural model (Verma et al., 2021). Additionally, they aid in mitigating collinearity issues (Ferrell et al., 2019).

Table 3: The reliability and convergent validity of the first-order constructs

Construct	Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
SBE	SBE3	0.908	0.852	0.865	0.911	0.773
	SBE4	0.914				
	SBE5	0.811				
CUST	CUST1	0.821	0.825	0.826	0.884	0.656
	CUST3	0.771				
	CUST4	0.825				
ENT	ENT1	0.830	0.811	0.818	0.888	0.726
	ENT2	0.881				
	ENT3	0.884				
INT	INT1	0.777	0.707	0.705	0.822	0.541
	INT2	0.767				
	INT3	0.805				
	INT4	0.568				
PV	PV1	0.685	0.647	0.668	0.776	0.413
	PV2	0.505				
	PV3	0.579				
	PV4	0.755				
	PV5	0.659				
PI	PI1	0.738	0.865	0.877	0.909	0.714
	PI2	0.897				
	PI3	0.866				
	PI4	0.870				
TREN	TREN1	0.897	0.683	0.700	0.862	0.758
	TREN2	0.843				
e-WOM	EOM1	0.511	0.760	0.791	0.840	0.519
	EOM2	0.805				
	EOM3	0.833				
	EOM4	0.742				
	EOM5	0.666				

AVE: Average variance extracted, CR: Composite reliability, e-WOM: Electronic word-of-mouth, SBE: Social brand engagement, CUST: Customization, ENT: Entertainment, INT: Interaction, PV: Perceived value, PI: Purchase intention, TREN: Trendiness, e-WOM: Electronic-word of mouth

We employed a two-stage approach to evaluate the R-F-HOC measurement model, following the suggestion of (Hair et al., 2021). In Stage 1, all constructs measured via first-order reflection were assessed for their convergent and discriminant validity. During Stage 2, we evaluated the accuracy of the HOC formatively measured model by assessing its convergent validity. To evaluate the convergent validity, redundancy analysis (Chin, 1998) was conducted. Additionally, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was utilized to ensure that multicollinearity is not an issue at the first-order construct level. The outer weight and its statistical significance were examined to determine the relative contribution in the HO formation. Table 5 displays this information.

5.4. Structural Model Assessment

We utilize a bootstrapping technique consisting of 5000 sub samples, as suggested by (Hair et al., 2021), to examine the postulated links in the conceptual model. The results of hypothesis testing are displayed in Table 6. The results indicate that social media marketing (SMM) has a strong and favorable impact on purchase volume (PV) (H1: SMM -> PV; $\beta = 0.618$, $t = 17.216$, $P < 0.001$), sales and business expansion (SBE) (H2: SMM -> SBE; $\beta = 0.346$, $t = 7.211$, $P < 0.001$), and brand performance and influence (PI) (H3: SMM -> PI; $\beta = 0.041$, $t = 4.596$, $P < 0.001$). Therefore, H1, H2, and H3 are all supported. There is a strong

Table 4: Displays the discriminant validity of the primary construct

Construct	SBE	CUST	ENT	INT	PV	PI	TREN	e-WOM
Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion								
SBE	*0.979*							
CUST	0.306	*0.820*						
ENT	0.034	0.393	*0.852*					
INT	0.217	0.597	0.630	*0.935*				
PV	0.309	0.473	0.387	0.437	*0.943*			
PI	0.755	0.418	0.194	0.332	0.432	*0.845*		
TREN	0.295	0.605	0.259	0.440	0.376	0.375	*0.870*	
E-WOM	0.401	0.548	0.401	0.478	0.633	0.485	0.433	*0.921*
HTMT								
SBE								
CUST	0.364							
ENT	0.067	0.473						
INT	0.279	0.775	0.833					
PV	0.425	0.631	0.485	0.606				
PI	0.847	0.501	0.231	0.421	0.581			
TREN	0.378	0.802	0.343	0.617	0.534	0.484	0.840	
e-WOM	0.527	0.688	0.496	0.634	0.838	0.610	0.846	0.579

The off-diagonal values (italic) in the above matrix are the square correlations between the latent constructs and the diagonals are AVEs. HTMT<0.85 (Kline, 2015).
HTMT: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio, SBE: Social brand engagement, CUST: Customization, ENT: Entertainment, INT: Interaction, PV: Perceived value, PI: Purchase intention, TREN: Trendiness, e-WOM: Electronic-word of mouth

Table 5: Assessment of convergent validity for higher order construct

HOC/second-order construct	LOC/first order construct	Convergent validity	Weight	VIF	T	P
SMM	ENT	B=0.762 (T=35.478; P=0.000; BCCI=0.621–0.575)	0.332	1.212	6.183	0.000
	CUST		0.237	1.143	5.896	0.000
	INT		0.562	1.110	10.634	0.000
	e-WOM		0.378	1.224	8.248	0.000
	TREN		0.221	1.132	3.129	0.016

VIF: Variable inflation factors, HOC: Higher order construct, LOC: Lower order construct, SMM: Social media marketing, CUST: Customization, ENT: Entertainment, INT: interaction, TREN: Trendiness, e-WOM: Electronic-word of mouth

Table 6: Displays the outcomes of the hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Path	β	Sample mean (M)	SD	T	P	Remarks
H1	SMM→PV	0.346	0.621	0.036	17.216	0.000	Supported
H2	SMM→SBE	0.478	0.346	0.048	7.211	0.000	supported
H3	SMM→PI	0.387	0.186	0.041	4.596	0.000	Supported
H4	PV→PI	0.113	0.117	0.047	2.423	0.015	Supported
H5	SBE→PI	0.324	0.654	0.038	17.071	0.000	Supported
H6	SMM→PV→PI	0.070	0.073	0.03	2.354	0.019	Supported
H7	SMM→SBE→PI	0.226	0.226	0.035	6.533	0.000	Supported

SMM: Social media marketing, PV: Perceived value, PI: Purchase intention, SBE: Social Brand engagement, SD: Standard deviation

positive relationship between PV and PI (H4: PV -> PI; $\beta = 0.113$, $t = 2.423$, $P < 0.001$), as well as between SBE and PI (H5: SBE -> PI; $\beta = 0.654$, $t = 17.071$, $P < 0.001$), providing evidence in support of H4 and H5. Consequently, all of the explicit hypotheses are affirmed.

We utilized the percentile bootstrapping method, employing 5000 subsamples (Hair et al., 2021), to investigate the mediation impact. The mediation effects of H6 (SMM -> PV -> PI; $\beta = 0.07$, $t = 2.354$, $P < 0.001$) and H7 (SMM -> SBE -> PI; $\beta = 0.226$, $t = 6.533$, $P < 0.001$) are statistically significant. Moreover, the outcome of the mediation study indicates a form of mediation known as partial complementary mediation. (Dijkstra and Henseler, 2015), proposed that researchers should consider both the concept of relevance and its practical importance while investigating complementary mediation. In this case, they proposed presenting the variance that was considered, specifically the VAF (Variance Accounted For), which is the ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect. The VAF, expressed as a percentage, represents the proportion of the total effect that is attributed to the indirect effect. The Vascular Access Failure (VAF) for Subclavian Central Venous Catheter (SMM) to Pulmonary Vein (PV) to Pulmonary Infarction (PI) in this study is 31%, while for SMM to Subclavian Brachiocephalic Vein (SBE) to PI it is 32.8%.

In terms of the overall quality of the model, the Structural Equation Modeling (SMM) accounts for 20.8% of the variation in PV and 27.6% of the variation in SBE. The combined effects of SMM, PV, and SBE account for 60.2% of the observed variation in PI. In accordance with the suggestions of (Shmueli et al., 2019), we have also employed PLS predict in this work to evaluate the predictive capability of the out-of-sample data. The exogenous constructs in Q^2 have predictive importance as they exhibit positive predictive values (PV = 0.209, SBE = 0.289, and PI = 0.426). In addition, all indicators of the independent variables in the PLS-SEM analysis showed decreased prediction error compared to the benchmark linear regression model. This suggests that the predictive ability of this model is strong (Hair et al., 2021).

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Lately, cosmetic businesses have primarily focused on utilizing social media (SM) due to their recognition of its importance in increasing social brand engagement (SBE) and shaping brand perception. In this study, a conceptual framework was built based on previous research to demonstrate the impact of social media marketing (SMM) on purchase intention (PI). This study specifically aimed to examine the direct impact of social media marketing (SMM) activities on purchase intention (PI). Furthermore, it analyzed the impact of social media marketing (SMM) activities on purchase intention (PI) indirectly by including the mediating effects of perceived value (PV) and social brand equity (SBE). The data analysis in this study employed the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique. The importance of H1-H5 is substantiated by the statistical significance of all direct hypothesized links between the constructs examined in the study. The results strongly indicated that SMM had a large direct impact on PV, SBE, and PI. Moreover, PV and SBE have a substantial impact on PI. The results align with previous research that investigated the impact of social media marketing (SMM) on brand visibility (PV), brand engagement (SBE), and purchase intention (PI) in a general sense. These prior studies include the works of (Abdullah et al., 2016; Akter and Sultana, 2020; Cheung et al., 2020; Dash and Sharma, 2022; Fernandes et al., 2020; Fida et al., 2020).

The findings of this study contribute to the existing knowledge in the realm of digital marketing and advertising by demonstrating that social media marketing (SMM) has a substantial and direct influence on purchase intention (PI). Furthermore, this influence is mediated by factors such as perceived value (PV) and social brand engagement (SBE). Furthermore, the results align with previous research that affirms the idea that PV and SBE lead to PI (Gani et al., 2020; Hanaysha, 2018), this study aimed to assess the indirect influence of social media marketing (SMM) on purchase intention (PI) through the mediating factors of perceived value (PV) and social brand engagement (SBE), as hypothesized in

H6 and H7. The findings demonstrated that both indirect effect hypotheses, H6 and H7, were validated and were statistically significant. This finding is consistent with prior research that provides evidence for the mediating influence of either PV (Rahi et al., 2021; Yap, 2022) or SBE (Rahi et al., 2021). on PI, particularly in the context of cosmetics and skincare products (Chrisniyanti and Fah, 2022).

6.1. Theoretical Implications

This paper holds numerous theoretical implications and contributions. This study is unique because it examines the impact of social media marketing (SMM) activities on purchase intention (PI) by considering the combined mediating effects of perceived value (PV) and social brand engagement (SBE). This is particularly significant in the context of cosmetic brand marketing literature. This study makes a substantial contribution to the existing knowledge on digital marketing and advertising by examining the ways in which social media marketing (SMM) influences consumer perception (PI) through visual content (PV) and social brand engagement (SBE). An important finding of the study is the discovery of the mediation mechanism (sequential effect) by which SMM influences the PI. Furthermore, the results of this study provide evidence for the joint mediation effect, which aligns with the theoretical framework of stimuli-organism-response (S-O-R). Specifically, the findings indicate that the activities related to social media marketing and advertising (SMMA) have an impact on customers' cognitive and emotional responses, namely perceived value (PV) and social brand engagement (SBE). These responses, in turn, stimulate customers' purchase intention (PI). Furthermore, it is observed that the description of the measurement model in the digital marketing and advertising literature lacks consistency. Hence, based on the research conducted by (Hair et al., 2021) this study proposes the validation of the operationalization of Social Media Marketing (SMM) as a Relationship-Focused Higher-Order Construct. This construct is assessed through its five primary dimensions, namely interaction, customization, trendiness, entertainment, and e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth), as suggested by (Cheah et al., 2018), and (Jarvis et al., 2003). This work makes a noteworthy contribution by filling a gap in the existing literature. The data analysis results also showed that interaction plays a crucial role in the development of SMM, along with e-WOM, entertainment, personalization, and trendiness in that order.

6.2. Practical Implications

The results obtained from Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) indicate that (SMM) has the strongest impact on the development of the Performance Indicator (PI), followed by Social Business Engagement (SBE) and Product Value (PV). This discovery holds significant implications for marketers who should carefully integrate social media marketing (SMM) into their array of digital marketing and advertising channels. The results also indicated that contact has the greatest impact on PI, followed by e-WOM and entertainment, among the primary components of SMM. This discovery holds particular importance for Palestinian marketers, who should prioritize the utilization of a social media platform that promotes active engagement. This includes incorporating live text conversations and chat rooms where skilled professionals may connect with existing and prospective consumers, particularly in the context of cosmetic items. Regarding interactivity, social media content creators should carefully focus on the production of their content to effectively stimulate customer engagement. Compelling and pleasurable material is crucial. By utilizing big data analytics and social media data mining, content makers, particularly in Palestine as a developing nation, can acquire insights into the latest trends and market requirements. This exercise will provide them with a diverse selection of superior material that will assist them in media strategy and insight building. The study revealed that SMM has the strongest impact on SBE ($\beta = 0.478$), with PI ($\beta = 0.387$) and PV ($\beta = 0.346$) following closely behind. These findings suggest that Palestinian marketers should exert additional endeavors to offer a diverse range of comprehensive, precise, and dependable product information in captivating and appealing manners, in order to captivate clients to the brand and tempt them to purchase the marketed cosmetic products.

6.3. Constraints and Areas for Further Investigation

Although this study provides valuable insights into the performance indicators of cosmetic brands, it, like other studies, has certain limits and opens up possibilities for further research. Initially, the study solely depends on cross-sectional, online survey data obtained through a convenience/non-probability sampling technique in a single nation (Palestine). This limitation hinders the capacity to apply the findings to a broader population. To obtain conclusions that may be applied to a wider range of situations, future research should utilize longitudinal data that combines experimental and mixed methods. This data should be collected using a random or probabilistic sampling strategy and should include participants from many nations. This can assure the consistency or divergence of the conclusions of this study when data is obtained from customers belonging to different cultures.

Furthermore, this study is confined to the specific environment of the cosmetic sector. Subsequent research can focus on different industry situations to verify the findings. Furthermore, this study assessed the performance index (PI) rather than the real performance index. Hence, it is recommended that future research investigates the influence of these identical characteristics on the tangible PI in order to enhance comprehension of this subject matter. In addition, this study failed to consider many essential factors that impact customer behavior, such as personality traits like technology readiness and privacy concern. Future study might investigate the potential moderating influence of these characteristics on the proposed correlations.

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