Consumer Brand Identification and Purchase Intentions: The Mediating Role of Customer Brand Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Although there has been significant growth in the literature on customer brand engagement, there have been relatively few empirical investigations on its causes and effects. Companies increasingly seek customer engagement with their services and/or products to track their brand performance. The primary purpose of this research was to evaluate the relationship between consumer brand identification and customer brand engagement. This research examines the mediating influence of customer brand engagement on the connection between consumer brand identification and purchase intention. Furthermore, the impact of brand engagement on purchase intention is investigated in this article. The responses of 443 participants were collected using a convenient sampling method. A structural equation modelling (SEM) approach using partial least squares (PLS) was used to conduct the analysis of the data. This investigation's theoretical underpinning is supported by social identity theory. According to the findings of this research, consumer brand identification is the primary driver of customer brand engagement. Customer brand engagement partially mediates the link between consumer brand identification and purchase intention. Additionally, this study reveals that customer brand engagement impacts the purchase intention of fashion clothing businesses. In the context of fashion clothing brands, brand managers should analyse customer brand engagement's role, specifically in generating purchase intention. This study broadens our understanding of customer brand engagement within the context of the fashion apparel industry. This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by expanding our understanding of the interrelationships between consumer brand identification, customer brand engagement, and purchase intention among consumers of fashion apparel brands in the emerging economy of Pakistan. Moreover, this study is exceptional since it investigates consumer brand identification in a novel context.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour studies how individuals, communities, and institutions choose, acquire, evaluate, and distribute offerings designed to satisfy desires and requirements (Qazzafi, 2019). Consumers purchase items for utility and fundamental requirements based on their functionality and utility (Khair & Malhas, 2022). Others consume for symbolic purposes, attempting to project a
particular image (Reed et al., 2012). Also, this consumption may make people feel like they belong to a certain social group, give them confidence in who they are, and make them feel like their self-image matches who they are (Khair & Malhas, 2022).

Brands have become important to customers' daily lives by portraying their identities Kirmani (2009) and encouraging self-expression (Aaker, 1999). As a result of growing competition and globalisation, a number of companies seek to gain customers' attention using a variety of means (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022). Commonly, fashion items are purchased for public show rather than inherent utility (Lewis & Moital, 2016). So, apparel is seen as a way to show who you are by confirming and ensuring your sense of self through consumption (McNeill, 2018). The fashion apparel industry has witnessed steady transformation over the last two decades owing to the quick introduction of new collections that aim to attract and excite customers (Coskuner & Sandikci, 2004).

According to many studies conducted and published over the last decade, consumer brand identification (CBI) has emerged as one of the most prominent issues in marketing research and practice (Lam, 2012). Consumer brand identification is a vital success element in marketing (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). This idea has been recognised for its lasting impression on consumer behaviors Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) and its ability to cultivate long-term ties (Boenigk & Helmig, 2013). Therefore, marketers aim to create strong brand identification among customers (Popp & Woratschek, 2017). Customer-brand identification is a psychological concept that provides a competitive edge in developing customer-brand connections (Shin et al., 2020). A customer's sense of connection or oneness with a brand is referred to as CBI (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012).

Customer brand engagement (CBE) has attracted expanding scholarly focus (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022). According to McLean and Wilson (2019), consumer engagement strengthens the consumer-brand relationship. It is a psychological tie between consumers and a brand (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). Customer engagement is a significant aspect of the customer's preferred behaviour that drives purchase choices (Algharabat et al., 2020). Pansari and Kumar (2017) describe customer engagement as a strong mental state that comes from a good relationship with a certain company. CBE is the extent to which a customer is engaged with and connected to a company's offerings or activities (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020).

When a person is aware that they have the capability, resources, and opportunity to engage in a certain behaviour, they feel more in charge and their desire to act increases (Cheng & Huang, 2013). The process of choosing what to purchase is complicated, and the desire to buy is usually influenced by attitudes and views regarding consumer behaviour (Ou et al., 2022). The term "purchase intention" refers to the possibility that a consumer will wish to buy a product, and the higher the "purchase intention," the more probable it is that the buyer will go through with the purchase (Zeithaml et al., 1996).
Many studies have investigated the influence of brand identification on consumer behaviour. Nevertheless, there is still a need for a novel understanding of how brand identification works in various contexts (Rather et al., 2020). This study was done on fashion apparel brands in third-world countries such as Pakistan. Similarly, research on purchase intention in the fashion industry, particularly in developing nations, is largely scarce (Chetioui et al., 2020). In developing nations such as Pakistan, disengaged consumers drive many customers to move to competitive firms. Thus, CBE has lately attracted the attention of both academics and professionals. Increasingly, businesses are rethinking their marketing approaches in order to increase customer engagement with their products and services. Less emphasis has been paid to customer brand engagement in the non-Western world, which is the central problem (Asante et al., 2020; Glavee-Geo et al., 2020).

This research was undertaken in response to academic demands for further research to deepen our understanding of customer engagement (Naqvi et al., 2020). In addition, the research that has been done on customer engagement has recommended that further research be done on the influence of customer engagement behaviours on the outcomes of consumer behaviour (such as purchase intention) (Li & Han, 2021). Because there have yet to be many studies done on the topic of customer engagement in the context of fashion clothing businesses, we have decided to focus on this topic. In addition, there is a scarcity of research that studies CBI from the perspective of social identity (Popp & Woratschek, 2017). Therefore, this research addresses this vacuum in the academic literature.

This research aims to give more empirical evidence supporting the CBI idea (Su et al., 2016). The connection between consumer brand identification and customer brand engagement is examined in this article. In addition, the impact of CBE on purchase intention (PI) is investigated. This research also examines the role of CBE as a mediator between CBI and PI. Using survey data, this article empirically investigates the probable driver of customer engagement and its result. The study provides guidance to practitioners and scholars by establishing which variables are most influential in generating CBE in the context of fashion apparel, as well as its impact on purchase intention. The following contributions are made by this work to the existing CBE literature: It develops CBE-related knowledge first. The effect of such an advanced CBE on boosting PI has been studied. Additionally, the mediating influence of CBE's function between CBI and PI is analysed. The results of this study help us understand social identity theory in the context of customers' purchase intentions for fashion apparel brands.

The present portion of the study describes the study context issue and the investigation's relevance; in the next section, researchers support the study with previous research and develop hypotheses. The third component of the paper outlined the research methodology. In Part 4, the researcher summarises the study's empirical findings and explains how they match with earlier research. In the article's conclusion, the researcher elaborates on the study's theoretical and practical consequences and concludes the research.
LITERATURE REVIEW
Theoretically, this study employs Social Identity Theory (SIT) proposed by Tajfel (1979). The social identity theory provides the theoretical underpinnings necessary to comprehend the phenomenon of consumer identification (Romero & Ruiz-Equihua, 2020). The theory of social identity can be defined as “the perception of oneness or belongingness to some human groups” (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 21). The social identity theory is the theoretical foundation that may be used to explain behaviour (Agyeiwaah et al., 2020).

Consumer brand identification
CBI can be described as “a customer’s psychological state of perceiving, feeling, and valuing his or her belongingness with a brand” (Lam et al., 2010, p.129). The foundation of CBI is found in the SIT, which contends that a individual's sense of self comprises both their individual and collective identities (Shin et al., 2020). Based on SIT, the core tenet of CBI is that individuals interact with and form relationships with brands that assist them in achieving essential identity objectives, such as fulfilling self-defining needs (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). This assumption is consistent with past empirical results demonstrating that individuals purchase brands for reasons other than their practical advantages and evaluate how a brand expresses their self-identity (Park et al., 2010).

Customer brand engagement
The word "engagement" has been defined in a number of ways by various research studies. In the commercial sector, engagement refers to a contract between multiple parties, but the management literature defines it as an organization's interaction with its internal stakeholders. In contrast, the term "engagement" has been used to refer to a customer's behaviour toward a firm in the context of marketing. This has led to the notion of "engagement" being elevated to "customer engagement" (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Academics and practitioners have paid a significant amount of attention to customer engagement research in recent years (Rather et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2021). Sociology and psychology, for example, have done research on engagement (Delbaere et al., 2021). Marketing has also paid a lot of attention to the topic (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021). CBE refers to the psychological state and intensity of customers' brand awareness, attachment, engagement, and connection (Paruthi & Kaur, 2017). It refers to the amount consumers spend on and engage in brand-related activities (Kumar et al., 2019). Customer engagement is the interaction between a company and a buyer as they striving to build a closer bond. It gives a way to measure how to create, develop, and improve relationships with customers (Lima et al., 2019). Customers' engagement with brands is also appropriate for companies developing new products. This is because customers give their thoughts and reactions to the most recent products (Imtiaz & Nasim, 2022). CBE is also a crucial indicator of business performance (Zhao et al., 2022).
Purchase intention

A customer's purchase intention is the likelihood of acquiring a product in the near future (Chang & Liu, 2009). Purchase intention corresponds closely with actual purchase behaviour (Zaharia & Schmitz, 2020). While encouraging purchasing intentions, marketers must also guarantee that the majority of purchase intentions result in real purchases (Tirtiroglu & Elbeck, 2008). Thus, marketers must evaluate the purchase intentions of current and potential customers (Tirtiroglu & Elbeck, 2008). Since buy intention and purchase behaviour are strongly connected, the company must increase customer purchase intention (Sun et al., 2017).

Consumer brand identification and customer brand engagement

Theoretical models imply that CBI positively influences CBE (Rather et al., 2018). It is often acknowledged that consumer identification is one of the most essential aspects driving customer engagement (Coelho et al., 2018). For instance, research has demonstrated that consumer brand identification influences customer brand engagement (Coelho et al., 2018). Customer-brand identification is defined by a strong psychological connection to the brand, which enables the prediction of future behaviour and the development of a long-lasting relationship (Akram et al., 2022). Theoretical models have shown a positive link between CBI and CBE (van Doorn et al., 2010), and consumer brand identification may be a crucial precursor to CBE (Rather et al., 2018). As a consequence of this, the following hypothesis is put up for consideration:

\[ H1: \text{CBI positively affects CBE.} \]

Customer brand engagement and purchase intention

Previous studies have frequently demonstrated that brand engagement affects future behaviour intentions (Sung et al., 2021). In another previous research shown that CBE positively influence purchase intention (Patel et al., 2022). A previous study has shown a connection between CBE and purchase intention (Islam et al., 2017). A positive link between CBE and PI has been shown in prior investigations (Sun et al., 2019). Moreover, past research has revealed a positive correlation between CBE and purchase intention (Zheng et al., 2022). In the current article, we suggest that:

\[ H2: \text{CBE positively impacts PI.} \]

Mediation of customer brand engagement

The association between conformity behaviour and online group purchase intention is mediated by customer engagement (Ou et al., 2022). Customer engagement mediates the connection between consumer community identification and brand love (Paruthi et al., 2022). In a past study, the effect of social identification on purchase intention was mediated by customer engagement (Prentice et al., 2019). The mediating role of CBE was noted as an area for future research (Chen et al., 2021). In conclusion, this study proposed H3 as follows:
**H3: CBE mediates the connection between CBI and PI.**

The following framework for the research is constructed based on the previous discussion of the relevant literature and previous studies (as shown in Figure 1).

![Figure 1.Framework of Study](image-url)

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study's hypotheses were evaluated and investigated using a quantitative research approach. This paper's demographic consists of Pakistani consumers of fashion apparel brands. Online data collection occurred. Because of the increasing number of digital platforms, online data collection is currently widespread (Kumar, 2019; Raïes et al., 2015). In addition, an online survey is suited for the collection of more data with fewer efforts in the field and fewer errors made by humans (Kumar, 2019). In order to collect information on our customers, we relied on cross-sectional data since this is the approach that is the most widely used, as well as the most cost-effective, prompt, and accurate (Zikmund & Babin, 2010).

There are two primary categories that may be used to classify the sampling techniques. The first method is known as a probability sampling technique, while the second method is known as non-probability sampling (Creswell, 2009). The technique of probability sampling can only be used if the sample frame is readily accessible and the sample size is restricted to a more manageable level. The author used a non-probability method for data collection since the target population's sample frame is unavailable. The data was collected via many internet channels, including WhatsApp and email. We received responses from 443 individuals in all. The PLS-SEM was employed to analyse the data. PLS-SEM permits researchers to examine samples less than 500 (Hair et al., 2014).

**Measurements**

Consumer brand identification consisted of four items derived from (So et al., 2013). CBE comprises four items derived from pertinent literature (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Five-item instruments are employed to assess PI (Lee et al., 2008; Son et al., 2013).
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent’s Profile

The demographic information received from the 443 survey respondents is shown in Table 1. The poll had 443 responses, of which 50.8% were from male respondents and 49.2% from female respondents. The majority of respondents, which accounts for 59.8%, reside in urban regions. The M.Phil or Ph.D. degrees were held by the majority of the participants (57.8%). The majority of respondents (39.7%) did not have a spouse in their household. The majority of respondents, 50.1%, reported earning less than 20,000 per month.

Table 1. Demographic analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of residence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than primary</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matriculation</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Phil/PhD</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 and above</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20,000</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>50.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,000-50,000</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51,000-80,000</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81,000 and above</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variance inflation factor

An investigation of the possibility of factor multicollinearity is performed using variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis. The VIF values of the constructs addressed in this study varied between 1.415 and 2.736 and were consistently lower than the suggested cutoff value of 5.0 (Kock, 2015). As a result, there was no evidence in our data that pointed to the existence of multicollinearity.
Common method bias

A self-administered survey was used to obtain the data for this research; hence, we analysed it to look for common method bias (Min et al., 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Initially, participants were informed that their replies would be kept confidential and that there was no one correct answer to any survey questions. Harman's single-factor test was subsequently used to assess the presence of CMB (Min et al., 2016). The exploratory factor analysis led to the conclusion that a single-component model could explain 36.767% of the observed variance. This result was much lower than the limit of 50%, which shows that CMB did not cause a problem with our data (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Results and Data Analysis

This study's Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) in this study is justified for various reasons. PLS-SEM was used for both data analysis and the testing of study hypotheses. PLS-SEM has found widespread use in marketing research due to its ability to evaluate the correlations between a large number of predictive factors. PLS employs the least squares regression technique, which may be adapted to do a simultaneous analysis of the relationships between a more significant number of variables with more precision than multiple regression, LISREL, and covariance-based approaches. In addition, PLS facilitates incorporating moderating factors into a study model (Kumar & Nayak, 2018).

Measurement model assessment

Table 2 shows that both the Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) scores were above the required level of 0.70 and that the average variance extracted (AVE) for demonstrating convergent validity for each construct was more than the recommended threshold of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017). The results confirmed the measurement model's convergent validity. It is necessary to analyse the discriminant validity of the conceptions to guarantee that each construct is distinct and captures a particular phenomenon (Hair et al., 2014).

In the methodology developed by Fornell and Larcker, (1981), discriminant validity is considered to have been established when the correlation between constructs is lower than the square root of the average variance extracted. According to the findings, the square roots of the AVE for all of the constructs included in the diagonal row are higher than the correlations between the constructs in Table 3. As a result, it is possible to demonstrate that the measurement model has acceptable discriminant validity. Examining the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratios for discriminant validity, Table 4 reveals that none of the HTMT values exceed the suggested limit of 0.85, suggesting that discriminant validity was obtained (Henseler et al., 2015). Consequently, discriminant validity is attained.
Table 2: Measurement model assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>items</th>
<th>Item loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach α</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer brand identification</td>
<td>CBI1</td>
<td>0.714</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.848</td>
<td>0.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBI2</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBI3</td>
<td>0.803</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBI4</td>
<td>0.805</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer brand engagement</td>
<td>CBE1</td>
<td>0.780</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>0.641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBE2</td>
<td>0.855</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBE3</td>
<td>0.858</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBE4</td>
<td>0.698</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>PI1</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>0.676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PI2</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PI3</td>
<td>0.811</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PI4</td>
<td>0.856</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PI5</td>
<td>0.854</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>CBE</th>
<th>CBI</th>
<th>PI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBE</td>
<td><strong>0.801</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBI</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td><strong>0.763</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td><strong>0.822</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Discriminant validity -HTMT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>CBE</th>
<th>CBI</th>
<th>PI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBI</td>
<td>0.546</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>0.716</td>
<td>0.347</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural model evaluation

All hypotheses were confirmed by the inner model evaluation. CBI positively influences CBE, thereby validating Hypothesis 1 (β=0.439, t=10.884, p<0.001). Likewise, CBE positively influences purchase intention, confirming Hypothesis 2 (β=0.607, t=16.047, p<0.001). The link between CBI and PI is partially mediated by CBE, which provides support for Hypothesis 3 (β=0.267, t=8.144, p<0.001). The outcomes of this research indicate that CBE is substantially influenced by variables such as consumer brand identification. Customers are more inclined to engage with a brand with high identification. Similarly, the research findings indicated that CBE had the most significant
influence on purchase intention. The greater the CBE's significance, the greater the likelihood of future purchase intentions for fashion apparel brands.

CBI accounted for 19.3% of the variation in CBE. The CBE explained 36.9% of the variation in PI. Moreover, taking into account the values of $R^2$ and $f^2$, the predictive sample reuse strategy ($Q^2$) demonstrates predictive significance (Chin et al., 2008). In the case that $Q^2$ is greater than zero, then the model has predictive significance; on the other hand, in the case that $Q^2$ is smaller than zero, then the model does not have predictive relevance (Ali et al., 2016). Because each $Q^2$ value is greater than 0, it may be deduced that the predictive validity of the model is sufficient. Researchers used Cohen's (1988) criterion to calculate the effect size ($f^2$), which is 0.02 for small effects, 0.15 for medium effects, and 0.35 for large effects. According to Table 5, all connections had medium and large effects, respectively.

**Table 5: Hypotheses testing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T values</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>$f^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: CBI -&gt; CBE</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td>10.884</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>0.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: CBE -&gt; PI</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>16.047</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>0.584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: CBI -&gt; CBE -&gt; PI</td>
<td>0.267</td>
<td>8.144</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2. Structural Model**

**Discussion**

Frequently and progressively, the literature acknowledges the growing significance of CBE. This study is a response to previous research that advised testing and validating the CBE scale using diverse nomological networks in various nations (Halaszovich & Nel, 2017; Kapoor et al., 2018). The purpose of the present study conducted in Pakistan was to evaluate the impact of the CBI on CBE, which in turn affects purchase intention. CBE has become an increasingly essential topic in marketing debates and brand decisions. As a consequence, this study's objective was to assess CBE's
underlying cause and effect. The current findings help us better understand customer engagement in the fashion apparel industry.

This article contributes to the pool of existing knowledge by presenting empirical information on customer brand engagement based on research that has been published in academic literature. The results provide evidence supporting the hypothesised relationships discovered in earlier investigations. The outcomes of our investigation supported every one of our hypotheses. The primary aims of this work were to build and empirically validate a model that incorporates CBI, CBE, and purchase intention as well as analyse the interrelationships among these latent variables. The results of this research indicate that CBI does have a positive effect on CBE. This result is supported by studies done in the past (Coelho et al., 2018; Rather et al., 2018). In addition, the result indicates that CBE has a positive influence on PI. This result is consistent with results from previous research (Patel et al., 2022; Sung et al., 2021). In addition, this paper makes a considerable contribution by exploring the role of CBE as a partial mediator in the interaction between CBI and PI. This result is consistent with results from a prior study (Paruthi et al., 2022). Research demonstrates that customer brand engagement may increase the influence of consumer brand identification on purchase intention.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Even though the marketing literature on consumer brand engagement is expanding at a rapid rate, more empirical research on its causes and effects has not yet been carried out. This study comprehensively investigates customer engagement in the fashion apparel business. All of these results are important for giving businesses a competitive edge. The purpose of this study was to investigate both the cause and the effect of customer brand engagement in the fashion apparel industry. This article contributes to the CBE literature. The outcomes of this research indicate that CBI affects CBE positively and that CBE influences purchase intentions positively. In addition, CBE serves as a partial mediator between CBI and PI. This research provides fashion clothing brand managers with insights on engaging customers with their apparel companies based on its results. The authors of this study believe that the results will encourage future studies to examine different possible causes and effects of CBE in fashion clothing businesses domain.

Theoretical Implications

In an emerging economy, researchers performed empirical research and added to the engagement literature. Emerging economies give a substantial growth opportunity for multi-national organisations (Islam et al., 2018). Few CBE studies have been conducted in developing markets (Hollebeek, 2018; Islam et al., 2019). Studying consumer brand identification is the next addition to the field of identification. It is a new construct that has been supported by some studies, but its importance in helping the company reach its long-term goals has not been thoroughly proven yet, so more research is needed (Shokri & Alavi, 2019).
The following are some of this paper's potential theoretical implications: In the first place, it broadens the scope of the earlier study on CBE, which should have paid greater attention to the industry of fashion clothing businesses. Second, there hasn't been enough investigation into the links between identification and the myriad of other factors that have been shown to play a significant part in relationship marketing (Popp & Woratschek, 2017). This study intends to add to the empirical literature on the role of CBE as a partial mediator in the link between CBI and PI. This research was done in Pakistan, a developing market in Asia. This is an extra contribution to this work since research on developing markets has been undertaken by only a few studies.

**Practical Implications**

This section includes suggestions for managers to improve consumer-brand relations through customer brand engagement. Academics and professionals in marketing have seen that CBE has positive effects, and it is expected that customer brand engagement acceleration will lead to the best results. However, more research has yet to be conducted in this field (Roy et al., 2018). This study shows the significance of developing fashion apparel-based customer brand engagement as its growth is likely to boost consumers' purchasing intent. Therefore, fashion clothes brand marketers should build customer brand engagement. This study offers brand managers with the knowledge they need to successfully generate engagement and create connections with fashion apparel brands. This article's findings validate several previously held beliefs regarding the significance of CBI and CBE. The integrated approach to major factors of marketing success, such as identification, CBE, and PI, leads to a number of novel insights for researchers. Businesses should use marketing techniques based on the identities of their consumers and capitalise on the direct benefits of identity in retaining and acquiring customers. Additionally, managers should be proactive in engaging customers with their businesses through a variety of promotional campaigns.

**Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

Limitations are inherent in any scientific endeavour. The results and the ability to generalise the findings are both impacted by the limitations. The limitations of the study are uncontrollable external factors that might have an impact on the overall quality of the research. In addition, it is not feasible to accommodate all of the potential theoretical foundations of an idea and offer methodological excellence to research at the same time. In order to overcome constraints, one exerts their maximum effort. There are fewer limits that were imposed on this study, and as a result, the generalizability was reduced. This was the case regardless of the quality of the endeavour. Some limitations of this study indicate the need for additional investigation in certain areas. We began by examining cross-sectional data. As a consequence of this, further research has to include longitudinal data in order to get a deeper understanding. Second, Pakistani customers of fashion clothing were the primary focus of this particular research. Therefore, its usefulness outside of this context may be restricted. In light of this, future research may study these associations in various scenarios. Last but not least, despite the fact that we used a non-randomly selected sample, we believe that more research that collects data using a probability-based method would likely yield more interesting results and would advance
the work that we have done. This research focuses only on purchase intention as a single potential outcome of CBE. Nevertheless, the model could include other constructs for predicting outcomes, such as brand love and brand loyalty. Lastly, the proposed model is restricted to investigating a mediation relationship. Therefore, incorporating relevant moderating factors (e.g., gender, culture) might give additional or refined understanding. This research was done inside a collectivist society. Thus, future studies may examine the conceptual model in other cultural contexts, such as individualistic cultures.

REFERENCES


