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Consumer Brand Identification and Purchase Intention: Mediating Role of Customer Brand Engagement and Moderating Role of Self-Esteem in the Fashion Apparel Industry

Consumer Brand Identification and Purchase Intention: Mediating Role of Customer Brand Engagement and Moderating Role of Self-Esteem in the Fashion Apparel Industry

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Abstract

This study emphasizes the role of customer brand identification in predicting customer brand engagement using social exchange theory. The study investigates the connection between customer brand engagement and purchase intention. Furthermore, the research investigates the mediatory role that customer brand engagement plays in the relationship between consumer brand identification and purchase intention. The moderating function of self-esteem between customer brand engagement and purchase intention also examined. This research used an online questionnaire and a convenience sampling technique to obtain valid data from 392 respondents who were either Pakistani fashion apparel users or those who intended to purchase fashion apparel brands. The structural equation modeling with partial least squares was employed to conduct the investigations. Social exchange theory was employed in this research. Consumer brand identification predicts customer brand engagement. Additionally, customer brand engagement has a favorable impact on purchase intention. Additionally, the relationship between consumer brand identification and purchase intention is partially mediated by customer brand engagement. Self-esteem moderates the relationship between customer brand engagement and purchase intention. The outcomes of this study suggest fashion apparel marketers explore the significance of CBE in the formation of purchase intention. This article is one of the few published manuscripts that belong to the Pakistani fashion apparel marketing sector. The results shed fresh insight on the causes of customer brand engagement and gave empirical evidence for customer brand engagement's partial mediating influence. Additionally, the study contributes to the literature on purchase intention by establishing the favorable influence of customer brand engagement on purchase intention.

Keywords: Consumer brand identification, Customer brand engagement, Self-esteem, Purchase intention

Introduction

As markets become more saturated and globalized, brands must develop innovative strategies to maintain their relevance to consumers. In 2022, the fashion industry generated over US$1.5 trillion in revenue; this figure is anticipated to exceed US$1.7 trillion in 2023 (Zeugner-Roth et al., 2025). South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India are becoming textile production hubs, producing roughly 60% of the apparel now consumed by humans (Razzaq et al., 2018). In the past, fashion was considered the game of the wealthy, but recently, it has become accessible to everyone. Therefore, the global fashion industry's income has significantly increased over the last ten years, mostly in the apparel sector (Chauhan et al., 2023).

Fashion apparel is experiencing a surge in popularity and acceptance among consumers in Pakistan. In addition to increased acceptance, the fashion industry is experiencing heightened competition as businesses endeavor to secure a competitive edge (Sandhu & Shabbir, 2023). Fashion studies have garnered considerable academic

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attention (Handa & Khare, 2013). Fashion may be the creative medium through which customers express themselves by adhering to the most recent trends or embracing unique styles (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). A fashion item is widely accepted as visually attractive and socially acceptable at the time (Entwistle, 2015). People may pay more attention when purchasing "suitable" clothing brands since clothes expose one's personality, communicate one's status, and identify the individual wearing them (Islam & Rahman, 2016). Fashion apparel has always been an intriguing subject of consumer behavior research (Talaat, 2022).

Humans have exhibited a natural urge to improve their outer appearance in front of society ever since the beginning of human society. Individuals engage in consumption behaviors with the intention of cultivating favorable social impressions and seeking good assessments from others (Naz, Awais, & Shafiq, 2018; Orehek et al., 2020). Fashion may be the creative medium through which customers express themselves by adhering to the most recent trends or embracing unique styles (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). Individuals employ "appearance management" products, including apparel, to enhance their physical appearance and express their personal taste in fashion (Sarkar & Sarkar, 2022). In Pakistan, the fashion sector is a significant component of the economy. Many emerging Indigenous brands, including Gul Ahmed, HSY studio, Junaid Jamshed, and Khaadi, target diverse niche markets in the country (Atta et al., 2024).

Customer engagement has been on the Marketing Science Institute's Tier I research priorities list since 2010 (Roy Bhattacharjee et al., 2023). Customer brand engagement is receiving an increasing amount of scholarly attention (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022). Despite the emerging abundance of research on CBE, the dynamics of the concept in emerging markets are still insufficiently understood (Wahid & Gunarto, 2022). Although academic publications have discussed consumer engagement as early as 2006, 2010 marked the beginning of the concept's sudden surge in popularity (Lim et al., 2022). The significance of customer engagement as a study area has increased in several business fields, including marketing, service management, and communication management (Shawky et al., 2020). Despite the increasing curiosity in customer brand engagement, there is a less empirical research in this area (NasarAmini Jeloudarlou et al., 2021). Several academicians advocate further investigating the drivers that influence customer engagement due to its critical importance from a strategic standpoint (Kosiba et al., 2020). One important gap in the research on CBE is the lack of empirical studies that look at possible moderators that affect the relationship between the causes and effects of CBE (Read et al., 2019). This gap in the research is especially important because finding moderators could help us learn more about how CBE drivers and outcomes work in different contexts.

The main problem is that CBE has not received enough attention from the non-Western world (Aziz & Ahmed, 2023). Previous CBE research has mostly occurred in Western cultures (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Specifically, it is argued that models established in Western contexts are inconsistent or give different findings in non-Western contexts (Harrigan et al., 2017; Leckie et al., 2016). In light of this, the current study conducted research in a developing country, such as Pakistan, in order to address the problem that was present in the CBE literature in the context of the fashion clothing business.

Regarding the CBE, in recent years, there has been growing recognition in academia of the significance of engagement and the connections that generate engagement between customers and companies (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez et al., 2024). According to the 2021 Global Customer Engagement Review, businesses that have a high CBE also enjoy decreased expenses associated with customer acquisition and enhanced customer lifetime value. Both of these factors are vital for the long-term success of a company. Furthermore, more than half of the companies that scored highly on the Customer Engagement Index exceeded their sales estimates for the year 2020, which is evidence of the competitive advantage that CBE offers to organizations (So et al., 2021). According to research by Gallup, fully engaged consumers generate 23% more revenue, profit, and wallet share than average customers. Actively disengaged customers spend 13% less than average customers on the same measures (Tourchian et al., 2022). Customer engagement is essential for businesses to predict and satisfy customer needs effectively, ultimately improving organizational performance (Sharma & Sharma, 2024). As a result, enhancing CBE has emerged as a key marketing goal (Gao & Shao, 2024). Scholars contend that the consumer identification process significantly impacts individual consumer behavior (Loureiro et al., 2024). Consumer behavior is a complex and varied field of study, wherein researchers continually examine the multiple factors influencing consumer decision-making (Kinawy, 2024). Brand identification may positively influence customer engagement, since those customers who strongly identify with a brand are more inclined to interact actively rather than remain passive customers (Shahid et al., 2025). Marketers and consumer behavior researchers must identify the key factors that accelerate and enhance consumer purchase intentions despite the availability of

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competing brands (Nikhashemi & Delgado-Ballester, 2022).

As a key indicator for measuring the connection between consumers and companies, one of the ultimate aims of businesses is to determine how to trigger CBE and maximize its beneficial impacts (Chen et al., 2021). Several studies have recognized CBE as a significant mediating variable (Agyei et al., 2020; Kaur et al., 2020a; Omar et al., 2021). Individuals' engagement in self-comparison and their perception of the information obtained from such comparisons are significantly influenced by differences between people (Bi & Zhang, 2022). In relation to social comparison processes, self-esteem, in particular, attracts the interest of academicians (Wang, Wang, Gaskin, & Hawk, 2017). Self-esteem is used as moderating variable in many studies (Burnasheva & Suh, 2020; Van Tran et al., 2022). In the present study self-esteem used as moderating variable.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the effect of CBI on CBE.
2. To evaluate the impact of CBE on purchase intention.
3. To investigate the mediating effect of CBE between CBI and PI.
4. To determine the moderation effect of self-esteem between CBE and PI.

This study significantly contributes to the marketing literature by rectifying the aforementioned deficiencies. This study enhances the present literature on marketing in several aspects. The study's results are a valuable addition to the CBE, which has substantial unexplored potential but has not yet garnered sufficient attention. Furthermore, this present investigation enhances the already established corpus of research on fashion clothing brands by investigating the fundamental correlations among CBI, CBE, SE, and their effects on fashion apparel brand's purchase intention. This study's findings contribute to our comprehension of the social exchange theory in relation to the purchase intentions of consumers for fashion apparel from companies.

Literature Review

Social Exchange Theory

The present research investigation is based on social exchange theory (SET), which mainly addresses transactional (social & economic) value, reciprocity, and social interactions (Kakakhel & Khalil, 2022). According to SET, individuals engage in social interactions only on the basis of their evaluations of the tangible and intangible costs and rewards associated with the relationship (Gligor & Bozkurt, 2022; Harrigan et al., 2018). Customers are supposed to exhibit favorable attitudes, emotions, and behaviors toward an object (e.g., brand/products) after obtaining advantages from the brand/firm (Rosado-Pinto & Loureiro, 2020). When exchanging resources with others, individuals strive to optimize their benefits and minimize their expenses (Jahan & Kim, 2021). This paper explores, from the perspective of SET, the links between the constructs of consumer brand identification, CBE, self-esteem and purchase intention (Blau, 1964). The significance of reciprocity in human relationships is underscored by the SET (Khalil et al., 2021). Several CBE research studies have used SET as their theoretical foundation (Gomes et al., 2025; Parray et al., 2023; Rasty & Filieri, 2023; Sallaku & Vigolo, 2022).

Consumer Brand Identification

Brands have evolved into esteemed societal entities that people may use to construct their own identity (Pedeliento & Kavaratzis, 2019). Individuals overlap their own image with the brand image in order to convey and strengthen their personal identity (Lee & Hsieh, 2021). The co-creation of CBI occurs via the interaction between brand identity and consumer identity, as they converge to form a cohesive representation of the customer's self-concept in relation to the entity offering the product or service. Consumers enhance their affiliation with a brand via consumer-brand identification, which is a result of brand identity (So et al., 2013). Moreover, the research suggests that customers make purchases not just for the practical advantages offered by products or services but also for the existential meaning they provide to their lives and the self-affirming impact they offer (Addie et al., 2019; Awais, Malik, & Khan, 2023). Customer identification leads to positive behavior. Identification positively correlates with content creation, engagement, and willingness to pay (Romero & Ruiz-Equihua, 2020).

Customer Brand Engagement

Numerous scholars have expressed substantial interest in the subject of engagement. For example, the notions of engagement have been studied in a number of studies pertaining to political science, educational psychology,

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sociology, organizational behavior, and, more recently, marketing (Awais, Kashif, & Raza, 2020; Hinson et al., 2019). Engagement is a subject that is of considerable significance to both academicians and marketers (Wang et al., 2022). There has been a great deal of discussion on the definition of engagement in a number of different settings. In the realm of business, two parties enter into a formal agreement known as an engagement. In the context of marketing, engagement is the degree to which consumers engage with a specific company, as evidenced by their actions and interactions (Salem, 2021). In the past decade, customer engagement has garnered a growing amount of scholarly attention (Monferrer et al., 2019; Roy et al., 2018). Customer engagement is increasingly recognized for positively impacting consumer behavior (Awais, Rehman, & Kiyani, 2020; Awais, Sulehri, Dar, Mohsin, Rehman, & Estes, 2021; Junaid et al., 2019). The role of customer brand engagement (CBE) in fostering intentions to utilize a brand is often described as "brand usage intentions"(Harrigan et al., 2018).

Self-esteem

The concept of self-esteem may be characterized as a fundamental psychological need for individuals. Consequently, persons with low self-esteem often have a considerable inclination to participate in activities that may elevate their self-esteem (Giovannini et al., 2015). Self-esteem (SE) is the personal assessment of one's own worth and encompasses an individual's self-perception (Rosenberg, 1965; Wang et al., 2017). In the disciplines of marketing psychology and consumer behavior, self-esteem is also a well-known term (Dittmar et al., 2007; Yurchisin & Johnson, 2004). Self-esteem can be described as an attribute of personality that exerts a powerful influence on how people behave and can also induce a variety of consumer behaviors (Pyszczynski et al., 2004).

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to the level of interest and consideration a buyer has while deciding to purchase a certain brand (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018). Purchase intention is influenced by the interplay between the customer's desires, attitudes, and perceptions towards the product or brand, and it pertains to the probability of a person engaging in a certain product purchase (Beneke et al., 2016). PI is an attitude variable that is used in the process of determining the future contribution that purchasers will make to a brand (Kim & Ko, 2012). Purchase intention is the most accepted predictor of consumer behavior (Verma, 2021).

Hypothesis Development

CBI And Customer Brand Engagement

Customers' identification results in good behavior. For instance, identification correlates positively with content creation, engagement, and the propensity to pay (Romero & Ruiz-Equihua, 2020). Theoretical models have proposed that CBI positively impacts CBE (Rather et al., 2018a). An earlier research has demonstrated that CBI has a beneficial effect on CBE (Agyei et al., 2021). Research has demonstrated that customers are more inclined to interact with a brand when they identify it, such as by dedicating time to learning about it (Kaur et al., 2020b). Prior empirical research has shown that brand identification increases consumer engagement (Badenes-Rocha et al., 2019). The results of this paper suggest that consumers' identification with a certain fashion apparel brand might influence their level of engagement with that brand. The discussion above can be used to form the following hypothesis.

H₁: Consumer brand identification positively affects CBE.

CBE and Purchase Intention

When people engage with a product and brand on a regular basis, they are more probable to buy that product or brand in the future (Joshi & Srivastava, 2019). CBE has a positive effect on PI (Algharabat, 2018). Theoretical frameworks in customer engagement highlight the significance of attachment, loyalty, and trust as key outcomes that influence purchase intention (Clement Addo et al., 2021). An earlier research has investigated the influence of CBE on favorable consumer outcomes, including purchase intention, consumer-based brand equity, and word of mouth (Zha et al., 2023). A prior study identified a favorable correlation between CBE and PI (Zeqiri et al., 2025). Research examining the relationship between CBE and PI is limited (Joshi & Srivastava, 2019). The discussion above can be used to construct the following hypothesis.

H₂: CBE positively influences PI

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Mediating Function of CBE

Engaged consumers are more likely to like the target brand than non-engaged consumers (Hollebeek, 2011). This results in a more favorable evaluation of the main brand and a stronger personal connection with it (Harrigan et al., 2018), it consequently strengthens purchase intention (Harmeling et al., 2017). Customer brand engagement has been used as a mediator in many previous studies (Gao & Huang, 2021; Kwon et al., 2021). Based on previous studies, it has been shown that CBE plays a mediating function in the connection between social identification and PI (Prentice et al., 2019). Moreover, customer engagement has been recognized as a mediator in the correlation between customer experience and behavioral intention (Gomes et al., 2025). In this research, the following hypotheses were made by keeping in mind how important brand trust and CBE are as links between different variables.

H_3: CBE mediates the connection between CBI and purchase intention.

Moderating Function of Self-Esteem

Prior investigations have established that self-esteem acts as a moderating factor with respect to specific psychological variables (Lee et al., 2020). Extensive research has shown that self-esteem significantly impacts an individual's behavior and serves as a driving force behind various consumer behaviors (Giovannini et al., 2015). In addition, a significant moderating influence of moderator self-esteem is found between customer engagement and PI (Lee et al., 2020). The discussion above can be used to construct the following hypothesis.

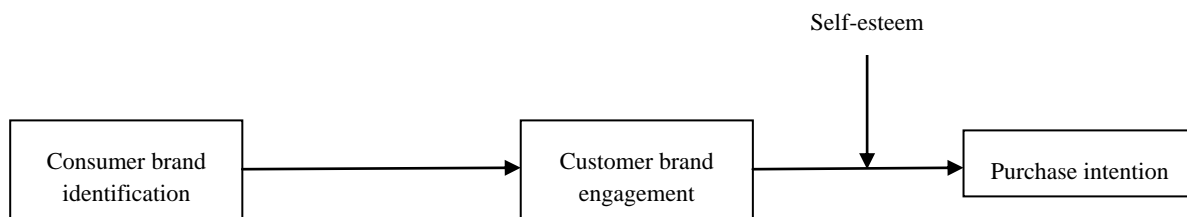H_4: Self-esteem moderates the connection between CBE and PI.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Methodology

Research Design

A research design provides the aims of a study and provides researchers with a strategic approach to follow (Antony & Banuelas, 2002). Research design is fundamentally classified into quantitative and qualitative methods. Nonetheless, the research design may vary with its attributes, frequency of interactions, sample type, and reference period (Saunders et al., 2009). This study employs a quantitative methodology.

Population and Sampling

This section defines the study's population and the sampling methodology used to select the sample. A sample is a subset of the population selected for research purposes (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The research population comprises consumers of fashion clothing brands in Pakistan. Many sampling techniques may be used to get a sample that accurately reflects the whole population, classified as either probability sampling methods or non-probability sampling methods (Creswell, 2009). Many researchers employ the convenience sampling technique, which proves advantageous for accurately predicting consumer behavior and swiftly gathering information (Gao & Shao, 2024; Safeer & Le, 2023). This research used a non-probability sample method due to the absence of a population frame for fashion clothing businesses and a lack of databases or other sources containing consumer contact information for fashion apparel firms. Non-probability convenience sampling is often used in emerging engagement research, making it an ideal strategy for this study (France, Merrilees, & Miller, 2016; Rather et al., 2019).

Survey Design Approach

This paper examines the connections between CBI and PI, with an emphasis on the mediating function of CBE and the moderation function of self-esteem. To achieve this objective, a survey approach was employed for data

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collection. The design includes the techniques used to gather participant data (Cuneen & Tobar, 2017). Researchers use surveys to collect data on individuals to describe, contrast, or explain their behavior, attitudes, and knowledge. A survey is a data collection approach in which individuals, known as respondents, are invited to answer questions (Monette et al., 2013).

Data Collection Method

Data was collected from the fashion apparel brand users in Pakistan. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from participants. The sample encompassed a total of 392 usable respondents from consumers. The respondents were selected using the convenience sampling technique. An online survey method was employed to access the fashion apparel consumers. Online surveys are regarded as a credible method for gathering data on the perception, attitude, and behavioral intentions of respondents (Evans & Mathur, 2005). The researcher sent questionnaires to a larger number of respondents via email and WhatsApp. In the last two years, WhatsApp has dominated the worldwide instant messenger industry (Quoquab et al., 2021). A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed. Following data screening for completion and validity checks, 430 questionnaires were deemed usable for further analysis. After additional data cleaning, the final sample size for analysis consisted of 392 usable responses.

Instrument Development and Measures

This section details the operationalization of key variables employed in the study. A 5-point Likert scale was employed for all measures, with a range of 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

Consumer Brand Identification (CBI)

CBI was assessed using an adopted 4-item scale developed by (So et al., 2013). A sample item included: "When someone criticizes this fashion apparel brand, it feels like a personal insult". This instrument captures consumers' psychological connection with the brand.

Customer Brand Engagement (CBE)

A 4-item scale adopted from (Hollebeek et al., 2014) measured CBE. An example item is: "I feel good when I use this fashion apparel brand". This scale gauges the extent to which employees identify with the brand and feel a sense of connection with it.

Self-Esteem (SE)

An established 3-item scale (Richardson et al., 2009) was utilized to measure self-esteem. An example item is: "I take a positive attitude toward myself". This scale captured the extent to which consumers associate the brand with positive attributes they value in themselves.

Purchase Intention (PI)

A 5-item scale developed by (Lee et al., 2008) and (Son et al., 2013) was employed to measure purchase intention. A sample item included: "I intend to buy fashion apparel brand constantly." This scale assesses how far a consumer is willing the buy particular apparel from a brand.

Data Analysis Tools

There are numerous justifications for employing PLS-SEM in this investigation. The data analysis and the evaluation of the research hypotheses were both conducted using the PLS-SEM technique. PLS-SEM has been extensively employed in marketing research as a result of its capacity to assess the correlations between many predictive factors. PLS utilizes the least squares regression method, which can be modified to concurrently examine the relationships between more variables with a higher degree of precision than covariance-based techniques such as multiple regression and LISREL. Additionally, PLS enables the integration of moderating factors Into A Study Model (Kumar & Nayak, 2018).

Results and Data Analysis

Sample Description

In this survey, 392 respondents participated, as indicated by the data. The statistical data for the sample indicated that 52.3% of the respondents were male, while 47.7% were female. The majority of respondents (38.5%) belong to the age category of 20–25. M.Phil. or PhD candidates comprised the majority of responses (54.8%).

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Additionally, the majority of respondents (60.7%) were unmarried. Among respondents, the majority (49.2%) reported a monthly salary of less than 20,000 rupees.

Measurement Model Assessment

The measuring model emphasizes the establishment of the reliability and validity of the constructs used in the investigation. This ensures that the measures accurately capture the intended concepts. The structural model examines the hypothesized causal relationships between the constructs. It determines the significance and strength of these relationships. The data analysis began with the evaluation of the measurement model. The measurement model was evaluated for two kinds of validity: convergent validity and discriminant validity. Experts advise that the values of Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) should exceed 0.70 and remain below 0.95 (Hair & Alamer, 2022). The composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values surpassed the 0.70 threshold, indicating construct reliability. Convergent validity was established by identifying the threshold value of the average variance extracted (AVE). Convergent validity is established when the AVE surpasses 0.50 (Henseler & Guerreiro, 2020). The AVE values above 0.50 indicate sufficient convergent validity. In addition, multicollinearity may be evaluated by the variance inflation factor (VIF). The expert said that a VIF score below five indicates the absence of multicollinearity among the latent constructs. The authors noted that the VIF value in this study is below the recommended threshold, affirming the model's robustness (Shehzad et al., 2022).

Discriminant validity refers to a case in which two unrelated factors should not be statistically related (Rehman et al., 2019). Legate et al. (2023) indicated that discriminant validity among all constructs is confirmed when the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) values fall below the suggested threshold of 0.90. The HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) criterion in Table 2 was used to check the discriminant validity of this study and confirmed that the constructs were different. All HTMT values fell below 0.90. Thus, discriminant validity is achieved.

Structural Model Assessment

The evaluation of the structural model came after the evaluation of the measurement model. The evaluation of the structural model included the examination of hypothesized linkages. The evaluation of the structural model includes the inclusion of coefficients of variables (β), t, R^2, f^2, and Q^2. The inner model evaluation validated all hypotheses except for one.

Table 1: Measurement model assessment

Constructs	items	Outer loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Customer brand engagement	CBE1	0.785	0.812	0.878	0.643
	CBE2	0.856			
	CBE3	0.857			
	CBE4	0.700			
Consumer brand identification	CBI1	0.706	0.766	0.849	0.585
	CBI2	0.750			
	CBI3	0.800			
	CBI4	0.799			
Purchase intention	PI1	0.815	0.877	0.910	0.671
	PI2	0.783			
	PI3	0.799			
	PI4	0.849			
	PI5	0.846			
Self-esteem	SE1	0.793	0.760	0.862	0.676
	SE2	0.864			
	SE3	0.809			

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Table 2: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	CBE	CBI	PI	SE
CBE				
CBI	0.564			
PI	0.703	0.360		
SE	0.378	0.153	0.523	

Structural Model Evaluation

Hypothesis 1 (H1) received strong support ($\beta = 0.454$, $p < 0.05$). Consumer brand identification exhibited a significant positive relationship with CBE. Hypothesis 2 (H2) was also confirmed ($\beta = 0.545$, $p < 0.05$), as customer brand engagement positively predicted purchase intention. The mediating function of CBE was validated. Hypotheses 3 ($\beta = 0.247$, $p < 0.05$), received significant support. CBI effects on purchase Intention were mediated by CBE. This research finds support for the moderating effect of self-esteem. The analysis revealed a significant positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.129$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that self-esteem moderates the connection between CBE and PI. In simpler terms, the impact of customer brand engagement on PI is indeed stronger for consumers with lower self-esteem compared to those with higher self-esteem.

Consumer Brand Identification displayed a direct and significant influence on purchase intention, with the mediation of CBE and moderation of self-esteem as detailed in Table 3 with beta coefficients.

Table 3: Structural Model: Path Co-efficient and Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Paths	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision	F Square
H1	CBI -> CBE	0.454	10.410	0.000	Supported	0.259
H2	CBE -> PI	0.545	10.152	0.000	Supported	0.485
H3	CBI -> CBE -> PI	0.247	6.472	0.000	Supported	
H4	Moderating Effect 1 -> PI	0.129	2.868	0.004	Supported	0.053

Table 4: R Square, Adjusted R Square and Q Square Values

	R^2	Adjusted R square	Q^2
CBE	0.206	0.204	0.121
PI	0.455	0.451	0.274

The current study evaluated model fit using two common criteria: Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and R-squared (R^2). Unlike Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM) which focuses on overall model fit, PLS-SEM emphasizes the explanatory power of the structural model (Aibinu & Al-Lawati, 2010). Therefore, relying solely on a single fit measure can be misleading. For instance, a model with a low R^2, indicating a low explanatory power, might still possess good fit based on other criteria. In this study, an SRMR (0.06) value below 0.10 was considered indicative of a good fit.

The CBI explained 20.6% of the variance observed in CBE. Furthermore, CBE accounted for 45.5% of the variance in purchase intention. The adjusted R-squared (R^2) values for CBE and PI are 0.204 and 0.451, respectively. The f^2 value indicates the extent to which an exogenous variable influences an endogenous variable (Götz et al., 2010). The f^2 value encompasses various classifications: small ($f^2 = 0.02$), medium ($f^2 = 0.15$), and higher influence ($f^2 = 0.35$), as suggested by Cohen (1988). Table 3 demonstrates that the influence of CBI on CBE has a medium effect. The impact of CBE on PI has a higher effect. The moderating effect has a lower impact on purchase intention. Furthermore, we evaluated predictive relevance through the Q^2 statistic. A Q^2 value exceeding zero signifies that the model demonstrates predictive relevance; on the other hand, a Q^2 value below zero indicates that the model does not possess predictive relevance (Ali, Kim, & Ryu, 2016). Positive and significant Q^2 values (reported in Table 4) suggest the model has strong relevance, meaning it can predict the endogenous variables with reasonable accuracy.
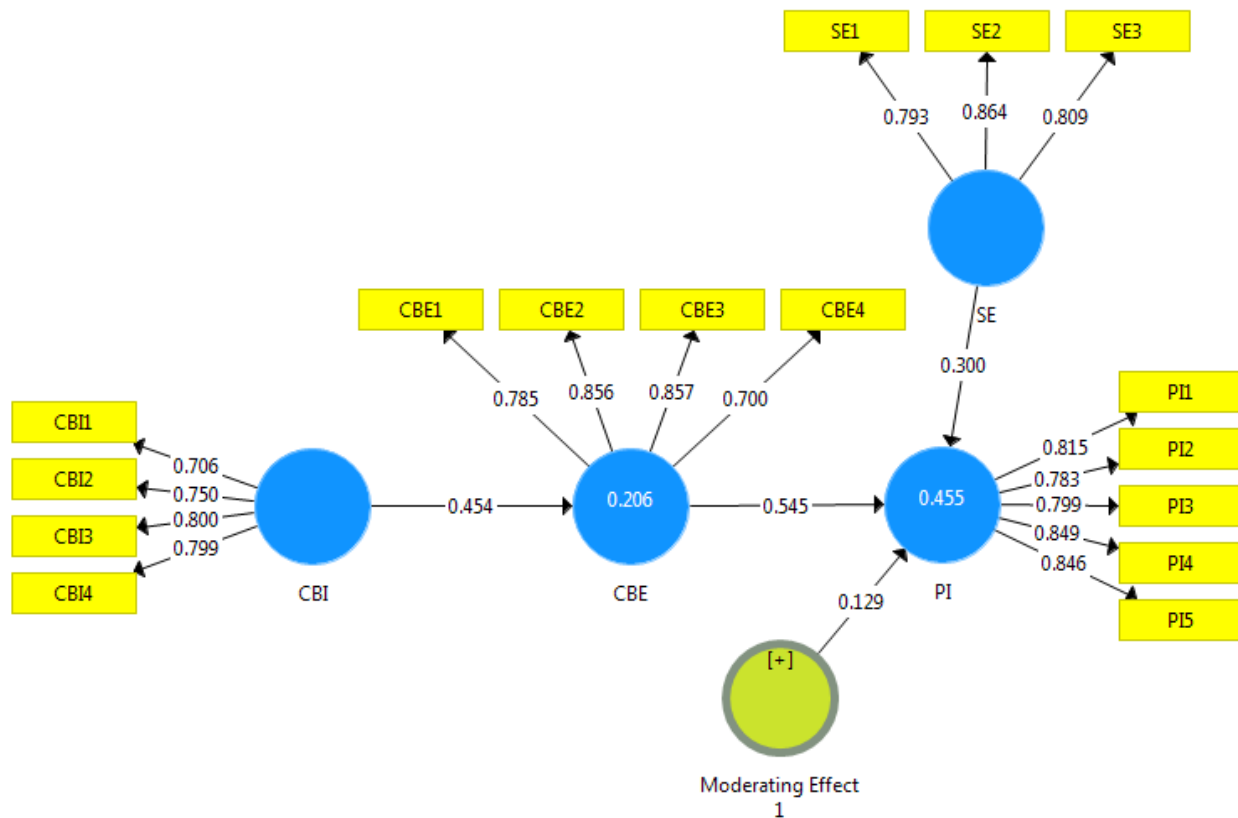
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Figure 2. Structural Model

Discussion

The empirical evidence presented in this study supports the influence of CBI on CBE. The paper makes a vital addition to the existing body of literature, which is a significant accomplishment. In addition, CBE influence on PI within the fashion clothing business was explored in this research. The findings are closely congruent with the hypothesized connections made in the earlier research. The findings of this paper's empirical investigations provide considerable evidence supporting almost all of the hypotheses that were stated.

This study found that in the fashion clothing industry, consumer brand identification affects CBE. Previous research corroborates this conclusion (Shahid et al., 2025). Furthermore, the findings confirm the influence of CBE in enhancing purchase intention. Previous studies support this finding (Patel et al., 2024; Shah et al., 2024; Zeqiri et al., 2025). This result indicated that more customer brand engagement results in purchase intention. Also, this paper found that there is partial mediating function of CBE between CBI and PI. Prior research support this outcome (Aziz & Ahmed, 2023). This result implies that promoting CBE might strengthen the influence of CBI on PI of fashion apparel brands. Additionally, the potential moderator's self-esteem is examined in light of the fact that it may exert a significant moderating effect. The aforementioned finding is corroborated by prior scholarly investigation (Lee et al., 2020).

The relevance of these findings is that the prior study has not fully elucidated the roles and significance of CBI, CBE, and SE concerning the purchase intention of fashion apparel firms. Consequently, the current findings contribute uniquely to the comprehension of buy intention within the fashion clothes sector by presenting novel insights into the interplay of CBI, CBE, and SE in shaping purchase intention. In a developing economy, scholars conducted empirical studies and contributed to the literature on customer engagement. Although emerging nations have substantial development opportunities for multinational corporations (Islam et al., 2018), there is a paucity of CBE research conducted in these areas (Hollebeek et al., 2022). This study addresses the issue by conducting research within a developing nation.

This research employs the social exchange theory to analyze the impact of CBI and CBE as significant determinants of purchase intention in the fashion apparel sector. Despite the growing corpus of marketing literature about customer brand engagement, further empirical investigations are warranted to explore its

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antecedents and consequences. This article makes a substantial contribution to the existing corpus of literature on CBE. This paper offers a comprehensive investigation of CBE within the fashion apparel industry. These results are all essential for giving organizations a competitive edge.

Conclusion

One of the primary objectives of this study is to conduct a thorough analysis of the pertinent literature to demonstrate the factors that shape purchase intentions. This article aimed to examine the effect of CBI on CBE. The researchers also aimed to evaluate the impact of CBE on purchase intention. Furthermore, this paper aims to examine the mediating effect of CBE between CBI and PI in the context of fashion apparel brands, thereby contributing empirical knowledge to this field. The paper also examines the moderation effect between CBE and PI. This study employed a quantitative technique. An online survey was conducted for this study. Previous research on consumer behavior employed the same approach as this poll. Participants were selected via a convenience sampling method. This sampling strategy aligns with other studies investigating consumer behavior in the fashion industry using the same approach. This research used a convenience sampling technique to obtain valid data from 392 respondents who were either Pakistani fashion apparel users or those who intended to purchase fashion apparel brands. The analysis of data and testing of study hypotheses were performed utilizing SPSS and Smart PLS. The findings indicate that CBI has a beneficial effect on CBE. This study also indicated that CBE favorably influences PI. The findings confirm that CBE partially mediates the connection between CBI and PI. The study identified the moderating effect of self-esteem on the relationship between CBE and PI. This study would give several insights for examining this embryonic notion and its implications for CBE in further depth. This research examines the determinants and consequences of CBE in the fashion apparel industry. This article enhances the understanding of CBE within the fashion clothing sector. Additionally, this research proposes that future research should shift its attention to emerging nations, a context that has been largely overlooked by previous research but which will have significant implications for policymakers and practitioners.

Theoretical Implications

This paper presents a novel opportunity to examine the use of CBE in fashion apparel businesses in developing markets. The paper further expanded upon social exchange theory in order to establish and verify the connections between CBE and its resulting effects. The results of this investigation provide a valuable contribution to the current corpus of knowledge in several respects. The study of customer engagement within the field of marketing is currently in its infancy (Shah, 2019). By examining CBE in the fashion apparel sector, this research contributes significantly to the current scholarly literature in the field. This research's theoretical implications enhance the existing literature on CBI, CBE, SE, and PI. The results offer a theoretical framework for future research, thereby deepening our comprehension of the intricate interplay between these constructs. Using SET, this research created a unique framework for CBI, CBE, SE, and PI in the context of fashion apparel, with a particular emphasis on the mediating role of CBE.

It adds to the literature by studying the largely unexplored antecedents and consequences of CBE and by providing a more specific knowledge of CBE in the fashion apparel sector. This paper examined the mediating function of CBE between CBI and PI. The function of self-esteem as a moderator was also examined. The paper is significant because it fills a gap in earlier studies. This article contributes to the extant literature by investigating CBE within the domain of the fashion apparel industries. As a result, the study satisfies the growing need for context-specific investigation of the concept (Kumar et al., 2019; Roy et al., 2018). This research enhances the current literature on engagement through an empirical analysis in the setting of a developing economy.

There has been little CBE research undertaken on growing markets (Hollebeek, 2018; Roy et al., 2018). Few CBE investigations have been conducted in such emerging regions. Multiple unaddressed research calls for including moderating variables (Junaid et al., 2020). By investigating the potential moderating influence of self-esteem, the current study seeks to fill a gap in the literature. In addition, the growing corpus of literature on customer management highlights the essential importance of CBE within the framework of customer-brand relationships. This paper enhances the current understanding by conducting research on CBE, specifically within the fashion apparel industry. This research addresses the need for contextually relevant studies on this subject (Kumar et al., 2019; Roy et al., 2018). In an emerging economy, researchers did empirical research and contributed to the engagement literature. While developing countries have significant growth possibilities for multinational firms (Islam et al., 2018), CBE research in emerging markets has been limited (Hollebeek et al., 2022). This research

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addresses it by conducting research in a developing country. This study enhances the marketing literature on engagement and purchase intention by doing empirical research in a developing nation.

Practical Implications

This paper has significant implications for fashion apparel brands, as it may contribute to the creation of superior customer engagement. The study findings may provide potential benefits to organizations, specifically in terms of management implications. This is especially relevant for brand and customer relationship managers, who are responsible for devising customer relationship strategies aimed at establishing a sustainable competitive advantage. This study seeks to enhance our understanding of CBI, CBE, self-esteem, and purchase intention in relation to fashion apparel brands. These findings can help in developing more targeted plans and tactics. The fit between the identity of a fashion brand and the identity of a customer has significant implications since it will improve the sales of fashion apparel brands. Due to the considerable influence this relationship has on a company's revenue, it is significant for marketers to comprehend the connections between customers and their fashion brands. In the contemporary era, managers cannot afford to disregard engagement; otherwise, their businesses would fail in the survival of the fittest (Obilo et al., 2021). With the ever-increasing competition and expansion of the fashion clothing sector, it is now essential for managers to find out how to engage and keep customers. Therefore, marketers should work on enhancing CBE, which would undoubtedly improve customers' intention to buy fashion apparel brands.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this research contributes to the current corpus of knowledge on CBE, it does have a number of deficiencies that underscore the necessity of further investigation. This study was limited to Pakistan's fashion sector. Consumer behavior might vary from industry to industry. Further studies might aim to reproduce the findings of this study across many industries, including domains such as sports, electronics, and tourism. Further study endeavors may be conducted to examine the various impacts that the valence of CBE may exert on individuals who make purchases. Even though this study looked at the link between CBI, CBE, self-esteem, and purchase intention, future research could look at a number of other related constructs. As a result, researchers are urged to include additional variables with potential moderating or mediating effects, including brand attachment, customer satisfaction, brand love, brand experience, and co-creation, in their models. Further investigation in future studies might potentially provide benefits by exploring the moderating impact of demographic variables on the interactions within the model. In conclusion, future studies should expand the outcome variable to include other customer loyalty behaviors. Although there are certain limitations, the current study provides enough intellectual stimulation and will promote more investigation into the field of consumer brand engagement.

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