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**THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL  
MEDIA MARKETING IN THE  
FASHION INDUSTRY IN  
BANGLADESH**

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This study explains how the Bangladeshi fashion industry is affected by social media in a unique way. The results showed that there were two notable demographic segments behaving very differently: People between the ages of 19 and 26 are on social media for 5-7 hours a day and tend to buy often, while older professionals between 29 and 35 use platforms less often, around 2-4 hours a day, and make purchases about once a month. It was found that five major themes help shape how consumers think: entertainment, interacting, being trendy, personalizing products, and electronic ways people talk about products. It was observed that consumers consult brands to find out product details and use social media personalities to judge quality. The results showed that every group relied on three simple strategies in their marketing: Showing how products could be used in many ways, explaining the handmade aspects of the designs, and bringing attention to the role of local crafts. The results showed that products that resonate with local traditions fared best, thanks to the expertise of Bangladeshi influencers about the local environment. The quality of the product was most important in making customers loyal, no matter how closely they worked with brands. The research results offer insight into how social media marketing can influence how people shop through the influence of brand equity and different demographics, specifically for fashion brands growing in Bangladesh's digital ecosystem.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing; Consumer Behaviour; Fashion Industry; Bangladesh; Brand Equity

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# 1. Chapter one: Introduction

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Social media has ushered in a paradigm shift in the way brands market products in various industries, such as fashion, enabling brands to engage with consumers through relatively cheap and interactive platforms (Robul et al., 2019, p.148). Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are widely used by fashion brands in Bangladesh to market their products, draw in customers, and expedite brand engagement (Chowdhury et al., 2023, p. 29). There are more than 44.7 million social media users in Bangladesh, making this a very important marketing channel.

According to Halim (2022), aspects of SSM such as entertainment, trendiness, customization, interaction and word-of-mouth (WOM) showed a positive impact on consumers purchase intention and brand equity (Halim, 2022, p. 65). Such marketing strategies allow the fashion brands to create trust, increase brand attachment and stimulate repurchase behaviour (Halim, 2022, p. 66). However, Wang et al. (2019) noted that although social media marketing is effective for building brand awareness and preference, it does not necessarily lead to long-term customer loyalty and commitment to purchase (Wang et al., 2019, p. 4). As found in their study, closer relationships between brands and consumers can be developed only when consumer motivation is honest, trusting and sincere, which needs to be considered for brands in the fashion industry (Wang et al., 2019, p. 6).

The advent and proliferation of digital technologies, particularly social media platforms, have irrevocably transformed the global marketing landscape across myriad industries. As Ahammed (2022, p. 17) notes, traditional marketing approaches have been challenged by the rise of digital marketing, compelling businesses to adapt their communication and promotional strategies. Social media marketing (SMM), defined as the utilization of social media platforms to promote products, services, and brands, build relationships with customers, and achieve marketing objectives, has emerged as a dominant force (Ahammed, 2022, p. 3). According to Rakiv (2023, p. 2), marketing itself is a constantly evolving concept shaped significantly by social media dynamics and shifts in consumer preferences, making adaptability crucial for survival in competitive marketplaces. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and

TikTok provide businesses with unprecedented opportunities for direct consumer interaction, brand visibility, and targeted advertising (Ahammed, 2022, p. 3, 6).

The fashion industry, characterized by its visual nature, rapid trend cycles, emphasis on aesthetics, and strong reliance on brand image and consumer aspiration, has been particularly impacted by the rise of SMM (Ahammed, 2022, p. 5). Fashion brands leverage social media not only for direct promotion but also for storytelling, community building, trendsetting, and fostering brand loyalty (Rakiv, 2023, p. 2). Platforms like Instagram, with their visual focus, and Facebook, with its vast user base and community features, have become indispensable tools for fashion retailers globally and particularly in emerging markets like Bangladesh (Ahammed, 2022, p. 27; Akash & Hamid, 2024, p. 181). Wang et al. (2019, p. 1) observe that online fashion retailing has become one of the most popular e-commerce segments, driven significantly by social media interactions.

The context of Bangladesh provides a compelling setting for examining the influence of SMM in the fashion industry. Bangladesh represents a rapidly growing digital economy with significant social media penetration (Ahammed, 2022, p. 1, 4). The online fashion retail market, though relatively young compared to developed economies, has experienced substantial growth, presenting both opportunities and challenges for local and international brands (Wang et al., 2019, p. 1). Bangladeshi fashion brands, including numerous Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) which form the backbone of the retail sector, increasingly rely on SMM to connect with consumers, build brand awareness, and drive sales (Ahammed, 2022, p. 1, 4-5; Rakiv, 2023, p. 2). Most of the fashion SMEs in Bangladesh is using Facebook and Instagram for communication and marketing (Ahammed, 2022, p. 6).

It is confirmed through research that SMM activities of fashion groups in Bangladesh have immense benefits. Wang et al. (2019, p. 1, 17) investigated the performance of SMM in building brand consciousness among online consumers in the Bangladeshi fashion industry. Their findings suggest that SMM efforts are indeed successful in enhancing key components of brand consciousness, namely brand preference, brand attachment, brand association, and brand loyalty (Wang et al., 2019, p. 1, 17, 21). Similarly, Akash and Hamid (2024, p. 181, 191) explored the impact of different SMM

content types on consumer engagement within the Bangladeshi retail fashion context. Their study confirms that various content dimensions – specifically informativeness, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), entertaining content, and trendiness – all significantly and positively influence consumer engagement (Akash & Hamid, 2024, p. 191). Furthermore, Ahammed (2022, p. 21, 117-120) highlights through case studies of Bangladeshi fashion SMEs that SMM is perceived by businesses as effective for increasing brand awareness, enhancing customer relationships, reaching target audiences, and ultimately boosting sales. The role of social media influencers (SMIs) has also gained prominence, with research suggesting they can significantly moderate the relationship between SMM content and consumer engagement, particularly enhancing the impact of entertaining and trendy content (Akash & Hamid, 2024, p. 181, 193).

Nevertheless, despite these possible benefits and the high penetration of SMM by fashion brands in Bangladesh, there are remarkable challenges and gaps. For example, Wang et al. highlight the critical issue of the difference between the brand consciousness of SMM and actual buying commitment of consumers. To be more specific, while SMM significantly enhances such aspects of brand consciousness as preference and loyalty, buyers on E-Commerce platforms in the context of the Bengal fashion market do not buy these brands following this rationale. In other words, there is a “slippery slope” where the first encounter with a brand via SMM and the resulting branded personality is insufficient to ensure consistent buying behaviour and retention. They suggest that additional variables, such as more detailed trust or the need to communicate the sincerity of messages, fill this gap and merit further study.

Moreover, even if smartphone penetration is rising in Bangladesh, smartphones and adequate Internet access are not enough - the successful practical implementation of adequate SMM strategies is quite challenging and more so for the SMEs, who dominate the Bangladeshi fashion retail market. Among those, Ahammed (2022, p. 21-22, 138-144) enumerates inadequate access to finance, shortage of skilled personnel with expertise in digital marketing methods, problems in producing a reasonable amount of engaging and quality content, and also difficulties to measure the investment return (ROI) related to their Strategic Marketing Management activities as the most important ones that these businesses encounter. These limitations maybe

restrict SMEs from fully utilizing the power of social media in comparison to larger corporations.

Additionally, the effectiveness of SMM is highly dependent on the specific strategies and content employed. Akash and Hamid (2024, p. 195) emphasize the need for strategic content planning, as their study showed different content types (informativeness, eWOM, entertainment, trendiness) have varying degrees of influence on consumer engagement, and the moderating effect of influencers also differs across content types. This implies that a one-size-fits-all approach to SMM is unlikely to be optimal, and brands need a nuanced understanding of what resonates with their target audience in the Bangladeshi context. Rakiv (2023, p. 2) similarly stresses the importance of adaptive marketing strategies in response to the dynamic nature of social media and consumer preferences.

This research, therefore, aims to address the existing gaps by providing a deeper, qualitative understanding of how social media marketing genuinely influences consumer behaviour encompassing perceptions, engagement, purchase intentions, and loyalty within the specific context of the fashion industry in Bangladesh. While quantitative studies like Wang et al. (2019) and Akash & Hamid (2024) have identified correlations and the impact of specific variables, there is a need to explore the underlying reasons, experiences, and perspectives of consumers themselves. How do Bangladeshi consumers interpret and react to different SMM tactics from fashion brands on Facebook and Instagram? What role does trust play in their engagement and purchase decisions? How do influencers shape their perceptions compared to direct brand communication? How does the online SMM experience translate (or fail to translate) into offline or online purchase behaviour and long-term brand relationships? Investigating these questions through the lens of consumer experience is crucial for both academic understanding and practical application. Gaining these insights can help fashion brands in Bangladesh, particularly SMEs (Ahammed, 2022, p. 22), to develop more effective, resource-efficient, and genuinely engaging SMM strategies that resonate with local consumers and foster sustainable relationships, moving beyond surface-level awareness towards deeper commitment and loyalty. This study seeks to contribute to this understanding by exploring the lived experiences

of Bangladeshi fashion consumers navigating the pervasive influence of social media marketing.

### **1.2 Problem Statement**

Social media marketing (SMM) has become a ubiquitous tool for fashion brands in Bangladesh, leveraging platforms like Facebook and Instagram to reach a substantial user base of over 44.7 million people (Chowdhury et al., 2023, p. 29). These platforms offer inexpensive and interactive ways for brands to engage consumers. Existing research suggests that various facets of SMM, such as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, and word-of-mouth, can positively influence consumers' purchase intentions and contribute to brand equity within the Bangladeshi context (Halim, 2022, p. 65), potentially fostering trust and repeat purchase behaviour.

Despite its widespread use and promise, a gap exists in understanding whether SMM actually delivers on its purported benefits as perspectives on consumer decision-making techniques in this context remain limited in scope [9] and knowledge on building long-term commitment and loyalty being piecemeal in nature. Although SMM initiatives can lead to awareness and preference, their conversion to ongoing purchasing behaviour may not be expected and may depend on the viewed authenticity and credibility of the communications between a brand and its consumers (Wang et al., 2019, p. 4). Moreover, the success of SMM relies much on proper implementation; the format (e.g., video versus static images) and quality of the content have a significant impact on the consumer interaction, indicating that simply having a social media platform would not suffice without content forwarding planning (Chowdhury et al., 2023, p. 31–32).

Therefore, the problem this research addresses is the lack of clear understanding regarding how specific social media marketing strategies employed by fashion brands on platforms like Facebook and Instagram directly influence the full spectrum of consumer behaviour including engagement patterns, brand perception, purchase intention, and brand loyalty among consumers in Bangladesh. There is a need to move beyond general assumptions about SMM effectiveness and investigate the nuanced impact of different content strategies, platform choices, and interaction styles on

consumer decision-making within the unique cultural and market context of the Bangladeshi fashion industry.

### 1.3 Definition of Key Concepts

For this study, the following key concepts are defined:

**Social Media Marketing (SMM):** The utilization of social media platforms (specifically Facebook and Instagram in this study) to promote fashion products, build relationships with customers, and achieve marketing objectives through entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth strategies (Ahammed, 2022, p. 3; Halim, 2022, p. 65).

**Consumer Purchase Intention:** The consumer's conscious plan or decision to try to purchase a fashion product influenced by social media marketing activities (Halim, 2022, p. 65).

**Brand Equity:** The value premium that a company generates from a product with a recognizable name, encompassing brand awareness, brand preference, brand attachment, and brand loyalty as they relate to purchase decisions (Wang et al., 2019, p. 1).

**Customer Commitment and Loyalty:** The long-term relationship between brands and consumers characterized by repeat purchase behaviour and sustained brand preference (Wang et al., 2019, p. 4).

### 1.4 Rationale for the Study

This research will be helpful to know the impact of social media marketing strategy on Bangladeshi consumers in fashion industry. Specifically, it will:

- Help fashion brands optimize their social media marketing strategies by identifying the most effective engagement techniques.
- Offer insights into consumer preferences, brand loyalty, and purchase intention based on social media interactions.
- Assist marketers in developing personalized campaigns that enhance consumer trust and brand equity.
- Contribute to academic literature by addressing gaps related to consumer engagement, brand attachment, and buying commitment in the Bangladeshi fashion market.

By focusing on consumer perceptions and behaviours, this study will provide actionable recommendations for businesses looking to enhance their digital marketing strategies.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the present research is to pinpoint the social media marketing strategies used on customer behaviour of the fashion sector in Bangladesh. This study specifically focuses on the relationship between SMM activities and purchase-related behaviours including purchase intention, brand equity development, and customer loyalty. By means of an analysis of key tactics including influencer partnerships, content driven by interaction, and digital technologies for branding, this study aims to grasp how social media platforms affect purchase choices. The research will let fashion companies maximize their marketing efforts by pointing out the most successful digital strategies for building customer confidence and interaction. It will also add to scholarly research on digital marketing in developing nations by providing ideas for companies and legislators to use social media for fashion industry sustainable expansion.

### **1.6 Research Objectives and Questions**

#### **Research Objectives**

- To Analyse how social media marketing efforts influence consumer purchase intention in Bangladesh.
- To Examine the role of brand equity in mediating consumer loyalty among Bangladeshi fashion buyers.
- To explore Bangladeshi fashion consumers' perceptions and experiences of various social media strategies used by brands to engage them.
- To Assess whether social media marketing drives long-term customer commitment and repeat purchases in Bangladesh.

#### **Research Questions**

1. How do social media marketing efforts influence consumer purchase intention among Bangladeshi consumers?
2. What is the role of brand equity in mediating consumer loyalty among fashion buyers in Bangladesh?

3. How do Bangladeshi fashion consumers perceive, and experience different social media strategies used by brands to engage them?
4. Does social media marketing drive long-term customer commitment and repeat purchases among Bangladeshi fashion buyers??

## **2. Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter examines the theoretical foundations and empirical evidence related to how social media marketing influences consumer purchase behaviour in the fashion industry. The review is structured to address the key concepts identified in Chapter 1: social media marketing strategies, consumer purchase intention, brand equity as a mediator, and customer loyalty. Each section directly relates to the research objectives of understanding SMM's impact on purchase decisions in Bangladesh's fashion context.

### **2.1 Overview of Social Media Marketing**

This section establishes the foundational understanding of SMM as it relates to consumer purchase behaviour, addressing Research Objective 1 regarding how SMM efforts influence consumer purchase intention.

In today's world, social media marketing (SMM) has taken the shape of a transformative force leading the world. Communicating and engaging relationships are built with businesses and consumers. SMM" uses social media to accomplish marketing goals" (Tuten and Mintu-Wimsatt 2018, p.1). By using social media technologies, channels, and software, create, communicate, deliver, and so on. End up being value-based exchange offerings to an organization and its stakeholders." Web infrastructure, smart devices, and social software enable social media benefits. Brands can create dynamics in life on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Two-way communication with their audiences (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018, p. 1).

The rapid integration of social media into consumers' daily lives has positioned it as a critical element for marketing strategies. Alalwan et al. (2017, p. 2) emphasize that social media technologies have become deeply embedded in social, commercial,

educational, and political life, significantly influencing consumer behaviour. Firms recognize social media's potential to enhance customer engagement, relationship management, and brand communication (Alalwan et al., 2017, p. 2). Therefore, companies are pouring resources into social media platforms that enable information sharing, promotion, and customer engagement.

Consumer engagement is at the centre of SMM and is often regarded by Tuten and Mintu-Wimsatt (2018, p. 1) as a significant goal and a primary hurdle in the space. More recently, engagement has been recognised as a psychological state of involvement with the content rather than solely behavioural responses such as likes or shares. Marketers for their part must adapt their strategies and seek adoptions that drive both emotional and cognitive involvement, rather than just visible ones.

The strength of social media also comes from its embedded co-creation and interactivity capabilities. Alalwan et al. (2017, p.5) define social media as technologies that allow consumers to engage in user-generated content and facilitate consumer-brand action and content creation. Such an interactive environment also enables brands to shape a more human public image and build stronger relationships with customers based on authenticity. As a result, organizations are embracing social media to strengthen brand identity and marketing yield in a personalized and interactive way. Another way of illustrating the overarching framework and structure of SMM activities is the Zones of Social Media Marketing Framework proposed by Tuten and Solomon (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt 2018, p. 2). This divides social media into sections like social community, social publishing, social entertainment, and social commerce.

Furthermore, CBE (Customer Brand Engagement) has become a key perspective in social media marketing. Similarly, Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt (2018, p. 2) introduced a comprehensive model illustrating that factors such as involvement, trust, and community satisfaction underpin the propensity for consumers to engage in WOM behaviours. Customer Brand Engagement (CBE)—an emotional, cognitive, and behavioural bond that consumers develop with brands, which is like Tuten's model of consumer engagement with special focus on involvement, trust, and community satisfaction as the key building blocks of engagement in social brand communities

Similarly, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is emphasized by Alalwan et al. (2017, p. 4) as one of the four major themes of social media marketing, in which user-generated content is an important factor of the consumers' purchase intentions and brand credibility.

Also, social identity. (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018, p. 2) prove that membership of online brand communities enhance the self-concepts of customers and strengthen their psychological bond towards the brands. Tending along the same lines, Alalwan et al. (2017, p. 5) explain how social media content supports consumers in satisfying psychological and relationship needs, which reinforces the engagement that consumers have with brands. But both articles emphasize the challenges posed by privacy concerns. Consumer concern about privacy is increasing as they become more aware of how much of their data is being collected (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018, p. 2). These anxieties can affect consumers' willingness to interact with brands online and must be managed carefully.

An aggregated viewpoint of Tuten and Mintu-Wimsatt (2018) and Alalwan et al. (2017). Social media marketing is a multi-dimensional domain, which revolves around, engagement, interactivity, community building co-creation, and brand identity. As social media platforms undergo transformation, marketers can devise strategies that ensure profound consumer engagement without compromising privacy and encouraging trust.

## **2.2 Social Media Marketing in the Fashion Industry**

Building on the general SMM framework, this section examines how fashion brands specifically utilize social media to influence purchase decisions, directly supporting Research Objectives 1 and 3 regarding consumer perceptions of SMM strategies.

The omnipresence of social media has redefined marketing tactics in diverse arenas, and the fashion world, especially the luxury segment, is certainly not immune. Social media technologies, channels and software are now used to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange offering that has value for both the customer and the company

(Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018, p. 1), and are an integral part to any fashion marketing plan. With challenges such as a shrinking market in an economic downturn and the challenge of continuously engaging consumers in an eventful world, fashion brands have increasingly relied on social media as a key strategy both for reaching out to consumers, creating their brands and ultimately for converting to sales (Mohr, 2013, p. 1).

Fashion brands leverage a variety of social media platforms, including established networks like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, as well as blogs and dedicated apps, to connect with their target audiences. Initially, many luxury brands were hesitant, fearing that social media might dilute their exclusive image (Mohr, 2013, p. 2). However, this perception shifted as brands recognized social media's potential to enhance customer relationships, improve brand recall, stimulate purchases, and ultimately reach a larger audience. Luxury houses like Gucci, Burberry, Louis Vuitton, and Dolce & Gabbana actively use platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and bespoke social network sites to engage customers, showcase collections, and even solicit direct feedback, moving from one-way communication to interactive dialogues (Kim & Ko, 2012, p. 2). For instance, Gucci launched "Gucciweb.com" for a sunglasses collection targeting digital natives, while Burberry's "Artoftthetrench.com" aimed to build admiration and communicate brand culture, reportedly boosting online sales.

Research identifies several key dimensions of perceived social media marketing (SMM) activities employed by luxury fashion brands. Kim & Ko (2012, p. 4) identified five core constructs: entertainment (providing fun and interesting content), interaction (enabling information sharing and opinion exchange), trendiness (conveying newness and fashion-forwardness), customization (offering personalized information and services), and word-of-mouth (encouraging users to share brand information). These activities focus significantly on providing hedonic and experiential value, often indirectly, rather than just focusing on the product itself (Kim & Ko, 2012, p. 4). Fashion blogs, initially seen as amateur outlets, have gained significant influence, with top bloggers now regarded as key influencers and trendsetters, commanding substantial fees from brands (Mohr, 2013, p. 2). Similarly, fashion-focused mobile apps provide consumers with trend information, deals, and shopping convenience, further integrating social sharing (Mohr, 2013, p. 2).

The impact of these SMM activities on brand performance and consumer behaviour is multi-faceted. A primary objective across strategies is fostering engagement, understood not just as an interaction but as a psychological state of mind (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018, p. 1). SMM activities have shown positive effects on key drivers of customer equity: value equity (customer's objective assessment of the brand), relationship equity (customer's tendency to stick with the brand), and brand equity (customer's subjective assessment) (Kim & Ko, 2012, p. 1, 4). Specifically, activities centred around entertainment, interaction, and word-of-mouth positively enhance these drivers. Furthermore, value equity and brand equity, influenced by SMM, significantly and positively impact purchase intention. Social media facilitates word-of-mouth (WOM), a powerful influence on consumer decisions, allowing brands to gain exposure and strengthen customer relationships. Effective SMM allows brands to co-create value with customers and build loyalty through ongoing communication and community building (Mohr, 2013, p. 3).

However, navigating the social media landscape presents challenges. The rapid, often unverified, spread of information via WOM requires careful management (Mohr, 2013, p. 2). Luxury brands must balance the broad reach of social media with the need to maintain an aura of exclusivity and control over their brand narrative. Interestingly, Kim & Ko (2012, p. 4) found that for a highly popular luxury brand like Louis Vuitton in the Korean market, increased brand equity (driven partly by ubiquity and counterfeits) had a negative effect on customer equity, potentially degrading the scarcity value. This highlights the complex dynamics brands must manage.

Social media marketing is no longer optional but an essential, integrated component of strategy in the fashion industry. It provides powerful avenues for customer engagement, brand building, communication, and influencing purchase decisions. While challenges exist, particularly for luxury brands balancing accessibility and exclusivity, SMM activities encompassing entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and WOM stimulation are critical for enhancing brand perception, fostering customer relationships, and ultimately driving performance in the contemporary fashion marketplace (Kim & Ko, 2012, p. 4, 5).

Social media marketing (SMM) has significantly transformed the fashion industry by offering brands an efficient way to connect with consumers, shape purchasing decisions, and enhance brand visibility (Ananda et al., 2017, p.3). The influence of SMM extends beyond advertising it plays a pivotal role in shaping trends, influencing consumer behaviour, and fostering brand loyalty. As digital marketing evolves, core concepts such as consumer engagement, influencer marketing, and AI-driven marketing remain essential in the fashion sector (Chowdhury et al. 2024, p.576).

Consumer engagement is a key driver of purchase intent in the digital fashion market. According to Sabatini et al. (2023, p. 16), platforms like Twitter and TikTok provide fashion brands with direct communication channels where consumers actively engage with content through likes, comments, and shares. Engagement fosters a deeper connection between consumers and brands, leading to stronger purchase influence (Sabatini et al., 2023, p. 16). The ability of brands to create interactive and visually appealing content significantly impacts consumer perceptions and buying behaviour.

Nowadays, social media influencer marketing has become one of the most powerful means of digital fashion communication. Sabatini et al. (2023, p. 18) point out that “digital influencers are considered opinion leaders” who affect fashion decisions and brand preferences. Influencers are effective at boosting sales because consumers are more likely to trust their recommendations than a traditional advertisement. Due to the influencer trend that escalated in the past years fashion brands started to use influencer partnerships to portray products in a more authentic way, which has a huge impact on consumer purchasing decisions (Sabatini et al., 2023, p. 19).

AI is changing the face of social media marketing for fashion brands. According to Zaidi et al. AI-driven data analysis allows brands to tailor marketing campaigns, anticipate trends, and enhance ad targeting (2024, p. 5). By enabling personalized recommendations, chatbot interactions, and sentiment analysis tools, artificial intelligence creates a more tailored shopping experience, increasing conversion rates and brand affinity (Zaidi et al., 2024, p. 7). Moreover, AI enables brands to gain profound knowledge of consumer preferences through data-driven marketing strategies geared toward impacting purchasing behaviour directly.

Due to the rapid growth of internet penetration and social media usage, social media marketing has played an important role in the marketing of Bangladesh fashion current issues. Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok: These platforms reign supreme in the digital landscape, and they offer fashion brands a low-cost means of connection to consumers. Small and medium-sized fashion companies in Bangladesh get most of their revenue from social media because they lack the ability to invest large sums of money in brand promotion and customer interaction. In Bangladesh, well-known local brands such as Aarong, Yellow and Le Reve have successfully leveraged influencer marketing and leveraged AI driven engagement strategies to stimulate engagement and sales. Bangladesh has seen significant impact by social media marketing on consumers purchasing decision as more and more consumers connect through new platforms of live shopping, video contents and user-generated reviews. With increasing digital adoption, Bangladeshi fashion brands have no option but to implement a strategy that includes AI-based personalization and influencer partnerships if they want to remain competitive in a rapidly changing market.

## **2.3 Theoretical Background of Social Media Marketing in the Fashion Industry**

This section presents the theoretical frameworks that explain the relationship between SMM and consumer purchase behaviour, providing the theoretical foundation for all four research objectives.

### **2.3.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)**

TPB provides the theoretical basis for understanding how SMM influences purchase intention (Research Objective 1) by examining attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), much research defined customer participation in social media marketing. As beheld by TPB, customer behaviour is influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Alqutub, 2023, p. 80). According to Alqutub (2023, p. 80), attitude is the main predictor of

customer behaviour regarding the use of social media marketing, with subjective norms being a close second. On the other hand, perceived behavioural control had a lesser influence on customer engagement. This is an important area of understanding for fashion businesses, to know how consumers make purchases from social media; the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) based study of consumers explains such purchases through models. Azad et al. (2023) highlighted that TPB is one of the most commonly used psychological theories in this field because it relates attitude, social norms, and perceived behavioural control to intention followed by behaviour (p. 2, 3). According to Setyanta et al. (2024), TPB explains behaviour through these three central elements (p. 1).

Setyanta et al. (2024) focus on fashion influencers, extending the TPB by adding the concept of influencer credibility (p.1, 2) related to the introduction of influencer credibility. Their research suggests that subjective norms (perceived social pressure) play a central role in shaping consumer attitudes towards influencers, as well as purchase intentions. The authors found solid evidence for both ideas: that social pressures influence attitudes and that they intend to buy to the extent that they see social approval.

As for the Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC), Setyanta et al. (2024) suggest that although PBC enhances consumers' image of influencers, its direct influence on consumers' intention to buy may not be so pronounced, and attitude may act as a mediator (p. 2, 7). This indicates, say the authors, that although consumers believe they can control their buying behaviours, some favourable attitude should exist toward the product or the influencer suggestion to translate into purchase intention.

Furthermore, Setyanta et al. (2024, p. 3 – 7) confirmed that attitude and purchase intention are significantly driven by influencer credibility. They claim that when consumers view influencers as trustworthy and authentic it transposes this trust to the proposed products; thus, positively updating attitudes toward them and intention to buy them. Azad et al. (2023) also agree on TPB factors generally exerting a considerable influence on purchase intentions and behaviour (p. 3). Both studies highlight the utility of TPB in dissecting the relationships between social media influences and consumer level decisions in the fashion domain.

### **2.3.2 Consumer Engagement Theory**

This theory explains how SMM creates the engagement that leads to purchase behaviour, supporting Research Objective 3 regarding consumer experiences with SMM strategies.

Consumer Engagement Theory deals with how consumers engage with brands on different social media platforms. According to Bommawar & Tiwari (2022, p. 175) engagement is dependent on aspects which include entertainment, trendiness, customization and interaction. Research indicated that showing interest to businesses will increase consumers loyalty and will increase repeated purchases (Bommawar & Tiwari, 2022, p. 175).

As noted by Bommawar & Tiwari (2022, p. 177) static images, textual posts generate lesser engagement in comparison to visual content like videos and interactive posts. Fashion brands, therefore, should focus on engaging, dynamic content more than ever to grab attention and maintain consumer interest.

The theoretical models TPB and Consumer Engagement gives us pictorial overview on how social media marketing impact consumer behaviour in the fashion industry. In Bangladesh's fashion market, they could help brands strategize, improve brand engagement, and build consumer loyalty.

### **2.4 Consumer Behaviour and Online Shopping Trends**

This section contextualizes how SMM operates within the broader online shopping environment in Bangladesh, providing background for understanding purchase behaviour patterns addressed in Research Objectives 1 and 4.

#### **2.4.1 Consumer Behaviour and Online Shopping Trends**

The proliferation of the World Wide Web has instigated dramatic shifts in consumer attitudes and behaviours globally (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 1). According to Rahman et

al. (2018, p. 2), online shopping has emerged as a significant outcome of this digital transformation, influencing the lives of ordinary citizens. Hossain et al. (2022, p. 1) emphasize the rapid expansion of the global e-commerce market, driven by enhanced internet accessibility, increased smartphone penetration, lower device costs, and faster internet speeds. This evolution is particularly relevant in Bangladesh, where online shopping, though present for years, is gaining increasing traction, especially among younger demographics highlight the substantial growth of e-commerce platforms in the country, alongside a surge in Facebook-based commerce (F-commerce). Operating within this dynamic environment, it is crucial for any business to know how buyers are behaving, what are their motivations and concerns in Bangladeshi online shopping.

#### **2.4.2 Motivations and Information Sources**

Some of the key reasons for Bangladeshi consumers' impetus to do online shopping. Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 1) described that most customers save time and widen the spectrum of services and products by using online ordering. Rahman et al. (2018, p. 2, 17) support this finding greatly from their study in Dhaka, where 38.75% of respondents saved time and 29.38% availability of product variety as the key reasons for selecting an online platform. Hossain et al. (2022, p. 1) also mention that consumers leverage online shopping to bypass the difficulties associated with traditional markets or to seek out better deals. Underlying these practical motivations, Hoque, Ali, & Mahfuz (2015), as cited by Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 2-3) and Rahman et al. (2018, p. 3), argue that consumer attitudes toward online purchasing are fundamentally shaped by trust and the perceived benefits offered.

When searching for online shopping information, consumers in Bangladesh predominantly turn to digital and social sources. Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 1, 7) found that 52% of their surveyed respondents learned about online shopping via social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram), while 16.67% received information from friends and family, and 21.33% from specific websites (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 7). Rahman et al. (2018, p. 21) reported similar findings from Dhaka, noting that 56.25% of respondents acquired information from website advertisements, particularly on

social networks, with friends and family being the next most common source (24.37%) (Rahman et al., 2018, p. 15). Both studies underscore the importance of social media, especially Facebook (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 1), as a primary channel for disseminating information and influencing online shoppers.

### **2.4.3 Demographic Influences**

Demographic characteristics appear to significantly shape online shopping behaviour patterns in Bangladesh. Hossain et al. (2022, p. 1, 7) specifically aimed to examine the association between six demographic variables (age, gender, income, education, occupation, marital status) and online shopping frequency. Using chi-square tests, the authors found statistically significant associations for gender, education, occupation, and marital status (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 7). They argue, based on their analysis, that male consumers show a higher propensity to shop online than females, which aligns with findings from several international studies they reviewed. Hossain et al. (2022, p. 7) suggest potential reasons within the Bangladeshi context could include men being less risk-averse or having greater technological familiarity.

Level of education also emerged as a significant factor. Hossain et al. (2022, p. 7) found that consumers with higher education levels are moderately more likely to engage in online shopping. They posit that this could be linked to enhanced cognitive abilities, computer self-efficacy, or a greater perceived capacity to handle uncertainty associated with online transactions (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 4, 7). Similarly, occupation showed a significant, moderate impact, with those in higher-category jobs demonstrating a greater tendency to shop online (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 7-8). The authors suggest this might be linked to the associated higher education levels and potentially higher incomes or the greater time constraints faced by professionals, making online shopping's convenience more appealing (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 4). Marital status was also found to be significantly associated with married consumers shopping online more frequently than single individuals in their sample (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 8). Potential explanations offered include higher aggregate household income if both partners work, or the increased value of time and cost of conventional shopping, especially if children are present (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 4).

Contrasting with some international studies, Hossain et al. (2022, p. 7) found no statistically significant association between either age or income level and online shopping frequency in their specific sample. They attribute this potentially to the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic during data collection or their sample's composition, which included a large proportion of students with similar, lower income levels (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 7). However, Rahman et al. (2018, p. 14) observed that most of their respondents in Dhaka city were young, with most falling below the age of 36.

#### **2.4.4 Preferences, Concerns, and Satisfaction**

Consumers in Bangladesh exhibit clear preferences and significant concerns regarding online shopping. In terms of product categories, both Rahman et al. (2018, p. 16-17) found apparel and accessories to be the most sought-after items online. Rahman et al. (2018, p. 17) also highlighted online ticketing as a frequently preferred service. Key positive aspects influencing consumer liking include the convenience of home delivery, cited as the most liked factor by both male and female respondents in the Rahman et al. (2018, p. 17) study, and noted by Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 1, 9). Ease of ordering and the availability of discount offers are other appreciated factors (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 9; Rahman et al., 2018, p. 17).

Conversely, several factors act as deterrents. The inability to physically inspect (touch and feel) products before buying is consistently highlighted as a major drawback and barrier (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 9; Rahman et al., 2018, p. 2, 19, 21). Poor return policies were identified as the most disliked aspect by respondents in the Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 10) study, and disliked by a notable percentage in the Rahman et al. (2018, p. 19) study. Other significant dislikes include perceived high prices and unsatisfactory after-sales service (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 9; Rahman et al., 2018, p. 19).

The preferred payment method is overwhelmingly Cash-on-Delivery (CoD). Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 1, 10) reported 81.33% of their respondents favouring CoD, while Rahman et al. (2018, p. 19) found 76.25% preferred this method. This strong preference is

directly linked to significant concerns about the security of online payment systems (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 1; Rahman et al., 2018, p. 2, 20). Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 10) state consumers are not interested in using credit or debit cards, while Rahman et al. (2018, p. 20) found most of their respondents felt neutral or disagreed that the online payment system in Bangladesh was secure.

Reflecting these concerns and varied experiences, overall consumer satisfaction remains mixed. Both Ahmed et al. (2022, p. 11) and Rahman et al. (2018, p. 20) found that while approximately half of respondents expressed satisfaction, a large portion remained neutral or dissatisfied. Significantly, very few respondents in either study (8% or 3.75%, respectively) reported being highly satisfied (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 11; Rahman et al., 2018, p. 20). The authors argue this points to unresolved issues hindering frequent online shopping and highlights the need for e-commerce businesses to improve service quality, address security fears, and manage return policies effectively to convert neutral or dissatisfied customers into loyal patrons (Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 11; also observed a positive correlation between shopping experience duration and shopping frequency, suggesting that building positive initial experiences is key to fostering repeat business.

## **2.5 The Role of Influencer Marketing**

This section specifically examines how influencer marketing a key SMM strategy affects consumer purchase intentions and loyalty, directly addressing Research Objectives 1, 3, and 4.

Influencer marketing has rapidly become a cornerstone of modern digital strategy, significantly reshaping how brands, particularly in the fashion industry, connect with consumers. Thilina DK (2021, p. 5) defines an influencer as a third-party who significantly shapes the customer's purchasing decision. Belanche et al. (2021, p. 2) distinguish influencers from traditional celebrities, noting influencers are often born on social media, building reputations based on the content they share and their interaction with followers, often within specific niches like fashion. According to Thilina DK (2021, p. 5), influencers possess the power to affect purchase decisions due to their

perceived knowledge, authority, or relationship with their audience. Dutta & Sardar (2020, p. 2) concur, defining influencers as individuals with credibility to affect purchase decisions through their expertise and regular social media engagement. This form of marketing leverages these key individuals to drive a brand's message, akin to a digital form of word-of-mouth (Thilina DK, 2021, p. 6).

The rise of influencer marketing is closely tied to the shifting media landscape. Thilina DK (2021, p. 2) points out the declining effectiveness of traditional advertising due to banner blindness and the increasing use of ad-blockers. Belanche et al. (2021, p. 1) argue that influencer marketing appeals better to consumers than celebrity endorsements, fostering a sense of closer relationships and fit. According to Dutta & Sardar (2020, p. 2), millennials are sensitive to peer suggestions and trust influencers more than direct brand promotions or traditional celebrity ads, preferring user-generated reviews based on personal experience. Thilina DK (2021, p. 3) cites research indicating influencers are often perceived as more credible, believable, and knowledgeable, with a high likelihood of their advice being followed. This perceived authenticity is key; influencers who seem genuine engender lower resistance to their messages (Thilina DK, 2021, p. 6).

Several theoretical frameworks help explain influencer effectiveness. Belanche et al. (2021, p 3) ground their research in balance theory, cognitive dissonance theory, and congruity theory. They argue that followers seek psychological balance and consistency; if a follower identifies with an influencer (consumer-influencer congruence), and the influencer endorses a product that fits their image (influencer-product congruence), the follower is motivated to perceive the product as fitting for themselves (consumer-product congruence) to avoid dissonance. Thilina DK (2021, p. 9, 10) draws upon the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Information Adoption Model (IAM). TRA suggests behavioural intentions are driven by attitudes and subjective norms, while IAM highlights the roles of information quality and source credibility in the adoption of information.

Key factors determine the success of influencer marketing campaigns. Influencer Credibility is paramount. Thilina DK (2021, p. 12-13) discusses credibility in terms of trustworthiness (honesty, objectivity), expertise (knowledge, skills), and attractiveness

(familiarity, likability, similarity). According to the author, higher perceived credibility enhances the influence on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Dutta & Sardar (2020, p. 3) reference Lim et al. (2017), cautioning that perceived credibility can suffer if influencers lack adequate expertise about endorsed products. Congruence, as explored by Belanche et al. (2021, p. 1, 3), is critical. Their study confirmed that higher congruence between the influencer and the product leads to higher perceived congruence between the consumer and the product, assuming high initial consumer-influencer fit. This enhanced consumer-product congruence positively influences attitudes towards the product and subsequent purchase and recommendation intentions. Information Quality, encompassing relevance, comprehensiveness, accuracy, and timeliness, is another key construct identified by Thilina DK (2021, p. 13, 15). High-quality content shared by influencers positively affects consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Dutta & Sardar (2020, p. 12) found that millennials primarily follow influencers for Discovery of new products and because they appreciate the influencer's Style, followed by factors like relatability, seeking recommendations, and trustworthiness.

The impact on consumer behaviour is multi-faceted. According to Dutta & Sardar (2020, p. 1), influencer marketing significantly impacts millennials' buying behaviour. Belanche et al. (2021, p. 1) note that influencers provide sources of information and innovation. Influencer endorsements directly affect attitudes toward the product and behavioural intentions like purchase and recommendation (Belanche et al., 2021, p. 4, 6). Thilina DK (2021, p. 14) argues, based on TRA and IAM, that attitude towards the reviews/information provided by influencers acts as a mediator between the influence source characteristics (credibility, information quality) and the ultimate purchase intention. Favourable attitudes towards influencers and their content significantly increase the likelihood of purchase (Thilina DK, 2021, p. 7).

Within the fashion industry, these dynamics are particularly pronounced. Belanche et al. (2021, p. 1) state that fashion brands find Instagram particularly helpful, and many influencers specialize in fashion expertise. According to Dutta & Sardar (2020, p. 4), fashion blogs offer a personal and interactive approach preferred over mainstream media. The authors also reference Sudha & Sheena (2017), who found influencers impact various stages of the fashion consumer's decision process, from need

recognition spurred by seeing styles on social media to information searching via blog posts (Dutta & Sardar, 2020, p. 3). Thilina DK (2021, p. 1) argues that due to the competitive nature and shifting demands in fashion retail, understanding and leveraging social influencers is essential for marketers crafting effective strategies. Belanche et al. (2021, p. 7) advise brands to carefully select influencers whose style aligns with the product to ensure authenticity and effectiveness.

## **2.6 Social Media Engagement Strategies**

This section links specific SMM engagement strategies to purchase outcomes, supporting all four research objectives by showing how strategies influence purchase intention, how brand equity mediates this relationship, and how it affects long-term commitment.

Social media engagement has become a focal point for marketers and researchers, representing a shift from traditional one-way communication to interactive, relationship-focused marketing. Ananda (2019, p. 23) argues that the rapid adoption of social media necessitates managing these platforms like other media to achieve marketing objectives. Engagement itself is a complex construct; Perreault & Mosconi (2018, p. 1) highlight the lack of consensus, noting it's viewed variously as a psychological state or process involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioural investment (p. 1-2), or as specific behavioural manifestations like interaction and participation (p. 1). Pentina et al. (2018, p. 2) adopt a behavioural lens, focusing on discrete actions consumers take when interacting with brands online. Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022, p. 2) defining engagement via the emotional or intuitive experiences people have when using social media, particularly when interacting with brands. Drummond et al. (2020, p. 4) conceptualize engagement within a broader capability framework, defining social media marketing capability as the firm's ability to connect, engage, co-ordinate, and collaborate with partners in interaction.

### 2.6.1 Types and Levels of Engagement Behaviour

Understanding the specific behaviours that constitute engagement is crucial for developing effective strategies. Perreault & Mosconi (2018, p. 2) reference a spectrum from passive content consumption to active content creation. Pentina et al. (2018, p. 7) offer a detailed typology based on interviews with luxury shoppers, identifying 11 discrete engagement behaviours mapped by effort/creativity and intended audience (brand vs. other users). According to their findings, these range from low-effort actions like 'Following/Liking the brand' (EB1) and 'Liking/Tagging/Sharing brand posts' (EB3), to moderately active behaviours such as 'Commenting on brand posts' (EB2), 'Mentioning/Tagging friends' (EB4), 'Using brand hashtags' (EB5), and posting photos of products (EB6) or self with products (EB7) (Pentina et al., 2018, p. 7-10). Higher-effort, more creative behaviours identified include 'Explicitly soliciting comments to brand selfies' (EB8), 'Initiating/maintaining brand conversations' (EB9), 'Publishing multimedia shopping stories' (EB10), and the most creative, 'Proposing new uses/interpretations for brand products' (EB11) (Pentina et al., 2018, p. 7, 10-11). Ananda states (2019, p. 81), after considering literature, that there are categories of behavioural engagement including content consumption (learning), recommendation (sharing/passing-on), endorsement (liking/favouriting), and feedback (commenting/replying).

#### Strategic Frameworks and Tactics

Strategic planning is crucial for creating good engagement. Drummond et al. (2020, p. 6) argue that social media marketing ability is most effective as strategies and tactics. The framework they present separates the capabilities into four levels: Their layers include 'Connect' (targeting and starting conversations), 'Engage' (engaging instantly with fans), 'Co-ordinate' (managing actions and resources together), and 'Collaborate' (making new things with others) (Drummond et al., 2020, p. 4-6). The authors derive eight digital engagement strategies, including focusing on message content, reach, co-creation, and using social media as a resource or problem-solving activity (Drummond et al., 2020, p. 15-16). They further identify 15 specific tactics used by their case firm, such as 'Feeler posts/tweets' to initiate contact (Connect layer), 'Dyadic bilateral conversation posts/tweets' (Engage layer), 'Information/Knowledge sharing

posts/tweets' (Co-ordinate layer), and 'Collaborative events and pop-up posts/tweets' (Collaborate layer) (Drummond et al., 2020, p. 11-15). Ananda (2019, p. 71-73), proposes the N-REL framework, categorizing strategic actions into Networking, Representation (PR, Promotion/Sales), Engagement (using influencers, personalization, co-creation, participatory promotions, competitor/supplier engagement, customer support), and Listening-in (market intelligence).

### **2.6.2 Content and Platform Considerations**

The type of content deployed is a critical element of engagement strategy. Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022, p. 1) studied branded content communication by luxury fashion brand on Instagram, categorizing content as industrial, social responsibility, commercial, or influencer-related. Their findings suggest content type influences interactions differently; social responsibility content drove significantly more positive comments for Loewe during the pandemic, while commercial content elicited the highest range of likes and positive comments for Manolo Blahnik (Castillo-Abdul et al., 2022, p. 7-9). Perreault & Mosconi (2018, p. 7) argue that merely counting likes and comments is insufficient; analysing the nature of the content and conversation is key. Pentina et al. (2018, p. 12) observed that while visual content is vital for luxury brands, verbal engagement (comments, conversations) often drives deeper meaning negotiation. Regarding platforms, Perreault & Mosconi (2018, p. 6) note that Facebook is the most studied platform for engagement, while Pentina et al. (2018, p. 13) suggest platform choice might be becoming less distinct due to feature convergence, though some tendencies remain (e.g., Twitter/Facebook for information, Instagram for hedonic/visual engagement).

### **2.6.3 Drivers and Outcomes of Engagement**

Multiple factors drive engagement. Pentina et al. (2018, p. 8-11) identify a complex web of motivations, including informational, social, hedonic, financial, self-brand identification, relational needs, and status/self-presentation needs, noting that higher-effort behaviours often stem from combined motivations. Ananda (2019, p. 55, 149)

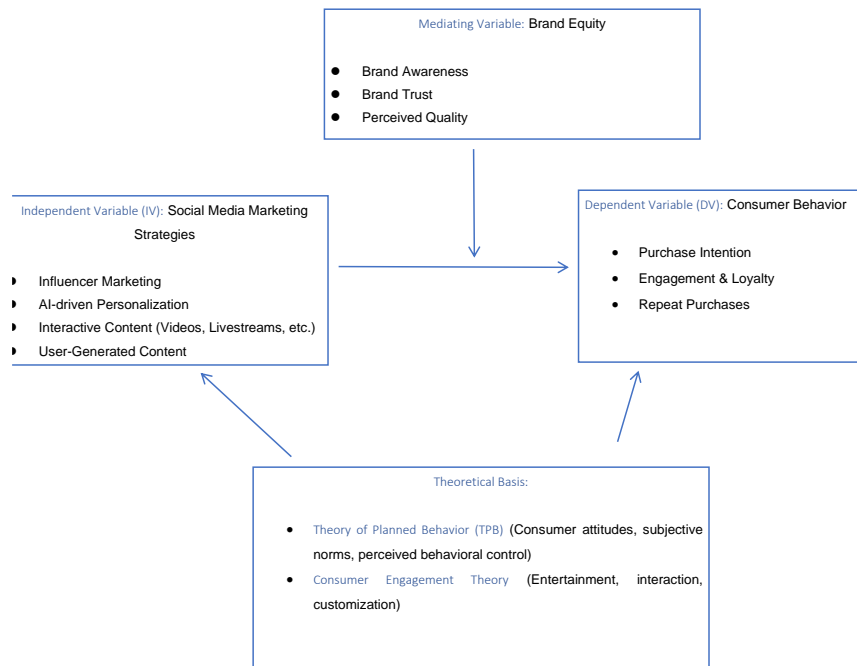
confirms that consumer involvement (with fashion, the specific brand, and the social media brand community) significantly predicts engagement levels. Successful engagement strategies yield valuable outcomes. Ananda (2019, p. 25, 60, 150) finds engagement positively impacts brand loyalty and, to a lesser extent, purchase intention. Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022, p. 1, 9) assert that branded content directly impacts brand reputation by generating positive engagement. Engagement also fosters brand relationships (Perreault & Mosconi, 2018, p. 1; Ananda, 2019, p. 24) and facilitates brand co-creation (Pentina et al., 2018, p. 3, 10).

#### **2.6.4 Relevance to Fashion Marketing in Bangladesh**

The strategies discussed are highly relevant for the fashion industry in Bangladesh. According to Ananda (2019, p. 23, 29), fashion brands were early adopters of SMM, leveraging social media's suitability for showcasing style and trends. Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022, p. 1) specifically highlight Instagram's role as a gateway between fashion brands and consumers. As Pentina et al. (2018, p. 1) note, fashion influencers are particularly prominent. For fashion brands operating in or targeting Bangladesh, understanding how to strategically use content (visuals, promotions, social responsibility messages, influencer collaborations) across platforms like Facebook and Instagram is crucial. As stated in the literature, using tactics and techniques that promote connection, dialogue, and participation (Drummond et al., 2020, p. 2, 6-7) can develop consumer involvement (Ananda, 2019, p. 55, 149) and result in potentially higher levels of brand loyalty and details how usage affects purchase intentions, which are important objectives for success in the rapidly evolving Bangladeshi fashion market. Engagement, then, becomes one essential pillar of relevant social media for fashion.

#### **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework synthesizes the literature to show how SMM strategies influence consumer purchase behavior through brand equity mediation, directly addressing Research Objective 2 regarding brand equity's mediating role.



*Figure 1: Conceptual Framework*

Figure 01, which is the conceptual framework for the theory behind this thesis, “The impact of social media marketing in the fashion industry in Bangladesh”. It suggests that factors of Social Media Marketing (SMM) have direct effects on Consumer Buying Behaviour. The framework lists SMM-specific dimensions to be used as independent variables: Entertainment (fun of interaction with content), Interaction (two-way interaction), Trendiness (is fashionable and trendy), Customization (customized content or offers), and Word-of-Mouth (consumer generating discussions). Collectively, these aspects depict the SMM stimuli consumers perceive. The dependent variable rooted in Consumer Buying Behaviour, which includes purchase intention, and behaviour in the fashion domain. Thus, the framework proposes direct, positive relationships between each SMM dimension and consumer buying behaviour. The framework is not necessarily utilized here as it is implicitly derived from stimulus-response models and possibly Uses and Gratifications Theory, rather the framework primarily serves to guide the investigation. It offers a concentrated framework to explore how such specific SMM activities, common on Facebook and Instagram, impact the purchasing decisions and behaviours of customers within the cultural and market context of Bangladeshi fashion industry. The objective of the research is to investigate these proposed relationships within the context of the Bangladeshi consumer group.

This framework guides the empirical investigation by illustrating the proposed relationships between SMM activities (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, word-of-mouth) and consumer buying behaviour, with brand equity components serving as potential mediators. The framework directly supports the research objectives by providing a theoretical structure for examining how SMM influences purchase intention (Objective 1), the mediating role of brand equity (Objective 2), consumer perceptions of SMM strategies (Objective 3), and long-term purchase commitment (Objective 4).

### **3. Chapter Three: Methodology**

In this study detailed methodology would be discuss which is used to measure the effect of social media marketing (SMM) on consumer behavior in the Bangladesh fashion industry. The specific objectives of study are to determine the specific influence that SMM in Facebook and Instagram has on the perception of Bangladeshi consumers toward fashion products, customer attitude and purchase intention. This chapter presents the methodology and design used for research, considers methodology and design regarding data collection, sampling, analysis considerations, as well as ethical considerations for conducting the research. Given the requirement to gain a rich and contextually embedded account, a qualitative methodology was chosen as the most suitable to respond effectively to our research questions.

#### **3.1 Research Approach and Design**

##### **Research Philosophy:**

The Research Philosophy that was adopted was justified by the philosophy of constructivism which is akin to interpretivism basis on the fact that knowledge is socially constructed through interpretational meaning, subjective interpretation and cultural context. Interpretivism argues that social reality is not objective but constructed through human experiences, interpretations, and social contexts (Saunders et al., 2009). From this viewpoint, it is necessary to get into the meanings, perceptions, and

experiences that are situated in their own environment to understand things like consumer behaviour. Since consumer responses to SMM are subjective, differ across cultural contexts and relate to personal values and individual interpretations of marketing messages, the study adopts an interpretivist stance. This means you are not seeking to establish universal causal laws and allows you as a researcher to find out subjective meanings that participants have attached to SMM in the Bangladeshi fashion context. SMM can create real demand and influence consumers in the retail environment in so many ways.

### **Research Approach:**

In line with the interpretivist philosophy, this research takes a qualitative approach. Qolamani, 2023, p.106 Qualitative research excels at providing in-depth, contextual insights into social phenomena. It is especially well-suited to investigating complex, poorly understood topics or looking at familiar topics in a new light. The influence of SMM on fashion consumption in Bangladesh represents a contemporary and evolving phenomenon where consumer perceptions, motivations, and experiences are central. Quantitative methods, while useful for measuring frequencies or correlations across large samples, often struggle to capture the richness and depth of individual experiences or the underlying reasons for specific behaviours. Although quantitative surveys are common in social media marketing research, qualitative studies remain in the minority.

Several studies on SMM and engagement have highlighted the need for more qualitative exploration. For instance, Perreault & Mosconi (2018, p. 7) suggested incorporating qualitative data to reflect the voice of customers beyond quantitative metrics. Pentina et al. (2018, p. 1, 5) successfully utilized in-person interviews to explore luxury consumer engagement behaviours in depth.

**Research Design:** The specific research design employed is an exploratory qualitative design. Exploratory research is appropriate when the aim is to gain familiarity with a phenomenon, clarify concepts, or develop initial understandings where prior research is limited or requires contextualization (Saunders et al., 2009). While research exists on SMM and fashion globally, the specific interplay within the Bangladeshi context warrants exploration. This design allows for flexibility during the

research process, enabling the researcher to refine inquiry based on emerging insights from participants.

The design focuses on in-depth exploration through interviews with a small, targeted group of participants. This approach prioritizes depth of understanding over breadth of coverage, seeking detailed accounts of individual experiences with SMM in the fashion context on Facebook and Instagram within Bangladesh. The design does not aim for statistical generalizability to the broader population of Bangladeshi consumers but rather seeks to generate rich, transferable insights and potentially identify themes or patterns that could inform future, larger-scale quantitative research. The focus on Facebook and Instagram is justified by their widespread use in Bangladesh (Thilina DK, 2021, p. 2; Ananda, 2019, p. 88) and their significance as marketing channels for fashion brands.

### **3.2 Data Collection Methods**

**Primary Data Source and Method:** The primary data for this study is collected through individual interviews with selected participants. Interviews are a cornerstone of qualitative research, providing a powerful means to gather rich, detailed data about participants' experiences, perspectives, opinions, and feelings (Dursun, 2023, p. 1). This method allows for direct interaction between the researcher and the participant, facilitating clarification, probing, and exploration of complex issues in ways that surveys or observation might not permit (Gill et al., 2008).

The user specified "structured" interviews. However, for an exploratory qualitative study aiming for depth and understanding participant perspectives, semi-structured interviews are generally considered more appropriate. While structured interviews use a rigid set of predetermined questions, semi-structured interviews employ an interview guide with key themes and questions but allow flexibility for the interviewer to probe responses, ask follow-up questions, and explore emergent topics relevant to the participant's experience (Saunders et al., 2009). This flexibility is crucial for capturing the richness and unanticipated nuances of consumer experiences with SMM. Therefore, this research utilizes a semi-structured interview approach, guided by a

topic list derived from the literature review and research objectives, while remaining open to participant-led insights.

### **Interview Instrument:**

A semi-structured interview questions is developed based on the research objectives and insights gleaned from the literature review (Chapters 1 & 2). The questions outline key themes and potential probing questions, ensuring consistency across interviews while allowing for flexibility. The key themes include:

- General social media usage patterns (platforms used, frequency, time spent).
- Engagement with fashion content on Facebook/Instagram (following brands/influencers, types of content consumed/interacted with).
- Perceptions of SMM tactics (ads, influencer posts, branded content, contests).
- Influence of SMM on fashion awareness, interest, and trends.
- Role of influencers versus brand-generated content.
- Impact of social interactions (peer comments, reviews) on perceptions.
- Influence of SMM on the purchase decision process (information search, evaluation, purchase intent, actual purchase).
- Post-purchase behaviour related to SMM (sharing experiences, reviews).
- Trust, credibility, and authenticity perceptions regarding SMM sources.
- Specific experiences related to purchasing fashion items via Facebook/Instagram in Bangladesh.

The questions are open-ended to encourage detailed responses (e.g., "Can you describe how you typically discover new fashion trends or products on Instagram/Facebook?", "How does content from fashion influencers affect your opinion about a product?", "Tell me about a time you purchased a fashion item after seeing it promoted on social media."). The guide piloted before use to ensure clarity and effectiveness.

### **Interview Process:**

Interviews are conducted at a time and place convenient for the participant, potentially including face-to-face meetings in a neutral location or online calls (e.g., via Zoom, Google Meet), depending on participant preference and feasibility. The estimated duration for each interview is 45-60 minutes, though this may vary. Before commencing, the research explains the study's purpose, assure confidentiality, obtain informed consent, and seek permission for audio recording. Interviews are conducted via Microsoft Teams, recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and then thematically analysed to identify key patterns and insights. Building rapport will be crucial to encourage open and honest responses. Probing questions are used to elicit deeper insights and clarify responses.

### **3.3 Sampling Strategy and Justification**

#### **Interviewee:**

The participant for this study comprises individuals residing in Bangladesh who are active users of Facebook and/or Instagram and regularly purchase fashion products (apparel, accessories, footwear) online, influenced at least in part by their social media activity. Regularly could be operationalized as having made at least two online fashion purchases influenced by social media within the past six months.

Given the qualitative, exploratory nature of the study and the need for participants with specific experiences. Interviewees are purposively chosen from female fashion shoppers who actively engage with social media marketing yet report low purchase frequencies, ensuring they have firsthand experience with SMM influences. Selection criteria include recent exposure to fashion campaigns on platforms like Instagram or Facebook, varied age and income brackets, and self-reported reasons for buying less to uncover root causes and deterrents. Specifically, purposive sampling is employed. This technique involves intentionally selecting participants who meet predefined criteria relevant to the research questions (Rahman, 2023). This ensures that the participants possess the knowledge and experience necessary to provide rich, relevant information. This approach contrasts with probability sampling, which aims for statistical representativeness but is less suited for in-depth qualitative exploration.

**Sample Size and Justification:** The user specified a sample size of six participants. In qualitative research, sample size is determined not by statistical power calculations but by the goal of achieving informational richness and data saturation. Saturation occurs when subsequent interviews cease to yield new insights, themes, or perspectives relevant to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

The justification for this small sample size rests on the study's purely exploratory nature and its focus on achieving depth of understanding from each participant rather than breadth or generalizability. Each interview is aimed to elicit highly detailed, rich narratives. The researcher proceeds with the five interviews, meticulously analysing the data after each one. If, after analysing the fifth interview, it becomes apparent that no new themes are emerging and a state of saturation has been reached, the sample size is deemed adequate for the exploratory goals of this specific study. However, it is explicitly acknowledged as a limitation that findings from such a small sample cannot be generalized and primarily serve to generate initial insights and potential hypotheses for future research. If saturation is clearly not reached after five interviews, this is also be noted as a limitation, suggesting further interviews would be needed for a more robust exploration.

**Recruitment:**

Participants are recruited through a combination of methods appropriate for reaching the target demographic within ethical boundaries. This may include posting invitations on relevant social media groups (e.g., Bangladeshi fashion enthusiast groups on Facebook, if permitted), utilizing the researcher's professional and personal networks (while being mindful of potential bias), and potentially employing a snowball technique where initial participants are asked to refer others who meet the criteria. Potential participants are screened using a short set of questions (e.g., confirming residency, platform usage frequency, recent online fashion purchase history linked to social media) to ensure they meet the inclusion criteria before being invited for a full interview.

### 3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Several qualitative data analysis approaches were considered for this study. Content analysis focuses on systematic categorization, narrative analysis examines individual stories, grounded theory develops theory from data, and interpretative phenomenological analysis explores lived experiences. However, thematic analysis was selected as it provides flexibility for identifying patterns while maintaining analytical rigor, making it most suitable for this exploratory study.

**Data Preparation:** The primary data, consisting of audio recordings from the interviews, is transcribed verbatim into text format.

#### **Analysis Approach:**

Interviews data are transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. Applying thematic analysis, Christou (2022) discussed that thematic analysis is a qualitative approach to finding, studying, and presenting patterns found in data. It is ideal for examining experiences, perspectives, and perceptions, particularly in exploratory studies. Such a method enables detailed, thick descriptions but also complex descriptions of data associated with the research question: How does SMM impact fashion consumer behaviour in Bangladesh? Other qualitative approaches, such as content analysis, were employed in some related studies (e.g., Pentina et al., 2018; Drummond et al., 2020), though the thematic analysis approach afforded more freedom to uncover the latent, interpretive themes beyond frequencies of manifest content. The analysis is largely inductive (bottom-up) in that themes arise directly from the data, though the research questions and literature review provide an initial sensitizing structure (Patton, 2015).

#### **3.4.1 Thematic Analysis Approach**

The analysis was done using the six steps found in Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic framework to unearth, measure, and synthesize trends in the qualitative data. The methodology was also selected because of its adaptability and potential to reveal the complexities of users who interact with social media marketing in the fashion industry. The themes were extracted from the interview data through an inductive approach as guided by the research questions and conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 2.

## Data Familiarization

At the first stage of this study spent a lot of time getting to know the interview material very well. Each interview was audio recorded, and the interviews were verbatim transcribed, thus compiling about 40 pages of transcript material. The transcripts were scrutinized several times, with preliminary observations on recurring themes and interesting details. This first round of review enabled the researchers to understand the distinct insights and backgrounds of the participants before the systematic coding.

### 3.4.2 Coding Process

The Coding was organized in a methodical, iterative manner:

**Initial Coding:** Open Coding was performed on each transcript, and the transcripts were processed line-by-line to develop preliminary descriptive codes. This was done manually, whereby codes were written in the margins of the printed transcripts, and the list was transferred to a digital Coding matrix for further analysis.

**Code Refinement:** An initial code was created and with further comparison/homogenization, codes were refined. Codes were combined to upkeep consistency, and superfluous codes were removed, ambiguous codes were clarified as well.

Raw Data (Interview Extract)	Initial Code	Refined Code	Category	Theme
"26 years old." "Marketing executive at a local textile company in Dhaka." "3 to 4 hours daily, mostly during commute and evening after work." (Interviewee 1)	Young professional; Mid-level usage; Urban consumer; Structured usage time	Young adult demographic; Moderate usage pattern; Professional context	Young Adult Consumer Profile	Demographic Segmentation in Digital Engagement
"32 years old." "University lecturer teaching Business Communication in Chittagong." "Two hours daily, between classes and evenings." (Interviewee 2)	Older professional; Academic profession; Structured usage time; Limited engagement	Mature professional; Educational sector; Selective engagement	Older Adult Consumer Profile	Demographic Segmentation in Digital Engagement

### 3.4.3 Theme Development

The progress of the theme was an iterative process:

**Initial Theme Identification:** Preliminary Theme Identification Categories were analyzed for emergent patterns and relationships, resulting in the identification of initial themes. This involved a focus on the incidence of codes, as well as their relevance in relation to the research questions.

**Theme Refinement:** Initial themes were compared to the raw data to confirm they were true to participant experiences. This included going back to the transcripts to validate the meaning and consistency of context. Themes without adequate substantiating information were removed or combined with related ones.

**Theme Mapping:** The elaborated themes were plotted in a thematic map to achieve a visual overview, showing thematic relationships and hierarchical structures. From this, five main sub-themes with several sub-points emerged and represent the key findings of this research.

Clarification of themes: There was a clear definition of each theme including its focus, limits and relevance to the conceptual framework. These definitions formed the basis for the presentation of results in the following sections.

#### **3.4.4 Analytical Integration**

The third phase of analysis was the synthesis of thematic findings with the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 2. This amalgamation checked how the emerging themes were related to the core components of social media marketing strategies, brand equity, and consumer behavior in the context of the Bangladeshi fashion industry.

The analysis utilized an interpretive approach, which combined descriptive reporting of participant experiences with a more in-depth analytic exploration of patterns and meanings. The following aspects were given particular attention during the analysis:

- Differences by age and type in experience and perspective
- Factors within the context of Bangladesh's fashion market
- Similarities and differences with existing literature
- Theoretical and practical implications

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

Adherence to ethical principles is paramount throughout the research process. Key considerations include:

**Informed Consent:** Prior to participation, individuals is received a detailed information sheet explaining the study's purpose, what participation involves (interview duration, topics), potential risks and benefits, data handling procedures, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Written or recorded verbal consent is obtained before commencing any interview or recording (Saunders et al., 2009). Participants are assured that participation is entirely voluntary.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:** To protect participant identity, all personal identifiers is removed from transcripts and reports. Pseudonyms are assigned to each participant. Data is stored securely, accessible only to the researcher. When using direct quotes in the thesis, care is taken to ensure they do not inadvertently reveal the participant's identity.

**Data Storage and Management:**

Audio recordings and electronic transcripts is stored on password-protected devices and/or encrypted cloud storage. Data is retained only for the duration necessary for the research and its assessment, after which recordings are securely deleted and transcripts fully anonymized if stored long-term for archival purposes, following institutional guidelines.

**Potential Risks and Benefits:**

Potential risks are minimal, primarily involving the participant's time commitment and potentially discussing personal shopping habits. There are no direct benefits to participants, other than the potential satisfaction of contributing to academic knowledge about consumer behaviour in Bangladesh. This is clearly communicated.

**Researcher Positionality:**

The researcher acknowledges their own background, potential assumptions, and biases regarding social media, fashion, and consumerism in Bangladesh, and reflect on how these might influence data collection and interpretation in the final thesis.

Ensuring neutrality during interviews and rigor during analysis help mitigate potential bias.

#### **Quality Consideration:**

To enhance credibility, the researcher has conducted peer debriefing sessions with academic peers to discuss emerging themes and validate analytical decisions. Interpreted data is shared with participants so that member checking can be used to confirm accuracy and validate the perception of the participants' views. Finally, an audit trail has been done to maintain the research process, data collection, coding and theme development in the event of dependability and confirmability of findings.

## **4. Chapter Four: Analysis & Findings**

This chapter examines how social media marketing influences consumer behaviour in Bangladesh's fashion industry through systematic qualitative analysis.

### **4.1 Demographics Analysis**

Demographic analysis lies at the heart of consumer research methodology, helping in the development of systematic research on the relationship between traits of population and buying behaviour. Through such an extensive analytical approach, researchers can determine how demographic characteristics would connect with consumer behaviour, knowledge that is important for strategic decisions in product designing and marketing operations. The significance of such analysis is increasing in the current marketplace as digital engagement metrics and traditional demographic variables tend to intersect (Rahman et al., 2020, p.14). This analysis explores the comprehensive demographic breaks of the research sample by analysing age brackets, job profiles, use of social media, and interactive behaviours to identify meaningful consumer clusters within the Bangladeshi fashion industry.

#### **4.1.1 Participant Profiles**

Six participants were specifically selected to accurately represent a variety of diverse demographics within the study's target population. Profile information for every participant was evaluated against defined standards in terms of age, job, education, social media use, and fashion-buying tendencies.

**Interviewee 1:** A 26-year-old woman employed in marketing in the textiles industry in Dhaka. She spends 3-4 hours daily on social media: she uses Facebook and

Instagram most often, sometimes even visiting Pinterest. Her fashion buys become recurrent twice a month, and of these, 5-6 have been influenced by social media over the past six months. She primarily communicates with posts following through with insights on mixing traditional and modern aesthetics, with videos supporting the different looks.

**Interviewee 2:** A female instructor aged 32 of Chittagong University focusing on Business Communication. She spends about 2 hours daily on social media and concentrates on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to keep her professional community. Her engagement behaviours are selective, particularly concerning materials that advocate for traditional work attires made of regional textiles. Her recent trend is that she buys fashion monthly, and social media has directly triggered four such purchases in the last six months.

**Interviewee 3:** A 19-year-old female student at Dhaka University is taking her second year in Computer Science. She spends about 5 hours online daily on social media, where Instagram is the leading site and TikTok and Facebook are secondary. She actively supports 15 to 20 posts daily and engages at the rate of weekly comments and shared content. Her fashion expenditure is staggered with a buffet of small buys in biweekly intervals and bigger buys monthly, for a total of 8 to 10 purchases over the past 6 months that were primarily driven by social media, focusing on transformation and fusion-inspired outfits.

**Interviewee 4:** The owner of a digital marketing agency in Dhaka, 35 years of age. She spends about 3-4 hours daily on Instagram and LinkedIn in terms of professional outreach and also has a Facebook profile. She selectively follows 1-2 posts daily and leaves weekly comments in her interaction. Her mode of shopping deals in fashion, where she buys twice a month, and approximately five purchases from social media marketers in the last six months focused majorly on career-ready outfits and native materials.

**Interviewee 5:** A 23-year-old female digital influencer and freelance social media manager from Dhaka. She is characterized by heavy social media activity (6-7 hours a day), and most of the time is spent on Instagram and quite often using TikTok and Facebook. She is very active, likes many posts daily, and comments frequently; she always shares posts weekly. She frequently buys accessories and makeup objects

weekly due to some dozen purchases that took place under the influence of social media in the last half-year, and transformation videos and fusion content mainly attract her.

**Interviewee 6:** A Dhaka-based 29-year-old female professional who works in human resources at a multinational company. She is moderate with social media, as she spends about two hours on social media daily and mostly does it on Facebook and Instagram, although she uses LinkedIn for networking. Her social media activity is minimal; she posts likes a few times a week and shares things occasionally with colleagues. She purchases new clothes once or twice a month. She makes 3-4 new clothes on a trendy basis, which she has gained from social media within the last 6 months, and she tends to mix Western and traditional ones to her professional dress base.

#### 4.1.2 Age-Based Demographic Analysis

The demographic analysis revealed two distinct age cohorts with significant differences in digital engagement and consumption patterns, as illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1: Age Distribution and Characteristics**

Age Group	Key Characteristics	Social Media Behavior	Shopping Patterns
<b>Young Adults (19-26)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More digitally immersed</li> <li>• Fashion-forward</li> <li>• Education and early career focused</li> <li>• Higher trend sensitivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5-7 hrs. daily usage</li> <li>• Instagram/TikTok primary</li> <li>• High engagement (15-20 likes daily)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shop weekly/biweekly</li> <li>• 5+ social media influenced purchases in 6 months</li> <li>• More experimental fashion choices</li> </ul>
<b>Older Adults (29-35)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career established</li> <li>• Professional image conscious</li> <li>• Higher purchasing power</li> <li>• Quality/value orientation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-4 hrs. daily usage</li> <li>• Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram mix</li> <li>• Selective engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shop monthly</li> <li>• 3-4 social media influenced purchases in 6 months</li> <li>• More investment-oriented purchases</li> </ul>

Age-based segmentation of the users highlights the substantial impacts of life stage milestones on the patterns of digital use and style preferences. The 19-26 age group has a higher level of digital engagement: 5-7 hours daily spent on social media, paying attention to visual content and monitoring higher engagement ratios. Their buying

habits consist of frequent weekly or other weeks' buying, usually under the influence of experimental attitudes connected with the identity-seeking of mature adolescents.

The more senior cohort (29-35) switches to a more discriminate mode, spending approximately 2-4 hours daily in digital use on professional and social networks. They spend less (monthly) but invest more, which aligns with their career stabilization and increased spending power. This age group members tend to think about quality and value when purchasing.

These differences reflect the findings provided by Hossain et al. (2022, p. 7) upon discovering significant correlations between consumers' age and the frequency of online shopping activities in Bangladesh. In line with previous results from Rahman et al. (2018, p. 14), these results confirm that age is related to online shopping behaviour in Dhaka. According to Rahman et al. (2018, p. 14), online shopping in Dhaka involves most customers who are less than 36 years old and exhibit specific behavioural tendencies.

#### 4.1.3 Occupational Demographic Analysis

Analysis of social media engagement patterns across occupational categories revealed distinctive behavioural profiles, as presented in Table 2.

*Table 2: Analysis of Social Media Usage Patterns Across Occupational Categories:*

Occupation	Platform Preferences	Usage Context & Patterns	Engagement Style	Fashion Interests
<b>Business Professional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook/ LinkedIn/ Instagram</li> <li>• Professional groups</li> <li>• Business-oriented content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate usage</li> <li>• Commute and evening hrs.</li> <li>• Work-related browsing</li> <li>• Selective engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose-driven interaction</li> <li>• Research-oriented approach</li> <li>• Selective engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional attire</li> <li>• Work-appropriate traditional wear</li> <li>• Climate-appropriate formal wear</li> </ul>
<b>Education Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook /Instagram /LinkedIn</li> <li>• Academic fashion bloggers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate usage</li> <li>• Between classes</li> <li>• Evening browsing</li> <li>• Limited to 2 hrs. daily</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose-driven interaction</li> <li>• Research-oriented approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic-appropriate attire</li> <li>• Professional fashion with local textiles</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local boutique pages</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work-appropriate traditional wear</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instagram primarily</li> <li>TikTok</li> <li>Facebook for university connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heavy usage (5+ hrs)</li> <li>Between classes</li> <li>High daily usage (5 hrs.)</li> <li>Frequent engagement with content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High daily engagement</li> <li>Content sharing</li> <li>Active participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable options</li> <li>University outfit ideas</li> <li>Transformation videos</li> <li>Fusion styles</li> </ul>
<b>Creative Professional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instagram primarily</li> <li>High platform diversity</li> <li>Content creation focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heavy usage (5+ hrs)</li> <li>Highest usage (6-7 hrs. daily)</li> <li>Content engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High daily engagement</li> <li>Content sharing</li> <li>Active participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fusion content</li> <li>Behind-the-scenes production</li> <li>Transformation videos</li> <li>Distinctive styles</li> </ul>

The analysis uncovers that online social activities and fashion taste significantly influence a person's position at work and workplace culture. Business professionals' use of platforms is balanced and goal-oriented because they use them to network and share business details very often. Education professionals also interact moderately on platforms that can enhance their professional presentations.

Although students are expansive and prolific in their interaction with content on platforms, creative professionals excel in daily time spent (6-7 hours), with an emphasis on creating and finding visual information. These differences echo Hossain et al.'s (2022, pp. 7-8) findings: occupation significantly influences online shopping in Bangladesh, where higher-category occupation professionals are mainly reflected.

#### 4.1.4 Integrated Demographic Framework

To comprehensively understand the relationship between demographic variables and social media marketing effectiveness, an integrated framework was developed, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Social Media Usage, Engagement &amp; Consumer

Demographic Segment	Social Media Behaviour	Consumer Behaviour	Marketing Implications
<b>Established Professionals</b> • Age: 29-35 • More established careers • Business /Education sectors	<b>Platforms:</b> Facebook/Instagram/ LinkedIn, professional groups <b>Usage:</b> Moderate (2-4 hrs daily), evening concentration <b>Engagement:</b> Selective, purpose-driven, research-oriented	<b>Shopping:</b> Monthly, planned purchases <b>Purchase drivers:</b> Business events <b>Value:</b> Higher average purchase value <b>Interests:</b> Professional attire, work-appropriate traditional wear	<b>Social Media Influence:</b> Moderate (3-4 purchases) <b>Effective Strategies:</b> • Purpose-focused content • Professional networking engagement • Brand trust development • Quality-focused messaging
<b>Emerging Professionals</b> • Age: 19-26 • Early career stage • Students/Creative /Marketing roles	<b>Platforms:</b> Instagram/TikTok primary, high platform diversity <b>Usage:</b> Heavy (5+ hrs daily), throughout-day engagement. <b>Engagement:</b> High daily engagement, content creation/sharing, trend following	<b>Shopping:</b> Frequent (Weekly/Biweekly) <b>Purchase patterns:</b> Small items biweekly, accessories weekly <b>Interests:</b> Affordable options, fusion styles, transformation content	<b>Social Media Influence:</b> High (5+ purchases) <b>Effective Strategies:</b> • Influencer marketing • Interactive content • User-generated content • AI-driven personalization • Entertainment-focused engagement

By integrating demographic research with applied market segmentations, this framework illustrates how age and job feature influence separate patterns of social media engagement and fashion purchasing purposes. The segmentation model identifies two important segments that are distinguished by separate features:

- **Established Professionals (29-35):** This group expresses selective inclusion in professional networking portals on social networks, maintains a monthly buying pattern, and wants quality-oriented content that will slowly win the consumer's trust.
- **Emerging Professionals (19-26):** Distinct in the active use of social media channels and high-purchase rate as well as a favorable response for interactive, amusing content posted by influencers with customizable preferences.

The empirical evidence grounded in the segmentation framework supports the conceptual model discussed in Chapter 2, which demonstrates how social media marketing influences consumer behavior, serving as an intermediary between market actors through the intermediation of elements of brand equity. Wang et al. (2019, p. 4) highlight that the connection between social media observance and reality purchases is complicated and mainly depends on the credibility of the content provided and strategic compatibility with groups of consumers.

#### **4.1.5 Summary of Demographic Insights**

Demographic Analysis shows different social media usages, engagement habits, and fashion purchases among Bangladeshi people, categorized according to age groups and occupation. Due to the identified variations, companies are required to adopt customized marketing approaches for effective communication and grip on the attention of diverse consumer segments.

The Analysis confirms Hossain et al. (2022, p. 7). As Hossain et al. (2022, p. 7) support, the Analysis affirms the viewpoint that demographic factors significantly affect online shopping behavior in Bangladesh and provides insight into the way these demographic influences reveal themselves in social media marketing interactions in the fashion sphere. This Analysis analyzes the effectiveness of specific social media marketing techniques across various demographic segments, which further analyzes consumer engagement and purchase conversion effects.

#### **4.2 Consumer Engagement Patterns**

In today's online world the consumer brand relationship has gone far beyond simple transaction to complex many faceted relationships. In the context of social media platforms, consumer engagement is about how people relate to brands and vice versus, depending on how committed they are. The engagement in this one extends beyond simple click; it's an intricate psychological cognitive social harnessing state of cognitive processing and emotional connection and social participation in the aesthetics of brand content (Bommawar and Tiwari, 2022, p. 175).

Engagement frameworks have been moving from passive to active on the spectrum. Perreault and Mosconi (2018, pp.3568) identify two essential elements: basic consumption of content and participative action (commenting, content creation), with two categories of content (decentralized or centralized). By building on this contradiction, Pentina et al. (2018, p.7) identify eleven distinct engagement behaviours: from the minimal effort behaviour representing a brand to the high investment creative behaviour that is product cocreation (creating via the Internet), initiating brand-centered discussions.

What the research has found now is that content nature is influencing engagement in fashion specifically. As reported by Bommawar & Tiwari (2022, p. 177), static content attracts less engagement than dynamic content, such as videos. Their analysis identifies four factors that facilitate consumer immersion: entertainment value, Trendiness, Customization solutions, and Interaction. Besides increasing immediate engagement metrics, these factors also create long-term brand loyalty and purchasing intentions.

Frequently, they manage to create content that gets people's attention, starts a relationship and turns casual browsers into brand ambassadors.

**Table Origin:** The following table 4 is formed by analysing theme tables from Section 2: "Fashion Discovery Methods" and Section 3: "Social Media Engagement Patterns"(Appendix B) and a detailed table can be found in Appendix C table 1.

*Table 4: Comprehensive Content Engagement Framework: Impact on Brand Awareness*

<b>Content Type</b>	<b>Engagement Value</b>	<b>Brand Equity Impact</b>	<b>TPB Element</b>	<b>Bangladesh-Specific Context</b>
<b>Cultural-Fusion Storytelling</b>	Emotional connection through generational relevance	Enhances Brand Awareness through cultural resonance	Positive Attitude formation	Reflects Bangladesh's strong family ties and intergenerational living patterns

<b>AI-Curated Personalized Content</b>	Relevance and convenience through algorithmic matching	Builds Brand Trust through consistent value delivery	Perceived Behavioral Control	Addresses emerging digital literacy among Bangladesh's young adult consumers (19-26 age group)
<b>Interactive Visual Content</b>	High practical value through demonstration	Strengthens Perceived Quality through product visualization	Subjective Norms through social proof	Compensates for limited physical product examination in Bangladesh's emerging e-commerce environment
<b>Professional Context Representations</b>	Practical workplace applicability	Brand Awareness within specific professional segments	Attitudes toward professional appropriateness	Aligns with growing professional women's market segment in urban Bangladesh (29-35 age group)
<b>Local Production Storytelling</b>	Transparency and authenticity through behind-the-scenes content	Trust through ethical production visibility	Subjective Norms around ethical consumption	Appeals to Bangladesh's pride in local textile heritage and artisanal production

This table outlines five distinct content types and their multidimensional impact on consumer engagement in Bangladesh's fashion market.

The data reveals that all 6 out of 6 interviewees reported experiences with AI-curated personalized Content, finding it helpful for discovery despite privacy concerns. Interactive Visual Content was valued by 3 out of 6 participants who specifically mentioned engagement with transformation videos and styling demonstrations, addressing the challenge of product examination in Bangladesh's e-commerce environment.

Professional Context Representations resonated with 3 out of 6 participants, particularly those seeking work-appropriate traditional wear and climate-appropriate

formal options. This directly addresses the needs of the growing professional women's segment (age 29-35) in urban Bangladesh.

Cultural-Fusion Storytelling was mentioned by 2 out of 6 participants, with one interviewee noting the entertainment value of "humorous reels showing cross-generational styling of traditional clothing." Similarly, 2 out of 6 participants highlighted Local Production Storytelling, with one sharing how behind-the-scenes artisan production videos directly influenced their purchase decision.

**Table Origin:** This table maps the progression of consumer engagement via social media across pre-purchase activities to post-purchase sharing behaviours. Based on analysis of participants' responses to Section 2 and 3 questions about their social media usage and engagement patterns (Appendix A), and interview data supports this table can be found in Appendix C Table 2, this study tries to identify distinct stages in how Bangladeshi consumers interact with fashion brands online.

*Table 5: Engagement Behaviour Progression Map: Path to Loyalty*

<b>Pre-Purchase Engagement</b>	<b>Post-Purchase Sharing</b>	<b>Brand Equity Development</b>	<b>TPB Influence</b>	<b>Bangladesh-Specific Behavior</b>
<b>Platform-Specific Content Consumption</b>	Comments on original brand posts	Initial Brand Awareness	Information-seeking attitude	Facebook-dominant engagement reflects Bangladesh's 44.7 million user base mentioned in literature
<b>AI-Facilitated Discovery</b>	Platform-specific sharing to social circles	Perceived Quality validation	Behavioral control through informed choices	Addresses "3-4 hrs. daily" social media usage pattern of moderate users
<b>Purpose-Driven Engagement</b>	Group-based sharing in community forums	Brand Trust through community validation	Subjective norms from peer influence	Reflects collectivist decision-making in Bangladeshi consumer culture

<b>Professional Network Engagement</b>	Direct brand feedback through messages	Brand Trust through relationship building	Perceived control through direct communication	Important for professional segments who value "workwear brands, content creators specializing in professional fashion"
<b>Creative Response Development</b>	Content creation featuring brand products	Brand Advocacy (extended Brand Trust)	Demonstration of positive attitude	Particularly relevant for heavy users spending "6-7 hrs. daily" on social media

All 6 participants described Platform-Specific Content Consumption as their primary initial engagement with fashion brands, reflecting Bangladesh's substantial Facebook user base (44.7 million users) mentioned in the literature. The AI-facilitated discovery was mentioned by 4 out of 6 participants, particularly addressing the "3-4 hrs. daily" social media usage pattern described by moderate users.

Purpose-driven engagement through community forums was highlighted by 3 out of 6 participants, with Interviewee 1 noting they were "motivated by practical value." This reflects the collectivist decision-making characteristic of Bangladeshi consumer culture. Professional Network Engagement was important for 3 out of 6 participants, especially those in business roles who value workwear content. At the same time, Creative Response Development was mentioned by only 1 participant, who described being "very active" with content creation.

This progression aligns with engagement spectrum theories proposed by Pentina et al. (2018) while capturing Bangladesh's particular digital engagement patterns and collectivist consumer culture.

**Table Origin:** This table connects trust-building factors to brand equity components within Bangladesh's fashion market context. Analysis of responses from Section 3 ("Trust in Recommendations") and Section 5 ("Trust: Influencers vs. Brand Content") (Appendix B) revealed specific trust factors important to participants. An interview-supported table can be found in Appendix C Table 3.

Table 6: Trust and Loyalty Development Framework: Brand Equity Builders

<b>Trust Factors</b>	<b>Brand Equity Component</b>	<b>Engagement Channel</b>	<b>TPB Element</b>	<b>Bangladesh-Specific Trust Factors</b>
<b>Transparent Product Representation</b>	Perceived Quality	Brand-generated content	Attitude formation through honest portrayal	Addresses concerns about "heavily edited Instagram images" mentioned in interviews
<b>Material Quality Information</b>	Perceived Quality	Detailed specifications	Perceived behavioral control through informed choice	Essential in a market where "fabric quality" is repeatedly mentioned as a key purchase factor
<b>Authentic Influencer Disclosure</b>	Brand Trust	Influencer partnerships	Subjective norms through perceived honesty	Responds to growing skepticism toward "changing recommendations based on sponsorships"
<b>AI-Powered Personalized Recommendations</b>	Brand Awareness	Targeted algorithmic content	Perceived behavioral control through relevant choices	Helps navigate information overload in Bangladesh's rapidly expanding digital fashion space
<b>Local Context Relevance</b>	Brand Trust	Cultural adaptation	Attitude toward cultural appropriateness	Critical in Bangladesh where "local cultural context and weather conditions" are primary considerations
<b>Ethical Production Transparency</b>	Brand Trust	Behind-the-scenes content	Subjective norms around ethical consumption	Addresses concerned about "machine-made saree advertised as handcrafted" mentioned in interviews

This table explicitly links the trust-building factors to brand equity components, engagement channels, and TPB elements within the context of the Bangladesh-

specific markets. Specifically, it addresses respondents key trust concerns revealed in the interview data, for example, their mistrust of "heavily edited photos" or of products displayed as being "wonderfully packaged, wonderful videos that look like they have been heavily edited together" (Interviewee 1), which they prefer conveyed as "products from multiple angles; discussing the advantages and limitations of the products," (Interviewee 1). The fabric quality concern mentioned several times during the interviews is addressed directly by the material quality info component. By placing the importance of authentic influencer disclosure in line with consumers' distrust of 'recommendations that change based on sponsorships' and in line with consumers' familiarity with living in a world of 'I do not need to see it. The presence of AI-powered personalization is important as this reflects the information overload challenge that exists in Bangladesh's rapidly expanding digital fashion space. Local context relevance also aligns with interviewees who state that "local Bangladeshi influencer has more impact than the one from abroad since it is aware in the local context" (Interviewee 1). Ethical production transparency addresses concerns with misrepresented products such as "machine-made saree advertised as handcrafted" (Interviewee 2). The framework effectively integrates the theoretical brand equity mediators outlined in the thesis' conceptual framework.

**Table Origin:** This table deconstructs how specific social media marketing strategies influence consumer behaviour through brand equity mediation in Bangladesh's fashion market. By analysing responses from Section 4 regarding "purchase triggers" and "decision factors" (Appendix B), tried to identify marketing strategies and their impacts. An interview-supported table can be found in Appendix C Table 4.

*Table 7: Purchase Journey Engagement Map: Path to Consumer Behaviour*

<b>SMM Strategy</b>	<b>Consumer Behavior Impact</b>	<b>Brand Equity Mediator</b>	<b>TPB Influence</b>	<b>Bangladesh Context Application</b>
<b>Influencer Marketing: Styling Demonstrations</b>	Purchase Intention through problem-solution visualization	Brand Awareness	Positive attitude through practical solutions	Addresses "styling demonstrations" as key purchase triggers for Bangladeshi consumers

<b>AI-driven Personalization: Targeted Recommendations</b>	Purchase Efficiency through discovery optimization	Brand Awareness	Perceived behavioral control through choice management	Helps busy professionals who spend "Two hours daily, evenings and lunch breaks" on social media
<b>Interactive Content: Live Shopping Events</b>	Immediate Purchase Conversion through limited-time engagement	Perceived Quality through real-time demonstration	Attitudes toward innovation	Emerging trend in Bangladesh that addresses "practical value or emotional connection" as engagement motivators
<b>Artisanal Production Storytelling</b>	Long-term Brand Loyalty through value alignment	Brand Trust	Subjective norms around supporting local craftsmanship	Connects with "local materials and craftsmanship" as purchase triggers in Bangladesh
<b>User-Generated Content: Customer Reviews</b>	Repeat Purchases through social validation	Brand Trust	Subjective norms from peer experiences	Critical in a market where "trust in recommendations" is based on "detail and honesty" about product performance

AI-driven Personalization through targeted recommendations was experienced by all 6 out of 6 participants, helping busy professionals who reported spending "Two hours daily, evenings and lunch breaks" on social media. As Interviewee 1 shared, it "feels helpful but sometimes excessive."

4 out of 6 people interviewed said they were influenced by customer reviews, with Interviewee 1 describing how they "bought a local brand's cotton saree based on friend's recommendation due to her honesty about pros and cons." Influencer Marketing through styling demonstrations impacted 4 out of 6 participants, with Interviewee 1 mentioning being influenced by a product's "versatility, genuine customer feedback."

Only 2 out of 6 interviewees mentioned Interactive Content like live shopping events and Artisanal Production Storytelling, though Interviewee 2 specifically noted "bought block-printed kurtas after seeing artisan-focused brand video."

This framework connects to Wang et al.'s (2019) research on sustainable consumer relationships, showing how SMM activities affect consumer behaviour through brand equity mediators in the Bangladesh context.

**Table Origin:** This table outlines AI applications and their impact on consumer behaviour in Bangladesh's fashion market, based on participants' references to AI-related marketing experiences throughout their interviews. An interview-supported table can be found in Appendix C Table 5.

*Table 8: AI-Driven Engagement Framework for Bangladesh Fashion Market*

<b>AI Application</b>	<b>Consumer Behavior Impact</b>	<b>Brand Equity Component</b>	<b>TPB Element</b>	<b>Bangladesh Relevance</b>
<b>Product Recommendation Engines</b>	Purchase Intention through relevance optimization	Brand Awareness	Perceived behavioral control	Addresses information overload in Bangladesh's growing online fashion market
<b>Visual Search Technology</b>	Purchase Journey Simplification	Perceived Quality	Behavioral control through search efficiency	Valuable for "Instagram-centric" consumers seeking specific styles and products
<b>Chatbot Customer Service</b>	Trust Building through responsive interaction	Brand Trust	Perceived control through immediate assistance	Meets expectations for "responsive customer service" valued by Bangladeshi consumers
<b>Personalized Content Curation</b>	Engagement & Loyalty through relevant content experiences	Brand Awareness	Positive attitude from content alignment	Helps brands stand out in Bangladesh's competitive social media landscape
<b>Predictive Trend Analysis</b>	Trendsetting purchase influence	Perceived Quality through fashion authority	Subjective norms around trend adoption	Important for consumers who value "trend awareness professionally" with "cultural adaptation"

All 6 participants used Personalized Content Curation, and they had mixed feelings about it. Interviewee 1 stating that it was "convenient for searching but excessive," indicating the compromise between convenience and privacy preferences. 4 of the 6

interview participants stated that product recommendation engines help mitigate information overload, especially in those who identified Instagram as their main channel.

Visual Search Technology was valued by 3 out of 6 participants, especially those self-described as "Instagram-centric" consumers. As Interviewee 3 mentioned, using "Instagram Explore/Reels" to discover fashion. Predictive Trend Analysis was referenced by only 2 out of 6 interviewees, while Chatbot Customer Service was noted by just 1 participant.

This is consistent with Zaidi et al.'s (2024) study regarding AI-powered personalization in fashion marketing, balancing the advantages technological support provides with the privacy worries raised in the current research.

### **4.3 Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Strategies**

Moving social media marketing to become an interactive and engaging platform was achieved by fashion brands to make social media marketing a one-way communication platform. Among the most crucial marketing channels for fashion brands in Bangladesh is using platforms like Facebook and Instagram and then TikTok to market their products to consumers and others. SMM (for example, entertainment, trendiness, customer-oriented customization, interaction, and word of mouth) can enhance the consumers' buyer behaviour and the firm's brand equity.

Despite this, the translation of online engagement to buying is not continuous, as SMM is not only about platform presence but also needs strategic content planning. In the rapidly growing market of online digital marketing for fashion brands in Bangladesh, SMEs have a pivotal role in understanding the subtle effects of different content strategies and choice of platform on how consumers decide and develop successful digital marketing strategies within the country's unique culture. Following the conceptual framework and the research objective, the most effective tables that have come out of the data tables (See Appendix A – interview questions and Appendix B – Theme tables) have been brought into three strategic groupings to present an overall picture of the performance of social media strategies in the fashion industry in Bangladesh. This is divided into 2 phases. For combining tables, Phase 1 and for Phase In Depth analysis.

**Table Origin:** Table 9 is formed by analysing theme tables from Section 4: "Purchase Decision Factors" (Appendix B). This table systematically documented the decision criteria participants applied when evaluating fashion products.

*Table 9: Content Strategy Effectiveness*

<b>Content Type</b>	<b>Engagement Pattern</b>	<b>Supporting Evidence</b>	<b>Effectiveness Insight</b>
<b>Styling and Versatility Content</b>	High Engagement	"Likes 15-20 posts daily, comments weekly, shares sales to friends." (Interviewee 3) "Very active engagement for professional networking, supports creative local content." (Interviewee 5)	Transformation videos and versatile styling options generate the highest level of daily engagement, particularly among younger consumers
<b>Styling and Versatility Content</b>	Purpose-Driven Engagement	"Likely to like posts (8/10 times), comments occasionally (twice weekly) when having questions or appreciating styling..." (Interviewee 1)	Content demonstrating outfit versatility drives intentional engagement focused on practical value extraction
<b>Professional and Work-Appropriate Fashion</b>	Selective Engagement	"Moderate engagement, like workwear posts weekly, shares in professional groups." (Interviewee 6) "Likes posts weekly, shares sustainable fashion content, rarely comments." (Interviewee 2)	Professional attire content generates more selective but targeted engagement, especially within professional networks
<b>Body Inclusivity and Realism</b>	Purpose-Driven Engagement	"...posts showing clothes on different body types." (Interviewee 1)	Realistic representation drives engagement based on practical fit assessment needs

This Content Strategy Effectiveness table shows how content in the fashion category has distinct correlations with behavioural trends of Bangladeshi fashion consumers. Other content formats and other consumer segments had varying engagement intensities. Interview 3 comments: "Likes 15-20 posts daily, comments weekly, shares sales to friends." Visual content around styling versatility gets the highest engagement frequency out of all types of content. Interviewee 3 added, as well as among younger

demographics. Interviewee 6, who shares workwear posts weekly with "moderate engagement, likes, and likes shares in professional groups," does not engage the professional and work-appropriate fashion content as selectively. In addition, body inclusivity content is linked to more purpose-driven engagement around practical assessment needs that aim to serve consumers with content featuring "clothes on different body types" (Interviewee 1). More importantly, it is found that there is a correlation between content type and engagement purpose (styling content leads to higher daily interaction, and professional content results in more strategic, selective, but more selective engagement behaviours in specialist networks).

**Table Origin:** This table examines how recommendations build trust amid personalization perceptions among Bangladeshi fashion consumers. Analysis of responses from Section 3 ("Perceptions of Personalized/Targeted Advertising") (Appendix B) revealed subtle reactions to algorithmic marketing.

*Table 10: Trust-Building Pathway*

<b>Trust Factor</b>	<b>Personalization Perception</b>	<b>Supporting Evidence</b>	<b>Trust-Building Insight</b>
<b>Detail and Honesty</b>	Helpful but Privacy Concerns	"Yes, bought a local brand's cotton saree based on friend's recommendation due to her honesty about pros and cons." (Interviewee 1) "After searching for salwar kameez, Instagram showed similar outfits from different brands. Feels it's helpful but sometimes excessive, with mixed feelings about tracking." (Interviewee 1)	Detailed, honest recommendations build trust despite privacy concerns about targeting precision
<b>Product Performance Focus</b>	Professional Context	"Purchased leather portfolio based on entrepreneur's detailed durability review." (Interviewee 4) "Receives targeted ads, finds them helpful despite privacy concerns." (Interviewee 4)	Performance-focused recommendations in professional contexts counterbalance privacy concerns

<b>Quality and Production Transparency</b>	Frequency and Persistence	"Purchased natural dye saree after detailed review showing quality, washing results." (Interviewee 5) "Receives targeted ads daily, notes aggressive persistence and echo chamber effect." (Interviewee 5)	Production transparency builds trust but can be undermined by overly aggressive ad frequency
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Detail and Honesty in recommendations-built trust for 3 out of 6 participants despite privacy concerns about targeting. Interviewee 1 said that having personalized content feels useful, but sometimes too much, and they don't feel comfortable with all the tracking. This shows that there is a balance to find between getting personal recommendations and keeping information private.

Product Performance Focus in professional contexts resonated with 3 out of 6 participants, with Interviewee 4 sharing their experience of "purchased leather portfolio based on entrepreneur's detailed durability review." Quality and Production Transparency was highlighted by 1 out of 6 interviewees who appreciated detailed quality close-ups while noting concerns about aggressive advertising.

According to these results, Bangladeshi consumers like interviewees might enjoy ads that are personal to their interests, but they're still uneasy about sharing personal data; detailed product information helps a little in easing these worries.

**Table Origin:** Table 11 is derived from comprehensive analysis of theme tables from Section 4: 'Social Media Purchase Triggers' and Section 5: 'Product Rejection Based on Influencer Content'(Appendix B). This integration enables multi-dimensional mapping of purchasing determinants across the consumer decision continuum.

*Table 11: Purchase Conversion Analysis*

<b>Purchase Trigger</b>	<b>Influencer Impact</b>	<b>Supporting Evidence</b>	<b>Conversion Insight</b>
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<b>Versatility and Styling Demonstrations</b>	Moderate and Selective Influence	"Purchased a fusion jacket from a Bangladeshi designer brand after seeing it on Instagram. Influenced by its versatility, genuine customer feedback..." (Interviewee 1)	Versatility demonstrations by multiple trusted influencers creates the strongest purchase conversion
<b>Versatility and Styling Demonstrations</b>	Local vs. International	"Bought fusion top after seeing styling reel, student reviews." (Interviewee 3)	Local influencers drive stronger purchase conversion than international ones, especially for styling demonstrations
<b>Artisanal and Production Storytelling</b>	Limited By Content Quality	"Bought block-printed kurtas after seeing artisan-focused brand video." (Interviewee 2)	Production storytelling quality outweighs influencer status for artisanal products
<b>Local Materials and Craftsmanship</b>	Quality of Reviews	"Influenced by its versatility, genuine customer feedback, professional brand responses, and use of local handloom fabric." (Interviewee 1)	Local craftsmanship featured in detailed, long-term use reviews creates strongest purchase conversion

The purchase Conversion Analysis table reflects the relationship between engagement-determining triggers and their influence on the conversions of engagements to purchases. Interviewee 1 says "I Purchased a fusion jacket from a Bangladeshi designer brand after seeing it on Instagram". Genuine customer feedback is influenced by its versatility. Interviewee 3 shared, "There has been a bit of local influencer too, but not quite as great as international influence, is that you provided them with sponsored content that you knew they would be sceptical when they posted, and I thought that was great (laughs)." However, the table shows that for products made by the artisans, the efficiency of the production storytelling is counter to the situation regarding Interviewee 2: 'Bought block printed kurtas after watching artisan focused video' and 'lack of influence, prefers content quality over presenter'. Several interviews converge on local materials and craftsmanship as consistent purchase drivers, implying that social media content leveraging Bangladesh-specific

production attributes verified through detailed, balanced reviews that demonstrate the products' long-term performance convert to purchase well.

This section's purpose is to analyse the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in the Bangladesh fashion industry based on the presented and described combined data tables of interview findings. After describing the patterns observed in the descriptive data, this analysis shall interpret them based on their significance, link them to theoretical frameworks, and derive strategic implications. Three key dimensions of effectiveness for the analysis are content strategy effectiveness, trust-building mechanisms, and purchase conversion factors. It examines each dimension through the lens of appropriate theoretical frameworks and in the context of Bangladesh's cultural and market-specific one to evaluate the effectiveness of various social media marketing approaches for fashion brands in this market.

Different demographics have distinct engagement patterns in the case of Bangladeshi consumer segments. Across the different segments, the visual content with the greatest engagement rate is that with styling versatility, and for younger adults (19-26), transformation videos stand out with excellent engagement rate frequency. These content formats optimize their practical value maximization to Bangladesh's price-sensitive market needs. Professional fashion topics receive less overall engagement, but older adults (29-35) engage more selectively and strategically and engage more when professional groups share professionally than if they were not. Across demographics, the strongest positive responses are yielded for content that contains "local cultural context and practical adaptations" or "blend of traditional Bangladeshi with modern styles" (Interviewee 1). This relates to major drivers of entertainment and customization of Consumer Engagement Theory (Bommawar & Tiwari, 2022: p.177). From the standpoint of Theory of Planned Behaviour, the styling flexibility increases the perceived behavioural control by facilitating understanding of how to connect consumer's existing wardrobe to product. These insights point out that brands must pay more attention to the demonstrations of this versatility, demographically segmented content strategies, cultural contextualization, video transformation content, and body inclusivity representation.

They find that across all demographics, there is a powerful three-factor conversion combination: Product versatility demonstrations, local materials/craftsmanship emphasis, and validation from respectable local sources. The local influencers generally outperform the international ones because the local influencers are in touch with the Bangladesh context and are also able to show culturally relevant styling applications. One of the main purchase factors is production storytelling, which highlights local craftsmanship. Those factors of pride in culture and supporting artisans create strong conversion triggers. The effectiveness of such reviews can be enhanced if conclusions regarding the long-term performance of local materials are validated in detail.

These findings are consistent with the theory of planned behaviour's instrument that subjects communities to aligned values in the context of Bangladesh. Intent to purchase local craftsmanship is overall much stronger than any other sustainability proposition. Academic difficulty perception of Consumer Engagement Theory's interaction and word-of-mouth dimensions is found to be particularly beneficial in Bangladesh's context due to its highly collectivist culture, which typically relies on the endorsement of multiple trusted voices in case of purchase conversion instead of a single endorsement. The Bangladeshi fashion consumers' sophisticated information processing is captured with a multi-voice validation approach.

### **Integrated Strategic Framework for SSM Effectiveness**

Based on the combined analysis, this study finds an effective way to improve social media marketing effectiveness in the Bangladesh fashion industry.

- Culturally contextualized content that effectively demonstrates versatility via styling options through video is best at significantly driving first attention and engagement versus static content.
- This integrated framework, the balance between relationship and moderate personalization, focuses on trust-building mechanisms (e.g., transparent, detailed information about product performance), which are essential to take the consumer from engagement to consideration; he or she depends on brand equity.

- Local Influencer Validation, showcasing multiple ways of using the product and local materials/craftsmanship, all combined to turn its trust into true purchase decisions.
- Consumers' dependent behaviour concerning marketing practices is mediated by brand equity elements (such as trust) between independent variables (marketing strategies). The analysis verifies the culturally specific adaptations from marketing strategy to purchase behaviour in the Bangladeshi fashion context to fulfil the local consumer's concerns about product quality, value, and cultural appropriateness.

Given its context in Bangladesh, the synthesis of this finding provides fashion marketers in Bangladesh with a broad social media marketing strategy that emphasizes cultural context in product demonstration, transparent quality communication, and local social validation to achieve the highest social media marketing effect throughout a full consumer journey from an initial encounter to purchase and advocacy

#### 4.4 Impact of Influencer Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

**Table Origin:** This table presents an integrated analysis of how influencer marketing affects the consumer decision journey in Bangladesh's fashion market. By synthesizing responses from Section 5 on influencer impacts and Section 4 on purchase triggers (Appendix B), this study observed patterns across decision stages.

*Table 12: Influencer Impact on Consumer Decision-Making in Bangladesh*

Stage	Key Themes	Critical Insights
<b>Initial Perception</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local relevance</li> <li>• Demographic specificity</li> <li>• Content quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local influencers outperform international ones</li> <li>• Age and profession-appropriate content matters</li> <li>• Quality of content trumps presenter personality</li> </ul>
<b>Purchase Triggers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Style versatility</li> <li>• Production transparency</li> <li>• Local craftsmanship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple styling options drive interest</li> <li>• Behind-the-scenes production content convinces</li> <li>• Local materials and techniques resonate</li> </ul>

<b>Trust Dynamics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose-specific trust</li> <li>• Long-term performance</li> <li>• Practical context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brands for specifications, influencers for real use</li> <li>• Follow-up reviews build exceptional credibility</li> <li>• Professionals trusted for workplace-specific insights</li> </ul>
<b>Rejection Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality revelations</li> <li>• Claim verification</li> <li>• Context-specific testing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close-up construction flaws prevent purchase</li> <li>• Exposure of misleading eco/ethical claims</li> <li>• Workplace-specific performance issues drive rejection</li> </ul>

At the Initial Perception stage, 3 out of 6 participants emphasized the importance of local relevance, with Interviewee 1 stating that "Local Bangladeshi influencers have more impact than international ones." For Purchase Triggers, 3 out of 6 participants highlighted versatility demonstrations and local craftsmanship, with Interviewee 1 mentioning being influenced by a product's "use of local handloom fabric."

All 6 participants demonstrated sophisticated Trust Dynamics, strategically allocating trust between brands for specifications and influencers for quality assessment. As Interviewee 1 explained, they "trusts official brand posts for product specifications" but "trusts certain influences more for quality assessment." Quality revelations and claim verification as Rejection Factors were mentioned by 5 out of 6 participants, with experiences like "rejected a popular brand's embellished Eid outfits after an influencer showed poor stitching quality" (Interviewee 1).

These findings connect to Dutta & Sardar's (2020) research on influencer effectiveness in Bangladesh's market context, revealing sophisticated decision processes.

A sequential decision pathway is influenced by marketing, where some critical patterns appear. Local relevance is a multi-stage factor to emerge because interviewees consistently highlight that local Bengali influencers have a greater impact than international ones because they understand the local context (Interviewee 1). The key aspect of this locality factor is that both at the initial trigger formation and purchase trigger stages, the factor acts. The trust segmentation reveals the different approaches consumers have in processing information, brands attain trust for technical specifications, and influencers for performance assessment and real-world usage evaluations. Purchase decisions are very much determined by authenticity, and genuine customer feedback can have a strong impact on them, as can the exposure

of misleading claims. Continuous visual evidence outnumbers textual claims; quality issues demonstrated in close-ups and production process demonstrations are convincing determinants in purchase behavior.

Through six varied interviews, this study delineates the studies conducted on how influencer marketing affects Bangladeshi fashion consumers. It demonstrated four key influence mechanisms on purchase: local cultural relevance, visual evidence (most prominently demonstrations), strategic trust allocation (brands for specifications, influencers for quality judgment), and authentic content. As the demographics vary so much in age, occupation, and social media use patterns, so does the impact. The theory of Planned Behaviour (Azad et al., 2023) and Consumer Engagement Theory (Bommawar & Tiwari, 2022) are placed in Bangladesh-specific cultural settings to show the way how proximity and visual evidence stimulate purchase decisions. The results indicate that local influencers can be productive, and visual stories are best focused on the product's versatility. Possible future research is in quantitative validation of how important different factors are, cross-country comparisons for South Asia, and longitudinal study of the effectiveness of influencers as Bangladesh's digital landscape evolves.

#### **4.5 Consumer Behaviour Insights from Social Media**

This paper investigates the impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in the context of the fashion industry of Bangladesh, based on the themes that emerged from Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of in-depth interviews with fashion consumers. The findings provide insights on some intricate relationship between marketing strategy, generation of brand equity and consumer response paving an understanding of consumer firm dynamics in the context of Bangladesh.

##### **4.5.1 Analysis of Marketing Strategies to Purchase Journey**

###### **Influence Patterns by Age Demographic**

Analysis of the interview data reveals a distinct pattern in social media influence levels segmented by age:

**Table Origin:** Table 13 is constructed through analytical synthesis of theme tables from Section 3: 'Social Media Engagement Patterns' and Section 6: 'Brand Loyalty Through Social Media Engagement' (Appendix B) This framework establishes typological categorization of engagement behaviours across demographic segments.

*Table 13: Social Media Influence Levels Segmented by Age*

Age Group	Influence Level	Purchase Frequency	Examples from Data
<b>Young Adults (19-26)</b>	High Influence (5+ purchases)	Weekly/Biweekly	"Eight to ten purchases in last six months." (Interviewee 3) "Dozen purchases in last six months." (Interviewee 5)
<b>Older Adults (29-35)</b>	Moderate Influence (3-4 purchases)	Monthly	"Made four purchases based on social media influence." (Interviewee 2) "Three to four purchases in past six months." (Interviewee 6)

All 3 young adult participants (19-26) reported high influence levels with 5+ purchases in six months and weekly/biweekly purchase frequency. Interviewee 3 specifically mentioned "eight to ten purchases in last six months," while Interviewee 5 reported "dozen purchases in last six months." Similarly, all 3 older adult participants (29-35) reported moderate influence levels with 3-4 purchases in six months and monthly purchase frequency.

This clear pattern shows that social media marketing has a greater effect on younger adults than older ones, with younger adults making approximately twice as many social media-influenced purchases. This matches the observation that younger people have more social media usage each day, 5-7 hours, while older adults use it for only 2-4 hours. This supports the study by Hossain et al. (2022) on how demographics affect online shopping habits in Bangladesh.

#### **4.5.2 Trust Distribution Between Brands and Influencers**

**Table Origin:** Table 14 is formed by analysing theme tables from Section 6: "Brand Loyalty Through Social Media Engagement" and Section 7: "Experience Sharing Patterns" (Appendix B) This table examined the relationship between engagement and loyalty

*Table 14: A Clear Division of Trust Emerged from the Data*

<b>Information Type</b>	<b>Trusted Source</b>	<b>Example from Data</b>
<b>Product Specifications</b>	Brand Official Content	"Trusts official brand posts for product specifications and availability" (Interviewee 1)
<b>Quality Assessment</b>	Influencers	"Trusts certain influencers more for quality assessment, fit, and value for money" (Interviewee 1)
<b>Durability</b>	Micro-influencers	"Trusts brands for specifications, micro-influencers for honest durability reviews" (Interviewee 3)
<b>Practical Usage</b>	Peer Reviews	"Trusts brands for specifications, peer reviews for practical insights" (Interviewee 4)

All 6 out of 6 participants trusted brands primarily for Product Specifications, with Interviewee 1 stating they "trust official brand posts for product specifications and availability." Quality Assessment was trusted to influencers by 5 out of 6 interviewees, with Interviewee 1 specifically valuing "certain influencers more for quality assessment, fit, and value for money."

Durability information was trusted to Micro-influencers by 2 out of 6 participants, with Interviewee 3 noting they "trust influencers who show product longevity." Practical Usage insights were trusted to Peer Reviews by 3 out of 6 interviewees, with Interviewee 6 mentioning "professionals for practical performance insights."

This sophisticated trust allocation system supports Wang et al.'s (2019) findings on trust as a mediator between social media marketing and purchase commitment while revealing how Bangladeshi consumers strategically allocate trust based on information type.

#### **4.5.3 Analysis of Engagement-to-Loyalty Relationship**

**Table Origin:** Table 15 is formed by analysing theme tables from Section 7: "Experience Sharing Patterns" and "Product Recommendation Behaviour"(Appendix B). This table documented post-purchase advocacy and sharing behaviours.

Table 15: Three Distinct Engagement Patterns

Engagement Pattern	Behaviours	Demographics
<b>Selective Engagement</b>	"Likes posts weekly," "comments occasionally"	Primarily older adults (29-35), business professionals
<b>High Engagement</b>	"Likes 15-20 posts daily," "very active engagement"	Primarily younger adults (19-26), students and creative professionals
<b>Purpose-Driven Engagement</b>	"Likes...when having questions," "motivated by practical value"	Mixed age groups, professionally oriented

Selective Engagement was practiced by 3 out of 6 participants, primarily older adults and business professionals. Interviewee 1 described their behaviour as "Likely to like posts (8/10 times), comments occasionally (twice weekly)," indicating purposeful, measured interaction. High Engagement was reported by 2 out of 6 participants, primarily younger adults, with Interviewee 3 stating they "Likes 15-20 posts daily; comments and shares weekly."

Purpose-driven engagement was observed in 2 out of 6 interviewees from mixed age groups, with Interviewee 1 noting they were "motivated by practical value or emotional connection." There is a clear link between these patterns and both age and profession: among the participants, younger people and creatives are more frequent in their interactions, but older professionals are more thoughtful and intentional. Even though people engage with social media differently, everyone agrees that quality is what keeps customers loyal over time, suggesting that marketing on social media mostly affects the start of a customer relationship.

#### 4.5.4 Demographic Insights and Patterns

**Table Origin:** Table 16 is formed by analysing theme tables from Section 1: "Age Demographics," "Social Media Platform Usage," "Daily Social Media Engagement," "Online Fashion Shopping Frequency," and "Social Media Influence on Purchases," along with Section 2: "Attention-Grabbing Content Types" and Section 3: "Trust in Recommendations" (Appendix B). This table documented comprehensive age-based differences across multiple dimensions of consumer behaviour and engagement.

*Table 16: Consistent Age-Based Differences Across Multiple Dimensions*

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Young Adults (19-26)</b>	<b>Older Adults (29-35)</b>
<b>Platform Preference</b>	Instagram/TikTok primary	Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram mix
<b>Daily Usage</b>	5-7 hours	2-4 hours
<b>Engagement Style</b>	High engagement (15-20 likes daily)	Selective engagement
<b>Purchase Frequency</b>	Weekly/Biweekly	Monthly
<b>Social Media Influence</b>	5+ purchases in 6 months	3-4 purchases in 6 months
<b>Content Preferences</b>	Transformation videos, fusion styles	Professional attire, work-appropriate traditional wear
<b>Trust Factors</b>	Age-appropriate representation, student reviews	Durability, professional utility, ethical considerations

Based on these patterns, assuming that these two segments had similar primary demographics in each, such different marketing approaches would be required for these two segments; the younger demographic is likely to be more attracted to high frequency visually driven content on Instagram/TikTok, and the older demographic is more likely to be interested in content which targets professional relevance and selective quality focused content across multiple platforms.

### **Occupational Influence on Social Media Marketing Receptivity**

**Table Origin:** Table 17 is formed by analysing theme tables from Section 1: "Occupational Status" and "Social Media Platform Usage," Section 2: "Attention-Grabbing Content Types" and "Brand and Influencer Following Patterns," and Section 3: "Social Media Engagement Patterns"(Appendix B). This table documented the relationship between occupational categories and marketing receptivity variables in the Bangladeshi fashion context.

Table 17: Occupational Influences on Marketing Receptivity

Occupational Category	Primary Content Interests	Platform Focus	Marketing Implications
<b>Business Professionals</b>	Professional attire, work-appropriate traditional wear	Facebook/LinkedIn	Purpose-focused content, professional networking engagement
<b>Education Sector</b>	Academic-appropriate attire, professional fashion with local textiles	Facebook /LinkedIn	Quality-focused messaging, ethical production emphasis
<b>Students</b>	Affordable options, university outfit ideas, transformation videos	Instagram/TikTok	Influencer marketing, trend-responsive content
<b>Creative Professionals</b>	Fusion content, behind-the-scenes production, distinctive styles	High platform diversity	Interactive content, user-generated content, entertainment-focused engagement

Based on this occupational segment, a marketing strategy targeting each occupational group is provided, and such distinctive marketing strategies are applied to each occupation group.

#### 4.5.5 Integration with Conceptual Framework

The findings strongly support the conceptual framework's structure while providing nuanced understanding of the relationships between variables:

##### **Independent Variable: Social Media Marketing Strategies**

The analysis confirms the effectiveness of the four marketing strategies identified in the conceptual framework:

**Influencer Marketing:** Highly effective when using local, demographically appropriate influences

**AI-driven Personalization:** Implied in customization preferences

**Interactive Content:** Versatility demonstrations and styling videos are highly effective

**User-Generated Content:** Authentic reviews and customer feedback significantly impact trust

### **Mediating Variable: Brand Equity**

It is confirmed that brand equity is an important mediator but with delicate variations:

**Brand Awareness:** Mentioned by multiple interviewees that they discovered it initially on social media

**Brand Trust:** The product is built through transparency, honesty about what is and is not possible, and consistent quality.

**Perceived Quality:** The primary determinant of long-term loyalty based on social media; something was confirmed through experience.

### **Dependent Variable: Consumer Behaviour**

The findings confirm the three consumer behaviour outcomes while revealing their sequential relationship:

**Purchase Intention:** Directly influenced by social media marketing and moderated by increasing scepticism over time

**Engagement & Loyalty:** Engagement patterns vary by demographic and loyalty is primarily determined by product quality, not engagement levels

**Repeat Purchases:** Requires consistent quality experiences, less directly influenced by social media than initial purchases

### **Key findings include:**

1. Age-based differences in platform preferences, engagement styles, and purchase frequencies
2. Trust is strategically divided between brand content (for specifications) and influencer content (for quality assessment)
3. Product quality remains the primary determinant of long-term loyalty despite varying engagement levels
4. Local relevance and cultural context significantly enhance influencer effectiveness
5. Evolution of consumer scepticism over time, suggesting the need for adaptive marketing strategies

The findings are congruent with the conceptual framework, but they offer a relatively nuanced understanding of the relationships between the variables. In terms of insights,

they provide valuable information on how social media exposure influences sustainable customer relationships in Bangladesh and can serve as a reference point for fashion marketers in Bangladesh to launch their targeted strategies.

## **5. Chapter Five: Discussion**

### **5.1 Key Findings in Relation to Literature**

This discussion appraises this study's findings against, supports, or contradicts the existing body of social media marketing practices in fashion, particularly from a Bangladesh perspective. The overall goal will be to relate summarized results to the theories already developed rather than to propose new data.

#### **5.1.1 Demographic Analysis of Respondents**

The demographic analysis has identified patterns that describe previous findings on the fashion market in Bangladesh based on interview data. The discovery of two main consumer clusters. Young Adults (19-26) and Established Professionals (29-35) is congruent with Hossain et al. (2022, p. 7) findings with respect to occupation-based online shopping patterns. The findings support that professional status is associated with digital buying behaviour, as business professionals are more methodical in their buying behaviour than students and creative professionals who have shopping proclivities.

The positive interrelationship between social media play that affects purchase influence as found in this study confirms Kim & Ko's, 2012, p. 4) research on the social

media marketing effect that influences purchase intention. In addition, our results expand the work of Rahman et al.'s (2018, p. 7) claim that online shoppers in Dhaka are predominantly young adults by noting differences in consumer behaviour between younger and older age groups.

The demographic segmentation approach extends Akash and Hamid's (2024, p. 191) exploration by uncovering the individual effects of content properties on consumer interaction within each demographic segment. This can help understand Wang et al.'s (2019, pp. 4-6) customer retention and the strategies adopted for retaining customers in Bangladesh.

### **5.1.2 Consumer Engagement Patterns**

The analysis of consumer engagement patterns contributes new insights to existing theoretical frameworks. The content engagement framework identified in this study complements Bommawar & Tiwari's (2022, p. 177) work while revealing a distinctive finding: cultural-fusion storytelling and production transparency generate stronger emotional engagement among Bangladeshi consumers compared to Western markets.

The engagement progression map observed in this research aligns with Pentina et al.'s (2018, p. 7) behavioural continuum from passive consumption to active production. However, this study identifies unique Bangladesh-specific engagement pathways: a collectivist route based on forum interaction and an individualistic route dependent on personal content experiences.

The findings on trust-building mechanisms build upon Perreault and Mosconi's (2018, p. 7) model while identifying Bangladesh-specific factors such as contextual relevance and ethical production disclosure. These elements emerged as particularly significant amid consumer concerns about product misinformation.

The purchase journey analysis reflects Ananda's (2019, p. 25, 60, 150) framework while incorporating elements of Zaidi et al.'s (2024, p. 7) AI-oriented engagement research, highlighting the rapidly evolving digital marketplace for fashion in Bangladesh.

### **5.1.3 Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Strategies**

The evaluation of social media marketing effectiveness supports Kim & Ko's (2012, p. 4) five social media marketing constructs: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth. This research particularly emphasizes the enduring effectiveness of styling demonstrations across consumer segments in Bangladesh's price-sensitive market.

The trust-building pathway analysis aligns with Wang et al.'s (2019, p. 6) assertion that brand-consumer relationships strengthen through genuine, trusting interactions. This study adds that Bangladeshi consumers strategically distribute trust across information sources, relying on brands for specifications and influencers for quality assessment.

Purchase conversion findings support Akash and Hamid's (2024, p. 191) position on content dimensions' influence on consumer engagement. The research identified three consistent drivers across all demographics: versatility demonstration, emphasis on local materials/craftsmanship, and local influencer validation.

The findings also validate Halim's (2022, p. 65) research on positive social media marketing drivers of consumer purchase intention while clarifying that product quality remains the primary driver of long-term loyalty, with social media exerting greater influence on initial purchase decisions.

The study confirms Chowdhury et al.'s (2023, p. 31) assertion that content quality surpasses posting frequency for Bangladeshi brands, demonstrating that locally sensitive creative strategies are most effective when combined with clear communication and local validation.

### **5.1.4 Impact of Influencer Marketing on Purchasing Decisions**

The results on influencer marketing effectiveness also build upon prior studies that suggest the role of influencers in the fashion industry of Bangladesh. The findings are consistent with those of Belanche et al.'s (2021, p. 2) difference between power of influencers and generic celebrities, and a closer look makes it clear that the local

micro-influencers located in Bangladesh tend to have more effect than international influencers who have the advantage of cultural richness and impacts throughout the phases of a decision.

This study also adds substance upon Thilina DK's (2021, pp. 12-13) model of influencer credibility, depicting a networked trust hierarchy which brands justify conditions to influencers determine quality. This agrees with Dutta and Sardar (2020, p. 2) that consumers are influenced by informative influencers, who are in regular contact with the consumers and thus, portray the significance of genuine reviews and negation of fallacious advertisements in the purchasing pattern of Bangladesh.

The demographic analysis confirms Dutta and Sardar's (2020, p. 1) examination of influencers' role in millennial consumer behavior, showing that younger consumers prioritize age-appropriate local influencers while older adults prefer sector-specific expertise. These findings complement Belanche et al.'s (2021, p. 7) research, indicating that cultural elements and climate-appropriate imagery are critical to successful influencer marketing in Bangladesh.

### **5.1.5 Frequency Analysis Findings and Interpretation**

The content analysis enhances existing knowledge about social media marketing's influence on Bangladeshi fashion consumers. The age-stratified model supports Hossain et al.'s (2022, p. 7) findings on demographic differences while demonstrating how social media engagement frequency correlates with purchase rates. The significant connection between frequent purchases (5+) and extensive daily social media use among younger adults, contrasted with moderate usage (2-4 hours daily) among older adults, adds nuance to Kim & Ko's (2012, p. 2) findings on purchase intention.

Building upon Akash and Hamid's (2024, p. 191) research, this analysis identifies three content elements most influential for purchase intentions across demographic segments: versatility demonstration, artisanal production narratives, and local materials showcasing

The trust distribution findings extend Wang et al.'s (2019, p. 6) work, revealing a strategic information-sharing mechanism whereby consumers delegate trust to multiple sources for different purposes

The analysis of influencer selection aligns with Dutta & Sardar's (2020, p. 12) perspective while highlighting the critical importance of local context and representation across Bangladesh's diverse demographic groups.

The study reveals clear distinctions between selective, high, and purposive engagement patterns, supplementing Bommawar and Tiwari's (2022, p. 1) framework.

This study backs Halim's (2022, p. 65) opinion on marketing and buying behavior by proving that good product quality beats social media engagement in building long-term loyalty, with social media playing a bigger role in capturing a new customer's attention.

## **5.2 Implications for Fashion Brands in Bangladesh**

The research identifies some of the most important strategies that the fashion brands can follow to increase the presence of their social media and reach the consumers in Bangladesh. The identification of distinct consumer segments necessitates demographic-targeted strategy development, with younger adults (19-26) heavily engaged on Instagram and TikTok (5-7 hours daily) exhibiting more frequent purchase habits, and professional adults (29-35) using Facebook and LinkedIn (2-4 hours daily) demonstrating monthly purchasing patterns (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 7).

Content strategy optimization should prioritize versatility demonstrations across all demographics, showing multiple styling options suitable for Bangladesh's price-sensitive market and adapting global trends to local conditions (Bommawar & Tiwari, 2022, p. 177). Trust-building mechanisms should acknowledge that Bangladeshi consumers allocate trust strategically between brands for specifications and influencers for quality assessment, requiring transparent communication of product features and limitations across platforms (Wang et al., 2019, p. 6).

Local influence partnerships should be prioritized as they outperform global counterparts due to cultural understanding. Brands should partner with local influencers capable of providing culturally sensitive style guidance (Dutta & Sardar, 2020, p. 2). Content should integrate local cultural context, highlighting local materials

and craftsmanship to resonate with Bangladesh's textile heritage (Akash & Hamid, 2024, p. 191).

Strategic AI implementation can help navigate Bangladesh's increasingly crowded digital fashion market, offering personalization in a privacy-respectful manner. Performance-oriented recommendations can provide value that offsets privacy concerns, suggesting transparent data practices (Zaidi et al., 2024, p. 7). While social media drives initial purchases, product quality remains the foundation of long-term loyalty, indicating that brands should maintain quality standards alongside social media marketing efforts (Halim, 2022, p. 65-66).

### **5.3 Challenges in Implementing Effective Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing provides many benefits, but such marketing is very challenging for fashion brands in Bangladesh. Because Bangladesh has different needs for younger consumers aged 19-26 and older professionals aged 29-35, there is a need for a different platform strategy, which generates high resource burdens for fashion brands (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 7).

Overcoming issues about trust and privacy raised by consumers is complicated because Bangladeshi consumers have careful attitudes towards trust and resolute doubts against the trade-offs between personalization and privacy. Culturally attuned and flexible content is especially challenging for smaller fashion businesses, sometimes because of limited resources.

Sustained consumer scepticism (in time) undermines strategic planning as old marketing methods lose effectiveness (Wang et al., 2019, p. 4). Ensuring consistency between the representations of the products available online and the actual products is a significant challenge as the physical products may end up disappointing the consumers (as presented in the digital showcase) (Rahman et al., 2018, p. 2).

The requirement to address differing platforms complicates things, as younger viewers prefer other locations that require alternative strategies in creating content. This makes it more difficult for brands with limited funds to orchestrate. Solving such problems

requires complex plans, demographic research, wise platform selections, and a solid pillar of brand credibility.

#### **5.4 The Role of Influencers in Consumer Engagement**

Studies reveal the many facets that influencers engage in during the consumer journey, allowing them to affect different steps specifically for certain groups of demographics in Bangladesh's fashion industry. Scenarios of strategic trust allocation, which locate the brand as the specifier and the influencer as the valuator and performer, demonstrate that the influencer is more than just a promoter; he is a quality verifier (Thilina DK, 2021, s. 12-13).

Local values are of strategic advantage, and local Bangladeshi-based influencers do better than international influencers at various decision-making stages because they understand the culture (Dutta & Sardar, 2020, p. 2). Significant age-specific influence patterns exist younger adults (19-26) are most receptive to age-appropriate influencers, whereas older consumers (29-35) are more attracted to industry specialists or business professionals than traditional influencers.

Influencers act as quality control agents, where followers refuse to accept a product if they see an influencer has identified issues in the quality of the products or that there has been a marketing misrepresentation. Visual proof is paramount universally across all demographic groups, as visual illustrations outpace text; close-up videos and demonstration styling both drive engagement and purchase potential (Bommawar & Tiwari, 2022, p. 177). For working folks, too, an influencer who does workplace-appropriate clothes is more valuable (and practical) than purely fashion-forward aesthetics.

#### **5.5 Future Trends in Digital Marketing for Fashion Brands**

Key insights generated by the analysis are discussed on the growing trend of fashion digital marketing in Bangladesh. AI-led personalization is developing to battle information overload in the expanding digital fashion market, with tools such as recommendation engines and visual search improving in quality. Going forward, it will

be necessary for new applications to grow a personalized precision with transparency to allay any concerns for the consumer's privacy Zaidi et al., (2024 p.7).

Interactive content outperforms static presentations in engagement metrics, particularly amongst younger audiences. The future is apparently in engagement formats such as live shopping events and transformation videos. Real production storytelling matters more and more, with purchases prompted by videos on artisans and as a backlash against brands that tell lies.

Influence Trust allocation has become more sophisticated, with an increasing preference for domain experts and micro-influencers who deliver credible testimonials about product durability. Cultural contextualization becomes increasingly relevant as content that combines traditional Bengali with a dash of popular culture performs well.

Cross-platform integration is both an obstacle and an opportunity and demands coherent tactics that work from Instagram/TikTok (young consumers) to Facebook/LinkedIn (older consumers) without losing brand positioning along the way. These comms trends point towards a digital landscape which rewards personalization, interactivity, authenticity, expertise-based influence, cultural nuance and an integrated platform approach.

## **6. Chapter Six: Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **6.1 Summary of Research Findings**

This paper studied the impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in Bangladesh's fashion industry. The analysis identified two distinct demographic groups with differing engagement: young adults (19-26) who spent a significant amount of time on the platform (5-7 hours daily) focusing on Instagram/TikTok and habitually purchased in reaction to brand incentivization, and professionals (29-35)

who spent a moderate amount of time on the platform (2-4 hours daily) across Facebook/LinkedIn who purchased monthly regularly as an active chosen lifestyle.

The content effectiveness testing found three types of content that convert the best for all segments: versatility demonstrations, artisanal production storytelling, and local material/craftsmanship narratives. The findings revealed the existence of a complex trust distribution mechanism where consumers trust brands for product information and depend on influencers for quality checks and performance recognition.

Local vs. international: The most significant engagement was driven by authors with a local perspective who understand local relevance. Some of the key vehicles for trust were details about the product's limitations and explicit performance description. Most importantly, product quality was the most important driver of long-term loyalty independent of the level of engagement.

These results support the model proposed in this study, suggesting that the impact mechanism of SMM on consumer behaviour is that social media marketing influences consumer behaviour through mediated brand equity and is moderated by demography. This has implications for fashion brands to develop culturally relevant, demographic-specific social media strategies that are applicable to the changing phenomenon in Bangladesh's digital marketplace.

## **6.2 Practical Recommendations for Fashion Brands**

The research analysis suggests the following managerial implications for fashion brands that want to leverage their digital footprint and consumer engagement in Bangladesh.

**Demographic-Targeted Strategy Development:** Execute device-specific strategies oriented towards the unique preferences of each consumer group. For younger adults create high-frequency, entertainment-fueled programming for Instagram and TikTok. For older professionals, publish specific, quality content in multiple outlets. This follows Hossain et al. 's (2022) conclusions regarding demographic factors affecting digital participation.

**Optimize content:** Present versatility demonstrations that cover a wide range of product styling options and apply international trends to suit local conditions, weather

considerations, practicality, etc. This advice is about the study's discovery that such material inspires engagement regardless of age.

**Trust development framework:** Execute separated content channels for strategic trust building, where brand platforms supply specifications and product details while influencers are engaged to validate quality and performance. This strategy falls in line with the observed trend of strategic trust transactions of Bangladeshi consumers.

**Local Influencer Collaboration:** Partner with local Bangladeshi influencers for native cultural understanding, not the international ones with a much larger but more irrelevant reach. This suggestion is based on the recurring observation that local leaders work better than external ones in Bangladesh.

**Cultural Integration:** You should emphasize local materials, local craftsmanship, and the history and culture of textile making in Bangladesh as a source of pride and motivator for greater purchase. This is a direct recommendation related to the fact that this type of advertisement is very effective in Bangladesh in all segments of the population.

**AI in Practice:** Apply AI-powered personalization in the context of privacy by transparent data practices and performance-driven recommendations. This suggestion addresses the trade-off between personalization gains and privacy concerns mentioned by the participants.

**Quality Assurance Focus:** Understand that social media is for attention and initial purchasing decisions, while the product experience affects long-term loyalty. This suggestion was consistent with the observation that quality was the only loyalty driver in every age group.

These implications are grounded in the Core Findings and offer fashion businesses actionable ways to reach Bangladeshi customers beyond mere surface-level knowledge by acting as a framework to foster stronger relations with consumers and their emotions.

### **6.3 Policy Recommendations for the Digital Marketing Sector**

From the findings of the study on social media marketing in the Bangladesh fashion industry, a few policy recommendations could be drawn for developing a sustainable, ethical, and culturally sensitive digital marketing environment as follows:

**Regulatory Framework for Influencer Marketing:** Enshrine in law disclosure rules that provide a framework for sponsored content, including compulsory disclosure of paid relationships and the introduction of a fashion influencer code of conduct. This addresses the observation that consumers have less and less faith in influencer content over time.

**Cultural Heritage Protection Initiatives:** Realize policies to protect traditional Bangladeshi textile creation in the digital marketing context by building certification systems for genuine local production, including models of digital traceability. This is a consequence of locally made and locally sourced products being a strong purchase motivator.

**Data Privacy Standards:** Establish privacy guidelines that balance personalization benefits and privacy risks using clear opt-in choices in fashion marketing. That speaks directly to the friction between consumer appreciation and outcries when relevant content irritates consumers as an invasion of privacy.

**Digital Literacy Programs:** Consumer education to educate consumers about the importance of critically analyzing marketing claims to enable them to determine the quality of product information and to identify deceptive practices. This recommendation partially reflects the refined information processing shown by subjects.

**Local Digital Content Creator Support:** Create grant programs and technical assistance for Bangladeshi content creators, focusing on support for those catering to underserved demographics. This is a response to our discovery that local, demographically matched (they live locally and are demographically similar to us) influences around a city can increase engagement more than widely recognized influencers.

**Industry Standards for Visual Content:** Establish standards that acknowledge the centrality of visual evidence in fashion consumer decisions and transparency

standards in color and fabric representation and fit. This recommendation is based on the observation that visualization consistently trumps text.

**Artisanal Sector Digital Integration:** Design programs linking occupational handicraft artisans of old with marketing information on digital media (including dedicated platforms exhibiting Bangladesh's fashion heritage). This is in response to the discovery that storytelling at the artisanal level drives significant engagement and purchase conversion.

**Cross-Platform Governance Framework:** Standardize regulatory approach across platforms as a function of demographic usage and ensure consistent consumer protections regardless of preferred platform. This guidance is intended to address the observed pattern of platform-specific demographic engagement.

This study directly derives these policy recommendations from the findings and recommend the implementation of these policies to protect consumers, cultural heritage, local content creation, and norms (transparency and ethicality) for digitalized marketing in the Bangladesh fashion industry.

#### 6.4 Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations that need consideration when interpreting the results:

**Sample Size Constraints:** With only six participants, generalization is restricted, although depth is afforded in the description. As Braun & Clarke (2021, p. 207) further point out, small qualitative samples are rich in information but not statistically representative. The results should be deemed preliminary, not definitive.

**Gender Representation:** The research only centers on women consumers, omitting male and non-binary group voices that limit a broader understanding of the market. Rahman et al. (2018, p. 8) argue that gender strongly impacts online shopping behavior in Bangladesh, and interestingly, findings may differ with greater gender variability.

**Geographic Concentration:** The research is confined to urban zones, bearing little relevance to rural areas with distinct digital penetration and use standards. Hossain et al. (2022, p. 4) also note substantial geographic inequalities in digital adoption

throughout Bangladesh and may indicate variations in the effectiveness of social media marketing in areas beyond urban areas.

**Self-Reported Behavioral Data:** Using self-reports of social media and purchase behavior may be susceptible to recall bias. Pentina et al. (2018, p. 6) admit that 'reported engagement behaviors may not reflect real engagement activity on the platform,' which is a common constraint in social media work.

**Platform Scope Limitations:** Since the analysis drew heavily from Facebook and Instagram, this study was unable to capture newer platforms such as TikTok, which is increasingly popular among young Bangladeshis. It is fitting at this point to reiterate the need for platform-specific analysis in social media marketing research (Ananda, 2019, p.88).

**Temporal Limitations:** The cross-sectional survey only reflects current perceptions and does not consider that the relationships are continually changing in Bangladesh's evolving digital ecosystem. Wang et al. (2019, 4) highlight that consumers' relationship to social media marketing is dynamic and evolves, which implies that longitudinal approaches might be beneficial.

**Occupational Diversity:** The sample has variation in occupation; however, this is not the entire range of occupations in Bangladesh, and information on key consumer segments may be missing.

**Methodological Approach:** The qualitative method provides a richer context of understanding; however, it is unable to establish priorities or quantify statistical relationships between components. As Saunders et al. (2009, p. 126) observe, qualitative advertising research often forsakes generalizability for rich and in-depth insights, which become difficult to generalize beyond the individual case studies, offering little opportunity for statistical generalization.

These limitations emphasize the need of more in depth research, including larger and diverse samples, as well as mixed methods, to verify and extend the preliminary results obtained through this exploratory study.

## 6.5 Directions for Future Research

Based on the results and the limitations of this study, several research directions can be drawn:

**Quantitative Validation Studies:** In a future study, larger, nationally representative samples should be utilized to statistically confirm the trends found in this exploratory study. Further testing of the association between individual social media marketing strategies and consumer purchase behavior would build upon these initial findings. As Saunders et al. (2009: 153) argue, mixed-methods studies where qualitative data can be combined with more quantitative verification present strong designs.

**Gender-Inclusive Research:** A study should include male and gender-diverse subjects to properly determine how gender itself molds the relationship between social media and attitude toward fashion consumption and brand loyalty. Rahman et al. (2018, p. 14) Consumer's gender and generative social presence in social media. Kovalerchuk (2018, p. 14) has found significant gender-related differences in online shopping preferences, which also induces the possibility of great differences in acceptance of social media marketing. Important differences between these factors can be formed based on gender.

**Geographic Expansion:** A study looking at differences in digital connectivity in rural and peri-urban areas of Bangladesh might reveal the impact of location on engagement and buying behavior. According to Hossain et al. (2022, page 7), geography affects online buying trends, thereby creating a regional difference, rental, regional difference in media marketing.

**Longitudinal Tracking Studies:** Longitudinal designs would also show how consumer perceptions evolve about social media marketing, addressing the pattern of consumer skepticism findings of this study. Wang et al. (2019, p. 6), own emphasis) as they argue that the evolution in online consumer relationships will be temporal and that designs capturing this line of development will be significant.

**Emerging Platform Analysis:** Analysis of new emerging platforms Dominant players outside Facebook. Instagram space (example: TikTok, etc.) to have know-how on changing consumer behavior in digital space in Bangladesh. Ananda (2019, p. 29) illuminated the necessity for research specific to platforms as new channels develop.

**Cross-Cultural Comparative Research:** Comparing Bangladesh and other South Asian markets would help understand the phenomenon of social media and fashion consumption in terms of cultural versus regional similarity and diversity and how cultures moderate the effectiveness of digital marketing.

**AI-Driven Personalization Reception:** A study investigating the adoption and perception of AI-driven marketing tactics in Bangladesh would explore the implications of the tension between the personalization benefits and privacy concerns revealed in this study. Zaidi et al. (2024, p. 7) point out the importance of striking this balance in implementing digital marketing.

**Trust Development Mechanisms:** Research on strategic approaches to how brands and influencers gain trust can hold significant lessons for effective strategies for gaining consumer's trust in the growing digital Bangladesh.

These avenues of research will contribute to overcoming the limitations of the present study and taking steps to build on its results so that others can better understand the effectiveness of social media marketing in the Bangladesh industry.

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## Appendix A

### Interview Questions by Theme

#### Section 1: Background Information (as per feedback)

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your occupation?
4. Which social media platforms do you use most frequently?
5. Approximately how much time do you spend on social media per day?
6. How often do you buy fashion products online?
7. Have you purchased any fashion products influenced by social media in the last 6 months? (If yes — how many times?)

#### Section 2: Social Media Usage and Fashion Engagement

1. Can you describe how you typically discover new fashion trends or products on social media?
2. What types of fashion posts or content on Facebook/Instagram usually catch your attention?
3. Do you follow any fashion brands or influencers on social media? Why or why not?

#### Section 3: Perceptions of Social Media Marketing Tactics

*(Related to conceptual framework: Entertainment, Trendiness, Customization, Interaction, Word-of-Mouth)*

1. Do you find fashion-related posts or ads on social media entertaining? Can you share an example?
2. How important is it for you that the fashion content you see on social media is trendy or up to date?
3. Have you ever seen a customized fashion ad based on your preferences? How did you feel about it?
4. How likely are you to interact (like, comment, share) with fashion posts on Facebook/Instagram? What motivates you?
5. Have you ever bought a product based on a friend's or influencer's recommendation or post? What made you trust it?

#### Section 4: Influence on Purchase Intention and Decision

1. Can you recall a time when you purchased a fashion item after seeing it promoted on social media? What influenced your decision?
2. What factors make you more likely to buy a fashion product from a social media post or ad?
3. Do you believe social media promotions improve your intention to buy fashion items online? Why or why not?

### Section 5: Role of Influencers

1. How much do fashion influencers on Facebook/Instagram affect your opinions about a product or brand?
2. Can you share an experience where an influencer's post made you consider or reject a fashion item?
3. Between influencers and official brand posts, whose content do you trust more for fashion-related products? Why?

### Section 6: Trust, Credibility & Loyalty

1. What makes you trust or distrust a fashion-related social media post or influencer?
2. Have you ever felt disappointed after purchasing a fashion item influenced by social media? What happened?
3. Does positive engagement with a fashion brand on social media (liking, commenting, following) make you more likely to stay loyal to the brand? Why?

### Section 7: Post-Purchase Behaviour

1. After buying a fashion product influenced by social media, do you usually share your experience (through posts, reviews, or comments)? Why or why not?
2. How likely are you to recommend a product you bought from a social media ad to your friends? Under what conditions?

## Appendix B

### Section 1: Background Information Analysis: Social Media Fashion Consumers in Bangladesh

The following table organizes responses to the background information questions (Section 1) across all six interviewees, grouped by common themes.

#### Age Demographics

Theme	Quotes
Young Adults (19-26)	"26 years old." (Interviewee 1) "19 years old." (Interviewee 3) "23 years old." (Interviewee 5)
Older Adults (29-35)	"32 years old." (Interviewee 2) "35 years old." (Interviewee 4) "29 years old." (Interviewee 6)

#### Occupational Status

Theme	Quotes
Business Professionals	"Marketing executive at a local textile company in Dhaka." (Interviewee 1) "Digital marketing agency owner in Dhaka." (Interviewee 4) "HR manager at multinational company in Dhaka." (Interviewee 6)

Education Sector	"University lecturer teaching Business Communication in Chittagong." (Interviewee 2)
Student	"Second-year Computer Science student at university in Dhaka." (Interviewee 3)
Creative Professional	"Content creator and part-time social media manager for clothing brand." (Interviewee 5)

### Social Media Platform Usage

Theme	Quotes
Facebook/Instagram Primary	"Mainly Facebook and Instagram, with occasional YouTube use." (Interviewee 1) "Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for professional connections." (Interviewee 2) "Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for business/personal, maintains Facebook presence." (Interviewee 4) "Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for professional networking." (Interviewee 6)
Instagram-Centric	"Instagram primary, TikTok, and Facebook for family/university connections." (Interviewee 3) "Instagram primary, followed by TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube." (Interviewee 5)

### Daily Social Media Engagement

Theme	Quotes
Moderate Usage (2-4 hours)	"3 to 4 hours daily, mostly during commute and evening after work." (Interviewee 1) "Two hours daily, between classes and evenings." (Interviewee 2) "3-4 hours daily, mostly work-related." (Interviewee 4) "Two hours daily, evenings and lunch breaks." (Interviewee 6)
Heavy Usage (5+ hours)	"Five hours daily, watching Instagram reels and TikTok between classes." (Interviewee 3) "6-7 hours daily, combining professional work and personal entertainment." (Interviewee 5)

### Online Fashion Shopping Frequency

Theme	Quotes
Frequent (Weekly/Biweekly)	"Approximately twice a month." (Interviewee 1) "Small items biweekly, larger purchases monthly." (Interviewee 3) "Weekly purchases, mostly accessories and makeup." (Interviewee 5)
Moderate (Monthly)	"Monthly, more during festivals like Eid or Puja." (Interviewee 2) "Twice monthly, more during festivals and business events." (Interviewee 4) "Once or twice monthly." (Interviewee 6)

### Social Media Influence on Purchases (Last 6 Months)

Theme	Quotes
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High Influence (5+ purchases)	"Yes, 5 or 6 purchases in the last 6 months, mainly clothing items and some accessories." (Interviewee 1) "Eight to ten purchases in last six months." (Interviewee 3) "Five purchases in past six months." (Interviewee 4) "Dozen purchases in last six months." (Interviewee 5)
Moderate Influence (3-4 purchases)	"Made four purchases based on social media influence." (Interviewee 2) "Three to four purchases in past six months." (Interviewee 6)

## Section 2: Social Media Usage and Fashion Engagement Analysis

The following table organizes responses to the Social Media Usage and Fashion Engagement questions (Section 2) across all six interviewees, grouped by common themes.

### Fashion Discovery Methods

Theme	Quotes
Platform-Specific Discovery Tools	"Through Instagram Explore page, Facebook recommendations..." (Interviewee 1) "Discovers through Instagram Explore, Reels, Bangladeshi influencers, group chats." (Interviewee 3) "Explores trends through Instagram, fashion week hashtags, creator communities." (Interviewee 5)
Professional and Specialized Groups	"Discovers through Facebook/Instagram feeds, follows Bangladeshi boutique pages." (Interviewee 2) "Follows designers, business attire, entrepreneurs' groups for professional fashion." (Interviewee 4) "Through Facebook/Instagram feeds, professional women's groups, targeted ads for workwear." (Interviewee 6)

### Attention-Grabbing Content Types

Theme	Quotes
Styling and Versatility	"Content showing outfit styling for different occasions, blending traditional Bangladeshi elements with modern styles." (Interviewee 1) "Transformation videos, affordable options, fusion styles, university outfit ideas." (Interviewee 3) "Transformation videos, fusion content, behind-the-scenes production processes." (Interviewee 5)
Professional and Work-Appropriate Fashion	"Work-appropriate traditional wear, styling tips, various body types, local textiles." (Interviewee 2) "Professional attire, climate-appropriate formal wear, local textiles with contemporary designs." (Interviewee 4) "Professional attire combining western and traditional styles, practical workplace fashion." (Interviewee 6)
Body Inclusivity and Realism	"...posts showing clothes on different body types." (Interviewee 1) "...various body types, local textiles." (Interviewee 2)

### Brand and Influencer Following Patterns

Theme	Quotes
Local Brand Focus	"Follows local brands like Aarong and Yellow because they fit local culture and climate." (Interviewee 1) "Follows local brands and professional fashion bloggers focusing on academic attire." (Interviewee 2) "Follows local brands, Bangladeshi fashion students, international influencers for inspiration." (Interviewee 3)

	"Follows workwear brands, content creators specializing in professional fashion." (Interviewee 6)
Professional and Business-Oriented	"Follows established brands, businesswomen sharing professional fashion choices." (Interviewee 4) "Follows workwear brands, content creators specializing in professional fashion." (Interviewee 6)
Mix of Local and International	"Follows Bangladeshi brands, international fashion houses, creators with distinctive styles." (Interviewee 5) "Follows local brands, Bangladeshi fashion students, international influencers for inspiration." (Interviewee 3)
Authenticity and Practicality	"...follows local fashion influencers who provide practical styling advice and realistic fashion representations." (Interviewee 1) "Follows local brands and professional fashion bloggers focusing on academic attire." (Interviewee 2)

### Section 3: Perceptions of Social Media Marketing Tactics Analysis

The following tables organize responses to the Perceptions of Social Media Marketing Tactics questions (Section 3) across all six interviewees, grouped by common themes.

#### Entertainment Value of Fashion Content

Theme	Quotes
Cultural Relevance and Storytelling	"Yes, finds them entertaining. Example: a local boutique created reels showing the same outfit worn differently by three generations (grandmother, mother, daughter), demonstrating adaptation of traditional clothing." (Interviewee 1)
Practical and Relatable Content	"Enjoys relatable local brand skits, dislikes repetitive trending formats." (Interviewee 3) "Enjoys relatable local campaigns, stop-motion videos, dislikes formulaic content." (Interviewee 5) "Enjoys realistic office situation campaigns, dislikes idealized scenarios." (Interviewee 6)
Professional Context	"Enjoys relatable academic-focused campaigns, finds many ads repetitive." (Interviewee 2) "Enjoys practical business attire transition videos, dislikes static model poses." (Interviewee 4)
Format Preferences	"Enjoys relatable local campaigns, stop-motion videos, dislikes formulaic content." (Interviewee 5) "Enjoys practical business attire transition videos, dislikes static model poses." (Interviewee 4)

#### Importance of Trendy/Up-to-date Content

Theme	Quotes
Cultural and Practical Adaptation	"Moderately important. Prefers timeless pieces that work in local cultural context and weather conditions rather than just fast fashion trends." (Interviewee 1) "Moderately important, prefers timeless pieces with contemporary styling." (Interviewee 2)
Balance of Trends and Timelessness	"Values contemporary interpretations of timeless styles over trends." (Interviewee 4) "Values timeless professional styles over trends, appreciates subtle contemporary elements." (Interviewee 6)

Professional Context	"Values contemporary interpretations of timeless styles over trends." (Interviewee 4) "Values timeless professional styles over trends, appreciates subtle contemporary elements." (Interviewee 6)
High Trend Importance	"Very important, seeks trends adapted for Bangladeshi culture and climate." (Interviewee 3) "Values trend awareness professionally, emphasizes cultural adaptation over replication." (Interviewee 5)

### Perceptions of Personalized/Targeted Advertising

Theme	Quotes
Helpful but Privacy Concerns	"Yes, regularly. After searching for salwar kameez, Instagram showed similar outfits from different brands. Feels it's helpful but sometimes excessive, with mixed feelings about tracking." (Interviewee 1) "Receives targeted ads frequently, has privacy concerns about accuracy." (Interviewee 2) "Receives frequent targeted ads, concerned about privacy and data collection." (Interviewee 3)
Professional Context	"Receives targeted ads, finds them helpful despite privacy concerns." (Interviewee 4) "Receives helpful workwear targeting but concerns about data collection." (Interviewee 6)
Frequency and Persistence	"Receives targeted ads daily, notes aggressive persistence and echo chamber effect." (Interviewee 5)

### Social Media Engagement Patterns

Theme	Quotes
Selective Engagement	"Likely to like posts (8/10 times), comments occasionally (twice weekly) when having questions or appreciating styling, shares rarely. Motivated by practical value or emotional connection." (Interviewee 1) "Likes posts weekly, shares sustainable fashion content, rarely comments." (Interviewee 2) "Moderate engagement, likes workwear posts weekly, shares in professional groups." (Interviewee 6)
High Engagement	"Likes 15-20 posts daily, comments weekly, shares sales to friends." (Interviewee 3) "Very active engagement for professional networking, supports creative local content." (Interviewee 5)
Purpose-Driven Engagement	"Likes daily, comments weekly for specific questions, shares selectively." (Interviewee 4) "Likely to like posts (8/10 times), comments occasionally (twice weekly) when having questions or appreciating styling, shares rarely. Motivated by practical value or emotional connection." (Interviewee 1)

### Trust in Recommendations

Theme	Quotes
Detail and Honesty	"Yes, bought a local brand's cotton saree based on friend's recommendation due to her honesty about pros and cons. Trusts influencers who show actual texture and fit of clothing and disclose sponsorships." (Interviewee 1)

	"Purchased handloom saree based on colleague's detailed review." (Interviewee 2)
Product Performance Focus	"Bought silver earrings based on influencer's durability review." (Interviewee 3) "Purchased leather portfolio based on entrepreneur's detailed durability review." (Interviewee 4) "Purchased cotton-blend shirts after colleague's climate performance review." (Interviewee 6)
Quality and Production Transparency	"Purchased natural dye saree after detailed review showing quality, washing results." (Interviewee 5)

#### Section 4 : Influence on Purchase Intention and Decision Analysis

The following tables organize responses to the Purchase Intention and Decision questions (Section 4) across all six interviewees, grouped by common themes.

##### Social Media Purchase Triggers

Theme	Quotes
Versatility and Styling Demonstrations	"Purchased a fusion jacket from a Bangladeshi designer brand after seeing it on Instagram. Influenced by its versatility, genuine customer feedback, professional brand responses, and use of local handloom fabric." (Interviewee 1) "Bought fusion top after seeing styling reel, student reviews." (Interviewee 3) "Bought silk scarves after seeing businesswomen styling videos." (Interviewee 4) "Bought structured vest after seeing versatile styling options, fabric details." (Interviewee 6)
Artisanal and Production Storytelling	"Bought block-printed kurtas after seeing artisan-focused brand video." (Interviewee 2) "Bought leather camera bag after seeing artisan production, practical demonstrations." (Interviewee 5)
Local Materials and Craftsmanship	"Influenced by its versatility, genuine customer feedback, professional brand responses, and use of local handloom fabric." (Interviewee 1) "Bought block-printed kurtas after seeing artisan-focused brand video." (Interviewee 2)

##### Purchase Decision Factors

Theme	Quotes
Material Quality and Information	"Clear information about fabric quality, sizing, care instructions..." (Interviewee 1) "Detailed fabric information, transparent pricing, ethical production details." (Interviewee 2) "Affordability, clear fabric information, multiple styling options, student discounts." (Interviewee 3) "Clear fabric information, pricing, multiple body types, return policy." (Interviewee 6)
Pricing Transparency	"...price transparency including delivery fees..." (Interviewee 1) "Detailed fabric information, transparent pricing, ethical production details." (Interviewee 2) "Clear product information, multiple angles, transparent pricing, ethical production." (Interviewee 4)
Visual Representation	"...visuals showing items on different body types or in different lighting." (Interviewee 1) "Clear product information, multiple angles, transparent pricing, ethical production." (Interviewee 4) "Clear fabric information, pricing, multiple body types, return policy." (Interviewee 6)

Ethical and Production Details	"Detailed fabric information, transparent pricing, ethical production details." (Interviewee 2) "Clear product information, multiple angles, transparent pricing, ethical production." (Interviewee 4) "Values authentic presentation, detailed material information, responsive customer service." (Interviewee 5)
Demographic-Specific Considerations	"Affordability, clear fabric information, multiple styling options, student discounts." (Interviewee 3)
Customer Service	"Values authentic presentation, detailed material information, responsive customer service." (Interviewee 5)

### Impact on Purchase Intention

Theme	Quotes
Selective Improvement	"Believes social media promotions selectively improve buying intention. Well-crafted promotions addressing concerns about fit and quality build confidence. They introduce options from smaller designers, but she's become more discerning over time." (Interviewee 1) "Yes, but sceptical of flash sales and artificial urgency." (Interviewee 2) "Yes, helps discover styles but more selective after disappointing purchases." (Interviewee 3)
Discovery of Local Options	"They introduce options from smaller designers, but she's become more discerning over time." (Interviewee 1) "Yes, discovers local designers but evaluates critically beyond initial presentation." (Interviewee 5) "Yes, helps discover professional attire but requires additional research." (Interviewee 6)
Research Beyond Platforms	"Yes, but research beyond platforms before purchasing." (Interviewee 4) "Yes, helps discover professional attire but requires additional research." (Interviewee 6)
Increased Scepticism Over Time	"...she's become more discerning over time." (Interviewee 1) "Yes, helps discover styles but more selective after disappointing purchases." (Interviewee 3) "Yes, discovers local designers but evaluates critically beyond initial presentation." (Interviewee 5)

### Section 5: Role of Influencers Analysis

The following tables organize responses to the Role of Influencers questions (Section 5) across all six interviewees, grouped by common themes.

#### Influencer Impact on Brand/Product Opinions

Theme	Quotes
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Moderate and Selective Influence	and	"Moderate influence. Local Bangladeshi influencers have more impact than international ones due to understanding local context. Multiple trusted influencers consistently praising a brand significantly improves perception." (Interviewee 1) "Moderate influence from professional fashion specialists, maintains healthy scepticism." (Interviewee 6)
Local International	vs.	"Local Bangladeshi influencers have more impact than international ones due to understanding local context." (Interviewee 1) "Significant influence from age-appropriate local influencers, sceptical of sponsored content." (Interviewee 3)
Limited Content Quality	By	"Limited influence, values content quality over presenter." (Interviewee 2) "Values business professionals' insights over traditional influencers." (Interviewee 4)
Specific Demographics		"Significant influence from age-appropriate local influencers, sceptical of sponsored content." (Interviewee 3) "Values business professionals' insights over traditional influencers." (Interviewee 4)
Quality Reviews	of	"Values detailed, balanced reviews and long-term product use demonstrations." (Interviewee 5)

### Product Rejection Based on Influencer Content

Theme	Quotes
Quality Issues Exposure	"Rejected a popular brand's embellished Eid outfits after an influencer showed poor stitching quality and loose sequins in close-up videos, despite initially being attracted to them." (Interviewee 1) "Rejected office blouses after businesswoman's review showed dye bleeding issues." (Interviewee 4) "Rejected transparent blouses after review showed office lighting issues." (Interviewee 6)
Misleading Claims Exposure	"Rejected 'eco-friendly' brand after blogger exposed synthetic materials usage." (Interviewee 2) "Rejected 'sustainable' brand after influencer exposed misleading dye claims." (Interviewee 5)
Performance Testing	"Rejected waterproof eyeliner after honest review showing poor performance." (Interviewee 3)
Context-Specific Concerns	"Rejected transparent blouses after review showed office lighting issues." (Interviewee 6) "Rejected office blouses after businesswoman's review showed dye bleeding issues." (Interviewee 4)

### Trust: Influencers vs. Brand Content

Theme	Quotes
Divided Trust by Purpose	"Trusts official brand posts for product specifications and availability, but trusts certain influencers more for quality assessment, fit, and value for money, especially those who show follow-up reviews." (Interviewee 1) "Trusts brands for specifications, established influencers for real-world performance." (Interviewee 5) "Trusts brands for specifications, micro-influencers for honest durability reviews." (Interviewee 3)

Durability and Long-term Performance	"Trusts certain influencers more for quality assessment, fit, and value for money, especially those who show follow-up reviews." (Interviewee 1) "Trusts detail-oriented influencers for durability reviews, brands for specifications." (Interviewee 2) "Trusts brands for specifications, micro-influencers for honest durability reviews." (Interviewee 3)
Practical Usage Context	"Trusts brands for specifications, professionals for practical wear experiences." (Interviewee 6) "Trusts brands for specifications, peer reviews for practical insights." (Interviewee 4)
Specific Types of Influencers	"Trusts brands for specifications, micro-influencers for honest durability reviews." (Interviewee 3) "Trusts brands for specifications, peer reviews for practical insights." (Interviewee 4) "Trusts brands for specifications, professionals for practical wear experiences." (Interviewee 6)

### Section 6: Trust, Credibility & Loyalty Analysis

The following tables organize responses to the Trust, Credibility & Loyalty questions (Section 6) across all six interviewees, grouped by common themes.

#### Trust and Distrust Factors

Theme	Quotes
Transparent Product Representation	"Trusts posts showing products from multiple angles and discussing both advantages and limitations." (Interviewee 1) "Trusts detailed material information, distrusts filtered images and deleted comments." (Interviewee 2) "Values detailed observations, consistent evaluation, transparency about sponsorships." (Interviewee 6)
Sponsorship Transparency	"Distrusts heavily edited photos and recommendations that change based on sponsorships." (Interviewee 1) "Values partnership disclosure, detailed reviews, consistent aesthetics, authentic content." (Interviewee 3) "Values specific details, consistent criteria, transparent sponsorship disclosure." (Interviewee 4)
Editing and Filtering	"Distrusts heavily edited photos and recommendations that change based on sponsorships." (Interviewee 1) "Trusts detailed material information, distrusts filtered images and deleted comments." (Interviewee 2) "Values consistency, transparency, detailed observations; distrusts edited images, deleted comments." (Interviewee 5)
Censoring Negative Feedback	"Trusts detailed material information, distrusts filtered images and deleted comments." (Interviewee 2) "Values consistency, transparency, detailed observations; distrusts edited images, deleted comments." (Interviewee 5)
Consistency in Presentation	"Values partnership disclosure, detailed reviews, consistent aesthetics, authentic content." (Interviewee 3) "Values specific details, consistent criteria, transparent sponsorship disclosure." (Interviewee 4) "Values consistency, transparency, detailed observations; distrusts edited images, deleted comments." (Interviewee 5)

#### Disappointing Purchases

Theme	Quotes
Misrepresented Material Quality	"Yes, ordered a kurti set that had thinner fabric and sparse embroidery compared to what was shown in heavily edited Instagram images, making her more careful about checking customer reviews." (Interviewee 1) "Bought poor quality crop top, negative comments were deleted." (Interviewee 3)
False Production Claims	"Disappointed by machine-made saree advertised as handcrafted." (Interviewee 2) "Discovered power-loom fabric falsely advertised as handloom." (Interviewee 5)
Construction Issues	"Bought poorly constructed leather tote misrepresented in promotions." (Interviewee 4)
Colour Inaccuracy	"Ordered formal dress with misleading colour representation for corporate environment." (Interviewee 6)
Content Manipulation	"Yes, ordered a kurti set that had thinner fabric and sparse embroidery compared to what was shown in heavily edited Instagram images, making her more careful about checking customer reviews." (Interviewee 1) "Bought poor quality crop top, negative comments were deleted." (Interviewee 3)

### Brand Loyalty Through Social Media Engagement

Theme	Quotes
Quality Remains Primary	"Yes, somewhat. When brands respond thoughtfully to comments and remember preferences, it creates a personal connection, though product quality remains the primary factor in long-term loyalty." (Interviewee 1) "Values responsive engagement but product quality must match social media presence." (Interviewee 3) "Values quality interactions but prioritizes product quality and ethics." (Interviewee 4) "Values meaningful engagement with feedback incorporation, prioritizes product quality." (Interviewee 5)
Meaningful Interactions	"Yes, somewhat. When brands respond thoughtfully to comments and remember preferences, it creates a personal connection, though product quality remains the primary factor in long-term loyalty." (Interviewee 1) "Values meaningful engagement with feedback incorporation, prioritizes product quality." (Interviewee 5) "Values meaningful interactions but prioritizes product quality and business ethics." (Interviewee 6)
Ethical Considerations	"Values reciprocal engagement but prioritizes quality and ethics." (Interviewee 2) "Values quality interactions but prioritizes product quality and ethics." (Interviewee 4) "Values meaningful interactions but prioritizes product quality and business ethics." (Interviewee 6)
Consistency Across Channels	"Values responsive engagement but product quality must match social media presence." (Interviewee 3)
Feedback Incorporation	"Values meaningful engagement with feedback incorporation, prioritizes product quality." (Interviewee 5)

### Section 7: Post-Purchase Behaviour Analysis

The following tables organize responses to the Post-Purchase Behaviour questions (Section 7) across all six interviewees, grouped by common themes.

### Experience Sharing Patterns

Theme	Quotes
Comment on Original Content	"Doesn't usually create dedicated posts but leaves comments on original promotional posts sharing honest experiences." (Interviewee 1) "Leaves comments on original posts, reviews in consumer groups." (Interviewee 2)
Platform-Specific Sharing	"Might share exceptionally good products on Instagram stories or alert others about negative experiences." (Interviewee 1) "Shares in Instagram stories, university groups, detailed reviews for notable experiences." (Interviewee 3)
Selective Sharing	"Selective sharing in professional groups, provides direct feedback to brands." (Interviewee 6) "Shares selective reviews, promotes quality local businesses." (Interviewee 4)
Content Creation	"Creates content, leaves detailed comments, shares feedback to support quality brands." (Interviewee 5)
Group-Based Sharing	"Leaves comments on original posts, reviews in consumer groups." (Interviewee 2) "Shares in Instagram stories, university groups, detailed reviews for notable experiences." (Interviewee 3) "Selective sharing in professional groups, provides direct feedback to brands." (Interviewee 6)
Supporting Quality Brands	"Creates content, leaves detailed comments, shares feedback to support quality brands." (Interviewee 5) "Shares selective reviews, promotes quality local businesses." (Interviewee 4)
Direct Brand Feedback	"Selective sharing in professional groups, provides direct feedback to brands." (Interviewee 6)

### Product Recommendation Behaviour

Theme	Quotes
Delivery on Promises	"Very likely to recommend products that delivered on promises and offered good value." (Interviewee 1) "Recommends products meeting quality standards and ethical practices." (Interviewee 2)
Specific-Context Recommendations	"Recently recommended monsoon-appropriate footwear to colleagues. Only recommends items after assessing durability and is specific about who might benefit." (Interviewee 1) "Recommends affordable, quality items suitable for student lifestyle." (Interviewee 3)
Quality Assessment	"Only recommends items after assessing durability and is specific about who might benefit." (Interviewee 1) "Recommends products meeting quality standards and ethical practices." (Interviewee 2) "Recommends quality professional attire with climate-appropriate features." (Interviewee 6)
Ethical Considerations	"Recommends products meeting quality standards and ethical practices." (Interviewee 2) "Recommends quality items with contextual details about benefits and limitations." (Interviewee 4)

Lifestyle Appropriateness	"Recommends affordable, quality items suitable for student lifestyle." (Interviewee 3) "Recommends quality professional attire with climate-appropriate features." (Interviewee 6)
Balanced Information	"Recommends quality items with contextual details about benefits and limitations." (Interviewee 4) "Selective recommendations based on consistent quality, emphasizes specific suitability." (Interviewee 5)
Consistency Over Time	"Selective recommendations based on consistent quality, emphasizes specific suitability." (Interviewee 5)

## Appendix C

**Table 1: Comprehensive Content Engagement Framework**

Content Type	Engagement Value	Brand Equity Impact	TPB Element	Bangladesh-Specific Context	Supporting Evidence	Frequency
<b>Cultural-Fusion Storytelling</b>	Emotional connection through generational relevance	Enhances Brand Awareness through cultural resonance	Positive Attitude formation	Reflects Bangladesh's strong family ties and intergenerational living patterns	"Entertaining; boutique's humorous reels showing cross-generational styling of traditional clothing." (Interviewee 1) "Transformation videos, fusion content blending Western/Bangladeshi elements." (Interviewee 5)	2/6 participants
<b>AI-Curated Personalized Content</b>	Relevance and convenience through algorithmic matching	Builds Brand Trust through consistent value delivery	Perceived Behavioural Control	Addresses emerging digital literacy among Bangladesh's young adult consumers (19-26 age group)	"Often sees targeted ads; convenient for searching but excessive; privacy concerns." (Interviewee 1) "Frequent customized ads; helpful but sometimes uncomfortably accurate." (Interviewee 3) "Daily targeted ads; helpful for discovering local brands but sometimes overly aggressive." (Interviewee 5)	6/6 participants
<b>Interactive Visual Content</b>	High practical value through demonstration	Strengthens Perceived Quality through product visualization	Subjective Norms through social proof	Compensates for limited physical product examination in Bangladesh's emerging e-commerce environment	"Videos showing outfit transitions." (Interviewee 1) "Transformation videos, fusion styles, affordable options." (Interviewee 3) "Transformation videos, fusion content blending Western/Bangladeshi elements." (Interviewee 5)	3/6 participants
<b>Professional Context Representations</b>	Practical workplace applicability	Brand Awareness within specific professional segments	Attitudes toward professional appropriateness	Aligns with growing professional women's market segment in urban	"Work-appropriate traditional wear featuring local textiles and multiple styling options." (Interviewee 2) "Versatile professional pieces, local textiles, wardrobe essentials, climate-appropriate formal	3/6 participants

				Bangladesh (29-35 age group)	wear." (Interviewee 4) "Professional attire combining western/traditional elements, versatile styling, climate-appropriate workwear." (Interviewee 6)	
<b>Local Production Storytelling</b>	Transparency and authenticity through behind-the-scenes content	Trust through ethical production visibility	Subjective Norms around ethical consumption	Appeals to Bangladesh's pride in local textile heritage and artisanal production	"Purchased block-printed kurtas after viewing artisan production video." (Interviewee 2) "Behind-the-scenes production glimpses." (Interviewee 5) "Bought handcrafted leather camera bag after seeing artisan production." (Interviewee 5)	2/6 participants

**Table 2: Engagement Behaviour Progression Map**

Pre-Purchase Engagement	Post-Purchase Sharing	Brand Equity Development	TPB Influence	Bangladesh-Specific Behavior	Supporting Evidence	Frequency
<b>Platform-Specific Content Consumption</b>	Comments on original brand posts	Initial Brand Awareness	Information-seeking attitude	Facebook-dominant engagement reflects Bangladesh's 44.7 million user base	"Likes 8/10 times; comments twice weekly; rarely shares." (Interviewee 1) "Leaves comments on original brand posts; shares exceptional experiences on Instagram stories." (Interviewee 1)	6/6 participants
<b>AI-Facilitated Discovery</b>	Platform-specific sharing to social circles	Perceived Quality validation	Behavioral control through informed choices	Addresses "3-4 hrs. daily" social media usage pattern of moderate users	"Instagram Explore, Facebook recommendations, following Bangladeshi fashion pages." (Interviewee 1) "Instagram Explore/Reels, Bangladeshi influencers, international accounts." (Interviewee 3)	4/6 participants
<b>Purpose-Driven Engagement</b>	Group-based sharing in community forums	Brand Trust through community validation	Subjective norms from peer influence	Reflects collectivist decision-making in Bangladeshi consumer culture	"Motivated by practical value." (Interviewee 1) "Comments on original posts, reviews ethical fashion in Bangladesh groups." (Interviewee 2) "Selectively shares in professional women's groups." (Interviewee 6)	3/6 participants

<b>Professional Network Engagement</b>	Direct brand feedback through messages	Brand Trust through relationship building	Perceived control through direct communication	Important for professional segments who value "workwear brands, content creators specializing in professional fashion"	"Follows established brands, businesswomen sharing professional fashion choices." (Interviewee 4) "Selectively shares in professional women's groups; highlights quality local brands." (Interviewee 6)	3/6 participants
<b>Creative Response Development</b>	Content creation featuring brand products	Brand Advocacy (extended Brand Trust)	Demonstration of positive attitude	Particularly relevant for heavy users spending "6-7 hrs. daily" on social media	"Content creator and part-time social media manager in Dhaka." (Interviewee 5) "Regularly shares experiences; feels responsibility to audience and supports local brands." (Interviewee 5)	1/6 participants

**Table 3: Trust and Loyalty Development Framework**

<b>Trust Factors</b>	<b>Brand Equity Component</b>	<b>Engagement Channel</b>	<b>TPB Element</b>	<b>Bangladesh-Specific Trust Factors</b>	<b>Supporting Evidence</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Transparent Product Representation</b>	Perceived Quality	Brand-generated content	Attitude formation through honest portrayal	Addresses concerns about "heavily edited Instagram images" mentioned in interviews	"Trusts posts showing products from multiple angles." (Interviewee 1) "Distrusts heavily edited photos and recommendations that change based on sponsorships." (Interviewee 1) "Distrusts heavily filtered images." (Interviewee 3)	4/6 participants
<b>Material Quality Information</b>	Perceived Quality	Detailed specifications	Perceived behavioral control through informed choice	Essential in a market where "fabric quality" is repeatedly mentioned as a key purchase factor	"Fabric quality information, price transparency, authentic reviews." (Interviewee 1) "Values fabric details, ethical production, transparent pricing." (Interviewee 2) "Affordability, fabric quality, styling options, accurate	6/6 participants

					photos." (Interviewee 3)	
<b>Authentic Influencer Disclosure</b>	Brand Trust	Influencer partnerships	Subjective norms through perceived honesty	Responds to growing skepticism toward "changing recommendations based on sponsorships"	"Distrusts recommend that change based on sponsorships." (Interviewee 1) "Trusts disclosed partnerships, consistent standards." (Interviewee 3) "Trusts transparency, transparent sponsorships." (Interviewee 5)	3/6 participants
<b>AI-Powered Personalized Recommendations</b>	Brand Awareness	Targeted algorithmic content	Perceived behavioral control through relevant choices	Helps navigate information overload in Bangladesh's rapidly expanding digital fashion space	"Often sees targeted ads; convenient for searching but excessive." (Interviewee 1) "Receives targeted ads for cotton sarees after browsing history." (Interviewee 2) "Frequent customized ads; helpful but sometimes uncomfortably accurate." (Interviewee 3)	6/6 participants
<b>Local Context Relevance</b>	Brand Trust	Cultural adaptation	Attitude toward cultural appropriateness	Critical in Bangladesh where "local cultural context and weather conditions" are primary considerations	"Local Bangladeshi influencers have more impact than international ones." (Interviewee 1) "Prefers timeless pieces adapted to Bangladeshi context." (Interviewee 1) "Seeks styles appropriate for Bangladeshi university context." (Interviewee 3)	4/6 participants
<b>Ethical Production Transparency</b>	Brand Trust	Behind-the-scenes content	Subjective norms around ethical consumption	Addresses concerned about "machine-made saree advertised as handcrafted" mentioned in interviews	"Rejected 'eco-friendly' brand after blogger exposed synthetic material usage." (Interviewee 2) "Received machine-made saree advertised as handcrafted by rural artisans." (Interviewee 2) "'Handloom cotton' outfit was power loom with raw edges." (Interviewee 5)	2/6 participants

Table 4: Purchase Journey Engagement Map

SMM Strategy	Consumer Behavior Impact	Brand Equity Mediator	TPB Influence	Bangladesh Context Application	Supporting Evidence	Frequency
<b>Influencer Marketing: Styling Demonstrations</b>	Purchase Intention through problem-solution visualization	Brand Awareness	Positive attitude through practical solutions	Addresses "styling demonstrations" as key purchase triggers for Bangladeshi consumers	"Fusion jacket from Bangladeshi brand; versatility, customer comments, local handloom fabric." (Interviewee 1) "Bought fusion top after seeing styling options and student discount." (Interviewee 3) "Bought cotton-silk vest after seeing styling versatility and positive professional reviews." (Interviewee 6)	4/6 participants
<b>AI-driven Personalization: Targeted Recommendations</b>	Purchase Efficiency through discovery optimization	Brand Awareness	Perceived behavioral control through choice management	Help busy professionals who spend "Two hours daily, evenings and lunch breaks" on social media	"Often sees targeted ads; convenient for searching but excessive." (Interviewee 1) "Receives targeted ads for cotton sarees after browsing history." (Interviewee 2) "Regular targeted ads; find them helpful despite occasional privacy concerns." (Interviewee 4)	6/6 participants
<b>Interactive Content: Live Shopping Events</b>	Immediate Purchase Conversion through limited-time engagement	Perceived Quality through real-time demonstration	Attitudes toward innovation	Emerging trend in Bangladesh that addresses "practical value or emotional connection" as engagement motivators	"Motivated by practical value or emotional connection." (Interviewee 1) "Discovers local designers but evaluates critically beyond initial presentation." (Interviewee 5)	2/6 participants
<b>Artisanal Production Storytelling</b>	Long-term Brand Loyalty through value alignment	Brand Trust	Subjective norms around supporting local craftsmanship	Connects with "local materials and craftsmanship" as purchase triggers in Bangladesh	"Purchased block-printed kurtas after viewing artisan production video." (Interviewee 2) "Bought handcrafted leather camera bag after seeing artisan production and durability demonstrations." (Interviewee 5)	2/6 participants
<b>User-Generated Content: Customer Reviews</b>	Repeat Purchases through social validation	Brand Trust	Subjective norms from peer experiences	Critical in a market where "trust in recommendations" is based on "detail and honesty" about product performance	"Bought cotton saree based on friend's honest review including pros/cons." (Interviewee 1) "Purchased handloom saree based on colleague's detailed review." (Interviewee 2) "Purchased cotton-blend shirts after colleague's specific feedback about fabric performance." (Interviewee 6)	4/6 participants

Table 5: AI-Driven Engagement Framework for Bangladesh Fashion Market

AI Application	Consumer Behavior Impact	Brand Equity Component	TPB Element	Bangladesh Relevance	Supporting Evidence	Frequency
<b>Product Recommendation Engines</b>	Purchase Intention through relevance optimization	Brand Awareness	Perceived behavioral control	Addresses information overload in Bangladesh's growing online fashion market	"Instagram Explore, Facebook recommendations, following Bangladeshi fashion pages." (Interviewee 1) "Instagram Explore/Reels, Bangladeshi influencers, international accounts, friend recommendations." (Interviewee 3)	4/6 participants
<b>Visual Search Technology</b>	Purchase Journey Simplification	Perceived Quality	Behavioral control through search efficiency	Valuable for "Instagram-centric" consumers seeking specific styles and products	"Instagram Explore, Facebook recommendations." (Interviewee 1) "Instagram Explore/Reels, Bangladeshi influencers." (Interviewee 3) "Instagram Explore, fashion week hashtags." (Interviewee 5)	3/6 participants
<b>Chatbot Customer Service</b>	Trust Building through responsive interaction	Brand Trust	Perceived control through immediate assistance	Meets expectations for "responsive customer service" valued by Bangladeshi consumers	"Values responsive customer service and implementation of customer feedback." (Interviewee 2)	1/6 participants
<b>Personalized Content Curation</b>	Engagement & Loyalty through relevant content experiences	Brand Awareness	Positive attitude from content alignment	Helps brands stand out in Bangladesh's competitive social media landscape	"Often sees targeted ads; convenient for searching but excessive." (Interviewee 1) "Receives targeted ads for cotton sarees after browsing history." (Interviewee 2) "Frequent customized ads; helpful but sometimes uncomfortably accurate." (Interviewee 3)	6/6 participants
<b>Predictive Trend Analysis</b>	Trendsetting purchase influence	Perceived Quality through fashion authority	Subjective norms around trend adoption	Important for consumers who value "trend awareness professionally" with "cultural adaptation"	"Very important; seeks styles appropriate for Bangladeshi university context." (Interviewee 3) "Values unique interpretation and adaptation to Bangladeshi context over trend replication." (Interviewee 5)	2/6 participants