

Influence of Social Media Post Frequency and Discount Offers on Brand Attitude, Purchase Intention, and Word-of-Mouth: Evidence from Pakistan's Fashion Industry

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Abstract

This study examines how social media marketing tactics —specifically post frequency and discount offers —shape brand attitude and influence purchase intention and word-of-mouth (WOM) in the context of Sapphire, a leading Pakistani fashion brand. Drawing on the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Elaboration Likelihood Model, and the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework, a conceptual model was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) on survey data from 200 active social media users. Findings reveal that both post frequency and discount offer significantly enhance brand attitude, which acts as a key mediator linking these strategies to purchase intention and WOM. A positive brand attitude increases both the likelihood of purchase and advocacy behavior. The study contributes to the digital marketing literature by integrating content and promotional strategies into a unified model. It offers practical insights for marketers on balancing engagement consistency with promotional incentives to foster sustainable brand growth.

KEYWORDS

Social Media Marketing, Discount Offers, Brand Attitude, Purchase Intention, Word of Mouth (WOM)

1 | INTRODUCTION

Social media has evolved into a vital network for brand-consumer interaction, product discovery, and purchasing decision-making in the modern digital marketplace, beyond its previous role as a simple communication medium. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok offer brands unparalleled opportunities to engage with global audiences through curated content, real-time dialogue, and targeted promotional strategies (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Frequent brand announcements and discount offers are among the most common and cost-effective strategies; they are intended to increase visibility, encourage interaction, and drive conversions. However, the mere implementation of these tactics does not guarantee success; their true efficacy is contingent upon how they are internalized by consumers, shaping their overall perception and evaluation of the brand, a construct known as brand attitude (Mitchell & Olson, 1981).

A favorable brand attitude is a critical antecedent to two paramount behavioral outcomes: purchase intention, which signals the likelihood of future transactions, and word of mouth (WOM), the powerful, consumer-driven communication that can significantly amplify or damage brand equity (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). In an era dominated by electronic word of mouth (eWOM), understanding the pathway from tactical exposure to positive attitude formation and subsequent advocacy is essential for sustainable brand growth. Despite the exponential investment in social media marketing, a significant lacuna exists in the scholarly understanding of how specific tactical elements — namely, post frequency and discount offers — collectively and individually influence the consumer's psychological journey.

Current literature often examines these variables in isolation, failing to capture the holistic, synergistic nature of the consumer experience, in which multiple

marketing stimuli are encountered simultaneously (Hudson et al., 2016; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015). This presents the first significant research gap: a lack of integrated empirical models that concurrently analyze the effects of content strategy (post frequency) and monetary incentives (discounts) on consumer cognition and behavior. Secondly, while these tactics are deployed to achieve short-term metrics, their long-term impact on brand building remains ambiguous. There is a pressing need to investigate whether frequent posting leads to brand familiarity or audience fatigue (Ashley & Tuten, 2015) and whether discounts foster loyalty or inadvertently cultivate a low-value brand association (Chandon et al., 2000).

The third critical gap concerns the relationship between the key behavioral outcomes themselves. Although purchase intention and word of mouth are often studied as parallel endpoints, there is a lack of empirical investigation into their potential sequential interplay within the social media context—specifically, whether the intention to purchase is a necessary precursor to generating positive word of mouth, or if these behaviors can develop independently from brand attitude (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). This oversight limits a holistic understanding of the consumer decision journey. To address these gaps, this study establishes clear objectives. Primarily, it examines the direct effects of social media post frequency and discount offers on consumers' brand attitudes. Subsequently, it aims to investigate the influence of this formed brand attitude on two critical behavioral outcomes: purchase intention and word-of-mouth communication.

Grounded in these objectives, the study is guided by the following research questions: What is the effect of social media post frequency on brand attitude? How do discount offers influence the formation of brand attitude? To what extent does brand attitude affect consumers' purchase intentions? And finally, how does brand attitude influence the likelihood of word-of-mouth behavior? The contribution of this study is threefold. Theoretically, it advances the field by proposing and testing a holistic conceptual framework that integrates constructs from advertising, consumer behavior, and digital marketing literature. It provides much-needed empirical evidence on the mediating role of brand attitude, thereby elucidating the psychological process through which external marketing stimuli are internalized and transformed into behavioral responses.

From a managerial perspective, the findings offer actionable insights for brand managers and digital marketers on how to strategically balance post frequency and discount strategies to cultivate positive brand attitudes without triggering adverse effects like oversaturation or value depreciation. For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with limited budgets, this research guides resource allocation to maximize impact on brand perception and consumer advocacy. In the end, this study advances a more sophisticated, fact-based understanding of how well digital marketing

works to build long-lasting relationships between consumers and brands in a crowded online space.

1.1. Literature Review

Though little is known about the combined effects of post frequency and discount offers, recent research emphasizes the expanding influence of social media in influencing customer attitudes and actions. There is a knowledge gap regarding the combined impact of these factors on brand attitude, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth, as previous research has chiefly examined them independently. By incorporating content and promotional elements into well-known frameworks such as TRA, ELM, and S-O-R, this study proposes a model in which these effects are mediated by brand attitude. This method advances theory by providing a cohesive perspective on digital marketing techniques and offers practical guidance for optimizing social media strategies to elicit positive customer reactions.

1.1.1. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), a well-known theory in consumer behavior, was developed by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1975. It asserts that the most direct indicator of whether someone will act is their intention to do so. According to TRA, two important elements influence this intention: the person's attitude toward the action and the subjective norms (social pressure) they observe in others (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). A consumer's general brand attitude represents the attitudinal component in this study. We suggest that social media strategies, such as frequent posting and discounts, help mold this mindset. Regular, high-quality articles, for example, can increase brand recognition and trust, leading to more favorable reviews (Kim & Johnson, 2016).

In a similar vein, meeting practical demands can improve value perceptions by reducing discounts. The reasoning behind TRA is that once a positive brand attitude is established, it becomes a strong motivator for buying or suggesting that brand to others, particularly when doing so is viewed as socially acceptable by one's peer group. A key strength of TRA is its emphasis on volitional control, which aligns well with the active, choice-driven nature of social media engagement. Consumers choose which brands to follow, interact with, and advocate for, making their resulting intentions a strong predictor of actual behavior. Therefore, TRA provides a robust foundation for hypothesizing that social media and discount stimuli influence brand attitude (Chen & Zhang, 2024), which in turn guides purchase and WOM intentions.

1.1.2. Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), offers a valuable framework for understanding how persuasive

communication shapes attitudes. It suggests there are two primary pathways to persuasion: a central route and a peripheral route. The path a person takes depends on their motivation and ability to think deeply about the message. The central route involves careful consideration of the content's logic and merits, while the peripheral route relies on cues such as visuals, endorsements, or promotions. Within the context of this study, ELM helps clarify how different social media tactics work. Social media posts, particularly those that are informative, educational, or tell a compelling brand story, act as central cues.

These appeal to consumers who are already interested or highly involved with the product category. These individuals are motivated to invest cognitive effort in understanding the brand's value proposition and features. Discount offers, on the other hand, often function as effective peripheral cues. They can be particularly influential for consumers with lower involvement, who may make quicker decisions based on immediate benefits, such as saving money, rather than a deep analysis of the brand itself. A key insight from ELM is that attitudes formed via the central route (through thoughtful engagement with content) tend to be more durable and resistant to change. In contrast, attitudes influenced by the peripheral route (such as a reaction to a discount) may be more effective in the short term but less stable (Chang, 2017).

For instance, a consumer might develop a positive brand attitude either by genuinely valuing a brand's helpful tutorial videos (central route) or by feeling tempted by a flash sale (peripheral route). In both cases, the improved attitude can increase the likelihood of a purchase or a recommendation. Therefore, ELM provides a nuanced explanation of how the two stimuli in this study —post-content and discount offer —can influence brand attitude through distinct cognitive processes (Miller & Lopez, 2024), potentially leading to variations in the strength and longevity of consumer intentions.

1.1.3. Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, originating from the work of Mehrabian and Russell (1974), provides a psychological framework for understanding how elements in an environment (stimuli) influence a person's internal state (organism), which then drives their outward actions (response). This model has been widely adopted in marketing to explain consumer behavior in both physical stores and digital spaces. These stimuli affect the internal Organism, in this case, the consumer's brand attitude. These internal states then lead to specific Responses, observable behavioral outcomes. In this research, the focal responses are purchasing intention (the plan to buy from the brand) and word-of-mouth (the willingness to share brand-related information with others).

A central tenet of the S-O-R model is that behavior is not an automatic reaction to a stimulus; it is mediated by internal psychological processes (Eroglu et al., 2001). This directly supports the proposed mediating role of brand attitude in this study's framework, suggesting that social media and discounts influence behavior primarily by shaping positive internal attitudes. The model is especially relevant in the context of social media, where stimuli are complex and multidimensional, combining visuals, text, and interactive elements to create a digital environment that influences consumer responses (Kim & Lennon, 2013; Davis & Patel, 2025).

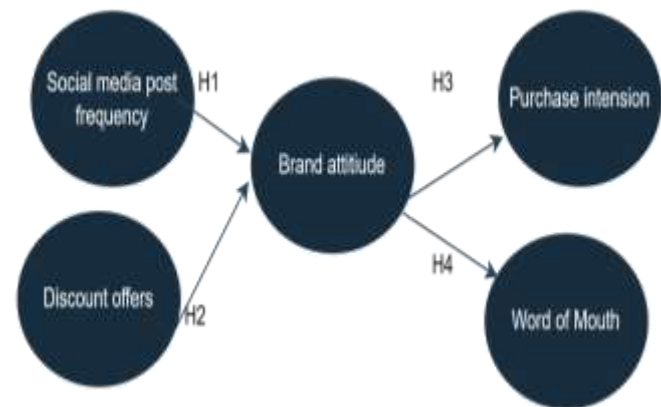


Fig. 1: Hypothesis construction.

1.1.4. Conceptual framework

This model highlights how brand attitude serves as a psychological link between customer behavior and marketing initiatives. Instead of immediately affecting behavior, social media and discount tactics first mold consumers' perceptions of a brand, which in turn influence their decisions to buy from or refer the business to others (See Fig. 1).

1.1.5. Hypothesis construction:

The growing importance of digital marketing has led researchers to pay closer attention to how specific tactics, like social media engagement and discount strategies, influence consumer behavior online. A substantial body of research confirms that the way consumers interact with brands on social media platforms plays a significant role in shaping their perceptions and intentions (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Bilgin, 2018). However, much of the existing work tends to examine these elements separately. There is a need for more research that explores how they work together within a unified framework. Our study aims to address this need by investigating how both social media post frequency and discount offer work in tandem to influence brand attitude. We then examine how this attitude, in turn, affects purchase intention and word-of-mouth. This approach helps bring together insights from

different fields to form a more complete picture of these digital marketing relationships.

1.1.6. Social Media Post Frequency on Brand Attitude

The increasing importance of social media in how brands communicate has sparked significant research on how often brands should post content. At the heart of this discussion is brand attitude, a consumer's overall feeling toward a brand, shaped by both rational and emotional connections (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). How frequently a brand shares content on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, or X (formerly Twitter) is an important part of its digital strategy. However, the relationship between posting frequency and brand attitude is subtle and context-dependent.

Research suggests that posting at an optimal frequency can improve brand attitude by making the brand more visible, memorable, and engaging (de Vries, Gensler, & Leeftang, 2012). When people see consistent, meaningful content from a brand, they tend to become more familiar and develop a sense of trust—key ingredients for positive brand feelings (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). Staying active on social media helps a brand remain top-of-mind, making it easier for consumers to form favorable impressions (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Regular communication can also signal that a brand is professional, transparent, and accessible, which further builds credibility.

That said, posting too often can backfire. When brands overwhelm their audience with content, users may find it intrusive or annoying, leading to frustration or even disengagement (Jung, Kim, & Kim, 2020). This kind of "communication overload" can harm brand attitude, especially if the content feels repetitive or irrelevant. Because of this, the relationship between frequency and attitude isn't straightforward; it often follows a curve. Moderate posting tends to work best, while very high or very low frequency can weaken a brand's appeal (Liu, Karahanna, & Watson, 2011). This is why brands need to carefully plan how often they post to keep their audience interested without overwhelming them.

Content quality also plays a crucial role. According to Tafesse and Wien (2018), posting frequency has a stronger positive effect when the content is entertaining, useful, or tailored to the audience's interests. In other words, posting a lot of low-value content can hurt a brand's image, while even occasional high-quality posts can significantly improve how people feel about the brand. Metrics like likes, comments, and shares also act as signals of social approval, which can further strengthen positive brand attitudes (Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013).

Social media post frequency can shape brand attitude through visibility, engagement, and familiarity, but the relationship is complex. How often a brand should post depends on audience expectations,

platform norms, and most importantly, the value of the content itself. The key takeaway is that balance and consistency matter. Future studies could help refine this understanding by exploring how factors such as industry type (Kim & Park, 2024), audience demographics, and social media algorithms shape what "optimal" frequency looks like across contexts.

H1: Social media post frequency affects brand attitude.

1.1.7. Discount Offers on Brand Attitude

Discount offers have long been a popular marketing strategy for encouraging consumer purchases, especially among price-sensitive shoppers. These promotions, which can include percentage-off deals, "buy-one-get-one" offers, limited-time sales, or loyalty rewards, aim to boost short-term sales. But beyond immediate transactions, discounts also play an essential role in shaping brand attitude, which refers to how a consumer emotionally and rationally evaluates a brand (Keller, 1993).

Research shows that discounts can improve brand attitude by making a product or service seem like a better value (Chandon, Wansink, & Laurent, 2000). When consumers feel they are getting a good deal, they often see the brand as more generous or customer-focused, which can enhance their overall impression. According to Grewal, Monroe, and Krishnan (1998), discounts also provide a sense of "transaction utility," the psychological satisfaction of feeling like a savvy shopper, which can lead to more positive feelings toward the brand. In some cases, discounts can even draw more attention to the brand, helping shoppers form a stronger connection.

That said, the relationship between discounts and brand attitude isn't always positive. If used too often or too heavily, discounts can actually weaken how people view a brand over time (Aaker, 1991). Shoppers might start to doubt the product's quality, assume the brand is always "on sale," or see it as less premium or trustworthy, especially in markets where exclusivity and quality are highly valued (DeVecchio, Henard, & Freling, 2006). In luxury categories, for example, frequent discounting can make a brand appear less prestigious.

How the discount is presented also matters. When discounts feel personalized like a special reward for loyal customers, they're more likely to be seen as genuine and can strengthen positive brand feelings (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). On the other hand, generic or pushy discounts may come across as manipulative, causing shoppers to question the brand's motives. This ties into attribution theory: if consumers believe the brand is offering a discount to thank or reward them, their attitude toward the brand improves. But if they think the brand is just trying to clear old stock or is struggling to sell, the discount could backfire (Lee & Zhang, 2024, Campbell & Diamond, 1990).

H2: Discount Offers have an impact on Brand Attitude

1.1.8. Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention

In consumer behavior research, the relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention is well-established. A person's overall opinion of a brand is reflected in their brand attitude, which is influenced by both emotional and analytical factors (Mitchell & Olson, 1981; Keller, 1993). Conversely, purchase intention describes a person's likelihood of making a future purchase of a good or service from that company (Spears & Singh, 2004). Research continuously demonstrates that consumers are more likely to purchase a brand when they have a favorable opinion of it. Because of this, marketers who want to influence consumer behavior should pay close attention to the connection between attitude and intention.

This relationship is explained in part by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen, 1991). According to these beliefs, a person's intention to act, such as making a purchase, is directly influenced by their attitude toward that action. Practically speaking, people are more likely to intend to purchase a brand they have a favorable opinion of. Customers feel more secure in their brand choice when they have positive attitudes, which in turn raises perceived value and trust (Bagozzi, 1981). This is particularly true when consumers perceive a brand as meaningful, dependable, or high-quality.

Emotional connections also play an essential role. When people feel an emotional bond with a brand, often built through consistent communication, relatable stories, or positive experiences, they are more likely to remain loyal and make repeat purchases (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). In some cases, these emotional ties can be even more influential than practical considerations, particularly when products from different brands seem very similar. This means brand attitude isn't just a rational evaluation, it's also an emotional anchor that guides future behavior.

That said, the strength of the link between attitude and purchase can vary. People who are highly involved with a brand or have had positive past experiences with it are more likely to act on their positive attitudes (MacKenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986). On the other hand, factors like price sensitivity, social influence, or situational barriers can weaken this connection. Brand trust and credibility also help strengthen the relationship between attitude and intention (Erdem & Swait, 2004). For this reason, companies are encouraged not only to build positive attitudes but also to deliver reliable performance and uphold their brand promises.

Research strongly supports the idea that positive brand attitudes increase purchase intention. When supported by emotional resonance, trust, and consistent value, favorable attitudes make people more willing to buy. For brands, maintaining and strengthening these attitudes remains essential for attracting and retaining customers in a competitive marketplace (Kim & Kumar, 2025).

H3: Brand Attitude has an impact on Purchase Intention

1.1.9. Brand attitude with word of mouth

Brand attitude, which reflects a person's overall positive or negative evaluation of a brand, plays a vital role in whether they choose to talk about it with others. Word of mouth (WOM) is the informal sharing of opinions and experiences about products or brands between consumers (Arndt, 1967). When people feel positively about a brand, they are more likely to recommend it. On the other hand, negative feelings can lead to criticism or avoidance. Theories like the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) suggest that strong attitudes, whether positive or negative, motivate people to share their views, either to reinforce their own choices or to influence others.

Research supports this connection. People with positive brand attitudes often become advocates, sharing their experiences online and offline (Keller, 2007). This usually stems from emotional satisfaction, a desire to express their identity, or to signal their values to others (Sweeney, Soutar, & Mazzarol, 2008). When a brand aligns with a person's self-image, they are more likely to speak positively about it. In some cases, consumers integrate beloved brands into their identity and naturally promote them within their social networks (Escalas & Bettman, 2005). This type of organic word of mouth is often viewed as more genuine and influential than traditional advertising.

Positive brand attitudes can lead to both intentional recommendations and unconscious sharing. Some people actively recommend brands to others, while others mention brands they love because of a strong emotional connection (Brown, Barry, Dacin, & Gunst, 2005). With the growth of digital platforms, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) such as reviews, social media posts, and ratings has become especially impactful. Those with strong positive attitudes often act as online ambassadors, defending and promoting the brand in digital spaces (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

The strength and consistency of brand attitude also affect how credible and persuasive word of mouth appears to others. Recommendations from people who are genuinely passionate about a brand are more likely to be trusted (East, Hammond, & Lomax, 2008). In contrast, weak or mixed feelings may lead to unconvincing or inconsistent messages. For this reason, companies looking to stimulate positive word of mouth should focus on building meaningful and lasting emotional connections with their audience.

Brand attitude is a key driver of word of mouth. Brands that foster positive attitudes are more likely to benefit from authentic advocacy — online and offline — which can enhance reputation and attract new customers (Kim & Lee, 2024).

H5: Brand attitude has an impact on word of mouth

1.1.10. Contribution of the Study

By using an integrated approach that demonstrates how these widely utilized strategies interact to influence consumer perceptions and behavior, it fills a pertinent gap in the literature on digital marketing. By integrating well-known frameworks, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior and the S-O-R model, into modern digital environments, the research advances theoretical understanding while also offering marketers sound advice on how to maximize engagement and promotional tactics. This study provides a balanced perspective that can help firms create more efficient, customer-focused digital branding strategies by illustrating how attitudinal responses link marketing actions to behavioral outcomes.

2 MATERIAL AND METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach, specifically a cross-sectional survey, to explore how Sapphire's social media posting frequency and discount offers shape brand attitude on customer experiences, such as purchase intention and word-of-mouth, for this leading Pakistani clothing brand. Quantitative methods work well here because they allow us to test specific hypotheses about relationships among these factors using numerical data, thereby making the findings generalizable (Creswell, 2014). By doing this, we can measure how Sapphire's digital marketing tactics resonate with consumers on a psychological level. We start with existing theory to develop testable predictions, a deductive approach. While focused on Sapphire's unique context, the insights will likely extend to other fashion retailers using similar social media strategies.

2.2. Data collection settings

We focused on people who actively follow and engage with Sapphire's social media accounts, especially Facebook and Instagram. As a top fashion brand in Pakistan, Sapphire thrives online, constantly sharing visual stories, promotions, and new collections with its audience. That's why our study zeroes in on consumers who don't just recognize Sapphire digitally but have actually liked, commented on, or viewed their posts/stories/ads within the past six months. Specifically, we're looking at urban Pakistanis aged 18 to 45, a group that's tech-savvy, style-conscious, and most tuned in to social media marketing in the country's retail scene.

To gain deep insights into how these consumers perceive and respond to Sapphire's strategies, we chose purposive sampling. This means we intentionally invited participants matching our core criteria: age range, city living, and recent engagement with Sapphire's online content. As Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) highlighted, this approach is ideal

when you're not chasing broad generalizations but seeking a rich, focused understanding of a specific group—exactly what we need to gauge how Sapphire's social media moves truly impact their audience.

To gather meaningful insights for this study, we designed a self-administered online survey targeting people who actively follow Sapphire on social media. Since we wanted to understand how tactics such as post frequency, discounts, and product quality shape customer perspectives, we intentionally invited social media-savvy followers who were familiar with Sapphire's brand. This deliberate sampling strategy ensured respondents could honestly express their opinions about the brand and potential future steps. We distributed the survey via Google Forms on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, where Sapphire's audience is active. This digital approach allowed participants to reply at their own pace and effectively targeted urban customers in Pakistan's major cities, including Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad. We tested the questionnaire with 15 participants before launching to make last-minute clarifications and improve any unclear or awkward wording.

Each respondent was made aware of our research objectives from the outset. We guaranteed that all answers would remain anonymous, that no names or contact information would be gathered, and that participation was entirely optional. We cleaned the data by eliminating incomplete entries after collecting 250 valid responses, a substantial number for our statistical modeling approach. SPSS and Amos were then used to evaluate the refined data set to verify its reliability and test our theories.

2.3. Scales and Measurements

To accurately measure our key concepts, we adapted questions from past studies, tailoring them slightly to fit Sapphire's unique context. Every question used a simple 1-to-5 rating scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), a trusted method for gauging consumer feelings since Likert introduced it back in 1932. Here's precisely how we measured each part of our study:

Social Media Post Frequency: We used one straightforward question (adapted from De Vries et al., 2012) asking how often people saw Sapphire's posts on Instagram/Facebook. **Discount Offers:** Three questions (from Chandon's team, 2000) dug into whether discounts felt appealing, offered real value, and sparked buying interest. It's the gap between what customers expect (based on price, brand promises, or past experiences) and what they actually perceive after using the product, whether it's durable, reliable, or visually consistent with marketing claims. **Brand Attitude:** Three items (based on Spears & Singh, 2004) captured overall opinions, emotional connections, and trust toward Sapphire. **Purchase Intention:** Another three questions (adapted from Baker & Churchill, 1977) asked about buying likelihood, repeat purchase plans,

and future consideration. Word of Mouth (WOM): Finally, three items (from Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004) measured if people would recommend Sapphire, speak positively about it, or nudge others to try it. It's not a passive habit, it's conscious repurchase decisions driven by satisfaction, even when alternatives exist.

2.4. Data Analysis Techniques

After collecting all survey responses, we embarked on a meticulous journey to transform raw data into trustworthy insights. Our first step was getting to know the people behind the numbers. Using SPSS, we painted a demographic portrait of our participants — ages, backgrounds, and habits—using simple counts and percentages (See Table 1). This helped us see whose voices shaped our findings.

Next, we rigorously tested our "measuring tools." Like weighing precious items on a scale, we checked whether our survey questions consistently captured each concept. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability scores (all above 0.70) confirmed our scales were dependable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Next came validity checks, where we used HTMT and Fornell-Larcker's techniques (1981) to confirm that while questions on the same topic (such as product quality) clustered tightly together ($AVE > 0.50$; factor loadings > 0.60), questions about different concepts, like brand attitude and word-of-mouth, did not overlap.

Using reliable tools, we used AMOS to map the connections among everything, particularly to see whether brand attitude served as the crucial link between Sapphire's strategies (social media postings, sales, and quality) and consumer behavior (purchases, referrals, and loyalty). We chose Amos because, despite our sample size, it performs well with complex mediator models similar to ours (Hair et al., 2019). Path strengths (β) are calculated to stress-test associations, and only those with p-values less than 0.05 are marked as significant.

3 RESULTS

This section of the study focuses on data collection and analysis, followed by results and a thorough discussion of the appropriateness of the conceptual model proposed here.

3.1. Measurement Model

This construct was operationalized through four reflective items. Respondents indicated their agreement with statements such as: "I am a frequent visitor to this brand's social media pages," and "I often interact with this brand's content (e.g., likes, shares, comments)." Reliability & Validity: The scale showed strong reliability with a CR of 0.89. Convergent validity was supported by an AVE value of 0.62. Purchase Intention —the likelihood of a consumer making a

purchase —was captured using three items. These included: "I would consider buying this brand's products in the future," and "I would actively seek out this brand when I need a product in this category." Reliability & Validity: The CR for this scale was 0.85, and the AVE was 0.60, confirming that the measure is both reliable and valid.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 200)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18–24 years	70	35.0%
	25–34 years	85	42.5%
	35–45 years	45	22.5%
Gender	Male	90	45.0%
	Female	110	55.0%
Income	Below PKR 30,000	30	15.0%
	PKR 30,001–60,000	50	25.0%
	PKR 60,001–100,000	65	32.5%
	Above PKR 100,000	55	27.5%
Education	Intermediate or below	20	10.0%
	Bachelor's degree	110	55.0%
	Master's degree or above	70	35.0%

To establish discriminant validity, the square root of the AVE for each construct (shown diagonally in Table 4) was compared to the inter-construct correlations (off-diagonals). For all constructs, the square root of the AVE was greater than its highest correlation with any other construct, confirming that the constructs are distinct from one another. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) also indicated a good model fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.1$, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.05), supporting the unidimensionality of the measures.

3.2. Convergent Validity

The constructs' internal consistency was confirmed by the composite reliability scores, which exceeded the established cutoff of 0.70 and varied from 0.82 to 0.90 (See Table 2). When combined, these findings provide substantial proof of convergent validity, confirming the measurement model's fit appropriateness for further structural examination (see Table 3).

3.3. Discriminant Validity

Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that each construct's square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) must be greater than its strongest correlation with any other construct. This requirement was met when the study verified that all diagonal values, representing the square roots of AVEs, were greater than the corresponding off-diagonal correlation coefficients.

Table 2: Convergent Validity of Constructs

Variable Name	No. of Items	Factor Loadings (FL)	AVE
Social Media Post Frequency	1	0.77	0.59
Discount Offers	3	0.72 – 0.85	0.62
Brand Attitude	3	0.76 – 0.89	0.69
Purchase Intention	3	0.73 – 0.85	0.66
Word of Mouth	3	0.75 – 0.87	0.70

Table 3: Model Fit Indices:

Model Fits	CFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	RMSEA
CFA	0.94	.911	.949	0.92	0.056

3.4. Hypothesis Testing

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to evaluate the proposed relationships in the research model (see Table 5). According to Hair et al. (2019), this approach works well for exploratory research and for models that incorporate mediating variables, such as brand attitude. Each hypothesis's significance was assessed by examining path coefficients and associated t- and p-values, as well as model fit indices (See Table 6), obtained using a bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples. The suggested correlations between the constructs were empirically supported by paths with a p-value less than 0.05, which were deemed statistically significant.

4 DISCUSSIONS

This study set out to decode the recipe for digital marketing success in Pakistan's vibrant fashion scene. Using Sapphire as our case study, we explored a simple but powerful question: How do everyday actions like social media posts and discount offers actually translate into real-world results like sales and recommendations. The answer, we discovered, lies in a crucial middle step: building a positive brand attitude. Our findings confirm that digital strategies don't just influence behavior directly; they first shape how people *feel* about a brand, and those feelings are what ultimately drive action (Kumar & Gupta, 2016). This aligns with the theory of reasoned action, which posits that attitudes are a

primary antecedent to behavioral intention. Our analysis shows that a regular, reliable social media presence does more than fill a feed; it builds a relationship. When Sapphire posts frequently, it doesn't go unnoticed. It creates a sense of familiarity and keeps the brand top-of-mind for consumers. The key, however, is strategic consistency. It's not about overwhelming the audience, but about providing a steady stream of content that feels relevant and valuable, reinforcing Sapphire's identity as an aspirational yet accessible fashion leader. This strategic approach to content curation is critical for fostering online engagement and building community (Tafesse & Wien, 2018).

While it's no surprise that promotions drive sales, our research found their most excellent power might be in building brand image. Well-timed and attractive discounts are interpreted by consumers as a sign of value and appreciation (Grewal et al., 2020). For Sapphire, a thoughtfully crafted offer doesn't just clear inventory; it makes customers *feel* smarter and more valued, which directly enhances their overall perception of the brand. It's a powerful tool for building long-term favorability, not just short-term revenue. This is the core of our discovery: Positive feelings are the engine of everything. We confirmed that when a consumer holds a favorable view of Sapphire, two critical things happen: A strong brand attitude creates a powerful psychological bridge, making customers much more likely to plan their next purchase (Spears & Singh, 2004).

It's the difference between simply seeing a beautiful outfit and actually intending to buy it. Happy customers don't stay silent. A positive perception is the single most significant predictor of word of mouth. Customers who love the brand become voluntary ambassadors, sharing their enthusiasm with friends and family, effectively amplifying Sapphire's marketing reach for free. This electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is a direct outcome of a strong brand attitude and is a key metric for brand health in digital environments (Ismagilova et al., 2020). Your digital strategy's true value isn't just in impressions or click-through rates. It's in its ability to cultivate a cherished brand attitude. Every post and every promotion is an investment in how your customers feel

Table 4: Table of discriminant validity of study variables.

Constructs	SMPF	DO	BA	PI	WOM
Social Media Post Frequency (SMPF)	0.77				
Discount Offers (DO)	0.45	0.79			
Brand Attitude (BA)	0.42	0.56	0.83		
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.40	0.52	0.68	0.81	
Word of Mouth (WOM)	0.36	0.50	0.66	0.62	0.84

Table 5: Table of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient (β)	T-value	P-value	Result
H1	Social Media Post Frequency $\rightarrow$ Brand Attitude	0.36	4.87	0.000	Supported
H2	Discount Offers $\rightarrow$ Brand Attitude	0.42	6.12	0.000	Supported
H3	Brand Attitude $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention	0.55	8.34	0.000	Supported
H4	Brand Attitude $\rightarrow$ Word of Mouth	0.49	7.45	0.000	Supported

about you. By masterfully combining consistent, high-quality content with strategic value-driven offers, Sapphire isn't just moving products, it's building an emotional legacy that fuels both loyalty and authentic advocacy in Pakistan's competitive fashion landscape.

Table 6: Model fit indices

Model Fits	CFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	RMSEA
SEM	.94	.91	.94	.94	0.056

4.1. Research Implications

4.1.1. Theoretical Implications

This study provides a significant advancement in our understanding of how digital marketing initiatives, such as a business's social media posting frequency and promotional offers, interact to influence consumers' perceptions of a brand and how those perceptions, in turn, shape their purchasing and referral behavior. The study makes the connection between what brands do online and how customers actually think and act clearer by combining these components into a single, cohesive framework. Confirming the crucial significance of brand attitude is one of its main insights. It acts as a vital link, a kind of psychological engine that transforms marketing actions into measurable consumer responses. While this idea has been suggested before, seeing it play out so clearly in the dynamic, fast-moving world of social media adds new depth to theories like the Theory of Planned Behavior, showing once again that attitudes really do predict actions.

What also sets this work apart is its dual focus. Rather than looking at social media posts or discounts in isolation, it explores how they work together, reflecting the real-world ways consumers experience brands. And by focusing on a major fashion label in Pakistan, it grounds these insights in a vibrant, emerging market where digital adoption is changing the rules of retail almost daily. Finally, the study reinforces that positive brand impressions don't just lead to purchases; they also inspire people to become advocates. This echoes broader thinking in relationship marketing: that success in digital spaces isn't just about transactions, it's about building connections that sustain the brand over time.

4.2.2. Practical Implications

This research translates into clear, practical guidance for marketing teams, brand managers, and content creators, especially in the fast-paced world of fashion retail. Here's what you can start doing differently today:

The lesson here isn't to post more, but to post "better". For a brand like Sapphire, maintaining a regular and predictable posting schedule helps you stay visible and top-of-mind without fading into the background. The real magic happens when that consistent flow of content is also highly relevant—beautifully shot, on-brand, and tailored to what your audience genuinely cares about.

Think of each post as a small deposit into your brand's reputation bank; make sure everyone counts. Move beyond seeing promotions as just a quick way to boost sales. Our findings show that a well-crafted discount is actually a powerful tool for building your brand's image. The goal is to make your audience feel valued and smart, not just lucky. Consider limited-time offers, exclusive access for loyal customers, or seasonal sales that feel like an event. Always present these offers with high-quality visuals and messaging that reinforces your brand's premium identity. This turns a simple price cut into a meaningful brand experience.

The most important takeaway is that everything you do should be designed to cultivate a positive brand attitude. This is the engine that drives both sales and powerful word of mouth. When customers feel a strong, positive connection to your brand, they don't just buy, they become your most convincing advocates. Encourage this by making it easy for them to share their experiences through user-generated content, reviews, and social sharing. This approach isn't just about your following quarterly sales report; it's a more innovative, more sustainable strategy for building a beloved brand that people trust, buy from, and enthusiastically recommend to others.

4.2.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this research provides valuable insights into how social media and discounts shape brand perception, it's essential to recognize its limitations to understand the scope of its findings better.

First, the study captured people's opinions at a single moment in time. This means we can see the relationships between variables clearly, but we can't track how feelings like brand attitude might shift over weeks or months. A longer-term study could reveal how consumer loyalty and perceptions change over time with ongoing exposure to marketing efforts.

Second, we relied on people's own reports of their attitudes and behaviors through a survey. While this is a common approach, it has a drawback: respondents may sometimes answer in a way they think is more socially acceptable rather than being completely accurate. In the future, pairing survey responses with real behavioral data, such as purchase history or social media engagement metrics, could strengthen the findings.

Third, this study zoomed in specifically on Sapphire, a popular fashion brand in Pakistan. This focus gives us rich, specific insights, but also means the results may not directly apply to brands in other industries (like tech or food), or even to the same industry in different countries. Expanding this research to other contexts would help show how universal these patterns really are.

Fourth, the participants were selected based on their existing connection to the brand (like being social media followers), rather than being randomly chosen from the general public. This helps us hear from the

right people, but it also means the findings are most relevant to audiences similar to Sapphire's, not necessarily every consumer.

Finally, while brand attitude played a central role in our model, other factors, such as trust, perceived quality, and emotional connection, may also influence how people respond to marketing. Future studies could incorporate these elements to provide a more complete understanding of what drives consumer decisions online.

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