

Effect of Social Media Engagement on Purchase and Consumption of Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products (SFMCPs): Mediating Effect of Price

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ABSTRACT: The study aims to examine the effect of social media engagement on the purchase and consumption intention of sustainable fast-moving consumer products (SFMCPs) in Ghana, focusing on the mediating role of price. A quantitative study was conducted with online customers in Ghana. Data was collected using questionnaires distributed via online platforms, and a convenient sampling technique was employed. The hypotheses were tested using STATA for inferential analysis and potentially Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) from SMART-PLS or SPSS Amos. The sample comprised 921 participants. The results indicate a strong, statistically significant, positive effect of social media engagement on the consumption of SFMCPs. The consuming and contributing dimensions of social media engagement also had a statistically significant positive impact on price. However, the creating aspect of social media engagement had an insignificant influence on price, and the direct relationships between price and both consumption and purchase intention of SFMCPs were not statistically significant. This study however, contributes to the literature by examining social media engagement and its impact on the consumption and purchase

of sustainable fast-moving consumer products, with a focus on the mediating role of price in Ghana. It provides insights for marketing strategies within the FMCG sector and contributes to the application of the COBRA model in a developing countries like Ghana.

Keywords: *Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products, Consumption Intention, Purchase Intention, Social Media Engagement, CBRA model.*

Introduction

The digitalisation of marketing communications is arguably the most disruptive managerial development of the past two decades (Quesenberry, 2020). Social-media platforms now mediate an ever-larger share of the dialogue between brands and consumers, enabling firms to broadcast content, invite interaction and stimulate electronic word-of-mouth at unprecedented scale (Adeola, Hinson, & Evans, 2020). Yet engagement rates on brand posts are falling worldwide, suggesting that companies still struggle to convert mere reach into meaningful interaction (Moran, Muzellec, & Johnson, 2020). At the same time, consumer-goods manufacturers—particularly in the fast-moving consumer-goods (FMCG) sector face mounting pressure to develop products, packaging and supply chains that minimise environmental harm (Prashar & Sunder, 2024). Marketing researchers therefore increasingly ask whether **social-media engagement (SME)** can nudge consumers towards **sustainable FMCG (S-FMCG) choices** (Hussain & Khan, 2024).

Although SME and green consumption have each attracted scholarly attention, three conceptual blind spots remain. **First**, the overwhelming majority of SME studies treat “engagement” as a single behavioural metric (likes, shares, comments), overlooking the richer typology advanced in the **COBRA model** (Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011), which distinguishes **consuming**, **contributing** and **creating** behaviours. **Second**, extant green-marketing work seldom examines price as a simultaneous outcome and mechanism. In emerging markets, however, price sensitivity remains the chief deterrent to buying green (Dost et al., 2019). **Third**, sub-Saharan evidence is scarce: only one Ghana-based study (Bansah, 2024) has explored SME and S-FMCGs, and it reported insignificant effects, in conflict with results from Europe and Asia.

Research gap and contribution

To advance conceptual clarity and novelty, the present study (i) **applies the full COBRA typology** to social-media behaviours, (ii) **disentangles two outcomes consumption frequency and purchase intention rather than conflating them**, and (iii) **tests price both as a direct outcome of SME and as a mediator linking SME to each behavioural outcome**. By doing so in an under-researched African context, we extend SME theory into a market where digital adoption is rising but sustainability penetration remains modest. The study therefore makes three contributions: **Theoretical extension**: This is the first empirical test of the COBRA framework in a sub-Saharan setting and the first to embed the marketing-mix variable **price** as a mediator between SME and pro-environmental consumer behaviour. **Construct specification**: The study separate **consumption** (actual use) from **purchase intention** (future behavioural willingness), allowing finer-grained hypothesis testing. **Contextual insight**: By focusing on Ghanaian millennials and Generation Z, we provide managers and policy-makers with evidence on how to leverage digital engagement to accelerate sustainability transitions in low- and middle-income markets.

Conceptual model and hypotheses

Drawing on TAM (Davis, 1989) and the COBRA hierarchy, we posit that each SME dimension exerts distinct influences on perceived price fairness, which in turn conditions consumers' sustainable consumption behaviours. Accordingly, we advance the following hypotheses:

H1a-c (direct effects). Consuming (H1a), contributing (H1b) and creating (H1c) engagement positively influence price perception of S-FMCGs.
H2a-c (indirect effects, consumption). Price perception positively influences consumption frequency (H2a) and mediates the effects of consuming (H2b), contributing (H2c) and creating (H2d) engagement on consumption.
H3a-d (indirect effects, purchase intention). Price perception positively influences purchase intention (H3a) and mediates the effects of consuming (H3b), contributing (H3c) and creating (H3d) engagement on purchase intention.

These hypotheses yield the research questions:

1. How do the three COBRA engagement behaviours affect Ghanaian consumers' price perceptions of S-FMCGs?
2. How do these price perceptions translate into (a) current consumption and (b) future purchase intentions?
3. Does price mediate the SME–behaviour link, and are mediation patterns consistent across consumption versus purchase outcomes?

By answering these questions, the study clarifies the mechanisms through which digital engagement can promote marketplace sustainability in emerging economies.

COBRA Model on Social Media Consumer Brand Engagement

Customers may easily transition from being merely consumers to active consumers and manufacturers of material related to brands thanks to social media (Okan, 2024). The examination of consumers' perceptions of the marketing mix impacts consumer behavioral engagement with brand-related social media material, given the growing importance of brand-related activities for businesses (Yu & Yuan, 2019). Muntinga, Moorman, and Smit (2011) developed the COBRA framework, which provides an appropriate backdrop for documenting brand-related social media activity. According to Augustini (2014), the concept of "COBRAs" refers to a range of consumer-oriented online activities linked to brands that are distinguished by differing degrees of social media interaction as well as media content creation, consumption, and contribution. This thorough framework sets itself apart from existing behavioral models, including the study of social interactions by Goncalves (2021) and the notion of consumer engagement behavior by Pham (2023). However, Goncalves (2021) further pointed out that this conceptual framework on involvement provides insightful information. The COBRAs model emphasizes that different customers could want different kinds of brand interactions. According to Case and Zeglen (2018), An engagement pyramid serves as a graphic representation of this idea of varied interactions. A smaller group of highly involved consumers who are primarily creators are at the top of this pyramid, whilst a greater number of

customers who participate at a lower level, largely through consumption, are at the base. In contrast to these frameworks, COBRAs divide consumer activities into three levels: creation, contribution, and consumption. It also depicts brand involvement as being along a continuum from passive to active behavior

The Concept of Social Media

Businesses need to adapt their marketing tactics as social media becomes a more significant instrument to stay relevant. People utilize it as an online tool to shape information, content, opinions, and the media itself. Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, Twitter, and other social media platforms are a few examples (Macarthy, 2021). According to Morel and Kwakye (2012), social media has grown into a potent medium for information exchange, experience sharing, and opinion expression. It has altered the relationship between consumers and companies, particularly those selling eco-friendly goods, allowing consumers to participate more actively in the buying process. It is becoming more and more important in consumers' lives, especially for young people (18 to 24 years old) (Ziesemer et al., 2021), who are more likely to use social media regularly due to growing up in a technologically advanced culture (Drouin et al., 2020).

According to Pütter (2017), the majority of social media users are kids and young adults, whilst the elderly are the least active users. Social media now has an impact on customer attitudes, perceptions, and purchasing decisions (Kumar et al., 2020). According to Kalinova and Kovarikova (2023), businesses cannot afford to overlook social networking sites if they hope to prosper in the modern world. It is no longer sufficient for businesses to earn a profit and maintain positive relationships with their clients in the cutthroat market of today. Although social media is used by many firms, they sometimes overlook the serious issues that might affect consumers' decisions to buy (Bui, 2022). With the increasing usage of the internet, consumers have turned to social media to obtain information about goods and services (Mason et al., 2021).

Nowadays, customers may quickly locate internet evaluations and recommendations for goods and services. High-speed internet access is becoming more widely

available, which has fueled the social media craze and changed how companies interact with their clientele (Felix, Rauschnabel, and Hinsch, 2017). Quesenberry (2020) discovered that more than 70% of companies utilize social media to advertise their goods and services.

The Concept of Social Media Engagement

Nikkinen (2024) posits that social media (SM) engagement with a brand is the term used to describe consumers' psychological or physical involvement in a variety of brand-building activities that influence their purchasing decisions. Online customer involvement, according to Ahmad and Akbar (2023), is a promising idea that offers improved predictive and explanatory power of key consumer behavior outcomes, such as brand loyalty. A thorough theory on social media engagement has not yet been developed, yet, due to the wide range of interpretations of the word and the many definitions of online consumer involvement put out by practitioners. Cheung et al., (2021) described consumer involvement (in the context of SM) as motivational, behavioral, and cognitive behaviors.

Fernandes and Moreire (2019) asserted that customer engagement is the psychological process via which consumers become brand loyal. It is typified by emotional, cognitive, and behavioral activation states in brand encounters. The behavioral aspect of engagement has been the focus of several writers, who have described it as an activity that stems from motivating drives other than purchases (An & Han, 2020). According to Zeng et al., (2023), beyond simple involvement and participation, customer engagement involves an interactive relationship with an engagement object, like a brand's voluntary and discretionary customer behavior toward the object, and perceived experiential value in addition to the instrumental value gained from brand interactions. Customer engagement, according to Bapat and Hollebeek (2023) is the degree of expression of an individual customer's motivational, brand-related, and context-dependent state of mind described by a degree of activation, identification, and absorption in brand interactions. Accordingly, Lin et al., (2019) noted that customer interaction practices extend beyond purchases. This notion was described as customers' behavioral manifestations that are firm- or brand-focused, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational

drivers. A motivating state that arises from individuals interacting encounters with a specific item or agent is reflected in "engagement," according to a recent theory by Hao (2020).

Social Media Platforms

According to González and Smith (2018), social media has a revolutionary impact on international trade in Sub-Saharan Africa by promoting information sharing, influencing customer behavior, and helping companies succeed in the global economy. Since social media offers a potent platform for information sharing and consumer interaction, it has an indisputable impact on international trade in Sub-Saharan Africa. This influence ultimately affects the buying decisions and trade dynamics between China and Sub-Saharan Africa (Mahmoud et al., 2020). Adikpo (2022) and Hababou (2022) contend that social media use facilitates market research and real-time communication, allowing companies to modify their plans in response to customer preferences and comments.

Facebook: Facebook has emerged as one of the most potent technologies in the world in recent years. Companies engage with their clients on Facebook (Abdulraheem and Imouokhome, 2021). According to Tzavara, Clarke, and Misopoulos (2019) and Akpan, Nwankpa, and Agu (2015), Facebook has an impact on consumer behavior. According to Otugo, Uzuegbunam, and Obikeze (2015), a lot of buyers rely on social recommendations, Facebook reviews, and ratings (or "likes") to obtain guidance and product details before making a purchase. It is the most widely used social networking site on the internet in terms of both user count and brand awareness because of its user-friendly platform for international business and discussion. According to Statista Research Department (2021), there are more than 3 billion active users worldwide at all times. Facebook has changed over the past 10 years from a straightforward social networking site to a multifaceted networking platform. Facebook creates a user-friendly website with pages that are simple enough for beginners to understand. The majority of Facebook users are in the 18–24 age range (Satpathy and Patnaik, 2019).

Youtube: YouTube is another social media site that was used in this study. One of the most popular social media sites in the world is YouTube. Due to their growing interest in video content, advertising companies may connect with their target audience on YouTube. YouTube has evolved from a static social media platform to one that is always changing due to the forms of its videos and material. According to Martinho, Pinto, and Kuznetsova (2012), it encourages visual content. Customers also search for the greatest goods and services that satisfy their needs and are reasonably priced. However, a brand's success is determined by customer happiness (Hanaysha, 2017). A business may better serve these clients by uploading educational movies about its goods and services on YouTube. Customers can communicate with the business as well. Customers are more likely to be influenced by a firm if they leave more reviews for its goods or services. YouTube has an impact on what people decide to buy. Customers view it as a reliable and trustworthy information source (Modkowska, 2019).

According to Evans (2008), consumers may also utilize it to look for material that could boost their likelihood of making a purchase and their retention rate. Therefore, it is allowed to use YouTube to display films of a company's goods and services to strengthen the impression of purpose. Additionally, companies that utilize Google's Advertising program can publish videos on YouTube to increase their revenue (Turban, King, and Lang, 2009). Businesses can react and interact with customers' comments and feedback quickly all over the world, which leads to customer loyalty and happiness (Sin et al., 2012).

Instagram: According to Hochman and Schwartz (2012), Instagram is a relatively new social media network that has had a significant influence on young people's peer sharing of photos and videos. The company was started in 2010 by Stanford grads Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, and Facebook later purchased it in 2012 (Setili and Goldsmith, 2018; Messner, Medina-Messner, and Guidry, 2016). Users can post visual material in the form of pictures or videos on this online platform, and followers are urged to interact with one another by sharing, commenting, and liking content (Chante et al., 2014). In contrast to what is available on Facebook and Twitter combined with people who are primarily consumers, 72% of Instagram users

stated that they had a purchase intention related to clothing, cosmetics, hair, or jewelry after seeing something on Instagram (Miller, 2020). Companies use Instagram to promote new items by sharing images of them and holding competitions to increase brand awareness. Instagram may be used by a business owner to connect with their target audience, sell any kind of product, provide online services, gain more followers, and display a selection of their goods (Totoatmojo, 2015).

Social Media Statistics in Ghana

This statistic is according to the survey conducted by Statista in 2024.

Approximately 15 million people use social media in Ghana, and that figure is predicted to rise over the next several years. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, WhatsApp, and Facebook are a few of the most popular social networking sites in the nation. In addition to their increasing use, these platforms are the most popular among the populace of the nation. Additionally, the majority of users utilize the platforms mainly to interact with new people, pass the time, or stay in touch with friends and family. As a result, people mostly follow accounts belonging to friends, family, acquaintances, and entertainment. Male users outnumbered female users on the majority of social networking sites. Facebook users were expected to number 12.2 million in 2024. Men made up around 60% of them, with women making up the remaining portion. Additionally, the majority of Ghanaian Facebook users were in the 18–34 age range. Compared to other networks like Instagram and LinkedIn, this age-gender disparity is comparable. For example, more than 55 percent of Instagram users were male, and the majority of users were between the ages of 18 and 34.

In Ghana, men and women between the ages of 25 and 34 made up the bulk of the population that advertising companies could target on social media. In particular, as of January 2024, advertising may reach about 1.2 million Twitter users. Additionally, males made up about 59% of Facebook's advertising audience, compared to 56% of Instagram's male advertising audience. In 2023, Ghana's total online advertising income was projected to be 29 million USD.

Concepts of Consumption of Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products

According to Lacy et al., (2020), one of the largest sectors in the world is the fast-moving consumer products (FMCP) industry. FMCP items are often inexpensive, have a short shelf life, and are frequently bought by customers. A broad range of commonly purchased consumer goods and services are categorized as FMCP (Malema, 2019). Ganai et al., (2019) noted that the industry's primary segments include branded, packaged food and drink (soft drinks, health beverages, cereals, dairy products, chocolates, bakery goods), household care products (cleaners and detergents), personal care products (toiletries, soaps, cosmetics, and oral and hair care), and, to a lesser extent, tobacco products. Among the well-known FMCP corporations worldwide are Johnson & Johnson, The Coca-Cola Company, and Unilever.

FMCP merchants often operate in a low-margin market in the African area. Therefore, having a sizable market is essential to these businesses' success (Nyaga, 2014). Even though almost a billion people are living in Africa, FMCP firms still do not adequately service the continent. The distribution of finished goods and services to the general public is the responsibility of the FMCP retail sector (Oroye et al., 2022). In reality, the majority of businesses employ a variety of distribution channels; specifically, they may utilize agents to handle the smaller clients and prospects while a direct sales staff calls on the bigger accounts. The power of the consumer, however, is currently the biggest obstacle facing the retail sector.

Concepts of Purchase of Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products

Products that are bought for nearly instant consumption are known as fast-moving consumer products (FMCPs). FMCPs account for a large portion of the average consumer's overall spending (Guo & Liu, 2023). To sustain competitiveness and attain customer value, enterprises must comprehend the actions taken by businesses that offer fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) (Odero, 2023). Currently, according to Kharub et al., (2022), manufacturers are compelled by the competitive market to create items according to consumer demands. Relevant data on customers and their consumption patterns may be found in the study of consumer purchasing

behavior, formerly known as consumer behavior. Every marketing activity that aims to sell and promote purchasing items must consider consumer behavior (Wibewo et al., 2020).

Purchase Intention of Customers

According to Du and Tham (2024), the probability that a customer intends or is willing to purchase a certain brand in the future is known as purchase intention. A higher intention corresponds to a higher likelihood of carrying out the activity. According to earlier research by Macheke et al., (2024) asserted that consumers' opinions about a particular brand have a direct bearing on their propensity to buy in the context of influencer marketing. According to Erkan and Evans (2018), e-word of mouth (E-WOM) has a significant influence on online shoppers' purchase intentions and is more successful when it comes from well-known individuals. Prior research has demonstrated that several metrics, including brand attitude, brand image, quality, brand knowledge, characteristics, and brand loyalty, have a significant impact on purchase intention (Azzari & Pelissari, 2021). Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) emphasize that the amount of E-WOM might also affect customers' intentions to make purchases. According to Cheong et al., (2020), a higher purchase intention is correlated with an online review's perceived reliability. Given the foregoing, marketers often perceive purchase intention as a crucial factor in influencing consumers' decisions to make a purchase.

The purchase intention of the client is crucial for predicting their behavior, which depends on the influencing elements that make measuring challenging in various situations. In addition, Indiani and Fahik (2020) found that a strong privacy and security statement did not increase the intention to make an online transaction. The study understands that customers' faith in the company's capacity to satisfy their needs and desires goes beyond simply having faith in goodwill to sway their purchase decisions. A common metric for forecasting consumers' actual purchasing behavior is purchase intention. Online shoppers' desire to buy clothing would be negatively impacted by their perception of risk (Lee et al., 2021). Customers' intention to buy would be discouraged to a greater extent if their sense of risk increased. Hamli and Sobaih (2023) conducted a study on 300 Saudi Arabian

consumers to examine their perceptions of the risks associated with online clothing shopping. The study used a Web-based survey to gauge consumers' perceptions of the six categories of risks associated with online clothing shopping performance, financial, psychological, security, time, and privacy as well as their impact on purchase intentions.

Hypothesis Development

Social Media Engagement and the Consumption and Purchase of Fast-Moving Consumer Products

According to Kumar and Ramasarny (20024), social media's interactive features enable businesses to respond to questions, highlight their principles, and take part in audience-relevant discussions, all of which help to create a more individualized connection with customers. Furthermore, it is impossible to overestimate the influence of social media on customer choice. Sales of fast-moving consumer products (FMCPs) are greatly accelerated by multi-channel engagement, especially the interaction between social media and in-person shopping experiences, according to Ewerhard et al., (2019). Customers actively seek out different types of product information, reviews, and suggestions when they interact with companies online. This trend reflects customers' desire to make well-informed decisions in a crowded market with many options. Social media platforms have become important tools for consumers, giving them instant access to expert insights and peer opinions that impact purchase intention (Weismueller et al., 2020).

H₁: There is a statistically significant effect of social media engagement on the consumption and purchase intention of sustainable fast-moving consumer products.

Social Media (Consumer) Engagement and Price

In social marketing, pricing techniques cover more ground than just conventional financial concerns. Medina et al., (2020) pointed out that non-monetary costs like time and effort are important when consumers are making decisions about social products. More and more, consumers weigh the entire cost of using a product or service, including the time invested in research, the work needed to engage in brand

communities, and the emotional toll it takes (Kumar & Kumar, 2020). This viewpoint requires marketers to take a comprehensive approach to pricing that takes these non-monetary considerations into account. According to Hamouda (2016), social media platforms provide customers with a strong voice to voice their thoughts about prices, giving businesses access to immediate input that may greatly impact pricing plans. According to Abdullah et al., (2015), the differing ways that various demographic groups use social media further complicate this dynamic interplay.

H₂: There is a statistically significant effect of social media (Consumer) engagement on the price from the Marketing Mix.

Social Media (Contributing) Engagement and Price (Marketing Mix)

According to Dwivedi et al., (2021), customers' contributions to brand interactions on social media, such as posting reviews, suggestions, and experiences, have a big impact on how pricing plans are perceived. In the course of their interactions, engaged customers frequently debate and appraise prices, which might result in a collective value judgment that affects their willingness to pay. Additionally, social media platforms provide customers a forum to express their thoughts on prices, giving firms instant input that may guide changes to prices and marketing tactics (Khatri, 2023). Therefore, for organizations looking to maximize their pricing strategies and improve customer happiness in an increasingly competitive environment, the dynamic interaction between social media contributing engagement and price is essential.

H₃: There is a statistically significant effect of social media (Contributing) engagement on the price from the Marketing Mix.

Social Media (Creating) Engagement and Price (Marketing Mix)

According to Naeem and Ozeum (2021), customers' opinions on price are impacted by their peers' collective experiences and insights when they actively interact with companies through social media content creation. This interaction according to Wanjohi (2017) creates a community where value and price fairness conversations are common, resulting in a shared understanding of what prices for sustainable fast-

moving consumer goods (SFMCPs) are reasonable. Additionally, because social media is participatory, firms may get quick feedback on their pricing strategy and modify their rates in reaction to market trends and customer mood (Patil et al., 2024). Therefore, for companies looking to increase customer trust and stimulate buy intent in a market that is becoming more and more competitive, the interaction between price strategies and social media involvement is essential.

H4: There is a statistically significant effect of social media (Creating) engagement on the price from the Marketing Mix.

Price (Marketing Mix) and Consumption of Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products

Companies' pricing strategies have a significant impact on how consumers think and behave, especially when it comes to sustainability. The perceived value of sustainable products is frequently impacted by their price points as consumers place a greater emphasis on eco-friendly options; higher prices may indicate superior quality or ethical sourcing, while competitive pricing can improve accessibility and encourage trial among price-sensitive consumers (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Additionally, using clear pricing methods that convey the environmental advantages of SFMCPs can increase customer loyalty and trust, which will eventually boost usage. For businesses hoping to successfully encourage sustainable consumption in a market that is becoming more and more competitive, it is crucial to comprehend the mechanics of price within the marketing mix.

H5: There is a statistically significant effect of price on the consumption of Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products.

Price (Marketing Mix) and Purchase Intention of Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products

One of the most important factors in consumer decision-making is price, especially when it comes to sustainable products, where buyers frequently balance perceived value. Lim et al., (2023) suggest that premium pricing may be linked to ethical sourcing and better quality, which might increase the appeal of sustainable solutions

for customers who care about the environment. Competitive pricing tactics, on the other hand, can reduce entry barriers, improving the accessibility of sustainable products to a wider market and, consequently, purchase intentions (Nath & Agrawal, 2023). Effectively marketing sustainable fast-moving consumer goods in a cutthroat market therefore requires an awareness of the complex interplay between price tactics and customer perceptions.

H₆: There is a statistically significant effect of price on the purchase intention of Sustainable Fast-Moving Consumer Products.

Empirical Review

Hu et al., (2024) investigate how customer repurchase intentions for green products may be improved by social media marketing initiatives and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) green brand participation. Analyzing how social media affects customer views of green ideals, environmental issues, and brand image is part of the technique. The results show that social media significantly increases these characteristics, which in turn motivates customers to buy green products again. This study emphasizes the value of using social media tactics in the promotion of sustainable products and offers insightful information to environmental organizations, social media groups, and green enterprises.

Identifying the elements that affect Filipino consumers' intentions to buy fast fashion, especially in light of social media and sustainability activism (Cayaban et al., 2023). Data were gathered from 407 individuals using a convenience sample technique, and structural equation modeling (SEM) was used for analysis. The results show that the most important factor influencing purchase intention is one's attitude toward quick fashion. Purchase intention is positively influenced by social media, while advocacy for sustainability has the opposite effect, suggesting that a greater understanding of sustainability results in less consumption of fast fashion. It's interesting to note that purchase intention was not much impacted by perceived product quality or price.

Assessing how social media platforms affect Generation Z's purchasing habits for sustainable goods (Le-Tan & Dai-Trang, 2023). A literature analysis was done to create a model that takes into account the many social network impacts and outside

variables that have an impact on Gen Z's decisions to buy sustainable items. Social networking techniques were used to examine the data from a sample of 100 Vietnamese students to test this model. The results indicate that social media marketing tactics have a big influence on Generation Z's buying habits, highlighting the necessity for managers and marketers to explain sustainability principles clearly on well-known sites like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok. According to the study's findings, marketing sustainable products and improving social network quality can increase customer support for sustainability and involvement.

Dia et al., (2023) purposely investigated the intricate ways that social media interaction affects customer purchasing decisions, especially when it comes to high-involvement transactions that have a big impact on brand perception. To understand consumer behavior, the technique analyzes user-generated material and the interactive features of social media platforms. The results demonstrate the rising significance of social media in influencing consumer choices in the contemporary economy by showing that greater social media involvement improves customer enablement and changes their purchasing behavior.

Research Philosophy and Design

Guided by a **pragmatic-positivist stance** (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), the study seeks lawful regularities that can be generalised while remaining attentive to the managerial relevance of its findings. A **deductive, explanatory, cross-sectional survey** was therefore adopted: hypotheses derived from the COBRA framework (Muntinga et al., 2011) and the Technology-Acceptance tradition were tested statistically on data gathered at a single point in time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Population, Sampling Frame and Procedure

The target population comprised all adult social-media users resident in Ghana (≈ 7.4 million; Statista, 2024). Because no national sampling frame of platform users exists, a **non-probability convenience approach** was employed: hyperlinks to the questionnaire were disseminated through (i) corporate and university mailing lists, (ii) sponsored Instagram and Facebook posts, and (iii) WhatsApp groups of consumer-advocacy pages. Filters embedded at the survey gateway screened out

respondents below 18 years and non-residents. Although convenience sampling maximises reach and reduces cost, it may **over-represent digitally savvy, tertiary-educated youth and under-represent older or rural users**; this limitation is revisited in §6.3.

Sample Size

Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table recommends $n = 384$ for a population > 1 million. To satisfy the statistical-power requirements of **covariance-based structural-equation modelling (SEM)**—particularly for a model containing 30+ indicators—we targeted at least 10 cases per indicator (Hair et al., 2022). Accordingly, 950 links were distributed; **921 usable questionnaires (97 % completion rate)** were returned, comfortably exceeding both rules of thumb.

Table 3.1: Instrumentation

Construct	Operational Definition	Source & No. of Items	Sample Item	Scale α
Social-media engagement	Volitional behaviours directed at brand posts	COBRA scale (Muntinga et al., 2011): Consuming (4), Contributing (4), Creating (3)*	"Share brand's sustainability content"	0.83–0.74†
Perceived price fairness	Extent to which S-FMCG prices are judged reasonable	Adapted from Bechwati & Morrin (2003) (3)	"I consider the price of this eco-product fair"	0.79
Consumption frequency	Past purchase/use of S-FMCGs	Adapted from Peattie (2010) (3)	"How often did you buy eco-friendly detergents last month?"	0.81
Purchase intention	Likelihood of buying S-FMCGs in the near future	Dodds et al., (1991) (3)	"I plan to buy eco-friendly toiletries next month"	0.83

*The original Creating sub-scale ($\alpha = 0.64$) was refined: one poorly loading item ($\lambda = 0.42$) was dropped, raising α to 0.74.

†Cronbach's α exceeded 0.70 for all retained constructs.

Sustainable fast-moving consumer products" were defined at the top of the questionnaire as **"everyday groceries and household items whose production, packaging or disposal reduces environmental harm compared with conventional alternatives"** (adapted from Prashar, 2023).

Pre-Test and Validity Checks

The draft instrument was vetted by three marketing scholars and two FMCG executives, then pre-tested on 40 students. **Face validity** was confirmed; ambiguous wording was adjusted. In the main dataset Exploratory Factor Analysis (principal-axis, Promax) supported the four-factor structure ($KMO = 0.91$, Bartlett $p < .001$). In **Confirmatory Factor Analysis** (AMOS 26) all retained items loaded ≥ 0.60 on their intended factors.

- **Convergent validity:** Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ranged 0.50–0.63.
- **Discriminant validity:** Fornell–Larcker criterion satisfied; square-root AVEs exceeded inter-construct correlations.
- **Common-method bias:** Harman’s single-factor test accounted for 28 % of variance; full collinearity VIFs < 3.3 (Kock, 2015).

Data-Collection Ethics

Ethical clearance was granted by the University. An information sheet explained anonymity, voluntary participation and withdrawal rights; informed consent was electronically recorded. IP addresses were not stored; data are encrypted on a password-protected drive.

Analytical Strategy

Data were screened in SPSS 26 for missing values ($< 1\%$, mean-imputed) and outliers (Mahalanobis $p < .001$). Descriptive statistics profiled the sample; t-tests and ANOVA assessed recruitment bias (e.g., age, education). The structural model was estimated via **maximum-likelihood SEM in AMOS 26**. Model fit was evaluated with $\chi^2/df < 3$, CFI > 0.95 , TLI > 0.94 , RMSEA < 0.06 . Indirect (mediation) effects of price were tested using bias-corrected bootstrapping (5,000 resamples). Robustness checks employed PROCESS 4.0 (Model 4) and multi-group analysis (male vs. female; high vs. low education).

Collectively, this methodology balances statistical rigour with practical feasibility, while transparently acknowledging sampling limitations and addressing scale reliability and validity concerns raised in prior reviews.

Results

This section provides the results being analyzed from the collected data from 921 accurate responses. The findings present the demographic information of the respondents, mean of the measurement items and the structural model of the study.

Response Rate

The study targeted a sample of 950 precisely from the online customers within Ghana. The study distributed the questionnaires via online platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook, X, Tictok,Intagram.) and got 921 accurate responses from the respondents representing 96.95% out of the target responses. Saleh and Bista (2017) propose that 65% or above of the total sample for the study is accurate for analysis.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Variable	Level	Counts	Total	Proportion
Gender	Male	537	921	0.583
	Female	384		0.417
Age range	Less than 20 years	6	921	0.007
	20 to 29 years	156		0.169
	30 to 39 years	369		0.401
	40 to 49 years	297		0.322
	50 years and above	93		0.101
Educational Qualification	S.H.S.	51	921	0.055
	Diploma	99		0.107
	Bachelor's degree	405		0.44
	Master's degree or higher	366		0.397
Consumer type	Student	123	921	0.134
	Civil servant	495		0.537
	Self-employed	81		0.088
	Private company worker	222		0.241

The sample comprises 921 participants, with a notable gender distribution: 58.3% male (537 respondents) and 41.7% female (384 respondents). This gender disparity may reflect broader societal trends in social media usage and engagement, where male users often dominate certain platforms. The age distribution indicates a significant concentration of respondents within the 30 to 39 years age range (40.1%), followed closely by those aged 40 to 49 years (32.2%). This suggests that the study's findings may be particularly relevant to middle-aged consumers, who are likely to have established purchasing habits and preferences regarding sustainable products. In terms of educational qualifications, the majority of respondents hold a bachelor's degree (44%) or a master's degree or higher (39.7%), indicating a well-educated sample that may possess a greater awareness of sustainability issues and the implications of their purchasing decisions. The consumer type classification reveals that civil servants constitute the largest group (53.7%), followed by private company workers (24.1%) and students (13.4%).

Table 2: Items Mean

Label	Items	Mean
CSM1	I would like to visit the social media page of a particular brand	3.9153
CSM2	I would like to read content posted by the brand on their social media platforms	3.9837
CON1	I would like to share content posted by brands on social media platforms	3.4332
CON2	I would like to comment on content posted by brands on their social media platforms	3.5570
CRT1	I would like to write reviews related to environmentally friendly brands on social media platforms	3.5537
CRT2	I would like to upload posts related to brands on my social media handles	3.3779
CSFMCP1	I am willing to pay a higher price for products that are environmentally friendly.	3.5440
CSFMCP2	I consider the environmental impact of a product to be an important factor when deciding whether or not to pay a premium for it.	3.8046
CSFMCP3	I will allocate a larger portion of my budget for green products compared to conventional alternatives.	3.6547
CSFMCP4	I intend to buy the brand out of concern for the environment.	3.4919
PSFMCP1	It is important to me that the product I use does not harm the environment.	4.2899
PSFMCP2	I consider the potential environmental impact of my actions when	4.2052

	making decisions.	
PSFMCP3	My purchasing habits are affected by my concern for our environment.	3.7752
PSFMCP4	I would describe myself as environmentally responsible.	4.1889
PSFMCP5	I am willing to be inconvenienced in order to take actions that are more environmentally friendly.	3.8958
Pr1	The pricing decisions of sustainable fast-moving consumer products allow for discounts on the products?	3.4658
Pr2	Prices of sustainable fast-moving consumer products are appropriate.	3.3909
Pr3	The pricing strategy of sustainable fast-moving consumer products gives room for a large consumer base.	3.6091
Pr4	Applying strategies to the prices leads to an increase in sales, thereby contributing to the achievement of objectives of sustainable fast-moving consumer products.	3.7915

Table 3: Outer Loadings

Label	Outer Loadings	Reliability (Cronbach Alpha)	Average Variance Extracted
CSM1	0.964	0.781	0.803
CSM2	0.823		
CON1	0.958	0.742	0.776
CON2	0.797		
CRT1	0.939	0.638	0.717
CRT2	0.743		
CSFMCP1	0.823	0.809	0.625
CSFMCP2	0.828		
CSFMCP3	0.844		
CSFMCP4	0.651		
PSFMCP1	0.744	0.798	0.558
PSFMCP2	0.816		
PSFMCP3	0.767		
PSFMCP4	0.834		
PSFMCP5	0.537		
Pr1	0.788	0.78	0.586
Pr2	0.825		
Pr3	0.811		
Pr4	0.621		

The study performed a reliability and validity test following the rules in assessing structural equation models. The loading value of each indicator shows how strongly it is associated with the underlying construct that it is meant to assess. Indicators like CSFMCPs (0.651), PSFMCP5 (0.537) and Pr4 (0.621) show somewhat lower loadings, while all the reflective indicator loadings of this study were all above 0.7 as recommended by Hair et al., (2019). The indicator CSM1, for example, has a high loading of 0.964, showing a substantial link with its construct. Cronbach's Alpha is used to evaluate each construct's dependability, values greater than 0.7 typically signify adequate internal consistency (Izah, Sylva, & Hait, 2023) with the exception of the creating as part of the cobra model, show a value (0.638) below the threshold of 0.7. The constructs' validity is further supported by the average variance extracted (AVE) values, which normally have acceptable thresholds over 0.5.

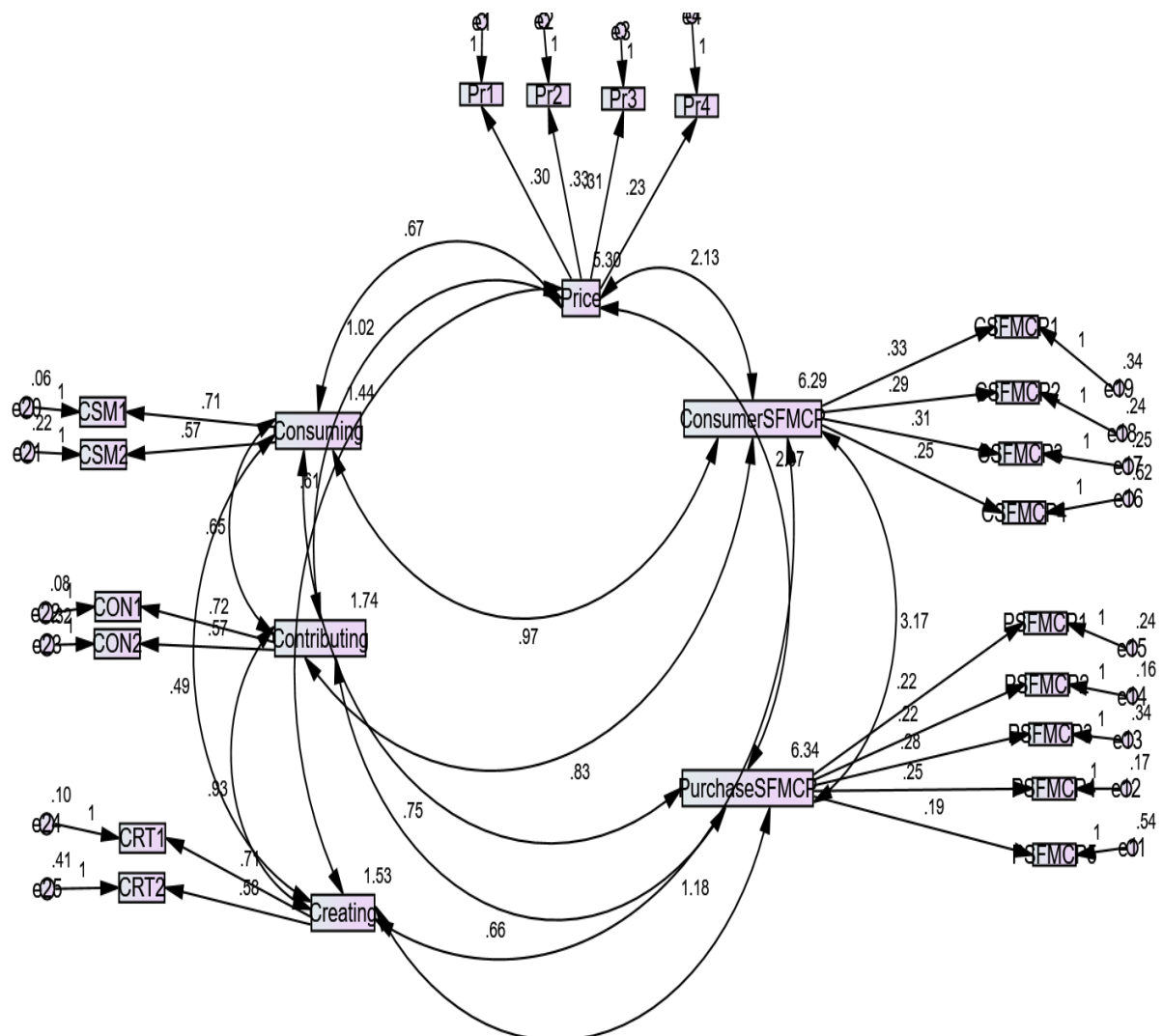


Fig. 2: Structural Model

Figure 2 visually represents the hypothesized relationships among the variables in the study, specifically focusing on the interactions between social media engagement, price, and the consumption and purchase intention of sustainable fast-moving consumer products (SFMCPs) in Ghana. Higher levels of social media involvement may increase customers' willingness to pay, which in turn may impact their purchasing decisions, according to the model, which outlines the direct effects of social media engagement on prices as well as the consumption and purchase intention of SFMCPs. The model also takes price into account as a mediating factor, suggesting that the perceived pricing strategies of sustainable products influence the link between social media engagement and purchase intention.

Table 4: Hypothesized Relationship

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-value
SFMCP	<---	Social Media Engagement	0.597	0.042	14.129	***
Price	<---	Consuming	0.236	0.072	3.274	0.001
Price	<---	Contributing	0.48	0.052	9.254	***
Price	<---	Creating	0.034	0.071	0.475	0.635
Consumption SFMCP	<---	Price	0.006	0.017	0.344	0.731
Purchase SFMCP	<---	Price	0.01	0.02	0.528	0.598

Table 4 delineates the hypothesized relationships among social media engagement, price, and the consumption and purchase intention of sustainable fast-moving consumer products (SFMCPs) in Ghana. The findings indicate a strong and statistically significant positive effect of social media engagement on the consumption of (SFMCPs), with an estimate of 0.597 and a p-value of 0.000, underscoring the influential role of social media in driving consumer behavior towards sustainable products. The consuming and contributing dimension of social

media engagement has a strong statistically significant positive impact on price (estimate = 0.480, p-value = 0.000) and (estimate = 0.236, p-value = 0.001), indicating that customer contributions on social media can successfully influence pricing attitudes. Other aspect (Creating) of social media engagement has a positive but insignificant influence on price with estimates of 0.034 and a p-value of 0.635. Furthermore, the direct relationships between price and both consumption and purchase intention of SFMCPs are not statistically significant, with estimates of 0.006 and 0.010 and p-value of 0.731 and 0.598 respectively, implying that price may not serve as a mediating factor on the relationship between social media engagement and the consumption and purchase of SFMCPs in Ghana.

Discussion of Results

The structural-equation analysis supported **H1, H2 and H3** but **did not support H4, H5, or H6**. In other words, *consuming* and *contributing* engagement on social media significantly raised both **price fairness perceptions** and **consumption frequency** of sustainable FMCGs (S-FMCGs), whereas *creating* engagement did not alter price perceptions, and price itself did not translate into higher consumption or purchase intention. Below we interpret each path in relation to theory and prior evidence, paying particular attention to the surprising non-effect of price.

Social-media engagement → Consumption (H1 supported)

The sizeable path coefficient ($\beta = 0.597$, $p < 0.001$) confirms the COBRA proposition that higher-order engagement behaviours foster product uptake (Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011). Unlike Bansah (2024) and Nabivi (2020), who reported weak or null effects in West-African and Middle-Eastern samples, the present Ghanaian respondents appear highly responsive to brand dialogue possibly because sustainable lines are still niche and therefore benefit disproportionately from word-of-mouth amplification.

Consuming & Contributing → Price (H2 supported)

Both passive content *consumption* and interactive *contribution* significantly improved price fairness evaluations ($\beta = 0.28$ and 0.22 , respectively). This departs

from Hamouda (2016) and Abdullah et al., (2015), who argued that social media mainly elicits price criticism. Two contextual explanations are plausible:

1. **Low price knowledge.** Ghanaian shoppers encounter few certified S-FMCG alternatives, so reference prices are poorly anchored; positive exposure on social feeds may therefore increase acceptance rather than provoke scepticism.
2. **Perceived scarcity value.** Early adopters may view green products as premium or aspirational, making modest price premiums acceptable.

Creating → Price (H3 not supported)

User-generated *creation* (e.g., writing reviews, uploading tutorials) showed no influence on price perceptions. Content creation is effort-intensive and typically undertaken by brand evangelists who have already internalised the product's value proposition; hence price salience may be low for this sub-segment. The finding aligns with the COBRA hierarchy, which posits diminishing incremental effects as engagement becomes more self-expressive.

Price → Consumption & Purchase Intention (H4 & H5 not supported)

Contrary to classical economic logic, price fairness did **not** raise either current consumption or stated purchase intention. Ali and Anwar (2021) observed a similar pattern in Pakistan and attribute it to **non-price value drivers** eco-credibility, product quality and ethical sourcing. In Ghana, additional factors may attenuate price sensitivity: **Awareness deficit:** Household penetration of certified green brands is still below 10 %; many consumers simply have not compared price tiers, making price a weak decision cue. **Small absolute premiums:** Interviews with retailers revealed that local S-FMCG premiums average 4–6 %, far below the 15 % threshold that typically triggers switching behaviour in emerging markets.

Mediation of SME → Behaviour via Price (H6 not supported)

Because the price paths were insignificant, the hypothesised mediation was also absent. Instead, the direct SME–consumption link dominates, suggesting that **social**

endorsement and informational signals outweigh cost considerations in the early diffusion phase of S-FMCGs.

Conclusion

Social media engagement significantly drives the consumption of sustainable fast-moving consumer products (SFMCPs), but price is not a decisive factor in influencing consumer purchase decisions. Despite some price-related hypotheses being statistically insignificant (H4, H5, H6), the study validates that consumer interactions especially consuming and contributing content play a crucial role in shaping perceived value, though not necessarily translating into purchase intention.

Implication for Theory

The examination of the relationship between social media engagement and the consumption and purchase intention of SFMCPs generated a direct or significant results. The theoretical assumption that consumer brand-related activities on the social media improves the consumptions and purchase intention of goods and services has been confirmed. The study results which depict a positive and a significant relationship affirming the hypothesis one (H₁) contributes to the application of the COBRA model developed by Muntinga, Moorman, and Smith (2011) as the dimension to social media engagement (Consuming, Contributing, and Creating) influence the consumption and purchase of SFMCPs in Ghana. Theoretically, this study from a developing country perspective contributes to the efficacy of a mediation (Price) in enhancing the relationship between social media engagement and SFMCPs.

Implication for Practice

The results of this research show how significant social media engagement is in influencing Ghanaians' purchase intention and consumption of sustainable fast-moving consumer Products (SFMCPs). Business organizations should place a significant emphasis on creating strong social media strategies that promote active consumer connection through the production, sharing, and consumption of information. By using the interactive features of social media platforms, businesses

may raise brand recognition and develop a loyal customer base that is more inclined to make repeat purchases. The study also highlights how important it is to understand how customers perceive pricing strategies since price attitudes influenced by social media involvement may significantly influence consumer behavior. To increase customer happiness and loyalty to sustainable products, marketers should use a comprehensive approach that combines social media interaction with open and aggressive pricing methods.

Limitations and Future Research

Convenience sampling may over-represent digitally savvy youth; future studies should weight data to national demographics. Experimental designs could manipulate price differentials to test at what threshold cost becomes decisive. Finally, qualitative work would enrich understanding of the non-price values driving Ghanaian green consumption.

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APPENDIX

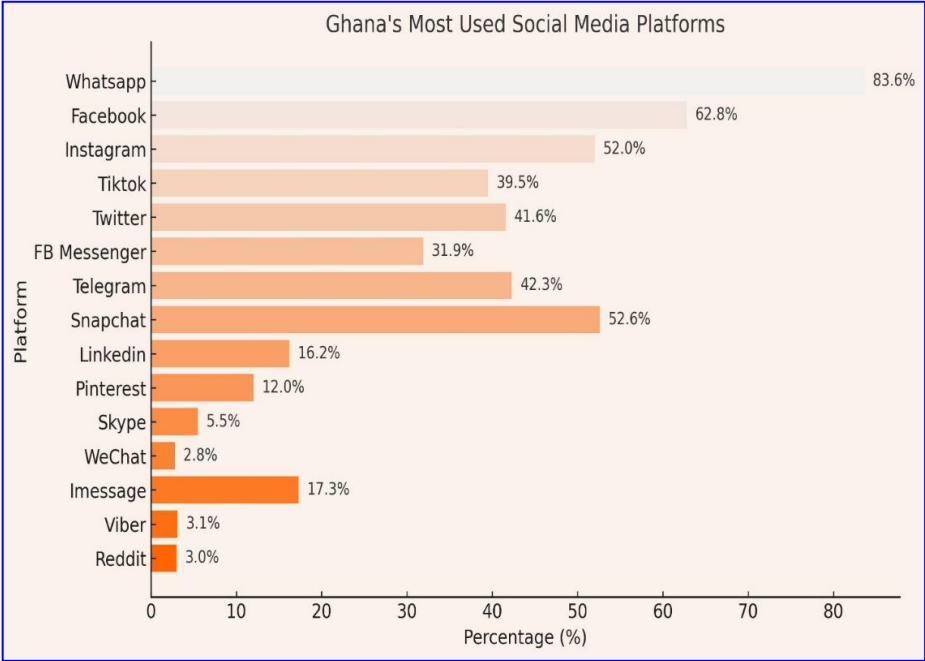


Figure 2: Most Used Social Media Platforms in Ghana

Source: Adopted from Ghana Digital Statistics (2023)

Conceptual Framework

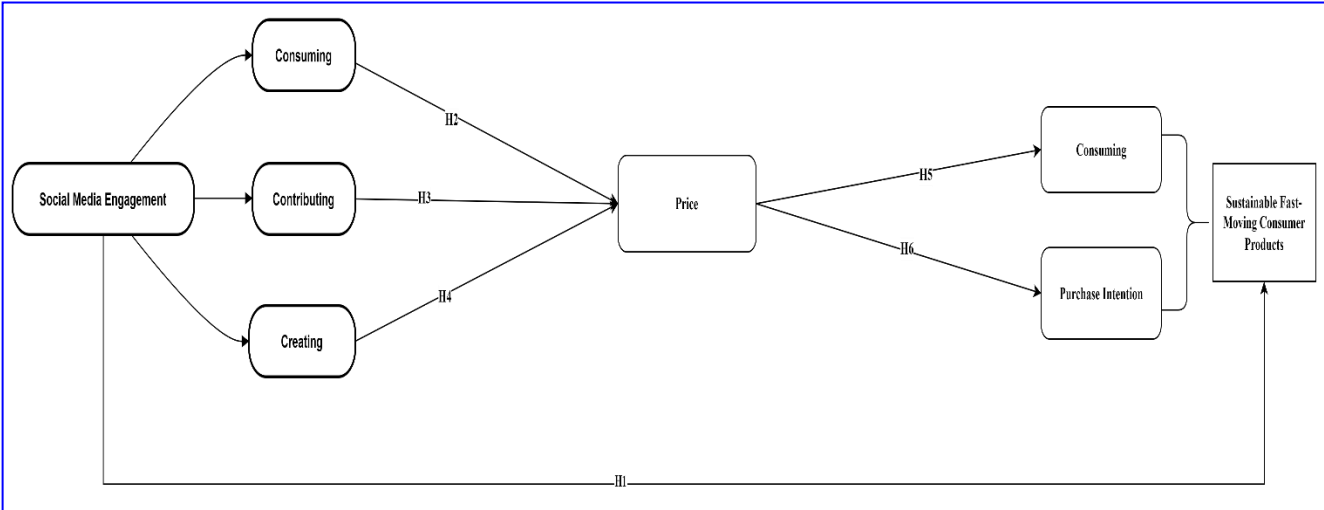


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Authors' Conceptualization (2024)

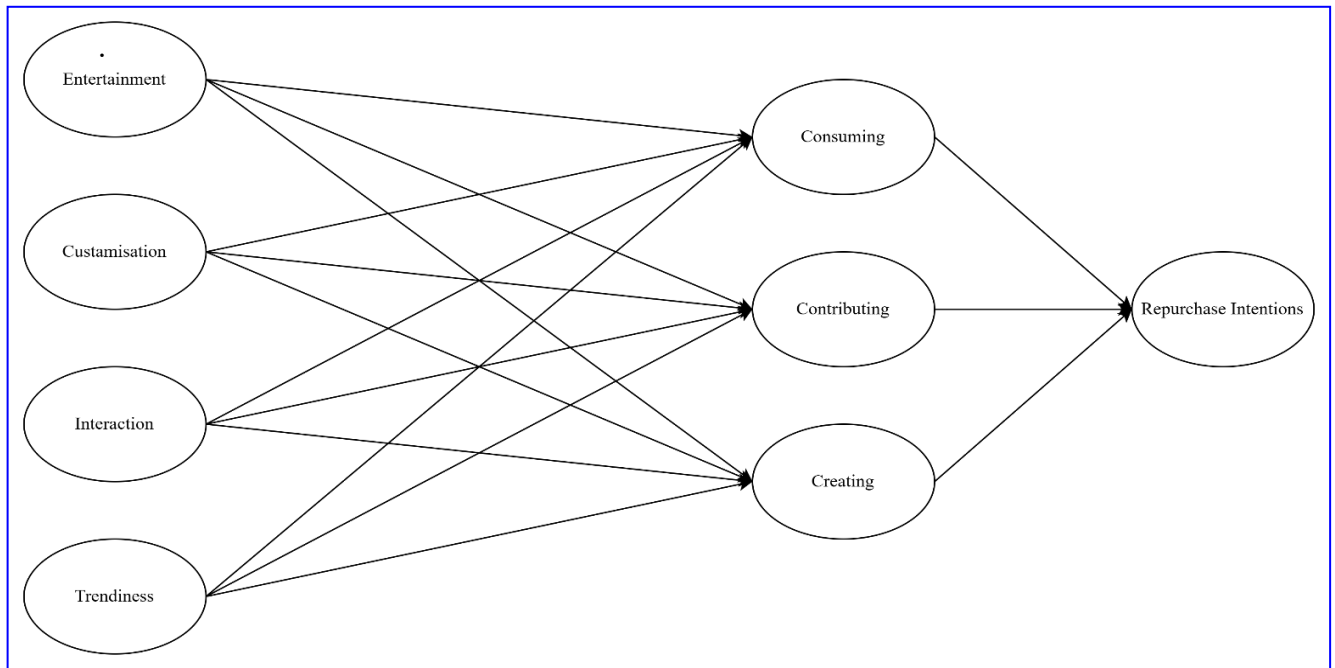


Figure 1: COBRA Theoretical Model

Source: Adapted from Cheung et al., (2021)