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The Influence of Hijab Influencers, Peer Communication, Family Communication, and eWOM on Hijab Fashion Consumption: A Consumer Socialization Perspective in Islamabad and Rawalpindi



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Abstract

This study explores the influence of hijab influencers on hijab fashion consumption among young Muslim women, with fashion consciousness as a mediating factor. Grounded in social influence and consumer behavior theories, the conceptual framework proposes that involvement with hijab influencers, hijab influencers' influence, family communication, peer communication, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on Instagram positively affect fashion consciousness, which subsequently drives hijab fashion consumption. A quantitative cross-sectional research design was employed, collecting data through a structured questionnaire from respondents. The proposed relationships were tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4.

The study contributes to understanding digital and interpersonal influences in the context of modest fashion consumption. Practical implications include strategies for marketers and hijab brands to enhance engagement through Instagram influencers and social communications. Limitations involve the cross-sectional design and platform-specific focus; future research may adopt longitudinal approaches or examine additional moderators.

Keywords: Hijab Influencers, Fashion Consciousness, Hijab Fashion Consumption, eWOM, Social Influence, Modest Fashion, PLS-SEM

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List of Abbreviations

AVE - Average Variance Extracted

β - Beta Coefficient

CI - Confidence Interval

CST - Consumer Socialization Theory

eWOM - Electronic Word-of-Mouth

FC - Family Communication

FS - Fashion Consciousness

HFC - Hijab Fashion Consumption

HII - Hijab Influencers' Influence

HTMT - Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio

IHI - Involvement with Hijab Influencers

M - Mean

OOTD - Outfit of the Day

PC - Peer Communication

PLS-SEM - Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling

R² - Coefficient of Determination

SD - Standard Deviation

SRMR - Standardized Root Mean Square Residual

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the introduction to the topic by discussing the background of this research, its objectives, what questions it is looking to answer, significance as well as scope of the study.

1.2. Background of the Study

The term fashion has always been associated with women but historically it's not always considered religious. The introduction of modest fashion however, has changed that. During last few years the rise of notions like inclusion and visibility, global brands are trying to reach the unexplored markets, the make products that integrates culture, religion and personal values, contributing to a significant rise in modest fashion (Sandikci, 2010). Modest fashion or hijab fashion has been fame around the world with its demand increasing rapidly.

The rise of social media has made people reach the farthest corners of the world, leading to more exposure, more options and more ways to do their normal routine things. Social media platforms have enabled people to give recommendations, share opinions and experiences. These people who using social media to do so, are called social media influencers. Many industries thrive off of influencer marketing, using their influence to

shift perspectives and drive consumer demand and fashion is one of the biggest ones (De Veirman, Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude, 2017). From A list celebrities telling people what they're wearing to normal people sharing their OOTDs (Outfit of the Day).

Social media is used, for not only recommendations and but inspiration as well. In ways social media has changed what fashion could mean by transforming how people interact with other people, brands and even products (Lou C. , 2022). The influencers have now become an integral part of any experience, because they are considered experts and people often turn to them for recommendations. This leads to people trying and then adapting the said recommendations. As many people look up to them, corporations attach great importance to them as well. Muslim population, the 2nd largest population of the world is no exception to this. Muslim people share their lifestyles and their fashion from around the world, influencing choices, building consciousness and the ultimate consumption. Like every other walk of life there are plenty who have dedicated platforms to talk about modest fashion

Consumer socialization is defined as a lifelong process where individuals acquire skills and knowledge to function as consumers in the marketplace. This theory provides a way to understand how consumers develop their attitudes, behaviors and knowledge related to consumption through various interactions with family, friends, and other individuals from a young age (Ward, 1974). Traditionally, interpersonal communication i.e. family and peers have been seen as the primary socialization agents that may shape an individual's attitude but the rise of social media has created a new domain of socialization agents, the influencers, who are presenting a new perspective on modest fashion. they give information and share their values and culture (Moschis, 1985). The ones promoting modest fashion are the same. The women following them now have

another source of information to take in about their hijab style in addition to their surroundings and family. This new wave of information inevitably affects women's understanding of fashion and ultimately the choice of wearing what style of hijab.

The process of socialization begins from a young age, that's why it is important to study the effect of family and peer communication as they are first sources of information to the individual whenever seeking advice and the same goes for hijab fashion consumption (Shin, 2025). The exposure to social media in terms of following influencers to watch what's trendy, individuals rely on other people (influencers) and feel connected or enough to follow through with what they are doing. The eWOM also plays a part in forming an opinion or becoming conscious, like reading comments and interactions on what's trendy and which style suits their image of fashion (Ahmed, 2024). This exposure contributes to becoming fashion conscious which explains how much of a person is keeping up with their appearance leading to hijab fashion consumption (Lam, 2014).

A report by Thomas Reuters in 2024 valued the global modest fashion market at USD \$254 billion expect to grow \$428 billion by 2027, and Pakistan is one of the top markets for modest fashion, its apparel market valued at \$5.8 billion, second largest Muslim population, about 66.9 million active social media users, which Instagram makes up of 22 million (Gateway, 2024) (Statista., 2025) (DataReportal, 2025). The people of Pakistan have been dressing modestly for a long time but term modest fashion is relatively new. This coupled with the unique cultural landscape of Pakistan which itself is pretty diverse, the idea of factors that shaping what people see as fashion, how much they are conscious about it and what it means to them is a new one as well.

The influencer marketing is very much prevalent in Pakistan as well. It is fueled by big following and people taking their recommendations and a lot of word of mouth. The communication from family and peers are extremely valuable as well as eWOM is equally important. People tend to read comments and reviews and even ask their friends online what to buy. The rise of social media and influencer culture are understudied in modest fashion context in Pakistan (Baig, 2022).

Previous researches have studied Consumer Socialization and how it shapes behavior but few integrate eWOM, peer and family communication and social media influencer's combined impact on hijab fashion consumption (Lam, 2014). Fashion consciousness is an important factor to be taken into consideration and its effect of hasn't really been explored.

This study aims to integrate the consumer socialization theory to study how social media influencers, eWOM and interpersonal communication from peers and family can shape fashion consciousness of young women in Pakistan that ultimately leads to hijab fashion consumption.

1.3. Problem Statement

The clothing in Pakistan has always been seen as modest but the use of modesty and fashion in the same sentence is new even for Pakistan. This rise coupled with the increasing use of social media to find and choose what style of hijab to wear is even more rapid and extremely understudied. The social media influencers are one of the primary sources of information for many consumers (Baig, 2022).

The studies exploring fashion consciousness and social media and influencer culture impact on modest fashion consumption exist but very few integrate both social media and interpersonal communication from parents and peers which is an important

factor in Muslim societies. Similarly, there is plenty of existing research on influencer marketing and fashion consumption as well but hijab fashion consumption especially in Pakistan's context remain underexplored. Most of these existing studies are done in Western contexts failing to capture the nuances of a Muslim dominant country.

Consumer Socialization theory provides a framework that can be used to study how multiple socialization agents' interaction can shape an individual's perception leading to the consumption (Ward, 1974). The research utilizing the consumer socialization theory to understand the factors driving modest fashion consumption are lacking. There is a gap in understanding how variables like influencer culture, eWOM are making women in Pakistan more conscious of what fashion means to them and how it leads to hijab fashion consumption.

1.4. Research Objectives

Following are objectives of this research

1. To examine the effect of involvement with hijab influencers and eWOM on fashion consciousness among young women
2. To examine the effect of family and peer communication on fashion consciousness among young women
3. To investigate the effect of fashion consciousness on hijab fashion consumption among young women

1.5. Research Questions

This research aims to answer these research questions

1. What is the effect of hijab influencers and eWOM on fashion consciousness among young women?

2. What is the effect of peer and parents' communication on fashion consciousness among young women?
3. What is the effect of fashion consciousness on hijab fashion consumption among young women?

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study is a contribution to growing research on modest fashion and consumer behavior shaped by social media in Pakistani context. It adds to consumer socialization theory in context of Pakistan by exploring the factors that affect the hijab fashion consumption and studying effect of socialization agents like eWOM, social media influencers and peer communication. This study contributes to literature by incorporating fashion consciousness as a mediator which leads to hijab fashion consumption in order to understand how socialization leads to consumer behavior. This research also provides evidence of potential growth of modest fashion industry in Pakistan. It offers insight for corporations eyeing Pakistan to expand into the fashionable hijab market or existing players that wish to understand their consumer behavior better.

1.7. Research Novelty and Contribution

This study offers several novel contributions to the literature on consumer behavior, modest fashion, and consumer socialization. First, it extends Consumer Socialization Theory by integrating both traditional socialization agents like family and peers and contemporary digital agents like electronic word-of-mouth and hijab influencers within a single framework. While prior studies have largely examined these agents in isolation, particularly in Western fashion contexts, this research examines their combined influence on hijab fashion consumption in a Muslim-majority country.

The study introduces fashion consciousness as a mediating mechanism through which socialization agents influence hijab fashion consumption. Existing research has primarily focused on direct effects of social media or interpersonal influence on purchase behavior; however, limited attention has been given to the psychological process that translates social influence into consumption behavior. By positioning fashion consciousness as a mediator, this study provides deeper insight into how social learning and interaction shape awareness and engagement before resulting in consumption.

The study contextually focuses on Pakistan, an under-researched yet highly relevant market for modest fashion. Despite Pakistan being one of the largest Muslim populations globally with rapidly growing social media usage, empirical research on hijab fashion consumption within this context remains scarce. This research addresses that gap by incorporating cultural, familial, and digital influences specific to Pakistani society.

The study also makes methodological contribution by distinguishing between involvement with hijab influencers and perceived influencer influence. This distinction allows for a more nuanced understanding of influencer dynamics, revealing that active engagement with influencer content may function differently from direct influencer persuasion. Together, these contributions advance both theory and practice by offering a comprehensive and context-sensitive understanding of hijab fashion consumption.

1.8. Scope and Delimitations:

This study will be focusing on hijab wearing Muslim women in Pakistan who interact with social media influencers. Its foundation is grounded in consumer socialization theory using socialization agents' effect on hijab fashion consumption, other variables and theories are out of its scope. It is specific to Pakistani context,

focusing only on its women, its findings may not hold true for other countries. This study utilizes self-reported data and is cross-sectional therefore there is a possibility of response biases, which may not accurately reflect long term patterns of consumption. Lastly. It uses PLS-SEM for analysis.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature on consumer socialization, electronic word-of-mouth, social media influencers, and fashion consciousness. It develops the theoretical framework and hypotheses underpinning the proposed research model.

2.2. Consumer Socialization Theory

Consumer Socialization theory argues how social interactions builds consumer attitudes, their motives, knowledge and their values in the marketplace. This theory is particularly employed when understanding the consumers and how they adapt to the everchanging trends in the society, and form behaviors. According to Ward (1974), consumers acquire their behaviors through observation, imitation and communications with socialization agents. The socialization agents often lead to a socialization process that leads to mental and/or behavioral outcomes. The consumer socialization has three main elements: antecedents, socialization process and the outcomes. The antecedents are the main influences of a consumer socialization process and they consist of social structural variables and developmental variables. The socialization processes usually begin in childhood and involve learning such as modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction which is combination of two. The most common socialization agents are peers, parents and media, which are paramount to shaping a consumer's attitude and behavior. Socialization processes combined with antecedents affect the consumer

socialization outcomes. The interpersonal communication agents like peer and family communication are one of the prime agents identified earlier by Ward and Moschis. They shape preferences and decision making of individuals because they transmit values, norms and expectations in an individual's life (Moschis, 1985) (Ward, 1974).

In a collectivist society like Pakistan, consumer socialization is significant and more complex than individualist societies. These influences are often family, social norms, culture and community/peers (Nawaz, 2011). The decision making in a collectivist society is often not autonomous and they are heavily influenced by family, peers, and social acceptances, and usually they are the ones playing a role in what is appropriate clothing.

Consumer socialization process can also happen virtually making social media computer mediated socialization agents, that can affect how behaviors and attitudes of consumers are constructed. Social media influencers form what is called aspirational identities that allows individuals to form connections and establish bonds that are authentic to them. These identities can affect how they view new knowledge and choices and in turn their consciousness of fashion (Baig, 2022).

Researchers studied the relationship of Pakistan youth with the exposure to social media which leads to fashion consumption and found a positive relationship of exposure and consciousness leading to consumption. They also found that women looking for contemporary sense of expression resort to social media for exposure and this exposure positively correlates with fashion adoption or buying behavior. This behavior reinforces fashion as a contemporary sense of expression or as we call it fashion (Nizamani, 2025). This framework examines consumer attitude in hijab fashion consumption, their communications with socialization agents like family and peers, and the effect of social

media influencers on how fashion conscious they are because of their interaction with these agents which subsequently lead to their consumption of hijab fashion.

2.3. Family communication

Family communication is not only foundational, its often times one of the first socialization agents of an individual's life. The literature has always placed great importance to family communication. It is extremely influential in defining a person's behavior in marketplace because of its role in shaping values, norms and knowledge about everything (Dotson, 2010) (Moschis, 1985). Research on consumer socialization has proven that family influence has a positive relationship with purchase behavior, further exploring the values and learn that these values are often part of their upbringing at home (Bravo, 2006). These values shape their fashion choices. In collectivist countries like Pakistan, where family is often at forefront of all kinds of decision making, study of this variable is important. The decisions are often a product of recommendations and collective decision making. The individuals especially young women seeking approval for what is the acceptable modest wear and spending priorities.

2.4. Peer Communication

Communication with peers plays an important in spreading fashion trends and validating choices of consumption. It makes the young Muslim women more aware of their fashion choices leading to them being more fashion conscious (Brown, 1987). Peers act as informal agents of socialization by providing comments and recommendations which influence hijab style and purchases and simultaneously act as sources of information as well. For example, peer groups encourage conformity to social images hence motivating women to use fashionable hijab to indicate identities and belonging as

found in studies that peer validation drives buying behavior (O'cass, 2004). Peer communication falls within the identities of dress, where peers can encourage modest yet fashionable dress and same goes for hijab as well. Studies of women wearing hijab, found that peers, together with family, play a strong role in reducing purchase risk by sharing knowledge of trends, thus generating a positive relationship (Ahmed, 2024).

Among Generation Z, peer communication has influence to increase fashion consumption, through social media and word of mouth, therefore increasing expenditure on hijab apparel. Peer pressure seems to create conflict as women negotiate more of the trendiness that comes from peers against religious modesty-hijab shifting from a spiritual symbol to more of a social status symbol (Fareed Ali, 2023). Direct studies on peer communication in hijab contexts are few usually it appears to mediate other external influences.

2.5. Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) refers to the exchange of consumption-related information, opinions, and experiences among consumers through online platforms (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). Unlike traditional word-of-mouth, eWOM operates on a larger scale, transcending geographical boundaries and enabling consumers to access diverse viewpoints in real time. Within the framework of Consumer Socialization Theory, eWOM functions as a contemporary socialization mechanism through which consumers learn about products, norms, and acceptable consumption behaviors by observing and interpreting others' experiences (Johnson Jorgensen, 2019).

The fashion industry, characterized by high symbolic value and subjective evaluation, is particularly influenced by eWOM. Consumers often rely on online reviews, comments, and peer-generated content to reduce perceived risk associated with fashion

purchases (Brown, 1987). Prior research has consistently demonstrated that eWOM influences consumer attitudes, trust formation, and purchase intentions, especially in online and fashion-related contexts (MajlesiRad, 2020). Exposure to eWOM allows consumers to remain informed about emerging trends, popular styles, and socially endorsed fashion choices.

In the context of modest and hijab fashion, eWOM plays an even more critical role due to the intersection of fashion with cultural and religious identity. Online discussions and shared experiences enable hijab-wearing women to negotiate meanings of modesty, style, and social acceptance. Studies suggest that engagement with fashion-related eWOM enhances awareness of trends and strengthens fashion-related knowledge, which contributes to increased **fashion consciousness** (Lam, 2014). In collectivist societies such as Pakistan, where interpersonal validation is highly valued, eWOM serves as an extension of peer communication in digital spaces, reinforcing shared norms and preferences related to hijab fashion (Nizamani, 2025).

2.6. Social Media Influencers and Hijab Fashion

Social media influencers are individuals who accumulate substantial followings on digital platforms and exert influence over audiences through perceived credibility, expertise, and relatability (De Veirman, 2017). Within Consumer Socialization Theory, influencers are categorized as media-based socialization agents, transmitting consumption norms, symbolic meanings, and lifestyle values through repeated exposure and observational learning (Ward, 1974). Their role is particularly prominent in fashion contexts, where visual presentation and identity expression are central.

In modest fashion markets, hijab influencers occupy a unique position by blending religious identity with contemporary fashion narratives. Prior research indicates

that hijab influencers contribute to shaping perceptions of acceptable and desirable fashion by presenting modest dress as both stylish and socially relevant (Sandikci, 2010). Through styling content, tutorials, and brand collaborations, influencers provide consumers with fashion cues that may affect attitudes toward hijab fashion and consumption behavior.

However, the literature presents mixed findings regarding the depth of influencer impact. While several studies report a positive relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention (Lou C. Y., 2019), others suggest that influencer-driven persuasion may be more effective in stimulating short-term buying behavior rather than fostering deeper fashion awareness or consciousness. This distinction aligns with Consumer Socialization Theory, which emphasizes learning through interaction and internalization, rather than passive exposure to promotional messages.

Recent studies further suggest that active involvement with influencer content such as following, engaging, and repeatedly observing influencer narratives may play a more significant role in shaping fashion-related awareness than perceived influencer influence alone. In culturally sensitive contexts like Pakistan, where authenticity, peer approval, and family norms remain influential, consumers may consume influencer content selectively, drawing inspiration without fully internalizing it as a basis for fashion consciousness (Nizamani, 2025). This highlights the need to distinguish between influencer engagement and influencer persuasion when examining their role in hijab fashion consumption.

2.7. Fashion Consciousness and Hijab Fashion Consumption:

Fashion consciousness refers to the degree to which consumers are aware of, interested in, and engaged with fashion trends and styles. Conceptually, fashion-conscious individuals pay attention to fashion information, seek novel styles, and often utilize social media and peer networks to stay updated (Lam, 2014). Research studies in fashion marketing indicate that highly fashion-conscious consumers exhibit stronger involvement in apparel shopping, higher information-seeking behavior, and greater responsiveness to trends and recommendations, outcomes that often translate into increased purchase intention and consumption behavior. Research suggests that the advent of social media has heightened fashion consciousness by providing real-time access to trends, influencer content, and community discussions, all of which strengthen consumer engagement with fashion products. In the context of modest fashion, fashion consciousness may incorporate both style awareness and identity considerations, blending aesthetic interests with cultural values (Kaiser, 1997). As digital platforms normalize diverse fashion expressions, fashion-conscious consumers in markets like Pakistan increasingly leverage social media to discover hijab trends and make informed consumption decisions.

Hijab fashion consumption combines traditional fashion behavior with religious and cultural identity. While the broader fashion literature addresses consumer behavior in apparel markets, modest fashion including hijab styles has emerged as a distinct segment characterized by consumers balancing style, modesty, and social meaning. Research on Modest fashion reveals that social media not only disseminates style information but also reshapes the cultural meaning of hijab and modest dressing, positioning digital platforms as spaces where consumers negotiate identity, trends, and

community values. This shift underscores the dual role of digital content in empowering hijab wearers to engage with fashion while maintaining cultural or religious norms (Shin, 2025). Research specifically linking social media influences, fashion consciousness, and consumption behavior in hijab fashion is still emerging, but studies indicate that fashion-related online interactions whether through influencer content or community discussions contribute to consumer awareness and intention in modest fashion segments (Hassan, 2016).

2.8. Hypothesis Development

Consumer behavior is shaped through continuous interaction with various social and environmental agents that influence individuals' attitudes, preferences, and consumption decisions. Consumer Socialization Theory (CST) explains how individuals acquire consumption-related knowledge, values, and behaviors through socialization agents such as family, peers, and media (Ward, 1974). In contemporary digital environments, social media platforms have expanded the scope of these agents by enabling influencers and online communities to play a central role in shaping consumer behavior (Wang, 2012). In the context of hijab fashion consumption, both traditional interpersonal influences and digital socialization mechanisms are particularly salient due to the value-laden and identity-driven nature of modest fashion (Kaiser, 1997). Based on this theoretical foundation, the following section develops hypotheses examining the relationships between involvement with hijab influencers, electronic word-of-mouth, peer communication, family communication, fashion consciousness, and hijab fashion consumption.

2.8.1. Hijab Influencers and Hijab Fashion Consumption

Involvement with hijab influencers refers to the extent to which consumers engage with influencer-generated content related to hijab and modest fashion on social media platforms. Such involvement includes following influencers, interacting with their content, and considering their recommendations when making fashion-related decisions (Solomon, 2018). According to Consumer Socialization Theory, media-based agents play a crucial role in transmitting consumption norms and symbolic meanings, particularly when consumers perceive these agents as credible and relatable (Ward, 1974).

2.8.2. Family Communication and Hijab Fashion Consumption

Family communication refers to discussions and guidance related to consumption decisions within the family unit. Consumer Socialization Theory emphasizes the family as the most influential and enduring socialization agent, particularly in contexts where consumption is closely linked to cultural and religious values (Ward, 1974). Through family interactions, individuals internalize norms related to modesty, appropriateness, and acceptable fashion behavior (Kaiser, 1997). Prior studies suggest that family influence remains strong in fashion-related decisions in societies characterized by strong family structures and collective value systems (Solomon, 2018). In Pakistan, family communication plays a central role in shaping attitudes toward hijab and modest fashion, as clothing choices are often evaluated in relation to cultural and religious expectations. Consequently, family communication is expected to significantly influence hijab fashion consumption. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Family communication positively effect on fashion consciousness.

2.8.3. Peer Communication

Peer communication refers to interpersonal discussions and information exchange among friends and social networks regarding fashion preferences and consumption decisions. Consumer Socialization Theory identifies peers as a primary socialization agent, particularly during adolescence and early adulthood, when individuals are highly sensitive to social approval and group norms (Ward, 1974). Through peer communication, consumers learn socially acceptable behaviors and fashion standards (Brown, 1987). Empirical research has demonstrated that peer influence significantly affects fashion adoption, brand choice, and consumption behavior (O'cass, 2004). Peer discussions often reinforce trends and encourage conformity, especially in collectivist cultures where social harmony and group belonging are emphasized (Solomon, 2018). In Pakistan, peer networks play a critical role in shaping fashion preferences, particularly among urban and digitally connected consumers. In the context of hijab fashion, peer communication may influence perceptions of style, modernity, and social acceptance, thereby shaping consumption behavior. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Peer communication positively effect on hijab fashion consciousness.

2.8.4. Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) refers to the sharing of opinions, reviews, and consumption experiences through online platforms (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). From the perspective of Consumer Socialization Theory, eWOM functions as a social learning mechanism through which consumers acquire product knowledge and form evaluations based on the experiences of others (Wang, 2012). Unlike firm-generated marketing

communications, eWOM is perceived as more credible due to its interpersonal and experience-based nature (Brown, 1987).

Existing literature consistently reports that eWOM influences consumer attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions, particularly in online retail and fashion-related decisions. Fashion consumption involves subjective evaluation and high perceived risk, making consumers more reliant on online reviews and peer-generated content (O'cass, 2004). In Pakistan, where digital communities play an increasing role in shaping lifestyle and fashion decisions, positive eWOM related to hijab fashion is expected to enhance consumer confidence and encourage purchase behavior. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Electronic word-of-mouth positively affects fashion consciousness.

2.8.5. Hijab Influencers

Hijab influencers act as contemporary socialization agents by combining religious identity with modern fashion narratives, thereby shaping consumers' perceptions of acceptable and desirable fashion choices (Kaiser, 1997). Prior empirical research indicates that influencer involvement significantly affects consumers' brand attitudes, trust, and purchase behavior, especially in fashion contexts where visual appeal and identity expression are central (O'Cass, 2004). Influencers reduce information asymmetry and perceived risk by providing experiential and value-aligned content (Solomon, 2018). In Pakistan, where social media usage is rapidly increasing and modest fashion is becoming more mainstream, engagement with hijab influencers is expected to positively influence hijab fashion consumption. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Hijab influencers' influence on hijab consumption positively affects hijab consciousness

H5: Involvement with hijab influencers positively affects fashion consciousness.

2.8.6. Fashion Consciousness

Fashion consciousness refers to the extent to which consumers are aware of, interested in, and involved with fashion trends (Goldsmith & Hofacker, 1991). It reflects consumers' attentiveness to fashion-related information and their motivation to align their appearance with prevailing styles (O'Cass, 2004). From a Consumer Socialization Theory perspective, socialization agents influence consumption behavior indirectly by shaping consumers' attitudes and awareness before these translate into actual purchasing decisions (Ward, 1974).

Prior research indicates that exposure to influencers, eWOM, and interpersonal communication enhances fashion awareness and involvement, which subsequently influences fashion consumption behavior (O'Cass, 2004; Solomon, 2018). In the context of hijab fashion, socialization agents not only promote specific products but also construct narratives that link modesty with style and self-expression (Kaiser, 1997). As a result, fashion consciousness is expected to function as a psychological mechanism through which socialization agents influence hijab fashion consumption.

Accordingly, fashion consciousness is proposed as a mediating variable, leading to the following hypotheses:

H6: Fashion consciousness positively affects hijab fashion consumption.

Research Framework:

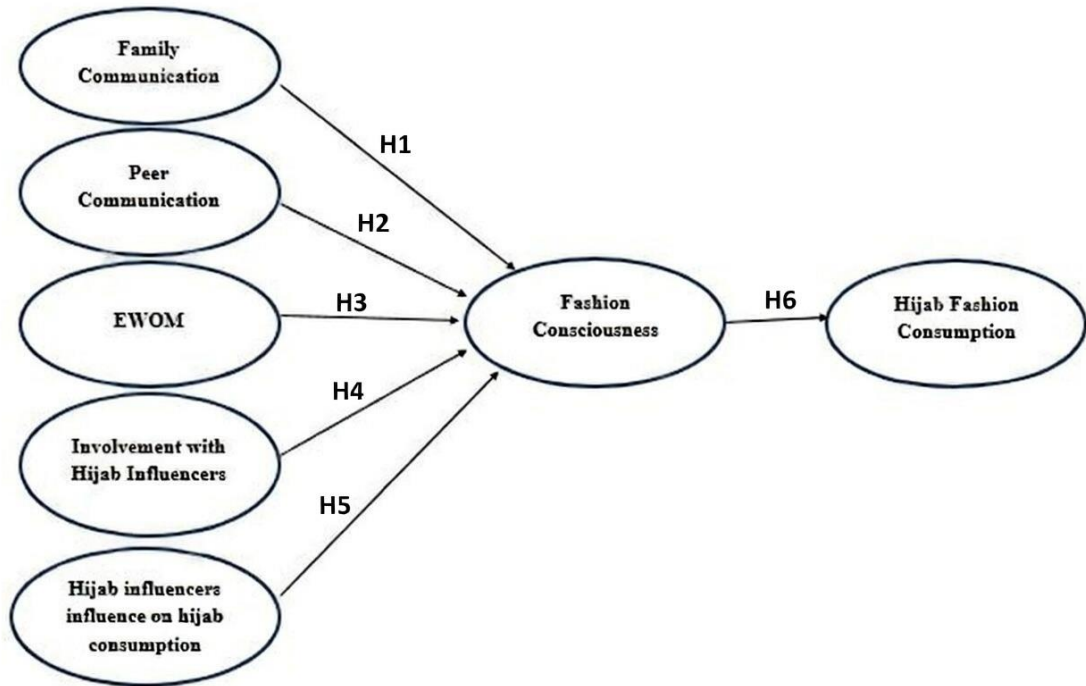


Figure 1 Research Framework

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter explains methodology of this study. It explains the research design, the population and sample for this and how they were determined. It also explains what instruments were to measure these variables and where they were adapted from and the tools that would be utilized in the data collection and analysis.

3.2. Research Design

The research design is defined as the plan that outlines the data collection, measurement and analysis to address the research problem (Creswell, 2014). This research is cross-sectional research, which means it examines the relationship between variables at a single point in time.

A deductive approach was used to examine the relationship between the variables by developing and testing hypothesis through existing knowledge from consume socialization theory and previous studies on modest fashion. This study is descriptive because it doesn't explore any unknown relationship rather drawing on previous theories and predefined variables to study casual relationship. The research is quantitative as it focuses on measurement of variables like involvement with hijab influencers, eWOM, communication between peers and family, fashion consciousness, and hijab fashion consumption using Consumer Socialization as foundation.

3.3. Population and Sample

3.3.1. Population

The population of interest are young women of Islamabad and Rawalpindi who are active on social media platforms and engage with social media influencers who promote modest fashion. The approximate combined population of Islamabad and Rawalpindi is 5.72 million. About 25% of the population are individuals aged 15 to 29, which there are 1.43 million individuals, for our age group i.e. 18 to 29 we'll be rounding off this number to ± 1 million. The female section of the population to be approximately 48.51% of the total so the estimated female population aged 18-29 is approximately 0.49 million (Finance Division, 2025) (bank, 2025).

3.3.2. Sample

The sample size was determined using Morgan Table, for a population of 0.49 million, Morgan table recommended minimum sample size of 384 (Morgan, 1970). Due to the size of the population of interest, and the absence of complete sampling frame data on the specific needs to recruits the respondents e.g. no list of females following Instagram influencers on Instagram. Therefore, the sampling method used to carry out the data collection is non-probability sampling methods, specifically snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is well suited for online surveys where it is difficult to access the targeted individuals (Malhotra, 2010). In case women who use social media, follow social media influencers and do hijab. Snowball sampling are done using referrals where one respondents is asked to share the questionnaire with more suitable people and that generates the responses further and further hence the name snowball (Babbie, 2016). Recruitment of respondents took place using social media and referrals to have efficient

access to the target niche group of women interested in modest fashion and use Instagram to follow hijab influencers.

3.4. Data Collection Method

Primarily the data was collected via digital channels using the online questionnaire made via Google Forms and it was distributed through channels like WhatsApp and Instagram. The links were sent to potential respondents furthermore they were encouraged to share the questionnaire with others who might meet the same criteria. This method proved to be efficient and cost saving.

This study specifically focuses on Instagram as the social media platform of interest. Instagram was selected due to its highly visual nature, widespread popularity among young women in Pakistan, and its dominance as a platform for fashion-related content, influencer marketing, and consumer interaction. Hijab influencers predominantly utilize Instagram to share styling ideas, product endorsements, and fashion-related narratives, making it an appropriate platform for examining digital socialization processes in the context of hijab fashion.

3.5. Instrument Development

The items were adapted from already existing scales. The family communication and peer communication items were adapted from interpersonal influence scales from Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) and Bravo, Fraj, and Martinez (2006). There were total 11 items out of which 7 were adapted. The items for eWOM were adapted from Lehdonvirta and Rasanen (2011) and Valenzuela, Park, and Kee (2009), 6 questions were used. The items for hijab influencers influence and their impact on hijab fashion consumption were taken from Trivedi (2018) and Eerde (2020) and Bouteraa and Al-

Aidaros (2020), Trivedi (2018), and Hassan and Harun (2016) respectively. For each construct 3 items were used. The items for fashion consciousness and hijab fashion consumption were taken from O' Cass (2004) and hijab fashion consumption by Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara (2012) and modified by Harun and Hassan (2016).

Variable		Item
Involvement with hijab influencers (IHI)	IHI 1: I follow fashion content from hijab influencers on Instagram	(Trivedi, 2018) (Eerde, 2020)
	IHI 2: Following hijab influencers' updates on Instagram is significant in my life	
	IHI 3: Hijab influencers keep me updated on latest hijab fashion trends	
Hijab influencers' influence (HII)	HII 1: Hijab influencers encourage me to wear hijab fashionably	(Bouteraa, 2020) (Trivedi, 2018) (Hassan, 2016)
	HII 2: I buy hijab influencers' recommended hijabs because they are trendy	
	HII 3: I would buy hijab brands endorsed by hijab influencers	
Family communication (FC)	FC 1: I consult my parents to choose the best hijab alternative.	(Bearden, 1989) (Bravo, 2006)
	FC 3: I gather information from my parents about hijab before buying.	
	FC 4: I try to buy the same hijab brands that my parents buy.	
	FC 5: It is important that my parents approve the hijabs I buy.	
	FC 6: I await my parents' approval before I buy the latest hijab styles.	
	FC 7: I identify with my parents by buying the same hijab brands they buy.	
Peer Communication (PC)	PC 1: I consult my friends to choose the best hijab alternative.	(Bearden, 1989) (Bravo, 2006)
	PC 2: If I lack experience with hijab options, I ask my friends.	
	PC 3: I gather information from my friends about hijab before buying.	

	<p>PC 4: I try to buy the same hijab brands that my friends buy.</p> <p>PC 5: It is important that my friends like the hijab I buy.</p> <p>PC 6: I await my friends approval before I buy the latest hijab styles.</p> <p>PC 7: I identify with my friends by buying same hijab brands they buy.</p>	
eWOM on Instagram (EM)	<p>EM 1: In a typical week, I post about hijab fashion on Instagram</p> <p>EM 2: In a typical week, I start new discussions about hijab fashion on Instagram?</p> <p>EM 3: In a typical week, I read/visit the profiles/posts of hijab fashion pages on Instagram?</p> <p>EM 4: On a typical day, I spend my time reading and posting about hijab fashion on Instagram?</p> <p>EM 5: Which best describes your involvement with hijab fashion on Instagram?</p> <p><i>Rarely visit hijab related posts/profiles;</i></p> <p><i>Only read/view comments and posts</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes like and write comments and posts;</i></p> <p><i>Regularly like, read and write Comments and posts;</i></p> <p><i>Read, write, like and post new hijab content on Instagram</i></p>	(Lehdonvirta, 2011) (Valenzuela, 2009)
Fashion Consciousness (FS)	<p>FS 1: I have one or more hijab outfits in latest style</p> <p>FS 2: I keep my hijab wardrobe updated with changing fashion trends</p> <p>FS 3: For me fashionable and attractive hijab style is very important</p> <p>FS 4: I shop in different stores and hijab brands for variety</p>	(Hassan, 2016) (O'cass, 2004)
Hijab fashion Consumption (HFC)	<p>HFC 1: I buy hijab fashion clothes because they are trendy</p> <p>HFC 2: I am interested in trendy hijab fashion</p> <p>HFC 3: I would pay more for clothes following hijab fashion</p>	(Hassan, 2016) (Lertwannawit, 2012)

	HFC 4: To me hijab has more value if it's fashionable	
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Table 1 Questionnaire Items

3.6. Data Analysis Techniques

The techniques used for analysis is PLS-SEM which is used to measure complex relationships using structural equation modelling. The research is quantitative so the data collection was assigned numbers to make the analysis easier. The analysis and how it was will be explained in detail in the next Chapter.

3.7. Limitations and Ethical Considerations:

The findings may not be applicable to rural women or women who do not regularly use computers, because of the use of non-probabilistic sampling methods. Self-reported data may have associated biases that affect reliability (i.e., social desirability and recall bias). The cross-sectional design allows for a correlation analysis but does not allow for a time-series analysis. The revised population density calculations are based on estimates from the Census. To collect data ethically, it was ensured that respondents were informed and their participation was voluntary and anonymous.

Chapter 4

Analysis

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research conducted using questionnaires to examine the relationship between variables. The analysis was done using PLS-SEM. The chapter shares demographics, descriptive stats, reliability, validity and hypothesis validation via bootstrapping.

Demographics and Data Collection:

The data was collected through online questionnaires made via Google Forms. As established before the number of respondents was acquired using Morgan Table, the data required 384 responses to get adequate and reliable results (Rahman, 2023). The questionnaire was floated using digital platforms and used snowball sampling to collect the data. The data was only collected from females' respondents.

The Google form was designed in a way that would lead respondents to end of form if someone selected male in the gender to ensure only female participation. A total of 400 responses were received, out of which the ones not in our target age bracket, and some male responses were not considered. After cleaning the total number was left to 343, which does not meet Morgan Table's 5% rule, but anything over 300 is acceptable for PLS analysis (Hair, 2017). Below is the demographics for the respondents.

		Frequency	Percentage
Education	Masters	127	62.97

	Bachelors	216	37.03
Age	18-24	238	69.39
	25-29	105	30.61
	0-3	125	36.44
Social Media usage	3-6	94	27.41
	6-9	76	22.16
	9-11	29	8.54
	<11	19	5.54

Table 2 Demographics of respondents

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics provide an overview of respondents' demographic characteristics and summarize the central tendency and dispersion of the study variables. For the main constructs, fashion consciousness (FS) recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.99$), suggesting that respondents generally perceive themselves as conscious of hijab fashion trends, keeping their wardrobes updated, and valuing attractive styles. This is closely followed by involvement with hijab influencers (IHI) and hijab influencers' influence (HII), both at $M = 3.20$, indicating moderate engagement with hijab influencers on Instagram and some influence on trendy hijab choices. Hijab fashion consumption (HFC) has a mean of 3.11 reflecting moderate interest in purchasing trendy and fashionable hijab items. Peer communication (PC) shows a slightly higher mean (M

= 3.07, SD = 1.00) than family communication (FC; M = 2.91, SD = 1.02), suggesting that peers play a marginally stronger role in discussions and approvals related to hijab purchases compared to family.

Overall, the descriptive statistics portray a sample of young, educated women who exhibit moderate fashion consciousness and influencer engagement but lower active eWOM behavior. These baseline perceptions align with the cultural context of hijab consumption, where family and peer influences remain relevant alongside digital factors. The data's distributional properties support the use of PLS-SEM for further inferential analysis.

Scale	No. Items	Mean	SD	Skewness	Excess Kurtosis
FC	6	2.91	1.02	0.28	-1.16
PC	7	3.07	1.00	-0.10	-0.44
EM	5	2.68	1.15	0.54	-0.22
IHI	3	3.20	0.99	0.05	-0.86
HII	3	3.20	1.13	-0.17	-0.71
FS	4	3.32	0.99	-0.05	-0.82
HFC	4	3.11	1.06	0.05	-0.79

Table 3 Descriptive Stats

4.2. Pilot Study

The study was done using Smart PLS 4, and items were checked for their reliability and validity within limits. According to (Hair, 2017) an item can be removed if its outer loadings, composite reliability and Average variance extracted are not up to the mark. Following these guidelines, PC3 was hence removed to make the results more reliable and valid.

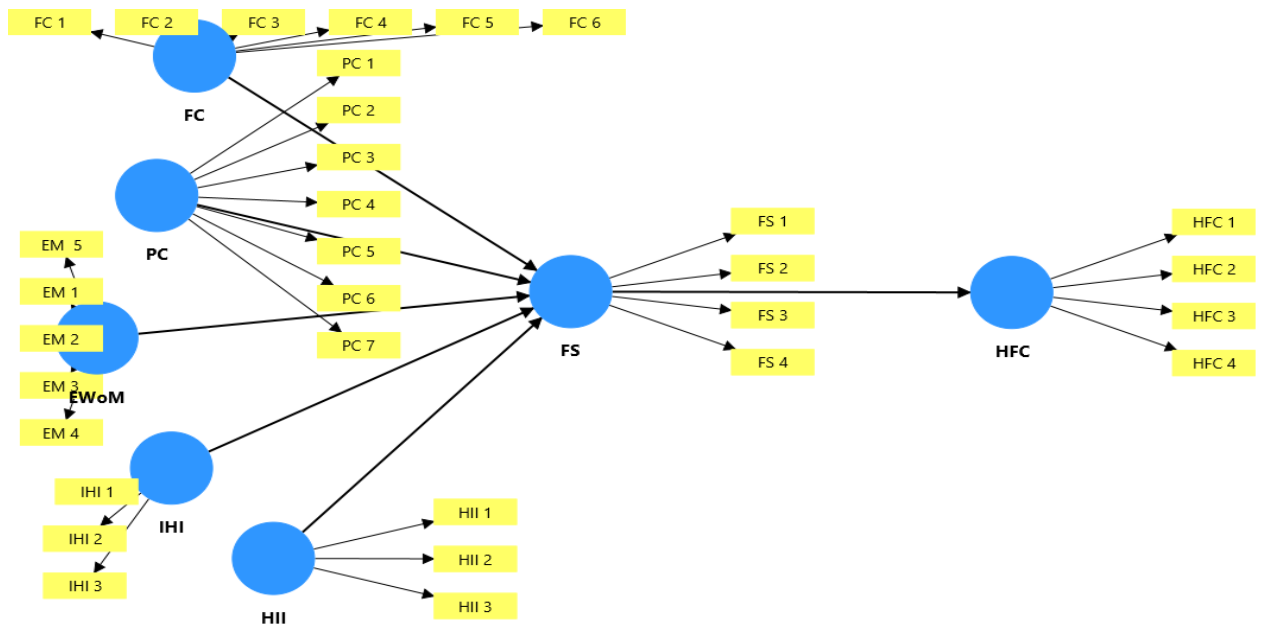


Figure 2 Pilot Study PLS SEM

4.3. Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated for indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity to ensure the constructs are reliably and validly measured.

4.3.1. Indicator Reliability (Outer Loadings)

Indicator reliability was assessed through outer loadings, which should exceed 0.708 for acceptable reliability. All indicators met this threshold following the deletion of PC2.

Construct	Indicator	Loading
eWOM on Instagram (eWOM)	EM1	0.916
	EM2	0.925
	EM3	0.790

	EM4	0.845
	EM5	0.831
Family Communication (FC)	FC1	0.733
	FC2	0.801
	FC3	0.854
	FC4	0.904
	FC5	0.862
Fashion Consciousness (FS)	FS1	0.751
	FS2	0.838
	FS3	0.892
	FS4	0.843
	FS5	0.861
Hijab Fashion Consumption (HFC)	HFC1	0.804
	HFC2	0.852
	HFC3	0.836
	HFC4	0.848
Hijab Influencers' Influence (HII)	HII1	0.895
	HII2	0.910
	HII3	0.826
	HII4	0.889
Involvement with Hijab Influencers (IHI)	IHI1	0.834
	IHI2	0.862
	IHI3	0.846
	IHI4	0.802

Peer Communication (PC)	PC1	0.712
	PC3	0.845
	PC4	0.876
	PC5	0.902
	PC6	0.854
	PC7	0.821

Table 4 Indicator Reliability

4.3.2. Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, rho_a, and composite reliability (rho_c), with thresholds above 0.70. Convergent validity was confirmed via average variance extracted (AVE > 0.50).

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_a	rho_c	AVE
eWOM on Instagram (eWOM)	0.913	0.916	0.936	0.745
Family Communication (FC)	0.853	0.861	0.903	0.685
Fashion Consciousness (FS)	0.891	0.894	0.919	0.703
Hijab Fashion Consumption (HFC)	0.882	0.885	0.910	0.698
Hijab Influencers' Influence (HII)	0.903	0.905	0.930	0.770
Involvement with Hijab Influencers (IHI)	0.872	0.874	0.902	0.698
Peer Communication (PC)	0.894	0.898	0.918	0.695

Table 5 Construct Reliability

All values exceed the recommended thresholds, providing strong evidence of reliability and convergent validity.

4.3.3. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using both the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) and Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell, 1981).

	EWoM	FC	FS	HFC	HII	IHI	PC
EWoM							
FC	0.57						
FS	0.79	0.62					
HFC	0.81	0.57	0.81				
HII	0.81	0.51	0.70	0.83			
IHI	0.80	0.52	0.72	0.78	0.88		
PC	0.77	0.71	0.71	0.81	0.77	0.87	

Table 6 HTMT Figures

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT). According to the Fornell–Larcker criterion, the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct should exceed its correlations with other constructs, indicating that the construct shares more variance with its indicators than with other constructs. Additionally, HTMT values below the recommended threshold of 0.85 confirm that the constructs are empirically distinct. The results indicate that discriminant validity is established for all constructs in the measurement model.

Construct	eWOM	FC	FS	HFC	HII	IHI	PC
eWOM	0.863						
FC	0.535	0.828					
FS	0.711	0.573	0.838				
HFC	0.727	0.532	0.816	0.836			
HII	0.739	0.488	0.642	0.738	0.916		
IHI	0.714	0.487	0.651	0.686	0.765	0.877	
PC	0.708	0.661	0.672	0.743	0.714	0.776	0.841

Table 7 Fornell-Larcker

The Fornell-Larcker criterion is satisfied, as square roots of AVE exceed inter-construct correlations, HTMT values are mostly below 0.85.

4.3. Structural Model Assessment and Hypothesis Testing

To evaluate the structural model and test the proposed hypotheses, bootstrapping procedures were employed using SmartPLS 4 software (Magno, 2024) with 5,000 subsamples, as recommended for PLS-SEM analyses (Hair, 2017). This approach provides robust estimates of path coefficients, standard errors, t-statistics, and p-values, enabling inference on the significance of relationships. The assessment focused on direct effects, indirect effects (for mediation), total effects, explanatory power (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), and predictive relevance, while ensuring no collinearity issues ($VIF < 5$) and adequate model fit ($SRMR < 0.08$ for saturated model).

4.3.1 Path Coefficients and Direct Effects

The direct path coefficients represent the hypothesized relationships. Table below presents the bootstrapped results, including original beta values (β), t-statistics, p-values, and bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (CI).

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	95% CI (Bias-Corrected)	Supported?
H1	EWoM → FS	0.355	7.227	<0.001	[0.264, 0.456]	Yes
H2	FC → FS	0.191	5.848	<0.001	[0.123, 0.252]	Yes

H3	FS → HFC	0.816	43.566	<0.001	[0.774, 0.848]	Yes
H4	HII → FS	0.094	1.410	0.159	[-0.025, 0.233]	No
H5	IHI → FS	0.141	2.379	0.017	[0.024, 0.252]	Yes (Weak)
H6	PC → FS	0.118	2.259	0.024	[0.016, 0.218]	Yes (Weak)

Table 8 Hypothesis testing

The results indicate strong support for most hypotheses. eWOM on Instagram positively influences fashion consciousness ($\beta = 0.355$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1 and suggesting that online discussions about hijab fashion enhance awareness of trends. Family communication also positively affects fashion consciousness ($\beta = 0.191$, $p < 0.001$), confirming H2 and highlighting the role of parental guidance in hijab choices. Fashion consciousness strongly drives hijab fashion consumption ($\beta = 0.816$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3 and emphasizing its centrality in trendy hijab purchases.

Involvement with hijab influencers and peer communication positively influence fashion consciousness $\beta = 0.141$, $p = 0.017$ for H5; $\beta = 0.118$, $p = 0.024$ for H6, indicating that influencer engagement and peer discussions foster trend awareness. However, hijab influencers' influence (HII) does not significantly affect fashion consciousness ($\beta = 0.094$, $p = 0.159$), failing to support H4. This may imply that direct endorsements are less impactful than ongoing involvement. The indirect effects provide evidence of full mediation for significant direct predictors. For instance, EWOM's influence on HFC was fully mediated by FS ($\beta = 0.290$, $t = 6.932$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H7. Similar mediation was observed for FC (H8), IHI (H9), and PC (H10), underscoring FS as a pivotal mechanism in translating antecedents into hedonic outcomes. The non-significant indirect effect for HII (H11) mirrors the direct path's insignificance. Total effects

(combining direct and indirect) reinforced these findings, with eWOM showing the strongest overall impact on FS ($\beta = 0.355$) and HFC ($\beta = 0.290$), followed by FC and others.

4.3.2. Model Explanatory Power

The explanatory power of the structural model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2), which indicates the proportion of variance explained in the endogenous constructs. The results show that the model explains a substantial proportion of variance in fashion consciousness, demonstrating that the selected socialization agents collectively contribute meaningfully to its formation. Furthermore, the model exhibits strong explanatory power for hijab fashion consumption, indicating that fashion consciousness serves as a key determinant of consumption behavior. Overall, the R^2 values suggest that the proposed model possesses adequate predictive capability and provides meaningful explanatory insight into hijab fashion consumption within the studied context. The model explains 59.3% of variance in fashion consciousness and 66.6% in hijab fashion consumption

Endogenous Construct	R²	Interpretation
FS	0.593	Moderate
HFC	0.666	Substantial

Table 9 R-squared.

A p-value below 0.05 indicates statistical significance and supports the proposed hypothesis. In addition, effect sizes (f^2) were examined to evaluate the relative impact of each exogenous construct on the endogenous variables. According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively.

Path	f ²	p-value	Interpretation
eWOM → FS	0.114	0.001	Medium
FC → FS	0.049	0.013	Small
FS → HFC	1.991	<0.001	Large
IHI → FS	0.014	0.266	Negligible
PC → FS	0.009	0.303	Negligible
HII → FS	0.007	0.536	Negligible

Table 10 p and f-squared

4.3.3 Indirect Effects (Mediation Analysis)

The indirect effects confirm partial mediation by fashion consciousness for significant predictors. For example, eWOM's effect on hijab fashion consumption is mediated by fashion consciousness ($\beta = 0.290$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H7. Similar mediation holds for FC (H8), IHI (H9), and PC (H10), underscoring fashion consciousness as a key mechanism. The non-significant mediation for HII (H11) aligns with its direct path.

In summary, the results provide robust empirical support for the framework, demonstrating that eWOM, family and peer communication, and involvement with hijab influencers enhance fashion consciousness, leading to increased hijab fashion consumption. These findings contribute to understanding influencer-driven consumption in modest fashion contexts. Effect sizes (f^2) assessed the substantive impact of each predictor. EWOM had a medium effect on FS while FS exerted a large effect on HFC. Other effects were small or non-significant, consistent with path results.

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Supported?

H7	eWOM → FS → HFC	0.290	6.932	<0.001	Yes
H8	FC → FS → HFC	0.156	5.647	<0.001	Yes
H9	IHI → FS → HFC	0.115	2.387	0.017	Yes
H10	PC → FS → HFC	0.096	2.263	0.024	Yes
H11	HII → FS → HFC	0.077	1.403	0.161	No

Table 11 Hypothesis results

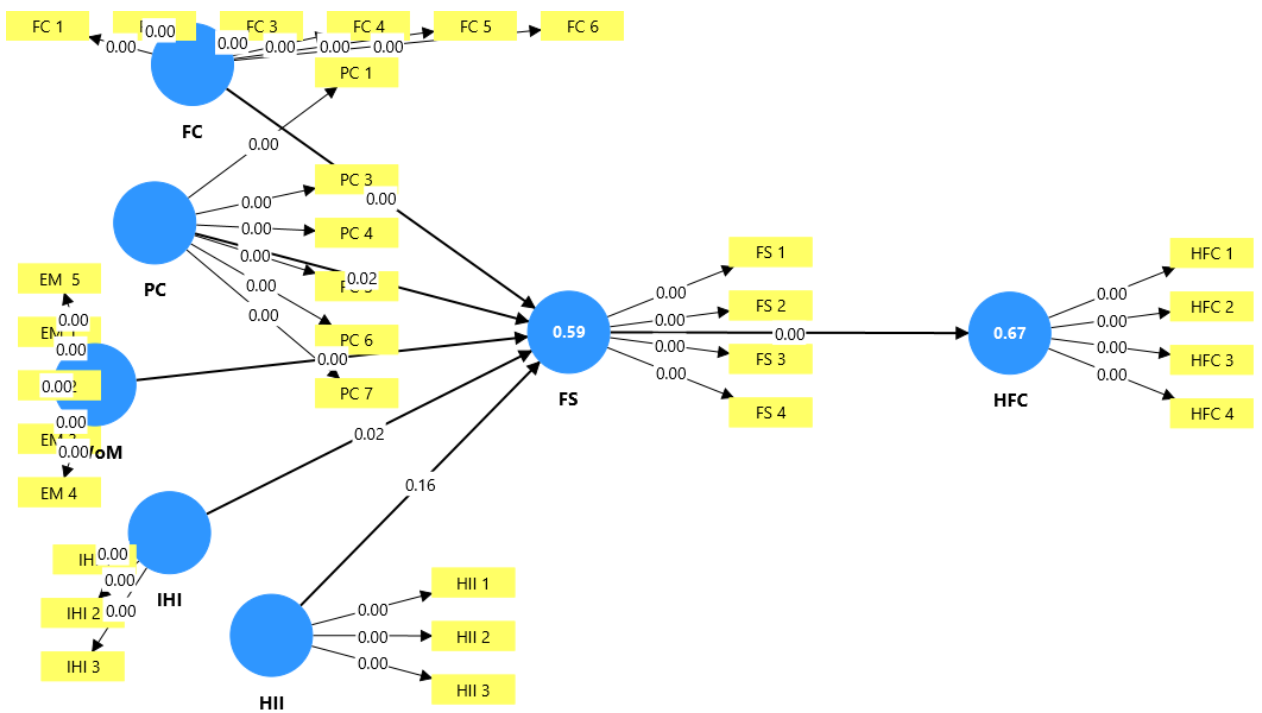


Figure 3 Bootstrapped Structural Model Results (Path Coefficients and R² Values)

4.4. Discussion of Structural Model Results

This section discusses the findings of the structural model by integrating empirical results with existing literature and Consumer Socialization Theory (CST).

Particular attention is given to the rejected hypothesis and the comparatively weak relationships observed among selected socialization agents. Figure presents the structural model with standardized path coefficients and significance levels obtained through bootstrapping in SmartPLS.

Hypothesis H4 proposed that hijab influencers' influence positively affects fashion consciousness. However, the results indicate that this relationship is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.094$, $t = 1.410$, $p = 0.159$), leading to the rejection of H4. As illustrated in Figure X, although the path coefficient is positive, its magnitude is weak and fails to reach the required level of statistical significance.

From a **Consumer Socialization Theory perspective**, this finding can be explained by the nature of the socialization process. CST posits that consumer learning and awareness develop through active interaction, observation, and internalization of norms rather than passive reception of persuasive messages (Ward, 1974). Hijab influencers' influence, as operationalized in this study, largely reflects perceived endorsement power rather than sustained interaction or engagement. As a result, while influencer endorsements may draw attention to products, they may not sufficiently contribute to deeper cognitive outcomes such as fashion consciousness.

This finding is consistent with prior research suggesting that influencer influence is more effective in shaping purchase intentions than in cultivating fashion-related awareness. (Lou C. , 2022) found that influencer credibility significantly affects purchase intention, but its effect on broader attitudinal outcomes depends on consumer engagement. Similarly, (O'cass, 2004) emphasized that fashion consciousness is a higher-order cognitive construct that develops through continuous exposure and involvement rather than isolated promotional cues.

Contextual factors further explain the rejection of H4. In Pakistan, hijab fashion is closely tied to religious values, cultural norms, and social expectations. As suggested by (Sandikci, 2010) modest fashion consumers often negotiate fashion within moral and cultural boundaries, which may reduce the persuasive power of influencer endorsements. Consumers may follow hijab influencers for inspiration or trend monitoring without internalizing their influence as a basis for fashion self-awareness. Thus, influencer influence alone may be insufficient to shape fashion consciousness in culturally sensitive consumption domains.

Several hypothesized relationships in the model, while statistically significant, exhibit relatively small effect sizes, indicating weak practical influence on fashion consciousness. These include the effects of family communication ($\beta = 0.191$, $t = 5.848$, $p < 0.001$), peer communication ($\beta = 0.118$, $t = 2.259$, $p = 0.024$), and involvement with hijab influencers ($\beta = 0.141$, $t = 2.379$, $p = 0.017$). The corresponding effect sizes (f^2) for these paths range from small to negligible, as shown in the structural model results.

According to CST, socialization outcomes are rarely driven by a single dominant agent; rather, they emerge from the combined and cumulative influence of multiple agents (Ward, 1974). Family communication has long been recognized as a foundational socialization agent that transmits values and norms (Moschis, 1985) (Dotson, 2010). However, among young adults, particularly those who are digitally active, family influence may function more as a background constraint than as a direct driver of fashion awareness. This explains the statistically significant yet weak effect of family communication on fashion consciousness.

Similarly, peer communication shows a positive but modest relationship with fashion consciousness. Prior studies have found that peers influence fashion adoption and

validation, especially in youth segments (O'cass, 2004). However, in the context of hijab fashion, peer influence may be moderated by religious norms and family expectations, limiting its direct impact on fashion consciousness. The weak coefficient suggests that peers contribute to reinforcing trends rather than actively shaping awareness.

The relationship between involvement with hijab influencers and fashion consciousness, although significant, also demonstrates a small effect size. This finding aligns with previous research who noted that follower engagement does not always translate into strong attitudinal change (De Veirman, Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude, 2017). While involvement reflects exposure and interaction, CST suggests that learning outcomes depend on depth, relevance, and personal identification. Engagement that is casual or entertainment-oriented may therefore have limited influence on the formation of fashion consciousness.

In contrast to the weak and rejected antecedent relationships, the effect of fashion consciousness on hijab fashion consumption is exceptionally strong and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.816$, $t = 43.566$, $p < 0.001$). This relationship also demonstrates a large effect size ($f^2 = 1.991$), indicating substantial practical significance.

This finding strongly supports CST's proposition that socialization agents influence consumption behavior indirectly by shaping internal cognitive states before behavioral outcomes occur (Ward, 1974). Once fashion consciousness is established, it becomes the primary driver of hijab fashion consumption, outweighing the direct influence of any single socialization agent. This result is consistent with prior studies that identify fashion consciousness as a key predictor of fashion involvement and consumption behavior (Hassan, 2016) (O'cass, 2004).

Furthermore, the model explains 59.3% of the variance in fashion consciousness and 66.6% of the variance in hijab fashion consumption, indicating moderate to substantial explanatory power. These values suggest that while individual socialization agents exert modest effects, their combined influence channeled through fashion consciousness effectively explains consumption behavior in the hijab fashion context.

Overall, the findings reveal that not all socialization agents contribute equally to fashion consciousness. The rejection of H4 highlights the limited role of influencer persuasion in shaping deeper cognitive awareness, while the weak relationships of family, peers, and influencer involvement emphasize the cumulative nature of consumer socialization. Consistent with Consumer Socialization Theory, the results demonstrate that fashion consciousness acts as the central mechanism through which social influences are translated into hijab fashion consumption.

By integrating empirical evidence with established theory and prior research, this discussion refines the understanding of digital and interpersonal socialization in modest fashion contexts and explains why engagement-based learning is more influential than direct persuasion.

Chapter 5

Conclusion, and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction

This chapter summarizes the key findings of the study and discusses their theoretical and practical implications. It also outlines the study's limitations and provides directions for future research.

5.2. Conclusion

This study examined the role of traditional and digital consumer socialization agents in shaping hijab fashion consumption, with a particular focus on the mediating role of fashion consciousness. Grounded in Consumer Socialization Theory, the research investigated how electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), family communication, peer communication, and social media influencers contribute to the development of fashion consciousness and subsequent hijab fashion consumption among women in Pakistan.

The findings reveal that fashion consciousness plays a central and decisive role in hijab fashion consumption. The strong and significant relationship between fashion consciousness and hijab fashion consumption confirms that awareness, interest, and engagement with fashion are critical psychological mechanisms through which social influences translate into actual consumption behavior. This result reinforces the core premise of Consumer Socialization Theory, which posits that socialization agents influence consumer behavior indirectly through internal cognitive outcomes (Ward, 1974).

Among the antecedents of fashion consciousness, electronic word-of-mouth emerged as a significant socialization agent, highlighting the growing importance of peer-generated information in digital environments. Family communication and peer communication were also found to have significant but relatively weak effects, suggesting that while traditional interpersonal agents remain relevant, their influence functions more as a reinforcing mechanism rather than a dominant driver of fashion awareness in contemporary contexts. Similarly, involvement with hijab influencers demonstrated a positive but modest contribution to fashion consciousness, indicating that engagement with influencer content can enhance awareness, albeit to a limited extent.

In contrast, the study found that hijab influencers' influence does not significantly affect fashion consciousness, leading to the rejection of the corresponding hypothesis. This finding suggests that perceived influencer persuasion alone is insufficient to shape deeper cognitive awareness related to hijab fashion. From a theoretical perspective, this result underscores the distinction between passive exposure and active social learning, emphasizing that fashion consciousness develops through sustained interaction, relevance, and internalization rather than one-way promotional influence. The cultural and religious sensitivity associated with hijab fashion further limits the extent to which influencer endorsements are internalized as a basis for fashion self-concept.

Overall, the study contributes to the literature by extending Consumer Socialization Theory to the context of digital modest fashion, demonstrating that not all socialization agents exert equal influence on fashion consciousness. The findings highlight the need to differentiate between engagement-based socialization and persuasive influence when examining the role of social media influencers. By identifying fashion consciousness as the key mediating mechanism, this research provides a nuanced

understanding of hijab fashion consumption and offers a foundation for future studies exploring culturally embedded fashion behaviors in digital environments.

5.3. Limitations of the Study

Despite merits of this study there are certainly some limitations as well. The study may depict generalization of hijab and modest fashion practices in Pakistan because of its rich culture and variations in how women view the idea of fashionable hijab, it might differ across the rural-urban areas of the country or it might be different for different digital usage. This study did not consider the effect of religiosity rather focused on more contemporary variables like eWOM and Hijab Influencers, and it focused on only one social media platform i.e. Instagram.

This research is cross sectional, that means it is only reflecting data collected at a certain point. It is also quantitative so it may not accurately measure constructs like fashion consciousness. This study relies on self-reported data which may contain inaccuracies and cause bias. Lastly it used PLS-SEM for analysis which is well suited for models like these but mix analysis approach may offer better insights.

5.3. Recommendations and Future Direction

The current research focuses on hijab fashion consumption by incorporating consumer socialization theory to study how socialization agents may shape an individual's fashion consciousness and how that leads to hijab fashion consumption. As consumer socialization theory is pretty diverse in its application there are multiple avenues to expand.

This research is cross-sectional research, which means the data collected is for a specific time frame, future studies can adopt a longitudinal research design to understand

how this behavior. This study is quantitative in nature, which may be suitable for this particular study but as modesty and what people may consider fashion consciousness both are subjective variables, so a qualitative approach to understand the behavior better might be better.

This study does not incorporate socio-structural variables rather focusing on socialization agents that may lead to the outcomes but socio-structural variables like religiosity, socioeconomic status can be extremely important in understanding what are factors other than family, peers and social media shape a person's consciousness of fashion. This study could be extended by incorporating platform specific influencers and including aspects like specific hijab brands that could widen how consumers behave specific to multiple constructs.

5.4. Theoretical Implications

This study makes several important theoretical contributions to Consumer Socialization Theory by demonstrating its applicability within contemporary digital and culturally specific contexts. The findings confirm that consumer socialization is no longer limited to traditional interpersonal agents such as family and peers but has expanded to include digital mechanisms such as electronic word-of-mouth and social media engagement.

By identifying fashion consciousness as a mediating variable, the study advances CST by illustrating the psychological process through which socialization agents influence consumption behavior. Rather than exerting direct effects alone, socialization agents shape awareness, interest, and engagement with fashion, which subsequently translate into hijab fashion consumption. This supports the theoretical argument that attitudes and consciousness precede behavioral outcomes.

Furthermore, the rejection of H4 refines existing theory by suggesting that not all digital agents function equally as socialization agents. While involvement and interaction align with CST's learning-based framework, perceived influencer influence alone may not be sufficient to foster fashion consciousness. This distinction adds nuance to the understanding of digital socialization and challenges the assumption that influencer power is universally effective across all consumer outcomes.

5.5. Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer valuable insights for hijab fashion brands, marketers, and influencers operating within Pakistan's modest fashion industry. Given the strong influence of electronic word-of-mouth on Instagram, brands should prioritize strategies that encourage consumer interaction, discussion, and content sharing rather than relying solely on traditional advertising or influencer endorsements.

Additionally, the continued importance of family and peer communication suggests that marketing strategies should remain culturally sensitive and socially grounded. Campaigns that acknowledge family approval, peer validation, and cultural norms are likely to resonate more strongly with hijab-wearing consumers.

Finally, as this study specifically highlights Instagram as a key platform shaping hijab fashion consciousness, brands and influencers should tailor their strategies to Instagram's visual and interactive features, leveraging reels, stories, and comment-based engagement to foster meaningful consumer participation.

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