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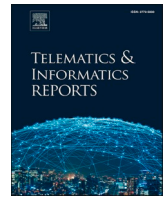


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Predictors and buying happiness outcome from cosmetic brands engagement on Instagram

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ABSTRACT

Driven by the platform's interactive, visual, and dynamic nature, consumer brand engagement (CBE) on Instagram is emerging as a critical area of interest in digital marketing and consumer behaviour. Consumers engage with brands on Instagram and other social media platforms to form any or all of the three CBE dimensions of emotional, cognitive, and behavioural bonds with brands. Both marketing-related and consumer-related benefits can be gained from CBE, yet much remains unknown about the consumer-related benefits and predictors of CBE. The uses and gratification theory suggests that CBE, even on social media spaces, should generate personal/consumer benefits. CBE varies digitally depending on the subject (sample), object (brand type) and context (culture/country). Thus, guided by the uses and gratification theory, we examined how much South African consumers' involvement and innovativeness impact the three dimensions of CBE with cosmetic brands on Instagram and the resultant buying happiness. Data was quantitatively collected from 203 middle-class consumers through snowballing sampling. The structural equation modelling results revealed that consumer involvement and innovativeness positively impacted all three dimensions of CBE. Except for the cognitive CBE dimension, the affection and activation CBE dimensions significantly predicted buying happiness. The demonstration from this study that psychological benefits are gained from social media CBE should strengthen social media brand positioning and consumer-brand relationships endeavours. Theoretically, literature on CBE, digital, relationship marketing and consumer behaviour is enriched.

1. Introduction

Although consumer buying happiness is growing in relevance and can be derived even from brand experiences and engagements without materially buying the products [1,2], growing research on consumer brand engagement (CBE) on social media ignores the buying happiness outcome from CBE [3]. For example and acknowledging the importance of generating CBE in the current explosive social media era, Santos et al. [4] studied 134 articles over three decades to examine the dimensions, predictors and outcomes of social media CBE. Surprisingly, their results found only one mention of buying happiness as a social media CBE outcome from the dozens of reported outcomes. Buying happiness, Cachero-Martinez, Garcia-Rodriguez and Salido-Andres [5] regret, lacks a unique definition because it is interchangeably used to mean life satisfaction, well-being, and buying/purchase utility [5,6]. Sameer et al.

[7], Cachero-Marinez et al. [5], and Gutierrez-Rodriguez et al. [3] highlight that buying happiness embodies both hedonic and eudemonic aspects. This is in consideration of the fact that buying happiness can be generated not only from fulfilling the material and physical purchase objectives but also from the experienced joy of engaging with admired and favourite brands [2] in varied spaces, including social media spaces [8].

Consumers, and not only marketers, should benefit from CBE [9,10]. The consumers' benefits may be in the form of social relationships from social brand experience, self-fulfilment [11], consumer happiness [10] and subjective well-being [8]. Consumers may have to enjoy these socio-psychological rewards before marketing benefits emerge according to the Uses and Gratification theory (UGT) [8–10] UGT suggests that consumers use certain types of media to engage and interact with the firm, friends, families, and brands because of the expected personal

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benefits, even if it is social (sense of belonging) and psychological (happiness) benefits [10]. However, Kaur et al. [9] and Osei-Frimpong et al. [8] worry that empirically derived insights into consumer-related CBE drivers and outcomes/benefits remain limited.

In terms of the drivers, a decade of research starting with Brodie et al. [12] shows that consumer involvement is the key driver of CBE. While Hollebeek et al. [13], Dwivedi [14], Harrigan et al. [15], Algharabat et al. [16] and Obilo, Chefor, and Saleh [17] show that consumer involvement impacts the three dimensions of CBE directly Cheung, Pires and Rosenberger III [18] suggest that consumer involvement influences CBE dimensions through ongoing search behavior. Irrespective of whether consumer involvement makes a direct or indirect impact, these studies demonstrate that for social media brand engagement, consumer involvement is important in creating all three CBE dimensions of affection, cognition and activation. Will this consumer involvement impact be applicable when consumers engage with cosmetic brands on Instagram, which McInnes [19] reports, attracts the highest makeup and skincare products influencers in South Africa with millions of followers?

Another possible consumer-related CBE driver which is lacking in CBE literature, is consumer innovativeness. With the growing appeal of brand engagement on social media and digital spaces, consumer innovativeness is required for the spaces' manoeuvring, content creation and brand-cocreation [20,21]. This innovativeness is also needed to navigate and fully enjoy the entertaining, informative, emotional and commercial contents of the growing technology-enabled and digital spaces [22].

Regarding CBE outcomes, marketing-related and not consumer-related outcomes dominate, even with reports that CBE provides both economic and social benefits [17]. For example, extant studies show that the marketing benefits from CBE are brand usage intent [13], brand loyalty [23], brand attitude [18], word-of-mouth [24], and customer-brand relationship building, all of which provide marketers a competitive advantage [25]. For consumer-related benefits, Osei-Frimpong et al. [8] empirically found that consumer subjective well-being can be generated from CBE. However, Hollebeek and Belk [26] contend that when social media and other technology-facilitated brand engagements are concerned, other positive emotions outcomes remain a gap to be studied.

Thus, from the foregoing and guided by the UGT, this study examined the impact of South African consumers' involvement and innovativeness on Hollebeek et al.'s [13] three dimensions of CBE with cosmetic brands on Instagram platforms. It also examines how much of the three CBE dimensions (i.e. cognitive, affection and activation) impact cosmetics buying happiness on Instagram. The Instagram platform is selected because, firstly, most research (e.g. [8]) studies social media in general and not its specific platform. Secondly, although McInnes [19] shows that Facebook is the most used social media platform in South Africa, Duh's [27] study on the social media platforms that ignited interest in cosmetics revealed that it was Instagram, followed by YouTube and not Facebook.

2. Literature review

2.1. Customer brand engagement on social media: reviewing South Africa's available social media platforms

2.1.1. Definitions and dimensions of customer brand engagement in social media spaces

Online and social media platforms have surged and revolutionized how firms, brands, consumers, their peers and family interact, create content, participate in brand-related discourses, and ultimately co-create brands [28,29]. These are what Hollebeek et al. [30] and Osei-Frimpong et al. [8] regard as social media brand engagements. Osei-Frimpong et al. [8], p2441 define social media brand engagement as the "connection, creation and communication of the brand's story between the firm and consumers (both existing and prospects) using brand or brand-related language, images and meanings via the firm's social

networking sites resulting from motivational drivers". Being one of the seminar authors of CBE, Brodie et al. [12], p.254 define CBE as the "psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g. brand). These definitions indicate that consumers proactively contribute to brand interactions and engagements instead of passively receiving brand-related prompts from marketers. Additionally, to the extent that CBE is a psychological state [12], and emanating from motivational factors [8,30], a psychological outcome such as happiness should be expected. Furthermore, CBE should also be driven by individual/consumer factors, as Osei-Frimpong et al. [8] suggest, and not only by marketing factors.

As hinted by various researchers (see e.g. [4,10,13,30]), CBE, either offline or online, is a multi-dimensional construct mainly with three dimensions of cognitive, emotional and behavioural [31], or cognitive, affection and activation [13] dimensions. Dwivedi [14] also identified three CBE dimensions of vigor (consumers' effort investment in brand interaction), dedication (consumers' sense of enthusiasm, significance, inspiration, pride about the brand), and absorption (consumers pleasantly immersed in brand interactions). Specifically in the social media context, Gómez, Lopez, and Molina [15] identified five CBE dimensions of identification, enthusiasm, attention, absorption and interaction, which they describe on page 197. Although these dimensions scored well in reliability and validity tests, this study used the three dimensions of Hollebeek et al. [12] because they have been commonly used and performed very well in scales' reliability and validity in emerging markets such as South Africa [32], Jordan [16], China [33], and a developed country like USA [15]. Notwithstanding, Dwivedi [14] highlights some commonalities in the CBE definitions and dimensions conceptualizations. Some of the commonalities that Dwivedi [14], p.101 identified and in his own words are, "participation in", "connection with", "a multifaceted state of mind, comprising cognitive, emotional and behavioural elements". He further noted that the CBE concept and dimensions are context-specific, with varied predictors and outcomes.

Hollebeek et al. [13], p.154 define the cognitive CBE dimension as "a consumer's level of brand-related thought processing and elaboration in a particular consumer brand interaction". The affective CBE dimension is defined as "a consumer's degree of positive brand-related affect in a particular consumer/brand interaction". The activation dimension is "a consumer's level of energy, effort and time spent on a brand in a particular consumer/brand interaction", which is the behavioral dimension [13], p.154. A brand, according to Hollebeek et al. [13], p.154, is the "totality of all stakeholders' mental associations about the organization and related objects", which covers the utilitarian, hedonic and symbolic aspects. Thus, if consumers enjoy these aspects from engaging on an offline basis, they should also enjoy them while engaging on online and social media platforms.

Considering that the competition among marketers to create consumer brand awareness, grab attention, interest, and preference is fierce and intensifying daily, building CBE was one of the top priorities among some 124 Chief Marketing Officers surveyed in 2013 [14]. Marketers' interest in CBE has continued to grow [34], especially as it is one of the key steps in building consumer-brand relationships [30]. It is therefore of no surprise that CBE has been continually included as a research priority by the Marketing Science Institute (MSI) since 2010 and even between 2020 and 2022. Thus, studying and developing effective brand strategies to enhance deeper CBE is a key research priority [35,36]. CBE is enhanced if integrated models of CBE with varied predictors and outcomes in social media spaces are developed and tested [31], especially in various cultures [37].

2.1.2. Usage and availability of social media platforms globally and in South Africa

The worldwide social media monthly usage by the number of people, according to Gómez Lopez, Molina [31], was expected to be a third of the world's population by 2021. This is about three billion monthly social media users. Nikolinakou, Phau, and Kwon [37] report that in

2022, there were about 4.62 billion global social media users who spent an average of 2.27 h per day on the sites. By 2024, out of the 5.45 billion global Internet users, the global social media usage number had increased to 5.17 billion users, which is about 63.7 % of the world's population [38].

The usage rate varies per region and country, with Asian and Northern European countries ranking at the top [38]. In Ghana, Osei-Frimpong et al. [8] report that the average time per day spent on social media is 65 mins. Young adult consumers, who are a large market segment, spend more than 65 mins per day on social media [32].

In South Africa, McInnes [19] and Cowling [39] report that the country is ranked third, with the largest number of internet users on the African continent. As of early 2022, there were about 43 million (about 70 % of South Africa's population) active South African internet users, only following the more populous Nigeria and Egypt. Out of the 43.48

million internet users in South Africa, those active on social media comprise some 25.8 million (48.8 % of the population), with most using WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram (Insert Fig. 1). The top reasons for South Africans' social media visits are interactions with friends and family. Social media in South Africa has become a part of people's routines and culture. The average time that South African consumers spent on social media per day per user was 3 h and 44 min, making up 38.7 % of the overall active time online [19]. Thus, it will be important for marketers to harness the popular social media platforms for brand engagement and purchases. (Insert Fig. 2)

In line with the global trend that shows that Instagram is the third most commonly used social media platform [38], Instagram is also the third most commonly used platform in South Africa [19]. However, finding and engaging with products and services on social media by South African consumers is number 7 priority (Fig. 1) [19]. Whether

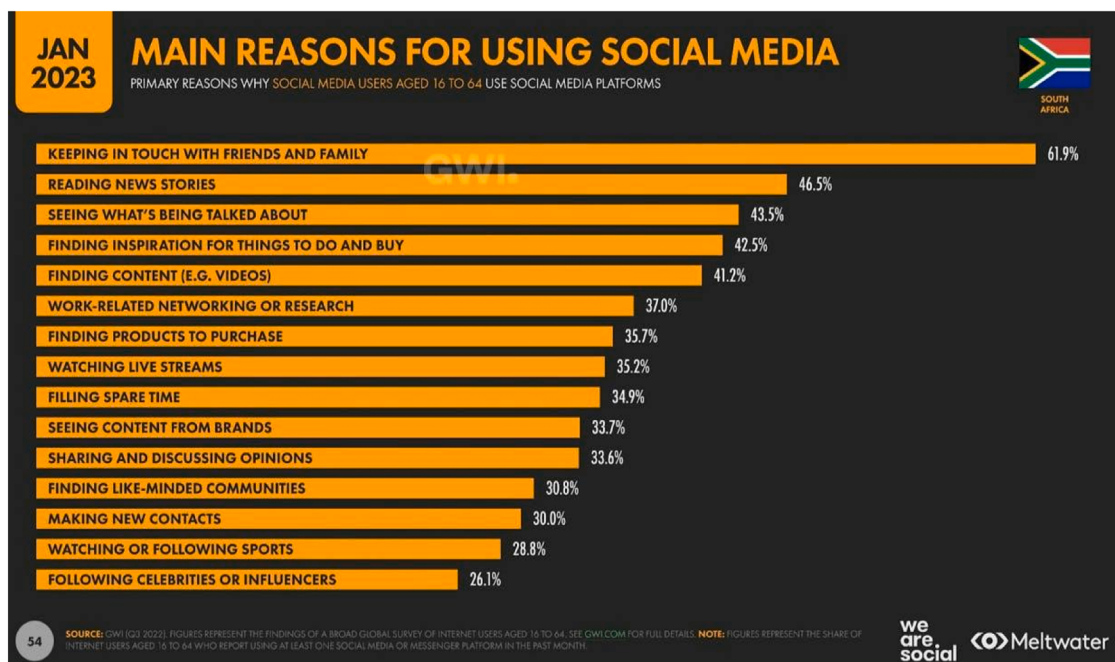
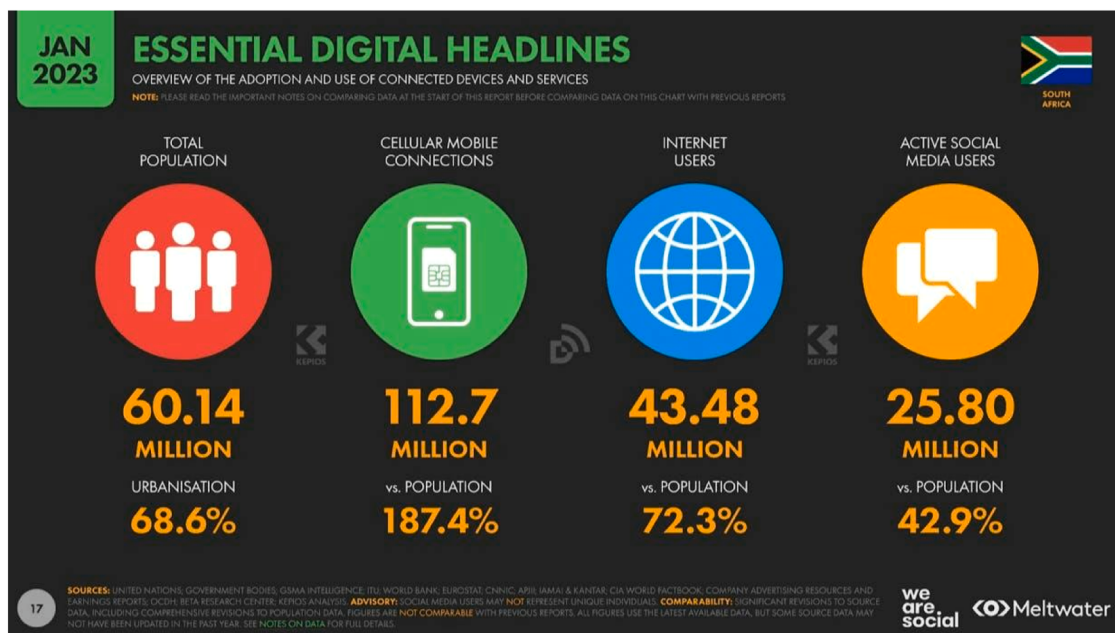


Fig. 1. Social Media Usage Rate and Main Reasons South Africans Use Social Media.
Source: (McInnes, 2023).

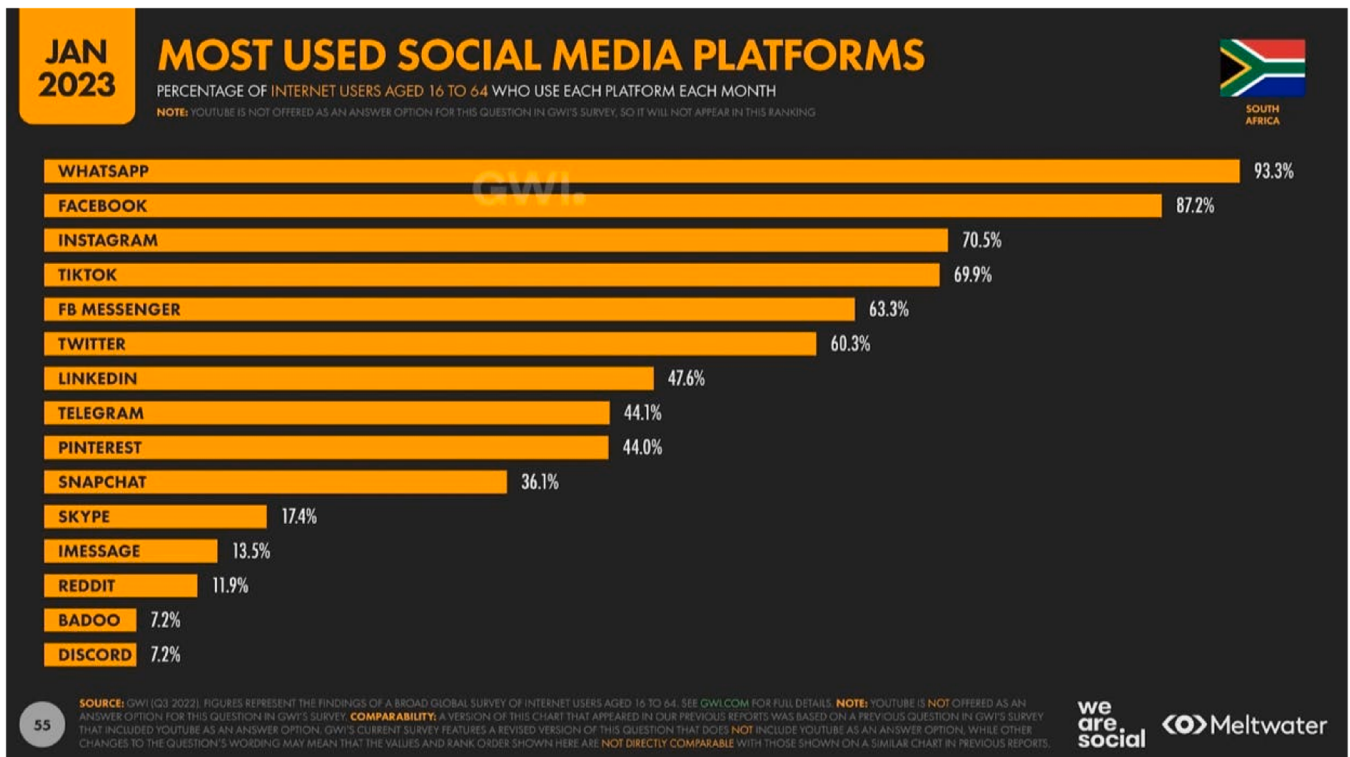


Fig. 2. Most Used Social Media Platforms in South Africa.
Source: (McInnes, 2023).

they derive psychology benefit, such as buying happiness as Razmus et al. [2] suggest, is one of the questions this study is to answer.

2.2. Theoretical and empirical literature and hypotheses development

2.2.1. Underpinning concepts, models, and theories

This study borrows from Hollebeek et al.'s [13] model, the uses and gratification theory and an element (i.e. consumer innovativeness) of Hong et al.'s [20] model to develop a conceptual model and its hypotheses. The Hollebeek et al.'s [13] model posits that CBE on social media has three dimensions of cognitive processing, affection and activation. The dimensions are all determined by consumer involvement and positively impact self-brand connection and brand usage intent. The model was developed and guided by the service-dominant logic theory. The theory, first proposed by Vargo and Lusch [40], stipulates that "value is dynamically co-created by actors through the recombination or bundling of resources" and the value is "value-in-use or value-in-context" [41], p.5. This means that the co-creation of value during consumer brand engagement requires marketers' efforts in developing and placing brands on particular platforms. It also requires consumers' resources in terms of effort, time, and involvement, either by suggesting improvements, sharing brand benefits with friends, or seeking advice on best-use methods. This hints at why Hollebeek et al. [13], p.163 suggest consumer involvement as a predictor of brand engagement on social media. They define consumer brand involvement as "an individual's level of interest and personal relevance in relation to a focal object/decision in terms of one's basic values, goals and self-concept". If consumer involvement drives brand engagement, what about consumer innovativeness that can create curiosity and ambitions to navigate social media sites to contribute to the brand co-creation [20]?

The model of Hong et al. [20] suggests that for functional and hedonic brand engagement benefits to be enjoyed, consumer innovativeness is needed. While Foxall, Goldsmith, and Brown [42] view consumer innovativeness as a personality trait that generates the tendency to be the first to engage and buy new products/brands as early adopters, Hong

et al. [20], p.265 describe it as inherent traits including "psychological factors such as curiosity, ambition and rationality alongside sociological elements such as exposure to media sources, and searching for sources of information concerning innovations". In terms of adopting social media for brand engagement and participation intentions, Kamboj and Sharma [43], p.526 define consumer innovativeness as "the cognitive pattern of consumers, their intrinsic qualities and behavioural predispositions" that is innate and gives consumers the ability to skilfully engage with brands, post and participate in contents developments.

Huang and Zhou [44] employ the UGT to explain that consumers participate, engage and shop for brands online and in social media spaces not only for the brands but for some personal reasons or motivations. One such motivation, as aforementioned, could be buying happiness or subjective well-being, which is lacking in the growing studies of social media brand engagement [2,8]. Thus, the integration of ideas from the UGT, Hollebeek et al.'s [13] and Hong et al.'s [20] models is used in this study to fill the gaps in the social media brand engagement literature. From the UGT and the two models, this study's conceptual model and hypotheses are developed.

2.2.2. Consumer brand involvement and CBE's three dimensions

Hollebeek et al.'s [13] CBE model, tested in a Facebook social media context, revealed that consumer brand involvement (CBI) positively impacted all three CBE dimensions of cognitive processing, affection and activation. They questioned whether on other social media platforms, such as Instagram, the results will be applicable. Also questioning whether the consumer involvement-CBE dimensions relationship will be applicable for other brand types like tourism brands in the USA (e.g. Kayak, Expedia, and TripAdvisor) and advertised on social media, Harrigan et al. [15] tested and found that CBI impacted all three of Hollebeek et al.'s [13] CBE dimensions. In Jordan, Algharabat et al. [16] also found that Hollebeek et al.'s [13] CBE dimensions were all impacted by CBI. Recently, smartphone brands advertised on social media in an emerging market like China, Gao and Shao [33] confirmed the CBI-CBE dimensions relationships. Thus, for cosmetic brands advertised on

Instagram in South Africa, it can be hypothesized that,

H1a-c: Consumer brand involvement will positively impact (a) the cognitive, (b) affection, and (c) activation CBE dimensions.

2.2.3. Consumer innovativeness and CBE's three dimensions

Consumer innovativeness is defined as the degree to which individuals are more likely to seek out or adopt new ideas/information, products, media, stimulation, and technology than their community counterparts. This is driven by the psychological need for novelty, uniqueness, curiosity, ambitiousness, and social identification [20,45]. Consumer innovativeness can be innate, a personality trait, or acquired from social exposure, learning, and experiences with innovations and technology [45,46]. According to Midgley and Dowling, [47], p.235], who are one of the seminar authors of consumer innovativeness, "all members of society possess a greater or lesser degree of innovativeness". Consumers with high innovativeness are quickly exposed to innumerable social media information on brands [43] daily [20]. With the exposure, Hong et al. [20] found a relationship between the consumer innovativeness, the cognitive, and affection CBE dimensions. Describing brand engagement as a process by which consumers participate and co-create brands to align with their self-concept [2,48], Goldsmith et al. [48] found that consumer innovativeness is a strong predictor of brand engagement but did not study the three CBE dimensions. In Poland, Bartkowiak and Michalak [49] found that when innovated products meet the consumers' expectations, they attract consumer innovativeness and resultant brand engagement. In a social media context, although a specific social media platform was not studied, Khan and Wahab [50] found a significant positive relationship between consumer-perceived innovativeness and brand engagement. Kamboj and Sharma [43] found that consumer innovativeness is one of the reasons that consumers will adopt, participate and engage with brands on social media. Thus, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H2a-c Consumer innovativeness will positively impact (a) the cognitive, (b) affection, and (c) activation CBE dimensions.

2.2.4. CBE three dimensions and buying happiness

Academics and practitioners are increasingly interested in CBE through social media because of its varied impact on consumer behavior. For example, it has been empirically proven that it leads to the intention to use the brand [13], the intention to be loyal [14], creates self-brand and brand usage intentions [13], and customer-based brand equity [8,16]. CBE on social media also leads to word-of-mouth [51] and improved consumer-brand relationship quality [31]. Few studies have revealed that CBE on social media can lead to buying happiness [2] and subjective well-being [8]. While de Azambuja et al. [10] show that consumers will be happy with their brand engagement only when delighted and satisfied, other studies (e.g. [51,52]) reveal that brand engagement on social media directly generates pleasure and arousal like joy, excitement and happiness.

People, including consumers, strive to gain happiness from their daily offline and online engagements. Some of the engagements are those with brands on social media spaces/networks [8] for purchase decisions. The purchase may be experiential and material, from which buying happiness is expected, as suggested by Razmus et al. [2]. The experiential brand purchase on which this study is focused embodies virtual brand connectedness, evaluations, discovery and appreciation of brand-self-congruity, the wait and anticipation for physical consumption after virtual consumption [2,53]. All these elements, according to the self-determination theory, may satisfy the psychological needs of competence, relatedness, autonomy, and general psychological well-being [54,55].

Razmus, Razmus and Grabner-Kräuter [56] examined the impact of brand engagement on joy and excitement at the pre-purchase and purchase stages. They found that even when consumers engage with brands at the pre-purchase stage without buying, they get psychological benefits of joy and excitement. Particularly, when consumers' attention is

focused on a brand and they are mentally interested/absorbed by it (i.e. cognitive CBE) [13], how they evaluate the encounter according to the cognitive appraisal theory can trigger positive emotions. The emotions can be appeal, joy, excitement, and buying happiness [2]. When the brand interest and evaluation align with consumers' goals (e.g. looking good), values and beliefs, excitement increases, and affective/emotional CBE develops to the point where brand content sharing, commenting and co-creation starts (i.e. activation CBE). The experiences at each of the three CBE dimensions stages "determine positive product-evoked emotions" [[2], p.333], one of which is buying happiness [2]. Thus, in the context of cosmetic brand engagement on Instagram, it can be hypothesized that,

H3a-c: The (a) cognitive, (b) affection, and (c) activation CBE dimensions will positively impact consumers' pre-purchase buying happiness

Fig. 3 is the study's conceptual model that delineates the hypotheses.

3. Research methods

3.1. Data collection method and sample statistics

We used quantitative methods to test the hypotheses. To be sure that we got respondents who had Instagram accounts and could afford cosmetics brands, we surveyed females and males in the middle-income bracket using a snowballing sampling method. The researchers posted the questionnaire on social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and WhatsApp groups of residents in middle-income class suburbs. We used screening questions as to whether they have encountered, engaged and bought cosmetic brands advertised on Instagram. We defined brand engagement and middle class at the beginning of the questionnaire and gave access to the rest of the questionnaire only to respondents who answered yes to being middle-class and had engaged with cosmetics brands on Instagram.

Nivea brands were used as an example of cosmetics brands because in South Africa, the brand covers a wide range of products for males, females and even children's cosmetic products. So, the Nivea brand is well-known. Instagram is a visual platform more frequently used by middle-class consumers who are reported to be easily influenced by cosmetic influencers and ads on Instagram. They also have the disposable income to purchase innovative products through innovative platforms like Instagram [57]. The snowballing started with the researchers distributing the online questionnaire link to friends and colleagues on social media spaces and soliciting sharing with other co-workers and friends. The total usable data collected was 203.

Of the 203 respondents, 69.46 % were female and only 28.08 % were male, with 2.24 % preferring not to declare their gender. The high number of females could imply that mostly females qualified as Instagram users and have engaged with cosmetics brands on Instagram. In terms of age groups, 43.84 % were young adults who were between the ages of 18 and 34. Most of the young adults have a university education and some have just entered the job market. Young adults are influential and spend most of their time on social media. 56.16 % of the respondents were adults between the ages of 35 and 55+, and most are working. The employment status of the 203 respondents showed that 75.37 % were employed, 6.4 % were pensioners, 3.45 % were unemployed, and 14.78 % were postgraduate students, most of whom work.

3.2. Measures and common method variance

We adapted previously used scales to measure the constructs with a 7-point Likert scale. Consumer brand involvement and engagement were measured with Hollebeek et al.'s [13] 8-item and extended 14-item scales, respectively. The 14-item scale measured the three dimensions of cognitive processing (4 items), affection (5 items) and activation (5 items). CBE adapted to the Instagram social media platform in the context of cosmetics brands. In the same context, consumer brand

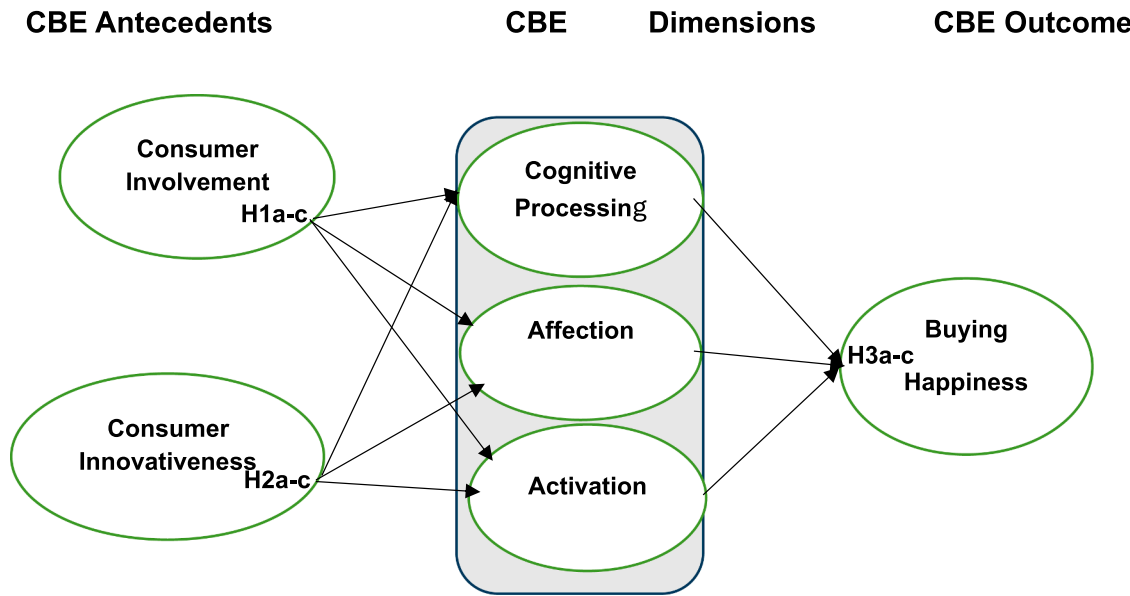


Fig. 3. The Study's Conceptual Model.

innovativeness was measured with Hong et al.'s [20] 4-item scale, while buying happiness was measured with a 4-item scale adapted from Razmus et al.'s [2] scale. For example, the items questioned respondents on how happy it makes them when they engage with brands to purchase them and how much the engagement contributes to their happiness in life on a 7-point Likert scale of (1 = not at all, and 7 = very much).

Common method variance (CMV) may occur in self-reported surveys and when the same sources respond to the variables [31]. One way to avoid this, as recommended by Ali et al. [58], is to collect data from varied demographics. Thus, although we collected data from middle-class consumers, we did so from non-students and students from varied socio-economic backgrounds. Secondly, we placed the demographic questions between the dependent and independent variables to disrupt any tendency of response patterns [31,58]. Thirdly, we used Harman's single factor method whereby an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of all the items was run to determine whether they fall into one factor. If not, is there any factor with a variance explained above 50 % as recommended by Podsakoff et al. [59] The EFA produced six factors, with the first factor having a variance explained of 40.8 %. These tests indicate that there was no problem with CMV.

4. Results

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to analyse this study's data because of its multivariate nature. Although partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) and Covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) are two commonly used methods to conduct SEM, this study preferred the CB-SEM mainly because it calculates model fit and is best to test and confirm models and hypotheses [60,61]. The analyses started with a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the IBM Amos 24 software.

4.1. Measurement model fit assessments

The indices we used to assess the model fit included Chi-square/df (X^2/df), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Norm Fit Index (NFI) and Random Measure of Standard Error Approximation (RMSEA). The results obtained were (X^2/df) = 1.547, which is within the recommended ≤ 3 (Kline, 2005), RMSEA = 0.052, within the recommended ≤ 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), CFI = 0.955, GFI = 0.905, NFI = 0.902, IFI = 0.954, and TLI = 0.946, all of which are within the recommended > 0.90

threshold [62].

4.2. Constructs' reliability and validity

Construct reliability was measured with Cronbach alpha and composite reliability. The results are in Table 1 and show that the Cronbach alpha varies between 0.800 and 0.950. The composite reliability figures vary between 0.799 and 0.950. These all satisfy the recommended 0.70 [60]. The validity was measured using convergent validity and through factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE).

Table 1 shows that the AVE and factor loadings figures all met the threshold of 0.50 [63]. The discriminant validity figure is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that the values are all less than 0.85, thus meeting the recommended ≤ 0.9 (Hair et al. [60]), thus confirming a satisfactory discriminant validity.

4.3. Structural model for hypotheses testing

The testing of the structural model started with the assessment of model fit which produced results of (X^2/df) = 1.547, RMSEA = 0.052, CFI = 0.969, GFI = 0.907, NFI = 0.917, IFI = 0.970, and TLI = 0.961, all of which are within the recommended thresholds [62]. The hypotheses testing results from the structural model are in Fig. 4 and Table 3.

Table 3 and Fig. 4 show that out of the nine hypotheses proposed, eight were significant. H1a proposed that consumer involvement will positively impact the cognitive dimension of CBE. This hypothesis was confirmed with (β = 0.605; p < 0.01). This means that when consumers' involvement with cosmetics on Instagram increases the higher their level of cognitive brand engagement.

H1b and H1c posited that consumer involvement will positively influence the affection (H1b) and activation (H1c) CBE dimensions. These hypotheses were supported with (β = 0.598; p < 0.01) and (β = 0.458; p < 0.01), respectively. H2a to H2c proposes that consumer innovativeness will positively impact the cognitive (H2a), affection (H2b) and activation (H2c) dimensions of CBE. The results revealed that the cognitive, affection and activation CBE dimensions were all positively influenced by consumer innovativeness with (β = 0.670; p < 0.001); (β = 0.728; p < 0.001) and (β = 0.740; p < 0.001) respectively.

H3a to H3c proposed that the cognitive (H3a), affection (H3b) and activation (H3c) CBE dimensions will positively impact buying happiness. With the exception of the cognitive dimension that did not

Table 1
Constructs Mean, Reliability and validity.

Research Construct		Descriptive Statistics				Cronbach's Test		C.R. Value	AVE Value	Factor Loading
		Mean Value		Standard Deviation		Item -total	α value			
CI	CI1	4.276	4.196	1.021	1.192	0.501	0.897	0.902	0.728	0540
	CI2	3.926		1.218		0.752				0816
	CI3	4.300		1.136		0.769				0812
	CI4	4.133		1.209		0.776				0837
	CI5	4.044		1.087		0.735				0798
	CI6	4.350		1.211		0.698				0741
	CI7	4.419		1.385		0.560				0574
	CI8	4.118		1.265		0.681				0707
CP	CP1	4.108	3.974	1.582	1.613	0.855	0.942	0.942	0.933	0880
	CP2	3.837		1.601		0.875				0912
	CP3	4.133		1.664		0.875				0902
	CP4	3.818		1.605		0.841				0890
AF	AF1	3.872	3.840	1.513	1.567	0.801	0.948	0.950	0.903	0821
	AF2	3.773		1.518		0.876				0904
	AF3	3.906		1.643		0.883				0913
	AF4	3.788		1.653		0.868				0907
	AF5	3.862		1.506		0.863				0887
AC	AC1	3.374	3.356	1.637	1.624	0.817	0.950	0.949	0.890	0849
	AC2	3.355		1.593		0.851				0877
	AC3	3.202		1.663		0.852				0883
	AC4	3.424		1.613		0.899				0933
	AC5	3.424		1.616		0.888				0909
CIN	CIN1	3.901	4.416	1.662	1.608	0.534	0.800	0.799	0.693	0520
	CIN2	4.197		1.775		0.673				0586
	CIN3	4.734		1.566		0.662				0912
	CIN4	4.833		1.429		0.599				0835
BU	BU1	3.916	3.951	1.628	1.648	0.786	0.948	0.949	0.887	0812
	BU2	3.941		1.566		0.907				0932
	BU3	3.921		1.696		0.879				0918
	BU4	3.975		1.651		0.854				0865

Note: CI = customer involvement; CP = cognitive processing; AF = affection; AC = activation; CIN = customer innovativeness; BU = buying happiness.

Table 2
Discriminant validity.

Inter-Construct Correlation Matrix						
	CI	CP	AF	AC	CIN	BU
CI	1					
CP	0.683	1				
AF	0.690		1			
AC	0.590	0.760	0.836	1		
CIN	0.362	0.487	0.487	0.495	1	
BU	0.608	0.763	0.813	0.811	0.532	1

significantly impact buying happiness considering ($\beta = 0.144$; ns), the affection and activation dimensions of CBE significantly influenced buying happiness ($\beta = 0.333$; $p < 0.01$) and ($\beta = 0.439$; $p < 0.001$), respectively. The strength of determination (R^2) figures was cognitive processing (0.582), affection (0.686), activation (0.661) and buying happiness (0.627). Thus, the conceptual model explained 62.7 % of buying happiness, which is a good explanatory power according to Duh and Pwaka [63].

5. Discussion and conclusion

Social media has created various platforms for brand communication, awareness, engagement and consumer-brand relationships from which varied benefits to firms are gained, but what about consumers? Because social media brand engagement is relational and reflects the level of consumer-brand interaction [31], there was a need to study the predictors and outcomes of CBE from a consumer perspective. Particularly, we studied how much consumer innovativeness and cosmetic brand involvement on Instagram impact CBE and the resultant psychological benefit of buying happiness. As was found in Europe [13], India [14] and China [34], we found a significant relationship between

consumer cosmetic brand involvement and the cognitive, affection and activation CBE dimensions. These indicate that when consumers are involved with cosmetic brands on Instagram, they not only process the brand information and develop a brand-related thought (cognitive dimension), but they also feel excited, fascinated and pleased with the brand (affection dimension) to the point of exerting energy, effort and time for purchase consideration (activation dimension). Studying Jordanian consumers who engaged with brands on Facebook, Algharabat et al. [16] found that consumer involvement impacted only the cognitive and affection CBE dimensions and not the activation. Could this be that Instagram brand involvement generates more effect on CBE than on Facebook? A CBE comparative study is needed on these two social media platforms for conclusions like this to be made.

We also tested how much consumer innovativeness impacts the three CBE dimensions. While Omar et al. [64] found in Malaysia that it is product, service and experience innovativeness that impact CBE, we found that it is the consumer innovativeness in accepting new brands and having the creativity to navigate the social media spaces that significantly impacts all three CBE dimensions. This confirms studies in Taiwan [20], Pakistan [50] and India [43]. In fact, with the growing technological savviness, curiosity and interest of modern consumers, Khan and Wahab [50] found that it is not the social media marketing activities of firms that attract brand engagements but mainly consumers' innovativeness that is behind consumers' adoption, participation and engagements with brands on social media spaces. While we found that consumers' innovativeness impacted all three CBE dimensions, Hong et al. [20] found that consumer innovativeness generates just the cognitive and affection (hedonic) benefits of brand engagement to the point of intentions to continually use innovative products. Can buying happiness be generated from the impacted brand engagements?

We tested the extent to which the cognitive, affection and activation CBE dimensions lead to buying happiness. The results revealed that, except for the cognitive dimension, the affection and activation dimensions make South African consumers happy when they engage with

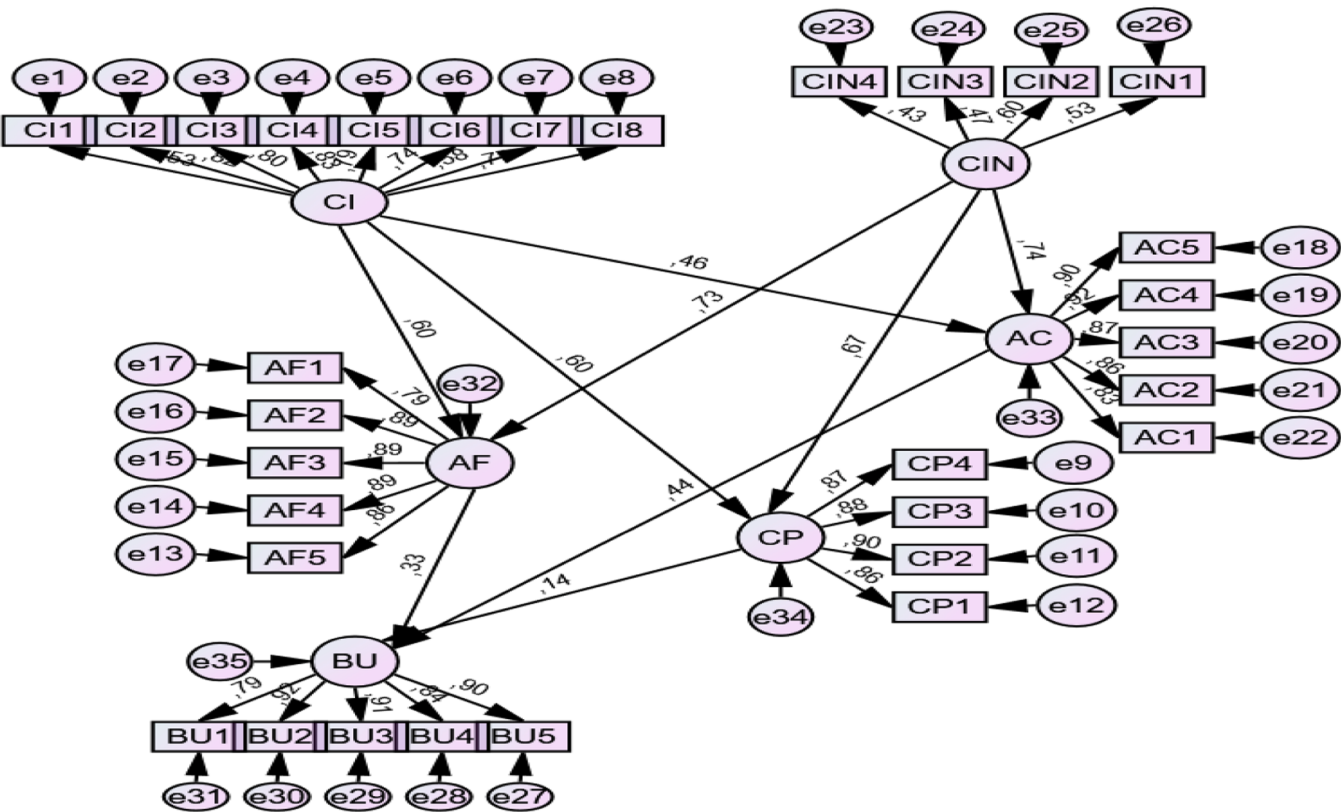


Fig. 4. Results from Testing the Hypotheses.

Table 3
Hypotheses Testing Results.

Hypothesised relationship			Estimates/ Path Coefficients		T- values	P- values	Outcome
CP	←	CI	H1 _a	0.605	8.245	0.000**	Supported and Significant
AF	←	CI	H1 _b	0.598	7.025	0.000**	Supported and Significant
AC	←	CI	H1 _c	0.458	6.405	0.000**	Supported and Significant
CP	←	CIN	H2 _a	0.670	8.578	0.000**	Supported and Significant
AF	←	CIN	H2 _b	0.728	10.423	0.000**	Supported and Significant
AC	←	CIN	H2 _c	0.740	11.240	0.000**	Supported and Significant
BU	←	CP	H3 _a	0.144	1.458	0.128ns	Positive impact but not significant
BU	←	AF	H3 _b	0.333	4.782	0.001**	Supported and Significant
BU	←	AC	H3 _c	0.439	6.345	0.000**	Supported and Significant
Model Explanatory Power (R ²)							
Cognitive processing (CP)				0.582	58.2 %		
Affection				0.686	68.6 %		
Activation				0.661	66.1 %		
Buying happiness				0.627	62.7 %		

Note: CI = customer involvement; CP = cognitive processing; AF = affection; AC = activation; CIN = customer innovativeness; BU = buying happiness; ** = significant at 99 % confidence level.

cosmetic brands on Instagram. This could be because of the colourful, vibrant and beautiful pictures of cosmetic brands displayed by beautiful individuals on Instagram. When it comes to the outcomes of the cognitive CBE dimension on social media, Hollebeek et al. [13] also did not

find that it made any significant impact, even on usage intentions. The cognitive dimension may make impacts through the affection and activation dimensions as Hollebeek et al. [13] later suggest. Or it could be that since there are various levels of positive brand-evoked emotions starting with appeal, joy, excitement and happiness [2], the cognitive CBE may generate only an appeal and not happiness. The information and interest generated after the cognition stage may then create the affective CBE from which excitement, joy and happiness are generated. Thus, future studies should test the various levels of emotions, and the interrelationships between the CBE dimensions and resultant effects should be tested.

Our finding confirms that even at pre-purchase or experiential buying stages, brand engagements on social media generate buying happiness [2] and subjective well-being [8]. However, it will be the affection (pleasure, joy, excitement) and activation (exerted energy, time and effort on the online brand) CBE dimensions, and not the cognitive dimension, that would lead to buying happiness as Loureiro et al. [51] and Gutierrez-Rodriguez et al [3]. also suggest. For the affection and activation dimensions, our finding confirms the studies of Razmus et al. [2] and Gutierrez-Rodriguez et al. [3] that show that engagement with brands creates exciting connections and exchange relationships that generate happiness. The happiness is higher from experiential buying on social media spaces [2], for fashion brand engagements [3], and cosmetic brand engagement on Instagram, as demonstrated in our current study. Our findings also support Razmus et al.'s [56] recent findings, which show that at the pre-purchase and post-purchase stages CBE generates positive brand-evoked emotions such as excitement and joy.

6. Theoretical and managerial contributions

6.1. Theoretical implications

In the current highly competitive digital and social media marketing

spaces, CBE is becoming a revolutionary metric for measuring initial brand performance from consumers' voluntary brand interactions, contributions and co-creation [35,36]. CBE leads to varied benefits including self-brand connections (Hollebeek et al. [13], positive word-of-mouth sharing, and purchase intentions [10], brand relationship quality [31], customer-based brand equity and subjective well-being [8,3]. Considering these benefits, there was a need for integrated models with CBE predictors and outcomes in social media spaces [31] to be tested in various cultures [37]. Thus, this study contributes by not only developing an integrated model but also by testing the model in an emerging market context and with middle-class consumers, most of whom are non-students. Most studies have used only student samples.

Our integrated model explained up to 68 % of buying happiness (i.e. R^2 of 0.68 compared to 0.65 of Hollebeek et al.'s [13] brand usage intent), which, according to Hatamleh et al. [65], is a strong explanatory power. The explanatory power obtained in this study confirms Hatamleh et al.'s [65] claim that relational aspects of consumer-brand relationships such as CBE dimensions, are beneficial to positive psychological outcomes for consumers and also for desired marketing outcomes, as Dwivedi [14] found. These enrich the consumer behaviour, marketing and consumer-brand relationship literature. Consumer happiness can lead to richer brand co-creation from which both marketers and other consumers will benefit [20,21]. We also confirm the uses and gratification theory by showing that consumers do indeed get personal benefits (i.e. buying happiness) when they get involved, use their innovativeness, interact and engage with cosmetic brands on Instagram. Our study, additionally, contributes by validating Hollebeek et al.'s [13] scale in an emerging marketing context and amongst middle-class consumers in Africa. Hollebeek et al.'s [13] CBE model shows that it is consumer involvement that predicts the three CBE dimensions. Our enriched model shows that consumer innovativeness is also a good predictor of all three CBE dimensions.

Consumers play purposeful and active roles when they visit social media spaces to engage with brands. With the UGT's postulation that individuals using media do so for the fulfilment of specific personal socio-psychological needs, this study demonstrates that one such need is buying happiness. The use of UGT not only assists in explaining media platform-specific brand engagement behaviours and the gratification gained but can enable brand marketers to design more mutually beneficial engagement strategies. Most studies have explained CBE from the stimulus organism response and social exchange theories [17]. Applying UGT in this study shows that consumers can actively go online to engage with brands, not necessarily in response to marketers but for their personal gratification. Thus, other personal socio-psychological benefits should be studied from Instagram and other social media platforms' brand engagements.

6.2. Managerial implications

Managerially and by confirming Hollebeek's et al. [13] CBE three dimensions in South Africa, we expose that on Instagram, South African consumers averagely engage with cosmetics brands cognitively ($M = 3.974$), affectionately ($M = 3.840$) and fairly behaviourally (activation) ($M = 3.356$). Notwithstanding the average agreement to these three CBE dimensions, these are indications that cosmetics brand managers should freely post content that is informative, trusted, pleasant, and exciting so that consumers can be activated to either share the information, make valuable comments or develop the intentions to purchase the brands. These are particularly important because two of the three CBE dimensions (i.e. affection and activation), as found in this study, not only make consumers happy, but can generate brand usage intention for marketers [13,3], the intention to comment on marketers' postings [30] and positive brand experience [66]. The fact that the affection and activation CBE dimensions made a significant impact on buying happiness on Instagram, brand owners should focus their marketing tactics and activities on fostering these two dimensions to achieve their social

media goals.

Our examination of the two consumer drivers of CBE on Instagram will assist marketers in developing focused marketing strategies that will facilitate brand decisions, generate sales growth, and increase consumer brand loyalty/retention [13]. When consumers engage with brands, brand managers can measure and identify exactly which brand engagement dimension is prominent, which will make consumers happy and have greater impact on consumer social media decision-making. Although we did not find a significant relationship between cognitive CBE and buying happiness, Gutierrez-Rodriguez et al. [3] found that cognitive CBE can impact hedonic happiness and not eudaimonic happiness in the Spanish fashion industry. Thus, depending on the industry, culture and type of happiness, all three CBE elements can be useful for important consumer and marketing outcomes, including brand commitment and usage intentions [13,3].

Since the current study shows that consumer involvement and innovativeness are important drivers of CBE on Instagram, a question arises as to how brand owners can increase consumer involvement and innovativeness. According to Dean, Zhang and Xiao [67], consumer involvement can be ignited and increased through consumer involvement in problem-solving and brand decision-making. This, in turn, increases brand engagement. In social media spaces, Hatamleh et al. [65] suggest that consumers are motivated to be involved and innovative and engage in social media spaces when there is entertainment, opportunity for social interaction, information giving and taking, ability to share self and fashion status, and relaxation. The nature of the involvement and resultant CBE, according to Hollebeek [68], depends on cultural values. For example, South Africa is more of a collectivist culture and may be more likely to get involved with brands that express/portray social connection and acceptance. In the collectivist culture, the cognitive and even the other CBE dimensions may be enhanced from user/group-generated content than company-generated content [37]. Considering that these social media motivators also directly lead to subjective happiness as Hatamleh et al. [65] found, brand marketers should use them to increase brand involvement, innovativeness, engagement and resultant happiness.

Being one of the fastest-growing social media platforms, Instagram can provide businesses with an abundance of opportunities for the co-creation and sharing of photos, videos, and instructions on cosmetics brands' usage. With these Instagram abilities, cosmetics marketers can satisfactorily serve consumers, improve brand experience and increase sales, brand loyalty and market share.

7. Limitations and future recommendations

Despite the theoretical and managerial contributions of this study, there are a few limitations. The first limitation is the sample size of 203 respondents. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, about 25.4 million South Africans use social media, out of which 70.5 % are Instagram users. Thus, the results of this study should be cautiously generalised until a larger sample is surveyed in future studies. The second limitation is the test of the CBE model with only cosmetic brands and on only the Instagram platform. Therefore, future research is recommended to extend the research across varied brands and use other social media platforms. Because of the social desirability problem of self-reported studies associated with surveys, future research can use experimental methods and even conduct longitudinal studies to track levels and dimensions of CBE over time. This is particularly important because the levels and types of engagement produce different magnitudes and types of outcomes [3, 30]. To the extent that CBE dimensions impact buying happiness, from which many other benefits can flow, more consumer predictors of CBE should be studied. Furthermore, Hollebeek [68] suggests that there are cultural differences in CBE. Thus, our model should be tested in other cultures.

Ethics statement

Before data was collected, the questionnaire and study proposal were submitted for approval to the Ethics Committee of University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg where the authors work.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Helen Inseng Duh: Writing – original draft, Supervision, Project administration, Methodology, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Kebashnee Moodley:** Writing – review & editing, Resources, Investigation, Conceptualization.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Supplementary materials

Supplementary material associated with this article can be found, in the online version, at [doi:10.1016/j.teler.2025.100240](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teler.2025.100240).

Data availability

One of the conditions of ethics approval was that the data will not be shared without a written request and permission. Thus, the data will be shared only with written request to the corresponding author.

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