

The Impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on Consumers' Conscious Consumption Behaviors

V. Özlem Akgün^{1*} , Emin Zeynalov² , and Uzel Gulmaliyev³ 

Abstract. Social media has become a significant marketing tool shaping consumer behavior. Social media marketing refers to the activities of brands promoting their goods and services by interacting with consumers through digital platforms. Conscious consumption, on the other hand, encompasses consumption choices made by individuals while considering their environmental, ethical, and social responsibilities. This study aims to examine the effects of the dimensions of social media marketing activities—entertainment, interaction, trending, personalization, and word-of-mouth—on conscious consumption behavior. The research was conducted on 400 consumers aged 18 and over in Azerbaijan. Data were collected using a survey method and analyzed using SPSS and AMOS software packages. The validity and reliability of the scales were tested with exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses; relationships between variables were examined with Pearson correlation analysis; and multiple linear regression analysis and structural equation modeling were used to test hypotheses. The findings revealed that social media marketing activities have a positive and statistically significant effect on conscious consumption behavior. When evaluated in terms of sub-dimensions, it was determined that the interaction dimension has a stronger effect compared to other dimensions. The model's explanatory power indicates that social media marketing activities explain a significant portion of the variance in conscious consumer behavior. Consequently, it has been shown that social media marketing activities influence not only the economic but also the ethical and social dimensions of consumer behavior. These findings suggest that social media marketing strategies can play a significant role in promoting conscious and sustainable consumer behavior

Keywords: Social media marketing, conscious consumption, consumer behavior, interaction, structural equation modeling

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Sosial media marketinqi fəaliyyətlərinin istehlakçıların şüurlu istehlak davranışlarına təsiri

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Xülasə. Sosial media istehlakçı davranışlarını formalaşdıran mühüm marketinq vasitəsinə çevrilmişdir. Sosial media marketinqi brendlərin rəqəmsal platformalar vasitəsilə istehlakçılarla qarşılıqlı əlaqə quraraq öz məhsul və xidmətlərini təşviq etməsi ilə bağlı fəaliyyətləri əhatə edir. Şüurlu istehlak işə fərdlərin istehlak seçimləri zamanı ekoloji, etik və sosial məsuliyyətlərini nəzərə

almalarını ifadə edir. Bu tədqiqat sosial media marketinqi fəaliyyətlərinin əyləncə, qarşılıqlı əlaqə, trendlərə uyğunluq, fərdiləşdirmə və ağızdan-ağıza kommunikasiya ölçülərinin şüurlu istehlak davranışına təsirini araşdırmaq məqsədi daşıyır. Tədqiqat Azərbaycan Respublikasında 18 yaşdan yuxarı 400 istehlakçı arasında aparılmışdır. Məlumatlar sorğu metodu ilə toplanmış və SPSS və AMOS proqram paketləri vasitəsilə təhlil edilmişdir. Şkalaların etibarlılığı və keçərliliyi kəşfedici və təsdiqləyici faktor təhlilləri ilə yoxlanılmış, dəyişənlər arasındakı əlaqələr Pearson korrelyasiya təhlili vasitəsilə araşdırılmışdır. Hipotezlərin yoxlanılması üçün çoxsaylı xətti reqressiya təhlilindən və struktur tənlik modelləşdirilməsindən istifadə edilmişdir. Tədqiqatın nəticələri sosial media marketinqi fəaliyyətlərinin şüurlu istehlak davranışına müsbət və statistik baxımdan əhəmiyyətli təsir göstərdiyini ortaya qoymuşdur. Alt ölçülər üzrə aparılan qiymətləndirmə zamanı qarşılıqlı əlaqə ölçüsünün digər ölçülərlə müqayisədə daha güclü təsirə malik olduğu müəyyən edilmişdir. Modelin izahedici gücü sosial media marketinqi fəaliyyətlərinin şüurlu istehlakçı davranışındakı dəyişkənliyin əhəmiyyətli hissəsini izah etdiyini göstərir. Nəticə etibarilə, sosial media marketinqi fəaliyyətlərinin istehlakçı davranışının yalnız iqtisadi deyil, həm də etik və sosial aspektlərinə təsir göstərdiyi müəyyən edilmişdir. Bu nəticələr sosial media marketinqi strategiyalarının şüurlu və dayanıqlı istehlak davranışının təşviqində mühüm rol oynaya biləcəyini göstərir.

Açar sözlər: *sosial media marketinqi, şüurlu istehlak, istehlakçı davranışı, qarşılıqlı əlaqə, struktur tənlik modelləşdirilməsi*

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Introduction

Digitalization has transformed communication channels and, as in all industries, has led to significant changes in the fields of communication and marketing. Mulhern (2009) described the digitalization of media as a major evolution in the history of communication and emphasized its impact on consumer behavior. Within this process, the phenomenon of digital marketing has emerged as a transformative force reshaping marketing practices (Royle & Laing, 2014). Digital marketing aims to reach consumers through the use of digital channels for the promotion of goods and services. However, it extends beyond internet marketing by encompassing various forms of digital media, including mobile marketing, social media marketing, video advertising, and search engine marketing (Yasmin et al., 2015). As a significant branch of digital marketing, social media marketing enables brands to interact directly with their target audiences. Today, marketing communication can no longer be conducted through a single channel, and it is widely recognized that traditional media and digital marketing should be integrated and utilized in a complementary manner (Kırcova & Enginkaya, 2015). In particular, social media has gone beyond the capabilities of traditional media channels, reshaping the ways in which brands reach and influence consumers. Social media marketing refers to the process of attracting attention to a brand through social media platforms. More specifically, it can be defined as a form of internet marketing that utilizes various social media platforms to achieve marketing relationship and branding objectives (Ziyaddin et al., 2019).

Conscious consumption refers to consumers making purchasing decisions while taking environmental, ethical, and social responsibilities into consideration. Social media serves as a powerful tool with the potential to promote such conscious consumption behaviors. Through social

media, consumers gain greater access to information regarding the environmental impacts of products and are encouraged to make purchasing decisions aligned with ethical responsibilities. In this context, the primary objective of this study is to examine the effects of various dimensions of social media marketing activities—namely entertainment, interaction, trendiness, personalization, and electronic word-of-mouth communication—on conscious consumption behavior. The data for this study were collected from participants aged 18 and above residing in Azerbaijan. The research provides empirical evidence regarding how social media marketing activities shape conscious consumption and influence changes in the consumption habits of social media users. Furthermore, the study aims to offer strategic recommendations for marketing professionals and researchers on how social media marketing strategies can support and promote conscious consumption practices.

1. Conceptual framework

1.1. Social Media Marketing

1.1.1. Definition and Development of the Social Media Marketing Concept

Social media marketing is a form of digital marketing through which brands promote their products and services and aim to increase brand awareness by interacting with consumers via social media platforms. This concept emerged and rapidly developed with the widespread adoption of Web 2.0 technologies. While social media enables individuals to interact online, create content, and share information, it has also become an important communication channel through which brands can directly reach their target audiences. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn allow brands to establish two-way communication with consumers. Unlike traditional marketing methods, social media marketing encourages users not only to consume content but also to create content and participate in interactions (Constantinides, 2014). Marketing activities conducted by brands on social media are evaluated across different dimensions based on the perceptions they create among consumers. According to the most widely accepted classification in the literature, social media marketing activities consist of five main dimensions: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, personalization, and word-of-mouth marketing (Kim & Ko, 2012). In this context, interaction refers to the reciprocal communication between users and brands, while entertainment reflects the extent to which content is engaging and enjoyable. Trendiness refers to the timeliness and innovativeness of content, whereas personalization denotes the provision of customized content and services tailored to consumers. Word-of-mouth marketing, on the other hand, encompasses the sharing of consumers' experiences and information about products and services with one another.

The development of social media marketing gained significant momentum, particularly with the establishment of Facebook in 2004. This was followed by the emergence of platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, which accelerated the widespread use of social media as a marketing tool (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012). Initially introduced as platforms where individuals could share personal content, social media networks gradually evolved into important marketing channels for businesses. Today, social media marketing extends beyond advertising activities and encompasses multidimensional strategies such as content marketing, influencer marketing, social media advertising, and customer relationship management (Assaad & Gómez, 2011). This process enables brands to establish stronger relationships with consumers, receive feedback, and enhance customer experiences. On the other hand, social media usage rates in Azerbaijan also highlight the importance of this field. According to data from January 2023, there were approximately 4.15 million social media users in the country, representing around 40% of the total population. However, it is noted that not all of these users are active. According to data based on advertising planning tools, there were approximately 3.9 million social media users aged 18 and above in Azerbaijan, accounting for 51.9% of the population (State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2023). These figures clearly demonstrate the potential of social media marketing to reach large audiences.

1.2. Conscious Consumption

1.2.1. Definition and Development of the Concept of Conscious Consumption

Conscious consumption is an approach to consumption in which individuals consider environmental, social, and ethical factors when making purchasing and spending decisions. This concept emerged particularly in the late twentieth century as a response to the culture of excessive consumption and the consumer society. The consumption culture that began with the Industrial Revolution and expanded rapidly under the influence of capitalism brought with it various challenges, including environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources, and changes in social structures (Buğday & Babaoğlu, 2016). Conscious consumption refers not only to satisfying individual needs but also to considering the impacts of consumption on the environment and society. Preferring environmentally friendly products, supporting brands that adopt ethical production processes, and preventing waste are among the fundamental elements of this approach. When evaluating goods and services, consumers consider not only factors such as price, quality, and functionality but also the transparency of production processes, social responsibility practices, and principles of environmental sustainability (Çelebi & Bayrakdaroğlu, 2018). The origins of conscious consumption can be traced back to the 1960s, when public concerns regarding environmental pollution and the depletion of natural resources began to increase. During this period, concepts such as environmentally responsible consumption, recycling practices, and energy conservation gained greater importance. Furthermore, conscious consumption aims to promote a more responsible consumption culture by raising individuals' awareness of the need to adopt sustainable lifestyles (Muldoon, 2006).

Today, conscious consumption is spreading rapidly not only in developed countries but also in developing regions. The adoption of conscious consumer behavior across society is of great importance in addressing global challenges such as economic growth, environmental issues, and social inequality. In this context, individuals can contribute to social change not only through their consumption preferences but also through participation in social responsibility projects, support for ethical supply chains, and the preference for environmentally friendly products.

1.2.2. Factors Affecting Conscious Consumer Behavior

Conscious consumer behavior is a complex construct that involves individuals' processes of translating environmental awareness into action and is shaped by the interaction of multidimensional variables. In the literature, the determinants of this behavior are generally examined within the framework of psychological, social, cultural, and demographic factors. At the psychological level, environmental awareness, perceived consumer effectiveness, and individual motivations (altruistic and egoistic) are among the key factors that directly influence conscious consumption. Within the scope of social factors, media, peer groups, and family influence emerge as important external stimuli that guide individuals' consumption preferences, with peer influence appearing to be particularly significant. From a cultural perspective, values such as collectivism and long-term orientation serve as important moderators that strengthen the transformation of environmentally friendly attitudes into behavior. In addition, contextual developments such as the COVID-19 pandemic, along with demographic variables such as education and income level, significantly affect conscious consumer behavior. Accordingly, conscious consumer behavior can be described as a holistic construct resulting from the combination of individual, social, and cultural dynamics, as well as contextual conditions (Alghamdi & Agag, 2024; Ghali-Zinoubi, 2022). Factors influencing conscious consumer behavior may vary depending on individuals' values, sense of social responsibility, educational background, and economic conditions. In this regard, environmental factors are among the primary elements shaping conscious consumption behavior. Environmental issues such as global warming, environmental degradation, and the depletion of natural resources have made individuals more sensitive to environmental protection. Consequently, increasing environmental awareness has led to greater demand for environmentally friendly products and sustainable production processes (Islam &

Chandrasekaran, 2015). Educational attainment is another important factor influencing conscious consumer behavior. Educated individuals are generally better able to assess environmental impacts and ethical production processes, enabling them to make more informed consumption choices. In this context, consumers evaluate not only the price and functionality of products but also the environmental and ethical dimensions of production processes (Çelebi & Bayrakdaroglu, 2018). Generational differences also play a significant role in shaping conscious consumption behavior. In particular, Generation Y exhibits a consumer profile that is more sensitive to environmental and ethical issues. Due to greater access to information, members of this generation tend to develop more informed and critical consumption behaviors. They place importance not only on satisfying their individual needs but also on fulfilling their social responsibilities. Finally, economic conditions play a decisive role in conscious consumer behavior. Income levels and economic fluctuations may lead individuals to reassess their consumption habits. Under such circumstances, consumers tend to prefer more economical and sustainable alternatives, highlighting the importance of economic factors in the widespread adoption of conscious consumption practices (Muldoon, 2006).

2. Literature review

Social media has become one of the most powerful tools shaping consumer behavior today and has assumed a significant role in influencing individuals' purchasing decisions, particularly in relation to conscious consumption elements such as environmental, ethical, and social responsibility concerns. In this context, studies examining the impact of social media marketing activities on consumers' conscious consumption behavior are presented chronologically below. One of the early studies in the literature, Muldoon (2006), suggested that social media can be used to raise public awareness regarding environmental consciousness and sustainable consumption. Subsequently, Barnes and Mattson (2008) emphasized that, in addition to being a low-cost marketing tool for businesses, social media provides an effective means of reaching large audiences. Research examining the direct effects of social media on consumer behavior became particularly prominent in the early 2010s. In this regard, Kim and Ko (2010) demonstrated that, within the context of luxury fashion brands, social media influences purchasing behavior by creating feelings of trust and closeness among consumers. Similarly, Ramsunder (2011) found that online advertisements and social media pages significantly affect consumer decision-making across various sectors. Studies conducted by 2013 indicated that social media marketing positively influences online consumer behavior and helps consumers select the most suitable products by enhancing brand awareness (Arora & Sharma, 2013; Vinerean et al., 2013). Subsequent research more clearly revealed the role of social media in information acquisition and decision-making processes. Olgun (2015) emphasized that consumers conduct extensive research on social media before making purchases and that user reviews on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter play a decisive role in purchasing decisions. Islam and Chandrasekaran (2015) examined the effects of dimensions of religiosity (intrinsic and extrinsic) on Ecologically Conscious Consumer Behavior (ECCB) among young Muslim consumers in India. Data collected through questionnaires from 191 university students were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings indicated a positive and significant relationship between intrinsic religiosity and ECCB, whereas no significant relationship was found with extrinsic religiosity. The study also demonstrated that the Islamic concepts of "Khalifah" and "Mizan" support environmental awareness. Consequently, religiosity was identified as an important variable in green consumer segmentation. Studies conducted in Türkiye support these findings. Buğday and Babaoğlu (2016) stated that social media serves as a tool for increasing conscious consumption, while Turgut (2016) demonstrated the effects of social media advertising on purchase intention, trust perception, and word-of-mouth communication (WOM). Research conducted in 2017 produced similar results. Şahin, Çağlıyan, and Başer (2017), as well as Zarroug (2017), emphasized the critical role of social media advertising in influencing consumer behavior, whereas Torun (2017) noted that consumers' tendency to first encounter products through social media increases its importance in the purchasing process. Çelebi and Bayrakdaroglu (2018) found that social media has a particularly strong influence on Generation Y and that this

generation increases its environmental awareness through social media, leading to greater preference for ethical and sustainable products. Later studies highlighted the structural and psychological dimensions of social media marketing. Özçifçi (2020) and Sharma (2020) drew attention to the determining role of perceived value and perceived risk in shaping purchase intention. In a study conducted in Azerbaijan, Məmmədova (2021, p. 204) found that social media advertisements have a significant effect on impulsive buying behavior and that this effect varies depending on the platform used. In particular, Instagram users were found to exhibit higher levels of impulsive purchasing behavior compared to YouTube users. From 2022 onward, research increasingly focused on sustainable and conscious consumption. Bozyiğit and Metin (2022) reported that awareness and preference developed through Instagram significantly explain purchase intention. Ebrahimi et al. (2022) found that the entertainment, personalization, and interaction dimensions of social network marketing positively influence purchasing behavior. Likewise, Bryła, Chatterjee, and Ciabiada-Bryła (2022) emphasized that influencer marketing has become an important driver of sustainable consumption, particularly among younger individuals. However, Pellegrino, Abe, and Shannon (2022) highlighted the “dark side” of social media, demonstrating that materialistic values may increase impulsive and compulsive purchasing behaviors. In another study conducted in the same year, food consumption awareness was examined through a face-to-face survey consisting of 16 questions administered to 250 randomly selected participants in the city center of Karaman. The findings revealed that higher educational attainment increases the likelihood of displaying proper consumption behavior; however, significant knowledge gaps remained in specific areas such as egg hygiene and waste oil management (Yerlikaya et al., 2022).

More recent studies have examined the effects of social media on conscious consumption in greater depth. Xie and Madni (2023) found that environmental information shared on social media is directly and positively associated with green consumption intentions, while perceived green value and subjective norms play strong mediating roles in this relationship. Studies published in 2024 addressed the effects of social media marketing on both sustainable consumption and consumer psychology in a more comprehensive manner. Kumar et al. (2024) found a significant relationship between exposure to social media marketing and the adoption of sustainable consumption practices, particularly highlighting that transparent and authentic content encourages environmentally friendly purchasing decisions. Huslan and Hassim (2024) reported that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube shape attitudes and motivations toward sustainable products through information accessibility and social influence. In the same year, Kayan (2024) found, in the context of Türkiye, that the influence of social media influencers on purchase intention is particularly strong among women, younger individuals, and groups with lower income and education levels. Shamim and Azam (2024) demonstrated that credibility signals associated with influencers, messages, and media channels build consumer trust and increase impulsive purchase intentions, with product attachment serving as a mediating factor in this relationship. Among the most recent studies, Horrich, Ertz, and Bekir (2025) demonstrated that the effects of social media platforms differ considerably. Their findings indicated that Instagram promotes aspirational consumption, Facebook encourages community engagement, and YouTube supports educational content; however, factors such as high costs may limit the translation of awareness into actual behavior. In the same year, Koay and Lim (2025) emphasized that “aspirational identification” is an important factor strengthening impulsive purchase intentions in influencer marketing. Overall, social media marketing activities have evolved from being merely tools for creating awareness into multifaceted mechanisms that exert profound effects on consumer psychology, sustainability, and conscious consumption behavior. A chronological review of the literature reveals that early studies primarily focused on awareness and accessibility, whereas more recent research addresses more complex and multidimensional relationships involving sustainable consumption, psychological mechanisms, and platform-specific differences.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Model and Hypotheses

The main purpose of this study is to determine the effect of social media marketing activities on conscious consumption behavior. In this regard, the target population of the study consists of individuals aged 18 and above, residing in Azerbaijan, and having at least one social media account. Convenience sampling was used as the sampling method. A questionnaire method was employed for data collection; the survey form was prepared online using Google Forms and distributed to participants through various social networks. In addition, face-to-face survey applications were also conducted at certain points. A total of 400 individuals participated in the study.

Within the scope of the research, a hypothesis was developed to test the direct effect of social media marketing activities on conscious consumption behavior. The conceptual model developed in this context is presented in Figure 1. In the model, social media marketing activities are considered as the independent variable and consist of five sub-dimensions: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, personalization, and word-of-mouth communication. The dependent variable is conscious consumption behavior. The research model aims to test the direct effect of social media marketing activities, through these sub-dimensions, on conscious consumption behavior.

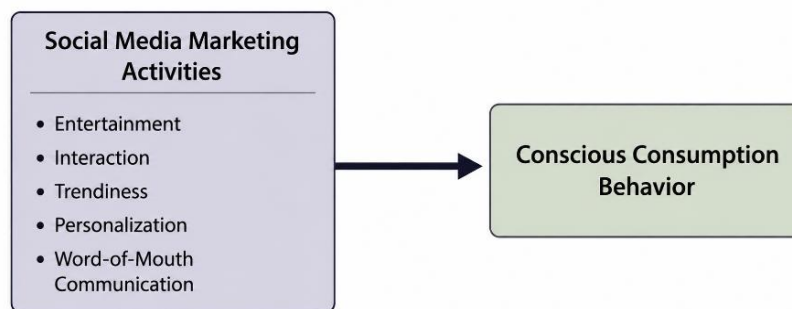


Figure 1
Research model

Accordingly, the following hypotheses were developed:

H1: Social media marketing activities positively affect consumers' conscious consumption behavior.

H1a: The entertainment dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.

H1b: The interaction dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.

H1c: The trendiness dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.

H1d: The personalization dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.

H1e: The word-of-mouth communication dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.

3.2. Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of individuals residing within the borders of Azerbaijan who are actively using at least one social media platform and are 18 years of age or older. Since the study focuses on social media marketing activities, active social media usage was adopted as a key criterion in defining the population. In addition, in line with the aim of examining conscious consumption behavior, only individuals who are capable of making independent consumption decisions were considered; therefore, participants aged 18 and above were included in the study. The sample of the study was selected using the convenience sampling method due to time and cost limitations and the

impossibility of reaching the entire population. In this context, data were collected from social media users in Azerbaijan through both online channels and face-to-face survey applications conducted at selected locations. At the end of the data collection process, data were obtained from a total of 400 participants. Prior to analysis, the dataset was examined in detail. During this process, incomplete questionnaires and inconsistent responses that could potentially affect the results were checked. As a result of these examinations, all questionnaires were deemed suitable for analysis, and data from all 400 participants were included in the analytical process. The sample size was considered sufficient for the application of commonly used quantitative analysis techniques in social sciences. However, it was also taken into account that, due to the nature of convenience sampling, caution should be exercised when generalizing the findings to the entire population.

3.3. Data Collection Instrument

In this study, the questionnaire method was used as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire was developed based on previously validated and reliable scales in the literature and consists of three sections: demographic information, social media marketing activities, and conscious consumption behavior. All scale items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where respondents were asked to rate the statements from 1 = “Strongly Disagree” to 5 = “Strongly Agree”. To measure social media marketing activities, a 23-item scale based on Kim and Ko (2012) was used, consisting of five dimensions: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, personalization, and word-of-mouth communication. To measure conscious consumption behavior, an 11-item scale based on Gupta and Sheth (2024) was employed. This scale covers environmental awareness, ethical responsibility, and responsible consumption tendencies and was treated as a holistic construct in the analyses. The original English scales were translated into Azerbaijani by bilingual experts and reviewed for content validity before data collection. The reliability and validity of the scales were tested using statistical methods during the data analysis process.

3.4. Data Collection Process

The data collection process of the study was planned by taking into account the purpose of the research, the target population, and accessibility conditions. The survey method was preferred in order to examine the relationship between social media marketing activities and conscious consumption behavior. This method was chosen due to its ability to reach a large number of participants in a short period of time and its suitability for obtaining quantitative data. The questionnaire was developed based on a review of the relevant literature and structured in accordance with the scope of the study. Prior to implementation, care was taken to ensure that the questions were clear, understandable, and free from leading expressions; after the necessary revisions, the questionnaire was finalized for application. During the data collection process, both online and face-to-face methods were used. Online surveys enabled access to participants from different regions of Azerbaijan, while face-to-face survey applications were also conducted at selected locations in order to increase sample diversity. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Nakhchivan State University (decision dated 08.12.2025, No. 10/25). Participants were clearly informed that participation was voluntary, that no identifying personal information would be collected, and that the data would be used solely for scientific purposes. The collected data were checked, prepared for analysis, and deemed suitable for statistical analysis.

3.5. Data Analysis Methods

The data obtained in the study were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS software packages. The analysis process included the evaluation of measurement instruments and testing the relationships between variables. In the first stage, the reliability of the scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine construct validity. The suitability of the data for factor analysis was tested using the KMO measure and Bartlett's test of

sphericity. To confirm the structure of the scales, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed, and model fit was evaluated using goodness-of-fit indices such as χ^2/df , GFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA. Prior to the analyses, assumptions for parametric tests were examined. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis values, and values within the range of ± 1.5 indicated that the dataset was normally distributed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Multicollinearity was assessed using VIF and tolerance values, while the independence of error terms was tested using the Durbin–Watson coefficient. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the direction and strength of relationships between variables. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the research hypotheses. Subsequently, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed, as it allows for the simultaneous testing of both the measurement model and structural relationships between variables. Since the data were collected from a single source at a single point in time, common method bias was assessed using Harman’s single-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The exploratory factor analysis results indicated that no single factor accounted for the majority of the total variance, and the first factor explained less than 50% of the total variance. These results suggest that there is no serious common method bias in the dataset.

4. Results

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

In this section of the study, findings regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented. The basic demographic variables of the participants, such as gender, age, marital status, education level, and income level, were analyzed in order to reveal the general profile of the sample. The obtained data were evaluated using frequency and percentage values, and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic characteristics of participants (n = 400)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	214	53.5
	Male	186	46.5
Age	18–24	112	28.0
	25–34	138	34.5
	35–49	94	23.5
	50–65	44	11.0
	65 and over	12	3.0
Marital Status	Single	238	59.5
	Married	162	40.5
Education Level	Primary education	18	4.5
	Secondary education	56	14.0
	High school	78	19.5
	Bachelor’s degree	168	42.0
	Postgraduate	80	20.0
Income Level (AZN)	0–400	54	13.5
	401–950	82	20.5
	951–1190	76	19.0
	1191–1700	68	17.0
	1701–2210	48	12.0
	2211–2720	34	8.5
	2721–3400	22	5.5
	3401 and above	16	4.0
Total		400	100.0

A total of 400 individuals participated in the study. An examination of the gender distribution shows that female participants (53.5%) and male participants (46.5%) were represented in relatively similar proportions. This indicates that the sample has a balanced distribution in terms of gender. Regarding age distribution, a significant proportion of participants were concentrated in the 18–34 age group (62.5%). This finding suggests that the sample predominantly consists of young and young adult individuals. In terms of marital status, 59.5% of the participants were single, while 40.5% were married. An examination of educational attainment reveals that the majority of the sample held a bachelor's degree (42.0%) or a postgraduate degree (20.0%). This indicates that the participants generally possess a relatively high level of education. With respect to income distribution, participants were represented across various income groups, with a notable concentration in the 401–950 AZN (20.5%) and 951–1190 AZN (19.0%) income ranges. This distribution suggests that middle-income individuals constitute a larger proportion of the sample. Overall, the findings indicate that the study sample includes individuals with diverse demographic characteristics.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

This section presents the descriptive statistics for the variables used in the study. The mean ($\bar{X}$) and standard deviation (SD) values of the social media marketing activities and conscious consumption scales were calculated to evaluate the general tendencies of the participants. The social media marketing activities scale initially consisted of 23 items. However, as a result of the exploratory factor analysis, items with low factor loadings or those that loaded significantly on more than one factor (cross-loading items) were removed from the analysis. Accordingly, a total of five items were excluded from the scale, and subsequent analyses were conducted using the remaining 18 items. The removed items included the statement “It is easy to use content related to this brand on social media” from the entertainment dimension; “It is easy to share opinions through this brand’s social media account” from the interaction dimension; “The information on this brand’s social media account reflects the latest developments” from the trendiness dimension; “This brand’s social media account provides me with personalized services” from the personalization dimension; and “I enjoy expressing positive opinions about this brand on social media” from the word-of-mouth communication dimension. These items were found to have factor loadings below acceptable threshold levels or to exhibit cross-loadings. As a result of these modifications, the factor structure of the scale was considered to be more consistent and reliable. The findings obtained are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of the variables (n = 400)

Scale / Dimension	Number of Items	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Social Media Marketing Activities	18	3.78	0.64
Entertainment	4	3.92	0.71
Interaction	4	3.85	0.68
Trendiness	3	3.74	0.73
Personalization	3	3.61	0.76
Word-of-Mouth Communication	4	3.79	0.69
Conscious Consumption (Overall)	11	4.02	0.58

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables used in the study. Following the exploratory factor analysis, the social media marketing activities scale was evaluated based on 18 items after the removal of items with low factor loadings. The scale consists of five sub-dimensions: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, personalization, and word-of-mouth communication. As shown in Table 2, participants’ perceptions of social media marketing activities were generally at a moderately high level ($\bar{X} = 3.78$). Among the sub-dimensions, the highest mean score was observed for the

entertainment dimension ($\bar{X} = 3.92$), followed by the interaction dimension ($\bar{X} = 3.85$). The lowest mean score was found for the personalization dimension ($\bar{X} = 3.61$). These findings indicate that participants primarily evaluate social media content in terms of its entertainment and interaction aspects. The mean score of the conscious consumption scale was 4.02, indicating a high level of conscious consumption tendency among the participants. The standard deviation values ranged from 0.58 to 0.76, suggesting that participants' responses did not exhibit excessive dispersion around the mean and that the distribution was relatively homogeneous.

To determine the construct validity and internal consistency of the social media marketing activities scale and the conscious consumption scale used in this study, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) were conducted. The suitability of the data for factor analysis was evaluated using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

Table 3

Results of the KMO measure and bartlett's test of sphericity (n = 400)

Scale	KMO	Bartlett χ^2	sd	p
Social Media Marketing Activities	0.914	4368.271	153	0.000
Conscious Consumption	0.879	2146.593	55	0.000

An examination of the KMO Measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity results presented in Table 3 reveals that the KMO value for the Social Media Marketing Activities Scale is 0.914, while the KMO value for the Conscious Consumption Scale is 0.879. Since both KMO values exceed 0.80, the sample size is considered highly adequate for factor analysis for both scales. The results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were found to be statistically significant for both scales ($p < 0.001$), indicating the presence of significant correlations among the variables and confirming that the dataset is suitable for factor analysis (Kaiser, 1974). Based on these findings, it was concluded that conducting exploratory factor analysis for both scales is statistically appropriate.

4.3. Factor Structure of the Social Media Marketing Activities Scale

According to the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the Social Media Marketing Activities scale was found to exhibit a five-factor structure. A factor loading threshold of 0.50 was taken into consideration, and items falling below this value or showing high loadings on more than one factor were excluded from the analysis. Accordingly, the analyses were conducted based on 18 items.

The KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity results presented in Table 3 indicate that the dataset is suitable for factor analysis.

Table 4

Factor loadings of the social media marketing activities Scale (n = 400)

Item	Entertainment	Interaction	Trendiness	Personalization	Word-of-Mouth
SMP1	0.781				
SMP2	0.764				
SMP3	0.742				
SMP4	0.718				
SMP5		0.786			
SMP6		0.761			
SMP7		0.739			
SMP8		0.715			

SMP9	0.771		
SMP10	0.748		
SMP11	0.724		
SMP12		0.769	
SMP13		0.743	
SMP14		0.718	
SMP15			0.769
SMP16			0.743
SMP17			0.718
SMP18			0.701

Total Explained Variance: 71.4%

An examination of the factor loadings presented in Table 4 shows that the item loadings range between 0.701 and 0.786, and all items have factor loadings above 0.70. This indicates that the factor structure of the scale is strong and that the items represent their respective factors at a high level. Moreover, the fact that each item loads strongly only on its corresponding factor demonstrates that the factor structure is clear and consistent. The total explained variance of the scale is 71.4%, which indicates a high level of construct validity. In order to determine the internal consistency of the Social Media Marketing Activities scale used in the study, Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis was conducted. In the literature, a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.70 and above is considered to indicate a reliable scale (Nunnally, 1978). According to the findings of this study, the overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.93. This value indicates that the scale has a high level of internal consistency.

Table 5

Reliability analysis of the social media marketing activities scale (n = 400)

Scale / Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Media Marketing Activities (Overall)	18	0.93
Entertainment	4	0.88
Interaction	4	0.90
Trendiness	3	0.87
Personalization	3	0.85
Word-of-Mouth Communication	4	0.89

As shown in Table 5, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the sub-dimensions were found to be 0.88 for entertainment, 0.90 for interaction, 0.87 for trendiness, 0.85 for personalization, and 0.89 for word-of-mouth communication. These findings indicate that all sub-dimensions of the scale are reliable.

4.4. Factor Structure of the Conscious Consumption Scale

The Conscious Consumption Scale used in this study to measure consumers' conscious consumption behavior consists of a total of 11 items. According to the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the scale exhibited a single-factor structure. This indicates that all items comprising the scale are grouped under the same construct and that the scale possesses a consistent factor structure. The results of the factor analysis showed that all factor loadings exceeded 0.60. These values indicate that the items represent conscious consumption behavior adequately and strongly.

Table 6

Factor loadings of the conscious consumption scale (n = 400)

Item	Factor Loading
BT1	0.783
BT2	0.769
BT3	0.754
BT4	0.732
BT5	0.719
BT6	0.706
BT7	0.693
BT8	0.681
BT9	0.669
BT10	0.657
BT11	0.642

Total Explained Variance: 63.4%

An examination of Table 6 shows that the factor loadings of the items in the Conscious Consumption Scale range from 0.642 to 0.783. This indicates that the items are consistently grouped under a single factor. The total explained variance of 63.4% suggests that the construct validity of the Conscious Consumption Scale is at an acceptable level. To determine the internal consistency of the Conscious Consumption Scale, Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis was conducted. In the literature, a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.70 or above indicates that a scale is reliable.

Table 7

Reliability results of the conscious consumption scale (n = 400)

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Conscious Consumption	11	0.90

An examination of Table 7 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the Conscious Consumption Scale is 0.90. This value indicates that the scale has a very high level of internal consistency. The findings demonstrate that the items comprising the scale are consistent with one another and that the scale can be used as a reliable measurement instrument.

4.5. Model Fit Indices

In order to evaluate the level of fit between the theoretical model developed in the study and the empirical data, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were conducted. In the structural model, social media marketing activities were represented by five sub-dimensions (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, personalization, and word-of-mouth communication), while the conscious consumption variable was modeled as a single-factor structure consisting of 11 items.

In assessing model fit, absolute fit indices, incremental fit indices, and error-based fit measures were considered together.

Table 8
Model Fit Indices (n = 400)

Fit Index	Acceptable Value	Model Value
χ^2/df	≤ 3.00	2.41
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.059
GFI	≥ 0.85	0.89
AGFI	≥ 0.80	0.86
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.93
TLI (NNFI)	≥ 0.90	0.92
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.94
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.91
SRMR	≤ 0.08	0.052

Table 8 presents the goodness-of-fit indices, indicating that the model demonstrates an acceptable to good level of fit with the data. The χ^2/df ratio being below 3 (2.41) shows that the overall model fit is within acceptable limits. Since the χ^2 statistic is sensitive to sample size, other fit indices were also considered in evaluating model fit. The RMSEA value of 0.059 indicates a low and acceptable level of approximation error. Regarding incremental fit indices, CFI (0.93), TLI (0.92), IFI (0.94), and NFI (0.91) values are all above the recommended threshold levels. The SRMR value of 0.052 indicates a low discrepancy between observed and predicted values. Overall, the goodness-of-fit indices suggest that the proposed structural model demonstrates statistically acceptable and good fit with the data.

4.6. Correlation and Regression Analyses

The suitability of the dataset for parametric analyses was evaluated according to the assumptions specified in Section 3.5 and was found to be appropriate for the analyses.

Table 9
Pearson correlation analysis among variables (n=400)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Entertainment	1					
2. Interaction	0.642**	1				
3. Trendiness	0.598**	0.621**	1			
4. Personalization	0.571**	0.606**	0.588**	1		
5. Word-of-Mouth Communication	0.624**	0.658**	0.601**	0.632**	1	
6. Conscious Consumption	0.536**	0.582**	0.497**	0.519**	0.561**	1

Note. $p < 0.01$.

According to the results of the correlation analysis, all sub-dimensions of social media marketing activities were found to have statistically significant and positive relationships with conscious consumption behavior. The highest correlation coefficient was identified between the interaction dimension and conscious consumption ($r = 0.582$, $p < 0.01$). This finding indicates a moderately strong positive relationship between the level of user participation and reciprocal communication on social media platforms and conscious consumption behavior. While correlation analysis reveals the relationships among variables, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine causal effects.

Table 10

The effect of social media marketing dimensions on conscious consumption multiple linear regression analysis (n = 400)

Independent Variable	β	t	p
Entertainment	0.214	4.327	0.000
Interaction	0.268	5.116	0.000
Trendiness	0.109	2.084	0.038
Personalization	0.131	2.567	0.011
Word-of-Mouth Communication	0.198	3.974	0.000

Model Statistics

Indicator	Value
R	0.681
R ²	0.464
Adjusted R ²	0.457
F	67.382
P	< 0.001

Multiple linear regression analysis results indicate that social media marketing activities have statistically significant effects on conscious consumption behavior. The overall significance of the model was confirmed by the F-test, and the model was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). When the model results are examined, the multiple correlation coefficient ($R = 0.681$) indicates a moderate-to-strong relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.464$) shows that approximately 46% of the variance in conscious consumption behavior is explained by social media marketing activities. The fact that the adjusted R^2 value is very close to the R^2 value indicates that the explanatory power of the model is stable. When standardized beta coefficients are examined, it is observed that the strongest effect on conscious consumption behavior belongs to the interaction dimension ($\beta = 0.268$; $p < 0.001$). This result suggests that marketing activities that increase user participation and reciprocal communication on social media platforms may play a more decisive role in shaping conscious consumption behavior.

Table 11

Hypothesis test results (n = 400)

Hypothesis	Hypothesis	Hypothesis
H1 (Supported through H1a-H1e)	Social media marketing activities positively affect conscious consumption behavior.	Supported
H1a	The entertainment dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.	Supported
H1b	The interaction dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.	Supported
H1c	The trendiness dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.	Supported
H1d	The personalization dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.	Supported
H1e	The word-of-mouth communication dimension positively affects conscious consumption behavior.	Supported

The findings indicate that all hypotheses tested in the study were supported at a statistically significant level. The results demonstrate that social media marketing activities have positive and significant

effects on conscious consumption behavior. When evaluated in terms of sub-dimensions, the strongest effect on conscious consumption behavior was observed in the interaction dimension, followed by the entertainment and word-of-mouth communication dimensions. These findings suggest that different dimensions of social media marketing activities have varying levels of influence on conscious consumption behavior.

5. Discussion, conclusion, limitations and future research

5.1. Discussion and Conclusions

The findings of this study demonstrate that social media marketing activities have a positive and significant effect on conscious consumption behavior. In particular, the interaction dimension exhibits a stronger effect compared to the other dimensions, indicating that user engagement and two-way communication on social media platforms play a decisive role. These results are generally consistent with previous studies emphasizing the transformative role of social media in consumer decision-making processes. Mulhern (2009) and Royle and Laing (2014) state that digital media environments provide consumers with greater access to information and comparison opportunities, thereby reshaping consumer behavior. The findings of this study similarly suggest that social media content can influence consumers' evaluation processes and contribute to more conscious purchasing decisions. In terms of sub-dimensions, interaction and entertainment emerged as the most influential factors. This finding aligns with Kim and Ko (2012), who reported that interactive and experiential content in social media environments strengthens consumer attitudes. Increased two-way communication and user participation on social media platforms can therefore contribute to more informed and reflective consumer decision-making. Studies conducted in Turkey also indicate that social media supports conscious consumption tendencies, particularly among younger consumers (Çelebi & Bayrakdaroglu, 2018). The fact that similar patterns were observed in the Azerbaijan sample suggests that social media marketing activities may produce comparable outcomes across different socio-cultural contexts.

From a managerial perspective, social media marketing strategies should be designed to enhance user interaction, support feedback mechanisms, and strengthen two-way communication. In addition, content that is engaging and experience-oriented can generate stronger effects on consumer behavior. Moreover, increasing the visibility of sustainability, ethical production, and social responsibility themes on social media platforms may further support conscious consumption tendencies. In this regard, transparent communication, informative content, and trust-building messages can contribute to more stable behavioral changes by influencing consumers' evaluation processes. Overall, it can be concluded that social media marketing activities play an important role in shaping conscious consumption behavior and can contribute to the development of more informed consumer choices. Accordingly, organizations that strategically utilize social media marketing activities can contribute not only to consumer engagement but also to the promotion of more conscious and sustainable consumption practices.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted using a convenience sampling method and a sample limited to Azerbaijan. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings is restricted. In addition, the study is based on cross-sectional data. This limits the ability to make causal interpretations regarding the relationships among variables. Future studies could employ longitudinal data or experimental research designs to provide a deeper understanding of these relationships. Furthermore, incorporating cultural, psychological, and socio-economic variables that may influence conscious consumption behavior could yield more comprehensive results. In addition, comparative studies across different countries and analyses involving different social media platforms would contribute to a better understanding and validation of the findings.

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