

Factors influencing brands' reputation on social media

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Abstract. *Social networks considerably impact brand reputation, influencing consumer behaviour, perceptions, and purchase intentions. The content of brands on social media is central to consumer attitudes and behaviour and the formulation of opinions about the brand and its reputation. Therefore, this research aims to identify the factors that influence the reputation of brands on social media. A quantitative methodology was adopted using the online questionnaire data collection technique through a non-probabilistic convenience sample (N=185). After statistical analysis using PLS-SEM, the results show that social media influencers contribute to brand reputation on social networks. This article contributes to understanding the role of social networks in brand reputation by showing the aspects that most influence reputation and providing marketing professionals and managers with the most effective tools for their brands' reputation.*

Keywords: brand reputation, brand content, social media, influencers, influencer factors.

Please cite the article as follows: Alves, J., Teixeira, S., Oliveira, Z. and Teixeira, S. (2024), "Factors influencing brands' reputation on social media", *Management & Marketing*, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 692-709, DOI: 10.2478/mmcks-2024-0031.

Introduction

In today's digital world, using social media marketing for a brand's reputation is paramount. Through the content they disseminate, brands can shape consumers' perceptions and attitudes, influencing their purchasing behaviour and optimising their brand image. Therefore, social networks, or social media, are significant for creating brand reputation (Dülek & Saydan, 2019; Gupta, 2023; Maboe, 2023). A brand with a robust and pertinent presence on social media is decisive for organisations to engage with their consumers and build consumer engagement and loyalty (Faoro et al., 2018; Hofman-Kohlmeyer, 2017;

Oncioiu et al., 2021). Studies have shown that social networks enable brands to connect with customers, increase brand loyalty, and influence consumer purchase intentions (Chavadi et al., 2023; Gupta, 2023; Navaneeth & Sujay, 2023). Arzhanova and Ereemeeva (2023) allude that brands can leverage their content on social networks by focusing on social responsibility, inspiration from others, opinion leaders, and emotional connections with the brand.

Motivated by the topicality of the subject and the importance of social networks in consumers' lives, it was found to be important to understand how social networks and the strategies used affect brand reputation. This research, therefore, seeks to identify the factors that influence brand reputation on social media.

This article begins with a brief introduction to brand reputation on social media, followed by a theoretical contextualisation section that discusses social media, brand reputation, and the factors that influence brand reputation on social media to construct the research hypotheses and conceptual model. The research methodology and the conceptual model, data collection method, sample, and statistical analysis procedure are presented. The analysis of results follows, detailing all the statistical analyses obtained to characterise the sample and test the research hypotheses. Finally, the data is discussed, and the research conclusions are presented.

Literature review

In this section, the themes that support this research—social media and brand reputation—will be contextualised theoretically to establish the research hypotheses.

Social media marketing

Social networks are gaining popularity, and this platform is part of consumers' daily lives. They are constantly changing the way people interact with each other (Statista, 2024). Liao and Yang (2021) define social networks as platforms that help individuals connect with others (e.g., friends and family) more efficiently and effectively. Increasingly, social networks play a significant role in companies and their communication with consumers, boosting brand performance and competitive advantage (Marolt et al., 2022; Oliveros-Coello, 2022; Ravaonorohanta & Sayumwe, 2020). Therefore, companies have an important communication tool to get in touch with their target audience and use this medium to spread their marketing. This type of marketing is called network marketing, a form of Internet marketing that involves creating and sharing content on social networks (Liao & Yang, 2021).

The use of a brand strategy on social media brings several benefits, including an increase in the number of customers; greater loyalty, reputation, and brand awareness; a reduction in the investment made in communication; and increased revenue and competitive advantage over competing brands (Ahmad et al., 2018).

Brand reputation

According to Rust et al. (2021), brand reputation is about how current and potential customers, employees, partners, and investors think, feel, and talk about a brand. It reflects real brand events (e.g., controllable marketing activities and uncontrollable public events) and is inevitably associated with the company's financial performance.

Brands use social media as a marketing vehicle to boost their influence with consumers, recognising the importance of maximising brand promotion through target-oriented strategies (Galli et al., 2019). Companies are increasingly attentive to their

reputation, as any comment or opinion can influence the decisions of other consumers, highlighting the critical role of social networks in influencing consumer behaviour and the brand (de Oliveira & Alturas, 2016). Thus, social media is important for increasing brand awareness, reputation, and loyalty (Chierici et al., 2018).

Social media platforms allow consumers to express their opinions, opinions, and experiences, which can significantly impact a brand's reputation, both positively and negatively (Al Olaimat et al., 2022). Therefore, brands should seek to constantly engage with their followers to respond promptly to adverse reactions and criticism to prevent potential reputational damage (Gupta, 2023). However, brands should be aware that although social media is a way of showing their identity and value, it is impossible to control everything said and how individuals understand it, emphasising the importance of actively managing these platforms (Jurišová & Piatrov, 2022). Therefore, monitoring followers' feelings in real-time is essential to understanding and effectively managing brand reputation (Turna, 2022).

Factors influencing brand reputation on social media

Brand reputation on social networks is a worrying aspect for marketing today due to the inability to keep up with the constant information, opinions, and criticism on these networks. Reputation on social networks is influenced by various factors, from influencers, who reduce the brand's persuasive recognition without affecting the attitude of the message; the content that the brand shares for the dissemination of influential users; social responsibility actions, with a focus on corporate capacity strategies; brand-consumer interaction on social networks with profound implications for brand image and reputation formation; and interactive brand-consumer connections and customer advocacy (Dutot et al., 2016; Pritchard et al., 2022; Shrivastava & Jain, 2022; Soltani et al., 2023; Vinerean, 2017; Xiayu, 2024). Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022) reinforce that brand content related to social responsibility tends to generate greater positive involvement and reactions from followers, directly impacting the brand's reputation (Castillo-Abdul et al., 2022). Therefore, understanding the dynamics of these factors and consumer responses is essential to managing and enhancing a brand's reputation. This research will consider the following factors: shared content, influencers, brand-consumer interaction, and social impact actions as influencers of a brand's reputation on social media.

Shared content

The content a brand shares on social media is one of the factors that influences brand reputation. According to Zahid et al. (2017), consumers tend to trust the information provided on social media, and the content shared by a brand on social media can have a positive or negative impact on the consumer's perception of the brand, depending on the quality of the content strategy carried out. Qalati et al. (2019) found that the dimensions of brand value, brand reputation, and social media are interconnected and that a brand's content on social media can improve or diminish its reputation, requiring strategic content creation and curation. Chierici et al. (2018) also point out that sharing content on social media positively impacts brand recognition, reputation, and loyalty, highlighting the need for consistent, high-quality content aligned with the brand's identity and values.

H1 - The content shared by a brand on social media influences brand reputation.

Social Media Influencers

Social media influencers are promoters of the brand in this medium and are even considered brand ambassadors. They are storytellers who help build the brand's image and reputation (Nuji et al., 2023; Shrivastava & Jain, 2022). For Shrivastava and Jain (2022), social media influencers impact brand reputation, improving consumer attitudes towards a brand and its reputation.

Jaitly and Gautam (2021) found that using influencers is important for brand reputation and that consumers exposed to their content are more likely to have a favourable brand opinion. However, according to the same authors, when consumers consider the influencer unsuitable, i.e., unsuitable for the brand's target audience, they express a negative opinion of the brand. Karhawi (2021) adds that managing partnerships with influencers meticulously is important, as crises can affect the reputation of both the influencer and the brand. It is, therefore, crucial that brands select influencers who are aligned with their values and image.

H2 - The use of digital influencers on social media has a positive impact on brand reputation.

Brand-follower interaction

According to Bilal et al. (2021), brand-follower interaction refers to the communication between a brand and a consumer via social networks, e.g., comments, replies, reactions, and shares (Souza & Filho, 2019). For Rohm et al. (2013), social media has become elemental to interactions between brands and consumers, with activities related to recommendations from colleagues and friends, user-generated content, and product reviews and feedback. Cheung et al. (2021) point out that consumer-brand interaction on social media can boost consumer-brand involvement and behavioural intentions. Ferreira and Zambaldi (2019) also mention that consumer involvement with the brand community, promoted by social media activities, can increase brand reputation. Nair (2023) adds that consumer involvement with brand passion, trust, product quality, and customer service solidifies brand-consumer interaction.

H3 - Interaction between brand and follower on social media has a positive impact on brand reputation.

Social impact actions

Consumers are becoming increasingly strict regarding brands taking their social actions into account. Social impact actions allow organisations to distinguish themselves from their competitors and win the trust and loyalty of consumers (Al-Haddad et al., 2022). Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022) also found in their study that brand content has a positive impact on the social network Instagram, especially when it relates to social responsibility. Chalouhi (2012) points out that social, ethical, legal, philanthropic, and economic responsibility impacts the brand reputation the most. In addition, Benitez et al. (2020) reinforce the view that social responsibility actions and social media presence significantly impact brand reputation.

H4 - Social impact actions on social media have a positive impact on brand reputation.

Based on the research hypotheses outlined, a conceptual framework (Figure 1) that constitutes the cornerstone of this investigation was established.

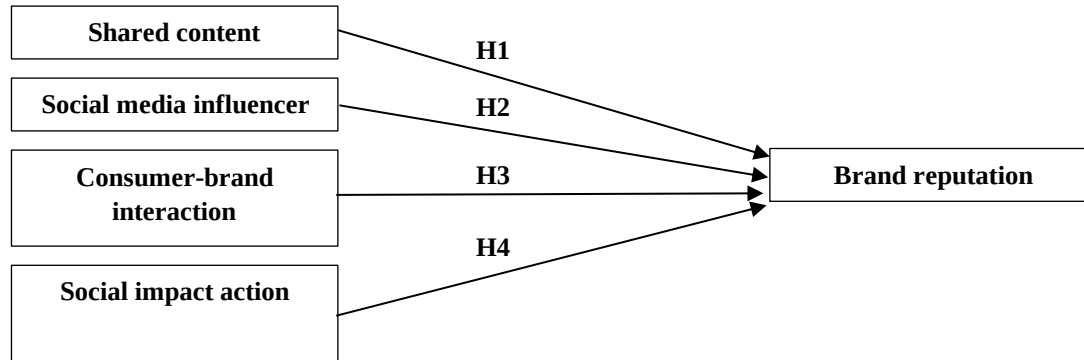


Figure 1. Conceptual model

Source: own research.

The main objective is to elucidate the effects of constructions related to shared content, social media influencers, consumer-brand interaction, and social impact action on brand reputation. This structure facilitates the examination of the interrelationships between variables, thus allowing a systematic and well-founded methodology to assess the extent to which these elements contribute to improving and strengthening brand reputation.

Methods

To understand the research objective, this article uses quantitative methodology. The structured questionnaire was the data collection technique used to collect primary data (Malhotra et al., 2020; Sampieri, 2018). The questionnaire for collecting primary data consisted of closed questions, e.g., dichotomous, multiple choice, and a linear scale (5-point Likert). On the Likert scale, the respondent could select from 1 corresponding to “totally disagree” and 5 to “totally agree” (Appendix I). The questionnaire was launched online using Google Forms via the social media platforms Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram. Data were collected between September 12 and September 25, 2023. During the data collection phase, we ensured that each response was distinct and independent of the platform used, thus avoiding duplication of participants. Duplicate response elimination was performed according to a rigorous protocol that involved evaluating unique identifiers (such as email addresses) and meticulously checking responses to confirm the absence of any overlap. This scenario aligns with the statements of Hennink et al. (2020), who emphasise that complete validation and data cleaning are fundamental to maintaining the quality and integrity of data in research.

This conceptual model under study is supported by statistical techniques based on variance through partial least squares (PLS). According to Hair Jr. et al. (2021), the sample for PLS-SEM is very robust even when the data are highly non-normal and the sample is small. Chin (1998) states that PLS-SEM is most appropriate when the sample size is less than 200 observations. In addition to what Chin mentions, the G*Power 3.1 software recommended by Hair Jr. et al. (2021) and Ringle et al. (2014) was used to calculate the

sample for structural equation modeling by partial least squares estimation. The input parameters were adjusted according to these authors - the effect size f^2 (0.15), the probability of error (0.05), the statistical power (0.80), the degree of freedom (1), and the number of predictors (4). Figure 2 shows the calculation of the minimum sample as G*Power.

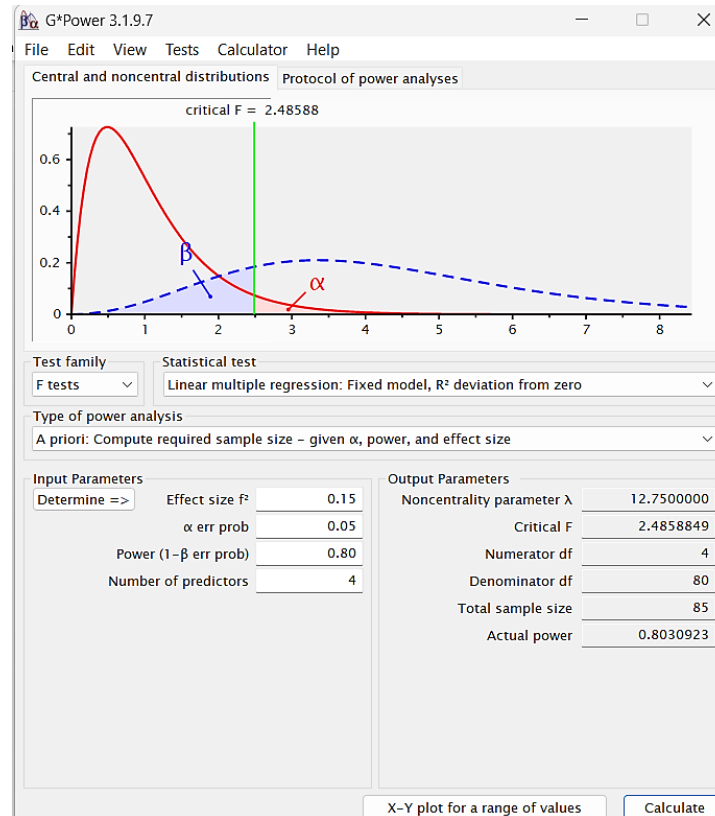


Figure 2. Minimum sample calculation with G*Power

Source: G*Power.

Considering the parameterisation of the G*Power® software, a minimum of 85 observations would be required. In this research, the sample was sufficient as it involved 185 observations. The statistical procedure used to characterise the sample was a frequency analysis of the sample's sociodemographic data. Subsequently, PLS-SEM was used to conduct the analysis and possible validation of the conceptual model using the SmartPLS software version 4.1.0.2 by Ringle et al. (2024). PLS-SEM was used because it is a recent technique that combines the advantages of multiple linear regression and principal component analysis (Hair Jr. et al., 2021).

The first step was to evaluate the measurement model, followed by the evaluation of the structural model and hypothesis testing (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). When evaluating the measurement model, the factor loadings were checked, reliability and validity were analysed, checking internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, convergent validity using the average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait correlation ratio (HTMT). To evaluate the model and the hypotheses, the PLS bootstrap resampling estimate was used, which, as suggested by Hair Jr. et al. (2021), was calculated using 5000 bootstrap samples. Multicollinearity (VIF), the

coefficients of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), effect size (f^2), and the estimated size and significance of the path coefficients were then checked. The significance level (5%) was set for the hypothesis test, and the Beta value (β), the probability of significance (p-value), and the t-value, which is a complementary value to the p-value, were calculated.

Results

The analysis of the results obtained from the consumer questionnaire began with the characterisation of the sample under study, frequency and descriptive analysis, and subsequently, the evaluation of the measurement model. This allowed the assessment of the reliability and validity of the constructs, the evaluation of the structural model, and hypothesis testing.

Sample characterisation

The questionnaire was answered by 187 individuals. Of the 187 respondents, only 185 were social media users, and these were considered valid. Of the 185 responses, two were answered by non-Portuguese people, which was not a factor to remove since the study was not only aimed at the Portuguese population. Table 1 shows that most of the respondents were between 18 and 24 years old (48.6%), female (72.4%) and living in Portugal (98.9%). The respondents have a bachelor's degree (54.6%), and their occupation is student (42.7%) and worker (34.6%).

Table 1. Sample characterisation

		Frequency	%
Age range	<18 years	10	5,4
	18 to 24 years	90	48,6
	25 to 40 years	50	27,0
	41 to 54 years	30	16,2
	55 to 64 years	4	2,2
	>=65 years	1	,5
	Total	185	100,0
		Frequency	%
Gender	Female	134	72,4
	Male	48	25,9
	Other	3	1,6
	Total	185	100,0
		Frequency	%
Location	Portugal	183	98,9
	Other	2	1,1
	Total	185	100,0
		Frequency	%
Academic qualifications	Elementary school	1	,5
	Basic education	4	2,2
	Secondary education	52	28,1
	Bachelor's degree	101	54,6
	Master's Degree	24	13,0
	Doctorate	3	1,6
	Total	185	100,0

Professional occupation		Frequency	%
	Student	79	42,7
	Worker/student	33	17,8
	Worker	64	34,6
	Unemployed	7	3,8
	Retired	1	,5
	Other	1	,5
	Total	185	100,0

Source: PLS-SEM.

Assessment of measurement models

For Hair Jr. et al. (2021), in an evaluation of reflective measurement models, the reliability assessment (indicator reliability and internal consistency reliability) and the validity assessment (convergent validity and discriminant validity) must be verified.

Assessment of reliability and convergent validity

Indicator reliability refers to the measure of whether the variance of each indicator is explained by its construct. Factor loadings (external loadings), which reflect how much an item contributes to a factor or variable, must be greater than 0.70 for each item (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). Chin (1998) suggests that a value of 0.50 or 0.60 remains acceptable. Analysing Table 2, all items present values above 0.5, and the vast majority present values above 0.7 for the constructs at all points of the measurement model.

Table 2. Outer loadings

	Social impact actions	Shared content	Follower-brand interaction	Reputation	Social Media Influencer
SA01	0,685				
SA03	0,798				
SA04	0,754				
SA05	0,683				
RP01				0,775	
RP02				0,790	
RP03				0,724	
RP04				0,826	
SC01		0,620			
SC02		0,543			
SC03		0,864			
SC04		0,821			
SC05		0,843			
SC06		0,654			
SI01					0,869
SI02					0,707
SI03					0,776
SI04					0,831
SI08					0,809
SI09					0,630

	Social impact actions	Shared content	Follower-brand interaction	Reputation	Social Media Influencer
CB01			0,818		
CB02			0,655		
CB03			0,722		

Source: PLS-SEM.

Internal consistency reliability refers to whether indicators that measure the same construct are interconnected (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). This study used two internal consistency reliability measures – Cronbach's alpha (α) and composite reliability (CC), which must have values > 0.7 to be acceptable or values > 0.8 to be very satisfactory. In this investigation, all values are above 0.7, and the majority are above 0.8. Convergent validity aims to verify how a construct converges to explain the variance of its indicators. This validity is analysed based on the average variance extracted (AVE) for all construct indicators, where the minimum acceptable value is 0.5 or higher, thus indicating that the construct explains 50% or more of the variance of the indicators that compose it. (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). Table 3 presents the results of internal consistency reliability and convergent validity.

Table 3. Internal consistency reliability and convergent validity results

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Social impact actions	0,819	0,824	0,821	0,535
Shared content	0,876	0,890	0,872	0,540
Follower-brand interaction	0,778	0,786	0,777	0,540
Reputation	0,860	0,863	0,861	0,608
Social Media Influencer	0,898	0,905	0,899	0,600

Source: PLS-SEM.

To verify whether the construct is empirically distinct from other constructs, discriminant validity was carried out (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the metric used to evaluate discriminant validity is the square root AVE of each latent variable, which must be greater than any other latent construct. Analysing Table 4, it is possible to verify that all AVE square root values are higher than their corresponding correlation coefficients with other variables, showing good discriminant validity.

Table 4. The assessment of discriminant validity using the Fornell–Larcker criterion

	Social impact actions	Shared content	Follower-brand interaction	Reputation	Social Media Influencer
Social impact actions	0,731				
Shared content	0,406	0,735			
Follower-brand interaction	0,302	0,441	0,735		
Reputation	0,582	0,485	0,454	0,780	
Social Media Influencer	0,660	0,531	0,473	0,695	0,774

Source: PLS-SEM.

However, Henseler et al. (2015) state that the Fornell-Larcker criterion does not perform well when the loads of different construct indicators fluctuate slightly. Therefore, the alternative approach to the heterotrait-monotrait correlation (HTMT) ratio was used to evaluate the discriminant validity, which must be less than 0.9. Observing Table 5, it appears that the values are below 0.9, which means that discriminant validity has been established.

Table 5. Heterotrait-monotrait correlations

	Social impact actions	Shared content	Follower-brand interaction	Reputation	Social Media Influencer
Social impact actions					
Shared content	0,417				
Follower-brand interaction	0,305	0,431			
Reputation	0,582	0,478	0,457		
Social Media Influencer	0,668	0,533	0,469	0,694	

Source: PLS-SEM.

Structural model assessment and hypothesis test

After establishing reliability and validity, the structural model was evaluated based on the assessment of multicollinearity, the estimate and significance of the effect size f^2 , the coefficient of determination (R^2), and the predictive relevance (Q^2). A consistent resampling process was carried out using PLS bootstrapping, 5,000 subsamples, and the system's default settings (Chin, 1998; Hair Jr. et al., 2021).

Table 6 presents the results of evaluating the model structure and hypothesis testing. We sought to verify multicollinearity, i.e., when two or more indicators in a formative measurement model are highly correlated. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was used, considering that values equal to or greater than 5 indicate collinearity problems.

Table 6. Results of structural model assessment and hypothesis testing

	Beta	VIF	f-square	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Social impact actions -> Reputation	0,210	1,789	0,054	1,617	0,106
Shared content -> Reputation	0,109	1,502	0,017	1,207	0,228
Follower-brand interaction -> Reputation	0,138	1,380	0,030	1,608	0,108
Social Media Influencer -> Reputation	0,433	2,256	0,180	3,299	0,001
	R-square			Q square	
Reputation	0,539			0,379	

Source: PLS-SEM.

Table 6 shows that all values are less than 5, with multicollinearity being satisfactory. To understand each path's effect size (f^2) in the model, f^2 was calculated where values greater than 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Cohen, 1988). To determine the predictive relevance of a model, R^2 (coefficient of determination) was used, which refers to the level of variation by which exogenous constructs explain endogenous constructs, and values of 0.02, 0.13, and 0.26 indicate a weak, moderate, and substantial level and Q^2 (predictive relevance) that values greater than zero for an explicit

reflective endogenous latent variable indicate the predictive relevance of the path model for a specific dependent variable (Chin, 1998; Cohen, 1988; Dolce et al., 2017). It was found that R^2 for reputation is 0.539 and is significant, with reputation being explained in 52.9% by the constructs (social impact actions, shared content, interaction between consumers-brand and social media influencer) (Chin, 1998; Cohen, 1988; Dolce et al., 2017). Analysing Q^2 , it was found that it is more significant than zero and has predictive relevance.

Discussion

In this section, hypothesis tests will be carried out on the results in Table 6. The p-value defined for this study was 5%, so the hypotheses are not rejected; that is, the significance level must be lower than the specified value. This study found a positive effect of shared content on brand reputation (Chierici et al., 2018; Qalati et al., 2019; Zahid et al., 2017), but it is not statistically significant (H1: $\beta = 0.210$; $t = 1.617$; $p\text{-value} = 0.106$), and the effect is small ($f^2 = 0.054$) which is in line with the results of Qalati et al. (2019) and Zahid et al. (2017) who found that a brand's content on social media can improve or decrease its reputation, depending on the quality of the content strategy carried out, requiring the creation and curation of content strategically. However, these results reject research hypothesis H1. This result contradicts previous studies demonstrating the importance of content in engaging the public and building a positive brand image and a more substantial reputation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Therefore, it appears that in some samples, the content shared is not linked to reputation, which suggests that the effectiveness of digital content may depend on the market's specificities and cultural context. This result is like what was revealed in this study; that is, in practice, for the context of our study, shared content does not have direct implications for the brand's reputation.

The results reveal that the social influencer influences reputation (H2: $\beta = 0.433$; $t = 3.299$; $p\text{-value} = 0.001$) and with a medium effect ($f^2 = 0.180$), supporting the research hypothesis H2. These findings align with existing literature (Jaitly & Gautam, 2021; Karhawi, 2021; Nuji et al., 2023; Shrivastava & Jain, 2022) that identifies digital influencers as enhancing brand reputation. In practice, the interaction generated through shared content enables greater consumer involvement and familiarity with the brand, creating trust and loyalty (Kumar & Bhatia, 2024).

The interaction between the consumer and the brand influences the brand's reputation, as verified by Bilal et al. (2021), Cheung et al. (2021), Ferreira and Zambaldi (2019), Nair (2023), Rohm et al. (2013), and Souza and Filho (2019). However, in this study, the result is not statistically significant (H3: $\beta = 0.138$; $t = 1.608$; $p\text{-value} = 0.108$) and has a negligible effect ($f^2 = 0.030$), consequently rejecting the research hypothesis H2. In some ways, these findings align with existing literature that identifies that to solidify the interaction between the consumer and the brand, it is necessary to combine a passion for the brand, trust, product quality, and customer service (Nair, 2023). In practice, for the consumer, brand interactivity and involvement are linked to brand trust and loyalty (Samarah et al., 2021).

Finally, H4 is rejected because, although social impact actions influence reputation, corresponding to what was predicted by Al-Haddad et al. (2022), Benitez et al. (2020), Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022), and Chalouhi (2012), this relationship is statistically insignificant (H4: $\beta = 0.210$; $t = 1.789$; $p\text{-value} = 0.106$). In fact, regarding social impact initiatives on brand reputation, this research illustrated a favourable influence predicted by Al-Haddad et al.

(2022), Benitez et al. (2020), Castillo-Abdul et al. (2022), and Chalouhi (2012), although it did not reach statistical significance ($H4: \beta = 0.210; t = 1.789; p\text{-value} = 0.106$). Social impact initiatives must be implemented with ethical, legal, philanthropic, and economic strategies. This implies that articulated social responsibility efforts are evidenced to increase brand credibility and promote consumer loyalty as they resonate with socially conscious consumers, affecting their purchasing decisions (Sharma & Nayal, 2024).

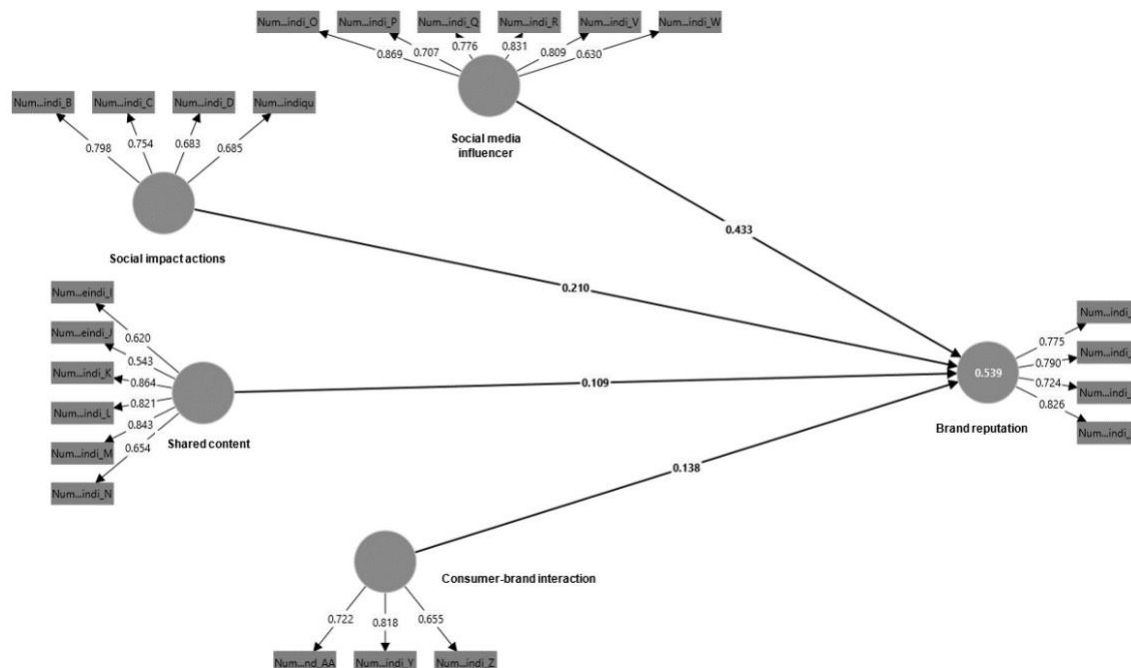


Figure 3. Update conceptual model (PLS-SEM)

Source: PLS-SEM.

Figure 3 illustrates the final conceptual model of this study, which was developed using structural equation modeling. It highlights three validated constructs - Social Media Influencer, Shared Content, and Consumer Brand Interaction, all of which positively influence the brand's reputation. The model synthesises the relationships among these variables, demonstrating how each contributes to enhancing brand reputation.

Conclusions

In the digital world, social media is currently central to brand strategies. During this investigation, we sought to identify the factors that influence the reputation of brands on social media. The results reveal that social media influencers are preponderant in a brand reputation strategy on social media, demonstrating the growing importance of digital influencers as crucial actors in brand marketing and playing a vital role in building a strong and positive connection. In the current digital scenario, where social networks strongly influence consumer behaviour, influencers serve as intermediaries between brands and consumers as they contribute to creating an image of trust and authenticity. For brands, collaborating with influencers requires careful planning and consideration. It is essential to choose influencers whose image and values are aligned with the brand, fostering a genuine

relationship with the public. As a result, brands must optimise this dynamic by forming strategic partnerships with authentic influencers who resonate with their target audience.

This research is relevant to the academic world as it indicates that some conclusions about the themes under consideration in this research require more in-depth studies with more constructs. The relationship between brands and social networks is more complex than it was in the recent past, and consumers have more demanding expectations about this relationship with brands.

Implications for management

This article is relevant for brands who are interested in knowing how to promote and boost their brand reputation on social media. The main contributions highlight the importance of defining their social media strategies, creating content suited to their audiences, and using social media influencers who identify with the brand's values. Companies need to be more cautious and strategic when choosing digital partners. When selecting influencers, they should prioritise individuals who have an authentic connection with their audience and whose values align with the brand's principles. These influencers play a crucial role in enhancing a brand's reputation. This insight highlights the increasing significance of influencers in modern marketing and encourages brands to adopt a more thoughtful and genuine approach to their influencer selection processes.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

This investigation has some limitations: the use of a convenience sample that prevents the extrapolation of data to the general population and the limited literature dedicated to brand reputation and social media marketing. Therefore, given these limitations, it is suggested that the study be replicated in future investigations to a larger sample with a more significant number of constructs. It is also suggested that we study how the public perceives the content of brands' social networks and what their perceived recognition, notoriety, and reputation are.

Funding

This work is financed by Portuguese national funds through FCT—Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia, under the project UIDB/05422/2020

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Constructs vs items

	Items	Authors
SA01	Brands that disclose information about their social responsibility on social media are transparent.	(Naatu et al., 2022)
SA02	Brands that share information about their social responsibility on social media make it easier for people to know what they do.	
SA03	Brands that communicate their social responsibility activities on social media do not hide anything from the public.	
SA04	Brands that disclose information about their social responsibility on social media are likely responsible.	
SA05	Brands that disclose information about their social responsibility on social media may not want to appear irresponsible.	
RP01	Brands present on social media are trustworthy.	(Barfi et al., 2019)
RP02	Brands present on social media have a good reputation.	
RP03	I feel like I have a clear reason to buy brands present on social media over others.	
RP04	Brands on social media make honest statements.	
SC01	Digital content on a brand's social media is efficient for obtaining information. Interacting with the public, that is, clarify questions asked by the public, responding to messages and comments, among others.	(Desyanti, 2021)
SC02	Digital content on a brand's social media provides the latest information.	
SC03	Digital content on a brand's social media meets my needs.	
SC04	Digital content on a brand's social media is fun.	

	Items	Authors
SC05	Digital content on a brand's social media is exciting.	(Pinto & Lidia Paramita, 2021)
SC06	Digital content on a brand's social media is attractive.	
SI01	A social media influencer has a good personality.	
SI02	A social media influencer has good intellectual skills.	
SI03	A social media influencer is credible.	
SI04	A social media influencer is trustworthy.	
SI05	A social media influencer must know the product being analysed.	
SI06	A social media influencer must have the same personality that followers desire.	
SI07	There must be a connection between the social media influencer and the product being analysed.	
SI08	Products that are evaluated by social media influencers are trustworthy.	
SI09	Social media influencers effectively use the products they review.	(Cheung et al., 2021)
SI10	The social media influencer must have the ability to communicate to attract consumers.	
CB01	I frequently express my personal needs to brands on social media platforms.	
CB02	I often find solutions to my problems together with brands on social media platforms.	(Cheung et al., 2021)
CB03	I am actively involved when brands post products on social media platforms.	

Source: Own elaboration.