SPOTLIGHT*BAHRAIN

VIEWS ON BRAND ENGAGEMENT

November - 2026



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Key Findings

Online leads, but the store still matters

Brand engagement in Bahrain is near-universal, with **almost everyone engaging with brands both online and offline** in the past three months. **Six in ten prefer to engage online**, yet this hasn't replaced the physical experience. **In-store visits remain the single most preferred channel**, ahead of social media and mobile apps. Women and younger consumers lean more digital, while **older and lower-income consumers stay more attached to physical stores**. For brands, **digital channels drive reach, but the store is still where relationships are built**.

Engaged consumers expect a say

Consumers are **active participants rather than passive audiences**, with around **seven in ten following**, recommending or visiting brands recently. That word of mouth cuts both ways: **two-thirds have also advised others against a brand**. Just over half believe they can influence brand actions, and around a third have already **boycotted or protested against a company**. Women are more engaged across every activity and more likely to take action. Brands **should treat consumer voice as a direct lever on reputation**, not just a feedback channel.

Responsibility is expected but not yet seen

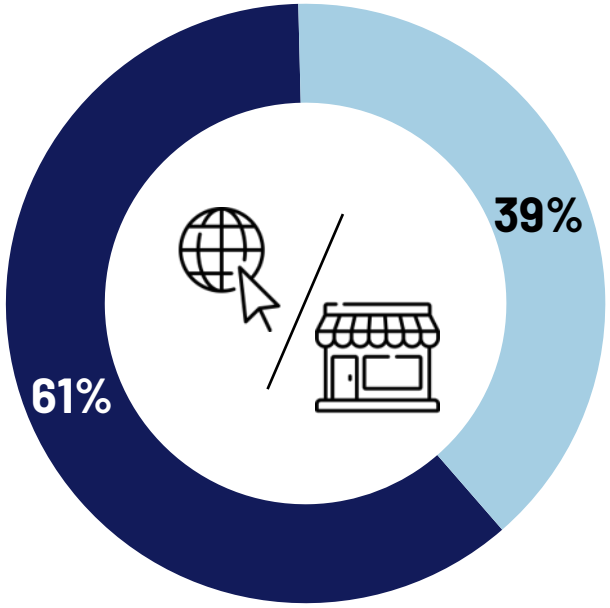
Social responsibility is becoming **a real factor in brand choice. Most consumers believe brands should get involved in social matters** beyond business, and **two-thirds would not buy from a socially irresponsible brand**, even one they like. Yet **fewer than half believe companies in Bahrain contribute positively to their communities**. This gap between expectation and delivery is an opportunity: brands **that make their social impact visible and relevant are best placed to win preference.**

HOW DO CONSUMERS PREFER TO ENGAGE WITH BRANDS?



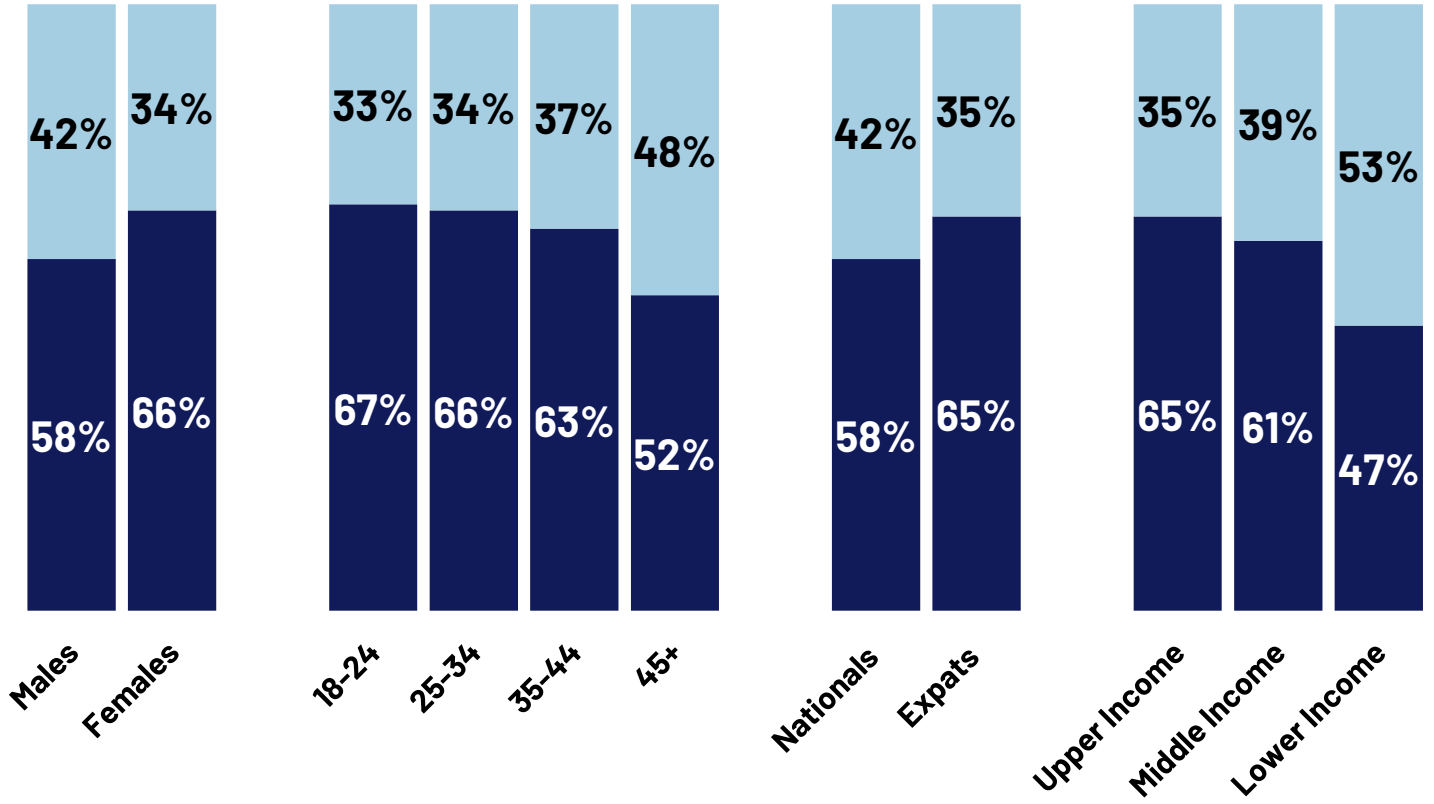
Brand interaction preference

% - by demographics

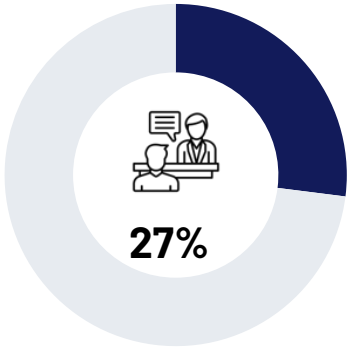


Prefer to engage with brands online

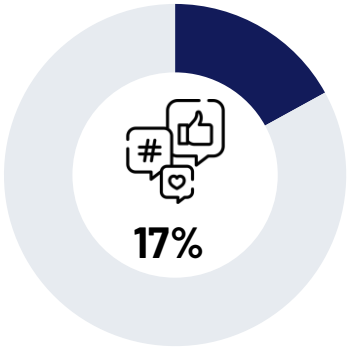
Prefer to engage with brands offline



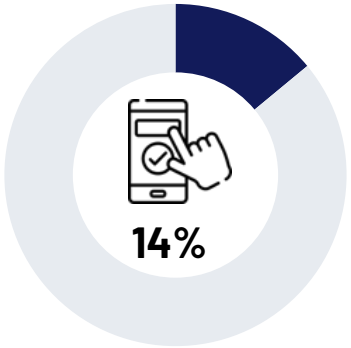
Preferred channels for interacting with brands



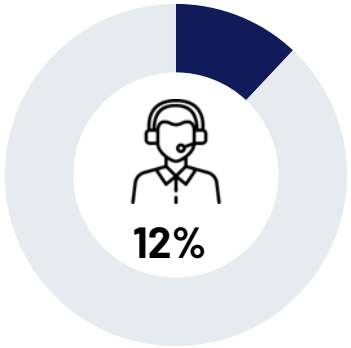
In-person visits to stores or physical locations



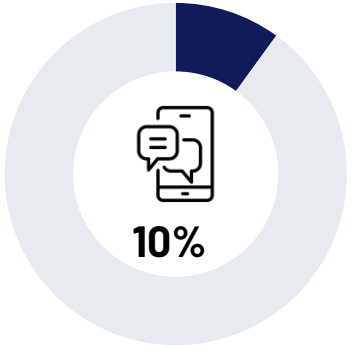
Social media platforms



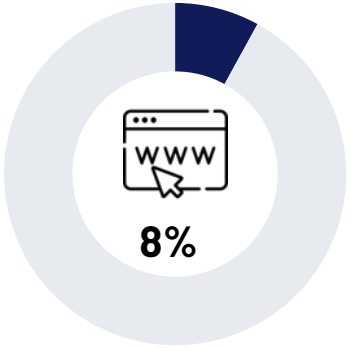
Mobile apps



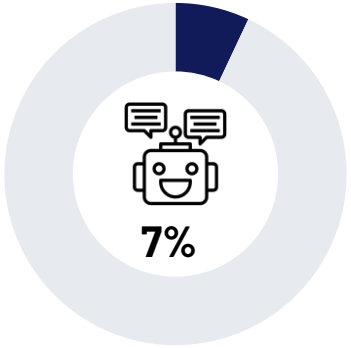
Call center



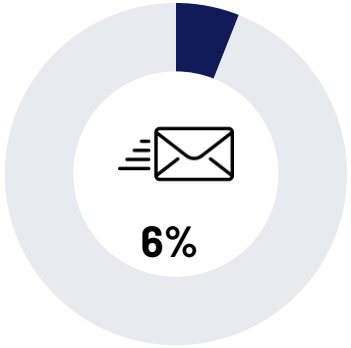
Messaging platforms



Brand websites



Online chatbots / Live chats



Email

Preferred channels for interacting with brands

% - by demographics

	In-person visits to stores or physical locations	Social media platforms	Mobile apps	Call center	Messaging platforms	Brand websites	Online chatbots / Live chats	Email
Total	**27%**	**17%**	**14%**	**12%**	**10%**	**8%**	**7%**	**6%**
Male	33%	19%	15%	9%	7%	8%	4%	6%
Female	19%	15%	12%	15%	13%	9%	11%	6%
18-24	23%	13%	19%	11%	18%	7%	5%	6%
25-34	19%	20%	12%	15%	10%	9%	8%	6%
35-44	28%	17%	12%	9%	9%	9%	9%	7%
45+	35%	16%	13%	13%	6%	8%	5%	4%
Nationals	32%	17%	8%	10%	10%	9%	8%	6%
Expats	21%	17%	20%	14%	10%	7%	6%	6%
Upper Income	20%	19%	15%	15%	6%	10%	7%	7%
Middle Income	31%	15%	12%	8%	12%	8%	9%	5%
Lower Income	42%	14%	12%	11%	15%	1%	-	4%

HOW DO CONSUMERS INTERACT WITH BRANDS?



Brand engagement over the past 3 months



94%

Have engaged with a brand online in the past three months



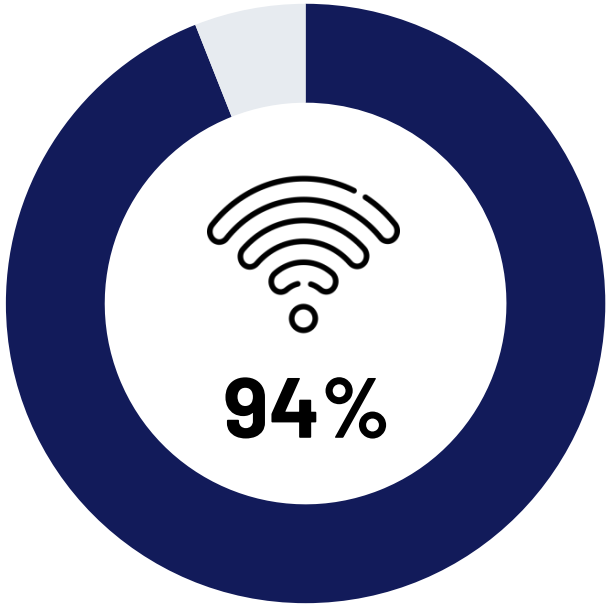
86%

Have engaged with a brand offline in the past three months

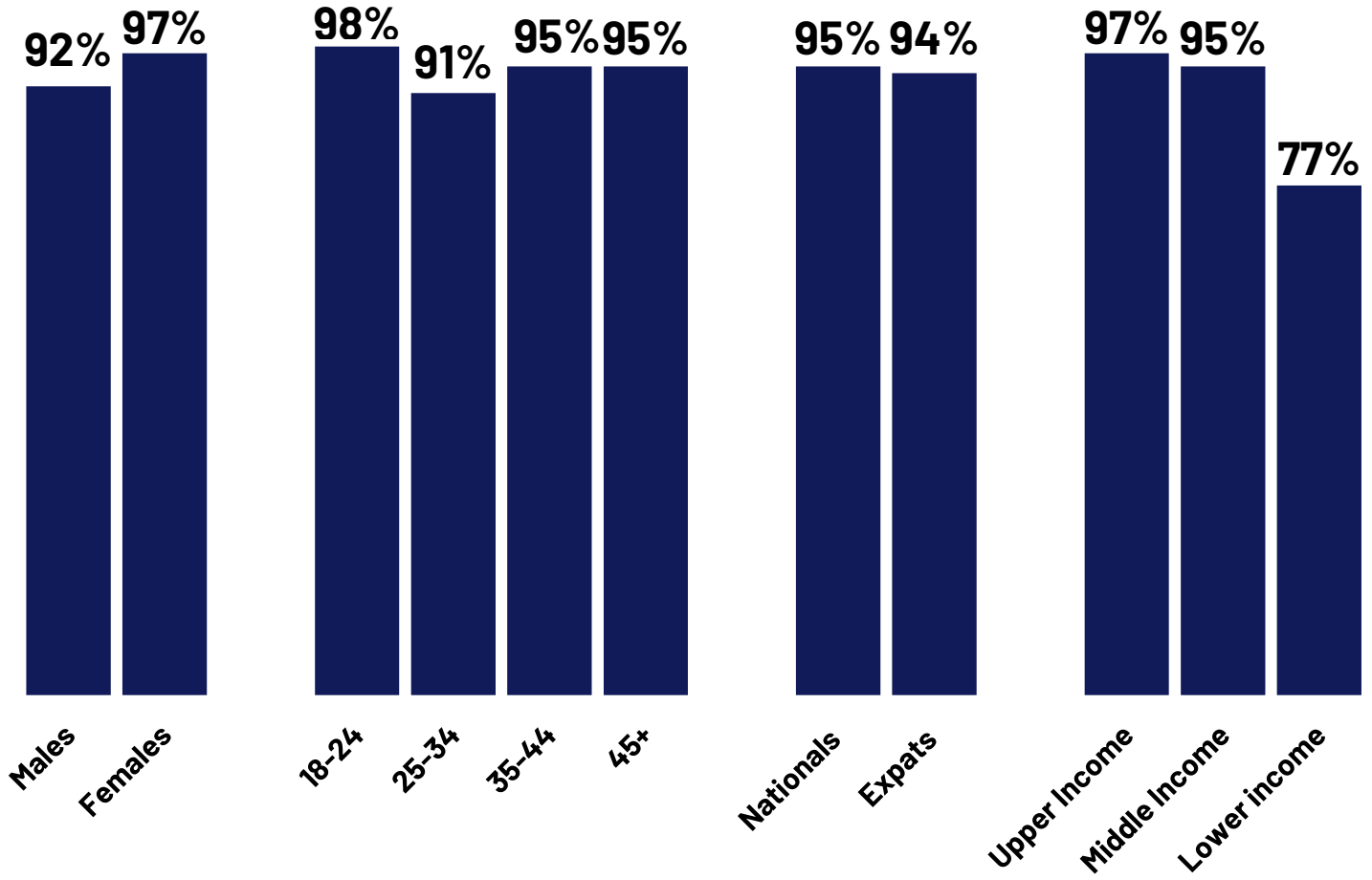
Base: % out those who have engaged with brands in the past three months

Offline brand engagement over the past 3 months

% – by demographics



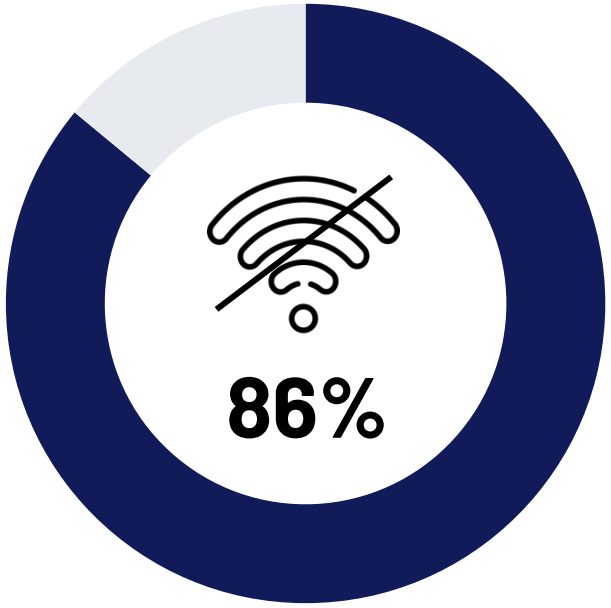
Have engaged with a brand online in the past three months



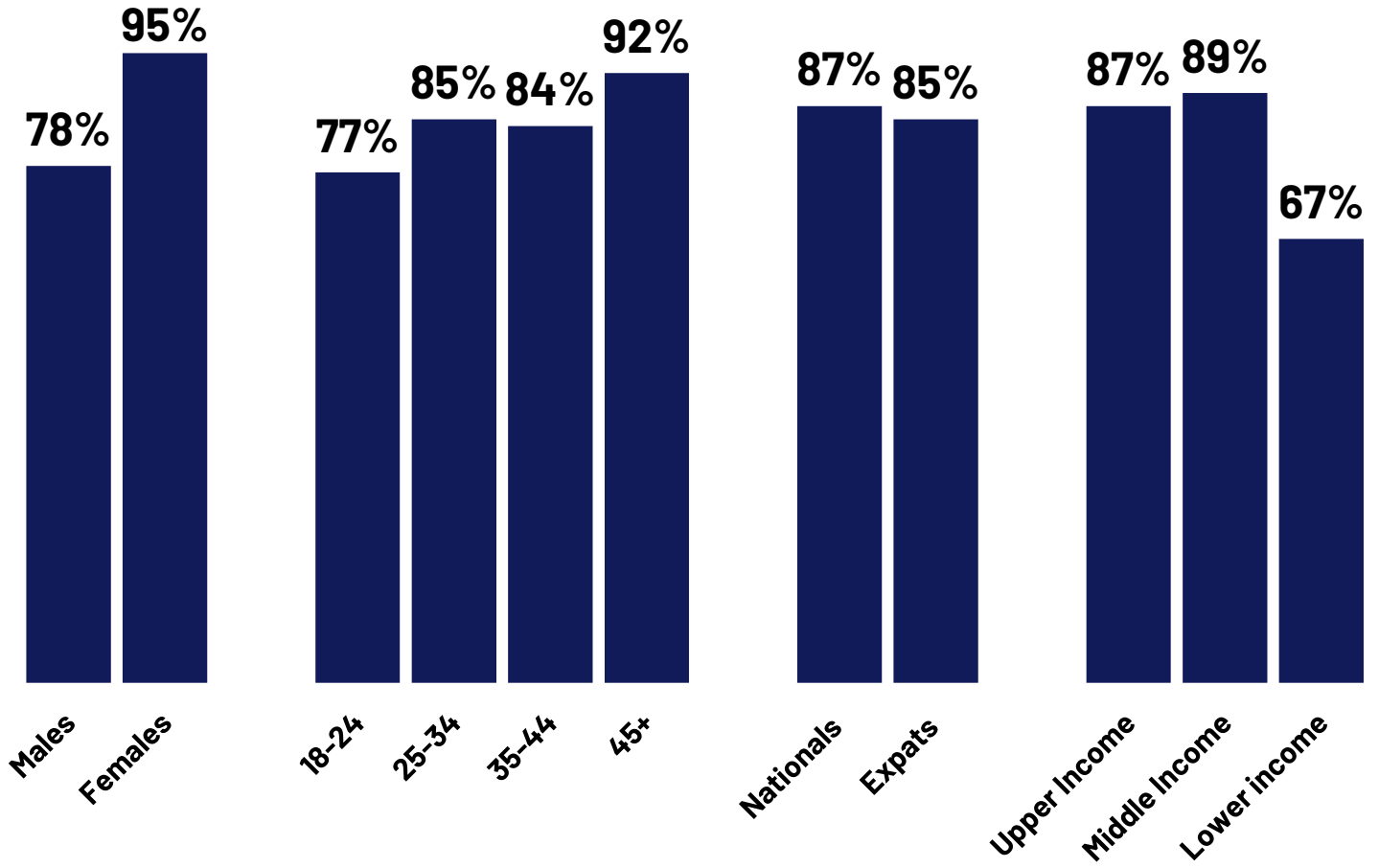
Base: % out those who have engaged with brands in the past three months

Offline brand engagement over the past 3 months

% – by demographics



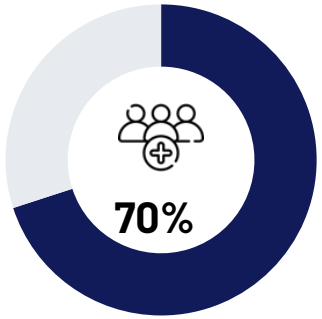
Have engaged with a brand offline in the past three months



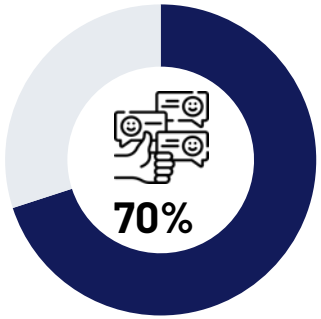
Base: % out those who have engaged with brands in the past three months

Detailed brand engagement over the past 3 months

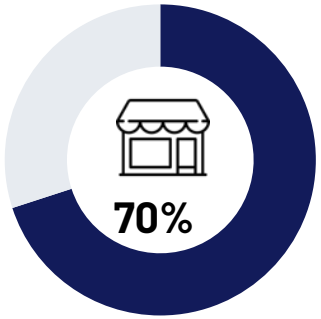
Top 10



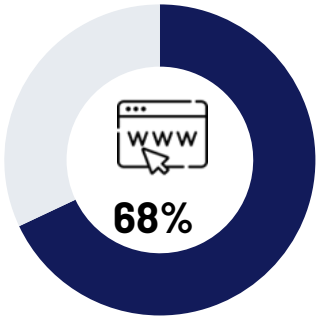
Followed a brand on social media



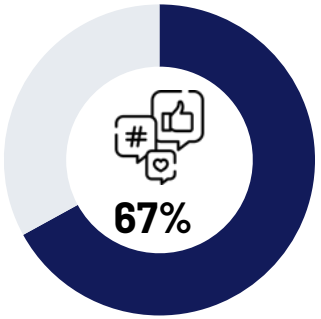
Recommended a brand/ product to other people



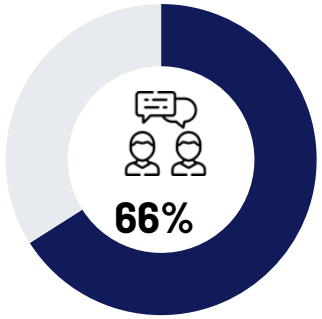
Visited a brand's store



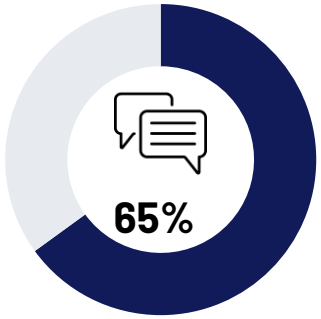
Visited a brand's website



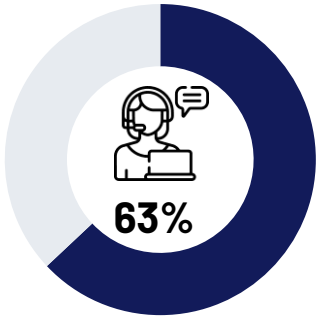
Interacted with a brand's post on social media



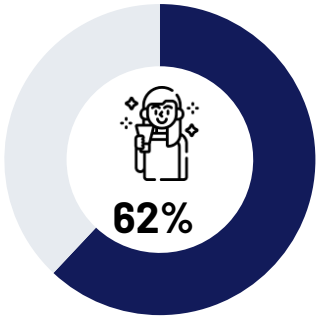
Recommended people against using a certain product/brand



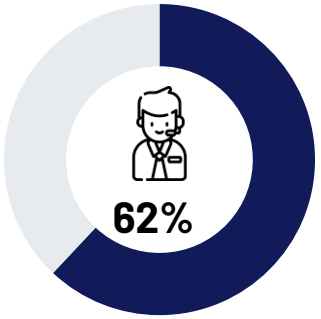
Sent a direct message to a brand on social media



Complained by contacting the call center



Attended brand-sponsored events



Called a brand representative for support

Base: % out those who have engaged with brands in the past three months

Detailed brand engagement over the past 3 months

Top 10 - by demographics

	Followed a brand on social media	Recommended a brand/product to other people	Visited a brand's store	Visited a brand's website	Interacted with a brand's post	Recommended people against a product/ brand	Sent a direct message to a brand on social media	Complained by contacting the call center	Attended brand sponsored events	Called a brand representative or customer service
Total	**70%**	**70%**	**70%**	**68%**	**67%**	**66%**	**65%**	**63%**	**62%**	**62%**
Male	63%	60%	60%	60%	61%	56%	58%	55%	53%	52%
Female	80%	82%	82%	77%	75%	79%	75%	73%	73%	75%
18-24	75%	63%	65%	65%	63%	60%	63%	56%	58%	58%
25-34	65%	71%	67%	65%	60%	63%	66%	61%	60%	60%
35-44	62%	69%	62%	67%	67%	63%	61%	60%	57%	57%
45+	82%	73%	83%	72%	76%	76%	71%	73%	71%	73%
Nationals	69%	74%	75%	71%	70%	73%	66%	67%	60%	66%
Expats	72%	66%	65%	65%	65%	60%	65%	60%	63%	59%
Upper Income	72%	70%	66%	67%	65%	66%	67%	63%	61%	60%
Middle Income	78%	80%	79%	76%	77%	76%	72%	71%	71%	74%
Lower Income	39%	34%	57%	44%	46%	34%	34%	36%	37%	34%

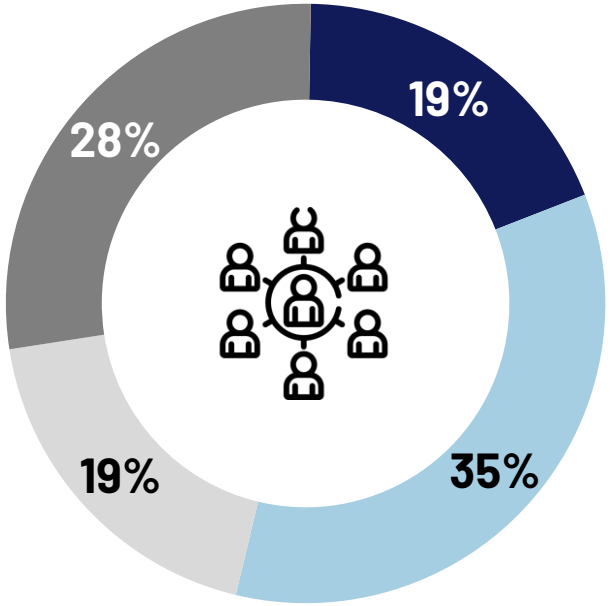
Base: % out those who have engaged with brands in the past three months

DO CONSUMERS BELIEVE THEY'RE INFLUENTIAL?

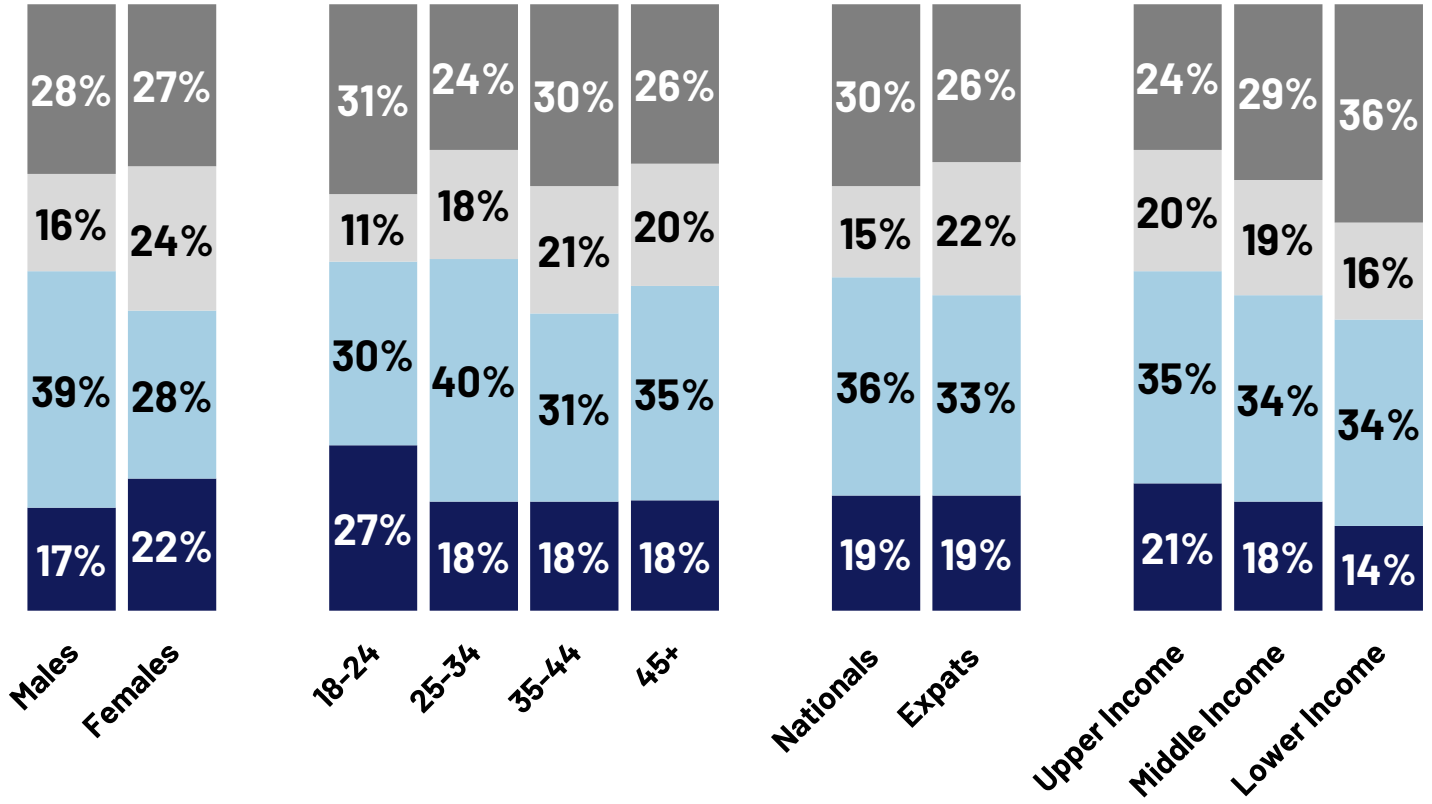


Perceived consumer ability to influence brand actions

% - by demographics



- Believe they're very influential
- Believe they're somewhat influential
- Believe they're somewhat uninfluential
- Believe they're not influential at all

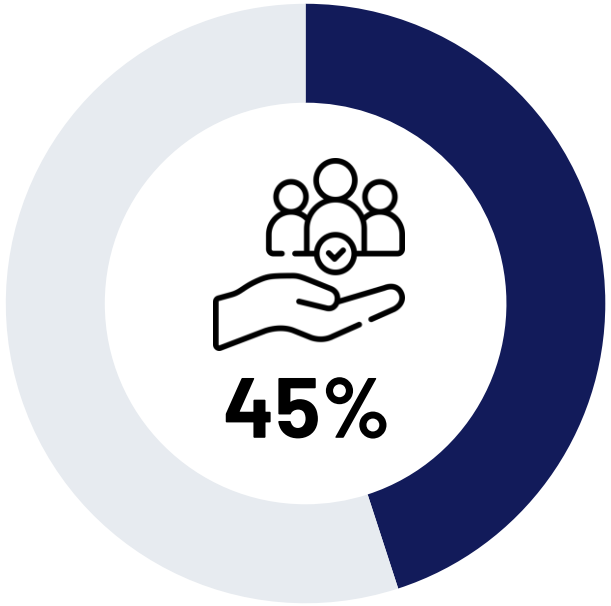


WHAT DO PEOPLE EXPECT FROM BRANDS?

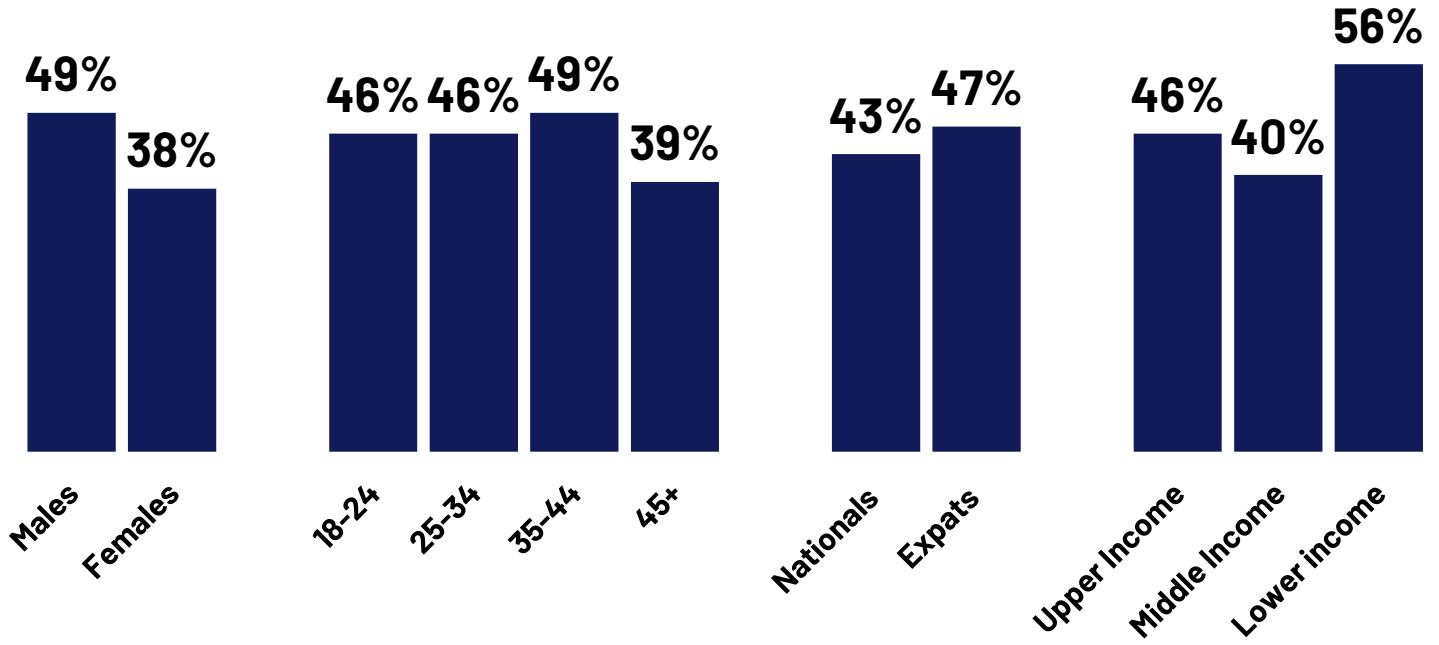


Social responsibility

%Agree – by demographics

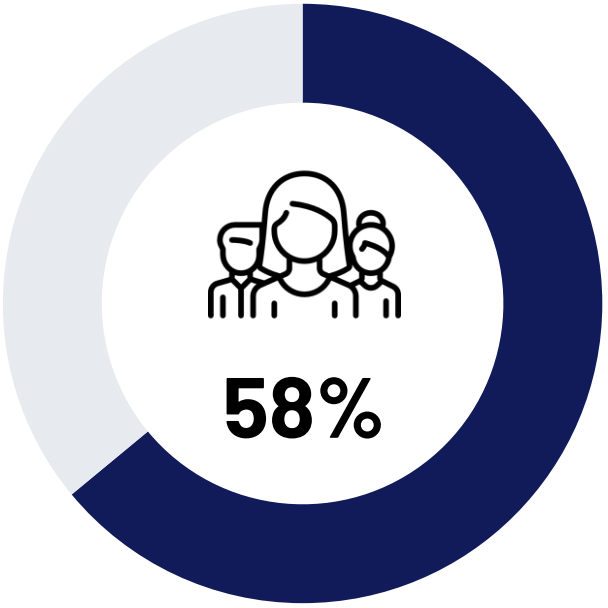


Companies in Bahrain are socially responsible and contribute positively to my community

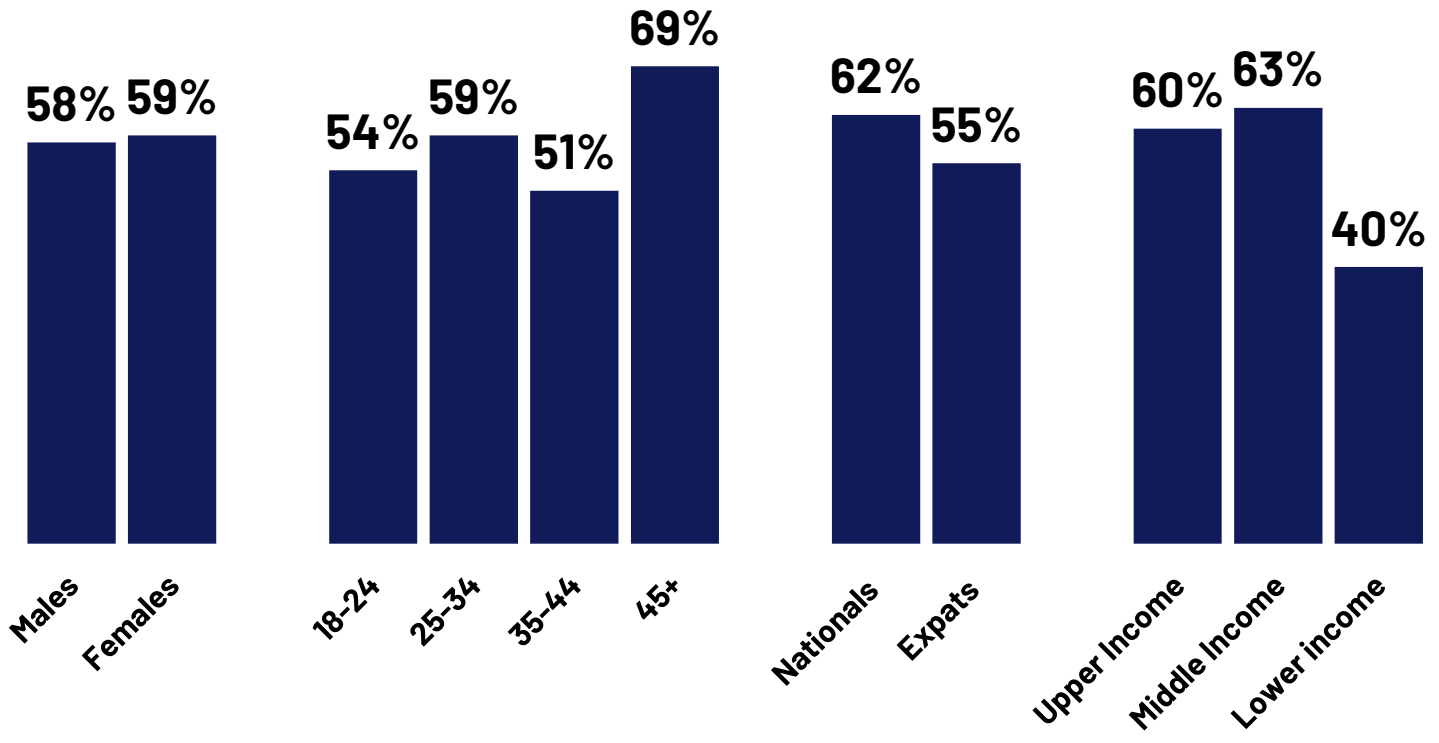


Brands' involvement in social aspects

%Agree – by demographics

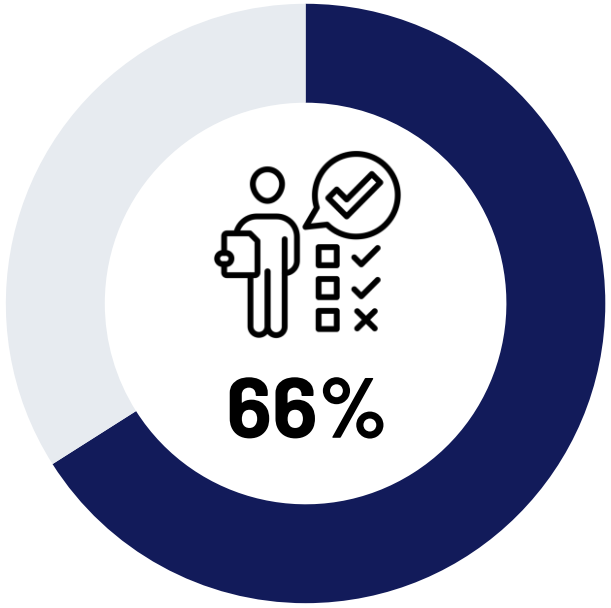


I think brands should get involved in social aspects and not only focus on business matters

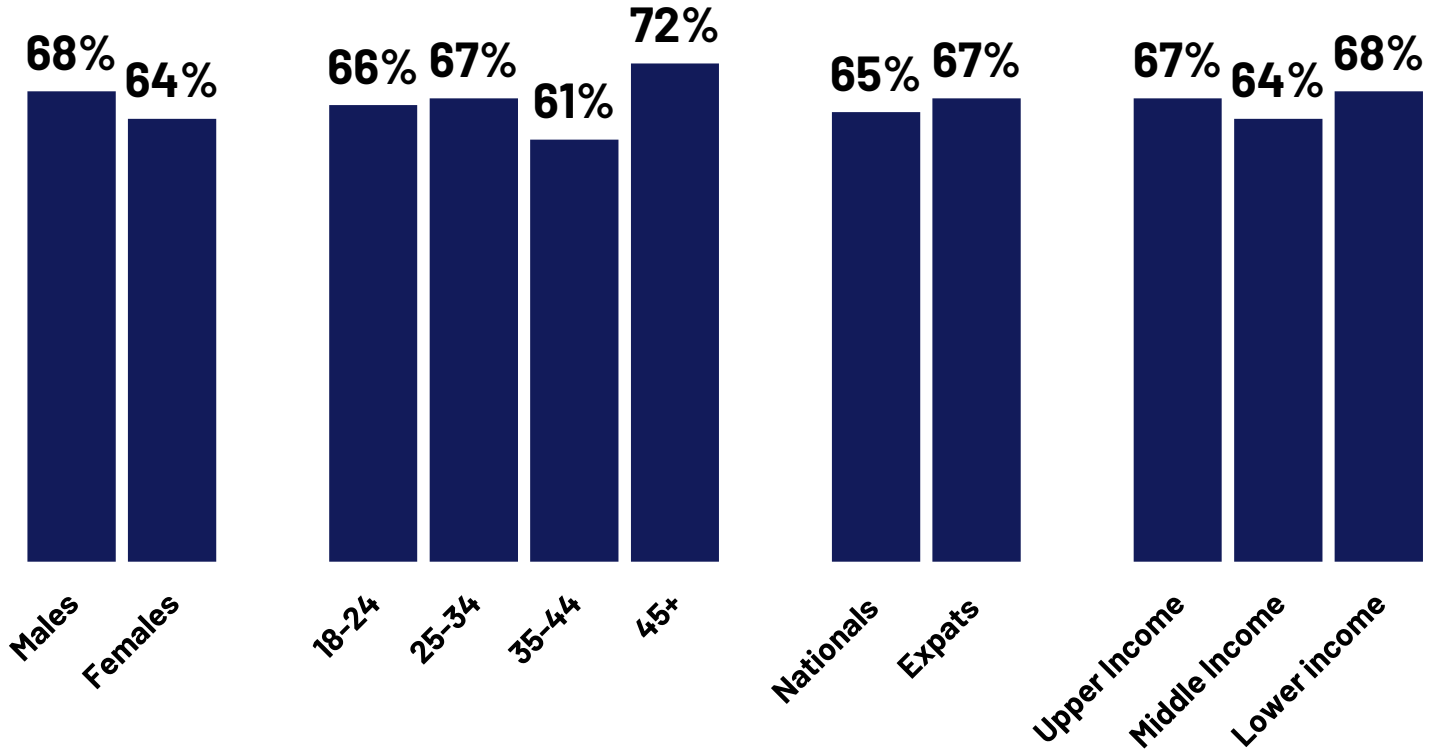


Prioritizing social responsibility in consumer choices

% – by demographics



I won't buy from a brand if it is not socially responsible, even if I like it



Way forward

Actionable recommendations for brands operating in Bahrain

Design for consumer influence

54% believe consumers can influence brand actions, and around a third have already boycotted or protested against a company. Give consumers visible ways to be heard and show how their feedback turns into action.

Put women at the heart of advocacy

82% of women have recommended a brand versus 60% of men, while 79% have also recommended against one. Treat women as powerful brand multipliers and invest in experiences that give them something positive to talk about.

Close the responsibility gap

66% will reject a brand they see as socially irresponsible, yet only 45% believe companies contribute positively to their communities. Make social impact tangible, relevant and visible rather than relying on corporate messaging alone.

Bring lower-income consumers in

Online engagement falls to 77% among lower-income consumers versus 97% among upper-income groups, while offline engagement drops to 67%. Build simpler, more accessible routes to engagement so participation is not concentrated among more affluent consumers.

Sample and methodology

Sample size
501 respondents

Sample criteria
General public
representative of the population across gender, age (18+), nationality, Region and SEC

Methodology
The survey was conducted via computer aided Telephone interviews (CATI)

Geographical coverage
Conducted in Bahrain
with a nationwide coverage



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