

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS FOR ONLINE PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR: MEDIATION BY BRAND CONSCIOUSNESS

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ABSTRACT

Social media Influencers (SMIs) is relatively new marketing strategy and effective for marketers willing to build relationships with their target market creatively. The modern marketing approach has seen a significant increase in partnerships of influencers with brands over the years for making consumer conscious for online purchase decision. The study scientifically and systematically reviews and synthesize the focus of research as an attempt to examine the mediating role of brand consciousness on the association of effectiveness of social media influencers and online purchase behaviour. Primary data is collected from 567 youth from Delhi NCR using close-ended, structured, non-disguised questionnaire. The analysis of data is done by using SPSS 21 & AMOS 21 by adopting the structural equation modelling (SEM) for explaining the path analysis. The study confirms the full mediation of brand consciousness between Social Media Influencers and online purchase behaviour. The contribution of the research will be on explanatory roles of effectiveness of Social Media Influencers and to assess the mediating role of Brand consciousness on online purchase behaviour.

Key words: Social Media Influencers, Brand consciousness, Online purchase behaviour, Influencer's effectiveness, Marketing strategies, youth behaviour, content-based influencers.

INTRODUCTION

Digital Media: Emergence of Social Media Influencers

With the advent of digital media innovations and the radical changes taking place around us, the tools, and methods of communicating with customers have undergone tremendous changes, the companies are learning the usage of social media in accordance with their business plans and online purchase (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). In a modern democracy, people are deluged with media content from a variety of sources (Hey & Trefethen, 2003). Long-standing traditional media such as newspapers, television, radio continues to be influential sources of news, and information, and promotion (Gupta et al, 2020; Kaye & Johnson, 2003). Social media has become another distinctive source of information that works primarily via social networks or because of individual interest in a particular subject matter (Kane, Alavi, Labianca, & Borgatti, 2014). An independent 'third party endorser' also known as 'Social Media Influencers' (SMIs) emerging to play important role in influencing the

perception, attitude and behaviour of public through social media platforms such as blogs, tweets and other audio video content. (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, & Freberg, 2011).

Social Media Influencers (SMI) is used these days largely through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Arora, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, & Dwivedi, 2019). Influencer Marketing is a new strategy that is gaining in popularity among companies (Kadekova & Holienčinova, 2018). The use of influential opinion leaders (Influencers), celebrities, and many fans on social media, to promote positive and ethical responses to their followers/ consumers (Riefa, & Clausen, 2019), concerning product interests using posts shared on such platforms and allows promoters and fans to participate in the co-creation of the brand image on communication (Glucksman, 2017). It also delivers exceptional opportunities for sales and advertising (Li, Lai, & Chen, 2011). It is considered that influential marketing results in a product getting better engagement results and doubling its ROI - eleven times more than once digital formats, it

makes sense to pursue influential marketing such as customer acquisition strategy, which grows significantly in the online context (Gross, & Wangenheim, 2018; Gupta and Kumar, 2017). In addition, half of the consumers already use ad blocks, which greatly reduce the performance of many common types of online advertising. Overcoming this growing barrier to online consumer access, brands wish to make an impact on 'focused consumers' on content, and that's where influential marketing is well balanced (Brown, & Fiorella, 2013).

The research study highlights the influential characteristics of social media for online purchase decision recommended by influencers, degree of involvement of youth with the influencers, and consciousness towards information and brands endorsed by the influencers. Exerting influence is an orientation of new marketing tactics for the identified people through Social media (Brown, & Fiorella, 2013). The marketers emphasizing on the purchase behaviour for drafting their social media strategy.

The purpose of the research study is to find out the effectiveness of new emerging marketing strategy - Social Media Influencers (SMIs) towards online purchase. The study also aims to assess the role of Social Media influencers for brand consciousness that lead to purchase decision. The purpose of the study is to explore the mediating role of brand consciousness between social media influencers and purchase decision.

Significance of the research

The study will help the marketers to take key marketing decisions while drafting their marketing strategies. The study explored social media influencers, their categories, content created by them and delivery for influencing the target market. The study contributes towards creating the knowledge base for inductive and scientific thinking for academicians and help the marketers to measure effectiveness of social media influencers and brand consciousness.

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Social Media Influencers and Purchase Behaviour

Influencers today are winning the hearts of people by their outstanding work, presence, and a high number of followers (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). The ideas of

onboarding influencers have a profound effect on people, especially on the younger generation (Rishi, & Kuthuru, 2021). According to Shimp and Andrews (2013), the measures to make an ad effective by considering it as a marketing strategy and developed from the consumer's perspective. Kotler and Armstrong (2014) discussed two categories of consumer involvement for purchase behaviour based on high or low customer interest, and major or minor brand variations. For purchase behaviour one important procedure is the choice interaction approach, which considers the occasions that go before and go with a buy and depicts how choices are made (Karimi, 2013). Consumer decision-making involves "consumer behaviour patterns that precede, evaluate, and follow the decision of purchase and the acquisition of need-satisfying goods, ideas, or services" (Schiffman, & Kanuk, 2009). The model given by Nicosia (1966), it discussed four fields of activity for the choice cycle: shopper mentality development, information journey and assessment, the demonstration of procurement, and post-utilization input.

Based on above discussion, the first objective and hypothesis are proposed -

O1 To measure effectiveness of Social Media Influencers on purchase behavior.

H1 - There is relationship between Social media influencers and purchase behavior.

Effectiveness of Social Media Influencers (SMIs) for Brand Consciousness

Onboarding Influencers in marketing and their effects on Millennials are very significant (Chatzigeorgiou, 2017). Influencers today are winning the hearts of people through the Internet by their outstanding work and presence helping the brand to get noticed (Levin, 2020). The marketers have marked them as the modern approach that has seen a significant increase in partnerships with marketing organizations over the years (Audrezet, De Kerviler, & Moulard, 2018). Many organizations have utilized different promoting and advertising techniques that have helped in enhancing brand awareness among customers, and that has straightforwardly converted into higher deals and sales (Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair, & Okumus, 2015). More and more people are following such influences not to miss the content. FOMO (Fear of missing out) has been applied in the marketing domain as commercial advertising appeal (Hodkinson,

2019). It is applicable in other domains as well. A study conducted by Shiva, Narula, & Shahi (2020) on the impact of 'NoMophobia' on Investment decision with the theory of compensatory internet and demonstrated the aspect of gamblers' fallacy.

The Brands gather with such influencers to comment, review, and recommend (Kadekova, & Holienčinova, 2018). Nelson and McLeod (2005) concluded that the high brand consciousness is seen among those youth where the parents are conscious for the brand. As a result, nowadays, early stage of their life consumers is conscious about the brand decision (Kumar, 2019). Choi and Lewallen (2018) conducted study on Instagram and suggested that the child's digital representation is huge on social media because parents share the content of their children. Young consumers are conscious about social media more nowadays and thus becoming more aware of the brands. (Thomas, Bestman, Pitt, Cassidy, McCarthy, Nyemcsok, & Daube, 2018). Instagram or any other social media platform is flooded with creators of different genres, Influencing not just younger generations but also people of different age groups (Dolan, Conduit, Fahy, & Goodman, 2016).

The second Objective and hypothesis of the study are as follows-

O2 To assess the effect of Social media Influencers on Brand consciousness.

H2 - There is relationship between Social media Influencers and Brand Consciousness.

Brand Consciousness through Influencers and Purchase Behaviour

Influencers with a high degree of social media maintain a close and approachable relationship with their followers. Influencers and social media outlets have varying levels of social presence (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The more social presence influencers have, the more powerful their interactions become with the consumers and they are conscious about the brands (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Furthermore, when determining the importance of information in online discussions, speed of response, frequency of conversation, and the amount of information presented all play a role (Weiss et al., 2008). The influencers having strong social presence must associate with

brands as the closeness and approachability are key goals of the influencer campaign. Verma and Verma (2017) concluded that Social media not only easy to use but also cost-saving and helpful in reaching a wider spectrum of the customer in case hotel industry too.

In recent years, this strategy has become increasingly focused on social media, which creates an opportunity for product marketing by social media influencers (Wansi, 2020). Different social media has a different set of Influencers to persuade for purchase, YouTube has influencers 'Gaurav Taneja', 'Glam couple', 'Bhuvan Bam', 'Mumbaiker Nikhil' etc. Talking about Instagram then, There are influencers such as 'Ritu Rathee', 'Masoom Minawala', 'Deeksha Khurana', 'Chinki Minki', 'Abkush Bahuguna' etc. Influencer marketing focuses on using these social media influencers as a communication channel in the marketing mix (Brown and Hayes, 2008). The influencers are divided in categories, some are into beauty content, some lifestyle, Travel, Food, MUA, Moto vloggers, Vines, Acting, Dance, Fashion, Hacks, Shopping Hauls, etc. Khare and Rakesh (2010) studied the consciousness across gender by studying the consumption involvement, advertising involvement, youth involvement in different fashion brands (Jhamb and Gupta, 2016). The researcher found the consciousness across gender is equal.

The third Objective and hypothesis are as follows-

O3 To analyse effect of Brand Consciousness on consumer purchase behavior.

H3 There is relationship between Brand consciousness and purchase behaviour

Social Media Influencers, Brand Consciousness and Purchase Behaviour

Influential marketing actions are practiced mostly on social media, e.g., Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Arora, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, & Dwivedi, 2019). Influencers can reduce the expense of reaching the target audience and offer choices (Tajudeen, Jaafar, & Ainin, 2018). The benefits of content or message conveyed by influencers are seen as a trustworthy, personal, non-commercial, and controlled brand, which is authentic, worthy of their liking and create consciousness. Broadly Influencers are divided into four broad categories based on the content- Snoopers, Informers, Entertainers, Infotainers (Gross &

Wangenheim, 2018). Snoopers are the recipients of social media. They are motivated by pure entertainment and it is fun to create and share content (Gross, 2020). Snoopers often share sensitive personal information with their audience (Gross & Wangenheim, 2018).

The motive for entertainment, art, and self-expression allows Snoopers to expand their social circles. They encourage regular and intense communication with their audience. They respond to an individual's opinion. (Brown and Hayes, 2008). In contrast to Snoopers, Informers aims to provide information, education, and support searchable content. They offer their highest level of skills, technology, and background information (Gupta et al, 2019).

Entertainers provide entertainment, amusement, and relaxation to their audiences by creating entertaining content. Audience communication unusual and close Contact occurs at a more integrated level Q&A videos, live streaming videos, meet and greet, or ask for feedback in content (Gross & Wangenheim, 2018).

Infotainers is a hybrid version of both Informers as well as entertainers. Mega influencers are highly visible on social media because of their celebrity status. (Britt, Hayes, Britt, & Park, 2020).

Macro influencers can be celebrities, TV personalities, athletes, or thought leaders. Since they can use their name to gain followers on social media, brands can expect a higher price – even though they are as big as mega influencers. Some brands may find this to be better suited to the audience and their goals (Alassani & Göretz, 2019).

The newest tier that was value-added is the Nano Influencers ranging from 1K following until 10K, the influencers are most likely to know their followers on a personal level (Wansi, 2020). With very little fan count, nano-influencers offer products with little or perhaps little access, too. Nano-influencers are more expensive than their counterparts, so products with limited resources may want to start at this effective marketing level.

The fourth objective and hypothesis of the study based on Social Media Influencers, brand consciousness and purchase decision are as follows-

O4 To assess the mediating effect of brand consciousness between Social Media Influencers and Purchase behaviour.

H4 Brand Consciousness will mediate the relationship between Social Media Influencers and Purchase behaviour

Theoretical Framework

The major variables of the research study are “Social Media Influencers”, “Brand Consciousness” and “Purchase behaviour” which are connected to theoretical background. In this research study the effectiveness of social media influencers advertising is measured by using EPIC Model given by Nielsen (2008).

The four dimensions of ‘EPIC model’ which are “Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, and Communication” taken into consideration and tested empirically. Based on the research on types of consumer decision-making styles in the theory Bettman 1979; Jacoby and Chestnut 1978; Maynes 1976; Sproles 1979, 1985; Thorelli, Becker, and Engeldow 1975: Miller, & Berry (1998), the researchers found out the characteristics of consumers (Sproles 1985; Sproles and Kendall 1986). Examples of these include perfectionist, value-conscious, Brand conscious, quality seekers, novelty-fashion seekers, time saver, satisfier, comparison shoppers, information seekers, and habitual or brand loyal consumers.

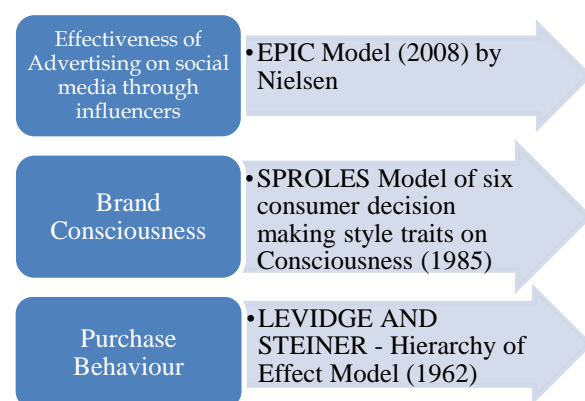


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research study is exploratory and descriptive where a cross-sectional research design has been used. The study was conducted by the survey on youth respondents from 16-35 years of age (As per the Census of India, 2011) Male and female; the data have been postulated

over the four months from December 2020 to April 2021. The Primary and statistical data were collected for a fixed period i.e., four months from Dec'20 to April'21. The study is original to measure the effectiveness of social media - influencer marketing towards purchase.

A large sample size is taken for the research study for causal explanations and cause and effect relationship establishment between influencer marketing and the attitude of youth towards brand purchase. The study measures the association between independent and dependent variables (Co-Variation). No attempt was made to manipulate the variables in this research study.

In the research study, for primary data collection survey method was used with the close-ended, structured, non-disguised questionnaire. Under the Probability sampling technique, stratified sampling is used to attain the sample. Strata were created based on distinct categories like Age and Gender. Proportionate sampling was used to attain the sample size. The sample frame is youth of Delhi NCR, 16-35 years, Sample size taken for the research study was 600 but completely filled 567 responses were considered for the analysis.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

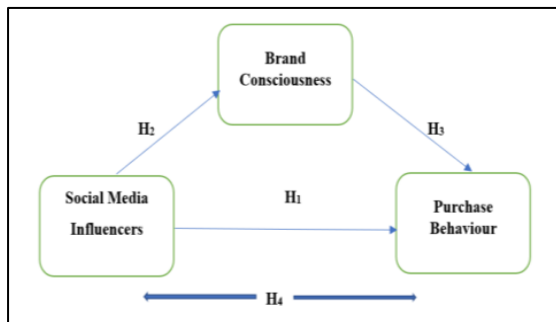


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

Research Design

Hypothesis testing research design is used for this study.

Sample and Data Collection

The data analysis is done with Amos 21. According to recommendation to use Amos, the sample size should be 10 to 20 times of number of items. The total number of items used in this study to measure three study variables are 32. So, planned sample size was 640 but because of

incompleteness only 567 is considered for further study though data is collected from 700 respondents using well designed questionnaire based on 5 points Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree). Non-random convenient sampling is used for cross-sectional data collection.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS 21 and AMOS 21 version. Structural equation modelling was adopted in this study. To explain the correlation between independent variable and dependent variable, in direct and indirect effect, and to find out mediation role, the path analysis was used (Asher, 1983).

Instruments of study variables

Social Media Influencers

In this study, Social media Influencers taken as an independent variable. For measuring the Effectiveness of social media Advertising, EPIC Model is adopted that is developed by Nielson (2008). It has four dimensions - Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, and Communication. Each dimension has 2 items, so total 8 items is used for measurement of this variable. All the items achieved the threshold factor loading of above 0.50. The value of average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability of each dimension is also close / above the recommended value of .5 and .7 respectively (Table 1.)

Brand Consciousness

Brand consciousness was chosen as a mediator variable. In this study, brand consciousness is measured with traits identified for Brand consciousness by Sproles (1985). There are six dimensions for this variable - Perfectionism, Value Consciousness, quality Consciousness, Novelty Consciousness, Time Saver consciousness and support for decision-maker. Each dimension has two items. So, total 12 items used for measuring this variable. All the items achieved the threshold factor loading of above 0.50. The value of average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability of each dimension is also close / above the recommended value of .5 and .7 respectively (Table 1.)

Purchase behaviour

Purchase behaviour is an outcome variable. In this Purchase Behaviour is based on "Hierarchy of effect model". It has six dimensions -

Awareness, Knowledge, Liking, Preference, Conviction, and Purchase. Each dimension has two items. So, total 12 items used for measuring this variable. All the items achieved the threshold factor loading of above 0.50. The value

of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (C.R.) of each dimension is also close / above the recommended value of .5 and .7 respectively (Table 1.)

Table 1. Description of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Variables	Dimensions	Items	Standardised Loadings	AVE	C.R.	
Social Media Influencers	Empathy	Influencers on social media are source of Brand attractiveness to connect with the consumer.	0.711	0.589	0.74	
		Influencers on social media helps in linking the advertising message with the personality of the Consumer.	0.821			
	Persuasion	Influencers on social media persuade towards purchase	0.808	0.6	0.75	
		Influencers on social media ad may turn consumers' view or trust into a desire and attitude to seek for the product advertised.	0.741			
	Impact	Influencer on Social Media induces impulsive buying of product.	0.851	0.61	0.76	
		Influencer on Social Media may involve consumers into messages it delivers.	0.718			
	Communication	Social Media Influencers on social media help increasing consumers' capability to remember primary message Brand Communication message.	0.84	0.68	0.81	
		The influencer's make the Brand Communication more effective by making consumers' understanding on messages delivered.	0.811			
	Brand Consciousness	Perfectionism	Social Media ads through influencers help in making consumer more brand conscious regarding the best available products.	0.736	0.6	0.74
			Influencers guide me to select the best choice among all available brands.	0.812		
Value Conscious		Influencers on Social Media makes me conscious about value for money.	0.821	0.67	0.8	
		I prefer buying big brands when they are on discount / Sale or available at low price.	0.827			
Quality Consciousness		Influencers on Social Media makes me quality and brand conscious	0.749	0.61	0.76	
		I keep track of latest brands offering quality products in the market as suggested by the influencers.	0.823			
Novelty Consciousness		Influencers on Social Media makes me conscious towards Novelty -Fad - Fashion.	0.714	0.55	0.71	

		I am conscious about the new design, and always consult influencers before purchase.	0.772		
	Time-saver consciousness	Influencers on Social media satisfy me in taking purchase decision.	0.784	0.55	0.72
		Influencers at Social Media acts as time saver	0.709		
	Support for decision-making	Influencers at Social Media acts as support system for buying	0.708	0.5	0.698
		Influencers help in avoiding confusion regarding the brands and features	0.711		
Purchase Behaviour	Awareness	I am aware about brands and latest fashion for online purchase.	0.834	0.68	0.81
		I am aware about new trends and innovativeness through online shopping.	0.822		
	Knowledge	I always prefer Known brand for any purchase decision.	0.785	0.69	0.82
		I keep knowledge about new trends brand available with offers and Product range.	0.869		
	Liking	I like influencers for giving information about brand for online purchase.	0.745	0.59	73
		I like online shopping and presentation of idea and communication techniques by influencers.	0.784		
	Preference	I give preference to the brands available online; I am conscious for online purchase decision.	0.81	0.62	0.76
		I prefer the online available brand which are in my thought.	0.769		
	Conviction	The innovative approach of brand gives me conviction that push me for purchase.	0.727	0.52	0.699
		The recommendation from influencer gives conviction that push me for purchase.	0.729		
	Purchase	I purchase online available brands for which I am conscious.	0.832	0.65	0.79
		Influencers help me buying the better products online.	0.788		

[AVE: Average Variance Extract, CR: Composite Reliability]

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The tabulation of data with analysis and interpretations has been done to get the complete representation in proportion with all the objectives of the study. The Likert scale was followed for data collection and for data summarizing and analysis descriptive statistics were used. The study is based on the youth online purchase behaviour through social media

Influencer of Delhi NCR. The study attempt to find out that online purchase behaviour is affected by social media influencer.

Sample Description

The sample description of the respondents is presented in terms demographics factors in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample description

Demographics details					
Gender	Frequency	Percent	Age Group	Frequency	Percent
Male	290	51.1	14-19	369	65.1
Female	277	48.9	20- 25	140	24.7
Total	567	100	26-30	34	6
			31-35	24	4.2
			Total	567	100
Location	Frequency	Percent	Marital status	Frequency	Percent
East Delhi	62	10.9	Married	46	9.3
West Delhi	84	14.8	Unmarried	514	90.7
North Delhi	48	8.5	Total	567	100
South Delhi	138	24.3	Working Couple	Frequency	Percent
Noida	149	26.3	Yes	144	25.4
Faridabad	9	1.6	No	423	74.6
Gurgaon	76	13.4	Total	567	100
Sonipat	1	0.2	Household size	Frequency	Percent
Total	567	100	1	9	1.6
			2	29	5.1
Family Income	Frequency	Percent	3	90	15.9
Less than 25000 Per Month	34	6	4	247	43.6
25000 to 50000 Per Month	99	17.5	5	94	16.6
50000 to 100000 Per Month	192	33.9	More than 5	98	17.3
100000 to 150000	242	42.7	Total	567	100
Total	567	100			

Measurement Model

Measurement model is tested for the study variables of the study and fit indices are presented in table 3 to support the validity or CFA results.

Results of the table depicted descriptive statistics

Regression Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

This analysis is conducted in two parts - without mediator and with mediator. In without mediator (direct relationship) part, the analysis is conducted between explanatory variable social media Influencers on outcome Purchase

Table 3. Model fit summary of study variables

Variables	P	χ²	Df	χ²/df	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMR
Social media Influencers	.000	376.598	145	2.597	.962	.927	.907	.078	.081
Brand consciousness	.000	1048.935	344	2.662	.975	.995	.947	.080	.076
Purchase behaviour	.021	19.543	9	2.171	.975	.957	.921	.067	.041

[Notes - GFI: Goodness of fit index, CFI: Comparative fit index, TLI: Tucker Lewis Index, RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, RMR: Root mean square residual]

and discriminant validity. Result showed that the inter-construct correlation values were less than the square root of the AVE for that construct. It means that the proposed measurement model also fulfills the criterion of discriminant validity (Sadhna et al, 2020; Sood et al, 2019). Apart from this, results also showed that there is positive relationship between all the latent variables.

behavior while in with mediator (indirect relationship) part, the analysis is conducted between explanatory variable social media Influencers on outcome Purchase behavior in presence of Brand consciousness as mediator.

In the direct relationship, a significant impact of the explanatory variable social media Influencers on outcome Purchase behavior can be noted (t value= 9.778, p= 0.000) from Table 4. Therefore, hypotheses 1 is fully accepted.

Table 4. Regression Estimates without mediator (direct effect)

Variable	Direction	Variable	Estimate	't' value	P
Purchase behaviour	<---	Social media Influencers	1.426	9.778	** *

[*** stands for p = .000]

However, Table 5 revealed that this direct relation of the social media Influencers and Purchase behavior is not significant when mediator Brand consciousness is used (t value= 0.611, p= 0.541) but there is significant relationship between social media Influencers and Brand consciousness, and between Brand consciousness and Purchase behavior. It confirms the full mediation of Brand consciousness between input variable social media Influencers and outcome variable Purchase behavior (Table 5). Therefore, hypothesis 4 is fully accepted.

The relationship between social media Influencers and Brand consciousness is significant in indirect relation (t value= 15.25, p= 0.000) (Table 5). Therefore, the alternate

hypothesis 2 is accepted (Table 5). Similarly, the relationship between Brand consciousness and Purchase behavior are significant in indirect effect (t value = 3.65, p=0.00) (Table VI). Thus, alternate hypothesis 3 is also accepted (Table 5).

Structural Model

The structural model is conducted to support the results of regression analysis and hypotheses testing. The model shows good fitness with or without a mediator. Without mediator value of $\chi^2/df=1.96$, values of GFI, CFI and TLI were above 0.95 (Table 5). With mediator value of χ^2/df were slightly lower, 1.71, although, values of GFI, CFI, and TLI remained in same range. Value of RMSEA clearly indicates that the present model has only 5-6percent difference from the ideal model (Table 6). Therefore, it shows that both direct and indirect relations exist with very good fitness among constructs (Table 5).

Two structural models are explained – one is the direct impact of the social media influencers on Purchase behavior without mediator and the other is a comprehensive model that has been explained by a mediator. In the table 7, the fit indices of both the case are presented and all fit indices are in acceptable limit. All the results are found to be with accepted standards (Henseler, 2010; Fornell & Larcker, 1981)

Table 5. Regression estimates of the proposed model (With Mediator)

Variable	Direction	Variable	Estimate	't' value	P
Brand consciousness	<---	Social media Influencers	1.331	15.256	***
Purchase behaviour	<---	Brand consciousness	1.229	3.456	***
Purchase behaviour	<---	Social media Influencers	.288	.611	.541

[*** stands for p = .000]

Table 6. Results of hypothesis testing

Independent Variable	Direction	Dependent Variable	Mediation	Inferences
Brand consciousness	<---	Social media Influencers	With mediation	H2: accepted
Purchase behaviour	<---	Brand consciousness	With mediation	H3: accepted
Purchase behaviour	<---	Social media Influencers	With mediation	H4: accepted
Purchase behaviour	<---	Social media Influencers	Without mediation	H1: accepted

Table 7. Fit indices summary of structural model

Variables	P	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMR
Model (without Mediator)	0.001	66.76	4	1.964	0.951	0.971	0.962	.061	.035
Model (With Mediator)	.000	149.22	87	1.715	0.933	0.967	0.973	0.052	0.026

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research study conducted at Delhi NCR where 'Social Media Influencers' are taken as input (explanatory) variable whereas 'Brand Consciousness' as mediating variable and Purchase behaviour as outcome variable. In the SEM (Structural equation modelling) all the constructs shown very good fitness with or without mediator. Between the social media influencer and purchase behaviour, a directed significant association was noted. A similar kind of result was found in the study by Chauhan, Singh, & Sachdeva (2021) a significant association was shown between input and mediating variable in indirect relationship. The various strategies of the constructs used in the research study is not possible to cover in one study. The association reflected in the study mediated by known or unknown constructs and full mediation of brand consciousness with social media influencers and purchase behaviour. The significant impact of brand consciousness on purchase behaviour was reflected with an indirect relationship as shown in the (Majeed, 2011; Teeratansirikool et al., 2013). It cannot be denied that the purchase behaviour is affected by consciousness towards the brand and social media influencers helps in creating brand consciousness.

On the basis of review of literature and the quantitative analysis, the researcher concluded that the businesses should first identify the target group they wish to make conscious about the brands for purchase decision. Second, they should identify the aims of their influencer campaign and the message to be shared based on this. Companies should determine whether to concentrate on domain scope or social presence, depending on which helps them achieve the specified targets, based on the influencer campaign's goals, target audience, and message.

Once the emphasis has been established, businesses should determine which of the four influencer styles best fits their needs. Finally, businesses should begin searching for influencers within the form they have identified. Influencers include Snoopers, Informers, Entertainers, and Infotainers, but that classification is not definitive. Because of the high level of dynamics on social media, new influencers emerge regularly, and the presented typology may be expanded by various subtypes. (Brown & Fiorella, 2013). The presented identification factors empirically tested, and the

influencer characteristics of each type is discussed.

Social Media Influencers are widely regarded as reliable marketing strategy, since people imitate Influencers for motivation of their own volition, influencer marketing is seen as trustworthy, likeable, and genuine. The influencer is a pro-consumer who, in his or her own special way, spreads the company's message to create brand consciousness to their followers for purchase behaviour. Influencer marketing, in comparison to more conventional marketing approaches, encourages consumers to respond to messages and ask questions, while traditional marketing methods do not offer the same degree of potential for contact.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research study has marketing and managerial implications for business where brands are competing for influencing their target audience for purchase decision. With effective social media influencers strategy brands can motivate and influence youth for purchase and boosting their sales. The brand consciousness of youth will encourage towards purchase.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This research is the first step of researcher toward a better understanding of how to choose the right types of influencers for effective influencer campaigns for creating brand consciousness and push towards purchase. Three constructs were limited in the study. The study is limited to longitudinal study with cross-sectional questionnaire which can be further explored by using qualitative methods like case study analysis, focus group interviews. Other constructs such as social media influencers and purchase behavior can be assessed as mediator role or explanatory variables.

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