

Role of Digital Influencer Marketing Strategy on Purchase of Private Label Brands: Mediating Effect of Brand Loyalty

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The study explores the nexus between digital influencer marketing strategies, consumer choices regarding private label brands (PLBs), and the mediating role of brand loyalty among a sample of 498 consumers in Chennai. Employing purposive sampling, a questionnaire is utilized for primary data collection. Percentage analysis scrutinizes the demographic profile of consumers. Structural equation modeling is employed to dissect the causal links amongst research constructs. Additionally, Analysis of Variance assesses the impact of demographic profiles on research constructs. Results found that audience engagement, influencer proficiency, and brand compatibility emerge as key determinants significantly impacting the efficacy of digital influencer marketing strategies. It establishes the pivotal task of digital influencer marketing strategies in driving the purchase decisions of consumers within the PLB context. Additionally, brand loyalty is identified as a partial mediator, elucidating its impact amid digital influencer marketing strategy and the actual buying behavior. Demographic profiles such as, age, academic qualification, and monthly income showcasing significant influences on various aspects of consumer engagement and purchasing decisions. This collective insight provides marketers with a nuanced understanding, enabling them to tailor strategies that resonate effectively with diverse consumer segments in the competitive landscape of PLBs.

Keywords: PLBs, Consumers, Digital Influencer, Marketing Strategy, Brand Loyalty.

1. Introduction

In the contemporary environment of buyer behavior, the influence of online platforms and digital influencers has transformed the marketing paradigm, particularly concerning PLBs. The study explores the link between digital influencer marketing strategies, purchase decisions of PLBs, and mediation effect of brand loyalty. With the proliferation of social media and the increasing reliance on influencers as trusted sources, accommodating the dynamics of such

intersection becomes vital for marketers and businesses alike. The phenomenon of PLBs, often associated with retailers, has observed a surge in admiration, challenging the traditional dominance of national brands (Chauhan and Kamboj, 2013). Concurrently, digital influencers apply considerable supremacy in determining consumer preferences and purchase intentions. The study explores into the uncharted territory where these two influential forces converge, examining how digital influencer marketing strategies impact the choices consumers make regarding PLBs.

Brand loyalty emerges as a critical mediating factor in this dynamic. As consumers form connections with digital influencers and engage with branded content, the study seeks to uncover how this loyalty translates into the decision to opt for PLBs. The background, therefore, goes beyond conventional marketing studies by intricately weaving together the realms of digital influencer strategies, brand loyalty, and private label brand preferences (Chopra et al., 2017). The insights generated from this investigation promise not only to add to academic literature in marketing but too to provide real implications for firms navigating the evolving environment of online marketing and brand management. In essence, the study aims to unravel the multifaceted network of influence that digital influencers wield over the buying decisions of PLBs, shedding light on mediating force of brand loyalty in this contemporary marketing paradigm.

Digital Influencer Marketing Strategy: It has emerged as a potent strategy, reshaping the environment of brand promotion in the online realm. The success of this approach hinges on several key factors that collectively contribute to its efficacy. Firstly, the audience reach and relevancy of content are paramount. Influencers possess the ability to connect with specific demographics, making their content more resonant and engaging (Glucksman, 2017). The strategic alignment of influencer and brand values ensures that the message reaches a targeted audience, enhancing the likelihood of meaningful interactions. The nature of audience interaction with influencer content is another critical facet. The two-way message facilitated by social media platforms enables influencers to cultivate a sense of community and trust. Engaged audiences are more likely to respond positively to endorsed products or services, creating a ripple effect of influence (Krywalski and Moreira, 2020).

Consistency in influencer communication is a key pillar of effective marketing. Maintaining an authentic and coherent voice across platforms and campaigns reinforces the influencer's credibility. This consistency builds a reliable brand image, nurturing a deeper connection among the influencer, the audience, and promoted products or services. Furthermore, the influencer's efforts in information dissemination play a vital role. Beyond product promotion, influencers often serve as conduits for valuable information, trends, and insights. The multifaceted role enhances their authority and keeps the audience actively engaged. A successful digital influencer marketing strategy revolves around audience-centric elements such as tailored content, interactive engagement, consistent communication, and the added value of information dissemination (Trabelsi, 2020). Brands leveraging these aspects strategically can harness the influential power of digital personalities to connect with audiences, build brand loyalty, and drive consumer actions in the digital space.

Audience Engagement: Audience engagement stands as a critical metric in the realm of online marketing, particularly in the context of social media platforms. The discernibility and activity

on social media networks are pivotal. Consistent presence across relevant channels certifies that the brands still detectible to the target segment. The vigorous kind of social media demands not only regular posting but also strategic timing to maximize reach and engagement. The quantum of involvement and relationship with followers is a key determinant of audience involvement. Brands that actively respond to comments, messages, and participate in discussions foster a sense of community (Burnes and Pepe, 2016). This engagement transforms a passive audience into active participants, contributing to a more vibrant and loyal following. Content relevance and the frequency of posts are crucial components of audience engagement. Tailoring content to align with audience interests, needs, and trends ensures that it resonates with followers. Additionally, the frequency of posts should strike a balance – too infrequent, and the brand might fade from audience consciousness; too frequent, and it risks overwhelming or disengaging the audience. Moreover, fostering engagement goes beyond quantitative metrics. The qualitative aspects of interaction, such as meaningful conversations, user-generated content, and polls, contribute significantly to audience involvement. These tactics not only reinforce the brand's relationship with its target group but also provide valuable insights into consumer preferences (Joudeh et al., 2020).

Influencer Proficiency: In the territory of influencer marketing, the proficiency of influencers delivers a pivotal task in determining its success and impact of promotional campaigns. The degree of genuineness and trustworthiness in the content delivered by influencers is a cornerstone of their proficiency. Authenticity resonates with audiences, fostering trust and credibility. Influencers who transparently share their experiences and opinions contribute to a more genuine connection with their followers. The influencer's knowledge and authority within a specific niche further enhance their proficiency. Expertise in a particular domain not only adds value to the content but also positions the influencer as a trustworthy cause of information (Sindhuja and Rani, 2023). Audiences are more probably to involve with influencers who demonstrate a depth of understanding and command authority in their chosen field. Consistency in maintaining a certain image across different campaigns is another dimension of influencer proficiency. Influencers who align their personal brand consistently with endorsed products or services build a coherent narrative. The consistency not only reinforces their authenticity but also aids in creating a recognizable and trustworthy online identity. Influencer proficiency encompasses the authenticity of content, the influencer's proficiency in a specific niche, and the capability to maintain a consistent image (Shobanapriya, 2020). Brands partnering with proficient influencers benefit from a more credible and impactful promotional strategy, fostering stronger connections with the target audience and maximizing the potential for successful marketing endeavors.

Brand Compatibility: Brand compatibility in influencer marketing is a pivotal determinant of campaign success, emphasizing the harmony between an influencer's persona and the brand's identity. The arrangement of tenets between the brand and influencer is paramount, ensuring that the certification feels authentic and vibrates with the existing image of influencer. When an influencer's values mirror those of the brand, it enhances the credibility of the partnership and fosters a genuine connection with the audience. Relevance to the target audience is another critical aspect of brand compatibility (Jewargi et al., 2022). The influencer's content, style, and overall brand association should seamlessly integrate with the favorites of the targeted audience. This alignment ensures that the brand message reaches the right demographic and

enhances the likelihood of positive reception. Personal affinity and connection among influencer and brand contribute significantly to brand compatibility. When influencers genuinely appreciate and connect with a brand, their endorsement becomes more than a transactional collaboration, it becomes a personal recommendation. The authentic connection is perceptible to the audience, establishing a more profound and lasting impact on brand perception. Brand compatibility relies on the synergies between values of influencer, the relevance of content to the target audience, and the genuine personal affinity between the influencer and the brand (Manavat et al., 2022). Brands that prioritize these elements when selecting influencers for collaborations are better positioned to generate authentic and impactful marketing drives that vibrate with consumers.

Brand Loyalty: Brand loyalty is a multifaceted concept that encapsulates the depth of connection customers feel toward a particular brand. A key indicator of brand loyalty is the repeat purchases made by customers. When consumers consistently choose a specific brand over alternatives, it signifies a level of trust and satisfaction that goes beyond mere transactions. The sustained patronage becomes a tangible expression of loyalty. Likewise, the likelihood of customers recommending a brand is a significant dimension of brand loyalty. Advocacy and peer recommendations amplify the brand's reach and influence. Customers who willingly endorse and suggest a brand to others demonstrate a genuine belief in its value and quality, contributing to the brand's positive image (Qitong and Rahman, 2019). Sensitive link renders a main task in fostering brand loyalty. Brands that induce sentiments, whether through storytelling, shared values, or memorable experiences, forge a deeper bond with their audience. The emotional resonance enhances customer loyalty by creating a brand relationship that transcends functional attributes. The preference for a brand over available alternatives is a decisive manifestation of brand loyalty. Even when faced with choices, loyal customers consistently opt for the familiar brand. The preference is rooted in the positive experiences, trust, and satisfaction that the brand has consistently delivered. Brands that prioritize building and nurturing these elements cultivate a loyal customer base, fostering long-term relationships and contributing to sustained success in a competitive market (Parmar, 2014).

Purchase of PLBs: The purchase of PLBs is influenced by numerous important factors, indicating the developing preferences and considerations of today's consumers. Central to this decision-making process is consumers' perception of quality and worth offered by PLBs. The professed balance between quality and value plays a crucial role in shaping the attractiveness of these brands, impacting consumers' willingness to choose private labels over established national brands. Price sensitivity is another influential aspect governing the purchase of PLBs (Gielens et al., 2021). Given the typically lower prices associated with private labels, consumers often view them as cost-effective alternatives. The price-conscious approach can significantly sway purchasing decisions, particularly in economically conscious markets.

The level of trust built through influencer endorsements has emerged as a contemporary factor influencing private label purchases. As influencers play a substantial role in shaping consumer opinions, their positive endorsements can enhance the perceived value and credibility of PLBs (Gautam and Sharma, 2017). Additionally, the innovative and unique offerings of PLBs contribute to their appeal. Consumers are drawn to products that stand out in terms of innovation, exclusivity, or differentiation, providing private labels with an opportunity to capture market share through distinctive offerings. Word-of-mouth influence remains a potent

force in the purchase of PLBs. Recommendations and positive experiences shared within social circles contribute to the perceived reliability and desirability of these brands, fostering a sense of trust and confidence among potential consumers. Understanding and strategically addressing these factors are crucial for PLBs seeking to carve a niche in the competitive consumer market (Faisal and Ekawanto, 2021).

2. Problem Statement

The connection of influencer marketing strategy in online and consumer behavior regarding PLBs presents a contemporary challenge and opportunity in the dynamic landscape of e-commerce. While digital influencers wield substantial influence in shaping consumer perceptions, their role in driving the purchase decisions of PLBs remains a moderately unexplored territory. The primary problem lies in knowing the intricate relationships amid digital influencer marketing strategy, the buying intention of PLBs, and the mediating influence of brand loyalty. Prevailing research has extensively delved into the effect of influencers on choice of consumers and the mediating role of brand loyalty in various contexts, but the specific dynamics within the realm of PLBs demand dedicated exploration. The challenge is to decipher how digital influencer strategies resonate with audiences in the context of PLBs. Additionally, understanding the mediating role of brand loyalty is essential for comprehending the sustained influence of digital influencers on consumers' choices over time. The study pursues to fill research gap by separating the complexities of how digital influencer marketing strategies align with the purchase behavior of PLBs and the underlying role of brand loyalty. Therefore, probing these relationships, the study aims to contribute intuitions that are not only rationally inspiring but also basically applicable for businesses directing the evolving environment of online marketing. Therefore, it underscores the need to dissect the intricate web of influence woven by digital influencers, specifically in the context of PLB choices, and the mediating force of brand loyalty in shaping consumer decisions.

3. Need

The need for the study is emphasized by the transformative effect of digital platforms on contemporary buyer behavior and the growing significance of PLBs in the retail arena. With digital influencer marketing becoming a dominant force in shaping consumer choices, there is a distinct lack of comprehensive research addressing its impact on the purchase decisions of PLBs. PLBs, once relegated to the sidelines, are gaining prominence, challenging established national brands. Considering the key role that digital influencer marketing renders in influencing consumers' preferences for private label products is crucial for both academics and practitioners in the marketing domain. Furthermore, the mediating role of brand loyalty adds an additional layer of complexity to this relationship. However, brand loyalty has been extensively studied in various contexts, its specific role as a mediator in the perspective of digital influencer-led PLB purchases remains underexplored. The study is essential for filling these knowledge gaps, offering insights into how digital influencers contribute to the perception and choice of PLBs and the subsequent development of brand loyalty. The findings hold insinuations for marketers planning to enhance their strategies in the rapidly evolving

digital landscape and capitalize on the synergies amid PLBs, influencer marketing and brand loyalty. The study addresses a critical void in current literature, presenting an opportunity to enhance our understanding of the intricate dynamics at the connection of digital influencer marketing and private label brand preferences.

4. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

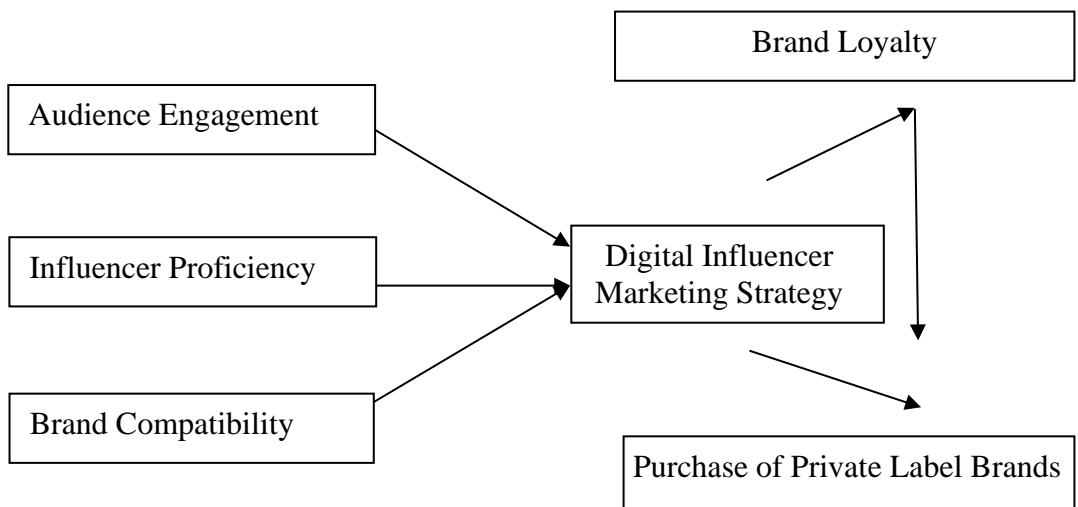
Digital influencer marketing strategy has developed a dominant force in product selling atmosphere. Consumers, especially those in younger demographics, increasingly trust and engage with influencers on digital platforms (Ao et al., 2023). The authenticity and relatability of influencers contribute significantly to their effectiveness in forming buyer insights and preferences. The strategic use of influencer promotion has been exposed to enhance brand visibility, credibility, and engagement (SanMiguel et al., 2018). Audience engagement emerges as a vital aspect in the efficiency of digital influencer strategies. Platforms like social media provide unique opportunities for two-way communication among influencer and audience (Belanche et al., 2021). High levels of engagement, including likes, comments, and shares, not only amplify the reach of influencer content but also indicate the depth of connection between influencers and their followers (Chin, 2019). Effective audience engagement is pivotal for creating a loyal and active community around a brand. Influencer proficiency, encompassing the genuineness of content, trustworthiness, and the influencer's authority in a specific niche, plays a pivotal role in influencer marketing success. Consumer is often possibly to involve with influencer who consistently deliver reliable content and align with their value (Chopra et al., 2021).

The proficiency of an influencer adds to the complete efficacy of influencer marketing strategies and can influence audience perceptions and purchasing decisions (Kadam et al., 2021). Brand compatibility in influencer marketing is crucial for ensuring that the influencer value align with the identity of brand. The alignment is essential to maintain legitimacy and resonance with audience targeted (Gil-Cordero et al., 2021). Consumers are highly interested to trust and involve with influencer-endorsed message when they observe a natural fit among the influencer identity and brand promoted (Gajanova et al., 2020). Strategic brand compatibility contributes to the realization of influencer marketing campaigns and strengthens the connection between influencers, brands, and consumers (Lim et al., 2017). Loyalty of a brand, a long-studied aspect of buyer behavior, has evolved in the perspective of online influencers' marketing. Consumers not only form attachments to brands but also develop loyalty to the influencers associated with those brands (Gomes et al., 2022). The emotional connections forged through influencer content contribute to a sense of community and shared values, reinforcing brand loyalty. This shift expands the traditional understanding of brand loyalty, integrating influencer relationships as a key factor (Lal and Sharma, 2021).

The purchase of PLBs is influenced by various aspects, including consumers' perceptions of quality and value, price sensitivity, influencer endorsements, product innovation, and word-of-mouth influence (Hanafiah and Irwansyah, 2022). PLBs, once overshadowed by national brands, have gained popularity due to perceived cost-effectiveness and comparable quality (Musso et al., 2022). The inspiration of digital influencer in shaping observations of PLBs is an emerging area, exploring how influencers contribute to changing consumer attitudes

towards these brands (Jimenez-castillo and Sanchez-fernandez, 2019). As a collective, these components form an intricate network of consumer behavior in the online marketing era. Successful digital influencer marketing strategies leverage influencer proficiency, audience engagement, brand compatibility, and brand loyalty to drive consumer choices (Ki and Kim, 2019). Understanding the relationships within this framework is crucial for sellers looking for optimizing their strategies in the rapidly evolving landscape of digital marketing and influencer-led consumer decision-making (Hermenda et al., 2019). It provides a foundation for comprehending the complications of buyer behavior in the online marketing, offering valuable intuitions for marketing firms navigating the evolving atmosphere of influencer-driven consumer choices (Kim and Ko, 2012). Review of previous literature suggest the ensuing conceptual framework (Figure 1) and hypotheses.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Hypotheses

H_{1.1}: Antecedents have significant impact on research variables.

H_{1.2}: Audience engagement, influencer proficiency, and brand compatibility have significant impact on digital influencer marketing strategy.

H_{1.3}: Digital influencer marketing strategy has significant impact on purchase of PLBs.

H_{1.4}: Brand loyalty has mediating impact between digital influencer marketing strategy and purchase of PLBs.

H_{1.5}: Demographic profile of consumers have significant impact on research variables.

5. Research Methodology

The research methodology provides a framework for investigating the relationships between digital influencer marketing strategies and purchase of PLBs, with the mediating effect of

brand loyalty among consumers in Chennai. The sample size comprises 498 consumers, selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation across diverse demographics. A questionnaire serves as the primary instrument for data collection. Prior to the final survey, a pilot study connecting 50 consumers is directed to improve the questionnaire, confirming clearness, applicability, and effectiveness. The feedback garnered from the pilot study contributes to enhance and validity of questionnaire. Percentage analysis is employed to scrutinize the demographic profile of the sample consumers. It helps to understanding characteristics of respondents and contributes valuable context to the subsequent analyses. Structural Equation Modeling is utilized to assess the causal links among the key research constructs. SEM offers a sophisticated statistical approach to model complex relationships, allowing for understanding of the interplay between variables. Analysis of Variance is employed to measure the effect of demographic profile on the identified research constructs. If ANOVA yields significant results, then Post-hoc tests are administered to delve deeper into the nature of these effects, providing a more detailed examination of the relationships. The comprehensive methodology is designed to yield insights into the intricate dynamics of consumer behavior regarding PLBs, influenced by digital influencer marketing strategies, and the mediating role of brand loyalty.

6. Results and Discussions

6.1. Demographic Profile of Consumers

The demographic profile of private label brand consumers is analyzed in table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Analysis

Demography	Classification	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	279	56.02%
	Female	219	43.98%
Age	Below 35 years	191	38.35%
	35 – 50 years	245	49.20%
	Above 50 years	62	12.45%
Academic Qualification	Up to HSC	207	41.57%
	Diploma/UG	140	28.11%
	Post Graduate	151	30.32%
Monthly Income	Below Rs.30,000	366	73.49%
	Rs.30,000 – 50,000	83	16.67%
	Above Rs.50,000	49	9.84%
Occupation	Employed	181	36.35%
	Business	239	47.99%
	Retired/Others	78	15.66%

Table 1 exhibits that 56.02% of consumers are male and 43.98% of consumers are female. Age reveals that 38.35% of consumers are in below 35 years, 49.20% of consumers are in 35 – 50 years, and 12.45% of consumers are above 50 years. Academic qualification discloses that 41.57% of consumers are educated up to HSC, 28.11% of consumers are qualified with diploma/UG, and 30.32% of consumers are qualified with post graduate degree. Monthly income shows that 73.49% of consumers are in below Rs.30,000, 16.67% of consumers are in Rs.30,000 – 50,000, and 9.84% of consumers are in above Rs.50,000. Occupation reveals that

36.35% of consumers are employed, 47.99% of consumers are businessmen, and 15.66% of consumers are retired and others. It confirms that consumers from diverse background purchases PLBs.

6.2. Causal Relationships among Research Constructs

An endeavor is paid to assess the causal relationship among Audience Engagement (AENG), Influencer Proficiency (IPRO), Brand Compatibility (BCTL), Digital Influencer Marketing Strategy (DIMS), Brand Loyalty (BLYT), and Purchase of PLBs (PPLB). Observed, endogenous variables include AENG3, AENG2, AENG1, IPRO3, IPRO2, IPRO1, BCTL1, BCTL2, BCTL3, DIMS4, DIMS3, DIMS2, DIMS1, BLYT4, BLYT3, BLYT2, BLYT1, PPLB1, PPLB2, PPLB3, PPLB4, and PPLB5. Unobserved, endogenous variables include DIMS, BLYT and PPLB. Unobserved, exogenous variables include AENG, IPRO, BCTL, and e1 - e25. The model consists of 53 variables, of which 22 are observed, 31 are unobserved; 28 are exogenous and 25 are endogenous variables. These variables are used to examine the causal relationship among the research constructs. In this way, the structural equation model is represented in Figure 2, and corresponding path coefficient values in Table 2.

Figure 2: Structural Model

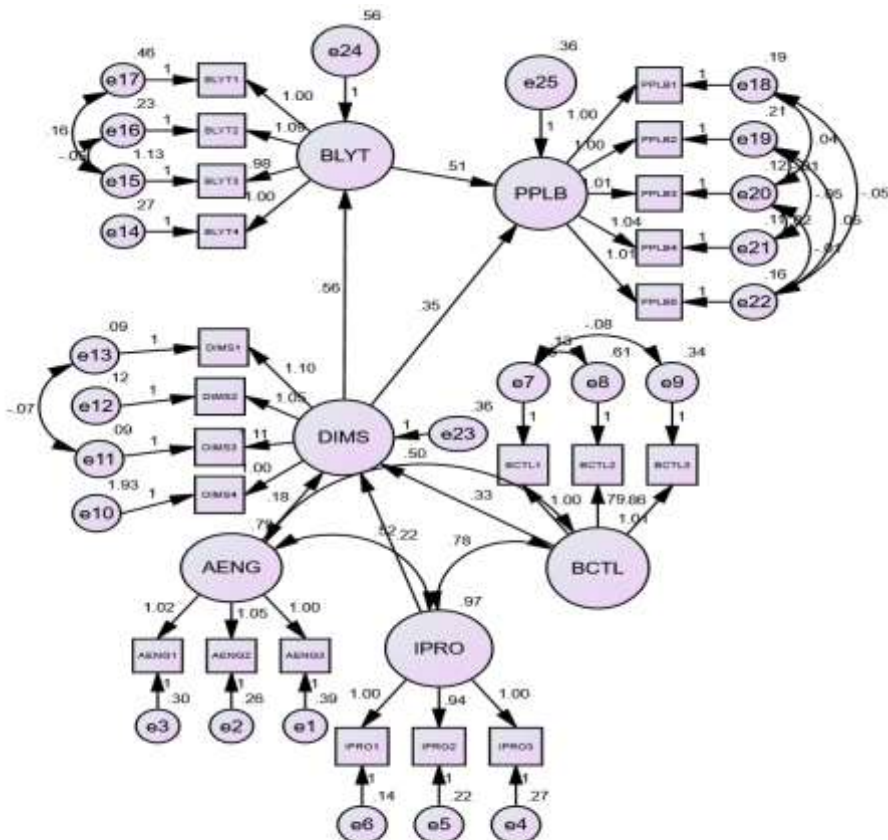


Table 2: Structural Path Analysis

Path		Estimate	Std. Estimate	t	p
AENG3 - Content relevance and frequency of posts	<-- -	1.000	.820		
AENG2 - Level of engagement and interaction with followers	<-- -	1.046	.877	22.109	***
AENG1 - Visibility and activity on social media platforms	<-- -	1.018	.856	21.612	***
IPRO3 - Maintains a consistent image across different campaigns	<-- -	1.000	.885		
IPRO2 - Influencer's knowledge and authority in specific niche	<-- -	.943	.895	29.017	***
IPRO1 - Degree of genuineness of content and trustworthy	<-- -	.995	.932	31.481	***
BCTL1 - Influencer's values align with the brand's identity	<-- -	1.000	.778		
BCTL2 - Relevance to target audience	<-- -	.786	.710	15.721	***
BCTL3 - Personal affinity and connection with brand	<-- -	.855	.825	15.770	***
DIMS4 - Influencer's efforts on information dissemination	<-- -	1.000	.528		
DIMS3 - Influencer communication and maintaining consistency	<-- -	1.108	.956	13.377	***
DIMS2 - Audience interaction with influencer content	<-- -	1.049	.932	13.412	***
DIMS1 - Audience reach and relevancy of content	<-- -	1.104	.954	13.362	***
BLYT4 - Preference over alternatives	<-- -	1.000	.862		
BLYT3 - Emotional connection with the brand	<-- -	.985	.635	14.386	***
BLYT2 - Likelihood of customers recommending brand	<-- -	1.092	.895	24.734	***
BLYT1 - Repeat Purchases of customers	<-- -	1.003	.794	21.144	***
PPLB1 - Consumers' perception on the quality and value	<-- -	1.000	.901		
PPLB2 - Price sensitivity of consumers on the brands	<-- -	.998	.891	27.523	***
PPLB3 - Level of trust based on influencer endorsements	<-- -	1.009	.935	33.436	***
PPLB4 - Brand's innovation and uniqueness in offerings	<-- -	1.042	.942	32.606	***
PPLB5 - Word-of-mouth influence on purchase of brand	<-- -	1.013	.918	28.674	***
DIMS	<-- -	.183	.188	3.901	***
DIMS	<-- -	.218	.248	3.217	.001
DIMS	<-- -	.326	.378	4.282	***

BLYT	<-- -	DIMS	.556	.541	9.307	***
PPLB	<-- -	BLYT	.513	.508	11.381	***
PPLB	<-- -	DIMS	.346	.334	7.133	***

*** Significant at 1%.

In the subsequent phase, calculations are performed to determine fit indices for the structural model. The results indicate a seamless alignment of the model with the dataset. The CMIN/df value, recorded at 1.874, falls below the established threshold of <3, indicating a flawless fit. Similarly, the RMSEA value, at 0.042, is below the recognized level of 0.06, providing additional assurance of a robust fit. Additionally, various measures of goodness of fit and baseline comparisons further validate the adequacy of the model. The GFI (0.940), AGFI (0.919), CFI (0.984), NFI (0.966), RFI (0.958), IFI (0.984), and TLI (0.980) all exceed the minimum requirement of 0.9. Collectively, these values reinforce the assertion that the structural model is ideally aligned with the dataset.

Table 2 indicates that the p-values associated with various pathways pertaining to audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and the purchase of PLBs are noteworthy at the 1% significance level. These outcomes validate hypothesis (H_{1.1}), substantiating the considerable impact of antecedents on the variables under investigation. The dimensions with the most and least influence within each variable are expounded upon. Within audience engagement, the primary dimension is the level of involvement and communication with followers, surpassing content relevance and post frequency in driving engagement with PLBs. In influencer proficiency, the prominent aspect is the genuineness of content and trustworthiness, whereas maintaining a consistent image across different campaigns proves to be the least influential. Brand compatibility is strongly influenced by personal affinity and connection with the brand, while relevance to the target audience holds the least significance. In the domain of digital influencer marketing strategy, influencer communication and maintaining consistency emerge as the foremost components, with influencer's efforts on information dissemination ranking as the smallest. Brand loyalty is predominantly influenced by the likelihood of customers recommending the brand, whereas emotional connection with the brand is the least prominent dimension. The purchase of PLBs is notably affected by the brand's innovation and uniqueness in offerings, whereas price sensitivity of consumers towards the brands exerts a comparatively minor effect.

Hypothesis (H_{1.2}) aims to assess the effect of audience engagement, influencer proficiency, and brand compatibility on digital influencer marketing strategy. The coefficients reveal that a one-unit growth in audience engagement effects in a 0.183-unit growth in digital influencer marketing strategy. Similarly, a one-unit rise in influencer proficiency leads to a 0.218-unit increase, and a one-unit growth in brand compatibility leads to a 0.326-unit growth in digital influencer marketing strategy. The computed p-values, significant at the 1% level, affirm that audience engagement, influencer proficiency, and brand compatibility significantly influence digital influencer marketing strategy. Hypothesis (H_{1.3}) delves into the significant effect of influencer marketing strategy in digital on the purchase of PLBs. The coefficients reveal that

a one-unit growth in digital influencer marketing strategy corresponds to a 0.346-unit growth in the purchase of PLBs. The computed p-values, significant at the 1% level, confirm that digital influencer marketing strategy indeed has a notable impact on the purchase of PLBs. These findings underscore the pivotal roles of audience engagement, influencer proficiency, and brand compatibility in shaping digital influencer marketing strategy, ultimately fostering a high level of purchase intention towards PLBs.

6.3. Mediating Impact of BLYT between DIMS and PPLB

The hypothesis (H_{1.4}) aims to assess the mediating effect of brand loyalty among digital influencer marketing strategy and purchase of PLBs. In this manner, it asserts that brand loyalty has mediating impact among digital influencer marketing strategy and purchase of PLBs.

Table 3: Mediating Impact of BLYT between DIMS and PPLB

Impact	Path			Estimate	p
Mediating Impact – Path A	BLYT	<---	DIMS	.556	***
Direct Impact	PPLB	<---	DIMS	.346	***
Mediating Impact – Path B	PPLB	<---	BLYT	.513	***

*** Significant at 1%.

Table 3 illustrates the direct influence of influencer marketing strategy in digital on purchase of PLBs, quantified at 0.346. In evaluating the mediating effect, the observed coefficient values of 0.556 for the pathway from digital influencer marketing strategy to brand loyalty and 0.513 for the pathway from brand loyalty to the purchase of PLBs are considered. The calculated mediating value is 0.285228 (0.556 x 0.513), indicating a cumulative impact of 0.631228. The established variance for this impact stands at 0.4519, exceeding the standard threshold of 0.2, conclusively indicating the presence of partial mediation. Therefore, it is affirmed that brand loyalty exerts a partial mediating influence between digital influencer marketing strategy and the purchase of PLBs.

6.4. Impact of Demographic Profile on Research Constructs

The impact of demographic profile of consumers on audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and purchase of PLBs is tested using One-Way ANOVA. The hypothesis (H_{1.5}) declares that demographic profile of consumers has significant impact on research variables.

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA

Constructs	Gender		Age		Academic Qualification		Monthly Income		Occupation	
	t	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
AENG	1.775	0.076	.321	.726	2.408	.091	12.448	.000***	.001	.999
IPRO	0.355	0.723	8.436	.000***	5.630	.004***	13.773	.000***	.361	.697
BCTL	0.850	0.395	10.855	.000***	6.018	.003***	14.647	.000***	.098	.907
DIMS	1.199	0.231	4.066	.018**	.435	.647	10.619	.000***	.175	.840
BLYT	0.604	0.546	5.014	.007***	5.067	.007***	20.942	.000***	2.050	.130
PPLB	0.583	0.560	4.866	.008***	1.957	.142	9.352	.000***	1.049	.351

*** Significant at 1%.

Table 4 reveals that the gender and occupation of consumers of PLBs do not exert a significant effect on audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, loyalty on brand, and the purchase of PLBs. Similarly, the age of consumers of PLBs shows significant impact on influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and purchase of PLBs. The significant outcomes obtained from the One-way ANOVA are subjected to post-hoc testing to evaluate the formation of sub-groups. In the case of the age of consumers, the Scheffe post-hoc test establishes three equal subsets: 35 – 50 years in subset a; below 35 years in subset a,b; and above 50 years in subset b for influencer proficiency. This test also forms two equal subsets, 35 – 50 years in subset a; and below 35 years and above 50 years in subset b for brand compatibility. Similarly, the test forms two equal subsets, 35 – 50 years and below 35 years in subset a; and above 50 years in subset b for influencer marketing strategy in digital, loyalty on brand, and the purchase of PLBs. The academic qualification of consumers of PLBs has significant impact on influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, and brand loyalty. In terms of academic qualification, the Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc test establishes two equal subsets, diploma/UG in subset a; and postgraduate and up to HSC in subset b for influencer proficiency. This test also forms three equal subsets, diploma/UG in subset a; postgraduate in subset a,b; and up to HSC in subset b for brand compatibility. Additionally, the test forms three equal subsets, diploma/UG in subset a; up to HSC in subset a,b; and postgraduate in subset b for brand loyalty. Monthly income of consumers of PLBs significantly affects audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and the purchase of PLBs. For monthly income, Ryan-Einot-Gabriel-Welsch Range post-hoc test establishes two equal subsets, below Rs.30,000 and Rs.30,000 – 50,000 in subset a; and above Rs.50,000 in subset b for audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, and the purchase of PLBs. Additionally, this test forms three equal subsets, below Rs.30,000 in subset a; Rs.30,000 – 50,000 in subset b; and above Rs.50,000 in subset c for brand loyalty.

7. Conclusion

The study examines the dynamics surrounding the task of digital influencer marketing strategy in impacting the purchase of PLBs, with a specific emphasis on the mediating effect of brand loyalty. The study emphasizes the substantial impact of antecedents on key variables, revealing significant relationships across audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and the ultimate purchase behavior of PLBs. Findings assert that audience engagement, influencer proficiency, and brand compatibility play pivotal roles in shaping the digital influencer marketing strategy, which, in turn, significantly impacts the purchase of PLBs. Importantly, it establishes the direct influence of influencer marketing strategy in digital on the purchase behavior in PLB context. This direct effect is quantified, ensuring effective insights into the efficacy of leveraging digital influencer strategies for enhancing customer engagement and driving private label brand purchases.

Moreover, the identification of brand loyalty as a partial mediating effect in the link between digital influencer marketing strategy and the purchase of PLBs adds depth to this arena. The

partial mediation implies that while digital influencer strategies have a close effect on buying behavior, the role of brand loyalty in mediating this relationship is significant, underscoring the nuanced psychological factors influencing consumer choices. These findings carry implications for marketers and brand strategists seeking to optimize their digital influencer marketing campaigns for PLBs. The study provides actionable insights into the specific antecedents that influence the persuasiveness of digital influencer marketing and, consequently, the purchase decisions of consumers. As the digital landscape remains to grow, understanding the mediating role of brand loyalty becomes increasingly critical for crafting effective marketing strategies that vibrate with customers, nurturing a sagacity of loyalty and, ultimately, driving the conquest of PLBs in the competitive market.

The study sheds light on the diverse factors influencing the engagement and purchasing behavior of consumers in the realm of PLBs. Findings reveal that gender and occupation of private label brand consumers exhibit no significant impact on key dimensions, including audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and the actual purchase of PLBs. On the other hand, age emerges as a decisive factor, exerting a substantial impact across multiple facets such as influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and the purchase of PLBs. Similarly, academic qualification is found to be a significant influencer, particularly impacting influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, and brand loyalty. Monthly income, a crucial economic variable, plays a pervasive role, significantly affecting audience engagement, influencer proficiency, brand compatibility, digital influencer marketing strategy, brand loyalty, and the ultimate purchase decisions related to PLBs. These findings underline the complexity of consumer behavior in the PLB sector, ensuring effective insights for marketers looking for to tailor their strategies according to demographic and economic variables to enhance consumer engagement and foster brand loyalty.

8. Research Implications

The findings hold several significant implications for both academia and marketing practitioners. Firstly, the identification of digital influencer marketing strategy as a potent driver of private label brand purchases underscores the increasing importance of influencers in shaping consumer behavior. Marketers can leverage this insight by strategically incorporating digital influencers into their brand campaigns to enhance engagement and influence purchasing decisions. Moreover, the recognition of brand loyalty as a partial mediator highlights the psychological shades included in the decision-making process of consumers. Understanding the mediating role of brand loyalty offers marketers a deeper insight into the underlying factors that contribute to consumer trust and repeat purchases. This knowledge is crucial for developing targeted strategies aimed at fostering brand loyalty through digital influencer collaborations. Future research can build upon these findings, exploring additional moderating factors and extending the recognizing of how influencer marketing can be enhanced for various product categories and consumer segments.

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