'INFLUENCERS MARKETING IMPACT ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR'

By:

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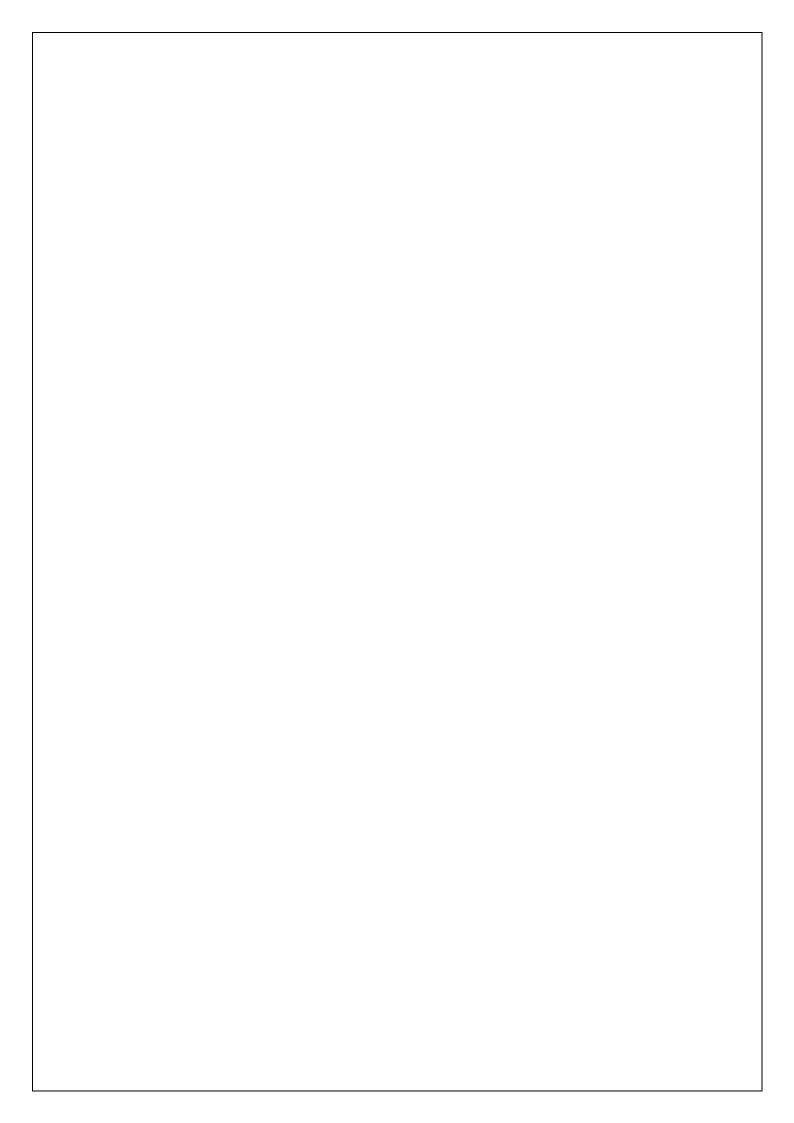
MBA (Marketing)

Supervisor:

Dr. Muhammad Usman

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Contents

Abstract

Due to continuous advancement and development in the fields of science and technology, the social media landscape has changed altogether. New modes of marketing have been introduced out of which one is influencer marketing. Majority of the people have become users of the social media platforms and they use these platforms to express their feelings of likeness and dis-likeness towards brand offerings. This study aimed to identify the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviors by analyzing word of mouth as a mediator in the fast-food industry of Pakistan. For this study, the targeted population (the group of people, with specific characteristics, who can participate in the study) includes the people from twin cities (Islamabad and Rawalpindi) and uses the products and services of fast-food restaurants. Moreover, 250-300 participants filled the questionnaire during the data collection process, which then later on have been analyzed with the help of a software named as SPSS. The study is conclusive, including the cause and effect relationship. The results of the study states that all the hypothesis have been proven true and therefore, influencer's marketing have a positive impact on consumer buying behavior and word of mouth as well. Similarly, there has been found a positive relationship among word of mouth and consumer buying behavior along with a positive mediation of word of mouth in the relationship of influencer's marketing and consumer buying behavior.

Chapter 1

1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Due to continuous advancement and development in the fields of science and technology, the social media landscape has changed altogether. New modes of marketing have been introduced out of which one is influencer marketing. Majority of the people have become users of the social media platforms and they use these platforms to express their feelings of likeness and dis-likeness towards brand offerings. On the other hand, the brands themselves are also using social media platforms to communicate and stay in touch with the customers (Sallam, 2015). The social media users can also influence their power both in the favor of or against the brands. This would help the brands to know where they are going wrong so that they can improve their performance and be back on track. At the same time, if they are performing well, they would continue to increase their performance. It has also become important for the brands that the users spread positive word of mouth regarding the brand and its offerings so that they could be able to achieve their social media objectives and goals in long run. This would only be possible if the brands are providing quality products and services to the customers. They also need to maintain the reputation and credibility of the brand and that is only possible due to their quality of products and also the way they promote and market their products. Consumers tend to develop their buying behaviors largely on the basis of the way brands opt for promoting and marketing the products to the customers. If customers are satisfied by the products and services of the brand, they tend to spread positive word of mouth regarding the brand and their products (Ansary and Hashim, 2018). This tends to increase their brand loyalty and bring in more customers thus increasing the customer base and market size as a whole. The brands should also know the positive impacts of positive word of mouth. It would attract more customers. Customers would also be motivated to make the purchase intensions for buying the product, as it would increase their buying behaviors. When brands would be carrying out successful influencer marketing, delivering the quality which the customers like and demand; customers would definitely be attracted towards that brand (Tariq, Abbas, Abrar and Iqbal, 2017). Customers would be able to develop positive perceptions regarding that brand thus brand

credibility would also increase. This research paper has therefore aimed to study and explore the impact of influencer marketing on word of mouth and consumer buying behavior by analyzing brand credibility as a mediator. No research has been carried out to study the impact of these variables. It would therefore be interesting to explore and analyze the impact of these variables. It is important for the brands to stay active on social media and keep the customers updating by doing influencer's marketing and influencer. By interacting with the customers and taking their opinions and feedback, the brands would be able to increase the positive word of mouth of their customers and thus their purchase intentions (Lin, Wu and Chen, 2013).

1.2. Background

Social media has been used by the people for many years now. There are different social media platforms that are very famous and many people are actively using these platforms for different purposes. Facebook is the most used social media platform where users connect with each other. It was introduced in the year 2004. As of the current statistics, currently Facebook has around 2.895 billion active monthly users. Twitter on the other hand was introduced in the year 2006. This platform is also used to connect with people and get to know the latest updates from around the globe. Influencer marketing is the latest form of marketing where the influencers on the social media platforms promote or endorse the products or services of a brand (Zhang, Li, Cao and Huang, 2018). These influencers have a huge fan following and increased number of followers and subscribers of their social media pages. The fast-food industry can use the influencer marketing to boost their sales. Different food bloggers are paid by the restaurants to promote their products among their followers. The influencer marketing has increased to $13.8 billion in the year 2021. More than 67% of the brands use Instagram platform for influencer marketing. Influencer marketing has reportedly resulted in an increase in sales of a brand. Therefore, it can be said that this form of marketing is effective.

1.3. Problem Statement

This study would identify and study the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviors by analyzing word of mouth as a mediator. This study would be discussing the relationship between these variables for the first time in fast food industry within Pakistani context.

It is considered as cost effective and efficient tool which helps in getting the desired results for the businesses. Two-way communication between the brand and customers is also very important

(Krishnamurthy and Kumar, 2018). It helps both the businesses and the customers to know the view point of the other party. Businesses in the same way proceed and progress when they incorporate the things which are liked by the customers. They come to know the likings and inclinations of the customers by communicating and interacting with them through social media. They take the feedbacks and opinions of the customers regarding what they like and expect from the business in long run (Mehdikhani and Valmohammadi, 2021).

1.4.   Research Gap

This study is first of its kind which is studying the impact of influencer marketing on and consumer buying behaviors by taking word of mouth as a mediating variable. This study would be conducted in Pakistani setting where no such study has been conducted in Pakistan up till now.

1.5.   Research Questions

- What is the effect of influencer marketing on consumer buying behavior?
- What will be the mediating role of word of mouth between influencer marketing?
- What is the relationship of influencer marketing and consumer buying behavior with word of mouth?

1.6.   Research Objectives

- To identify the effect of influencer marketing on consumer buying behavior.
- To analyze the mediating role of word of mouth between influencer marketing.
- To examine the relationship of influencer marketing and consumer buying behavior with word of mouth.

1.7.   Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1. Influencer Marketing

"Influencer marketing is a way of marketing that focuses on influential people instead of a targeted market using social media. It recognizes people who have influence over prospective customers and adjusts marketing actions around those specific influencers" (Gordon, 2021).

1.7.2. Consumer Buying Behavior

 "A process of choosing, purchasing, using and disposing of products or services by the individuals and groups in order to satisfy their needs and wants" (Solomon et al., 1995)

1.7.3. Word of Mouth

 "A person-to-person communication tool, between a communicator and a receiver, who perceives the information received about a brand, product, or service as non-commercial" (Arndt, 1967).

1.8. Significance of the Study

This study would be unique in itself as it would be the first study which would be exploring the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviors by analyzing word of mouth as a mediator. Word of mouth would be used as a mediator, which will help to add good results in the existing literature and also enhance the significance of the research paper. However, it has been observed that the brands which tend to do influencer marketing, attract more customers and their sales also increase to a greater extent. This is due to the fact that every individual has an access to social media and use different social media platforms and follow different influencers as well (Husain et al., 2020). Companies on the other hand, use different social media platforms to gain the attention of the customers, advertising their product at the same time (Lee and Kim, 2020). Word of mouth acting as a mediating variable would be helpful in explaining the nature of the relationship between both independent and dependent variables. Moreover, it has been observed that word of mouth is an important element in purchase related intensions of the individuals. However, no previous research has been conducted taking word of mouth as a mediating variable. This research is however significant as it would explore the impact of word of mouth as a mediating variable. Moreover, this is the first research of its kind which would be conducted in Pakistan. Related researches have been conducted in western culture and sectors such as banking sector. This research topic would be considered as a good and eminent addition in the literature as less research has been carried on these variables that too in Pakistani setting.

Chapter 2

2. Literature Review

2.1. Influencers' Marketing

Social media has a pivotal role when it comes in shaping consumers' behavior because of its widespread usage all over the world. Prior to the emergence of the Internet, the environment underwent tremendous changes that had a profound impact on people's behavior. The items and administrations are setting further developed to acquire an upper hand in the contemporary, strongly serious market. One of the imperatives in a corporation is to strategically utilize marketing. Marketing has a boost thanks to the emergence of modern business and communication technology giving a fresh structure for activity. With the improvement of interpersonal organizations, a totally groundbreaking thought of E-commerce, explicitly, is developing rapidly (Bognar, Puljic, and Kadezabek, 2019; da Costa, 2019; Pate and Adams, 2013). Furthermore, "Influencers" have a considerably greater market impact on people in this new marketing strategy. This essay focuses on how "influencers" affect customer behavior. The study examines how consumers view "Influencers" and explores if they have an impact on their choices (Bruns, 2018; Ali and Alqudah, 2022). Influencers have long been a tool employed by marketers to improve brand recognition or perception. People regularly have confidence in celebrities who they like or seek to be like. The thought behind force to be reckoned with promoting is comparative, yet rather than utilizing TV or famous actors, notable competitors, or artists, they utilize virtual entertainment powerhouses (Sammis et al., 2015; Draganova, 2018). However, Thakker (2021), Farmer (2017), Khan et al. (2021), and Gupta et al. (2020) highlight that influencers to be reckoned with are ones that have the ability to change the perspectives of their colleagues (those similarly situated, subordinates, and periodically chiefs) in light of their insight, abilities, and character as opposed to their situation. At the end of the day, powerhouses include the ability to choose things inside the organization.

Social networks' advent has enabled users to share their thoughts and experiences on products and services with one another. An ever-increasing number of clients are looking on the web for surveys of items or administrations and depending on assessment pioneers to figure out what the purchasing and item data means for the client's decision to buy a decent or administration (Chopra

et al., 2021). Influencers are used to increase brand awareness and encourage sales. Both of these objectives immediately benefit from the recommendations and comments made by influencers on social networks. Every one of these powerhouses has fostered areas of strength for a brand, a particular specialized topic, and unmistakable characters as well as values. Their spectators are generally reliable regarding interests, associations, and, surprisingly, economic wellbeing, and they normally accomplish the number of supporters in interpersonal organizations. They connect with their adherents in discussion and back to their work. They have a bona fide voice and assessment and they are faithful to it (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012). The company asks the influencers for a favorable review of its goods or services after assessing the influence of social media influencers on consumers' purchasing decisions. Influencers have established a deep connection with and earned the trust of their audience. In this manner, the user gains confidence in the Influencers as a trustworthy source of information regarding particular goods or services. Such individuals typically have more than 10,000 followers; as a result, people are seen as having status (Matsumura et al., 2018). High (low) force to be reckoned with item compatibility causes high (low) buyer item consistency; powerhouse customer coinciding is fixed and high. At the point when a shopper and an item are exceptionally consistent, this outcome in additional positive feelings viewing the item as well as higher purchase and proposal expectations, ensuring that force to be reckoned with promoting drives is productive (Belanche et al., 2021). However, Kaulbars-Staudinger (2019) states that to make a more supportable future for the dress business, it is essential to grasp how customers see their web-based shopping conduct because of powerhouse showcasing, too as how forces to be reckoned with can work in a more reasonable manner while advancing dress on the web and all through their work overall. Force to be reckoned with showcasing, manageable design, and practical powerhouse advertising are terms used to depict online buyer buy conduct.

Influencer marketing has become more popular, providing brands with a new avenue for more natural connections with their target audience. A brand may need to review and update its advertising plan if they are not employing influencer marketing, as it has become so widely used. Influencers on social media, particularly those on Instagram and YouTube, have totally changed the game and set up a good foundation for themselves as the greatest pattern in promoting and advertising, especially in the space of way of life mark. Forces to be reckoned with of lifestyle work for associations whose items buyers utilize every day (Terkan, 2014). Several studies suggest

7

that Influencer marketing on Instagram has a tremendous impact on consumer buying behavior, including brand image, brand marketing, and brand sales. amusement for its users. Influencer marketing and customer purchasing intentions are closely related. Additionally, a link between customer attitude and purchase intent was found to be positive. The final goal of trying to persuade someone to buy a certain product is greatly dependent on that person's perception (Brown and Hayes, 2008; Sardar and Dutta, 2020; Hashem, 2021). Influencers are reckoned with promoting, a specific sort of online entertainment showcasing, that has filled in fame throughout recent years. A few items might help more than others from force to be reckoned with promoting than others. With regards to buying clothing, footwear, beauty care products, and, amazingly, administrations, powerhouses will have the greatest effect while people still primarily rely on other considerations to make their purchases of food, jewelry, and technology, but it's possible that influencer marketing could have an impact on those decisions as well (Zak and Hasprova, 2020).

A marketing strategy is known as "force to be reckoned with showcasing" makes use of the influence of prominent opinion leaders or individuals to influence consumer brand awareness and purchasing behavior. People with significant areas of strength that is appropriate for communicating evaluation, ideas, and the plan to the group or its supporters to show support for what is introduced in its online publications. Alternatively, the underlying manifestation of progress is also in selling goods or services through people (forces to be reckoned with). It may have an impact on a person's personality brand. Therefore, influencer marketing is a temporary process to employ people who are persuasive in the online entertainment they consume (Isyanto et al., 2002; Dawes, 2000; Kotler and Amstrong, 2014). A key component of an intriguing is the communicator's or message's source's credibility. As a result, a power to be feared must have legitimacy or be acceptable to those who support or buy online entertainment accounts. A force to be reckoned with should also continue disseminating public relations messaging in a straightforward manner to win over potential customers (Brown and Fiorella, 2013; Li, Lai, and Chen, 2011; Reinstein and Sriyder, 2005). Furthermore, finding interesting blog locations is an important study topic that explores how these blog locations affect both the world inside and outside the blogosphere. Various variables of blog postings, such as number of blog entries referred to in, number of blog entries referenced in, number of comments, and length of blog entries, address bloggers. In any case, the unofficial blogging community isn't taken into consideration. Two common methods for identifying online powerhouses are interpersonal

organization analysis and content mining. To determine the most engaging bloggers in the blogosphere, the authors combine informal community-based investigation, content-based investigation, and animation evaluation in our analysis (Romero et al., 2011; Schemer et al., 2008; Snyderz, 2005; Mayzlin, 2006; Riefa, 2019). A total getting it and the leaders of style-based reference direct require an inside and out an investigation of its conditions and inspirations as well as the recognizable proof of those clients who have the most potential for social impact and WOM esteem. Character strength is thought to be a characteristic of individuals, an indication of their confidence in powerful positions, their capacity to shape the perceptions of others, and their ability to have an impact on interpersonal and political outcomes. These individuals exhibit higher degrees of life fulfillment and are more active in their networks. They interact with a variety of people, speak with them at gatherings, engage in talks, and attend a variety of events as a result of their activities in various deliberate affiliations (Tigert et al., 1976, Westbrook, 1987; Ki et al., 2002). Moreover, a powerful approach for businesses to communicate with customers through web-based entertainment has emerged: powerhouse showcasing. Despite the fact that powerful advertising has recently increased revenue from including scientists, there is typically little awareness of the substance and commitment approach of powerhouses and its connections to devotees' commitment behavior. The surprising mix of virtual amusement into individuals' day-to-day routines has furnished brands with sufficient chances to interface with clients through these stages (Wiedmann, Hennigs, and Langner, 2010; Gross and Wangenheim, 2018).

Client dissatisfaction is a problem that is always growing in the social administration sector (such as retail banking and media communications), where productivity ultimately depends on long-term relationships with clients. Businesses in this industry typically see satisfaction and administration quality as the key tools for increasing client retention. The administration of client stirs, or turnover, is a top worry for pioneers in help businesses including retail banking and broadcast correspondences. The brand is a critical, long-haul asset for the retail organization that might be utilized to help with client relationship issues like client support and moreover, client valuable approaches to acting. It is acknowledged insight showcasing that new client obtaining is unquestionably a more expensive endeavor than laying out a more extensive and more profound relationship with existing clients (Sweeney and Swait, 2008; Baek et al., 2010; Wang and Yang, 2011; Adnan et al., 2019; Junior Landeira et al., 2020). Besides, on the grounds that a brand assumes a huge part in keeping up with and growing a customer, leaders ought to put areas of

strength for an on staying away from any activities that could in any capacity harm the brand's standing. However, brand validity setbacks due to perceived business unreliability may offset any positive effects of efforts to reduce consumer loyalty declines by strategic actions (such as restrictions and statements of regret). As a general rule and Ceteris paribus, the board should adopt a reasonable approach to dealing with change: refrain from promising customers things that are obviously difficult or even impossible to fulfill. Any temporary benefit from the guarantees' non-conveyance may have been likely to be more than compensated by the long-term negative consequences (Reitsamer and Brunner-Sperdin, 2021; Monoarfa, Usman, and Tausyanah, 2020; Anridho and Liao, 2013; Cuong, 2020). Previous researches highlight that One of the most well-known strategies used by publicists is the use of VIP endorsers. VIPs can enhance the chaos of competing businesses by bringing visibility to notices. Organizations put away a lot of cash to win clients' consideration. furthermore, to protect a cutthroat situation on the watch. This much is proposed by a decent guess. Unwavering quality, then again, is characterized as a source's steadfastness, honesty, and validity. Contrasts likewise exist as far as the parts each form involves. VIP reliability includes qualities like sincerity, unwavering quality, dependability, trustworthiness, and truthfulness. Brands aim to determine the effects of brand believability on corporate validity as well as the effects of corporate validity on brand believability. This makes it easier for filmmakers to understand the influence that each believability can have on the others. Additionally, this makes it easier for directors to choose between marketing a brand, a business, or both based on the importance and viability of each partnership. Publicists will actually want to figure out the meaning of associated interfaces and can look at how each form can increment or diminishing the legitimacy of the others considering the revelations (Rifi and Mostafa, 2022; Sekhar et al., 2021; Jin et al., 2015; Alrwasdeh, Helalat, and Alkhodar, 2022; Perera, Nayak, and Nguyen, 2022).

2.2. Consumers Buying Behavior

Consumer buying behavior is a process comprises of multiple sub factors including problem identification, research, option assessment, it and final purchase decision. It is defined as "the process and activities people engage in when searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services so as to satisfy their needs and desires" (Prasad and Jha, 2014, p. 336). It was comparatively a new area in the late 1960s (Karimi, 2013). Consumer behavior gets to be treated in an important way in the terms of marketing because of its proven significance in multiple aspects. With the specific knowledge of the buying Trends

regarding consumers can help marketers to make better strategies, as they can implement it their preferences in the strategy making process. (Stankevich, 2017). Some major subjects like behavioral disciplines, economics, and marketing have already put emphasis on the consumer behavior. (Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard, 1995). Previously, many studies related to decision making have focused on the consumer buying behaviors (Loudon and Bitta, 1993). After 1950's, perceptions of modern marketing were assimilated into researches related to consumer-decision-making (Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard, 1995).

The quality, variety, covering, and other aspects of bundling also influence the buyer's behavior when making purchases. Bundling is the act of combining multiple items into one package. This practice boosts consumer willingness to make purchases. Bundling increases sales and pie-sized deals while lowering market and specialized costs. Consider the brand's image and its strong points to see how they relate to consumers' purchase behavior. People view the brand image as being positive. After gazing at a heavily marked item, shoppers purchase more merchandise. In this way, name affects the buyer's purchasing behavior, but there are also a few other aspects that do the same (Raheem, Vishnu, and Ahmed, 2014; Alice, 2006; Karbasivar and Yarahmadi, 2011; Retailing, 2000; Dunnan et al., 2020). Furthermore, in the United States, reckless consumer behavior is viewed as odd in general. It accounts for up to 80% of all purchases in some item classes. Cost is the main factor affecting whether or not to buy a cell phone. Additionally, the components assembled into a portable handset are the primary factor that people consider when purchasing a cell phone. In any case, not all aspects of cell phones are equally important. The strength and brand of cell phones are additional elements that are moderately related to and influence the decision to purchase. Both factors have a strong relationship with the design of cell phone accessories. After transaction administration and societal repercussions, are the aspects that are least related (Kacen and Lee, 2002; Baumgartner and Steenkamp, 1996; Zhang et al., 2018; Anderson et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2014). According to previous research, there are major areas of strength between client buy choices and packaging data. Due to the consumers' limited association with the things, item data is only mildly important to them. However, purchasers who have an elevated degree of knowledge of the items are bound to check out the thing data and pursue the proper choices, when necessary, which may alter their intention to buy the product. The dynamic changes in consumer purchasing behavior demonstrate that bundling shouldn't merely attract attention from consumers or persuade them to buy a product; rather, it should receive favorable

11

feedback from consumers after the sale and should function well in terms of its comfort and delivery so that consumers may make an informed decision (Adam and Ali, 2014; Chang, Eckman, and Yan, 2011). Moreover, we're all consumers and we consume everyday objects, and we also buy them based on our needs, preferences, and financial ability to do so. These can be consumable merchandise, solid products, particular products, or, contemporary merchandise. The competition between businesses that offer similar products and services is increasing in our globalizing environment. Administrations have become more complex, and the customer who is seen as the key focal point in a modern business is suffering approaching, becoming more important. Consequently, realizing that there is a need for firms (Pujari et al., 2016; Iram and Chacharkar, 2017).

2.3. Word of Mouth

Consumers' intentions to purchase a brand are positively influenced by brand reputation. The relationship between brand validity and customers' goal to buy a brand is viewed as decidedly directed by brand picture and brand mindfulness. Hu et al. (2012), Baum and Uberschaer (2018) state that consumers make assumptions about a brand utilizing data from electronic informal (EWOM). Purchasers who are more drawn in with a brand will invest more energy and read more EWOM content than the people who are less participated in requests to lay out assumptions or thoughts regarding the brand. Also, shoppers that are extremely involved foster better brand insights. Furthermore, Zoghlami et al. (2018), Fan Miao (2012), and Huang et al. (2012) highlight that because EWOM information lessens uncertainty in the decision-making processes for consumers, it also aids in the building of brand expectations among consumers prior to purchase. In turn, these expectations affect how consumers view the brand. EWOM has been growing gradually in power, in part because of the widespread use of social media. Nearly 25% of the top brands in the world's search results come from EWOM. However, Krishnamurthy and Kumar (2018), Park, Yi, and Kang (2018), Shindy and Hariandia (2021) highlight that the term "word-of-mouth" refers to informal discussions among purchasers about the belonging, use, or characteristics of explicit labor and products and their suppliers. The web has essentially adjusted how we impart in later times, transforming verbal suggestions into electronic informal (EWOM). While the principal qualification between disconnected informal exchange and electronic verbal (EWOM) is that the latter is disseminated using internet-based technology, EWOM and offline word-of-mouth are extremely similar in all other respects.

Consumers are becoming more and more influenced by EWOM, mostly thanks to social media. This is due to the fact that EWOM has the power to unite brand users, enhancing a person's sense of belonging. Given its significance today, other consumer features and attributes can help to limit the impact of EWOM on customers (Zhao et al., 2020; Saleem, Yaseen, and Wasaya, 2018; An et al., 2019). Since the customer's needs and wants would colossally affect how the organizations are made due, clients are considered perhaps of the most essential component that should be paid to very cautiously by firms that offer labor and products to the overall population. The essential variables in this study that have a critical bearing on client maintenance as a vital achievement part in the present business climate are brand believability, consumer loyalty, client dependability, and verbal exchange because of fulfillment and devotion (Ghorban and Tahernejad, 2012). Kotler and Keller (2006) highlight that the name, design, sign, word, symbol, or combination of them is used to distinguish the products or services of one vendor or group of sellers from those of rivals. Based on their brands, consumers and users assess the same goods and services. One methodology is that past buyer encounters are a decent wellspring of brand data. Clients contrast different brands to pick the best ones as per their necessities and particulars.Tang (2017) states that the internet has developed into a significant e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) resource for consumers. The impact of e-WOM on cultural factors, on the other hand, has largely gone unstudied. Sallam (2015) states that clients' familiarity with ecological issues develops, and green showcasing is arising as an essential technique for organizations hoping to acquire an upper hand. Green WOM likewise has backhanded unfortunate results because of customer perspectives on greenwashing, which are inconvenient to green buy goals. Furthermore, Wang and Yang (2010); Kuo et al. (2013); Zakari, Dogbe, and Asante (2019) state that more clients are excessive for an effective business. They accepted that since they found a way to produce benefit in the economy, directors expected to focus more on the bleeding edge labor force and innovation with regards to the new financial matters. To bring down apparent gambling, purchasers research items prior to getting them. Verbal exchange is one such data source as WOM correspondence influences buyer perspectives, risk-taking, short-and long-haul item assessments, buying choices, and decision conduct, as per advertising studies.

The e-WOM impact is affected by the data direction (positive versus negative), the standing of a site (laid out versus unestablished), and the electronic verbal (e-WOM). The e-WOM impact is more grounded for experience merchandise contrasted with search products, more grounded for

laid out sites contrasted with unestablished sites and more grounded for negative e-WOM than positive e-WOM. Negative e-WOM bigger affects the e-WOM impact for experience products than for search merchandise. Like this, experiential items are more influenced by site notoriety on the e-WOM impact than search merchandise is considerable (Parka and Lee, 2009; Murtiasih et al., 2014; Li and Jaharuddin, 2021; ElAydi, 2018). The apparent brand value of good cause brands is firmly connected with the giver's impression of brand affiliation, brand mindfulness, and brand dependability. The connection between saw quality, value, brand devotion, and value pathways is directed by brand validity. Government rules that are too tight and deteriorating consumer-brand interactions pose a threat to the expansion of charitable brands. It is also noteworthy that donors do not have an emotional connection to charity brands, which could negatively impact brand loyalty patterns (Kashif et al., 2018). Brand commonality directs the impact of verbal (WOM) on brand assessments (buy aims and brand mentalities). Terrible WOM prompts customer view of both natural and new brands to decline, albeit new brands are more harmed by the negative messages than recognizable brands are. Conflictingly, while great WOM is worthwhile for both notable and fresher brands, the last option is bound to benefit. In general, brand assessments of new items are bound to change because of WOM correspondence than brand assessments of perceived items (Sundaram and Webster, 1999). Notwithstanding, Word-of-mouth (WOM) has been recognized as one of the best methods for spreading data. How data is communicated has been modified because of advancements in data innovation and the presentation of online long range interpersonal communication locales. Customers are affected by this problem since the decision to purchase could be significantly influenced by readily available information. A brand's credits are its unmistakable characteristics, for instance, what a purchaser acknowledges the brand is or has, and what is locked in with buying or consuming it. Benefits are the close-to-home worth that customers put on a brand's features, or the way in which they acknowledge the brand can help them (Xia and Bechwati, 2008).

Customers regularly communicate their thoughts, news, and information to others. They discuss vacations, criticize movies, or gush over restaurants. They debate the most recent games bits of gossip, evaluate key policy-driven concerns, and spout off about collaborators. Messaging, Facebook, and other technological advancements have only accelerated and simplified communication. Every day, billions of messages, countless websites, and tweets are created. The conversation has a big impact on how people behave while shopping. Relational correspondence

increments item mindfulness and convinces individuals to attempt things, and "casual exchange is the principal component behind 20 to half of all buy choices and makes multiple times the exchanges of paid advancing," (Buttle, 1998; Martilla, 1971; Lau, and Ng, 2001; Keller and Fay, 2009; Barreto, 2014; Silverman, 2011). Furthermore, the close-to-home driver is related to emotion, whereas the social driver is connected with social flagging: conveying individuality, self-upgrading, and a desire to interact. It focuses on sharing and the rationale of WOM is related to the desire to help others and the desire to gather information and understanding these drivers and the requirements associated with them help us identify specific brand characteristics that play a role in boosting WOM Consider the social driver, for example, the need to communicate uniqueness is made clear: It is simpler to signal uniqueness through a profound and a differentiated brand than a generic one. Therefore, we argue that a brand with a larger degree of separation will likely have a more noticeable WOM. Curiously, the projected separation work on WOM had not yet been concentrated (Berger and Iyengar, 2013; Lam, Lee, and Mizerski, 2009; Reingen, 1987; Hajli et al., 2014; Brown and Reingen, 1987). Moreover, the distinctions between disconnected and online word-of-mouth at the level of brand qualities. Sometimes characteristics have a significant impact in one situation but not in another (for example period of the brand). These differences at the brand trademark level are typical of fascinating discrepancies relating to the importance of the three general speech drivers. While the social and practical drivers are most important for online WOM, we discover that the close-to-home driver is most important for disconnected WOM. These results paint a fascinating picture of WOM. Disconnected conversations, which typically take place in one-on-one settings, are more private and personal, allowing people to communicate emotions like vigor and fulfillment. Social flagging is more suited to online WOM, which often involves "broadcasting" to many people (like on Twitter) (e.g., uniqueness) (East et al., 2007, Rosen, 2002; Ennew et al., 2000). Informal interchange correspondence is one of the crucial results of customer loyalty (WOM). WOM is a concept that has attracted support from studies. Customers that are really happy with their interactions with a business are likely to take part in helpful behaviors by spreading the good word about that business. Customers appear to speak negatively about their experiences at the commercial center to others with the purposes of helping others, getting even, reducing their anxiety, and selling advice (Gelb and Johnson, 1995; Sweeney et al., 2008).

Word of mouth (WOM) is a remarkable tool for disseminating both accurate and false information. WOM and other factors interact and e-WOM, establishing various avenues for knowledge distribution. However, marketers are unable to manage this information; at least this is rarely the case as e-WOM has both positive and negative remarks, and they have a significant impact on persuasiveness, credibility, and trust, with influencers playing a major role in these areas. The dissemination of information affects brand reputation. and false information online (Aramendia Muneta, 2017). However, Shin et al. (2019) state that brand responsibility and devotion are significant and good predicators of brand reliability. Brand devotion is an interceding factor between brand responsibility and brand trust, while brand notoriety is an intervening component between brand responsibility and brand trust. Thusly, organizations in the cell phone market, and likewise all associations, ought to endeavor to increment and urge customers' steadfastness to cell phone brands. Furthermore, about word-of-mouth, Liu et al. (2021) highlight that the telecoms industry, which depends on trust and technological prowess, poses a danger when utilizing comedy as an advertising campaign technique, however, there are a lot of amusing advertisements created by telecommunications businesses throughout the world. Although a comical commercial significantly affects how people feel about it and how they plan to spread the word about it, it has little to no effect on how people feel about the company or how likely they are to make a purchase. The relationship between the amusing commercial and the attitude toward people's advertisements could not be moderated by the requirement for humor. Zanageneh et al. (2014) point out that the reasons a consumer chooses an online store will determine the depth of their WOM search. Additionally, familiarity with the store and whether the retailer was a pure Internet or a clicks-and-mortar firm affected how negatively WOM information affected the perceived credibility of the retailer and buy intentions. In this light, Godes and Mayzlin (2009) state that customers can access e-WOM in a variety of online consumer reviews that they can use to inform their e-commerce purchase selections. Customers acknowledge that online user reviews may be useful in assisting them in deciding the reliability of e-WOM and in making purchasing selections. The association between brand credibility and customers' intention to acquire that brand is identified to be favorably moderated by brand image and brand awareness. This effect is said to be stronger when a customer has a disconfirmation and when a professional is watching the WOM communication between the customers and the brands.

2.4. Impact of Influencer's Marketing on Consumer Buying Behavior

A number of authors such as Le Giang Nam (2018) and De Vierman et al. (2019) state that finding the proper kind of influencer who would provide curated tips, stories, and recommendations to interest the audience is essential for effective influencer marketing. As consumers followed the particular types of influencers for various product categories, product influencer fitment was a crucial factor. Customers are impacted by influencers' posts on four different levels: subject matter competence, and brand preference.

Over time, extensive work portrays that more businesses are utilizing the marketing strategy of influencer marketing to promote their brands. It has come to light that the respondents put more faith in their immediate environment than they do in social media influencers (Kamaldee, 2021). As opposed to clients who have horrible mentalities about online entertainment powerhouses, and who like to abstain from purchasing, shoppers with great perspectives toward web-based entertainment forces to be reckoned with are bound to buy what is being sold. The shopper's feeling of association, genuineness, and the web-based entertainment powerhouse's promotion of labor and products inside its area of capability are factors that help customers trust them. What has been shown to considerably affect impacting shoppers' buying choices and perspectives (Saura et al., 2020). The elements of the influencer, purchaser feelings and self-understanding all have an impact on various levels in how Chinese twenty to thirty-year-olds act while making imprudent buys. Consumers' self-construal has a special role in modulating their impulse buying behavior to varying degrees, while the features of influencers have a favorable influence on it through aroused emotions (Wangshu and Guanhua, 2020). In the light of reported by Santiago and Castelo (2020); Zhao et al. (2021) that it is convincible that the purchasing habits people have on blogs can be very different from those they have on other social media platforms. As previously mentioned, blogs can depict a variety of marketing strategies that appeal to consumers. Consumers frequently give greater credence to reviews from other customers than they would to banner ads or public relations remarks since they are written objectively. The promoting techniques utilized in web journals can altogether affect buyers and, thus, on the genuine buying process. Powerhouse showcasing affects millennial perspectives for various reasons, including the arrangement of the advancements that a force to be reckoned with presents, the degree of legitimacy and reliability of the messages, as well as a change in the powerhouse's very own style. Influencer marketing has transformed people's perceptions since its growth in 2016 when a new marketing law was created to inform consumers

about social media content that is considered to be a paid relationship. Chetioui et al. (2020) and Pick (2020) highlight that influencer are reckoned with showcasing has been displayed to generally affect buyer conduct and to be compelling similarly that content promoting does. This implies that both of these systems significantly affect shopper conduct and buy choices. A pivotal component of powerhouse promoting is miniature forces to be reckoned with. These powerhouses regularly show an elevated degree of legitimacy, are experts in a specific field, and need monetary motivating forces. At the point when buyers are effectively involved, the connection between their mentalities and expectations is ordinarily steadier. Utilizing well-known powerhouses increments great mentalities toward the organization and, subsequently, purchase expectations.

Therefore, it can be deduced that:

Hypothesis 1: Influencer's Marketing has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior.

2.5. Impact of Word of Mouth as Mediator

Consumers are becoming more and more influenced by EWOM, mostly thanks to social media. This is due to the fact that EWOM has the power to unite brand users, enhancing a person's sense of belonging. Given its significance today, other consumer features and attributes can help to limit the impact of EWOM on customers (Zhao et al., 2020; Saleem, Yaseen, and Wasaya, 2018; An et al., 2019). Since the customer's needs and wants would colossally affect how the organizations are made due, clients are considered perhaps of the most essential component that should be paid to very cautiously by firms that offer labor and products to the overall population. The essential variables in this study that have a critical bearing on client maintenance as a vital achievement part in the present business climate are brand believability, consumer loyalty, client dependability, and verbal exchange because of fulfillment and devotion (Ghorban and Tahernejad, 2012). Kotler and Keller (2006) highlight that the name, design, sign, word, symbol, or combination of them is used to distinguish the products or services of one vendor or group of sellers from those of rivals. Based on their brands, consumers and users assess the same goods and services. One methodology is that past buyer encounters are a decent wellspring of brand data. Clients contrast different brands to pick the best ones as per their necessities and particulars. Tang (2017) states that the internet has developed into a significant e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) resource for consumers. The impact of e-WOM on cultural factors, on the other hand, has largely gone unstudied. Sallam (2015) states that clients' familiarity with ecological issues develops, and green showcasing is arising as

18

an essential technique for organizations hoping to acquire an upper hand. Green WOM likewise has backhanded unfortunate results because of customer perspectives on greenwashing, which are inconvenient to green buy goals. Furthermore, Wang and Yang (2010); Kuo et al. (2013); Zakari, Dogbe, and Asante (2019) state that more clients are excessive for an effective business. They accepted that since they found a way to produce benefit in the economy, directors expected to focus more on the bleeding edge labor force and innovation with regards to the new financial matters. To bring down apparent gambling, purchasers research items prior to getting them. Verbal exchange is one such data source as WOM correspondence influences buyer perspectives, risk-taking, short-and long-haul item assessments, buying choices, and decision conduct, as per advertising studies.

The e-WOM impact is affected by the data direction (positive versus negative), the standing of a site (laid out versus unestablished), and the electronic verbal (e-WOM). The e-WOM impact is more grounded for experience merchandise contrasted with search products, more grounded for laid out sites contrasted with unestablished sites and more grounded for negative e-WOM than positive e-WOM. Negative e-WOM bigger affects the e-WOM impact for experience products than for search merchandise. Like this, experiential items are more influenced by site notoriety on the e-WOM impact than search merchandise is considerable (Parka and Lee, 2009; Murtiasih et al., 2014; Li and Jaharuddin, 2021; ElAydi, 2018). The apparent brand value of good cause brands is firmly connected with the giver's impression of brand affiliation, brand mindfulness, and brand dependability. The connection between saw quality, value, brand devotion, and value pathways is directed by brand validity. Government rules that are too tight and deteriorating consumer-brand interactions pose a threat to the expansion of charitable brands. It is also noteworthy that donors do not have an emotional connection to charity brands, which could negatively impact brand loyalty patterns (Kashif et al., 2018). Brand commonality directs the impact of verbal (WOM) on brand assessments (buy aims and brand mentalities). Terrible WOM prompts customer view of both natural and new brands to decline, albeit new brands are more harmed by the negative messages than recognizable brands are. Conflictingly, while great WOM is worthwhile for both notable and fresher brands, the last option is bound to benefit. In general, brand assessments of new items are bound to change because of WOM correspondence than brand assessments of perceived items (Sundaram and Webster, 1999). Notwithstanding, Word-of-mouth (WOM) has been recognized as one of the best methods for spreading data. How data is communicated has

been modified because of advancements in data innovation and the presentation of online long range interpersonal communication locales. Customers are affected by this problem since the decision to purchase could be significantly influenced by readily available information. A brand's credits are its unmistakable characteristics, for instance, what a purchaser acknowledges the brand is or has, and what is locked in with buying or consuming it. Benefits are the close-to-home worth that customers put on a brand's features, or the way in which they acknowledge the brand can help them (Xia and Bechwati, 2008).

The analysis led to below mentioned hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: *Influencer's marketing has a positive impact on word of mouth of consumers.*

Hypothesis 3: *Word of mouth has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior.*

Hypothesis 4: *Word of Mouth is positively mediating the relationship between influencer's marketing and consumer buying behavior.*

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

For this study, the target population (the group of people, with specific characteristics, who can participate in the study) includes the people from twin cities (Islamabad and Rawalpindi) and uses the products and services of fast-food restaurants. Each participant will be informed regarding the study and its implications before the respondents fill the questionnaire, and they will have the free choice to refuse to be a part of the study. Moreover, 250-300 participants will fill the questionnaire during the data collection process, which then later on will be analyzed with the help of a software named as SPSS. The study will be conclusive, including the cause and effect relationship.

3.2. Type of Research

For the analysis purposes, the nature of the relationship is considered deductive, as the impact of influencer's marketing on consumer buying behaviors by analyzing word of mouth as a mediator in fast food industry. In addition, the research type is quantitative, as the questionnaires are being filled by the customers of fast-food restaurants operating in twin cities. This data then will go through multiple tests including Reliability test, Correlation test, and Regression test, with the help of a software to analyze the impact of variables. Other than collecting primary data, secondary data will also be analyzed in the form of existing literature on these specific topics, with the help of different journals and articles.

3.3. Time Horizon

The study will take place once and the data will be collected one time. Therefore, it is a cross sectional study as it is a onetime activity. The customers of different fast-food restaurants have filled the survey once and the analysis has been done to find out the results.

3.4. Unit of Analysis

For the purpose of this study, the unit of analysis will be individual, as the consumers in their single capacity has been asked to fill the questionnaire.

3.5. Theoretical Framework

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┌──────────────┐         ╱──────────────╲        ╭──────────────────╮
│ Influencers  │────────▶╱  Word of Mouth ╲──────▶│ Consumer buying  │
│ Marketing    │         ╲                ╱       │ behaviors        │
└──────┬───────┘          ╲──────────────╱        ╰────────▲─────────╯
       │                                                   │
       └───────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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3.6. Population

As this research paper has planned to analyze Impact of the impact of influencer's marketing on consumer buying behaviors by analyzing word of mouth as a mediator in fast food industry. Therefore, customers of these fast-food restaurants have filled out the questionnaire. As there are a number of customers from diverse backgrounds, who are consuming the products and services of these restaurants and responding towards the strategies of the same, it has helped in getting the perspectives of customers with diverse backgrounds. The population, which is being targeted has been present in the twin cities (Rawalpindi and Islamabad), as due to multiple reasons the data collection has only taken place in these two cities.

3.7. Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size in the research is 270. The total of 270 customers have participated and filled the survey. The sampling technique used for this purpose is random sampling, as it has been convenient to formulate the sample and also it carries lesser risk of error along with the equal chance of selection. This has also reduced the chance of researcher bias.

3.8. Measures:

Below mentioned are the measure through which the questionnaire has been measured:

3.8.1. Influencer's Marketing:

To measure the influencer's marketing variable, the questionnaire has been adopted questionnaire

from "Building Brand Evangelism through Social Media Micro-Influencers: A Case Study of Cosmetic Industry in Thailand" by (Pornsrimate, and Khamwon, 2020). Construct such as customer interest, influencer's personality, creative content, and impact on decision making due to the information provided by influencers has been used. All the statements have been measured using five-point Likert-type scale. (1=Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree). Sample questions of this variable are:

- "They produce specific contents that correspond to my interests."
- "It is important that paid posts about fast-food restaurants match with their personality."
- "When I am on their channels, I feel as if I am part of them."

3.8.2. Consumer Buying Behavior:

The questions for consumer buying behavior are adopted from "An examination of the factors influencing consumers' attitudes toward influencer's marketing" by (Akar, and Topçu, 2011). The context of that specific questionnaire was different, therefore while adopting the questionnaire, changes has been made as per the requirement of this research work. All the statements have been measured using five-point Likert-type scale. (1=Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree). Sample questions of this variable are:

- "Sponsorships provided by influencers on social media and other platforms affect my buying decisions."
- "Endorsements by influencers affect my buying decisions."
- "Reviews of products by influencers affect my purchasing decisions."

3.8.3. Word of Mouth:

The questions of word of mouth are adopted from "Marketing Scales Handbook" by Bruner and Gordon, (2012). There were several factors and questions mentioned on the questionnaire but for this study the questionnaire has been adopted according to the requirement and need of this research work. All the statements have been measured using five-point Likert-type scale. (1=Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree). Sample questions of this variable are:

- "I 'speak up' about the fast-food brands preferred by the influencers, to people I know."
- "I bring up the services of fast-food brands preferred by the influencers in a positive way in conversations I have with friends and acquaintances."

- "In social situations, I often speak favorably about the fast-food brands I deal with."

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter a detailed analysis of all the variables have been done, on the basis of the data collected through questionnaires. Here the Influencer's Marketing has been treated as independent variable, consumer buying behavior as dependent variable, and word of mouth as the mediating variable. That data analysis has been done with the help of the software named as SPSS and this chapter will explain all the results from the data analysis. Analysis includes the demographic analysis, reliability tests, correlation test, and finally the hypothesis testing through regression analysis.

4.2. Demographics

For this research the data has been gathered from 270 customers of fast-food industry within the twin cities (Islamabad and Rawalpindi) and had different backgrounds. An online questionnaire was used to collect the data. The demographic analysis shows that 54.4% (163) of the participants were females and the rest of 45.6% (137) were males. The age bracket of the participants started from 15 years. Majority of the participants were from the age bracket of 15-25 as they contributed about 33.6%. Second most prominent age group was between 26-35 with a percentage of 29.3% and 88 participants. Rest of the 25.3% were from the age bracket of 46-55, and only 12% people from the age group of 36-45 participated in the study. None of the respondents belong to the age group of Above 55.

Third demographic aspect asked was the occupation of respondents. In this category, 5 generic options were given. Which concluded that 98 (32.7%) respondents were students, 75 (25%) were job holders, 88 (29.3%) were the business owners and only 39 (13%) were freelancers. Last question was about income group of the respondents and different income brackets were given in options. Most of the respondents were from the income group of 100,001 – 200,000 participating a percentage of 35% of sample. Second highest percentage was 25%, including 75 respondents for 0 – 50,000 income group. Third highest was 200,000 – 400,000 with a percentage of 20% and 60 respondents. However, 54 respondents belonged to a group of 50,000 – 100,000 and last 6 respondents had an income group of above 400,000.

Table 1. Demographics

Total no Respondents:200

Gender	Respondent	Percentages %
Male	107	35.6 %
Female	193	64.3 %
Age Brackets	**Respondent**	**Percentages %**
15-25	101	33.6 %
26-35	88	29.3%
36-45	35	12%
46-55	76	25.3%
Above 55	0	0%
Occupation	**Respondent**	**Percentages %**
Student	98	32.7%
Job Holder	75	25%
Business Owner	88	29.3%
Freelancer	39	13%
Others	0	0%
Income Group	**Respondent**	**Percentages %**
0 – 50,000	75	25%
50,000 – 100,000	54	18%
100,001 – 200,000	105	35%
200,001 – 400,000	60	20%
Above 400,000	6	2%

4.3. Reliability Analysis

Reliability test was performed by using SPSS on all the variables in order to check the consistency among the responses of each variable. Reliability and descriptive analysis also provided the mean and standard deviation of all the variable separately. The Cronbach Alpha value of influencer's marketing is 0.86 and there were a total of 12 items for this variable. The value shows that 86% of

the data is consistent, and as this is above 0.7 it means that the data is reliable. Moreover, the Cronbach Alpha value for consumer buying behavior is 0.73 for a total of 4 items. This shows the data is 73% consistent. Lastly, the value for word of mouth is 0.86 for a total of 5 items. This is again above 0.7 and therefore the value is reliable.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Alphas

Variable	Code	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Influencer's Marketing	SMM	0.860	12
Word of Mouth	CCCE	0.860	5
Consumer Buying Behavior	CBD	0.737	4

4.4. Correlation Analysis

Correlation test is used to evaluate the strength and nature of any relationship among different variables. The correlation coefficient has a range between 1.0 to -1.0, where 1.0 is considered as perfectly positive and -1.0 as perfectly negative. Moreover, coefficient also determine the strength of relationship. More the value is closer to 0, the weaker it is and the more it is closer to 1 or -1, the stronger it is.

The Pearson correlation test analyzed the fact that whether the relationship is significant or not and if yes then and how strong the relationship is. As shown in the table 3, the relationship between Independent and dependent variable i.e. Consumer buying behavior and influencer's marketing has a positive relationship ($r = 0.481$, $p<.05$). The significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 and indicates that the relationship is highly significant. And the value of correlation coefficient shows that the strength of this relationship is moderate. Moreover, the analysis of word of mouth with influencer's marketing ($r = 0.548$, $p < .01$) also shows a positive relationship with a higher significance value of 0.000, and again the strength of this relationship is also moerate.

Furthermore, table 3 gives the analysis of consumer buying behavior, which is the dependent variable and word of mouth ($r = 0.442$, $p < .01$) it was found out that they are positively correlated and this relationship is also highly significant as significance value is less than 0.01. Also, the relationship is moderate considering the value of coefficient is 0.44.

26

Table 3. Correlations

Correlations		IM_M	CBB_M	WOM_M
Influencer's Marketing	Pearson Correlation	**(0.856)**		
Consumer buying behavior	Pearson Correlation	.481**	**(0.737)**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
Word of mouth	Pearson Correlation	.548**	.442**	**(0.860)**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
**The correlations which are denoted by (**) illustrate high significance				

4.5. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was used in order to analyze the hypothesis. First of all, the impact of influencer's marketing on consumer buying behavior was analyzed through linear regression. As shown in the table 4, "Influencer's marketing (Independent Variable) has a positive impact on Consumer Buying Behavior" ($p < 0.005$). This value interprets that the relationship is highly significant and the hypothesis is true.

In order to study the impact of "influencer's marketing" on "consumer decision making", adjusted R have been interpreted. The value of adjusted R square is 0.481 in this case. This indicates that influencer's marketing causes 48.1% change in the dependent variable (consumer buying behavior). Rest of the 51.9% change gets occurred by the other variables in the environment. Moreover, the value is positive, which indicates the positive relationship and thus the hypothesis is fully accepted.

The second regression test determined if Influencer's Marketing has a positive relationship with word of mouth. As shown in the table 4, ($p < 0.005$) the significance value is 0.001 and is less than 0.05, which shows that this relationship is significant which interprets that influencer's marketing has a significant relationship with word of mouth. Moreover, the value of R square is 0.548, which indicates that the relationship is positive and influencer's marketing causes 54.8% change in Word of Mouth. Therefore, the hypothesis (H2) is Accepted.

Lastly, the regression analysis was done to evaluate the hypothesis 3, which states that Word of mouth has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior. The value of adjusted R square is 0.442 in this case. This indicates that word of mouth causes 44.2% change in the dependent variable (consumer buying behavior). Rest of the 57.8% change gets occurred by the other variables in the environment. Moreover, the value is positive, which indicates the positive relationship and thus the hypothesis is fully accepted.

Table 4. Regression Analysis

Sr. No.	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R Square	Standardized Coefficient	Sig.
1	Influencer's marketing	Consumer buying Behavior	.481	0.229	.000
2	Influencer's marketing	Word of Mouth	.548	0.351	.000
3	Word of Mouth	Consumer Buying Behavior	.442	0.185	.001

To check the mediation of word of mouth in the relationship of Influencer's Marketing and Consumer Buying Behavior, the process of Andrew and Hayes has been used. As shown in the table 5, Both the values of ULCI (Upper Level Confidence Interval) and LLCI (Lower Level Confidence Interval) are positive. This implies that the word of mouth has a positive mediation in the relationship. Also, this relationship is highly significant ($p<0.05$) According to this result, hypothesis H4 is accepted.

Table 5. Mediation Test

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI

constant	-.0116	.7586	-0.153	.9878	1.5055	1.4823
WOM_M	.7054	.2200	3.2057	.0015	.2720	1.1387

Table 6. Hypothesis Table:

Hypothesis 1: Influencer's Marketing has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior.	**Accepted**
Hypothesis 2: Influencer's marketing has a positive impact on word of mouth of consumers.	**Accepted**
Hypothesis 3: Word of mouth has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior.	**Accepted**
Hypothesis 4: Word of Mouth is positively mediating the relationship between influencer's marketing and consumer buying behavior.	**Accepted**

5. Discussion

This study aimed to identify the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviors by analyzing word of mouth as a mediator in the fast-food industry of Pakistan. It is considered as cost effective and efficient tool which helps in getting the desired results for the businesses. Two-way communication between the brand and customers is also very important (Krishnamurthy and Kumar, 2018). It helps both the businesses and the customers to know the view point of the other party. Businesses in the same way proceed and progress when they incorporate the things which are liked by the customers. They come to know the likings and inclinations of the customers by communicating and interacting with them through social media. They take the feedbacks and opinions of the customers regarding what they like and expect from the business in long run (Mehdikhani and Valmohammadi, 2021).

The study included 3 major variables, "Influencer's Marketing", "Consumer Buying Behavior", and "Word of Mouth". According to these variables, research objectives were formulated as below:

- To identify the effect of influencer marketing on consumer buying behavior.
- To analyze the mediating role of word of mouth between influencer marketing.
- To examine the relationship of influencer marketing and consumer buying behavior with word of mouth.

For the very first objective, "To identify the effect of influencer marketing on consumer buying behavior", a hypothesis was for formulated, which states that "*Influencer's Marketing has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior*". According to the results of this study, the hypothesis ahs been proven right. A number of authors such as Le Giang Nam (2018) and De Vierman et al. (2019) state that finding the proper kind of influencer who would provide curated tips, stories, and recommendations to interest the audience is essential for effective influencer marketing. As consumers followed the particular types of influencers for various product categories, product influencer fitment was a crucial factor. Customers are impacted by influencers' posts on four different levels: subject matter competence, and brand preference (Saura et al., 2020).

Similarly, for second objective, "To analyze the mediating role of word of mouth between influencer marketing" a hypothesis was formulated, which stated "*Word of Mouth is positively*

mediating the relationship between influencer's marketing and consumer buying behavior". Again this hypothesis was also accepted supporting different previous researches. Like Kotler and Keller (2006) highlight that the name, design, sign, word, symbol, or combination of them is used to distinguish the products or services of one vendor or group of sellers from those of rivals. Based on their brands, consumers and users assess the same goods and services. One methodology is that past buyer encounters are a decent wellspring of brand data. Clients contrast different brands to pick the best ones as per their necessities and particulars. Tang (2017) states that the internet has developed into a significant e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) resource for consumers. The impact of e-WOM on cultural factors, on the other hand, has largely gone unstudied. Sallam (2015) states that clients' familiarity with ecological issues develops, and green showcasing is arising as an essential technique for organizations hoping to acquire an upper hand. Green WOM likewise has backhanded unfortunate results because of customer perspectives on greenwashing, which are inconvenient to green buy goals. Furthermore, Wang and Yang (2010); Kuo et al. (2013); Zakari, Dogbe, and Asante (2019) state that more clients are excessive for an effective business. They accepted that since they found a way to produce benefit in the economy, directors expected to focus more on the bleeding edge labor force and innovation with regards to the new financial matters.

Lastly, the other two hypothesis stating "*Influencer's marketing has a positive impact on word of mouth of consumers",* and *"Word of mouth has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior"*. Were supporting the last objective "To examine the relationship of influencer marketing and consumer buying behavior with word of mouth." These two hypotheses were also proven to be true through results. Like different researches including Hu et al. (2012), Baum and Uberschaer (2018) who stated that consumers make assumptions about a brand utilizing data from electronic informal (EWOM). Purchasers who are more drawn in with a brand will invest more energy and read more EWOM content than the people who are less participated in requests to lay out assumptions or thoughts regarding the brand. Also, shoppers that are extremely involved foster better brand insights. Furthermore, Zoghlami et al. (2018), Fan Miao (2012), and Huang et al. (2012) highlight that because EWOM information lessens uncertainty in the decision-making processes for consumers, it also aids in the building of brand expectations among consumers prior to purchase. In turn, these expectations affect how consumers view the brand. EWOM has been growing gradually in power, in part because of the widespread use of social media. Nearly 25% of

the top brands in the world's search results come from EWOM. However, Krishnamurthy and Kumar (2018), Park, Yi, and Kang (2018), Shindy and Hariandia (2021) highlight that the term "word-of-mouth" refers to informal discussions among purchasers about the belonging, use, or characteristics of explicit labor and products and their suppliers. The web has essentially adjusted how we impart in later times, transforming verbal suggestions into electronic informal (EWOM). While the principal qualification between disconnected informal exchange and electronic verbal (EWOM) is that the latter is disseminated using internet-based technology, EWOM and offline word-of-mouth are extremely similar in all other respects.

6. Conclusion

The study aimed to find out the impact of influencer's marketing on consumer buying behavior while analyzing the mediating role of word of mouth in this relationship. The study has been conducted in the fast-food industry of Pakistan. The results of the study states that all the hypothesis have been proven true and therefore, influencer's marketing have a positive impact on consumer buying behavior and word of mouth as well. Similarly, there has been found a positive relationship among word of mouth and consumer buying behavior along with a positive mediation of word of mouth in the relationship of influencer's marketing and consumer buying behavior.

6.1. Limitations

The surveys were floated to the people residing in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Due to the restriction of the geographical location, the findings were also restricted and not very broad and open. These findings cannot be incorporated on all the people of Pakistan because data was not collected from different places. It is therefore very important to include different cities across Pakistan in order to have a clear picture of the findings as a whole. The study also consists of different biases as well, because different people have different viewpoints which they cannot change. This study would have been more effective if surveys would have been performed physically and on site and also from different regions to get good quality results.

This study is cross-sectional which means that it includes a one-time activity which includes filling in the questionnaires. Being a single time activity, the causes and impacts of these variables could not be evaluated and observed due to less amount of time. There, in future this study should be conducted keeping in mind the longitudinal time frame. This would ultimately help to broaden the scope of the research work.

The scale that has been used in this research was long and complicated. As a result, the respondents did not show more interest. This deteriorated the quality of data which ultimately impacted the analysis work on SPSS software. This study could have been more effective and could yield better results if all the issues and loop holes would have been address and solved on time.

6.2. Future Direction

As per the above listed limitations, future directions can be:

1.   Complex scales being used in the questionnaire resulting into lack of interest

2. Data acquisition issues

Based on the above-mentioned problems, it is suggested that for the future research if the qualitative study would have been done on these aspects inside of the quantitative this like we did, it may provide better data and information. In this research will be able to conduct interviews from different professionals in the practical market and analyze and assess whether they are actually getting such kind of results or not. Moreover, compare that research with the existing results in the research.

Secondly, if someone would insist on caring quantitative study it is suggested that they could use some fewer complex tools together the data and then analyze it. This will make sure that the respondent is interested in filling the questionnaire.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Name (Optional): _____

Occupation:

   a) Student
   b) Job Holder
   c) Business Owner
   d) Freelancer
   e) Other

Age Group

   a) 15-25
   b) 26-35
   c) 36-45
   d) 46-55
   e) Above 55

Income Group (per month)

   a) 0-50,000
   b) 50,001-100,000
   c) 100,001-200,000
   d) 200,001-400,000
   e) Above 400,000

Kindly think about the influencers you follow on multiple online and offline platforms while filling this questionnaire. Please make sure you read the questionnaire and fill it with the best of your understanding. Feel free to ask if you do not understand any part of the questionnaire.

Sr. No.	Variable	Questions	Reference
1	Influencer's Marketing	● They tend to be less broad in their contents about fast-food. ● They produce specific contents that correspond to my interests. ● Their contents are highly unique. ● They have an attractive personality. ● Their channels/ social media accounts are genuine. ● It is important that paid posts about fast-food restaurants match with their personality. ● They seem to understand things I want to know. ● I like to compare my ideas with what they say. ● When I am on their channels, I feel as if I am part of them ● I pay a lot of attention to the fast-food brand recommended by influencers. ● I spend a lot of time thinking about this fast-food brand endorsed by influencers. ● I make time to think about this fast-food brand recommended by influencers.	Pornsrimate, and Khamwon, (2020)
2	Consumer buying behaviors	● Sponsorships provided by influencers on social media and other platforms affect my buying decisions. ● Endorsements by influencers affect my buying decisions.	Akar, and Topçu, (2011)

47

		● Reviews of products by influencers affect my purchasing decisions ● I regularly look at the reviews of products of influencers before I buy something	
3	Word of Mouth	● I 'speak up' about the fast-food brands preferred by the influencers, to people I know ● I bring up the services of fast-food brands preferred by the influencers in a positive way in conversations I have with friends and acquaintances ● In social situations, I often speak favorably about the fast-food brands I deal with ● I often recommend the fast-food brands preferred by the influencers, to people I know. ● I share my positive experiences about fast-food brands preferred by the influencers, to my friends	Bruner, Hensel, and James, (2005)

PLAGIARISM REPORT

Influencer's Marketing

ORIGINALITY REPORT

17%	10%	6%	10%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Higher Education Commission Pakistan Student Paper	3%
2	Submitted to Cambridge Education Group Student Paper	2%
3	Submitted to Global Banking Training Student Paper	1%
4	Submitted to King's College Student Paper	1%
5	cibmee.vgtu.lt Internet Source	<1%
6	Submitted to University of Surrey Student Paper	<1%
7	coek.info Internet Source	<1%
8	Submitted to Segi University College Student Paper	<1%
9	Submitted to University of Northumbria at Newcastle	<1%