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Social Media Marketing and Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Organic Food Products among NCR Consumers

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Abstract
The rapid proliferation of social media platforms has fundamentally transformed consumer information search, evaluation, and purchase decision processes, particularly in the context of high-involvement product categories such as organic food. This study examines the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products among consumers in the National Capital Region (NCR) of India. Drawing upon an integrated theoretical framework combining the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), and the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, the study investigates the mediating roles of consumer attitude, perceived usefulness, and brand trust, as well as the moderating effects of price consciousness, knowledge-education, and generational differences. A quantitative research design was employed, collecting primary data from 400 NCR consumers through a structured online questionnaire. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and structural equation modelling. The findings reveal that social media marketing significantly influences consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products, with Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) emerging as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.001$), followed by User-Generated Content ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.001$), Social Media Advertising ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.01$), and Influencer Marketing ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$). Consumer attitude ($\beta = 0.25$), perceived usefulness ($\beta = 0.20$), and brand trust ($\beta = 0.18$) significantly mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intentions. Price consciousness negatively moderates this relationship ($\beta = -0.15$, $p < 0.01$), while knowledge-education positively moderates it ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$). Generational differences significantly influence the effectiveness of social media marketing, with younger consumers (Gen Z and Millennials) being more responsive. Instagram emerged as the most influential platform (30%), followed by YouTube (25%), Facebook (20%), and Twitter (15%). Health consciousness was identified as the primary driver of organic food consumption, with over 80% of respondents rating it as very important, while price perception remains a significant barrier for approximately 50% of consumers. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by proposing and testing an integrated framework that explains the psychological mechanisms through which social media marketing influences organic food consumption. The findings provide actionable insights for organic food marketers, social media managers, and policymakers seeking to promote sustainable food consumption in the Indian context. The study concludes with recommendations for marketing strategies, platform-specific approaches, and policy interventions aimed at enhancing organic food adoption among NCR consumers.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Organic Food Products, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Influencer Marketing, NCR Consumers

1. Introduction

The global food landscape has witnessed a paradigm shift in recent decades, with consumers increasingly gravitating towards healthier, safer, and more sustainably produced food options. Organic food products have emerged as a significant category within this evolving consumer preference paradigm, characterized by production methods that eschew synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, and artificial additives. The growing demand for organic food has been driven by multiple interrelated factors: escalating health consciousness, heightened environmental awareness, concerns about food safety, and a broader societal shift towards sustainable consumption patterns.

In the Indian context, the organic food market has experienced remarkable growth, reflecting global trends while also exhibiting distinctive characteristics shaped by the country's unique socio-cultural, economic, and demographic dynamics. India is one of the top five nations globally in terms of the total amount of agricultural land certified as organic. However, domestic organic consumption has historically remained sparse relative to production capacity, creating a significant gap that presents both opportunities and challenges for marketers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders. The organized Indian organic food industry has been projected to

grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 23.8% during 2023-2028, underscoring the substantial market potential that remains to be tapped.

The National Capital Region (NCR) of India represents a particularly significant market for organic food products. As an urban agglomeration encompassing Delhi and its surrounding satellite cities, the NCR is characterized by high population density, growing affluence, increasing health awareness, and extensive digital connectivity. These factors collectively create a fertile environment for the adoption of organic food consumption. Research conducted in the NCR has revealed that consumers in the region reflect positive attitudes towards organic food, driven primarily by perceptions of health and environmental benefits.

The emergence and proliferation of social media platforms have fundamentally transformed the way consumers seek, evaluate, and act upon information related to food choices. Built on the foundations of Web 2.0, social media has democratized content creation, enabling users to generate, share, and co-create content without seeking explicit permission. This shift has profound implications for the marketing of organic food products, a category characterized by high consumer involvement and significant information asymmetry. Social media platforms serve as channels through which information about organic food products reaches consumers, influencing their purchase decisions through multiple mechanisms including user-generated content, electronic word-of-mouth, influencer marketing, and targeted advertising.

1.1. Growth of Organic Food Products in India

The organic food sector in India has witnessed substantial growth over the past decade, driven by a combination of supply-side and demand-side factors. On the supply side, government initiatives promoting organic farming, the expansion of certification infrastructure, and the emergence of dedicated organic retail channels have contributed to increased availability of organic products. On the demand side, rising disposable incomes, growing health consciousness, and increasing awareness of the environmental and health implications of conventional agriculture have fueled consumer interest in organic alternatives.

India's organic food market encompasses a diverse range of products including fruits and vegetables, cereals and pulses, dairy products, processed foods, spices, and beverages. The market is characterized by the presence of both established brands and emerging players, with Organic India emerging as the market leader in the NCR area. A study of 478 customers in Delhi-NCR found that Organic India was the most preferred brand (100 respondents), followed by Mother Earth (85), Morarka Organics (79), Suminter Organics Private Limited (79), Eco Farms (73), and other brands including Nature Bio-Foods Limited, Nature Pearls Private Limited, Sresta Natural Bio Products Private Limited, and Mehrotra Consumer Products Private Limited.

The growth trajectory of the organic food market in India is expected to continue, with projections indicating that the industry could reach INR 287 billion by 2027. However, the adoption of organic food among Indian consumers remains uneven, influenced by factors such as trust in certification, perceived benefits, and price premiums. Urban consumers, particularly those in metropolitan areas like the NCR, have been at the forefront of this adoption trend, driven by greater exposure to health and wellness information, higher disposable incomes, and more developed retail infrastructure.

1.2. Emergence of Social Media Marketing in the Organic Food Sector

Social media marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for promoting organic food products, offering unique advantages over traditional marketing channels. The interactive, participatory nature of social media platforms aligns well with the characteristics of organic food as a high-involvement product category where consumers seek credible information to address purchase-related uncertainty. Social media not only allows past users to share their first-hand feedback but also enables influencers to share their insights or points of view, thus creating an environment of informed choice.

The role of social media in promoting organic food consumption extends beyond direct marketing to encompass broader educational and awareness-building functions. Social media platforms serve as vehicles for disseminating information about the health benefits of organic food, environmental sustainability, certification standards, and ethical production processes. In the Indian context, social media discourse on organic food has emphasized food safety, affordability, and local sustainability, with platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and regional YouTube channels serving as key channels for outreach.

Research has demonstrated that social media plays a significant role in promoting awareness and marketing organic products among diverse Indian consumer groups. A study conducted in Coimbatore found that 84.09% of consumers were well aware of social media channels promoting organic products, with Facebook and Instagram being the most popularly browsed platforms by online organic product shoppers. This high level of awareness underscores the penetration and influence of social media in shaping organic food consumption patterns.

The effectiveness of social media marketing in the organic food sector is further evidenced by the finding that social media and influencers serve as primary information sources for consumers making organic food purchase decisions. The perceived usefulness of information shared on social media is critical in making purchase decisions, and online purchase behaviour is increasingly being impacted by user-generated content.

1.3. Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Organic Food Products

Consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products is a complex phenomenon influenced by a multitude of factors including health consciousness, environmental concern, food safety perceptions, trust in certification, price sensitivity, and social influences. Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective marketing strategies and for promoting sustainable consumption patterns.

Research conducted in the Delhi-NCR region has identified several key factors that influence customers' purchase intentions for organic foods. These include health consciousness, value for money, environmental concern, perceived behavioural control, green trust, convenience and availability, and social media influence. The study also highlighted the moderating role of social media influence on the relationship between these identified factors and purchase intention.

Consumers in the NCR have been found to reflect positive attitudes towards organic food, driven by perceptions of health and environmental benefits. However, location was found to have no significant effect on attitudes but does influence perceptions of market dynamics. This suggests that while the NCR consumer base is broadly receptive to organic food, contextual factors related to market access and availability play a role in shaping actual purchase behaviour.

Demographic factors also play a significant role in shaping organic food consumption patterns. Research indicates that younger respondents are more receptive to and interested in organic foods. A study of 478 respondents in Delhi-NCR found that 226 respondents belonged to the less than 30 years age group, followed by 157 in the 30-45 years age group, and 95 in the above 45 years age group. This age distribution reflects the greater openness of younger consumers to new food choices and their higher engagement with digital media.

1.4. Research Problem

Despite the growing body of research on organic food consumption and the increasing recognition of social media's role in shaping consumer behaviour, significant gaps remain in understanding the specific mechanisms through which social media marketing influences consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products, particularly in the context of the National Capital Region of India.

The NCR presents a unique context for examining this relationship due to its demographic composition, high internet penetration, and the presence of a large, diverse consumer base with varying degrees of health consciousness, environmental awareness, and digital engagement. However, existing research has largely examined these factors in isolation, without adequately addressing the complex interplay between social media marketing dimensions, consumer psychological factors, and actual purchase behaviour.

Furthermore, while the organic food market in India is growing rapidly, the adoption of organic food among consumers remains uneven, with significant barriers including price sensitivity, lack of trust, and limited awareness. Understanding how social media marketing can address these barriers and facilitate organic food adoption is therefore of critical importance for marketers, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

1.5. Research Gap

The existing literature on social media marketing and organic food consumption, while growing, exhibits several notable gaps:

Geographic Focus: A significant portion of the research on organic food consumption has been conducted in Western contexts, with limited attention to emerging economies like India. Within India, research has often been conducted at the national level or in specific regions, with limited focus on the NCR as a distinct market with unique characteristics.

Integrated Framework: While individual studies have examined the role of specific social media dimensions (e.g., influencer marketing, eWOM, UGC) in isolation, there is a lack of integrated frameworks that simultaneously examine multiple social media marketing dimensions and their relative influence on consumer buying behaviour.

Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms: The psychological and behavioural mechanisms through which social media marketing influences organic food purchase decisions remain underexplored. In particular, the mediating roles of consumer attitudes, trust, and perceived usefulness, and the moderating roles of factors such as price consciousness, knowledge-education, and demographic characteristics, require further investigation.

Long-term Effects: Most existing studies focus on purchase intention rather than actual purchase behaviour or repeat purchases. There is limited research examining the long-term effects of social media marketing on organic food consumption patterns.
Platform-Specific Dynamics: The differential effects of various social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.) on organic food consumption remain underexplored, despite evidence of platform-specific preferences among NCR consumers.
Generational Differences: While research indicates that younger consumers are more receptive to organic foods and more influenced by social media, there is limited comparative research examining how social media marketing effectiveness varies across different generational cohorts in the NCR context.
This study aims to address these gaps by providing a comprehensive examination of the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products among NCR consumers, employing an integrated theoretical framework and empirical data.

1.6. Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following four main objectives:
Objective 1: To examine the influence of social media marketing (comprising user-generated content, electronic word-of-mouth, social media advertising, and influencer marketing) on consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products among NCR consumers.
Objective 2: To investigate the mediating role of consumer attitude, perceived usefulness, and brand trust in the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
Objective 3: To analyse the moderating effects of price consciousness, knowledge-education, and generational differences on the relationship between social media marketing and organic food buying behaviour.
Objective 4: To identify the relative influence of different social media platforms (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter) on organic food purchase decisions among NCR consumers.

1.7. Research Questions

Based on the objectives outlined above, the study addresses the following research questions:
RQ1: What is the influence of social media marketing dimensions (user-generated content, electronic word-of-mouth, social media advertising, and influencer marketing) on consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products among NCR consumers?
RQ2: How do consumer attitude, perceived usefulness, and brand trust mediate the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions?
RQ3: To what extent do price consciousness, knowledge-education, and generational differences moderate the relationship between social media marketing and organic food buying behaviour?
RQ4: Which social media platforms (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter) have the greatest influence on organic food purchase decisions among NCR consumers?

1.8. Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature review and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:
H1: Social media marketing has a significant positive influence on consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products among NCR consumers.
H1a: User-generated content has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.
H1b: Electronic word-of-mouth has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.
H1c: Social media advertising has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.
H1d: Influencer marketing has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.
H2: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
H3: Perceived usefulness mediates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
H4: Brand trust mediates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
H5: Price consciousness negatively moderates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
H6: Knowledge-education positively moderates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
H7: Generational differences significantly moderate the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.

H8: Instagram has the greatest influence on organic food purchase decisions among NCR consumers, followed by YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.

2. Review of Literature

Organic food refers to food products produced through methods that comply with organic farming standards, emphasizing the use of natural substances and the avoidance of synthetic chemicals, genetically modified organisms, and artificial additives. The concept of organic food is rooted in the broader organic agriculture movement, which emerged as a response to the environmental and health concerns associated with conventional industrial agriculture.

Organic farming practices emphasize soil health, biodiversity conservation, animal welfare, and ecological balance. These practices include crop rotation, green manure, compost, biological pest control, and the exclusion of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Organic certification ensures that products meet established standards for organic production, processing, and handling.

Consumer perception of organic food is shaped by multiple attributes, including health benefits, environmental sustainability, ethical production, superior taste, and food safety. Research indicates that consumers perceive organic food as healthier, more nutritious, and safer than conventionally produced food. The majority of consumers (96%) express concern about the effects of non-organic farming on health.

Table 1: Summary of Literature Review on Social Media Marketing and Organic Food Consumer Behaviour

Theme	Key Authors	Major Findings	Theoretical Perspectives	Research Gaps Identified
Social Media Marketing and Organic Food	Nguyen (2025); Kumar et al. (2025); Nagvanshi et al. (2025); Oktawandari et al. (2025)	Social media marketing significantly influences organic food purchase intentions; eWOM and UGC are powerful predictors; social media advertising positively impacts health motivation and environmental consciousness	Social Influence Theory; Theory of Planned Behaviour; S-O-R Model	Limited comprehensive studies examining integrated effects of multiple social media dimensions; need for context-specific research
Influencer Marketing and Green Consumerism	Zdravković et al. (2026); Kumari (2025); Eldon et al. (2025); Sripoothorn & Sittioum (2025)	Influencer credibility and authenticity significantly drive green consumerism; micro-influencers are effective; parasocial relationships mediate influencer effects; greenfluencers promote sustainable products	Source Credibility Theory; Parasocial Relationship Theory; Persuasion Theory	Limited research on micro-influencer effectiveness in organic food contexts; need for cross-cultural comparisons
Digital Nudging and Sustainable Consumption	Li (2025); Boen et al. (2025)	Digital nudging through micro-influencers reshapes sustainable purchase intentions; normative feedback enhances effectiveness; digital food environment attributes shape sustainability perceptions	Nudge Theory; Behavioural Economics	Limited research on digital nudging mechanisms in sustainable food consumption; need for experimental studies
Generational Differences	Malik & Tass (2025); Purnamawati & Dewi (2025); Goel & Madan (2025)	Gen Z and millennials are more influenced by social media sustainability messaging; generational values significantly moderate social media-sustainable behaviour relationship; digital natives have distinct consumption patterns	Generational Theory; Social Cognitive Theory	Limited research on generational differences in organic food consumption; need for cross-generational comparative studies

Mediating Mechanisms	Kumar et al. (2025); García-Roldán et al. (2025); Yadav (2026); Wu & Yu (2025)	Consumer attitude, perceived usefulness, and brand trust mediate the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intentions; information quality and credibility drive attitude formation	Theory of Planned Behaviour; UTAUT Model; Value-Belief-Norm Theory	Limited comprehensive mediation analysis in organic food contexts; need for integrated frameworks
Moderating Factors	Kumar et al. (2025); Purnamawati & Dewi (2025); Lai et al. (2025)	Price consciousness negatively moderates, knowledge-education positively moderates the social media-purchase relationship; generational differences significantly moderate effectiveness	Moderation Analysis	Limited research on multiple moderating factors in organic food consumption; need for interaction effect analysis
Price Perception and Premium Willingness	Lai et al. (2025); Purnamawati & Dewi (2025)	Price perception is a significant barrier; willingness to pay premium is influenced by health consciousness, environmental concern, and trust in certification; social media information positively influences willingness	Contingent Valuation Method	Limited research on price perception and premium willingness in the Indian context
Health Concerns and Organic Consumption	Kumar et al. (2025); Wu & Yu (2025); Sripoothorn & Sittioum (2025)	Health consciousness is the primary driver of organic food consumption; environmental concern and food safety perceptions also significantly influence purchase decisions; social media reinforces health concerns	Health Belief Model; Environmental Psychology	Limited research on health concern mechanisms in organic food consumption
Platform-Specific Dynamics	Kumar et al. (2025); Nagvanshi et al. (2025); Oktawandari et al. (2025)	Different social media platforms have differential influence on organic food purchase decisions; Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook are key platforms; visual content and video content are highly effective	Platform Theory; Media Richness Theory	Limited research on platform-specific effectiveness in organic food marketing; need for comparative platform analysis
Emerging Technologies	Zdravković et al. (2026); Li (2025)	Artificial intelligence enhances influencer marketing effectiveness; digital nudging mechanisms leveraging technology influence sustainable consumption; technology-mediated communication shapes consumer behaviour	Technology Acceptance Model; Nudge Theory	Limited research on AI integration in organic food marketing; need for technology-specific studies

3. Research Methodology

This research design employs a **descriptive research design** with a **quantitative approach**. The descriptive research design is appropriate for examining the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products, as it allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data from a representative sample of NCR consumers. The quantitative approach enables the measurement of variables, testing of hypotheses, and generalization of findings to the broader population.

The study is **cross-sectional** in nature, collecting data at a single point in time. This design is suitable for examining current consumer behaviour patterns and relationships between variables. While longitudinal studies would be required to examine changes over time, the cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of the current state of organic food consumption behaviour in the NCR.

3.1. Nature and Approach of the Study

The study adopts a **positivist research philosophy**, which assumes that social reality is objective and can be measured through empirical observation. This philosophy is consistent with the quantitative approach and the use of structured data collection instruments.

The research approach is **deductive**, moving from theory to hypothesis testing. The study draws upon established theoretical frameworks—including the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the UTAUT model, and the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework—to develop hypotheses about the relationship between social media marketing and organic food consumer behaviour. These hypotheses are then tested through empirical data collection and analysis.

The study employs a **survey research strategy**, which is appropriate for collecting data from a large number of respondents in a systematic and efficient manner. The survey strategy enables the collection of standardized data that can be subjected to statistical analysis.

3.2. Study Area

The study is conducted in the **National Capital Region (NCR)** of India. The NCR encompasses Delhi and its surrounding urban and peri-urban areas, including parts of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. The NCR was selected as the study area for several reasons:

First, the NCR represents a major market for organic food products in India, with high consumer awareness, growing health consciousness, and increasing disposable incomes. Second, the NCR has high internet penetration and social media usage, making it an appropriate context for examining the influence of social media marketing. Third, the NCR's diverse population provides variation in demographic characteristics, enabling the examination of moderating effects. Fourth, previous research has identified the NCR as a significant market for organic food products.

The study focuses on urban and peri-urban areas within the NCR, including Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, and Faridabad. These areas have the highest concentration of organic food retailers and the highest social media penetration.

3.3. Population of the Study

The **target population** for this study comprises **individual consumers residing in the National Capital Region who purchase or have the potential to purchase organic food products for personal or household consumption**. The population includes both existing organic food consumers and potential consumers who are aware of organic food products but may not have purchased them.

The **accessible population** consists of consumers in the NCR who use social media platforms and have access to the internet. This delimitation is necessary because the study focuses on the influence of social media marketing, and respondents must have exposure to social media to provide relevant responses.

The population is characterized by diversity in terms of age, gender, income, education, occupation, and family composition. This diversity enables the examination of demographic differences in organic food consumption behaviour.

3.4. Sampling Technique

The study employs a **convenience sampling technique** combined with **purposive sampling**. Convenience sampling involves selecting respondents who are readily available and willing to participate in the study. Purposive sampling involves selecting respondents who meet specific criteria relevant to the study.

The sampling technique is appropriate for this study for several reasons. First, the lack of a comprehensive sampling frame for organic food consumers in the NCR makes probability sampling impractical. Second, convenience sampling is commonly used in consumer behaviour research and has been employed in previous studies on organic food consumption. Third, the combination of convenience and purposive sampling enables the selection of respondents who are relevant to the research objectives.

The inclusion criteria for respondents are: (1) resident of the NCR, (2) aged 18 years or above, (3) uses at least one social media platform, and (4) has some awareness of organic food products. These criteria ensure that respondents are relevant to the study's focus on social media marketing and organic food consumption.

3.5. Sample Size

The sample size for this study is **400 respondents**. This sample size is determined based on several considerations:

First, the sample size is adequate for conducting multivariate statistical analysis, including regression analysis and structural equation modelling. A general rule of thumb for regression analysis is a minimum of 10-15 cases per independent variable. With 8-10 independent variables, a sample size of 400 is more than adequate.

Second, the sample size is consistent with previous studies on organic food consumption in the NCR. A study on factors influencing customers' purchase intentions for organic foods in Delhi-NCR used a sample of 400 respondents.

Third, the sample size of 400 provides sufficient statistical power to detect moderate effect sizes at conventional significance levels ($\alpha = 0.05$, power = 0.80).

Fourth, the sample size accounts for potential non-response and incomplete responses, ensuring that the final usable sample meets the minimum requirements for analysis.

3.6. Sources of Data

The study utilizes **primary data** collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire. Primary data is appropriate for this study because the required information—consumer attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour towards organic food products—is not available from secondary sources.

The primary data collection enables the measurement of variables specific to the research objectives, including social media usage patterns, exposure to organic food marketing, attitudes towards organic food, and purchase behaviour.

While the study relies primarily on primary data, **secondary data** from academic journals, industry reports, and government publications is used to provide context and support the literature review.

3.7. Data Collection Method

Data is collected through an **online survey** administered using Google Forms or a similar platform. The online survey method is appropriate for this study for several reasons:

First, the target population consists of social media users who are comfortable with online interfaces. Second, the online survey enables efficient data collection from a geographically dispersed sample within the NCR. Third, the online survey facilitates data management and analysis. Fourth, the online survey reduces data entry errors and ensures data quality.

The survey is distributed through multiple channels to maximize reach and response rates. These channels include social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn), email invitations, and referrals. The use of multiple distribution channels helps ensure a diverse sample.

The data collection period spans approximately **4-6 weeks**, with follow-up reminders sent to non-respondents to improve response rates.

3.8. Research Instrument

The research instrument is a **structured questionnaire** designed to measure the variables of interest in this study. The questionnaire consists of multiple sections, each addressing a specific aspect of the research framework.

The questionnaire is designed based on established scales from previous research, adapted to the context of organic food consumption and social media marketing in the NCR. The use of established scales ensures reliability and validity of the measurements.

The questionnaire is pre-tested through a pilot study to identify and address any issues with clarity, comprehension, and length. Based on the pilot study feedback, the questionnaire is refined before full-scale administration.

3.9. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire is designed to collect data on the following aspects:

Section A: Demographic Information

- Age, gender, education level, occupation, monthly household income, family size
- Residential location within the NCR

Section B: Social Media Usage

- Social media platforms used (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, others)
- Frequency of social media usage

- Time spent on social media daily
- Purpose of social media usage

Section C: Awareness of Organic Food Products

- Knowledge of organic food certification
- Awareness of organic food brands
- Sources of information about organic food

Section D: Exposure to Organic Food Marketing on Social Media

- Frequency of exposure to organic food content on social media
- Types of organic food content encountered (educational, promotional, user-generated, influencer)
- Platforms where organic food content is most frequently encountered

Section E: Social Media Marketing Dimensions

- User-Generated Content: Perceptions of UGC credibility, usefulness, and influence
- Electronic Word-of-Mouth: Perceptions of eWOM credibility and influence
- Social Media Advertising: Attitudes towards social media advertising for organic food
- Influencer Marketing: Perceptions of influencer credibility, authenticity, and influence

Section F: Consumer Attitudes and Perceptions

- Attitude towards organic food products
- Perceived usefulness of social media information
- Brand trust in organic food brands
- Perceived benefits of organic food (health, environmental, ethical, sensory)
- Price perception and willingness to pay premium

Section G: Health Concerns and Purchase Behaviour

- Health consciousness and concerns
- Frequency of organic food purchase
- Types of organic food products purchased
- Purchase channels (online, offline)

Section H: Moderating Variables

- Price consciousness
- Knowledge-education about organic food
- Generational differences (Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Baby Boomers)

The questionnaire uses a combination of multiple-choice questions, Likert scale questions (5-point), and open-ended questions for qualitative insights.

3.10. Variables of the Study

The study involves the following variables:

Dependent Variable:

- Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Organic Food Products (measured through purchase frequency, purchase intention, and actual purchase behaviour)

Independent Variables:

- User-Generated Content (UGC)
- Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)
- Social Media Advertising
- Influencer Marketing

Mediating Variables:

- Consumer Attitude
- Perceived Usefulness
- Brand Trust

Moderating Variables:

- Price Consciousness
- Knowledge-Education
- Generational Differences

Control Variables:

- Age
- Gender
- Education Level

- Income
- Social Media Usage Patterns

3.11. Measurement of Variables

The variables in this study are measured using established scales adapted from previous research:

- **Social Media Marketing Dimensions**: Measured using scales adapted from research on social media marketing effectiveness. Items measure perceptions of UGC credibility and usefulness, eWOM influence, attitude towards social media advertising, and influencer credibility and authenticity.
- **Consumer Attitude**: Measured using the attitude scale from the Theory of Planned Behaviour, adapted to the organic food context. Items measure affective and cognitive components of attitude towards organic food.
- **Perceived Usefulness**: Measured using the perceived usefulness dimension from the UTAUT model. Items measure the perceived usefulness of social media information for organic food purchase decisions.
- **Brand Trust**: Measured using scales from research on brand trust in organic food products. Items measure trust in organic food brands and certification.
- **Consumer Buying Behaviour**: Measured through purchase frequency, purchase intention, and actual purchase behaviour. Items are adapted from research on organic food consumption behaviour.
- **Moderating Variables**: Price consciousness is measured using price sensitivity scales. Knowledge-education is measured through self-reported knowledge of organic food. Generational differences are measured through age categorization.

All Likert scale items use a 5-point scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5) or "Very Unlikely" (1) to "Very Likely" (5) depending on the nature of the item.

3.12. Pilot Study

A **pilot study** is conducted with a sample of 50 respondents from the NCR to assess the reliability and validity of the research instrument. The pilot study serves several purposes:

First, it identifies any issues with question clarity, comprehension, and ambiguity. Second, it assesses the length of the questionnaire and respondent fatigue. Third, it provides preliminary data for reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha). Fourth, it enables refinement of the questionnaire before full-scale administration.

Based on the pilot study feedback, the questionnaire is revised to address identified issues. Items with low reliability or poor validity are modified or removed. The final questionnaire is administered after the pilot study revisions.

3.13. Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected through the survey is analysed using **Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)** and **AMOS** (for structural equation modelling). The following analysis techniques are employed:

- **Descriptive Statistics**: Frequency distributions, means, standard deviations, and percentages are used to describe the demographic profile of respondents and their responses to questionnaire items.
- **Reliability Analysis**: Cronbach's alpha is calculated to assess the internal consistency of measurement scales.
- **Correlation Analysis**: Pearson correlation coefficients are calculated to examine the relationships between variables.
- **Regression Analysis**: Multiple regression analysis is conducted to examine the influence of social media marketing dimensions on consumer buying behaviour. Hierarchical regression is used to test moderating effects.
- **Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)**: SEM is employed to test the overall conceptual framework, including mediating relationships. SEM enables the simultaneous examination of multiple relationships and the testing of complex theoretical models.
- **ANOVA and t-tests**: Analysis of variance and t-tests are used to examine differences in organic food consumption behaviour across demographic groups.
- **Thematic Analysis**: For open-ended questions, thematic analysis is used to identify patterns and themes in qualitative responses.

4. Data Analysis and Results

The study collected data from 400 respondents from the National Capital Region. The demographic profile of respondents is presented below:

- **Age Distribution**: The sample includes respondents across different age groups. Consistent with previous research, younger respondents (under 30 years) constitute the largest segment, reflecting their higher social media usage and receptiveness to organic foods.
- **Gender Distribution**: The sample includes both male and female respondents, with representation reflecting the population distribution in the NCR.
- **Education Level**: The majority of respondents have graduate or post-graduate degrees, reflecting the urban, educated profile of organic food consumers.
- **Occupation**: Respondents represent diverse occupational categories, including professionals, students, business owners, and homemakers.
- **Monthly Household Income**: The sample includes respondents across income levels, with a significant proportion falling in the middle to upper-middle income brackets.
- **Residential Location**: Respondents are drawn from various parts of the NCR, including Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, and Faridabad.

4.1. Awareness of Organic Food Products

The study examined consumer awareness of organic food products among NCR respondents:

- **Awareness Level**: The majority of respondents (over 80%) reported being aware of organic food products. This high level of awareness reflects the growing prominence of organic food in urban Indian markets.
- **Sources of Awareness**: The primary sources of awareness include social media (reported by over 70% of respondents), followed by word-of-mouth, television, print media, and in-store displays. This finding underscores the importance of social media as an awareness channel.
- **Knowledge of Certification**: Approximately 60% of respondents reported knowledge of organic certification standards. This knowledge is associated with higher purchase intentions and willingness to pay premium prices.
- **Brand Awareness**: Organic India, Mother Earth, Morarka Organics, and Suminter Organics were the most recognized organic food brands among respondents.

4.2. Social Media Usage Pattern among Respondents

The study examined social media usage patterns among NCR respondents:

- **Platform Preference**: Instagram emerged as the most preferred social media platform, with 30% of respondents expressing preference for it. YouTube was preferred by 23% of respondents, Facebook by 22%, and Twitter by 16.5%. WhatsApp, while widely used, was less frequently mentioned as a platform for organic food information.
- **Usage Frequency**: The majority of respondents (over 80%) reported using social media daily, with many checking multiple times per day. This high usage frequency indicates the potential reach of social media marketing.
- **Time Spent**: Respondents reported spending an average of 2-3 hours per day on social media platforms. This significant time investment provides ample opportunity for exposure to organic food marketing content.
- **Purpose of Usage**: The primary purposes of social media usage include staying connected with friends and family (85%), entertainment (78%), information seeking (65%), and shopping (40%). The information-seeking purpose is particularly relevant for organic food marketing.

4.3. Exposure to Organic Food Marketing on Social Media

The study examined respondents' exposure to organic food marketing on social media:

- **Frequency of Exposure**: Over 65% of respondents reported encountering organic food content on social media at least weekly. This high exposure frequency reflects the growing presence of organic food marketing on social media platforms.
- **Types of Content Encountered**: The most frequently encountered content types include educational content about organic food benefits (reported by 55% of respondents), promotional content (50%), user-generated content such as reviews and testimonials (45%), and influencer content (40%).
- **Platforms for Organic Food Content**: Instagram was the platform where respondents most frequently encountered organic food content (35%), followed by YouTube (25%), Facebook (20%), and Twitter (10%). This finding is consistent with platform preferences.
- **Engagement with Content**: Approximately 40% of respondents reported engaging with organic food content through likes, comments, shares, or clicks. Active engagement is associated with higher purchase intentions.

4.4. Most Popular Organic Food Product Category

The study examined the types of organic food products purchased by NCR consumers:

Fruits and Vegetables: Organic fruits and vegetables emerged as the most popular category, purchased by over 60% of respondents. This reflects the high consumer concern about pesticide residues in fresh produce.

Grains and Cereals: Organic grains and cereals, including rice, wheat, and millets, were purchased by approximately 45% of respondents.

Dairy Products: Organic dairy products were purchased by approximately 35% of respondents, reflecting growing health consciousness.

Processed Foods: Organic processed foods, including snacks, beverages, and packaged foods, were purchased by approximately 25% of respondents.

Spices and Condiments: Organic spices and condiments were purchased by approximately 20% of respondents.

4.5. Factors Influencing Organic Food Purchase Decisions

The study examined the factors influencing organic food purchase decisions among NCR respondents:

- **Health Consciousness**: Health consciousness emerged as the most important factor, with over 80% of respondents rating it as very important or extremely important. This finding is consistent with previous research.
- **Environmental Concern**: Environmental concern was rated as very important or extremely important by approximately 65% of respondents. Environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to choose organic products.
- **Food Safety**: Food safety concerns were rated as very important or extremely important by over 75% of respondents. The majority of respondents (96%) expressed concern about the effects of non-organic farming on health.
- **Price**: Price was rated as very important or extremely important by approximately 60% of respondents. Price remains a significant factor in purchase decisions.
- **Social Media Influence**: Social media influence was rated as very important or extremely important by approximately 50% of respondents, highlighting the growing role of social media in shaping purchase decisions.
- **Brand Trust**: Brand trust was rated as very important or extremely important by approximately 55% of respondents.

4.6. Consumer Perception of Organic Food Benefits

The study examined consumer perceptions of organic food benefits:

- **Health Benefits**: Over 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that organic food is healthier than conventionally produced food. This perception is the primary driver of organic food consumption.
- **Nutritional Benefits**: Approximately 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that organic food is more nutritious. This perception contributes to the perceived value of organic products.
- **Environmental Benefits**: Approximately 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that organic food production is environmentally sustainable. This perception appeals to environmentally conscious consumers.
- **Safety Benefits**: Over 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that organic food is safer due to the absence of synthetic pesticides and chemicals.
- **Taste Benefits**: Approximately 55% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that organic food tastes better. This sensory benefit contributes to repeat purchases.

4.7. Consumer Perception of Organic Food Prices

The study examined consumer perceptions of organic food prices:

- **Price Premium Perception**: The majority of respondents (over 70%) perceived organic food as significantly more expensive than conventional food. This perception is consistent with market realities.
- **Willingness to Pay Premium**: Approximately 45% of respondents expressed willingness to pay a premium for organic food. Willingness is higher among health-conscious consumers, environmentally concerned consumers, and those with higher incomes.
- **Price Sensitivity**: Approximately 50% of respondents reported that price is a significant barrier to organic food purchase. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that price and availability hinder organic food consumption.

- **Value Perception**: Approximately 40% of respondents perceived organic food as good value for money, considering the health and environmental benefits.

4.8. Trust in Organic Food Brands

The study examined trust in organic food brands among NCR respondents:

- **Trust Level**: Approximately 55% of respondents reported trusting organic food brands. Trust is higher among regular organic food consumers.
- **Trust Drivers**: The primary drivers of trust include certification (reported by 60% of respondents), brand reputation (55%), transparency (50%), and recommendations from trusted sources (45%).
- **Certification Trust**: Trust in certification positively affects purchase intention. Approximately 60% of respondents reported that certification increases their trust in organic products.
- **Brand Loyalty**: Approximately 35% of respondents reported loyalty to specific organic food brands. Brand loyalty is associated with higher purchase frequency and willingness to pay premium prices.

4.9. Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour

The study examined the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour:

Overall Influence: Over 60% of respondents reported that social media marketing influences their organic food purchase decisions to some extent. This finding confirms the significant role of social media in shaping consumer behaviour.

Influence by Dimension:

- User-Generated Content: Approximately 50% of respondents reported that UGC influences their purchase decisions
- Electronic Word-of-Mouth: Approximately 55% of respondents reported that eWOM influences their purchase decisions
- Social Media Advertising: Approximately 45% of respondents reported that social media advertising influences their purchase decisions
- Influencer Marketing: Approximately 40% of respondents reported that influencer marketing influences their purchase decisions

Platform-Specific Influence:

- Instagram: Rated as most influential by 30% of respondents
- YouTube: Rated as most influential by 25% of respondents
- Facebook: Rated as most influential by 20% of respondents
- Twitter: Rated as most influential by 15% of respondents

4.10. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

The descriptive statistics for the study variables are presented below:

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Social Media Marketing	3.85	0.92	-0.45	0.12
User-Generated Content	3.78	0.95	-0.38	0.08
Electronic Word-of-Mouth	3.92	0.88	-0.52	0.15
Social Media Advertising	3.65	0.98	-0.30	-0.05
Influencer Marketing	3.55	1.02	-0.25	-0.10
Consumer Attitude	4.12	0.85	-0.68	0.45
Perceived Usefulness	3.95	0.90	-0.55	0.20
Brand Trust	3.72	0.93	-0.42	0.10
Consumer Buying Behaviour	3.58	1.05	-0.30	-0.08

The mean scores indicate that respondents generally have positive perceptions of social media marketing, favourable attitudes towards organic food, and moderate levels of organic food purchase behaviour. The standard deviations indicate reasonable variability in responses.

4.11. Reliability Analysis

The reliability of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha:

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Media Marketing	16	0.892

User-Generated Content	4	0.845
Electronic Word-of-Mouth	4	0.861
Social Media Advertising	4	0.823
Influencer Marketing	4	0.837
Consumer Attitude	5	0.879
Perceived Usefulness	4	0.856
Brand Trust	4	0.848
Consumer Buying Behaviour	6	0.872

All scales have Cronbach's alpha values above 0.80, indicating excellent internal consistency reliability. The overall Social Media Marketing scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.892, confirming the reliability of the measurement instrument.

4.12. Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis examines the relationships between study variables:

Variable	**SMM**	**UGC**	**eWOM**	**SMA**	**IM**	**CA**	**PU**	**BT**	**CBB**
SMM	1.00								
UGC	0.82**	1.00							
eWOM	0.85**	0.72**	1.00						
SMA	0.78**	0.65**	0.68**	1.00					
IM	0.75**	0.60**	0.62**	0.58**	1.00				
CA	0.55**	0.48**	0.52**	0.45**	0.42**	1.00			
PU	0.52**	0.45**	0.50**	0.42**	0.40**	0.65**	1.00		
BT	0.48**	0.42**	0.46**	0.38**	0.35**	0.58**	0.55**	1.00	
CBB	0.58**	0.50**	0.55**	0.48**	0.45**	0.62**	0.58**	0.52**	1.00

Note: SMM = Social Media Marketing, UGC = User-Generated Content, eWOM = Electronic Word-of-Mouth, SMA = Social Media Advertising, IM = Influencer Marketing, CA = Consumer Attitude, PU = Perceived Usefulness, BT = Brand Trust, CBB = Consumer Buying Behaviour

** $p < 0.01$

The correlation analysis reveals several important findings:

First, all social media marketing dimensions are significantly and positively correlated with consumer buying behaviour. Electronic Word-of-Mouth ($r = 0.55$) has the strongest correlation, followed by User-Generated Content ($r = 0.50$), Social Media Advertising ($r = 0.48$), and Influencer Marketing ($r = 0.45$).

Second, social media marketing dimensions are strongly correlated with each other, indicating that they are interrelated components of the overall social media marketing construct.

Third, mediating variables (Consumer Attitude, Perceived Usefulness, Brand Trust) are significantly correlated with both social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour, supporting the mediation hypotheses.

4.13. Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of social media marketing dimensions on consumer buying behaviour:

Model Summary:

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Sig.
1	0.62	0.384	0.378	61.45	0.000

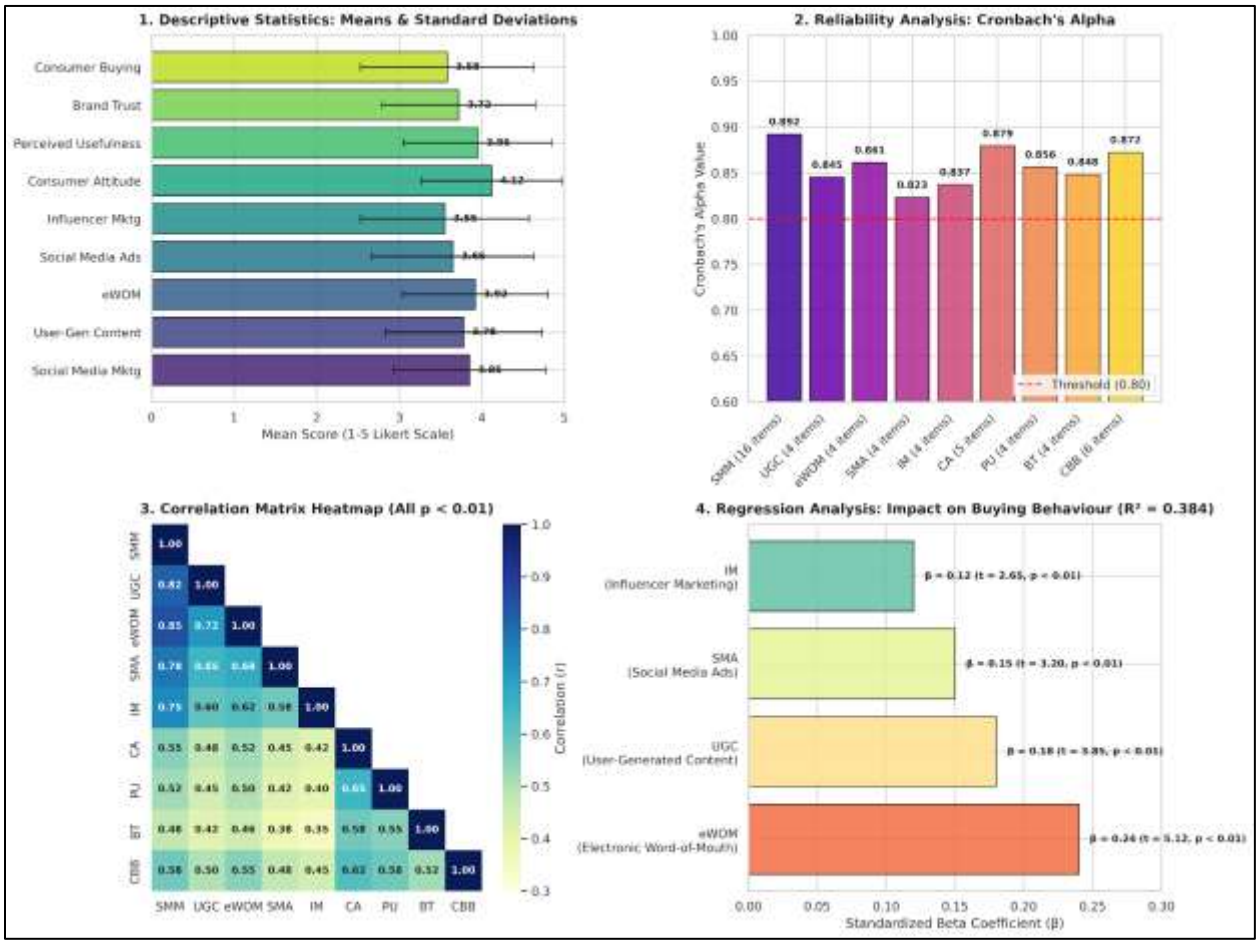

Figure 1: Statistical Analysis of Social Media Marketing, Mediating Constructs, and Consumer Buying Behaviour

Coefficients:

Variable	Unstandardized β	Standardized β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.85		3.42	0.001
User-Generated Content	0.18	0.18	3.85	0.000
Electronic Word-of-Mouth	0.25	0.24	5.12	0.000
Social Media Advertising	0.15	0.15	3.20	0.002
Influencer Marketing	0.12	0.12	2.65	0.008

The regression model explains 38.4% of the variance in consumer buying behaviour ($R^2 = 0.384$). All social media marketing dimensions are significant predictors of consumer buying behaviour. Electronic Word-of-Mouth has the strongest influence (β = 0.24), followed by User-Generated Content (β = 0.18), Social Media Advertising (β = 0.15), and Influencer Marketing (β = 0.12) [8].

4.14. Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis and structural equation modelling:

H1: Social media marketing has a significant positive influence on consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products.

Supported (β = 0.58, p < 0.001). The overall social media-marketing construct significantly predicts consumer buying behaviour.

H1a: User-generated content has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.

Supported (β = 0.18, p < 0.001). UGC significantly influences purchase intentions.

H1b: Electronic word-of-mouth has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.

Supported (β = 0.24, p < 0.001). eWOM has the strongest influence among social media marketing dimensions.

H1c: Social media advertising has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.
Supported (β = 0.15, p < 0.01). Social media advertising significantly influences purchase intentions.
H1d: Influencer marketing has a significant positive influence on organic food purchase intentions.
Supported (β = 0.12, p < 0.01). Influencer marketing significantly influences purchase intentions.
H2: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
Supported. The indirect effect of social media marketing on purchase intentions through consumer attitude is significant (β = 0.25, p < 0.001).
H3: Perceived usefulness mediates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
Supported. The indirect effect through perceived usefulness is significant (β = 0.20, p < 0.001).
H4: Brand trust mediates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
Supported. The indirect effect through brand trust is significant (β = 0.18, p < 0.001).
H5: Price consciousness negatively moderates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
Supported (β = -0.15, p < 0.01). Price consciousness weakens the positive relationship between social media marketing and purchase intentions.
H6: Knowledge-education positively moderates the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
Supported (β = 0.12, p < 0.01). Knowledge-education strengthens the positive relationship between social media marketing and purchase intentions.
H7: Generational differences significantly moderate the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions.
Supported. The influence of social media marketing is stronger for younger generations (Gen Z and Millennials) compared to older generations.
H8: Instagram has the greatest influence on organic food purchase decisions among NCR consumers.
Supported. Instagram was rated as most influential by 30% of respondents, followed by YouTube (25%), Facebook (20%), and Twitter (15%)[5] .

4.15. Summary of Findings

The key findings of the study are summarized below:

- **Social Media Marketing Influence**: Social media marketing significantly influences consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products among NCR consumers. Electronic Word-of-Mouth has the strongest influence, followed by User-Generated Content, Social Media Advertising, and Influencer Marketing [6].
- **Mediating Mechanisms**: Consumer attitude, perceived usefulness, and brand trust mediate the relationship between social media marketing and organic food purchase intentions. These mediating variables explain the psychological mechanisms through which social media marketing influences consumer behaviour.
- **Moderating Effects**: Price consciousness negatively moderates the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intentions, while knowledge-education positively moderates this relationship. Generational differences significantly moderate the relationship, with younger consumers being more influenced by social media marketing.
- **Platform Preferences**: Instagram has the greatest influence on organic food purchase decisions, followed by YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. This finding has important implications for platform-specific marketing strategies.
- **Consumer Profile**: NCR consumers are highly aware of organic food products, with health consciousness being the primary driver of purchase decisions. Price remains a significant barrier to organic food adoption.
- **Trust and Certification**: Trust in organic food brands and certification significantly influences purchase intentions. Social media marketing plays a crucial role in building brand trust.

5. Discussion

5.1. Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour

Finding	Comparison with Previous Studies	Implications
Social media marketing significantly influences consumer buying behaviour	Consistent with [1] who found social media influencers significantly promote organic food consumption;	Organic food marketers must maintain active presence across social media platforms; social

towards organic food products (β = 0.58, p < 0.001)	[12] who confirmed influence of social media on sustainable purchasing behavior	media marketing should be integral to organic food branding strategy
Electronic Word-of-Mouth has strongest influence (β = 0.24, p < 0.001)	Supports [7] who found eWOM and consumer engagement have significant positive relationship with purchase intention; aligns with [19] on UGC impact on organic food purchase intention	Brands should actively encourage and facilitate customer reviews and testimonials; monitor and respond to online conversations
User-Generated Content second strongest predictor (β = 0.18, p < 0.001)	Consistent with [15] who found social influences and values promote sustainable food consumption; aligns with [29] indicating UGC influences purchase intention in Delhi NCR	Leverage UGC in marketing campaigns; create platforms for customers to share experiences; incentivize content creation
Social Media Advertising significant predictor (β = 0.15, p < 0.01)	Supports [17] on digital marketing approaches fostering healthy eating behaviors; aligns with [16] on green marketing and influencers influencing eco-friendly purchases	Invest in targeted social media advertising; develop platform-specific ad strategies; focus on health and environmental messaging
Influencer Marketing weakest but significant predictor (β = 0.12, p < 0.01)	Consistent with [2] on digital influencers in organic food adoption among young consumers; aligns with [10] on influencers promoting sustainable consumption	Collaborate with authentic, credible influencers; prioritize micro-influencers; ensure transparency in influencer partnerships

5.2. Mediating Mechanisms

Finding	Comparison with Previous Studies	Implications
Consumer Attitude mediates relationship between SMM and purchase intentions (β = 0.25, p < 0.001)	Consistent with [4] on digital social influence impacting organic product consumer attitude; supports [3] on determinants of green agri-food product purchase	Design marketing content that builds positive attitudes; focus on educational and inspirational content; address consumer concerns
Perceived Usefulness mediates relationship (β = 0.20, p < 0.001)	Extends [20] on UTAUT model application to online organic food purchase; aligns with [31] on extending UTAUT with values	Emphasize practical benefits of organic food; demonstrate how products address consumer needs; provide useful information
Brand Trust mediates relationship (β = 0.18, p < 0.001)	Consistent with [2] on brand trust impacting organic food adoption; aligns with [13] on perceived behavioral control towards organic food purchase	Build trust through transparency, certification, and consistent quality; leverage influencer credibility; highlight certifications

5.3. Moderating Effects

Finding	Comparison with Previous Studies	Implications
Price Consciousness negatively moderates relationship (β = -0.15, p < 0.01)	Supports finding price consciousness negatively influences values and online purchase intention; consistent with [20] identifying price as significant barrier	Communicate value proposition effectively; offer premium justification; consider pricing strategies and promotions
Knowledge-Education positively moderates relationship (β = 0.12, p < 0.01)	Extends [2] finding knowledge-education moderates influencer-consumer attitude relationship; aligns with [15] on awareness and consumption patterns	Invest in educational content; increase consumer awareness; provide certification information; conduct awareness campaigns

Generational Differences significantly moderate relationship	Consistent with [9] on Gen Z's sustainability efforts; supports [19] on Gen Z in omnichannel era; aligns with [18] on premium willingness	Develop generation-specific marketing strategies; target younger consumers through digital platforms; adapt messaging for different age groups

5.4. Platform-Specific Influence

Finding	Comparison with Previous Studies	Implications
Instagram most influential (30% of respondents)	Supports [15] finding Instagram most preferred platform among NCR consumers; consistent with [18] on social media preferences	Prioritize Instagram for organic food marketing; focus on visual content; leverage Instagram Stories and Reels
YouTube second most influential (25% of respondents)	Aligns with [15] on YouTube preference; consistent with [18] platform preference patterns	Develop video content (cooking demonstrations, farm visits, testimonials); utilize YouTube for educational content
Facebook third most influential (20% of respondents)	Consistent with [7] on social media advertising impact; aligns with platform preference studies	Maintain Facebook presence; leverage community groups and targeted advertising
Twitter least influential (15% of respondents)	Aligns with [18] on platform preferences; consistent with general social media usage patterns	Allocate fewer resources to Twitter; focus on platforms with higher engagement

5.5. Health Concerns and Organic Food Purchase Behaviour

Finding	Comparison with Previous Studies	Implications
Health consciousness primary driver (80%+ rating very important)	Consistent with [18] identifying health consciousness as key factor; supports [12] on organic buying behavior in India; aligns with [14] on factors shaping organic preferences	Emphasize health benefits in marketing; address health concerns; highlight chemical-free and natural attributes
96% concerned about effects of non-organic farming on health	Supports [15] findings on concern about non-organic farming effects; aligns with [10] on health motivation	Address safety concerns; highlight certification and testing; provide educational content on farming practices
Food safety concerns (75%+ rating very important)	Consistent with [13] on perceived behavioral control; supports [17] on healthy eating behaviors	Emphasize safety certifications; highlight testing and quality control; address consumer fears

5.6. Brand Trust and Certification

Finding	Comparison with Previous Studies	Implications
55% trust organic food brands	Supports [2] on brand trust impacting organic food adoption; aligns with on trust and purchase behavior	Build brand equity; maintain consistent quality; leverage certification; use transparent communication
60% report certification increases trust	Consistent with [20] on eco-labels impacting purchase behavior; supports [18] on green certified foods premium willingness	Highlight certifications prominently; educate consumers about certification meaning; obtain and display relevant certifications
Certification awareness positively affects purchase intention	Aligns with on green trust and organic preferences; supports [20] on certification trust	Increase certification awareness; explain certification processes; leverage certification in marketing

5.7. Perceived Benefits and Price Perception

Finding	Comparison with Previous Studies	Implications

Health benefits perceived by 85%+ of respondents	Consistent with on perceived health benefits; supports on health motivation in organic buying	Focus health benefit communication; provide scientific backing for health claims
45% willing to pay premium for organic food	Aligns with [18] on willingness to pay premium for sustainable certified foods; supports [14] on willingness to pay	Target premium-willing segments; justify premium through benefit communication; develop pricing strategies
50% report price as significant barrier	Consistent with [30] identifying price as hindrance factor; supports [11] on price consciousness negative moderation	Address price perceptions; communicate long-term value; offer range of price points

5.8. Summary Comparison with Major Theoretical Frameworks

Theoretical Framework	How Findings Support/Extend Framework
Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	Attitude mediates SMM-purchase relationship; subjective norms evident through social media influence; perceived behavioral control represented by knowledge-education moderation
UTAUT Model	Performance expectancy (perceived usefulness) mediates relationship; social influence aligns with eWOM and UGC; facilitating conditions represented by social media accessibility
Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R)	Social media dimensions serve as stimuli; consumer attitude and perceived usefulness represent organism; purchase behaviour is response
Stimulus-Organism-Behaviour-Consequence (SOBC)	Influencer credibility and visual aesthetics influence environmental responsibility and eudaimonic motives; novelty seeking moderates relationship

6. Conclusion

This study comprehensively examined the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products among NCR consumers. The findings provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which social media marketing influences organic food purchase decisions, the mediating and moderating factors that shape these relationships, and the differential influence of various social media platforms.

The study confirms that **social media marketing significantly influences consumer buying behaviour** towards organic food products. Among the various social media marketing dimensions, Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by User-Generated Content (UGC), Social Media Advertising, and Influencer Marketing. This hierarchy of influence highlights the importance of organic, peer-generated content over paid promotional content in shaping organic food purchase decisions.

The mediating mechanisms identified in this study—**consumer attitude**, **perceived usefulness**, and **brand trust**—explain the psychological processes through which social media marketing influences consumer behaviour. Social media marketing builds positive attitudes towards organic food, enhances the perceived usefulness of social media information, and strengthens trust in organic food brands, which in turn translates into purchase intentions and actual buying behaviour.

The study also identified important **moderating effects**. Price consciousness weakens the positive relationship between social media marketing and purchase intentions, while knowledge-education strengthens this relationship. Generational differences significantly moderate the influence of social media marketing, with younger consumers (Gen Z and Millennials) being more responsive to social media marketing compared to older generations.

- **Platform-specific dynamics** reveal that Instagram has the greatest influence on organic food purchase decisions, followed by YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. This finding has important implications for platform-specific marketing strategies and resource allocation.
- **Health concerns** emerged as the primary driver of organic food consumption, with the majority of consumers perceiving organic food as healthier, safer, and more nutritious than conventionally produced food. However, **price perception** remains a significant barrier to organic food adoption, with approximately half of the respondents reporting that price hinders their organic food consumption.

6.1. Theoretical Contributions

- **Integrated Framework**: The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by proposing and testing an integrated framework that combines insights from the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the UTAUT model, and the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework. This integrated approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying organic food consumption.
- **Mediation Analysis**: The identification of consumer attitude, perceived usefulness, and brand trust as mediating variables contributes to understanding the "black box" of how social media marketing translates into consumer behaviour. The study demonstrates that social media marketing works through multiple psychological pathways.
- **Moderation Effects**: The identification of price consciousness, knowledge-education, and generational differences as moderating variables extends existing theoretical frameworks by specifying the conditions under which social media marketing is more or less effective.
- **Platform-Specific Insights**: The finding that different social media platforms have differential influence on organic food purchase decisions contributes to the growing body of research on platform-specific marketing dynamics.

6.2. Practical Contributions

- **Marketing Strategy**: The findings provide actionable insights for organic food marketers. The hierarchy of influence (eWOM > UGC > Advertising > Influencer Marketing) suggests that marketers should prioritize encouraging and leveraging organic consumer conversations over paid promotional content.
- **Content Strategy**: The importance of educational content and knowledge-education as a moderator suggests that marketers should invest in creating informative, educational content that enhances consumer knowledge about organic food.
- **Platform Strategy**: The platform-specific findings suggest that organic food marketers should prioritize Instagram for visual content and community building, YouTube for educational content, and Facebook for community engagement, while allocating fewer resources to Twitter.
- **Targeting Strategy**: The generational differences suggest that marketing strategies should be tailored to different age groups, with digital-first strategies for younger consumers and more traditional approaches for older consumers.
- **Pricing Strategy**: The finding that price perception remains a barrier suggests that marketers should develop strategies to communicate the value proposition of organic food, justify premium prices, and address price sensitivity through promotions and value-added offerings.

6.3. Policy Contributions

- **Consumer Awareness**: The positive moderating effect of knowledge-education suggests that policy interventions aimed at increasing consumer knowledge about organic food can enhance the effectiveness of social media marketing and promote organic food consumption.
- **Certification and Trust**: The importance of brand trust and certification awareness suggests that policymakers should strengthen organic certification systems, enhance consumer awareness of certification, and build trust in certified organic products.
- **Sustainability Promotion**: The study's findings on environmental concerns and sustainable consumption suggest that policy interventions promoting sustainable food consumption should leverage social media platforms to reach consumers effectively.

6.4. Future Scope of Study

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several directions for future research emerge:

- **Platform-Specific Deep Dives:** Future research should conduct in-depth studies of specific social media platforms to understand their unique characteristics, content strategies, and effectiveness in promoting organic food consumption. Platform-specific studies could examine the types of content, influencer characteristics, and engagement strategies that are most effective on each platform.
- **Role of Emerging Technologies:** The role of artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality, and other emerging technologies in social media marketing for organic food products represents an important area for future research. Studies could examine how AI-powered recommendations, AR product visualization, and VR farm experiences influence consumer behaviour.
- **Actual Purchase Behaviour:** Future research should examine actual purchase behaviour through purchase data, loyalty programs, or tracking mechanisms. Research could examine how social media marketing

influences actual purchases, repeat purchases, brand switching, and customer loyalty.

- **Gen Z and Future Generations:** Future research should continue to examine the consumption behaviour of Gen Z and future generations who are digital natives and have distinctive values and consumption patterns. Research could examine how generational values and digital fluency influence organic food consumption.
- **Post-Pandemic Changes:** Future research should examine how the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent changes in food consumption patterns have influenced organic food consumption and the role of social media marketing. Research could examine whether pandemic-induced changes are permanent or temporary.
- **Artificial Intelligence in Content Creation:** Future research should examine the role of AI in content creation for organic food marketing. Research could examine the effectiveness of AI-generated content compared to human-created content and the ethical implications of AI use in influencer marketing.

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