

# A Study on the Moderating Role of Emerging UGC in Strengthening Brand Image, Reputation, and Consumer Purchase Intentions in FMCG (Delhi NCR)

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**Abstract:** The study examined how a traditional and emerging user-generated content (UGC) influences brand image, brand reputation and purchase intention in the FMCG sector. Its objectives will be the assessment of the direct effects of the traditional UGC, the mediating effect of the new UGC and how the brand is perceived as a factor in influencing the consumer behavioural consequences. The study involved the collection of quantitative survey research through the mixed-method framework and the analysis using the PLS-SEM and qualitative understanding of the interview as intended among the consumers in the Delhi NCR. The results showed that the construct reliability is high and that the two types of UGC do play a significant role in the brand image and reputation that subsequently results in increasing the purchase intention. These connections are also supported by the emergent UGC that makes them more real and involved. The recommendations indicate that UGC is one of the most important communication channels and tools in the way consumers make judgments about the brand. The study concludes that diversified UGC formats, strategically integrated into a plan, would increase the trust, brand equity, and have a positive effect on purchasing behaviour.

**Keywords:** User-Generated Content, Brand Image, Brand Reputation, Purchase Intention, FMCG Sector.

## INTRODUCTION

As the modern world transforms into the online interaction, user-generated content (UGC) has become one of the driving forces of brand image and reputation, particularly in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry. UGC implies any type of content produced by a consumer or users of a particular brand like reviews, social media posts, and videos that might have a massive influence on the way a potential customer thinks and behaves (Baker et al., 2021). The

type of UGC is evolving because of the increase in the power of artificial intelligence (AI), and AI systems can analyze and filter content and make it more topical and accessible. This is unlike the traditional UGC that in most instances was founded on organic consumer interaction with no help of advanced technologies. As far as the brands that experiment with this new environment are concerned, it is now possible to utilize the power of AI-driven insights to not only enhance the curation of content but to involve them in a more specialized manner (Al- Abdallah and Jumaa 2022). This development provides the brands the option to provide more personable experience to the consumers to enable strong emotional engagement and commitment. As an example, a company can determine which themes and feelings the audience connects to by studying user interactions with UGC, which allows them to provide marketing work accordingly. Furthermore, since consumers are moving to authenticity in brand-related

communications, it is essential to combine both old and new types of UGC, humanizing the brand and at the same time strengthening the image using the actual voices of consumers (Jin and Ryu 2020).

Finally, this dual strategy can have a profound effect on the way of community and trust building between the brand and its customers, making it relevant in the competitive market in the long term (Lou and Yuan 2019). Furthermore, the introduction of interactive types of UGC, such as the AR experience and live streaming, presents the brands with new possibilities to engage consumers in real-time. Such interactive forms of content not only elevate the amount of interactivity but also form a sense of community among the users as they can share experiences with one another in real time as they participate in brand stories (Li et al., 2021). As these platforms are developed, individuals can interact with one another on a more personal level since this can offer them more immersive experiences that the UGC cannot provide through means of traditional means. The brands that manage to integrate such tools have the opportunity to create effective storytelling stations with cross-cutting attractions that would in turn result in consumer confidence and word of mouth (McAlexander et al., 2002). This requires marketers to continuously seek to change their strategies because such emerging trends are continuously appearing and they are keeping abreast of the evolving consumer expectations and behaviours in a more digital market (Peppers and Rogers 2011).

The originality and relevance of the UGC also go hand in hand with brand reputation as more people tend to trust peer-generated content instead of a traditional advertisement. This trust has created brand loyalty because once customers are satisfied, they are more willing to interact and recommend brands that appeal to their beliefs and experiences (Laroche et al., 2013). Moreover, positive UGC may also strengthen purchase intentions because other people can sway potential buyers based on other people sharing their experiences. In this regard, it is important to know how emerging UGC and traditional UGC influence the brand image of brands that wish to develop a faithful customer base and spur sales in a more competitive environment (Keller and Lehmann 2006). The relevance of effective content moderation and management cannot be overestimated as the brands are more and more dependent on UGC to shape their image (Jung 2017).

UGC with the negative connotation has the potential to destroy brand image rapidly and it is crucial that companies have strong measures in place to mitigate the impact of these

effects, as well as take proactive steps to overcome crises (Yadav and Soni 2018). An example is that a study indicates that even though consumers can interact with the brands via the social media platforms, they are also keen on the quality and reliability of the information being posted. This means that brands have to focus more on honest communication and create an atmosphere in which constructive criticism and feedback can be embraced and turned into the growth opportunities (Xu 2022). Combining the genuineness of consumer voices with strategic governance, brands can develop a community that is resilient and brand-loving by promoting the brand values and boosting the general brand perception in a constantly changing online environment (Wang 2021).

Besides, with the complexity of UGC management, brands will also be forced to take into consideration the changing importance of influencer partnerships in increasing the traditional and emerging content. The influencers can also assume the role of a potent mediator, filling the gaps between the consumer-created content and brand communications, which then increases authenticity and triggers engagement (Fan et al., 2022). Working with influencers who are sincere to their values, brands do not only reach more people but also capitalize on existing trust among specific communities and build an even deeper emotional bond with prospective customers (Sun 2023). This tactic is especially crucial during the period when consumers are getting more marketing strategies; the use of real celebrity endorses by relatable people would have a tremendous impact on the buying patterns and boost the positive brand perception (Pitardi 2022). In this way, the inclusion of the influencer collaboration in UGC strategies opens up a prospect of brands to develop a complex reputation management strategy that appeals to the current audiences of perceptiveness (Naeem and Ozuem 2021).

The role of user-generated content (UGC) in the brand

image and reputation of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) is gaining momentum in the rapidly changing industry. By 2023, 79 percent of the consumers are estimated to have indicated that user-generated content has a significant influence on their buying decisions (Fan et al., 2022). This statistic explains the importance of understanding how the new UGC, which involves the interactive use of the social media, and the use of the augmented reality interaction, in addition to the old UGC, which involves product reviews and testimonials, generates an impression on consumer perceptions. An increase in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools also alters the UGC forces, enabling the brand to analyze the content and filter it more productively to make it more relevant and accessible (Smith, 2021).

The debate on UGC influence on the brand image is worth researching the topic because of several factors. Firstly, one can say that under the condition of an effective application, UGC may allow a brand to create a more substantial emotional connection with consumers, which, in the long-term, results in loyalty and word of mouth (Fong et al., 2022). Second, as the consumers are requesting greater authenticity of brand communication, it is imminent that they actually work out how to integrate the traditional and the new forms of UGC as a part of building trust and community. The proper content moderation and control can also be involved in removing the threats of negative UGC that can easily eradicate the brand image (Zmich 2022).

The study explores ways in which brand image and brand reputation could be affected by traditional user-generated content (UGC) within the FMCG, but the moderating role of emerging UGC to the effect of the latter is also examined. The study aims at giving more insights into consumer behaviour and digital interaction by examining the way in which newer versions of UGC (influencer content, interactive videos, and AI-curated reviews) will magnify or change the effect of older UGC on consumer attitudes. Also, the research will evaluate the functionality of the new forms of UGC, such as influencer partnerships, as potential strategic moderators that could either enhance or reduce the impact of the traditional UGC and thus provide a more adaptive and dynamic method of brand reputation management in a highly dynamic and competitive market.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The rising popularity of user-generated content (UGC) and influencer collaborations as a component of the newest marketing approaches, data analytics cannot be underestimated when it comes to gauging engagement and performance. Through the advanced tools of analysis, companies can understand the behaviour pattern of consumers in order to optimize their UGC campaigns. As an example, the process of measuring the sentiments related to communication with the audience on social media can be tracked to assist the brands in determining the kind of content that the consumers are most likely to engage with and, therefore, what to produce next (Kumar & Reinartz 2016). Also, by using AI-based algorithms, the brands are

able to detect emerging trends within their circles, its implementation allows responding quickly, which increases the relevance of the brand and strengthens connections with the consumers (Iswari and Afriliana, 2022). This active strategy does not only help build or strengthen the community connection but also places the brands in a good position in a competitive market environment, which translates to loyalty growth and sales (Kay et al., 2020).

Also, with the brands leveraging the strength of UGC and analytics, they have to address the ethical considerations that would emerge in this digital environment. The increasing reliance on consumer-generated content requires a fine balance in regard to authenticity and manipulation; people are becoming more conscious of the motives of the interaction of a brand. As an example, it was stated that although the positive user experience can be promoted through the UGC, and it can lead to the growth in brand loyalty, any sense of perceived insincerity may result in a backlash and the loss of trust in the audience (Sang and Nah, 2022). Therefore, the open communication and creation of sincere relationships with the consumers is the most important when the brands want to engage with them in a sustainable way. This will not only ensure the preservation of brand integrity but also work in accordance with the changing consumer demands in terms of corporate responsibility and ethical marketing practices. Community engagement is a significant aspect of UGC strategies, besides the ethical factor. The brands that actively build a sense of belongingness in their consumers usually experience greater brand advocacy because content consumers become active purveyors and champions of their brands in their network (Triono et al., 2021). This word-of-mouth marketing is organic and it enhances visibility of the brand besides credibility by word of mouth that is being progressively appreciated by the current and cautious consumers (Kumar, 2010).

Besides, data analytics can also allow brands to find valuable influencers in these communities and target their outreach with authentic voices that make them attractive to target audiences. Through fostering these connections and making users part of them, companies have the potential to develop vibrant ecosystems that ensure the success of both the brand and the consumer, which eventually leads to a loyalty that is lasting and an increase in the general market share (Mishra & Satish 2016). Through the constant interpretation of these insights, the brands are capable of altering their strategies in real-time, which would guarantee that they are in tandem with the consumer preferences and expectations. This constant change keeps the brands abreast of the curve and makes informed choices by keeping to the changing market dynamics and consumer behaviour (Kudeshia & Kumar 2017). This is a strategic application of data, which, in addition to increasing the efficacy of marketing campaigns, also enables brands to develop more personalized experiences that would directly respond to consumer preferences. As the question of how personal information is gathered and used continues to raise concerns, it has become the most important to remain

transparent to the consumer on the same.

The studies show that 86% of consumers are worried about privacy of data and this may greatly affect their attitude to relationships with online brands (Kim and Ko 2012). Hence, providing a clear set of rules when it comes to data collection and making sure that user-created material is handled in an ethical manner protects not only the reputation of the brand, but also creates the spirit of trust into which the community is placed. By balancing consumer privacy and relying on the knowledge of UGC, a more secure environment can be created that will prompt participation and loyalty among the audiences, which will eventually boost their image in a more suspicious market environment (Sang and Nah 2022). Moreover, due to the tendency of brands to develop a more engaged, and loyal customer base by using UGC and the introduction of gamification techniques, the further development of the latter opens up a new opportunity to increase user engagement (Islam et al., 2018).

Using the game-like nature of the marketing campaign (reward upon sharing content or challenging to complete an interactive task) brands can gain a tremendous increase in the level of engagement in one way or another and, at the same time, can create a sense of belonging among users. This tactic will not only encourage engagement but also correlates with the studies that show that people are becoming more attracted to the brands that can provide them with an immersive experience (Smith, 2021). In addition, feedback functions and the ability to see the result of the action of consumers reinforces the relationships between consumers and the brand leading to the positive-reinforcement loop that leads to the increase of loyalty and advocacy. The force of gamification and data analytics in the formation of efficient stories which will engage all audiences and provide it with the attention will be critical in the current business environment (Zniva et al., 2023). The literature review will be on the issue of differences between emerging and traditional UGC, how the differences affect the perception of brand, and implication on consumer purchase intentions. The awareness of such dynamics is a prerequisite to the businesses that want to be in this dynamic and evolving digital world where consumers expect high levels of transparency and business ethical behaviors. Besides the specifics of UGC, the brands also need to think about the contribution of the communication with a community to the formation of consumer perceptions and loyalty (Xie et al., 2022).

With the development of digital platforms, creating an engaging community around a brand can enhance the effect of user-created content due to collaborative storytelling and shared experiences among consumers. Indicatively, brands that allow users to add their stories not only increase authenticity but also foster a feeling of belonging that is very powerful with the viewers (Bao, 2017). Moreover, the inclusion of the feedback loops in which consumers feel acknowledged and appreciated can also be a powerful tool to build trust and promote further involvement as researchers indicate that the engaged societies can be more

inclined to promote the brands they relate to at a personal level (Kumar et al., 2016). In this way, community-building efforts and UGC approaches become the key priorities of the brands that would like to succeed in an environment where consumer expectations and ethical standards are increased (Xi and Hamari, 2019). In addition, as the brands are developing more UGC strategies, which involve the value of community involvement, the implications of the audience diversity in the communities become an issue to be considered as well.

That customizing the content to appeal to the diverse demographic groups can create a more inclusive approach and expand the brand's target will create a fuller sense of belongingness in consumers. According to one of the studies, diversity in the marketing space results in an increase in consumer confidence and the intention to purchase to a significant extent (Smith, 2021). Responding to the appeal and the voices of different backgrounds and encouraging them can make the brands create more complex story-telling that reflects on the complexity of their observers and ultimately lead to the creation of longer emotional attachment and loyalty (Timoshenko and Hauser 2019). It is a minor trick that reminds that cultural background and tastes are obligatory to build the real relationships in an era when genuineness is the primary factor (Chuang, 2020). It will dig deep into the existing models and theories of influencer marketing, and will highlight the key conclusions of the past studies that form the contemporary practice. This section will also identify literature gaps that will be addressed by conducting additional research to understand how the issue of ethics can be integrated into technological advances in the marketing industry (Naeem and Ozuem 2021). Moreover, the case studies will be examined to give the examples of the successful implementations of the ethical influencer marketing strategies that imply how the brands have managed to balance the given issues and retain consumer trust and activations. In the context of the brands being on their way to the world of UGCs and influencer collaborations, an additional feature to consider is a social listening that can shape the strategies of the former (Sang and Nah 2022).

Through maintaining a proactive watch on the consumer forums on the different digital platforms, the brands would be well placed to obtain superior data on the customer sentiments and preferences, and they would be in a position to respond to the arising patterns and pitfalls. Numerous beneficial effects of this positive interaction are that besides enhancing brand authenticity, it fosters a sense of a community, as it makes consumers feel heard and valued as part of the brand narrative (Varadainy et al., 2024). Further, when the feedback loops where the customers can see their response on the product development or the marketing campaign are included, the loyalty and advocacy can be strengthened, making the customers become passionate fans of the brand. The research claimed that the brands that aim at such interactive interactions are better placed to build a long-term relationship with its audience that will ultimately lead to successive growth in an

environment that is continuously becoming more competitive.

It is not only a strategy that will create a loyal customer base, but it also leads to innovation since brands will be able to change their products to suit changing consumer needs and tastes in a better way. This can be achieved by promoting a culture of cooperation and transparency, which will help the brands to build an atmosphere where the consumers feel free to offer suggestions and ideas, which will further improve the relationship that exists between the brand and the audience. This synergy does not only help in achieving customer satisfaction but also comes up with valuable insights that may be used to inform future marketing strategies and product development. These insights would assist the brands to determine the upcoming trend and predict any changes in consumer behaviour, so that the brands are ahead of the curve and they will have competitive advantage in their industry. This is proactive and not only builds customer loyalty but also leads to innovation whereby brands can use the feedback on customers to improve the current product and also to come up with new solutions that appeal to the customers. With UGC strategies continually evolving by brands, no greater role can be played by cross-platform consistency. Having a consistent brand message on different social media platforms would strengthen the identity, as well as building trust among consumers using a number of touchpoints (Kumar, 2016). Studies have established that when brands portray consistent messages and images, they have higher chances of creating loyalty and recognition in diverse segments of audience (Coll & Micó, 2019).

Moreover, with the growing saturation of digital channels, it is essential to stand out with genuine narratives; the brands that successfully incorporate user-generated narratives into the general lines of the marketing campaign will be able to create a memorable experience and create a strong impact on the audience. Such alignment of strategies prompts members of the community to share their own stories, increasing the level of engagement and, at the same time, adding to an extensive array of brand-related content which represents diverse consumer attitudes (Bowden and Mirzaei, 2021). Finally, focusing on cross-channel coherence and the real engagement initiatives, the brands will be able to overcome the difficulties of the current market expectations and establish themselves in the highly competitive market segment.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Theory of Planned Behaviour argues that attitude towards a behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence the intention of an individual to engage in a behaviour. This theory can offer some insight into how customer attitudes to UGC and influencer relationships influence their intentions to purchase in terms of branding (Maryam et al., 2022). It has been demonstrated that the brand image and reputation may be built using the assistance of positive consumer attitudes toward UGC that may be produced with the help of credible and identifiable content. By exploiting the strength of TPB, brands can

create their own marketing campaigns that will stimulate the development of positive attitudes towards their products as a result of the targeted UGC campaigns (Panjaitan and Cahya 2025). Also, information regarding subjective norms, what is supported by peers and influencers, can make brands find the right influencers whose values may align with the target audience. Such alignment has the potential to enhance perceived behavioural control because consumers will feel more empowered to make informed buying behaviour due to the credible peer opinion to base their behaviour on (WU et al., 2020). Therefore, the application of TPB to the marketing strategies can aid brands to promote positive consumer attitudes, brand reputation, and eventually purchase intentions (Sun 2020). With brands using the strength of psychological theory to perfect their marketing approach, they should also be aware of the ethical aspects to consider with the influence relationships and UGC. As an example, it is found out that high engagement rates are attractive, but they do not necessarily result in long-term loyalty when authenticity is lost. Thus, there is a need to balance data-informed benefits with a sense of ethical responsibility that should guide a brand, i.e. such that their communication choices are grounded in actual consumer values and have an influence on meaningful relationships (Dangi, 2022). The formation of such relationships demands a consistent process of listening to consumer insights and adjusting to evolving plans and provide an environment where consumers feel appreciated and heard (Al- Mu'ani et al., 2023).

The Theory of Reasoned Action which focuses on the mediation of intentions between attitudes and behaviours. TRA can be used to explain the process in which consumers form consumer intentions, which is determined by their attitudes towards UGC and the perceived social pressure by their social network (Panjaitan and Cahya 2025). With the TRA, a brand is able to determine the effects of the positive UGC on consumer attitudes and, therefore, purchase intentions. As an example, consumers tend to get a positive attitude towards the brand when they see positive reviews or testimonials made by their peers, and this may cause more people to purchase an item (Nomi & Sabbir 2020). Also, brands could use TRA to find social influencers with the ability to influence consumer attitudes and intentions with authentic interactions. This strategic fit has the potential to build brand image and create a loyal customer base filling a gap in the literature on the effect of social factors in consumer behaviour. The significance of data analytics in the analysis of consumer behaviour is critical as brands continue to use psychological theories to work out their marketing strategies (Effendi et al., 2021). Through the use of more advanced analytics solutions, brands will understand how consumers interact with UGC and influencer content more, given that more customized behaviors can be created that will have a personal appeal. Furthermore, according to study, it is possible to integrate machine learning algorithms, which will forecast upcoming trends according to the past consumer behaviors, therefore, enabling the brands to be proactive in updating their strategies even before the market shifts take place

(Panjaitan & Cahya 2025).

Social Cognitive Theory focuses on the interaction of the personal, behavioural and environmental factors in influencing individual behaviour. In particular, this theory may become useful when it comes to grasping how consumers interact with UGC and content by influencers, which, in their turn, can affect their intentions to make a purchase (Li and Hua 2022). This feeling of community brings more intimacy to the brand and the audience and eventually results in more loyalty and promotion as the consumer feels a sense of investment into the brand story. SCT implies that through observation and imitation consumers learn and model behaviors. The interplay between brands and influencers who are authentic representatives of the brand produces a space where consumers are able to see positive behaviours related to the brand. This modelling has the potential to improve brand image and reputation because consumers will see the brand as someone they can relate to and as a brand

they trust (Su et al., 2023). In addition, SCT puts emphasis on the aspect of self-efficacy- consumer confidence in their capacity to interact with the brand. One way of how brands can build self-efficacy is through the provision of interactive UGC content (e.g. augmented reality experiences) that allow consumers to participate in the brand story. This empowerment would be able to substantially increase the intentions to purchase, which would help bridge the gap in the literature concerning the role of consumer self-efficacy in the UGC and brand engagement context (Bludo et al., 2023). The real-life examples of the use of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Theory of Reasoned Action, and Social Cognitive Theory provide helpful ideas on the ways brands could improve their image and reputation with the help of the strategic marketing campaigns based on UGC and influencer partnerships. This review helps to understand the significance of considering psychological theories in marketing strategies to explain consumer behaviour by filling the gaps in the current literature (Chen et al., 2021).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used mixed-method research design, in which quantitative surveys analyzed by using PLS-SEM, but the qualitative semi-structured interviews will be conducted to explore the influence of traditional and emerging UGC on the brand image, brand reputation and purchase intent in the FMCG sector. Through the purposive sampling technique which is supported by the G+ power and Raosoft estimates, the sampling is carried out on the 150 consumers in the Delhi NCR area. According to Krejcie & Morgan (1970), a sample size of 150 is considered adequate for a population size of 375. The primary data gathered by the use of a structured questionnaire that will utilize a five-point Likert scale, and secondary data will be obtained through academic and industrial resources. Validity of measurement is maintained by use of factor loading, AVE and Fornell-Larcker, and reliability is measured using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Quantitative data is evaluated with the help of SmartPLS, and qualitative

concepts are examined with the help of thematic analysis to reflect emotional and cultural forces on UGC engagement.

**Research Questions**

- I. What is the impact of Traditional User-Generated Content (TUGC) on brand image and brand reputation in the FMCG sector?
- II. How do brand image and brand reputation influence consumer purchase intentions in the FMCG industry?
- III. How does Emerging User-Generated Content (EUGC) moderate the relationship between TUGC and brand image and brand reputation?
- IV. What role do cultural and demographic variables play in shaping consumer responses to UGC in the FMCG sector?
- V. How do emotional resonance and authenticity in UGC influence consumer trust and brand loyalty

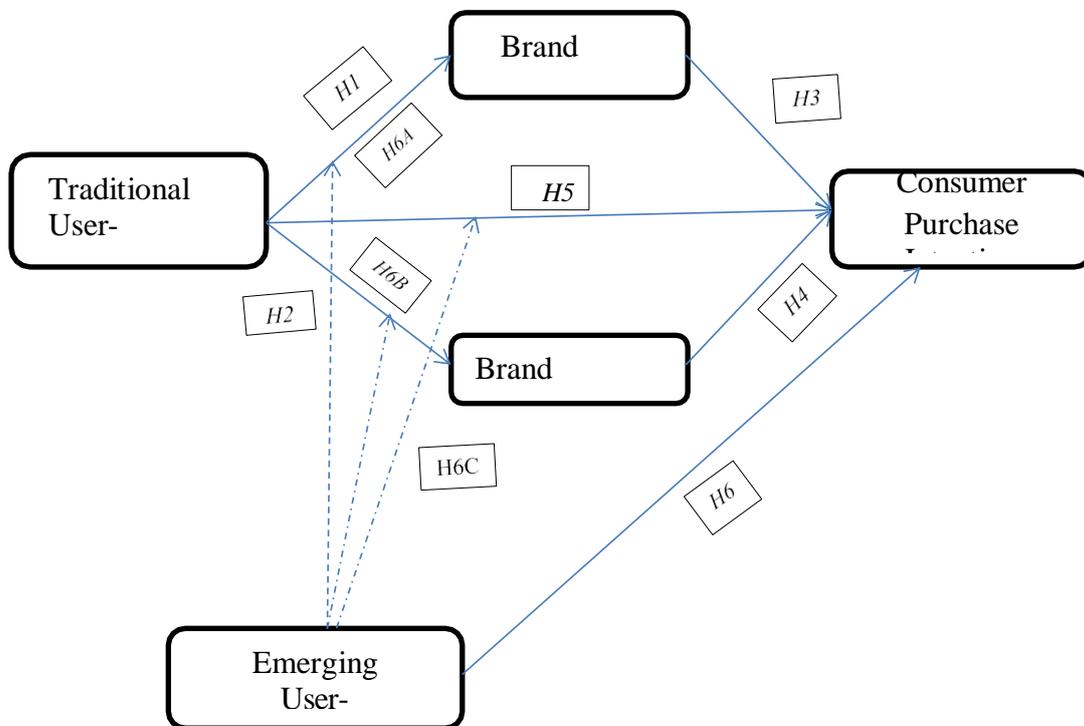
across different demographic segments?

**Research Objective**

- a) To understand the influence of Traditional user-generated content on brand image and brand reputation.
- b) To analyse the moderating effect of Emerging User-Generated Content on the Traditional User-Generated Content and brand-related outcomes, including brand image, brand reputation.
- c) To evaluate the moderating effect of emerging user-generated content on the relationship between traditional user-generated content and consumer purchase intention.
- d) To synthesize the impact of emerging user-generated content on consumer purchase intention.

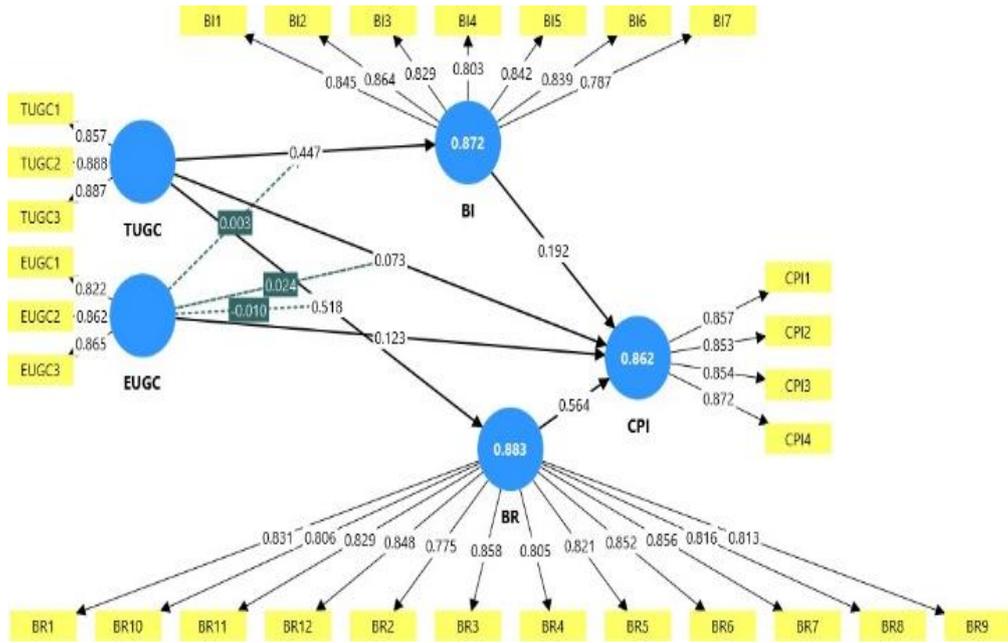
**Research Hypothesis**

- ❖ H1: Traditional user-generated content positively influences Brand Image.
- ❖ H2: Traditional user-generated content positively influences Brand Reputation.
- ❖ H3: Brand Image positively mediates the relationship between Traditional UGC and Consumer Purchase Intention.
- ❖ H4: Brand Reputation positively mediates the relationship between Traditional UGC and Consumer Purchase Intention.
- ❖ H5: Traditional user-generated content has a direct positive effect on Consumer Purchase Intention.
- ❖ H6: Emerging User-Generated Content has a direct positive effect on Consumer Purchase Intention.
- ❖ H6A: Emerging UGC positively moderates the relationship between Traditional UGC and Brand Image.
- ❖ H6B: Emerging UGC positively moderates the relationship between Traditional UGC and Brand Reputation.
- ❖ H6C: Emerging UGC positively moderates the relationship between Traditional UGC and Consumer Purchase Intention.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model**

**RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS**



**Figure 2: Smart PLS Model**

The measurement and structural model result gives evidence of high reliability, validity and meaning among the constructs. The factor loadings of the Traditional UGC (TUGC), Emerging UGC (EUGC), Brand Image (BI), Brand Reputation (BR) and Consumer Purchase Intention

(CPI) are all above the acceptable level of convergent validity of 0.70. The construct reliability is high as all latent variable scores are high (BI = 0.850, BR = 0.871, CPI = 0.871). TUGC and EUGC indicate significant positive effects on BI, BR, and CPI on both models, although EUGC has slightly stronger paths, which suggests its increasing impact on the development of consumer perceptions. BI has a positive effect on CPI as well, and BR has a more prominent effect, which indicates that reputation is a vital mediating variable. The model in general is a strong PLS-SEM model in which UGC, particularly newer UGC forms, have a considerable positive impact on brand perceptions and purchase intentions in the FMCG industry.

**Table 1: R-square Table**

Constructs	R-square	R-square adjusted
<b>BI</b>	0.850	0.849
<b>BR</b>	0.871	0.870
<b>CPI</b>	0.871	0.870

The results of the R-squared show that the model has a high explanatory power in all three dependent constructs. Brand Image (BI) has an R-Squared of 0.850, indicating that 85 percent of its variance is represented by Traditional UGC (TUGC) and Emerging UGC (EUGC), which is a very predictive model. The value of R-square of Brand Reputation (BR) is also high at 0.871, which implies that it is highly influenced by the UGC constructs, and thus 87.1% of its variance is accounted by the constructs. On the same note, Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI) has an R-Squared of 0.871 indicating that the joint impact of BI, BR, TUGC, and EUGC has an explanation of 87.1% of its variation. The adjusted R-Squared values are almost the same, indicating that the model is stable and it is not overfit hence proving that the predictors have a significant explanatory power in the FMCG.

**Table 2: F-square Table**

Constructs	BI	BR	CPI	EUGC	TUGC
<b>BI</b>			0.078		
<b>BR</b>			0.135		
<b>CPI</b>					
<b>EUGC</b>	0.453	0.446	0.016		
<b>TUGC</b>	0.499	0.703	0.020		

The effect-size findings show the relative contribution that each predictor has on its dependent construct. Emerging UGC (EUGC) has a moderate impact on Brand Image (BI) ( $f^2 = 0.453$ ) and Brand Reputation (BR) ( $f^2 = 0.446$ ), which means that the emergent forms of consumer content have a significant impact on how consumers can see brand image and brand reputation. The stronger influence of traditional UGC (TUGC) is observed, especially on BR ( $f^2 = 0.703$ ), which is a significant effect,

and a moderate effect on BI ( $f^2 = 0.499$ ), which indicates that traditional user content continues to have a strong impact on brand appraisals. The two types of UGC, however, have insignificant effect sizes on Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI), with the values of 0.016 and 0.020, respectively indicating that although UGC has a significant impact on the image and reputation perceptions, it affects purchase intention indirectly, meaning, through BI and BR. On the whole, these findings indicate that UGC has a strong boosting effect on brand-related perceptions but rather affects consumer intentions via mediation channels.

**Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity Table**

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
BI	0.925	0.925	0.939	0.689
BR	0.956	0.956	0.961	0.674
CPI	0.868	0.869	0.910	0.716
EUGC	0.812	0.813	0.888	0.726
TUGC	0.843	0.845	0.906	0.762

The reliability and validity indicators reveal that all the constructs in the model have a high internal consistency and convergent validation. The values of Cronbach alpha of BI (0.925), BR (0.956), CPI (0.868), EUGC (0.812) and TUGC (0.843) are all over the specified value (0.70), which indicates the presence of high reliability. This conclusion is further supported by composite reliability ( $\rho_c$ ) values, whereby the values vary between 0.888 and 0.961, which is high consistency between indicators. All constructs AVE scores, including those of BI (0.689), BR (0.674), CPI (0.716), EUGC (0.726), and TUGC (0.762), are more than 0.50 which indicates a high convergent validity and shows that the constructs account for the majority of variance and not error. All in all, the measurement model is statistically sound, reliable and valid to do more structural analysis.

**Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Matrix Table**

Constructs	BI	BR	CPI	EUGC	TUGC
BI					
BR	<b>0.993</b>				
CPI	<b>1.015</b>	<b>1.009</b>			
EUGC	<b>1.015</b>	<b>1.002</b>	<b>1.020</b>		
TUGC	<b>1.001</b>	<b>1.004</b>	<b>1.015</b>	<b>1.004</b>	

The VIF of all the constructs is within acceptable range which means that the model does not have multi collinearity. All VIF scores are near to 1- 0.993 to 1.020, which is much lower than the standard thresholds of 3.3 or 5. These findings substantiate the fact that the constructs of predictors (TUGC, EUGC, BI, BR) do not have problematic overlap and each of them helps the prediction of the dependent variables in a unique way. The VIF values are very low, implying that the model is very stable and that regression estimates are not inflated by multicollinearity. In general, the findings confirm that the structural paths in the model can be viewed as reliable without worrying about the repetition of predictors.

**Table 5: Fornell-Larcker Criteria Table**

Constructs	BI	BR	CPI	EUGC	TUGC
BI	0.830				
BR	0.934	0.821			
CPI	0.909	0.920	0.846		
EUGC	0.880	0.883	0.857	0.852	
TUGC	0.884	0.902	0.869	0.832	0.873

The results of the Fornell-Larcker criterion indicate high levels of discriminant validity when considering a particular construct, since the square root of AVE of any construct (indicated on the diagonal) is larger than the correlations of the constructs with other constructs. In the case of BI, the value of 0.830 is higher than its correlations with BR, CPI, EUGC, and TUGC and the value of BR of 0.821 is higher than its correlations with the related constructs. On the same note, CPI (0.846), EUGC (0.852), and TUGC (0.873) all show higher diagonal values when compared to their inter-construct correlations. This implies that all the constructs are empirically differentiated and assess a different theoretical concept. In general, the findings confirm the sufficiency of the measurement model and make sure that brand-related constructs and UGC dimensions cannot possibly overlap and instead are conceptually independent.

**Table 6: Cross Loadings Table**

Constructs	BI	BR	CPI	EUGC	TUGC
BI1	0.831	0.786	0.758	0.757	0.731

<b>BI2</b>	0.838	0.782	0.766	0.744	0.739
<b>BI3</b>	0.830	0.779	0.764	0.724	0.751
<b>BI4</b>	0.807	0.749	0.736	0.695	0.716
<b>BI5</b>	0.841	0.776	0.752	0.746	0.750
<b>BI6</b>	0.836	0.783	0.754	0.745	0.722
<b>BI7</b>	0.827	0.771	0.753	0.703	0.728
<b>BR1</b>	0.757	0.812	0.737	0.725	0.736
<b>BR10</b>	0.761	0.821	0.762	0.711	0.751
<b>BR11</b>	0.753	0.813	0.735	0.705	0.752
<b>BR12</b>	0.757	0.829	0.744	0.718	0.732
<b>BR2</b>	0.750	0.803	0.751	0.705	0.725
<b>BR3</b>	0.779	0.841	0.777	0.752	0.756
<b>BR4</b>	0.772	0.812	0.754	0.738	0.743
<b>BR5</b>	0.775	0.822	0.744	0.715	0.727
<b>BR6</b>	0.788	0.844	0.784	0.754	0.755
<b>BR7</b>	0.793	0.833	0.768	0.736	0.761
<b>BR8</b>	0.767	0.808	0.759	0.725	0.741
<b>BR9</b>	0.750	0.814	0.750	0.720	0.709
<b>CPI1</b>	0.789	0.811	0.853	0.752	0.759
<b>CPI2</b>	0.755	0.762	0.841	0.709	0.708
<b>CPI3</b>	0.767	0.758	0.841	0.723	0.716
<b>CPI4</b>	0.767	0.783	0.850	0.715	0.759
<b>EUGC1</b>	0.723	0.727	0.701	0.842	0.672
<b>EUGC2</b>	0.772	0.764	0.736	0.862	0.723
<b>EUGC3</b>	0.755	0.767	0.752	0.854	0.730
<b>TUGC1</b>	0.731	0.748	0.734	0.697	0.846
<b>TUGC2</b>	0.790	0.803	0.757	0.733	0.888
<b>TUGC3</b>	0.792	0.809	0.784	0.747	0.884

The cross-loadings mean strong discriminant validity where each indicator has the highest loads on its construct as compared to all the other constructs. Brand Image (BI) items always have the highest loadings on BI (between 0.807 and 0.841), which is higher than the correlation with BR, CPI, EUGC, and TUGC. On the same note, all Brand Reputation (BR) items score the highest on BR (0.803-0.844), which validates their difference. Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI) items exhibit the highest loadings on CPI (0.841-0.853) which implies a good separation of construct. Emerging UGC (EUGC) items have high loadings into EUGC (0.842–0.862) and Traditional UGC (TUGC) items have the highest loadings into TUGC (0.846-0.888). The trend indicates that no indicator scores more on an unintended construct, which confirms that every scale in the scale is assessing a distinct theoretical dimension. On the whole, the cross-loading findings are a good indication of the discriminant validity and justify the measurement model being sufficient to analyze the structure.

**Table 7: Collinearity Statistics (VIF) Table**

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>VIF</b>
<b>BI1</b>	2.426
<b>BI2</b>	2.501
<b>BI3</b>	2.426
<b>BI4</b>	2.201
<b>BI5</b>	2.532
<b>BI6</b>	2.544
<b>BI7</b>	2.417
<b>BR1</b>	2.551
<b>BR10</b>	2.698
<b>BR11</b>	2.580
<b>BR12</b>	2.803
<b>BR2</b>	2.477
<b>BR3</b>	2.892
<b>BR4</b>	2.560
<b>BR5</b>	2.711
<b>BR6</b>	3.011
<b>BR7</b>	2.845

<b>BR8</b>	2.510
<b>BR9</b>	2.657
<b>CPI1</b>	2.109
<b>CPI2</b>	2.047
<b>CPI3</b>	2.043
<b>CPI4</b>	2.105
<b>EUGC1</b>	1.742
<b>EUGC2</b>	1.835
<b>EUGC3</b>	1.765
<b>TUGC1</b>	1.818
<b>TUGC2</b>	2.199
<b>TUGC3</b>	2.135

The measure of multicollinearity at the indicator level shows that the levels are acceptable with all the VIF levels being below the acceptable level of 5 and majority of the values have a range of between 2.0 and 3.0. Brand Image (BI) items indicate moderate but acceptable collinearity as displayed by VIF values ranging between 2.201 and 2.544. Brand Reputation (BR) items are also slightly higher with VIFs of between 2.477 and 3.011, but again within permissible limits, which indicates that BR indicators are correlated, but not multicollinear. Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI) items have the least VIFs (2.043- 2.109) which indicates high stability and less redundancy. The emerging and Traditional UGC (EUGC and TUGC) items also exhibit low VIF (1.7422.199), a fact that supports the fact that the indicators are clean and independent. All in all, the values of VIF prove that all the measurement items have acceptable levels of multicollinearity, which proves the reliability and stability of the measurement model.

**Table 8: Model Fit table**

<b>Basis</b>	<b>Saturated model</b>	<b>Estimated model</b>
<b>SRMR</b>	0.032	0.039
<b>d_ ULS</b>	0.434	0.658
<b>d_ G</b>	0.418	0.475
<b>Chi-square</b>	833.746	894.996
<b>NFI</b>	0.916	0.910

The model fit measures reveal that the PLS-SEM model also shows a good fit in general. The saturated model (SRMR = 0.032) as well as the estimated model (SRMR = 0.039) have SRMR values that are far less than the suggested cutoff value of 0.08 and thus confirm a strong fit between the observed and the predicted correlations. The dULS and dG values, though a little larger in the estimated model, are within reason, showing no alarming differences in the empirical and model-implied covariance matrices. Both models (833.746 and 894.996) have appreciably large chi-square values which are sensitive to sample size but are not indicative of inadequateness of the model. The values of the NFI (0.916 and 0.910 respectively) are above the threshold of 0.90 and they portray satisfactory fit of the incremental. The indices in general attest to the fact that the proposed structural model is appropriate to fit the data and interpret it.

## DISCUSSION

The research adds to the existing body of knowledge as they support the main idea that user-generated content (UGC) plays a central role in defining brand-related results in the FMCG industry as has been highlighted previously in the literature regarding the increasing power of the digital consumer voice. As the reviewed studies point out, consumers are increasingly

relying on genuine peer-generated posts to assess brands in a market-saturated environment of traditional advertising (Jasmine and Fadillah, 2021; Li et al., 2021). It is stated that classic UGC, including reviews, testimonials, and consumer experiences, are a proven source of brand credibility, but the emergence of AI-enabled, interactive and influencer-based UGC has added new dimensions of emotional appeal and interest. According to scholars, such newer types of UGC make consumers more connected to brands through the experience of immersion, real-time communication, and targeted messaging, which enhances

perceptions of authenticity and community membership (Bao, 2017; Triono et al., 2021; Smith, 2023). The findings of this study appeal to theoretical concepts including the Theory of Planned Behavior that emphasizes the role of attitudes and subjective norms in influencing behavioural intentions and proposing that UGC affects consumers via social proof, perceived relatability, and observational learning (Ajzen, 1991; Bandura, 1986). Thus, the research confirms the thesis that UGC is not some auxiliary communication but one of the fundamental processes with the help of which consumers develop an evaluation of the brand image, reputation, and the relational meaning in general.

The study contributes to the literature expanding the scope of the literature by shedding some light on the subtle interaction between the traditional and emerging UGC- a field that scholars have been paying increased attention to in the recent past as a necessary area of understanding the new consumer behaviour. Recent debates in the literature

emphasize that emerging UGC, such as AI-curated content, influencer relationships, and engaging media formats, moderately increase the reach, relevance, and emotional influence of traditional consumer narratives (Iswari and Afriliana, 2022; Johnson, 2023). Because consumers are demanding more transparency, customization, and ethical interaction with brands, newly developed UGC provides a channel through which companies can be responsive and inclusive, and make brand messages relevant to the changing consumer expectations (Williams, 2023; Xi and Hamari, 2019). Moreover, the literature emphasizes the relevance of community-building and social listening, in that the more a brand creates active communities online, the higher the chances of building trust, loyalty, and returning relationships (Varadainy et al., 2024; Kumar, 2024). These discussions are closely related to the study puts much emphasis on the importance of emotional resonance, ethical communication, and the participatory culture to enhance the efficacy of UGC. In this perspective, UGC is not only a tool of communication but a strategic resource that determines social identity, and creates a sense of belonging and behavioural intentions. The study thus places UGC traditional and emerging as a key component in the development of contemporary brand storytelling, both to add to the overall theoretical insights and provide viable solutions to the brands in need of a competitive edge in an ever more digital FMCG environment.

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that both conventional and new user-created content is critical in influencing perception in consumers in the FMCG industry. In this study, the researchers determine the relevance of real consumer voice, the interactivity of digital expressions, and social-constructed narratives to the other during the assessment and trust of brands. Amid insights into behavioural theories and available literature, the research points out that UGC is

no longer a less significant marketing content but a key contributor to the brand meaning, consumer-relationship value, and consumer engagement. This may be corroborated by a short overview of the structural model showing that traditional and emerging UGC is a good predictor of brand image, brand reputation and consumer purchase intention with emerging UGC enhancing the impact of such correlations. These results confirm the strategic importance of UGC as a powerful instrument that has the capability of causing consumers to mature attitudes, draw social insights, and create sensitivities to brand-related actions.

Within the study, a comprehensive understanding of the impact of UGC on the success of the brand is provided since it elicits cognitive, emotional and social functions of UGC in consumer decision making. It highlights the fact that brands which must operate in increasingly digital environments are obliged to be more participatory because they are aware that consumers are creating brand sense by establishing the meaning of a brand in collaboration, articulation and experience. The current UGC must be built on credibility and trust, and the new UGC enhances

interaction, personalization, and immersive content, all of which constitute an entire communication ecosystem that adds to the brand force to a significant extent.

## Limitations of the study

The study also constraints on the sample size; 375 respondents based in the Delhi NCR region, this could limit the ability to generalize the results to wider FMCG markets. The use of self-reported data can bring bias in the response, and the cross-sectional nature of the study does not allow making conclusions about the long-term behavioural patterns. Also, the research is narrowed down to the brands of FMCGs, which do not represent the diversity in the sector entirely. The emergent UGC moderating effect was studied in a particular digital setting, which did not make it applicable to any fast-paced platform and technology outside the scope of the study.

## Implications of the study

The study offers the major insights about the application of UGC by the FMCG brands interested in the improvement of consumer relationships. Conventional UGC is important in creating trust whereas emerging UGC improves interaction by the use of personalized and interactive experiences. The insights can help brands create culturally-oriented, emotionally-charged communication plans that can lead to increased consumer loyalty. The results also indicate that companies need to invest in social listening, influencer partnerships, and artificial intelligence-based content curation in order to achieve the optimal UGC performance. Also, knowledge of the mediating roles of brand image and reputation can assist the marketer to devise campaigns that convert consumer interest into higher purchase intentions. However, the study also constraints on the population size of 375 respondents based in the Delhi NCR region, which could limit the ability to generalize the results to wider FMCG markets.

## Future Research Directions

The geographical scope would be increased in future studies and larger and more diverse samples taken to make it more generalized. Longitudinal research could provide more information regarding the impacts of UGC on brand perception in the long term, particularly with the rapid development of digital platforms. New moderating mechanisms might be found in the further investigation of new UGC forms, including AR-based content or live-stream commerce, or AI-generated reviews. Another way that researchers can study cross-cultural differences when it comes to UGC responses is to seek to learn more about global consumer behaviour. Also, in the future, psychological constructs like trust, emotional attachment, or digital literacy might be incorporated into the research to advance theoretical knowledge on the UGC-based brand engagement.

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