



"Mediating Effect of Brand Loyalty on Viral Marketing and Consumer Purchase Intention towards Cosmetic Products - An Investigation in Agartala City"

Nabaraj Bhowmik^{1*}, Dr. Dipangshu Dev Chowdhury²

^{1*}Ph.D. Research Scholar, Faculty of Management and Commerce, ICFAI University Tripura, e-mail- nabarajbhowmik@gmail.com

²Assistant professor, Faculty of Management and Commerce, ICFAI University Tripura, e-mail- ddchoudhury@iutripura.edu.in

Citation: Bhowmik, N. and Dev Chowdhury, D. (2024). "Mediating Effect of Brand Loyalty on Viral Marketing and Consumer Purchase Intention towards Cosmetic Products - An Investigation in Agartala City", *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(2), 1730-1736. Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i2.3470

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the interplay between viral marketing, brand loyalty, and consumer purchase intention towards cosmetic products in Agartala, India. The research adopts a simple random sampling method to gather data from a sample size of 300 participants. Following the Baron and Kenny model for mediation analysis, the study utilizes SPSS 20 for multiple linear regression. The results uncover a partial mediation effect, indicating that brand loyalty partially mediates the relationship between viral marketing and purchase intention among consumers in Agartala. This emphasizes how important brand loyalty is in influencing customer behavior in the cosmetics industry. By elucidating this mediation mechanism, the study enriches understanding of consumer decision-making processes within the context of viral marketing in Agartala. Moreover, it offers actionable insights for marketers aiming to optimize their strategies in the region's cosmetics industry. This study offers insightful information specifically suited to the Agartala market, aiding in the creation of successful local marketing plans.

Keywords: Viral Marketing, Purchase Intention, Cosmetic Products, Mediation analysis, Baron and Kenny

Introduction

Viral marketing is a dynamic approach employed by associations to unfold their communication fleetly through expression-of-mouth and digital sharing. Viral advertising has surfaced as an important approach in the ultramodern-day outlook of advertising and retailing. Using the interconnectedness of the digital world, viral marketing pretensions spread communication fleetly through word-of-mouth and social sharing, constantly propelled via engaging and shareable content material. In this research, we will claw into the dynamics of viral advertising, exploring its mechanisms, effectiveness, and counteraccusations for ultramodern-day marketing. At the coronary heart of viral marketing lies viral happiness—the fabric that captures interest, resonates with the target followership, and compels them to partake in it with others. This material may be presented in several ways, such as entertaining movies, funny memes, thought-provoking articles, and eerie artwork. The crucial function of viral content is its capacity to rouse sturdy feelings or responses, egging individualities to proportion it inside their social circles, thereby amplifying its reach exponentially. But creating virally happy material by an individual is not enough for a megahit crusade. Strategic dispersion and modification also play critical roles. Entrepreneurs frequently hire focused seeding tactics to start, pitching the material to powerful individuals or organizations that might spread it far enough. Social media platforms, with their huge crowd bases and participating functionalities, function as a rich bottom for sowing viral happy material, permitting it to spread suddenly across networks. Likewise, the connected nature of online groups allows content to attain areas of interest cult with participant interests, easing natural virality within specific demographics or more. This centred approach complements the probability of engagement and sharing, maximizing the crusade's effect and effectiveness. Within the realm of marketing, viral advertising offers stupendous blessings over traditional procedures. Not like traditional classified advertisements, which can be perceived as protrusive or disruptive, viral content is freely ate up and participated in by guests, fostering a sense of authenticity and acceptance as true. By aligning with the pastimes and values of their target followers, brands can domesticate meaningful connections and foster hallmark advocacy, ultimately driving purchaser fidelity and engagement. Also, viral marketing can yield

large cost and fiscal savings as compared to standard advertising and marketing channels. With social media platforms furnishing free or low-value distribution channels, manufacturers can attain great hype without the hefty rate markers associated with television classified advertisements or print commercials. Start-ups and small businesses may now compete on a level playing field with large corporations because of the globalization of marketing, given that they can create engaging and viral content. Brand loyalty is the biased behavior response expressed over time by some decision-making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands and is a function of psychological processes (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978). Brand loyalty can also be described as "a profound dedication to purchase or advertise a preferred product or service consistently in the future, which leads to repetitive same-brand or same-brand-set purchasing, regardless of situational influences and marketing efforts having the possibility to cause transitioning behavior" (Oliver, 1999).

Review of literature

Liu and Wang (2019), in their study on interrelationships between viral marketing and purchase intention via customer-based brand equity, have used customer-based brand equity to investigate the links between purchase intention and viral marketing. The study discovered that while just receiving a viral marketing message might have a negative impact on both brand equity and purchase intentions, engaging with such communications is crucial for favorably influencing both. Additionally, the detrimental impact of message reception on customer purchase intentions can be mitigated by adding brand equity as a mediator.

The influence of viral marketing on purchase intention as mediated by consumer behavior was examined by Fitriani et al. in 2022. This study aimed to determine the impact of viral marketing on purchase intention mediated by consumer behavior (Study on TikTok User Management Students at Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya University). The study has involved 141 respondents, and the data analysis has been done using the Smart PLS 3.0 application. The research carried out demonstrated that viral marketing strongly and positively affects both consumer behavior and purchase intention.

Rosyihuddin et al. (2022) investigated the influence of viral marketing and product innovation on repurchase intentions through the mediation of purchase decisions and focused on exploring the influence of viral marketing and product innovation on repurchase intentions through the mediation of purchase decisions within the framework of conventional MSME products in Indonesia. The study emphasized structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis with the assistance of Smart PLS software to analyze the data. The study finds that while product innovation and viral marketing directly affect consumers' decisions to buy, the effect on their desire to repurchase is little.

Using brand image as a mediating variable, Indahsari et al. (2023) looked into the impact of electronic word-of-mouth and online advertising on purchase intention. The study aimed to examine the effect of online advertising and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) on brand image, which in turn had an impact on purchase intention for local cosmetic products in Indonesia. The study involved 210 respondents, and the data has been analyzed with structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS 26 software, which concludes that online advertising and E-WOM had a positive effect on brand image and purchase intention.

Research on Trust Mediates Channel Integration and Viral Advertising in Repurchase Purpose Gold Saving Products was conducted by Tampubolon et al. in 2023. The investigation was targeted to determine and observe the indirect effects of purchaser belief, integration channels, and viral marketing on repurchase purposes. 170 respondents were involved, where the record's evaluation has been accomplished with the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis technique and structure measurements have been done through smart-PLS 3. The author indicates that omnichannel and viral advertising strongly influence consumers' beliefs and intentions to repurchase, and that trust can operate as a mediator between these marketing channels and customers' repurchase intentions.

Methodology

This study looked at the mediating effect of brand loyalty had on purchase intention and viral marketing, with 300 inhabitants of Agartala participating. Information on these traits has been acquired using a standardized questionnaire. First, the participant's responses and demographic details were examined using descriptive statistics. The following included figuring out the means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages for all the variables. Next, the Statistical Package for Social Scientists version 20 software has been used to execute hierarchical regression analysis. In this study, purchase intention is the dependent variable, while viral marketing is the independent variable. The mediating variable has been introduced as brand loyalty. As control factors, the study also included demographic information such as income, gender, and age. The residents of Agartala had access to the well-structured questionnaire, and every effort was made to guarantee the reliability and correctness of the results throughout the whole data collection procedure. Initial analyses

were done on the collected data to find and fix misfits and values that were not present. Following pre-processing, multiple regression analysis was performed to look at the relationships between the variables. Using the Sobel test method, the mediator's effect's magnitude was assessed. Throughout the research process, strict measures were taken to uphold ethical standards, such as obtaining participants' agreement and safeguarding the confidentiality of their responses. Using an emphasis on the Baron and Kenny model, this research used multiple regression analysis and descriptive statistics using SPSS 20 (Baron and Kenny, 1986). This model offered a systematic approach to examining the relationship between the enthusiasm, purchase intentions, and viral marketing of Agartala consumers.

Research question

Brand loyalty mediates the impact of viral marketing on consumer purchase intention?

The study has accounted for brand loyalty as the mediating variable, and to check its impact on overall viral marketing and purchase intention, the average value of the determinants of viral marketing and purchase intention has been calculated.

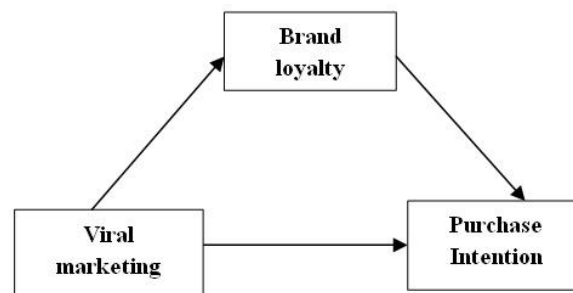


Figure1 - Conceptual Model
Source- Authors compilation

Analysis and Discussion

According to Table 1, out of the 300 respondents, 79% are in the 20–30 age range, which is the highest age bracket among all respondents. This is followed by 7.67% of attendees in the under-20 age bracket, 6.67% of attendees in the 30–40 age bracket, and 2.67% of attendees in the 40–50 demographic. Interestingly, 4% of respondents are in the above-50 age group, and 2.67% of participants are in the 40–50 age group. Highest level of educational attainment is secondary education which accounted for 12% of the attendees; master's degree, which accounted for 8% of the attendees; other degrees, including a Ph.D., which accounted for 2.67% of the attendees; and primary level education, which accounted for 0.67% of the attendees.

Table-1: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptives	Parameters	Numbers (% values)
Age	Less than 20	23(7.67)
	20-30	237(79)
	30-40	20(6.67)
	40-50	8(2.67)
	above 50	12(4)
	Total	300(100)
Gender	Male	179(59.67)
	Female	121(40.33)
	Total	300(100)
Educational Level	Primary	2(0.67)
	Secondary	36(12)
	Bachelor degree	222(74)
	Masters	24(8)
	Ph.D.	8(2.67)
	Others	8(2.67)
	Total	300(100)
Employment Status	Unemployed	28(9.33)
	Govt. Employee	26(8.67)
	Private Employee	41(13.67)
	Business	28(9.33)
	Student	177(59)
	Total	300(100)

Monthly Income	Family	10,000-20,000	76(25.33)
		20,000-30,000	135(45)
		30,000-40,000	22(7.33)
		40,000-50,000	20(6.67)
		above 50,000	47(15.67)
		Total	300(100)

Source: Calculated and compiled from primary data

Additionally, the table lists the 300 respondents' demographics: 59% are students, followed by 13.67% private employees, 9.33% unemployed people, 9.33% business owners, and 8.67% government employees. These numbers suggest that the viral marketing of cosmetic products has a big impact on bachelor's degree students, likely because of the digital influence among them, which is then followed by other respondents with varying levels of education and employment status. The table indicates that, of the 300 respondents, 45% have a monthly household income of between 20,000 and 30,000 rupees. This is followed by 25.33% who have a monthly family income between Rs. (10,000–20,000), 15.67% who have a monthly family income above Rs. 50,000, 7.33% who have a family income each month between Rs. (30,000–40,000), and Rs. (40,000–50,000) for 6.67% of the respondents.

Table 2 – Descriptive statistics

Sl. No.	Parameters	Mean	Median	SD	Max	Min
1	Consuming and sharing viral messages are enjoyable	2.5	2	1.18	1	5
2	Consuming and sharing viral marketing messages are entertaining	3.23	3	0.82	1	5
3	Viral marketing communications offer useful product information.	3.16	3	1.34	1	5
4	Viral marketing messages provide me with timely information	3.32	3	0.93	1	5
5	Viral marketing messages are a reliable source of current product knowledge.	3.41	3	0.92	1	5
6	I trust viral marketing messages	3.07	3	0.92	1	5
7	Will try if a product went viral on social media.	3.36	4	0.98	1	5
8	I would give a try a cosmetic product that I learned about through viral marketing communications.	3.27	3	0.93	1	5
9	I would invest in a cosmetic product after knowing of it via viral marketing communications if I spotted it in stores.	3.42	3	0.93	1	5
10	Upon knowing about a cosmetic product through viral marketing campaigns, I'll actively look for it to buy.	3.24	3	0.99	1	5
11	If a viral marketing campaign promised me incentives for purchasing the product, I would purchase a cosmetic product.	3.29	3	1.01	1	5

Source: Calculated and compiled from primary data

The primary statistical method used in SPSS (Version 20) to estimate the path analysis was hierarchical regression analysis. The steps for conducting the mediation analysis were also as described by Baron and Kenny (1986), namely: (a) the independent variable significantly predicts the dependent variable; (b) the independent variable significantly predicts the mediator variable; (c) the mediator variable significantly affects the dependent variable; and (d) the dependent variable is regressed on both variables (the mediator and the independent variable); the mediator significantly predicts the dependent variable, whereas the predictive utility of the independent variable is reduced.

H₁: Viral marketing significantly predicts Purchase Intention

The following table illustrates that because the p-value is smaller than 0.05 for the VM, it can be stated that there is a noticeable connection between the VM and PI that satisfies the first condition of the Baron and Kenny model of mediation (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

Table 3- Coefficient table linear regression between PI and VM

Model				Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
				Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.173	0.174	-	12.505	0.000
	VM	0.340	0.052	0.351	6.478	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: PI (Purchase Intension)

Source- Calculated and compiled from primary data**H₂** : VM significantly predicts the BL

Given that the p value is smaller than 0.05, the table illustrates the VM; therefore, one may say that there is a strong connection between BL and VM that satisfies the second condition of the Baron and Kenny model of mediation (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

Table 4- Coefficient table linear regression Viral marketing and Brand loyalty

Model				Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
				Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.364	0.223		10.581	0.000
	VM	0.239	0.067	0.202	3.552	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: BL (Brand loyalty)

Source- Calculated and compiled from primary data**H₃** : Brand loyalty variable significantly affects the Purchase Intention

From this table, it can be identified that, for the BL, the significance level is less than 0.05. Consequently, it may be claimed that there is a substantial relationship between brand loyalty and purchase intention that satisfies the third condition of the Baron and Kenny model of mediation (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

Table 5- Coefficient table linear regression between PI and BL

Model				Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
				Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.815	0.126		14.366	0.000
	Brand loyalty	0.464	0.039	0.570	11.968	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Source- Calculated and compiled from primary data**H₄**: PI is significantly regressed on both BL and VM.

In this table, two models are highlighted, where the first model highlights the regression between VM and PI, which depicts the significant p-value, and the R square value is 15.5%. Furthermore, in the second model, when brand loyalty has been accounted for as the mediating variable for PI and VM, it can be depicted that there is a change in R square of 24%.

Table 6- Model Summary of multiple linear regression between Purchase intention, VM and BL

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.393	0.155	0.152	0.64622	0.155	54.539	1	298	0.000
2	.628	0.395	0.391	0.54776	0.240	117.756	1	297	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), VM

b. Predictors: (Constant), VM, BL

Source- Calculated and compiled from primary data

Based on Table 7, it is evident that the association exists because the p-value for the VM when regressed with PI is less than 0.05 between BL and VM. Moreover, when the mediating variable BL is introduced in the second model, the significant mediation due to the BL on the VM and PI can be identified since the p-value is below 0.05, which satisfies the fourth condition of the Baron and Kenny model for mediation (Baron and

Kenny, 1986). However, according to this model, if the p-value for all the variables in both models in multiple regression stands <0.05 , then there is partial mediation due to the mediating variable. Therefore, in this table, it can be stated that there is partial mediation due to the mediating variable, i.e., brand loyalty.

Table 7 - Table of coefficients for multiple linear regression between Purchase intention and VM and BL

Model				Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
				Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.173	0.174		12.505	0.000		
	VM	0.340	0.052	0.351	6.478	0.000	1.000	1.000
2	(Constant)	1.172	0.171		6.846	0.000		
	VM	0.238	0.045	0.247	5.298	0.000	0.959	1.042
	BL	0.423	0.038	0.520	11.175	0.000	0.959	1.042

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Source- Calculated and compiled from primary data

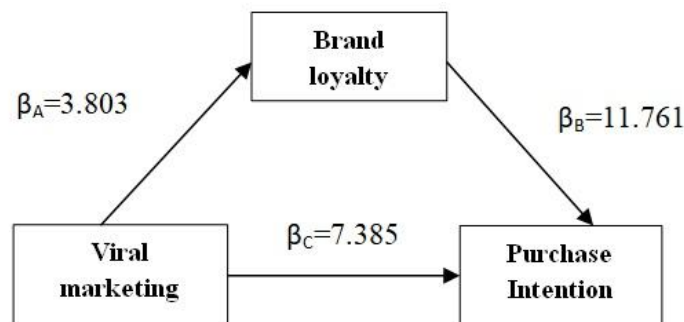


Figure 2 -Beta values from linear regression

Source- Authors compilation

In a mediation analysis, the significance of a mediation effect may be ascertained statistically using the Sobel test. By means of a mediating variable, researchers hope to gain insight into the indirect impact of an independent variable on a dependent variable. In particular, the Sobel test determines if the indirect effect—that is, how the independent variable affects the dependent variable via the mediator variable—is statistically distinct from zero. From Table-6 since the value of 'z-test' from the test statistic is above 1.96 hence the value is significant moreover the p-values are likewise below 0.05, thus the indirect effect from the VM towards the PI due to BL is significant.

Table 8– Sobel test result

Sobel test			
	Input	Test statistic	P-value
t _a	3.552	3.40519129	0.00066118
t _b	11.968		
t _a = Coefficient of VM and BL			
t _b = Coefficient of BL and PI			

Source- Calculated and compiled from primary data

Conclusion and Recommendation

To sum up, this study exposes the complex relationships among viral marketing, brand loyalty, and consumer intention for purchasing in the context of the cosmetic industry in Agartala. Through the application of the Baron and Kenny mediation model and analysis using SPSS 20, it was found that brand loyalty plays a significant indirect role in the interaction between viral marketing and consumer purchase intention. Specifically, while viral marketing exerts a direct influence on consumer purchase intention, this influence is partially mediated by the level of brand loyalty generated among consumers. These findings have several implications for marketers and practitioners in the cosmetic industry. Firstly, they underscore the importance of considering not only the content and reach of viral marketing campaigns but also the emotional response they elicit from consumers. Marketers should aim to create exciting and engaging content that stimulates consumer interest and drives purchase intention. Additionally, understanding the mediating effect of brand loyalty can inform the development of more targeted and effective marketing strategies. By identifying the specific aspects of viral marketing campaigns that generate brand loyalty among consumers, marketers can

tailor their approaches to maximize impact and enhance consumer engagement. Furthermore, this study highlights the need for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of viral marketing efforts to assess their effectiveness and adapt strategies accordingly. Marketers may obtain understandings of consumer behavior by using data analysis tools such as SPSS and optimizing marketing campaigns in real-time. In general, by realizing the significance of brand loyalty as a mediator in the relationship between viral marketing and consumer purchase intention, marketers can better navigate the competitive landscape of the cosmetic industry in Agartala and drive success through more informed and strategic marketing initiatives.

References

1. Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>
2. Fitriani, I., Hadita, H., & Faeni, D. P. (2022). The impact of Viral Marketing on Purchase Intention mediated by Consumer Behavior (Study on Tiktok User of Management Students at Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya University). *Journal of Sustainable Community Development*, 4(2), 84–91. <https://doi.org/10.32924/jscd.v4i2.72>
3. Indahsari, B., Heriyadi, H., Afifah, N., Listiana, E., & Fauzan, R. (2023). The Effect of Online Advertising and Electronic Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention through Brand Image as a Mediating Variable. *South Asian Research Journal of Business and Management*, 5(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.36346/sarjbm.2023.v05i01.001>
4. Jacoby, J., & Chestnut, R. W. (1978). *Brand loyalty: measurement and management*. Retrieved from <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA21001377>
5. Liu, H., & Wang, Y. (2019). Interrelationships between Viral Marketing and Purchase Intention via Customer-Based Brand Equity. *Journal of Business and Management Sciences*, 7(2), 72–83. <https://doi.org/10.12691/jbms-7-2-3>
6. Mukherjee, S., Das, M. K., & Chakraborty, T. K. (2023). Viral Marketing in increasing brand awareness and Predicting Purchase intention: Exploring Mediating Role of Brand Loyalty in FMCG sector. *Scholars Journal of Economics, Business and Management/Scholars Journal of Economics, Business And Management*, 10(04), 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.36347/sjebm.2023.v10i04.001>
7. Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 63, 33. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1252099>
8. Pasaribu, R., Tampubolon, F. Y., & Matodang, V. (2023). Trust Mediates channel integration and viral marketing in repurchase intention golds saving products in PT Pegadaian Pringgan Medan. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 11(06), 4956–4966. <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijssrm/v11i06.em03>
9. Rosyihuddin, M., Sudarmiati, S., & Hermawan, A. (2022). The Influence of Viral Marketing, and Product Innovation on Repurchase Intentions through Mediation of Purchase Decision. *Almana/Almana : Jurnal Manajemen Dan Bisnis*, 6(3), 568–581. <https://doi.org/10.36555/almana.v6i3.1962>
10. Sobel, M. E. (1982). Asymptotic confidence intervals for indirect effects in structural equation models. *Sociological Methodology*, 13, 290. <https://doi.org/10.2307/270723>