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INFLUENCER-BRAND CONGRUENCE: THE EFFECTS OF INFLUENCER-BRAND PERSONALITY MATCHING ON ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

As influencers continue to gain prominence in digital marketing, understanding how their alignment with brand traits affects consumer perceptions becomes crucial. This research examines the impact of congruence between influencer and brand personalities on advertising effectiveness. This research employs a multi-phase methodology, including focus groups and surveys, to evaluate responses from Pakistani consumers to influencer-brand pairings. Key findings reveal that advertisement believability and attitudes toward ads are significantly enhanced when influencer personalities closely align with brand personalities. However, such unity does not significantly influence purchases. This highlights the importance of careful influencer selection based on personality traits to improve advertisement credibility and consumer attitudes, although it may not directly lead to higher purchase rates. The study contributes to the influencer marketing literature by emphasizing the role of personality traits in influencer-brand congruence beyond traditional factors like attractiveness and expertise. These insights hold special significance for marketers who aim to optimize the use of influencers in their advertising campaigns. To further understand the generalizability of these impacts, future study could extend these findings to a wider variety of consumers and product categories.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Social Media Influencers, Congruence, Advertising, Branding.

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Introduction

Businesses need to make sure that their communication tactics complement other aspects of their marketing plan, including product design, branding, packaging, and distribution methods, in order for a marketing campaign to be effective (Rosário & Raimundo, 2021). This alignment contributes to the cohesive and successful feeling of the entire marketing campaign (Das, 2021). Celebrity product endorsements have long been a common practice (Schimmelpfennig & Hunt, 2020). Traditionally, using celebrities to endorse products has been a popular method. Celebrities can bring immediate attention and credibility to a brand because they are widely recognized and often admired (Rocha et al., 2019). When a product is connected to a well-known individual, it can draw in their followers and possibly gain their confidence fast (Calvo-Porral et al., 2021).

But in the modern digital environment, social media influencers are becoming more and more popular (Aw & Labrecque, 2020). Despite not being conventional celebrities, these influencers have amassed sizable online fan bases because people relate to and find them real (Cocker et al., 2021). Their followers are typically highly involved, and they frequently focus on a particular topic, such as fashion or gaming (D. Agnihotri et al., 2023). Because they can reach and affect particular groups of people more directly than traditional superstars, influencers are especially useful for targeted marketing (A. Agnihotri & Bhattacharya, 2021).

Due to globalization, there are a lot of companies competing in the same product categories, which has led to a saturation of the market (Sharifonnasabi et al., 2020).. Brands must set themselves apart from the competition in this competitive market when many products are similar to one another (Ibrahim, 2022). One of the best methods for attaining this separation is to have a distinctive brand identity. Businesses can establish a distinctive brand identity and increase consumer attractiveness by linking distinctive personality attributes to their products. This strategy, as Aaker (1997) emphasized, highlights how crucial brand personality is to setting a company apart in a crowded market.

This paper suggests that influencer endorsement could be an effective marketing communication strategy for establishing a brand's unique personality, as long as the influencer's personality aligns with that of the brand and all marketing communications emphasize this match. Furthermore, although a few studies on influencer endorsements have explored other aspects, most have primarily focused on "attractiveness" and "expertise" as the key elements for this alignment (Akhtar et al., 2024; AlFarraj et al., 2021; K. A. Azhar et al., 2023; K. Azhar & Shah, 2021; Blanche et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2019). In the competitive landscape of modern marketing, establishing a unique brand identity through influencer endorsements can significantly enhance consumer engagement and trust. By leveraging the authentic and relatable personas of social media influencers, brands can achieve more targeted and effective marketing strategies. This alignment not only differentiates brands in saturated markets but also drives higher advertisement believability, favorable attitudes, and increased purchase intentions.

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Problem Statement

The rise in the influence of social media gurus in marketing prompted companies to turn to these people to promote their products, which refers to the fact that companies are increasingly collaborating with these individuals to advertise their products. However, even though influencer marketing is widely used, there is a lack of research concerning the impact of the personality alignments between influencers and brands on the responses made by consumers. While most existing studies have mainly reported a good experience of influencer recommendations, they have not clearly argued the importance of the fit of personality between the influencer and the consumer. At the same time, studies that focus on the personality congruence of the influencer and the audience have found that matching personality traits is not always enough to guarantee a positive outcome. This goal is to give a comprehensive view of the topic by answering the question of how congruence between an influencer's personality and a brand's personality influences advertising success in the form of advertisement believability, the attitude of consumers to the ad, brand perception, and their purchase intentions. This report is aimed at acquiring basic insights into these dynamics so that marketers can recognize the development of successful influencer marketing strategies.

Rationale of Research

By conducting an empirical investigation into how consumer attitudes are impacted by a brand's influential endorser's personality alignment, this study seeks to close a research gap in the literature. The study will examine whether high or low congruence levels impact variables such as advertisement believability, attitudes towards the advertisement, the brand, and purchase intentions. Pakistan's top social media influencers are the focus of this analysis. This study contributes to the field in three significant ways: (1) it broadens the discussion from influencer-product category congruence to influencer-brand congruence; (2) it introduces personality as a key factor in aligning influencers with brands; and (3) it explores how different levels of congruence (high/low) influence key advertising effectiveness metrics.

Research Questions

This research aims to address a gap in existing studies by empirically testing how the alignment of personalities between a brand and its influencer endorser affects consumer attitudes. The study will explore the following research question:

How does the congruence between an influencer's personality and a brand's personality affect key advertising effectiveness measures, including:

- Advertisement believability
- Consumer attitudes towards the advertisement
- Brand perception
- Purchase intentions?

Research Objectives

- To empirically investigate the impact of personality alignment between an influencer and a brand on advertisement believability.
- To assess how congruence between an influencer's personality and a brand's personality influences consumer attitudes towards the advertisement.
- To examine the effect of personality congruence on brand perception among consumers.
- To analyze the relationship between personality alignment and purchase intentions among consumers.

Literature Review

Brand Personality

Marketers can personify their products in ways that consumers find appealing or relevant by using brand personality, which is essentially the human attributes attached to a brand (McManus et al., 2021). The late 1990s saw the rise in popularity of this idea, especially after Aaker created the Brand Personality Scale, which translated human personality attributes into categories that were appropriate for brands: competence, sincerity, enthusiasm, sophistication, and ruggedness. While this model was first thought to be universal, additional research revealed that cultural considerations may require modifications, emphasizing the significance of context in brand personality evaluations (Roy & Banerjee, 2022).

The application of brand personality is particularly significant in celebrity endorsements. The effectiveness of such endorsements hinges on the alignment between the celebrity's public persona and the brand's personality (Arora et al., 2021). A congruent pairing, where the celebrity's traits reflect the brand's characteristics, can enhance the endorsement's impact, reinforcing the brand's identity and increasing consumer appeal (Adiba et al., 2020). For example, a luxury brand with a sophisticated personality would benefit from an endorsement by a celebrity known for elegance and grace.

Similarly, influencer endorsements rely on the congruence between an influencer's characteristics and the brand's personality. Influencers, unlike traditional celebrities, often cultivate a niche audience, engaging deeply and authentically through regular, personalized content (Brooks et al., 2021). This engagement builds a level of trust and relatability, making influencers particularly effective for targeting specific consumer segments (Aw & Chuah, 2021). The authenticity of an influencer's endorsement can significantly boost its effectiveness, especially if the brand aligns well with the endorsing brand's personality (D. Agnihotri et al., 2023).

Influencer Endorsement

The concept of influencer marketing and endorsement was introduced in the early 21st century, but it flourished more in the past five years (Khurana et al., 2024). The major reason for the phenomenal rise of influencer marketing was the emergence and

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dominance of social media platforms which began to have a significant impact on the digital landscape. These social media platforms allowed ordinary users to become content creators which helped them gain substantial followings. Therefore, brands capitalized on their digital influence and started using them for product and brand endorsements (Atiq et al., 2022).

Though there are several important factors that contribute to the effectiveness of influencer marketing, researchers have found that the perceived authenticity and relatability of the influencers play a huge role in their influence on their followers (Audrezet et al., 2020). These influencers often share their personal experiences and stories which creates trust and a sense of intimacy that cannot be seen in the traditional celebrities. Therefore, the endorsements coming from them seem more genuine to the target audiences. Studies have shown that influencers can significantly impact consumer behaviors, increasing a brand's visibility, enhancing its image, and driving sales, especially among younger demographics who spend considerable time online (D. Agnihotri et al., 2023; Ao et al., 2023; Aw & Chuah, 2021; Bu et al., 2022; Khamis et al., 2017).

With the significant rise in the importance of influencer marketing and social media influencers, the academic interest in these fields also began to rise in the recent years. Researchers have been looking at the various dimensions of influencer marketing to gain a better understanding of the similarities and differences it has with traditional celebrity endorsements.

Theoretical Framework

Endorsement Model: The Match-up Hypothesis

The match-up hypothesis is a well-established and studied concept in the traditional marketing setting. The concept which forms the basis of this hypothesis is that there has to be an alignment between the endorsing entity and the brand or product that the entity is endorsing (Kamins, 1990). The implications for the match-up hypothesis are that the effectiveness of the endorsement depends significantly on the congruence or alignment between the perceived attributes of the endorses and the brand being endorsed.

Misra & Beatty (1990) were the first ones to describe this match up hypothesis by explaining as a scenario where the spokesperson's most relevant characteristics are consistent with the key attributes of the brand. They emphasiesd that this congruence is critical because it has an impact on the credibility and perceptions of the endorsements. The match-up theory has enormous relevance in today's marketing environment. High congruence endorsements help overcome consumers' growing cynicism of advertising as they become more perceptive and wary of it by providing a more genuine and convincing marketing message (Tripathi et al., 2022). This genuineness is essential for gaining the trust of customers and has a big impact on how they feel about the brand and what they buy.

Hypotheses

The principal aim of this study is to broaden the scope of previous research on influencer endorsements by investigating the ways in which varying degrees of brand and influencer personality alignment impact consumer attitudes and actions. This study specifically assesses the impact on important metrics of advertising efficiency of high versus poor congruence between the influencer's personality and the brand. These metrics include the degree to which consumers find commercials credible, their opinions of the company, their attitudes toward the commercials, and their propensity to make a purchase.

As was covered in the preceding section, studies on how well a product matches the traits of the endorser—previously exclusive to celebrities—show that these endorsements work best when they are highly compatible. This theory, which was first put forth by Lynch & Schuler (1994), contends that for an endorsement to be successful, the features of the endorser and the product should complement each other effectively. Similar findings were made by Kahle & Homer (1985), who discovered that the degree to which an endorser's image aligns with the product's is another crucial factor in an endorsement's success.

This relationship was further clarified in 2000 by Till & Busler (1998), who said that "endorsers are more effective when there is a fit between the endorser and the endorsed product." It has been demonstrated that several measurements of advertisement effectiveness are strongly impacted by this fit or congruence. Studies have documented its influence on factors such as the believability of the advertiser (T. Kim & Kim, 2021), attitudes towards the advertisement (Chan & Fan, 2022), brand recall (Ferguson & Mohan, 2020), brand effect (Annissa & Paramita, 2021) and attitude (Centeno & Wang, 2020) as well as the credibility of the endorser (D. Y. Kim & Kim, 2021), and consumers' purchase intentions (Dey et al., 2021).

Applying these findings to the context of influencer-brand congruence based on personality traits, it is reasonable to suggest that a strong alignment between the personality of the influencer and the brand can also significantly and positively impact these important advertising effectiveness measures. The hypotheses (1-4) outlined in the discussion are based on these observations and argue for the significant role of influencer personality-brand personality congruence in enhancing advertising outcomes.

H_1: Advertisement believability will be significantly higher in conditions of high brand personality-influencer personality congruence compared to conditions of low congruence.

H_2: Attitude toward the brand will be significantly more favorable in conditions of high brand personality-influencer personality congruence compared to conditions of low congruence.

H_3: Attitude toward the advertisement will be significantly more positive in conditions of high brand personality-influencer personality congruence compared to conditions of low congruence.

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H_4: Purchase intentions will be significantly stronger in conditions of high brand personality-influencer personality congruence compared to conditions of low congruence.

Conceptual Framework

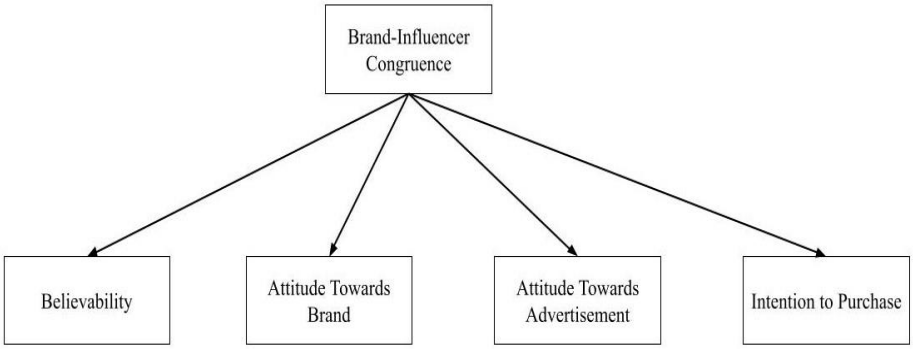


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Three distinct phases were used to gather and analyze data. The first phase involved focus groups. These sessions were designed to identify which brands resonated most with our target demographic. We brought together participants from various backgrounds to discuss and select the product categories and brands that aligned best with their lifestyles and preferences. The focus groups involved various demographic groups; however, graduate students, particularly those residing in Karachi, were found to be most knowledgeable about the lifestyles and personalities of influencers due to their higher consumption social media content. Therefore, for this research, the chosen target population was comprised of urban-dwelling graduates aged 18-35 years in Pakistan. Five focus groups were conducted, each lasting one hour. To ensure fairness and avoid gender bias, an equal number of male and female participants were included in each group.

The discussions were strategically divided into three segments. In the first segment, participants identified the product categories most relevant to their age group, which included restaurants, grocery products, clothing brands, energy drinks, and mobile phones. The subsequent segment focused on pinpointing the most recognizable brands within these categories. As a result, sting for energy drinks, Tapal green tea for grocery products, and Gul Ahmed for clothing were identified as the most familiar brands among the participants.

The final segment of each focus group aimed to identify the most visible personality traits associated with these well-known brands. From these discussions, Sting and Tapal Green Tea were chosen for further exploration in the study due to their strong

brand personalities—'High energy" for Sting and 'Refreshing' for Tapal Green Tea, as determined by a pre-test conducted with 73 respondents from the target demographic.

The second phase was a preliminary survey. This survey listed social media influencers who were thought to have personalities and public personas matching the brand personalities identified in the focus groups. We asked a broader range of respondents to rate these influences on how well they matched the brands. The ratings helped us narrow down the list to the influencers who were viewed as the best fit. The congruent and incongruent influencers were identified from the survey: Irfan Junejo and Nadir Ali for Sting and Anushae Khan and Faiza Saleem for Tapal Green Tea.

The third and final phase was the main study. For the main phase of the study, collaboration was established with a marketing agency that has an influencer marketing division and a strong presence across Pakistan. This agency facilitated data collection and provided access to a wide social media user population across Pakistan. They supplied email addresses of 3,000 individuals who fit the study's target demographic, ensuring a comprehensive reach within the specified population. Four hypothetical digital advertisements were developed and utilized alongside questionnaires for the primary respondents in this study. These advertisements incorporated brands and influencers identified through multiple focus group discussions and preliminary tests.

Four different structured questionnaires were created, each associated with one of the four fictitious advertisements that featured a specific influencer-brand pairing. The scales utilized in the questionnaires were bipolar and borrowed from previous research. The measures included believability of the advertisement (Atkin & Block, 1983), attitude toward the advertisement and the brand (Silvera & Austad, 2004), and purchase intention (Ohanian, 1990).

Data collection for the main study was conducted online. Participants accessed the survey through a web link that was sent to their email addresses provided by the marketing agency. Data collection for each influencer-brand pair ceased once a sufficient number of responses, defined as a minimum usable sample size of 120 per pair, were gathered. The study amassed a total sample size of 382 respondents, ranging in age from 18 to 35 years. Of these respondents, 45.83% were female, and 65% were students.

For each brand, Sting and Tapal, respondents were divided into two groups. One group received advertisements featuring an influencer whose personality was deemed congruent with the brand, while the other group received ads with an influencer considered incongruent. The study aimed to assess how different levels of congruence (high vs. low) influenced the effectiveness of the advertisements, specifically looking at believability, attitudes toward the ad and brand, and purchase intentions. To analyze these effects, a series of t-tests were conducted to compare the mean responses between the two groups for each brand. In total, four t-tests were carried out for each brand.

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Table **01: Influencer – Brand Pairs (Congruent and Incongruent)**		
Influencer/Brand	Sting	Tapal Green Tea
Congruent Influencer	Irfan Junejo	Anushae Khan
Incongruent Influencer	Nadir Ali	Faiza Saleem

Results and Discussion

A series of t-tests were conducted to evaluate the data from manipulation checks and to compare the responses across various variables (Believability, Attitude toward Brand, Attitude toward Advertisement, and Intention to Purchase) between groups that saw ads with congruent and incongruent influencer-brand pairings. These t-tests verified significant differences in the perceived congruence between influencers and specific brands.

For Sting, Irfan Junejo received a higher mean score of 6.87, significantly outperforming Nadir Ali, who scored 3.67, in terms of perceived congruence with the brand's "high-energy" personality trait ($t=9.412$, $p<0.05$). Similarly, for Tapal, Anushae Khan, with a mean score of 4.23, was perceived as significantly more congruent than Faiza Saleem, who scored 2.95, aligning with the "refreshing" trait ($t=5.119$, $p<0.05$).

Further t-tests were performed to determine if there were notable differences in advertising effectiveness between pairs of brands and influencers that were congruent and those that were incongruent. The outcomes of these t-tests for brands Sting and Tapal are displayed in Table 2 and Table 3, respectively.

The t-test results for both brands indicated a significant difference in the variables "Attitude toward Advertisement" and "Believability" between congruent and incongruent influencer-brand pairings. However, for both brands, no significant differences were observed between the congruent and incongruent pairings regarding "Intention to Purchase." Specifically, for the brand Sting, only hypothesis H_4 was not supported, indicating that unity did not significantly affect purchase intention. For the brand Tapal, both hypotheses H_2 and H_4 were not supported, suggesting that congruence did not significantly impact attitude toward the brand and intention to purchase.

Table 02: T test for Sting						
Hypotheses	Variables	t-test for Equality of Means				
		t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference
H_1	Believability	6.621	382	0.000	2.421	0.425
H_2	Attitude towards Brand	7.368	382	0.000	5.236	0.782
H_3	Attitude towards Advertisement	5.789	382	0.000	3.554	0.621
H_4	Intention to Purchase	0.982	382	0.278	0.621	0.699

Table 03: T test for Tapal Green Tea						
Hypotheses	Variables	t-test for Equality of Means				
		t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference
H_1	Believability	5.222	382	0.00	1.952	0.362
H_2	Attitude towards Brand	1.215	382	0.825	0.987	0.620
H_3	Attitude towards Advertisement	4.756	382	0.000	3.879	0.706
H_4	Intention to Purchase	1.321	382	0.067	0.998	0.531

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 addressed whether advertisement believability was notably higher in scenarios where there was high congruence between brand personality and influencer personality compared to low congruence. For Sting, as illustrated in Table 2, the advertisement featuring the congruent influencer Irfan Junejo scored significantly higher in believability (t = 6.621, p-value = 0.000) than the advertisement featuring the incongruent influencer, Nadir Ali. Similarly, for Tapal, shown in Table 3, the advertisement with the congruent influencer Anushae Khan was significantly more believable (t = 5.222, p-value = 0.000) than the one with the incongruent influencer Faiza Saleem. Thus, Hypothesis H1 was supported, affirming that higher congruence leads to greater advertisement believability.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 explored whether consumer attitudes toward the brand were significantly more positive in instances of high brand personality-influencer personality congruence compared to low congruence. For Sting, as shown in Table 2, there was a significant difference in attitude toward the brand when comparing the advertisement with the congruent influencer Irfan Junejo to the one with the incongruent influencer Faiza Saleem (t = 7.368, p-value = 0.000), indicating that hypothesis H2 was supported for Sting.

However, for Tapal, as indicated in Table 3, the difference in consumer attitudes toward the brand between the advertisement featuring the congruent influencer Irfan Junejo and the one with the incongruent influencer Nadir Ali was not significant (t = 1.215, p-value = 0.825). This result shows that for Tapal, hypothesis H2 was not supported, demonstrating that congruence did not significantly influence consumer attitudes toward the brand in this case.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 investigated whether consumer attitudes toward advertisements were significantly more favorable in cases of high brand personality-influencer personality congruence compared to those with low congruence. For Sting, as reported in

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Table 2, the advertisement featuring the congruent influencer Anushae Khan demonstrated significantly higher favorability (t = 5.789, p-value = 0.000) in consumer attitudes toward the advertisement compared to the advertisement with the incongruent influencer Faiza Saleem. Similarly, for Tapal, as shown in Table 3, the advertisement with the congruent influencer Irfan Junejo also showed significantly higher favorability (t = 4.756, p-value = 0.000) in attitudes toward the advertisement than the one featuring the incongruent influencer, Nadir Ali. Thus, Hypothesis H-3 was supported.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 examined whether the intention to purchase a brand was significantly greater when there was high congruence between the brand's personality and that of the endorsing influencer compared to low congruence. For Sting, as indicated in Table 2, the analysis revealed no significant difference in purchase intentions between the advertisement featuring the congruent influencer Anushae Khan and the one with the incongruent influencer Faiza Saleem (t = 0.982, p-value = 0.278). Similarly, for Tapal, shown in Table 3, there was no significant difference in purchase intentions between the advertisement with the congruent influencer Irfan Junejo and the one featuring the incongruent influencer Nadir Ali (t = 1.321, p-value = 0.067). As a result, Hypothesis H-4 was not supported, indicating that influencer-brand congruence did not significantly influence consumer purchase intentions in this study.

One possible reason for the insignificance of purchase intention differences between congruent and incongruent influencer-brand pairs might relate to the established reputation and strong market presence of brands like Sting and Tapal. Consumers often rely on their previous experiences and the established reputation of a brand when making purchasing decisions. In cases where brands have a long-standing market presence and a solid consumer base, the immediate impact of an influencer's endorsement may not drastically sway purchase intentions. This effect is particularly pronounced for well-known brands where consumer loyalty and familiarity can overshadow the influence of an influencer's endorsement. Even if an influencer perfectly matches the brand's personality, the already formed perceptions and loyalty towards the brand might not alter significantly, leading to no dramatic change in purchase intentions.

Another explanation could be the nature of the influence that endorsers have on the various stages of the consumer decision-making process. While influencer endorsements might significantly impact initial reactions such as advertisement believability and brand perception (as observed in increased advertisement believability with congruent influencer endorsements), these endorsements might not necessarily translate into final purchasing decisions. This could be due to the multifaceted nature of buying behavior, which involves factors such as price, availability, consumer reviews, and personal priority or need at the time of purchase. Influencers might successfully enhance a brand's image or the credibility of its advertisements, yet these enhancements may not always lead directly to purchase. This suggests that while influencer endorsements can effectively modify perceptions and attitudes, their ability to directly influence purchasing decisions could be limited, particularly when other strong decision-making determinants are in play.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore how varying levels of congruence between influencers and brands impact key advertising effectiveness metrics, including advertisement believability, attitudes towards ads and brands, and purchase intentions. Congruence was assessed based on the dominant personality trait shared between the influencer and the brand. Two different brands were chosen as test cases to broaden the study's applicability. Results indicated that for metrics like advertisement believability and attitude toward the advertisement, there were significant differences when comparing high and low congruence pairs of influencer and brand. However, for other metrics, such as attitude toward the brand and intention to purchase, the results showed little variation between high and low congruence pairs. These outcomes were consistent for both brands involved in the study and aligned with findings from previous research.

The study found that purchase intention did not show significant differences for either brand, indicating that the level of congruence between the influencer and the brand did not substantially influence consumers' likelihood to buy the products. Additionally, while there was no significant impact on attitudes toward the brand Tapal regardless of influencer-brand congruence, the brand Sting did show a significant difference in consumer attitudes depending on the level of congruence. This suggests that the effect of influencer-brand congruence on consumer attitudes can vary depending on the brand.

Recommendations

Careful consideration should be taken on the part of brands to match influencer personalities to their own, which we would argue improves ad believability and attitudes toward ads. It might not always yield a significant improvement in purchase intentions or brand attitudes; however, it still can captivate the consumer. Sting's congruence is a key determinant of brand perception, which is why influencer alignment is a must for them. In comparison to Tapal, which doesn't have much impact on congruence, other factors may take priority. Putting these findings into practice with personalized influencer partnerships would maximize the effectiveness of marketing.

Significance of the Study

This research enhances our understanding of influencer endorsements by investigating how these endorsements influence consumer reactions. There has been limited discussion on how the personality traits of influencers as a specific variable affect the match-up with brands and, in turn, how this impacts consumer attitudes and intentions. This study addresses these gaps by shifting the focus from broad celebrity-product category alignments to more specific influencer-brand matches based on personality traits, examining the resulting effects on advertisement believability, consumer attitudes, and purchasing intentions.

The study's conclusions have a number of useful ramifications for companies and marketers looking to maximize their influencer marketing campaigns. Influencer and brand personality alignment dramatically improves the plausibility of advertisements and

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consumer perceptions about them. Choosing influencers whose personalities closely align with their own is consequently a priority for brands looking to maximize the perceived authenticity and trustworthiness of their efforts. The study did find that influencer-brand congruence is not always associated with higher purchase intentions, though. This shows that, even though congruence can improve brand perception and ad effectiveness, it might not be enough to increase sales on its own. In order to impact consumer decisions, marketers should combine aligned influencer partnerships with other tactical components like product availability, price, and overall brand reputation. Beyond its academic value, the findings from this study are also highly relevant for industry practitioners. The core objective of this research is to assess how the combined personalities of brands and influencers affect consumer perceptions of endorsements. These insights are particularly valuable for brand managers involved in the selection of influencers for marketing campaigns.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its value, this study has some shortcomings that point to potential areas for further investigation. A major drawback is that the emphasis is placed on only two businesses, which might not adequately reflect the wide range of markets or product categories that influencer endorsements might help with. This limits how broadly the results may be applied to other industries where there may be wide variations in consumer behavior. The study also focused on a narrow group of people, mainly Pakistan's youthful urban population, which may not accurately represent the wider range of customers who interact with influencers and businesses. To improve the validity of the results, future studies should enlarge the sample to encompass a greater variety of brands and product categories in addition to a more varied demographic profile.

The current study's dependence on made-up scenarios and marketing is another drawback. Although this method aids in controlling outside factors, it might not fully represent the nuanced nature of actual customer responses to influencer endorsements. The fake environment may have influenced the participant's responses' authenticity because real purchasing decisions frequently involve more complex and dynamic factors. In the future, research on consumer responses might be conducted using real influencer campaigns in naturalistic environments. This would yield findings that are more immediately applicable to marketing strategies in the real world.

Moreover, the study failed to consider the long-term consequences of influencer endorsements on customer behavior and brand loyalty. The scope of the study was restricted to consumers' initial responses to influencer-brand congruence, which may not reflect their long-term beliefs and actions. Research on the long-term effects of influencer endorsements on consumer loyalty and purchase behavior could be done through longitudinal research. This would provide a greater knowledge of the strategic importance of influencer endorsements in establishing long-term brand equity and assist marketers in comprehending the long-term effects of influencer relationships on consumer engagement and brand perception.

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