Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

Section A-Research paper

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTIONS ON RECRUITMENT OF SECONDARY STUDENTS: A STUDY BASED ON UG PROFESSIONAL COLLEGES IN DELHI-NCR

Mr. SUMIT GAUR
Research Scholar, Invertis University, NH-24, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh (India)

Dr. MANISH GUPTA
Dean, Faculty of Management, Invertis University, NH-24, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh (India)

Mr. MANISH KUMAR
Assistant Professor, Institute of Management Studies (University Courses Campus), Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh (India)

Abstract
Purpose: With the emergence of this digitalization in every segment, all educational institutions must utilize digital marketing approaches to secure their online presence. The use of online and digital space has been considered a significant innovative technique contributing to the marketing and branding, along with the recruitment and growth of educational institutes. It has been observed that institutes have established specific departments and hired social media marketing experts from the industry to execute this online /social media marketing to reach out to even those students who cannot be connected or communicated directly. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to out the impact of Social Media Promotions on the Recruitment of Secondary Students located at remote locations in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-NCR.

Methodology: The study is exploratory and conducted with the help of an adaptive questionnaire on a Likert 5-point scale. For the study, a non-probable sample of 150 students studying in classes 11th and 12th is considered. The statistical tests involve descriptive analysis to check demographic details, normality analysis, reliability test, and Path analysis using smart PLS-Sem-4.

Findings: The results of data analysis highlighted that social media promotions i.e. use of Facebook, Instagram pages, etc. have a significant impact on the recruitment of secondary students located at remote locations. The results also show that there is a significant difference in the decision the institution among boys and girls of secondary students.

Limitations: The major limitation of the study is the sample size along with the time duration in which the study is conducted.

Implications: Institutes can establish specific departments and hire social media marketing experts from the industry to execute online /social media marketing to reach out to even those students who cannot be connected or communicated with directly. Therefore, to reach out to the maximum number of students in a single click and without investing too much money and time, the need for digital/ social media marketing is generated to aid institutes in managing a good number of admissions.

Keywords: Facebook, Instagram, Student recruitment, Professional Institutes, Digital promotions.

Eur. Chem. Bull. 2023,12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941

3931

1. Introduction

Technology's constant growth has altered how businesses, governments, and other organizations operate. Social networking is one of the most significant technological advancements of the previous ten years. People and organizations have been continuously modifying their ways of functioning and communicating to stay up with the rapidly changing environment (AI-Youbi, *et al.*, 2020). Students are using social media networks more frequently, which have increased the amount of social media marketing being done by various educational institutes.

The individual colleges abroad provide immediate access to the entrance gateway through a Facebook or Instagram post. Social media networks were often utilized for social engagement a decade ago, mostly between friends who students already had offline relationships with (Al Husseiny, and Youness, 2023). It quickly evolved into a forum for discussing cultural and social disparities between nations. Organizations have been greatly inspired and challenged by the innovation in the social media sector to find efficient methods of marketing and communication (Soares, 2022). With the emergence of this digitalization in every segment, all educational institutions must utilize digital marketing approaches to secure their online presence (Anderson, 2019).

The use of online and digital space has been considered a significant innovative technique contributing to the marketing and branding, along with the recruitment and growth of educational institutes (Belair-Gagnon, and Agur, 2012). It has been observed that institutes have established specific departments and hired social media marketing experts from the industry to execute this online /social media marketing to reach out to even those students who cannot be connected or communicated

directly (Shields and Peruta, 2018). Social media is frequently considered the starting point for engaging potential students because of the rise of ad blockers and a target population that actively avoids marketing messages (Kimmons, 2021).

Today, practically all colleges and educational institutes as well as the majority of schools across the world, have a social media presence. The platforms used might range from more mainstream and recent ones like Snapchat and Instagram to more well-known and more established ones like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn (Thornton, 2017). According to research, social media is a vital tool that both prospective and existing students use to connect with classmates, stay up to date on school news, make connections with the business world, and generally feel (Howell, 2019).

Here, the emphasis is on students' extensive social media use and how it might assist organizations like educational institutes, colleges, and institutes (in this instance alone). Numerous studies point to social media's enormous influence and presence over the past ten years. A greater degree of social media marketing is being done by many institutions as a result of increased student use of social media (Boulianne, 2015). In the past, organizations distributed informational materials via websites and broadcast media. With today's social media strategies, more information may be shared. Social media significantly increased global reach and reduced gaps in people, cultures, and nations. A projected 4.80 billion individuals would be accessing social media by 2023, with that figure expected to rise sharply by 2025 (Global Social Media Statistics). These most recent statistics continue to push businesses to develop fresh social media marketing approaches. Many educational institutes are utilizing social media marketing to promote their programs and draw in potential

3932

Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,*12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*

Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

Section A-Research paper

students because traditional marketing techniques are costly and ineffective in comparison to social media marketing reach (Bratkiv, 2019). Since, social media is defined by its interactivity, openness, and flexibility as well as its rapid information flow, marketers at educational institutes must approach social media marketing in ways that match these traits (Richardson, Brinson, and Lemoine, 2018). Colleges and educational institutes can gain a better understanding of how prospective students utilize social media in the area of social media marketing. Due to their collaborative and participatory nature, social media is the perfect extension for relational marketing operations (Rutter, *et al*., 2016). Educational institutes' websites can serve as the foundation for an engaging user environment. There is a dearth of literature on strategic concerns, case studies, or best practices specifically related to social media as a tool for marketing in higher education. However, American institutions are increasingly incorporating social media into their marketing strategies (Brech, *et al*., 2017).

Hayes, Ruschman, and Walker (2009) educational institutes are using social networking as a marketing strategy. There is a correlation between individuals who logged onto the social network and their propensity to apply to educational institutes. According to research by Chanana, and Sangeeta (2021) social networking site profiles are generally being adopted by non-profit organisations, but they are not being fully utilised for the development of relationships. There are a few innovative initiatives by higher education institutions to use social media as part of their student recruiting strategies. Educational institutes' websites can link to Twitter or Facebook pages or let users bookmark pages as favorites and "like" or "re-tweet" them, as well as Facebook pages and frequently

YouTube channels (Choudaha, 2013). Several educational institutes also have their websites. Social networking applications are sometimes exploited with blatantly commercial intent. Educational institutes are launching an online forum to recruit students for their bachelor programmes and also initiated a live chat forum to recruit prospective students (Chugh, and Ruhi, 2017). This study focuses on two main issues: the influence of social media marketing carried out by many educational institutes on secondary students' choice of college for higher education study and the variety of difficulties that educational institutes will face in developing and putting into practice their social media marketing strategies. The goal of this study is to offer a full grasp of social media marketing trends and problems, as well as how Indian educational institutions and prospective secondary students use it. There haven't been many studies on the subject, but to show the current effects, I'll focus on changes in student recruitment techniques, especially for prospective secondary students. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to out the impact of Social Media Promotions on the Recruitment of Secondary Students located at remote locations in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-NCR.

2. Literature Review

Social Media: Social media technology has altered the way people communicate on a personal and professional level. Nowadays, social media platforms are virtually completely integrated into the everyday life of most users through their smartphones. Online platforms that facilitate connectedness, communication, and collaboration are what social media takes the shape of (Zincir, 2017). Social media can take many different forms, including blogs, vlogs, instant messaging, virtual communities, and social networking sites

3933

Eur. Chem. Bull. 2023,12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941

Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

Section A-Research paper

(Chugh and Ruhi, 2017). Social media platforms are divided into a variety of market sectors and needs (Chugh, and Ruhi, 2018). Although the line separating formal and informal use is becoming hazier, LinkedIn and Viadeo target formal business-related interactions while Facebook and MySpace target informal social communication. Although social networking sites are the only topic of interest in this paper, social media, in general, includes blogging, discussion forums, bookmarking, and wikis. Social networking websites are a crucial and essential component of social media, which strives to encourage widespread collaboration. An online service that enables users to create a public or private profile to connect and participate with their social connections is an inclusive definition of social networking sites that covers people, technology, and processes (Cingillioglu, *et al*., 2023).). From this point forward, social networking websites, particularly Facebook, shall be referred to as social media for the sake of clarity and consistency. The phrase "social media" has also occasionally been used interchangeably because Facebook is the clear focus. Social media is used by many people in a variety of different industries for a variety of different purposes, including problem-solving and complaint resolution (Clark, and Scheuer, 2017), customer relationship development (Cordero-Gutiérrez, and Lahuerta-Otero, 2020), online engagement and marketing (Darko, *et al.*, 2022), and informal social networking (Ellonen, 2013). The widespread adoption of social media has also been seen in the education sector. Social media can be used to distribute teaching materials, educational information, and updates, and to encourage communication and cooperation. In higher education, social media can be utilized for content generation, sharing, interacting, and jointly socializing (Hisel, and Pinion 2020). According to Howell, *et*

al. (2019) Facebook's social communication features increase connections between teacher-students and student-students, foster collaborative learning, and create an online class group for students. Teachers need to be aware of how social media affects their classes (Josefsson, *et al.*, 2016). There are many types of social media channels present today. The most popular of them, are as follows:

i.   *Facebook:* With 2.963 billion active members, Facebook has surpassed all other free social networking sites in popularity (January 2023). In the three months before January 2023, there were around 5 million (+0.2%) more monthly active Facebook users. (a) According to the most recent statistics, around 37.0% of all individuals on Earth use Facebook right now. Facebook is made up of six main parts: user profiles, status updates, networks (geographical areas, institutions of higher learning, and businesses), groups, applications, and fan pages. Fan pages resemble personal profiles but are also accessible to corporations (Giannikas, 2020). They consist of numerous applications, such as wall posts, message boards, pictures, and videos (John, 2022). When someone views your page, they can decide to "like" it, which makes them appear to their friends as "fans" of your business. When one of their friends notices they've become a fan of a different organization that interests them, they're likely to follow suit, creating a viral marketing effect (Johnston, and Pennypacker, 2010). Additionally, Facebook pages give businesses the chance to interact directly with fans (such as those in a particular network or age group) and view "insights,"

3934

Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,*12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*

Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

Section A-Research paper

which provides comprehensive usage data on the business's page.

ii. *Instagram:* According to a recent survey of Instagram users' statistics shows that the number of Instagram users is expected to hit 1.35 billion worldwide in 2023. Instagram is owned by Facebook. By 2026, it is anticipated that there will be 1,822.9 million active Instagram users globally. One of the most widely used social networks in the world, Instagram, is especially well-liked among youngsters (Sheldon, and Bryant, 2016). It is a social media platform where users can upload and share photographs while also liking, commenting, and interacting with other images (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016). To reach huge audiences, businesses use Instagram for marketing (Djafarova and Trofimenko, 2019). In comparison to other platforms where businesses can publish eye-catching photographs to engage with consumers, Instagram, one of the most frequently used social media sites by consumers, offers a more fun advertising experience (Voorveld *et al*., 2018).

3. Twitter

According to a recent survey of Twitter users' statistics shows that the number of Twitter users is 353.90 million worldwide in 2023. Twitter has established itself as a mainstay in modern educational institutions thanks to its broad use, concise communication manner, and following features. Understanding how institutions use Twitter is crucial due to its wide uptake and potential (Josefsson, 2016). According to research to date (Veletsianos *et al.*, 2016; Kainde, and Mandagi, 2023) institutional Twitter communications are primarily monologic, marketing-focused, and positive. Governmental Twitter posts

frequently portray a favorable image of academic life and very little information on extensive involvement and communication between the institution and other parties. However, several shortcomings in current research restrict the applicability of these findings (Kimmons, 2016). These restrictions include small sample sizes (number of institutions and tweets), the inability to distinguish between different types of institutions, and sample bias such as only collecting information from highly ranked institutions (Kumar and Nanda, 2019).

4. Theoretical Framework

According to TAM, a person's intention to use a system is determined by their perception of its utility and ease of use, with that intention acting as a mediator between that intention and the actual usage of the system. Perceived simplicity of use is seen to have a direct bearing on perceived utility. By eliminating the attitude construct contained in TRA from the current definition, researchers have streamlined TAM (Venkatesh *et al*., 2003). According to Wixom and Todd (2005), attempts to extend TAM often follow one of three strategies: incorporating components from related models, providing extra or alternative belief factors, or looking at the antecedents and moderators of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Gefen and Larsen (2017) made the case in recent research that the semantic linkages between the questionnaire items in TAM serve as the primary source of its construct relationships. The semantic theory of survey response describes a theory that explains their findings (Gagnon, *et a.,* 2012). TAM which have significant behavioral components, assume that if someone decides to act, they will have complete freedom to do so. In actuality, the freedom to act will be constrained by

3935

*Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*

Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

Section A-Research paper

factors including limited capacity, time, environmental or organizational restrictions, and unconscious tendencies

Social Media and Student Recruitment:

The widespread usage of social media has transformed how people connect and communicate online. It has become a potent tool for communication on a global scale. Social networking websites, blogs, vlogs, instant messaging, and virtual communities are examples of social media channels (Kumar, and Nanda, 2019). Beyond the confines of interpersonal communication, social media is also changing how businesses interact with their audiences and with the public at large (Hendricks and Schill, 2015).

Higher education institutions prioritize social media to reach a broad audience because it has become an essential component of the plans of practically all industrial sectors (Kumar, and Nanda, 2020). This can also be linked to the fact that younger generations now engage mostly on social media and that this younger generation makes up the bulk of the student body at higher education institutions. Statistics from 2017 show that millennials (those born after 1980) spend an average of 223 minutes a day using mobile internet, more than doubling from 2012 to 2017 (Statista, 2017). This demonstrates how much young people rely on the Internet in their daily lives.

The environment of higher education is likewise going through a time of significant change (Bolat and Sullivan, 2017). Several developments are being noticed in higher education, including changes to student tuition prices, deregulation of student number controls, value for money, tendencies towards large-scale marketing, and perceiving the student as a customer (Scullion and Molesworth, 2016; Tomlinson, 2015).In line with this, internet-based tools and technology can play a crucial role in the search for new and efficient marketing techniques for Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). Technology not only makes it simple to find information, but it also enables online communication between people (Kusumawati *et al*., 2014; Sobaih, *et al.,* 2016). According to Nayar and Kumar (2018), information and communication technology (ICT) eliminates the significant limitations of time and geography in higher education and allows access from any location at any time. Many promotional tools, such as conventional print and broadcast media, have faced significant challenges, such as timeliness, convenience, and cost-effectiveness, as a result of social media's recent rise in popularity (Shields, and Peruta, 2019). Because of this, many HEIs have adopted some social media platforms for marketing objectives (Kusumawati, 2019; Song, 2023). Due to the interactive nature of the web, higher educational institutions mostly used websites as a basic setting for interaction before the development of social media (Sörensen*, et al.,* 2023). Traditional marketing strategies have long encouraged one-way communication, but social media gives businesses the chance to interact with their audiences in two directions (Manca, 2020). Social media can "facilitate dialogue among groups that wouldn't easily be in conversation with each other current students, prospective students, alumni, parents, and friends of the college" in this regard (Munshi, 2018).

The current demographic of college freshmen, the millennial generation, has been described as having a "desire for collaboration and connecting with others" (Lindbeck and Fodrey, 2010). Through a survey of college freshmen, Lindbeck and Fodrey's study looked at the relative weighting of different technologies in undergraduate admissions. They

3936

discovered that the two most crucial technologies were email and school websites, followed by phones, social networking, videos, blogs, and audio material (Neier and Zayer, 2015). The survey didn't make an effort to differentiate across different social media networks. This study is the first to examine how students perceive and use particular social media platforms during the college application process. Social media platforms can offer colleges an efficient and affordable way to advertise campus programs and connect with alumni, sports fans, prospective students, current students, and the larger campus community (Peruta, and Shields, 2018). Social media can help build virtual communities that increase brand loyalty and benefit the organization that hosts the community (Ellonen, *et al.,* 2013). 91% of college admissions offices believe that social media is very essential or moderately relevant to their recruitment methods (Peruta, and Shields, 2017). Social media websites have become incredibly popular in recent years. Social media websites made up five of the top 12 most visited websites worldwide (Alexa, 2014). Social media has changed how individuals, businesses, organizations, and the government process information ever since social media technology was developed. Qualman ((2009) since its inception, the communication has changed. Social media may be summed up simply as a network of platforms where users can share material with others. The term "social media" refers to a group of online communication platforms that focus on user-generated content, collaboration, and community involvement (Ragini, 2016). Among the various forms of social media are websites and programs devoted to forums, micro blogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curating, and wikis.

Despite its extensive use in college recruitment, little empirical study has been done on how prospective students view social media (St-Laurent-Gagnon, *et al.,* 2012; Rutter, *et al.,* 2016). It is stated use of social media in higher education through social media technologies is widely used, it was noted that "little is known about the all the benefits of their use in secondary school student recruitment contexts and for specific purposes. There are no empirical studies assessing students' impressions of social media usage in secondary school student recruitment.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework
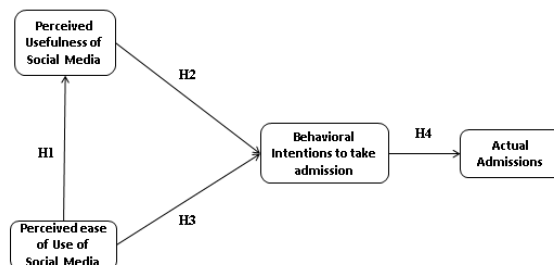
5.　Research Methodology

The nature of the research is explorative and descriptive with cross-section data collected through structured questionnaires used appropriately and tested through SmartPLS (Dawabsheh *et al.,* 2020). Theoretical background was developed through secondary data published in the form of research papers and articles in indexed journals and primary data was used to investigate the proposed model statistically. Primary data included 267 full-time secondary school students looking for taking admission to higher education in educational institutes located in Delhi/NCR. Delhi-NCR has a diverse culture, religion, and ethnicity. With more than 3000+ educational institutional institutes the National Capital Region has become the hub of education. Out of the top management education colleges in India, nearly 10 percent are located in Delhi-NCR. Out of

3937

these 10 percent, 90 percent are managed by private management bodies, approximately 9 percent are managed by the government and the remaining 1 percent is mutually governed by both public and private bodies. Hence, Delhi-NCR was chosen as a primary location for data collection (Edusha Eduversity, 2021; Shiksha.com, 2023). Snowball sampling and purposive sampling i.e., the non-probability method were used as sampling techniques. A total of 300 questionnaires were circulated but only 289 were received back on time form only 267 filled responses were considered as the final data for further analysis. The study consisted of Social media independence represented by the Perceived Usefulness of Social Media, Perceived ease of Use of Social Media, Behavioral Intentions to take admission, and Actual admissions as dependent variables

Table 1 Sample demographics (N=267)

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	65	24.0
Female	202	76.0
267	100.0	267

Source: Author

b) Model Assessment

The study examined the model for outer model assumptions through internal reliability and convergent validity. In PLS-SEM, the Confirmatory Composite Analysis (CCA) was used to analyze the Perceived Usefulness of Social Media, Perceived ease of Use of Social Media, Behavioral

representing the TAM model (Fred Davis in 1986; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003; Wixom and Todd 2005; Gefen and Larsen 2017). The questionnaire used for data collection was adapted with a total of 16 items (Gagnon, 2012) recorded on a Likert 5-point scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree along with demographic details (gender) of the students. The proposed model (Figure 1) consists of reflective modeling and was tested on PLS-SEM in Smart PLS (Hair *et al.,* 2019; Hair *et al.,* 2020).

6. Findings

a) Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive details of the faculties are reported in Table 1 and it was observed that the majority of the students were females (76.0%) and Male students were 24.0 percent. Table 1 Sample demographics (N=267).

Intentions to take admission, and Actual Admissions. Further, values of Cronbach Alpha, along with Dijkstra and HenselerrhoA, Composite Reliability (CR) were tested and found above the threshold limit of 0.70 (Hair *et al.,* 2017; 2020). The study also established convergent validity with the average variance extracted (AVE) score, which was again above 0.50 as proposed, and also for all reflective constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al.,* 2019). Table 2 explains the results of internal reliability and convergent validity.

Table 2: Quality Criterion for reflective model and Composite Model

Construct	Items	Type	Loading	Cronbach Alpha	rhoA	CR	AVE
Perceived Usefulness of Social Media,	PU1	Reflective	0.859	0.940	0.948	0.954	0.746
	PU2		0.889				
	PU3		0.905				
	PU4		0.917				
Perceived ease of	PES1		0.816				
	PES2		0.880				

3938

Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,*12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*

Use of Social Media,	PES3	Reflective	0.850	0.938	0.943	0.951	0.737
	PES4		0.884				
Behavioral Intentions to take admission	BI1	Reflective	0.757	0.906	0.943	0.951	0.737
	BI2		0.822				
	BI3		0.871				
	BI4		0.790				
Actual Admissions	AU1	Reflective	0.832	0.913	0.919	0.861	0.919
	AU2		0.922				
	AU3		0.895				
	AU4		0.898				

Source: Author's Calculations.

Further, with Fornell and Larcker's Criterion (1981), the data was also tested for discriminant validity. The results were according to suggested limits as the under the root of AVE of the constructs on the slop was high than the values of inter-item correlation. Each construct had a clear dissimilarity from the other and thus the study is fit to further analysis Table 3 highlights the correlation.

Table 3 Discriminant Validity Assessment

	Perceived Usefulness of Social Media	Perceived ease of Use of Social Media,	Behavioral Intentions to take admission	Actual Admissions
Perceived Usefulness of Social Media	**0.864**			
Perceived ease of Use of Social Media,	0.592	**0.804**		
Behavioral Intentions to take admission	0.48	0.45	**0.859**	
Actual Admissions	0.41	0.45	.0.46	**0.823**

Source: Author's Calculations.

The heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) was also used in this study to establish the discriminant validity of the constructs. The suggested upper threshold value i.e., all HTMT values must be less than 1 but it was also proposed that Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio of correlations with the highest ratio of 0.85 (Voorhees *et al*., 2016) and 0.9 permissible value (Gold *et al*., 2001). In the study work, it was found that none of the constructs were above the threshold limits, thereby establishing the uniqueness of all the constructs as per the pragmatic standards as represented in Table 4

Table 4 HTMT Ratio of Correlations for Discriminant Validity Assessments

	Perceived Usefulness of	Perceived ease of Use	Behavioral Intentions to	Actual Admissions

3939

Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941

	Social Media	of Social Media,	take admission	
Perceived Usefulness of Social Media				
Perceived ease of Use of Social Media,	0.03			
Behavioral Intentions to take admission	0.047	0.65		
Actual Admissions	0.03	0.07	0.071	

Source: Author's Calculations

c) Structural Model Assessments

In this study, structural model assessments were used to examine the different proposed relationships. A bootstrapping process with the suggested 5000 bootstraps without significant change in order was conducted to test the framed hypotheses to achieve the required p-values (Hair *et al.,* 2017; Hair *et al.,* 2020). To test the structural inner model, predictor constructs were tested separately for tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and values were less than 3.33 suggesting that no Collinearity issue was present in the study (Diamantopoulos *et al.,* 2008; Hair *et al.,* 2017). Further, the significance and relevance of the path coefficients were also tested, through bootstrapping process with 5000 subsamples.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of the endogenous construct's Actual use was 38.7 percent which is higher than the recommended value of R^2 of 0.20 (Rasoolimanesh *et al.,* 2017), and here actual use was extensively determined by perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and behavioral intentions. The goodness of fit criterion was also explored by the Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and the results show an SRMR value of 0.067 which was well under the threshold value of 0.08 to indicate that the proposed model had good explanatory power (Henseler *et al.,* 2016; Hair *et al.,* 2020).

The structural model estimation and hypotheses testing are given in detail in Table 5. Results revealed that Behavioral Intentions to take admission have a significant positive impact on taking actual admissions in the institution ($\beta=0.574$, $p<0.001$) more intentions to take admission in a selected program of a selected institution are helping students to take admission in a particular educational institution. Also, the level and amount of information students are receiving from different social media handles of educational institutes are adding up to the experience and knowledge of students about choosing selection of college Hence, H4 is significantly supported by the study.

Another important impact observed that behavioral intentions to take admission are governed by the perceived usefulness of using different social media sites for exploring information regarding the institution of choice significantly impact students' behavioral intentions to take admission ($\beta=0.302$, $p<0.001$) stating that more the social media feature is interactive and provide required information easily to

3940

Eur. Chem. Bull. 2023,12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941

the student with minimum efforts to explore with increased participation in development programs teachers also develop professionally increase the footfall on institutes' social media platforms making students more aware about different the information related to features, programmes, and facilities provided. Proper social media promotions and usage improve the level of admission; hence H2 is supported for the study. Further, Perceived ease of use of social media has also been found to be significantly impacting behavioral intentions to take admission (β=0.533, p<0.001) indicating that with more are better, interactive, and informative content on social media promotions, it is easy to develop intentions of taking admission among students therefore, supporting H3. The results also claimed that perceived ease of use also emerged as a significant factor (β=0.59=1impacting perceived usefulness between faculty developments thereby, supporting H1.

Table 5 Structural Model Assessments

Path Relationship	Std. Beta	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T Stats.	2.50%	97.50%	Decision
PEU→ PU	0.591	0.594	0.034	17.10***	0.525	0.669	Supported
PU→BI	0.302	0.303	0.040	7.510***	0.35	0.587	Supported
PEU→ BI	0.533	0.533	0.007	75.853***	0.389	0.577	Supported
BI→AU	0.547	0.573	0.009	67.131***	0.02	0.165	supported

Source: Author's Calculations

Effect size (f2) and (Q2) of the proposed model understudy for testing the prognostic importance and relevance was also done (Ringle *et al*., 2020). In this study, behavioral intentions (f^2= 0.23) and perceived ease of use (f^2= 0.05), and perceived usefulness (f^2=0.13) on actual use. For behavioral intentions, medium effects were highlighted whereas for perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, small effects were there. Behavioral intentions have emerged as the most important construct responsible for explaining actual use.

Lastly, the prognostic significance of the structural model with Perceived Usefulness of Social Media Perceived ease of Use of Social Media, Behavioral Intentions to take admission Actual Admissions was examined by Stone-Geisser'sQ2 and a value above 0.02 can be used to take a broad view of the results later on and have adequate projecting power (Richter *et al*., 2016). It was found to be 0.58 for Actual Admissions highlighting a strong predictive relevance of the model (Geisser, 1975; Stone, 1974). Stone-Geisser's Q2 for Actual Admissions was also found to be 0.62 which concludes that Behavioural intentions are also important in the conceptual model under study and the inferences can be generalized in different contexts for future studies.

d) Importance of Performance Map Analysis (IMPA)

Priority map analysis i.e., importance-performance matrix (Ringle and Sarstedt, 2016) was applied to reinforce the results of the constructs under study. IMPA is more correctly applied in the presence of mediators or complex mediation effects. Variance Accounted for (VAF) method is applied to test the level of mediation. Therefore, IMPA in this study helped to identify which of the scale, i.e., Perceived Usefulness of Social Media, Perceived ease of Use of Social Media, and Behavioral Intentions to take admission was important

3941

to outline the performance of actual admission (Ringle and Sarstedt, 2016). Strong total effects on behavioral intentions were acknowledged with a relatively highly important construct in the study.

Table 6: Importance –Performance Map (Construct wise unstandardized effects)

	Importance	Performances
PEU	0	51.97
PU	0.007	55.848
BI	0.011	62.553
Mean	0.006	56.790

Source: Author's Calculations

Table Number 6, represents the unstandardized Total Effects of the Perceived Usefulness of Social Media, Perceived ease of Use of Social Media, and Behavioral Intentions to take admission on actual admission to smooth the progress of the ceteris paribus explanation of the impact of the antecedent. The performance of the construct's actual admission is calculated as 56.790. All the essential conditions were met as all the pointers were having significant positive loading and weights (Ringle and Sarstedt, 2016) to apply IMPA. By calculating the mean values of importance and performance of the constructs four quadrants were successfully created. One unit change in behavioral intentions from 62.553 to 63.553 would enhance the performance of faulty engagement from 56.790 to 57.790 with a total effect of 0.006. Therefore, behavioral intentions are comparatively more imperative in the four quadrants and would have more impact on the performance of faculty engagement. Therefore, educational institutes with a more focused developing such promotional content on social media can motivate students to have a better understanding, knowledge, and information regarding the institutes sponsoring their behavioral intentions leading to actual admission taking or selection of institute (Sagynbekova, 2021; Chanana, 2021).

7. Discussion

Due to increased competition, less state financing, tougher admittance criteria, and rising tuition costs, educational institutes have recently faced new problems. As a response, there has been a renewed emphasis on growing the student body by utilizing fresh marketing and hiring techniques (Scullion, and Molesworth, 2016; Selwyn, 2012; Joly, 2016). Educational institutes have a unique opportunity to develop integrated marketing plans centered on recruiting prospective students to their educational institutes using social media platforms to connect with those potential students because of the rapid advancements in online technology and the use of social media by prospective students (Sashittal, DeMar, & Jassawalla, 2016). To understand the effects social media had on students' decision-making processes about their college choices, additional research was required (Hisel, and Pinion, 2020).). By examining how educational institutes used social media sites to sell their institutions to potential students, this research study sought to investigate how social media affected students' decision-making processes while choosing colleges (Salem, 2020).

Educational institutes are struggling to attract more students because of heightened rivalry, shrinking state funding, and a stagnant economy (Hisel, and Pinion, 2020).). Educational institutes must acknowledge the influence that social media platforms developed by educational institutes have on students' college choice decision-making process and comprehend how to use that information to effectively recruit potential students by concentrating on the institutional qualities that student's value in the context of higher education College Choice process. According to the TAM model of technology acceptance the perceived ease of use of social media and perceived usefulness impacts the behavioral

3932

Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,*12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*

intentions of the students to make an actual decision regarding choosing an appropriate college for them, study's findings, highlighted that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use both have a significant impact on behavioral intentions which further significantly influence the decision of taking admission Facebook and Twitter are the two active social media platforms that the majority of colleges, both small and large, use the most. In actuality, more educational institutes posted to their Twitter accounts than any other social networking platform.

While institutions need to keep their Facebook and Twitter profiles updated and active, there are two more social media platforms Snapchat and Instagram that may be used more effectively to attract potential students. To attract students and influence their college choice process throughout the higher education setting of the college choice model, educational institutes should be actively posting on their Instagram pages. Additionally, there is a chance for the colleges to make better use of their YouTube accounts by frequently uploading fresh films and recruiting materials. The majority of the educational institutes' YouTube accounts, however, continued to receive a lot of views and new subscribers throughout the seven days, indicating the popularity of YouTube accounts and giving educational institutes the chance to actively post new videos, such as recruiting and student life-related ones, to their YouTube accounts to attract potential students.

Implications: Many recommendations may be made to educational institutes' admission managers regarding how the use of social media sites affects students' college decision process and how to address these issues. These findings can aid institutions in their efforts to attract potential students more successfully. Educational institutes must continue to use their Facebook and Twitter pages for recruiting, but they must also take into account the fact that more and more prospective students are using other; more widely used social media platforms. Instagram and Snapchat are two of these recent social media apps. While some educational institutes use both Instagram and Snapchat, more educational institutes should actively post images and videos to their accounts to promote their schools, connect with potential students, and increase the number of followers, shares, and comments from prospective students. By doing this, they will increase their visibility and foster a positive online reputation, which will ultimately lead to a rise in enrollments. To satisfy the needs of potential students and grow the number of views and subscribers, educational institutes must regularly refresh their YouTube channels with fresh video content. According to the study's findings, educational institutes should regularly post about student events, athletic contests, and campus activities to engage prospective students. These posts received the most likes, shares, and comments from both current and prospective students, and they are crucial to the higher education context phase of prospective students' college choice models.

Moreover, using hashtags on social media will provide institutions with more chances to communicate with and recruit potential students. To ensure the hashtags trend on well-known social media sites and increase the visibility of the universities' posts as well as highlight their reputation, students, and events to social media users, educational institutes must create straightforward, distinctive, and simple-to-remember hashtags that can be used by prospective students, current students, alumni, and fans. However, educational institutes may need to hire a social media director within both their communications and admissions offices to

3933

*Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*

Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

Section A-Research paper

strategically manage their social media sites to market the educational institutes and attract potential students online. This is because there are so many different social media platforms to monitor and keep active through the posting of pictures, videos, and other content. Educational institute's administrators must be very strategic when using an educational institute's social media platforms to carry out their integrated marketing communications plan because social media use by educational institutes can have a positive or negative impact on an educational institute's image and reputation, which in turn could cause an increase or decrease in an educational institutes' enrollment.

Limitations

This study attempted to evaluate student college choice and how it is affected by social media advertising by educational institutions. As a result, a major drawback of this research is that it is cross-sectional. Long-term studies must be done to comprehend human behavior in any occurrence. The sample's narrow geographic distribution was another problem. It may be possible to get more meaningful connections with higher beta values to fully generalize the study's findings with larger sample size and more organizations. Therefore, thorough survey research is required, taking into account institutions other than higher ones that are located in various geographic regions. The current research findings can be utilized as a reference for comparative studies between higher and lower-level educational institutions, between the public and commercial sectors, etc.

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Section A-Research paper

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Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

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Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,*12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*

Impact of Social Media Promotions on Recruitment of Secondary Students: A Study Based in UG Professional Colleges in Delhi-Ncr

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3941

*Eur. Chem. Bull. **2023**,12(Special Issue 5),3931-3941*