

Hedonic Pleasure, Cyber Dating, Live-In Relationship, and Social Acceptance Amongst IT Professionals

Urvashi Tandon, Chitkara Business School, Chitkara University, Punjab, India

Deepika Jhamb, Chitkara University, Punjab, India*

Pawan Chand, Chitkara University, Punjab, India

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the intricate relationships among hedonic pleasure, cyber dating, live-in relationships, and societal acceptance among professionals working in information technology sector in India. Data were collected from 269 millennials working in the IT sector of India via a survey questionnaire. Structure equation modeling was implied to analyze the collected data. According to the findings of the study, hedonic pleasure has a direct and significant effect on social acceptance, live-in relationships, and online dating of millennial employees. The indirect relationship demonstrates that cyber dating and live-in relationships can fully mediate hedonic pleasure and social acceptance. Employers, academicians, parents, and other stakeholders will benefit from the findings of this study in acknowledging the personal lifestyles of millennial employees towards social acceptance.

KEYWORDS

Cyber Dating, Hedonic Pleasure, IT Professionals, Live-In Relationship, Social Acceptance

1. INTRODUCTION

‘Man is by nature a sociable animal, an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human,’ said Aristotle, a renowned Greek philosopher (Aristotle, 1984). The above quote is universally recognized and supported by numerous studies (Vinciarelli, 2009; Vinciarelli, 2011; Moustakas, 2015; Ozolins, 2017; Boyatzis, 2020; Shetty et al., 2021; Kumari and Vangapandu, 2021). This clearly demonstrates the significance of social interaction (Colomo-Palacios et al., 2017). However, the glamorous world, on the other hand, is revealing a distinct picture, where people are increasingly moving towards virtual space for both searching as well as building relationships. The key determinants of this transition are technological advancements, a competitive work place environment, and an active lifestyle (Hu and Kellinger, 2008; Tarafdar, et al., 2020; Khurana and Misra, 2021). People are becoming more task-driven and output-oriented to gain success in their professional lives by compromising their personal relationships. This generates the hedonic needs of unfulfilled love, belongingness, and acceptance. People start looking for relationships using dating

DOI: 10.4018/IJHCITP.300311

*Corresponding Author

This article published as an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and production in any medium, provided the author of the original work and original publication source are properly credited.

apps like Tinder, Bumble, Hinge, Ok Cupid, and others to fulfil these hedonic pleasures. According to an article published in 'The Indian Express' by Mehrotra, (2021), India has become the second largest revenue market for dating apps after the US, with \$323 million of revenue in 2020. These dating apps are also becoming popular in females as it witnessed 12 percent spike in female users in 2020 (The Times of India, 2021). The usage of online dating applications further triggers to cyber dating and live-in relationships, where couples start living together after hook-up (Rosenfeld, 2018). Looking at the current trends, the present research study is an attempt to evaluate the intricated relationships among cyber dating, live-in relationships, hedonic pleasures, and social acceptance.

Sautter et al., (2010, p. 555) defined cyber dating or internet dating as 'the use of websites that provide a database of potential partners—typically in close geographical proximity—that one can browse and contact, generally for a fee.' Cyber-dating had significantly altered the meaning and structure of relationships. The primary motivation for using cyber dating platform is to satisfy the hedonic pleasures such as 'fun,' 'excitements,' and 'amorousness' (Bryant and Sheldon, 2017). Furthermore, literature also claims that cyber dating has increased the likelihood of live-in relationships between partners who meet online for hook-ups on dating sites. Narayan et al., (2021, p. 18) defined live-in relationship as 'continuous cohabitation for a significant period of time, between partners who are not married to each other in a legally acceptable way and are sharing a common household.' Initially, live-in relationships were not considered with elegance in emerging societies such as India and it was believed that these are meant for western nations. Now, these relationships are also getting acceptability by emerging societies because of modernization of societies and surge of cyber dating (Tribune, 2021). People living in these societies began to recognize that marriage is not required for total fulfillment of a relationship. Moreover, India has finally stepped ahead and walked with rest of the world by legalising the live-in relationships (Agrawal, 2012; Mkrtchian, and Chernyshenko, 2021). The legal acceptability of this relationship in India has further gain popularity and there has been an increase in number of such relationships (Narayan et al., 2021).

Despite gaining significant importance, there is a scarce literature available that explores the intricated relationships amongst cyber dating, hedonic pleasures, live-in relationship and social acceptability. Further, majority of the research has validated these as solitary constructs without understanding the intricacies among these. Therefore, this becomes the motivation to conduct a study where interaction among these could be empirically validated. This research will have significant implications in understanding the complicated relationships of the modern society of digital era.

The sequence of the manuscript is as follows. The second section deals with theoretical background and hypotheses development followed by research methods in third section. Section 4 covers data analysis and discussion. Conclusion, implications, limitations and future scope is discussed in the last section of the study.

2. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The social exchange theory (Blau, 1986; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Sledgianowski and Kulviwat, 2008; Nakonezny, and Denton, 2008) emphasized upon the interpersonal exchange of information on social websites and reinforces the relationship between couples. The theory stresses that a higher level of interaction derives higher hedonic pleasure from the social exchange on hi-tech mediums. Social exchange theory signifies that people in relations are inspired by the favorable consequences (Blau, 1986; Thibaut and Kelly, 1959). From the standpoint of social exchange theory, the desirability and capability to interact varies with the recognitions, and rewards and has inverse relationship with alleged costs (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). As per Sprecher (1998, p. 32), "Although rewards, costs, and reciprocity, as defined in general social exchange theory, refer to any types of exchanges, these concepts can also be redefined more specifically to refer to sexual exchanges." In most of the close relationships, sexual recompenses are exchanged for confidence and love. The duration of a friendship or romance may also influence the process of social exchange (Nakonezny, and Denton, 2008).

Redmond (2015) also highlighted that social exchange influences the instigation of a relationship and addressed that “If good outcomes are experienced in initial contacts or if these contacts lead the persons to anticipate good outcomes in the future, the interaction is likely to be repeated (p. 17).” Therefore, this research extends social exchange theory by validating role of hedonic pleasures in achieving social acceptance.

Hedonic theory (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Ha et al., 2007; Van der Heijden, 2004; Schacter et al., 2011) posits those individuals choose to form relationships based on their emotional experiences, whether good or bad. Individuals in relationships who have had good emotional experiences are more likely to transmit happiness. This theory has also been extended to validate human behaviour along with consumption behaviour (Holsapple and Wu, 2007; Waite, & Joyner 2001). For example, Titz et al., (2002) used this theory in studying gambling and confirmed significant association between hedonic responses and attitude of gamblers. Hedonic transition to romantic relationships is sometimes considered as an unusual course but it helps in progressing the relationship at fast pace. Launching a new relationship provides a boost on overall well-being and leads to an improvement in work performance (Bao and Lyubomirsky, 2013). Therefore, this theory has been extended to study the associations among cyberdating, live-in relationships and hedonic pleasure among IT professionals.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Hedonic pleasure is derived as the outcome of emotions and joy (Babin et al., 1994; Turel et al., 2007; Bruwer and Rueger-Muck, 2019; Chatterjee, 2021). Employees use a computer-mediated social network that is built on technology. Facebook, Whatsapp and Cyberdating sites for example, can be used to express personal feelings with friends and colleagues (Waite and Joyner, 2001; Hu and Kellinger, 2008; Tarafdar, et al., 2020; Pathak, 2021; Tandon et al., 2021). Maximum interactions through the social exchange process increases employee proximity, which can lead to more happiness and excitement in living together (Sledgianowski and Kulviwat, 2008; Rosen and Sherman, 2006). Hedonic enjoyment aids the employee in attracting specific attention both at work and in society (Grieve et al., 2013). Cooper et al., (1998) and Impett et al., (2005) emphasized the need of understanding the diverse parts of psychological experience from pleasure to generalize the approach-avoidance, sexual, and interpersonal drive. Approach motives indicate positive consequences such as increased interpersonal physical pleasure, increased relationship connection, and care for one another (Grieve et al., 2013). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H1: Employees’ hedonic pleasures have a positive impact on social acceptance.

The pleasure and joy derived from employee-to-employee talks contribute to personal desire and drive individuals to use information technology for entertainment and to frequent social networking sites to share personal feelings with one another (Sledgianowski and Kulviwat, 2009). People participate in the media to meet their personal motives, according to the gratification theory (Katz et al., 1974). Employees use cyber dating sites for hedonic pleasure, finding new friends, romance, chats, curiosity, sexual partners, adventures, and comfort after a life crisis, releasing stress, information, and personal identity (Lawson and Leck, 2006; Wang and Chang, 2010; Mull and Lee, 2014; Stewart et al., 2017; Magsamen-Conrad et al., 2015). Therefore, we posit that:

H2: Employees’ hedonic pleasures have a positive impact on cyber dating.

Joy, excitement, desire, love, passion, commitment, trust, concern for each other, and conflicts are all aspects of romance in a relationship (Bao and Lyubomirsky, 2013). Hedonic adaptation refers to the advantages and disadvantages of a person’s level of happiness after responding to a specific stimuli, such

as pre-marriage levels (Frederick and Loewenstein, 1999). Most millennial employees, regardless of their gender, choose to spend time together to get to know one another and adopt cohabitation or live-in relationships before marrying, preferring to live under one roof (Goodwin et al., 2010; Rhoades et al., 2015). Commitment theory on emotions (Aube, 1998) stressed the importance of desire in couples to stay together for extended periods of time in order to feel hedonic pleasure in their lifestyle (Johnson et al., 1999).

H3: Employees' hedonic pleasures have a positive impact live-in relationship.

Three reasons are given by the researchers for selecting cyberdating. First, for fun (Couch and Liamputtong, 2008; Lawson and Leck, 2006), people can easily access a society-accepted online cyberdating website via mobile phone, laptop, or other apps, browse the numerous profiles, see the attractive pictures of the individuals, and show curiosity to read their characteristics and match such with their taste, and engage in frequent interactions (Wang et al., 2010). Second, to develop the relationship (Couch and Liamputtong, 2008; Wang et al., 2010), the selected online profiles were contacted via mobiles, facebook, or other apps to share the feelings of romance and moments were enjoyed to relieve routine stress and anxiety (Lawson and Leck, 2006), and third, to 'hook up' with partner through physical contact (Couch and Liamputtong, 2008; Wang et al., 2010). According to (Taylor, 2015), bachelors in their 20s like cyberdating for entertainment and fun, but they are less interested in long-term commitment and building proximity, whereas those in their 30s want to use cyberdating to form a relationship. Men are interested in cyberdating for fun and pleasure, according to (Taylor, 2015; Paul et al., 2000), whereas women are interested in developing a personal and close relationship. Cyberdating is an online method of communication between couples that allows them to exchange as much information as possible through video chats and text messages (Machimbarrena et al., 2018; Borrajo et al., 2015). Cyberdating encourages people to form love relationships by alleviating loneliness, sadness, substance abuse, and shyness (Valkenburg and Peter, 2007; Kim et al., 2009). On the basis of above discussion, following hypothesis has been formulated:

H4: Cyber dating mediates the relationship between hedonic pleasure and social acceptance in the employees.

The probable grounds for live-in relationships among employees in their professional domain are self- optimism and self-image (Brissette et al., 2002), warmth (Fiske et al., 2002), likeliness (Fiske et al., 2002), dynamism, value, and social-desirability (Peeters, 2004). Self -optimism assures the high probability of occurrence of positive events, warmth, and likeliness reinforce the trust, passion of romance and care for each other in the relationship. People like to live fast life, try to find the pleasure, joy, peace all around, believe in themselves and expect the high social acceptance (Brissette et al., 2002).

H5: Live-in relationship mediates the relationship between hedonic pleasure and social acceptance among employees.

2.2 Proposed Conceptual Model

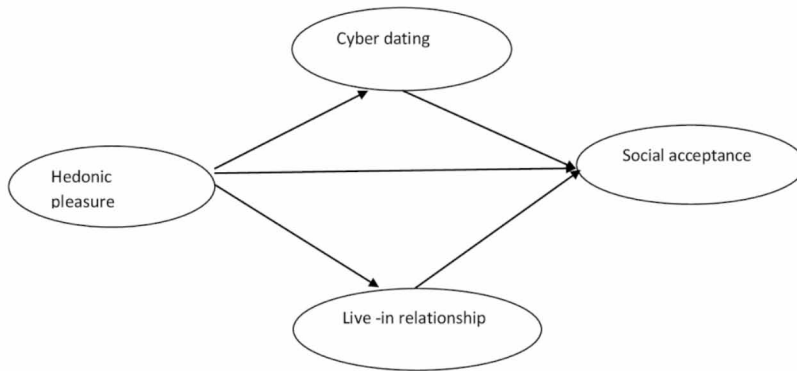
See Figure 1.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Survey Instrument

The survey questionnaire was divided into two sections: A and B. The demographic features of respondents are found in Section A, while the item statements for hedonic pleasure,

Figure 1. Shows how hedonic pleasure, cyber dating, live-in relationships, and social acceptance are intertwined among millennial employees in India's information technology sector



cyber dating, live-in relationships, and social acceptance are included in Section B. For the assessment, the survey questionnaire has a total of 43 item statements. Hedonic pleasure was measured by taking the scale of Snaith et al., (1995), which comprises total 13 items including statements on interest pastimes, social interaction, sensory experience and food drink. Employees' cyber dating was examined using a 14-item scale segregated into three sub-constructs namely hook up, relationship, and fun. The scale was developed and validated by Clemen et al., (2015) and Wang and Chang, (2010). The items of construct social acceptance (4 items) were derived from the previous study of Bryant and Sheldon, (2017), which reveals the employee's attitude toward cyber dating. The live-in relationship was assessed using the scale of Fower et al., (2016) included a total of 12 items. All the statements were measured on the Likert's scale with options 1 to 5 where '1' stands for strongly disagree to '5' strongly agree (see Appendix).

3.2 Data Collection

The data was collected using purposive sampling technique from 269 respondents comprising millennials working in the information technology sector of Tier 1 cities such as Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Ahmadabad, and Pune. An online google link was generated and circulated among employees of IT companies. As the nature of information is delicate and personal, therefore respondents were ensured about the confidentiality of the information provided by them. This also helped to meet the condition of social desirability bias (Misra, 2020). To enhance the participation and response rate, reminders were sent to them with a request to circulate the link of questionnaire among their peers also. Employees at the middle and high levels of hierarchy in firms classified as team leaders, system analysts, senior managers, associate director, project manager, chief IT officer, Human resource officer, and others made up a sample of 130 females and remaining 139 males making a sample of 269 respondents in the research study. The working experiences of millennial employees were ranged between 2 to 18 years. The demographic characteristics of millennial employees are discussed in Table 1.

Millennial employees were judged eligible for this study. Because adults between the ages of 25 and 40 are establishing themselves in their work lives and looking forward to enjoying hedonic pleasure with their partners. In India's Tier 1 cities, there are a large number of information technology companies that provide rich exposure to modern lifestyles and a rejuvenating environment.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of millennial employees

S.no	Item	Valid (%)
1	Total respondents (N)= 269	
	Gender	
	Male = 139	51.67
	Female = 130	48.32
	Education Qualifications	
2	Graduate = 186	69.14
	Postgraduate= 83	30.86
3	Length of Service (in years)	
	2 to 8 years=145	53.9
	9 to 18 years=124	46.1
4	Annual Income	
	0 to 10 lacs (INR)=102	37.92
	Above 11 lacs (INR)=167	62.08

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Structural Equation Modelling Analysis

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS 20 was used to analyze the data. SEM was preferred over other techniques since it integrates many standard methods such as correlation, multiple regression, factor analysis into one single software (Lowry and Gaskin, 2014).

4.1.1 Reliability and Validity

To assess the reliability and validity of the proposed measurement model, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out with items of live-in relationships, cyber-dating, hedonic pleasure and social adjustment. The CFA (Table 2) indicated that the standardized loadings of all the included variables are significant. One item SA4 of social acceptance was deleted due to low factor loadings. The constructs further demonstrate evidence of reliability (values convergent > 0.60 on all occasions), validity (significant and high standardized loadings as well as average variance extracted > 0.50 on all occasions), composite reliability (values > 0.70 on all occasions), and discriminant validity (AVE estimate of each construct is larger than the squared correlations of this construct to any other construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) (Table 3).

4.2 Structural Model

The theoretical model was estimated on all the dependent and independent variables (table 4, Figure 2). Hedonic pleasure in the employees had significant relationship with social acceptance ($\beta=0.22$, $p=0.000$) thereby confirming hypothesis 1 which stated that “Employees’ hedonic pleasures have a positive impact on social acceptance”. Further, hypothesis 2 which stated that “Employees’ hedonic pleasures have a positive impact on cyber dating” is also supported ($\beta=0.73$, $p=0.000$). This finding indicates that IT professional have the passion for visiting cyberdating sites for hedonic pleasure, chatting with new friends and relieve job-related stress. Moving further, the results also indicated the significant positive impact of hedonic pleasure on live-in relationship among the employees working in IT sector ($\beta=0.17$, $p=0.000$) thereby accepting hypothesis 3. This indicates that millennials like to

Table 2. Measurement Model

		Std. Estimate	Std. Error	Critical ratio	Average Variance Extracted	Composite reliability
Cyber-dating						
Hook-up	HP1	0.759				
Mean=3.851	HP2	0.873	0.066	15.172		
SD=0.776	HP3	0.839	0.071	14.726	0.609	0.903
	HP4	0.722	0.075	12.346		
	HP6	0.701	0.077	11.933		
	HP7	0.775	0.087	13.098		
Relationships	REL1	0.735				
Mean=3.919	REL2	0.798	0.088	12.769	0.602	0.858
SD=0.738	REL3	0.824	0.116	13.187		
	REL4	0.743	0.1	11.857		
Fun	FUN1	0.671				
Mean=3.344	FUN2	0.86	0.129	12.7	0.718	0.878
SD=1.017	FUN3	0.97	0.138	13.457		
Hedonic Pleasure	HP1	0.592				
Mean=3.782	HP2	0.604	0.065	13.176		
SD=0.647	HP3	0.652	0.121	8.808		
	HP4	0.683	0.129	9.1		
	HP5	0.678	0.137	9.053		
	HP6	0.807	0.109	10.177		
	HP7	0.776	0.102	9.923	0.572	0.937
	HP8	0.788	0.1	10.022		
	HP9	0.782	0.112	9.979		
	HP10	0.695	0.107	9.206		
	HP11	0.807	0.117	10.185		
	HP12	0.788	0.13	10.029		
	HP13	0.804	0.13	10.159		
Live-in relationship	LR1	0.653				
Mean=4.118	LR2	0.722	0.067	14.006		
SD= 0.697	LR3	0.821	0.095	11.658		
	LR4	0.768	0.113	11.043		
	LR5	0.667	0.105	9.814		
	LR6	0.76	0.123	10.956		
	LR7	0.768	0.127	11.043	0.571	0.83
	LR8	0.781	0.091	11.192		
	LR9	0.802	0.086	11.439		
	LR10	0.756	0.092	10.903		
	LR11	0.807	0.124	11.495		
	LR12	0.711	0.111	10.36		
Social acceptance	SA1	0.847				
Mean=3.753	SA2	0.989	0.058	23.705	0.849	0.944
SD=1.031	SA3	0.923	0.06	21.509		

Table 3. Correlation Matrix

	Hook-up	Relationships	Fun	Hedonic Pleasure	Live-in relationship	Social acceptance
Hook-up	0.780					
Relationships	.727**	0.775				
Fun	.617**	.575**	0.847			
Hedonic Pleasure	.577**	.617**	.650**	0.756		
Live-in relationship	.189**	.190**	.105	.175**	0.755	
Social acceptance	.206**	.224**	.185**	.216**	.543**	0.921

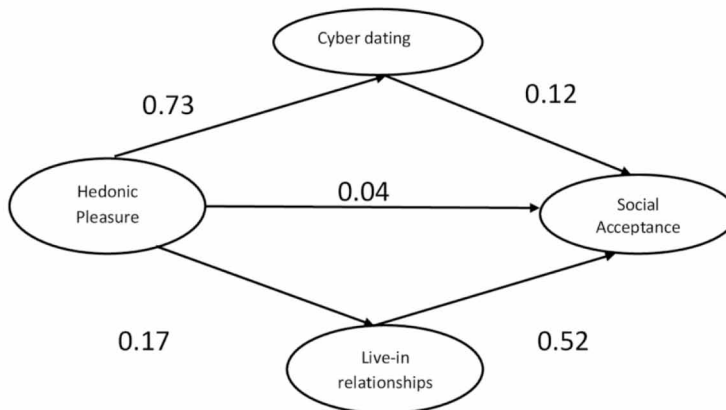
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Note:* Diagonal values in bold represent the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) while off-diagonal values represent the raw inter-construct correlations

Table 4. Hypotheses

No.	Hypotheses	(β)	C.R.	P Value	Remark
H1	Hedonic pleasure in the employees significantly impact the social acceptance.	0.22	3.618	***	Supported
H2	Hedonic pleasure significantly associated with cyber dating in the employees.	0.73	13.47	***	Supported
H3	Hedonic pleasure significantly affects the live-in relationship in the employees	0.17	2.902	.004	Supported

CMIN/df=3.126, GFI=0.945, AGFI= 0.923. NFI=0.958, RFI=0.936, IFI=0.918, TLI=0.982, CFI=0.932, RMSEA= 0.065

Figure 2. Model after mediation



devote some time together to understand each other and implement the practices of live- in relationship before the marriage.

4.3 Model After Mediation

Hypotheses 4 and 5 ascertained that cyberdating and live-in relationship mediate the relationship between hedonic pleasure and social acceptance. Table 5 indicates the mediating effect of cyberdating and live-in relationship. The parameter estimates of relationship between hedonic pleasure and social acceptance became insignificant ($\beta=0.04$, $p=0.614$) thereby indicating full mediation. To confirm the mediation, Sobel test was performed (Mac Kinnon et al., 2012). The value of the Sobel test statistic with cyberdating as a mediator was 2.368 and was significant at $p < 0.017$. Sobel test was also performed with live-in relationship as a mediator and the value was 2.69 and was significant at $p < 0.007$. These results imply that cyberdating and live-in relationship depict a full mediating effect on the relationship between hedonic pleasure and social acceptance.

5. DISCUSSION

The research builds a theoretical model by examining the complex linkages that exist between cyber dating, hedonic pleasures, live-in relationships, and social acceptability in employees' working in IT sector. Due to limited number of studies to date, this research makes an earnest attempt to understand the mediating roles of cyber-dating and live-in relationships thereby validating social exchange theory and hedonic theory. Results of the study indicated the significant positive impact of employees' hedonic pleasures on social acceptance. This finding corroborates with the results of the previous studies (Turel et al., 2007; Bruwer and Rueger-Muck, 2019). Moreover, In India, there is a great deal of variety in the workforce; these millennials come from diverse geographical locations to work in IT Sector. As they stay away from family and live in a rented house, therefore, feel isolated. Consequently, IT sector employees frequently share their emotions and feeling with peers which in-turn leads to close propinquity, leading to happiness, and excitement of living together.

Findings of the study confirmed strong association between hedonic pleasure and cyberdating indicating that IT professionals really relish virtual meetings as it helps them to get close and share things. This finding is in sync with the previous studies (Mull and Lee, 2014; Stewart et al., 2017; Magsamen-Conrad et al., 2015). Cyberdating sites allow employees to find new friends which help them to reduce job stress and provide them comfort. Moving further, hedonic pleasure is also significantly associated with live-in relationships although its impact was least among other two variables thereby supporting the findings of the previous studies (Bao and Lyubomirsky, 2013; Goodwin et al., 2010; Rhoades et al, 2015). This substantiates that IT professionals spend time

Table 5. Mediation results

No.	Hypotheses	Direct effect β	Total effect β	Indirect effect β	P value	Remark
H4	Hedonic pleasure→cyberdating→ social acceptance	0.73	0.04	0.09	0.614	Full mediation
H5	Hedonic pleasure→live-in relationship→ social acceptance.	0.175	0.04	0.08	0.614	Full mediation

together to acquaint themselves with the habits of each other, and adopt live-in relationships before marrying, prefer to live under one roof (Rhoades et al, 2015). Thus, they feel hedonic pleasure in their lives by indulging in live-in relationships.

Both cyberdating and live-in relationships showed full mediating effect between hedonic pleasure and social acceptance. Complete mediation specifies the significance of cyber-dating and live-in relationships in increasing social acceptance. These findings support the previous studies (Machimbarrena et al., 2018; Borrajo et al., 2015; Fiske et al., 2002). Both cyber-dating and live-in relationships are framed in response to attitudinal similarity resulting in sustained relationships.

5.1 Implications of the Study

This study bridges the gap by empirically validating the interrelationships among hedonic pleasure, cyber-dating, live-in relationships, and their impact on social acceptance. The results of the study therefore are of great importance to academia as well as industry. Recently, there has been an increase in usage of cyber-dating sites to get rid of seclusion due to job-stress and sadness. The study provides evidence that hedonic pleasure is significantly related to cyberdating, live-in relationships as well as social acceptance. The study also established the mediating role of cyber-dating and live-in relationship thereby extending the contribution of existing theories.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The study discusses the significant association of hedonic pleasure, live-in relationship and social acceptance. The findings support the following theories namely social exchange theory (Blau, 1986); and hedonic theory (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Ha et al., 2007; Van der Heijden, 2004; Schacter et al., 2011). According to the findings, cyber dating, as an online medium, plays a vital role among millennial professionals in the information technology sector in exchanging regular interactions and expressing emotions for hedonic pleasure. The study extends the contribution of social exchange theory by confirming that higher hedonic pleasure leads to social acceptance in the context of cyberdating and live-in relationships. The individuals require a partner to share their feelings and wish to enjoy life by satisfying their physical and emotional needs. Hence, adopt cyberdating and live-in relationship to make the lifestyle glamorous and dynamic as in Western context (Tribune, 2021). The above discussion confirms that individuals tend to prefer live-in relationships to satisfy their hedonic motives which extend the contribution of hedonic theory.

5.3 Practical Implications

The findings of this study are valuable for employers and the general public in recognizing the living styles of millennials who come from diverse parts of India to work in the information technology sector. According to the findings, hedonic pleasure is significantly linked to cyber dating, live-in partnerships, and social acceptance. The study found the significant mediating effect of cyber-dating and live-in relationships between hedonic pleasure and social acceptance, the increased significance of such findings to sociologists, psychologist, and anthropologist aid in understanding how trends are perceived by Indian society on sensitive problems related to interpersonal relationships. The employers understand the millennials' basic urges to be free of workplace stress; they may make improvements to their overarching human resources management policies program for the employees. Besides having a hectic work schedule, IT companies should provide sufficient recreation facilities such as yoga camps, short trips, festive celebrations, periodical work-from-home facilities to their employees which will help them in improving the interpersonal relationship and enhance the organizational productivity. Because a stress free rejuvenated mind in a young person contributes considerably to personality freshness, innovations and creativity at work.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

The data for this study was gathered using the purposive sampling technique from 269 respondents. The study's modest sample size will need to be generalized using a large number of participants in future research study. The information collected from the respondents' was personal and sensitive in nature. So, it becomes difficult to convince the respondents to fill the data. For such subjects, qualitative research approach can be better used to develop a rapport with respondents to extract the actual information. This will also help to record the expressions of the respondents which will further provide the information which they may be reluctant to share. Additionally, the study could have validated other important variables such as performance, career success, and well-being also to make it more comprehensive. To accomplish our research objective, the data was gathered from the IT professionals only. Future studies may consider other sectors in other developing as well as developed countries to have a broader perspective.

FUNDING AGENCY

Publisher has waived the Open Access publishing fee.

REFERENCES

- Agrawal, A. (2012). Law and 'Live-in' Relationships in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 50–56.
- Aristotle, J. B. (1984). *The complete works of Aristotle* (Vol. 2). Princeton University Press.
- Aubé, M. (1998). A commitment theory of emotions. AAAI-1998.
- Babin, B. J., Darden, W. R., & Griffin, M. (1994). Work and/or fun: Measuring hedonic and utilitarian shopping value. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(4), 644–656. doi:10.1086/209376
- Bao, K. J., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2013). The rewards of happiness. *The Oxford handbook of happiness*, 12, 119–133.
- Blau, G. J. (1986). Job involvement and organizational commitment as interactive predictors of tardiness and absenteeism. *Journal of Management*, 12(4), 577–584. doi:10.1177/014920638601200412
- Borrajó, E., Gámez-Guadix, M., Pereda, N., & Calvete, E. (2015). The development and validation of the cyber dating abuse questionnaire among young couples. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 48, 358–365. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2015.01.063
- Boyatzis, R. E. (2020). Social Intelligence. *The Wiley Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences: Personality Processes and Individual Differences*, 435–438.
- Brisette, I., Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. (2002). The role of optimism in social network development, coping, and psychological adjustment during a life transition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 102–111. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.82.1.102 PMID:11811628
- Bruwer, J., & Rueger-Muck, E. (2019). Wine tourism and hedonic experience: A motivation-based experiential view. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 19(4), 488–502. doi:10.1177/1467358418781444
- Bryant, K., & Sheldon, P. (2017). Cyber Dating in the Age of Mobile Apps: Understanding Motives, Attitudes, and Characteristics of Users. *American Communication Journal*, 19(2).
- Chatterjee, S. (2021). Antecedence of Attitude Towards IoT Usage: A Proposed Unified Model for IT Professionals and Its Validation. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(2), 13–34. doi:10.4018/IJHCITP.2021040102
- Clemens, C., Atkin, D., & Krishnan, A. (2015). The influence of biological and personality traits on gratifications obtained through online dating websites. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 49, 120–129. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2014.12.058
- Colomo-Palacios, R., García-Peñalvo, F. J., Stantchev, V., & Misra, S. (2017). Towards a social and context-aware mobile recommendation system for tourism. *Pervasive and Mobile Computing*, 38, 505–515. doi:10.1016/j.pmcj.2016.03.001
- Cooper, M. L., Shapiro, C. M., & Powers, A. M. (1998). Motivations for sex and risky sexual behavior among adolescents and young adults: A functional perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(6), 1528–1558. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.75.6.1528 PMID:9914665
- Couch, D., & Liamputtong, P. (2008). Online dating and mating: The use of the internet to meet sexual partners. *Qualitative Health Research*, 18(2), 268–279. doi:10.1177/1049732307312832 PMID:18216345
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874–900. doi:10.1177/0149206305279602
- Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J., Glick, P., & Xu, J. (2002). A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: Competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(6), 878–902. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.82.6.878 PMID:12051578
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variable and measurement error. *JMR, Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39–50. doi:10.1177/002224378101800104
- Fowers, B. J., Laurenceau, J. P., Penfield, R. D., Cohen, L. M., Lang, S. F., Owenz, M. B., & Pasipanodya, E. (2016). Enhancing relationship quality measurement: The development of the Relationship Flourishing Scale. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 30(8), 997–1007. doi:10.1037/fam0000263 PMID:27918187

- Frederick, S., & Loewenstein, G. (1999). 16 Hedonic adaptation. *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology*, 302-29.
- Goodwin, P. Y., Mosher, W. D., & Chandra, A. (2010). Marriage and cohabitation in the United States: A statistical portrait based on Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. *Vital and Health Statistics. Series 23, Data from the National Survey of Family Growth*, 23(28). PMID:20629347
- Grieve, R., Indian, M., Witteveen, K., Tolan, G. A., & Marrington, J. (2013). Face-to-face or Facebook: Can social connectedness be derived online? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(3), 604–609. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2012.11.017
- Ha, J. H., Kim, S. Y., Bae, S. C., Bae, S., Kim, H., Sim, M., Lyoo, I. K., & Cho, S. C. (2007). Depression and Internet addiction in adolescents. *Psychopathology*, 40(6), 424–430. doi:10.1159/000107426 PMID:17709972
- Holsapple, C. W., & Wu, J. (2007). User acceptance of virtual worlds. *ACM SIGMIS Database*, 38(4), 86.10.1145/1314234.1314250
- Hu, T., & Kellinger, W. J. (2008). Why people continue to use social networking services: developing a comprehensive model. *Proceeding of the 29th International Conference on Information System (ICIS)*.
- Impett, E. A., Peplau, L. A., & Gable, S. L. (2005). Approach and avoidance sexual motives: Implications for personal and interpersonal well-being. *Personal Relationships*, 12(4), 465–482. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2005.00126.x
- Johnson, M. P., Caughlin, J. P., & Huston, T. L. (1999). The tripartite nature of marital commitment: Personal, moral, and structural reasons to stay married. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(1), 160–177. doi:10.2307/353891
- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1974). *The Uses and Gratifications Approach to Mass Communication*. Sage Pubns.
- Khurana, K., & Misra, R. K. (2021). Measuring Employability Skills of Budding IT Professionals in India. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(1), 51–73. doi:10.4018/IJHCITP.2021010104
- Kim, M., Kwon, K., & Lee, M. (2009). Psychological characteristics of internet dating service users: The effect of self-esteem, involvement, and sociability on the use of internet dating services. *Cyberpsychology & Behavior*, 12(4), 445–449. doi:10.1089/cpb.2008.0296 PMID:19630586
- Kumari, T., & Vangapandu, R. D. (2021). Impact of Work-Family Conflict on Career Development of Knowledge Workers in Indian IT Sector: Examining Moderating Effect of Age. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(3), 37–53. doi:10.4018/IJHCITP.2021070103
- Lawson, H. M., & Leck, K. (2006). Dynamics of internet dating. *Social Science Computer Review*, 24(2), 189–208. doi:10.1177/0894439305283402
- Lowry, P. B., & Gaskin, J. (2014). Partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling (SEM) for building and testing behavioral causal theory: When to choose it and how to use it. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 57(2), 123–146. doi:10.1109/TPC.2014.2312452
- Machimbarrena, J. M., Calvete, E., Fernández-González, L., Álvarez-Bardón, A., Álvarez-Fernández, L., & González-Cabrera, J. (2018). Internet risks: An overview of victimization in cyberbullying, cyber dating abuse, sexting, online grooming and problematic internet use. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(11), 2471. doi:10.3390/ijerph15112471 PMID:30400659
- MacKinnon, D. P., Cheong, J., & Pirlott, A. G. (2012). *Statistical mediation analysis*. American Psychological Association.
- Magsamen-Conrad, K., Dowd, J., Abuljadail, M., Alsulaiman, S., & Shareefi, A. (2015). Life-span differences in the uses and gratifications of tablets: Implications for older adults. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 52, 96–106. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2015.05.024 PMID:26113769
- Mehrabian, A., & Russell, J. A. (1974). The basic emotional impact of environments. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 38(1), 283–301. doi:10.2466/pms.1974.38.1.283 PMID:4815507

- Misra, S. (2020, November). A step by step guide for choosing project topics and writing research papers in ICT related disciplines. In *International Conference on Information and Communication Technology and Applications* (pp. 727-744). Springer.
- Mkrttchian, V., & Chernyshenko, S. (2021). Digital Intelligent Design of Avatar-Based Control with Application to Human Capital Management. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(1), 19–32. doi:10.4018/IJHCITP.2021010102
- Moustakas, E. (2015). The impact of Social Networking on consumer behaviour. ERPBSS Conference.
- Mull, I. R., & Lee, S. E. (2014). “PIN” pointing the motivational dimensions behind Pinterest. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 33, 192–200. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2014.01.011
- Nakonezny, P. A., & Denton, W. H. (2008). Marital relationships: A social exchange theory perspective. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 36(5), 402–412. doi:10.1080/01926180701647264
- Narayan, C. L., Narayan, M., & Deepanshu, M. (2021). Live-In Relationships in India—Legal and Psychological Implications. *Journal of Psychosexual Health*, 3(1), 18–23. doi:10.1177/2631831820974585
- Ozoliņš, J. J. T. (2017). Creating the Civil Society East and West: Relationality, responsibility and the education of the humane person. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 49(4), 362–378. doi:10.1080/00131857.2015.1048666
- Pathak, D. (2021). The Work-Life Balancing Act: A Study on the Mandatory Work From Home Due to COVID-19 on the IT and Non-IT Industry Sectors. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(3), 1–20. doi:10.4018/IJHCITP.2021070101
- Paul, E. L., McManus, B., & Hayes, A. (2000). “Hookups”: Characteristics and correlates of college students’ spontaneous and anonymous sexual experiences. *Journal of Sex Research*, 37(1), 76–88. doi:10.1080/00224490009552023
- Peeters, G. (2004). Review of: N. Dubois (Ed.) (2003). A sociocognitive approach to social norms. London: Routledge. *European Bulletin of Social Psychology*, 16, 40-44.
- Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., & Allen, E. S. (2015). Can marriage education mitigate the risks associated with premarital cohabitation? *Journal of Family Psychology*, 29(3), 500–506. doi:10.1037/fam0000081 PMID:25938709
- Rosen, P., & Sherman, P. (2006). Hedonic information systems: acceptance of social networking websites. *AMCIS 2006 Proceedings*, 162.
- Rosenfeld, M. (2018). Are tinder and dating apps changing dating and mating in the USA? In *Families and technology* (pp. 103–117). Springer. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-95540-7_6
- Sautter, J. M., Tippet, R. M., & Morgan, S. P. (2010). The social demography of Internet dating in the United States. *Social Science Quarterly*, 91(2), 554–575. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6237.2010.00707.x
- Schacter, D. L., Guerin, S. A., & Jacques, P. L. S. (2011). Memory distortion: An adaptive perspective. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 15(10), 467–474. doi:10.1016/j.tics.2011.08.004 PMID:21908231
- Shetty, V., Ruiwale, M., Deepthi, R., & Shetty, D. D. (2021). *Well-being of Indians: A Lockdown Story*. Authorea Preprints.
- Sledgianowski, D., & Kulviwat, S. (2008). Social network sites: Antecedents of user adoption and usage. *AMCIS 2008 Proceedings*, 83.
- Sledgianowski, D., & Kulviwat, S. (2009). Using social network sites: The effects of playfulness, critical mass and trust in a hedonic context. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 49(4), 74–83.
- Snaith, R. P., Hamilton, M., Morley, S., Humayan, A., Hargreaves, D., & Trigwell, P. (1995). A scale for the assessment of hedonic tone the Snaith–Hamilton Pleasure Scale. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 167(1), 99–103. doi:10.1192/bjp.167.1.99 PMID:7551619
- Sprecher, S. (1998). Social exchange theories and sexuality. *Journal of Sex Research*, 35(1), 32–43. doi:10.1080/00224499809551915

- Stewart, G. (2015). *Dating apps vs dating sites: 10 questions to ask yourself*. Retrieved from <https://www.datingadvice.com/online-dating/dating-apps-vs-dating-sites>
- Stewart, M., Ritter, T., Bateson, D., McGeechan, K., & Weisberg, E. (2017). Contraception—what about the men? Experience, knowledge and attitudes: A survey of 2438 heterosexual men using an online dating service. *Sexual Health*, 14(6), 533–539. doi:10.1071/SH16235 PMID:28618247
- Tandon, U., Chand, P. K., & Mittal, A. (2021). Emotional Maturity and Employer Satisfaction: A Study on Recruitment of Information Technology Graduates. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(3), 54–73. doi:10.4018/IJHCITP.2021070104
- Tarafdar, M., Maier, C., Laumer, S., & Weitzel, T. (2020). Explaining the link between technostress and technology addiction for social networking sites: A study of distraction as a coping behavior. *Information Systems Journal*, 30(1), 96–124.
- Taylor, J. (2015). *Find love at any age*. Retrieved from <https://www.match.com/magazine/article/5425/Dating-At-20-30-40-50-And-60/>
- Thibaut, J. W., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. Academic Press.
- Titz, K., Andrus, D., & Miller, J. (2001). Hedonistic differences between mechanical game players and table game players: An exploratory investigation on the road to a comprehensive theory for gambling. *UNLV Gaming Research & Review Journal*, 6(1), 2.
- Turel, O., Serenko, A., & Bontis, N. (2007). User acceptance of wireless short messaging services: Deconstructing perceived value. *Information & Management*, 44(1), 63–73. doi:10.1016/j.im.2006.10.005
- Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007). Who visits online dating sites? Exploring some characteristics of online daters. *Cyberpsychology & Behavior*, 10(6), 849–852. doi:10.1089/cpb.2007.9941 PMID:18085977
- Van der Heijden, H. (2004). User acceptance of hedonic information systems. *Management Information Systems Quarterly*, 28(4), 695–704. doi:10.2307/25148660
- Vinciarelli, A. (2009, June). Social Computers for the Social Animal: State-of-the-Art and Future Perspectives of Social Signal Processing. In *International Conference on User Modeling, Adaptation, and Personalization* (pp. 1-1). Springer. doi:10.1007/978-3-642-02247-0_1
- Vinciarelli, A., Pantic, M., Heylen, D., Pelachaud, C., Poggi, I., D'Errico, F., & Schroeder, M. (2011). Bridging the gap between social animal and unsocial machine: A survey of social signal processing. *IEEE Transactions on Affective Computing*, 3(1), 69–87. doi:10.1109/T-AFFC.2011.27
- Waite, L. J., & Joyner, K. (2001). Emotional satisfaction and physical pleasure in sexual unions: Time horizon, sexual behavior, and sexual exclusivity. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(1), 247–264. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.00247.x
- Wang, C., & Chang, Y. (2010). Cyber relationship motives: Scale development and validation. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 38(3), 289–300. doi:10.2224/sbp.2010.38.3.289
- Wang, J., Kumar, S., & Chang, S. F. (2010). Semi-supervised hashing for scalable image retrieval. In *2010 IEEE Computer Society Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition* (pp. 3424-3431). IEEE.

APPENDIX

Table 6. Measurement Scale items

	Hedonic Pleasure (Snaith et al., 1995)	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1.	I would enjoy my favourite television or radio programme.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I would enjoy being with my family or close friends.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I would find pleasure in my hobbies and pastimes.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I would be able to enjoy my favourite meal.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I would enjoy a warm bath or refreshing shower.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I would find pleasure in the scent of flowers or the smell of a fresh sea breeze or freshly baked bread.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I would enjoy seeing other people's smiling faces	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I would enjoy looking smart when I have made an effort with my appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I would enjoy reading a book, magazine or newspaper.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I would enjoy a cup of tea or coffee or my favourite drink.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I would find pleasure in small things, e.g. bright sunny.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I would be able to enjoy a beautiful landscape or view.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I would get pleasure from helping others.	1	2	3	4	5
	Employee Cyber dating (Clemen et al.,2015; Wang and Chang, 2010)					
1.	To find a person/people to have sexual relations with.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	To find sexual partners.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	To find people to "hook up" with	1	2	3	4	5
4.	To have a casual fling.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	To engage in a non-committed relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	To be free from commitments.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I would rather meet someone through a cyber-format than in person.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	To find a companion.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I'm looking for a long-term relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	To look for a potential boyfriend/girlfriend.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Meeting people online and through mobile apps is convenient.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	It is a form of entertainment.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	It is fun to look at pictures and view profiles.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I would feel pleasure when I receive praise from other people	1	2	3	4	5

continued on following page

Table 6. Continued

	Hedonic Pleasure (Snaith et al., 1995)	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
	Social Acceptance (Bryant and Sheldon, 2017; Wang and Chang, 2010)					
1.	Online/mobile dating is a great way to meet potential partners/ "hook up."	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Mobile apps and online dating sites are socially acceptable ways to form relationships or "hook up."	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Mobile apps and online dating sites have a good chance of leading to a relationship or "hook up."	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Mobile dating apps and online dating sites are popular ways to meet people.	1	2	3	4	5
	Live-in relationship (Fower et al., 2016)					
1.	I have more success in my important goals because of my partner's help	1	2	3	4	5
2.	We look for activities that help us to grow as a couple.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	My partner has helped me to grow in ways that I could not have done on my own.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	It is worth it to share my most personal thoughts with my partner.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	When making important decisions, I think about whether it will be good for our relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	It is natural and easy for me to do things that keep our relationship strong.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Talking with my partner helps me to see things in new ways.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I make it a point to celebrate my partner's successes.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I really work to improve our relationship	1	2	3	4	5
10.	My partner shows interest in things that are important to me	1	2	3	4	5
11.	We do things that are deeply meaningful to us as a couple	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I make time when my partner needs to talk	1	2	3	4	5

Urvashi Tandon is an Associate Professor Chitkara University, Punjab (India). She is currently doing research on E-Commerce, Online shopping, and Supply Chain practices of online retailers. Her research has been published in several journals like Electronic Markets, Service Science, Information Development, Nankai Business Review, International, Information Systems and e-Business Management, International Journal of e-Business.

Deepika Jhamb is an Associate Professor at Doctoral Research Centre - Chitkara Business School, Chitkara University, Punjab, India. She holds her PhD from Thapar University, Punjab, India with specialization in the field of retailing and Master of Business Administration (MBA) in marketing from the Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India (ICFAI). She has received the Post-Doctoral Fellowship from Indian Council of Social Science Research, Delhi and served as a co-investigator of UGC major research project. She has a teaching and research experience of more than 10 years and her areas of teaching and research are Research Methods, Marketing, Retailing and Consumer Behaviour. She has several research papers published in SSCI, Scopus and ABDC list of journals and also presented research papers in several international conferences held in IIMs, NITs and State Universities.

Pawan Kumar Chand is presently working as an Associate Professor in the Doctoral Research Centre, Chitkara Business School, Chitkara University, Punjab, India. He holds a PhD in Organization Behaviour from NIT- Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh- India. He is a PhD supervisor to research scholars at Chitkara University, Punjab, India. He loves to teach Research Methodology, Human Resource Management, and Organization Behaviour.