

# **THE IMPACT OF SPIRITUAL ORIENTATION ON EVOLVING CONSUMER MARKETING VALUES: A SEM APPROACH TO INDIAN MILLENNIUMS ‘WORKING FROM HOME’ IN POST PANDEMIC PHASE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The evolving role of spirituality and related values in shaping pro-consumption patterns and marketing values across millennial working from home across the time of pandemic is worth discussion. The spiritual orientation across millennial borrows from the rise in negativity, uncertainty and closure of economic flows as well as potential threats to human life from the COVID pandemic related fears. The research relied on factors internal religiosity, external religiosity, sacredness, spirituality and intent to purchase. The study relied on random sampling and attracted a valid sample size of 275 respondents. The extractive factor analysis methodology comprising KMO Test (For data Adequacy), EFA (For extraction of loading variables or sub scale items and reduction of data), Reliability Assessment with Cronbach Alpha, Correlation Assessment were leveraged. The study based hypothesis were validated with SEM.

**KEY WORDS:** Internal religiosity, External religiosity, Sacredness, Spirituality and Intent to Purchase

## **1.1 Introduction**

The work from home has radically altered consumption patterns and marketing tactics. The millennium as working from home comprises the segment that is newly employed or undertaking ICT assisted employment or working from home with aid of digital gadgets and internet connectivity or broadband connection. The segment comprises the most marketing prone segment and presents novel opportunities for marketing acceptance, innovation and marketing strategy interpretation across evolving work class. The pandemic driven lockdown, phased opening up and repetitive consequences of lockdown ushered in unique marketing thrust in conjugation with evolving spiritual values across this vulnerable segment. In line with global trends and studies, the spiritual interference in hour of crisis with the marketing under tones presented a never before opportunity to unlock transforming marketing potential of the millennial working from home. The study hence emphasizes the evolving role of spirituality and related values in shaping pro-consumption patterns and marketing values across millennial working from home across the time of pandemic. The paper hence reviews the impact of spiritual undertones on marketing orientations and is divided into sections that conceptualize and develop the construct and scale. Though the scale development studies exist with regard to constructs yet the impact of materialistic values under spiritual orientation needs serious review across working from home millennial population. The existing studies only seem to provide insights into the moderating effects yet wholesome focus is missing. The investigation of spiritual orientation could uncover

the mechanisms and role of the millennial mindsets in post national lockdown perspective and aspects that are fueling the spirituality amidst threat of loneliness.

## **1.2 Literature Review**

### **1.2.1 Spiritual Orientation Across Millennial**

The spiritual intent and orientation across young millennial foresee a matter of intense research and analysis. The spiritual following across young millennial work from home has undergone a sea change in the period across and post the national lock down. The otherwise non-religious and non-spiritual millennial population has adored the basics of existence of divine powers, spiritual basis of healing and faith as well as hope and possibility as guiding life courses. The spiritual orientation across millennial borrows from the rise in negativity, uncertainty and closure of economic flows as well as potential threats to human life from the COVID pandemic related fears. The spiritual orientation and loneliness have often been explored in conjunct manner. The individual's perceptions of threat from a pandemic, resultant threat to life, health and possible loneliness across staying indoors seem to be inter linked in more than one ways and means. The question of interaction across materialistic values in young millennial and spiritual intent (Lucic,Uzelac,Previsic, 2021) poses serious consequences for understanding the shaping of phenomenon. The literature (Kale, 2006) regards the connection between spirituality and marketing as shaping the consumption patterns in the developed and developing economies alike. The terms religion and spirituality have often been utilized side by side and often stand for the institutional connotations that manifest themselves as shaping the impulse and intent to consume a good or service in discrete or moderate proportions. Spirituality has also been observed as linked with one's inner self and individual's own endeavors to explore and connect to inner urges and aspirations of goodness and god.

### **1.2.2 Marketing Values**

The shaping up of marketing values constitutes the consistent process of interaction and exposure to the marketing environment across digital and social media platform. The online shaping of millennia's market values has been a rampant phenomenon across lockdown and the events that followed economic closure. The lateral and direct transformation of youth's marketing values, feeling of loneliness, rising move over to spiritual orientation has been an evident phenomenon. The digital shaping of spiritual orientation across millennial population hence focuses on the aspects of spiritual utility of goods and services and spiritual – marketing connection is even translating into a big market in itself. The inner self and notions of beyond the physical body to deeper sense of atman and one's true self; often manifests in number of ways and means. The studies on spiritual orientation across millennial explores the fancies of spiritual absorption,

spiritual following and spiritual awakening in moderate to variable proportions. The often quoted Drucker's knowledge society and work place knowledge worker notion and interference with spiritual notions; remains a highly explored aspect of research. The typical contrast between knowledge society and spiritual societies (Pande, 2021) seem to prevail immensely.

### **1.2.3 Transforming Materialism**

The materialism in day to day decision making, consumption decisions and grocery based decisions is self evident. The digitalization of supply chains, marketing and promotion efforts has opened up attributes of impulsiveness and ready to consume attributions. The study (Lucic,Uzelac,Previsic, 2021) across 483 Croatian youth in lockdown revealed the incidence of effect of materialism values on the cognitive and affective propositions of youth's decision making. Another research (Pandeleare, 2016) figured out the dimensions of materialism values and noticed their gradual transformation. The possession (Richins, 1994) of specific gadgets, goods, products, facilities, apparel, technology products and transforming materialism became a rampant phenomenon across lockdown. The ongoing commodification of spiritual relief across economic closure added to sequential consumption of spiritual products and services in a modest to moderate manner.

### **1.2.4 Interference of Religious Propensity**

The interference across religion, spirituality and materialism and even combinations across these elements yields awkward results in terms of consumption promotion and bending the consumption of spiritual and inner life based products and services. The inclination for yoga, immunity boosting exercises, concept of god, religious sermons, religious satsang sessions virtually and even religious literature across digital channels and sermons; often identify as the natural consumption outcome. The growing trend for consumption of the

### **1.2.5 Work from Home Across Millennial**

The work from home (Vries,Tummers, 2019) work arrangement comprises over emphasis on the restrained mobility and casts pressures on the psychological mindsets and cognitive patterns. The post lockdown work from home phenomenon has casted immense effects on the development of stress, inclination of millennial towards the spirituality and directness towards attributes of sacredness. The work from home phenomenon is going to last for years in continuity. The work from home setup induces the stress, the muscular effects, back bone related problems as well as induces a sense of boringness and fatigue.

## **1.3 Objective**

The core research objective is to develop and validate a measurement instrument to ascertain the impact of spiritual values on marketing orientation across those working from home across the phase of pandemic in urban Indian perspective.

## **1.4 Hypothesis Development**

The study hence proposes set of four conjugated hypothesis that collectively capture the impact of perceptions of millennial work force on the shaping of intent to purchase spiritual goods and services.

H1: There is significant impact of millennial's internal religiosity on intent to purchase spiritual products

H2: There is significant impact of millennial's spirituality on intent to purchase spiritual products

H3: There is significant impact of millennial's sacredness beliefs on intent to purchase spiritual products

H4: There is significant impact of millennial's external religiosity on intent to purchase spiritual products

## **1.5 Methodology**

### **1.5.1 Survey form Development**

The review of existing literature also points towards the prevalence of uni-dimensional and multidimensional as well as formative and reflective measures of internal religiosity, external religiosity, sacredness, spirituality and intent to purchase. The scale items for factors internal religiosity, external religiosity were derived from the scale items (Sardana, Gupta, Sharma, 2018) and for factors sacredness, spirituality were devised from scale items (Narang, 2011). The existing literature also suggests the aspect 'spiritual intent or intent to purchase' as one of the most frequently applied frontier level construct in spirituality and religiosity research, yet the research is non-convergent till date. The problem of use of effective research instruments and measurability of spiritual behavior has not been explored well across the existing literature on sacredness research.

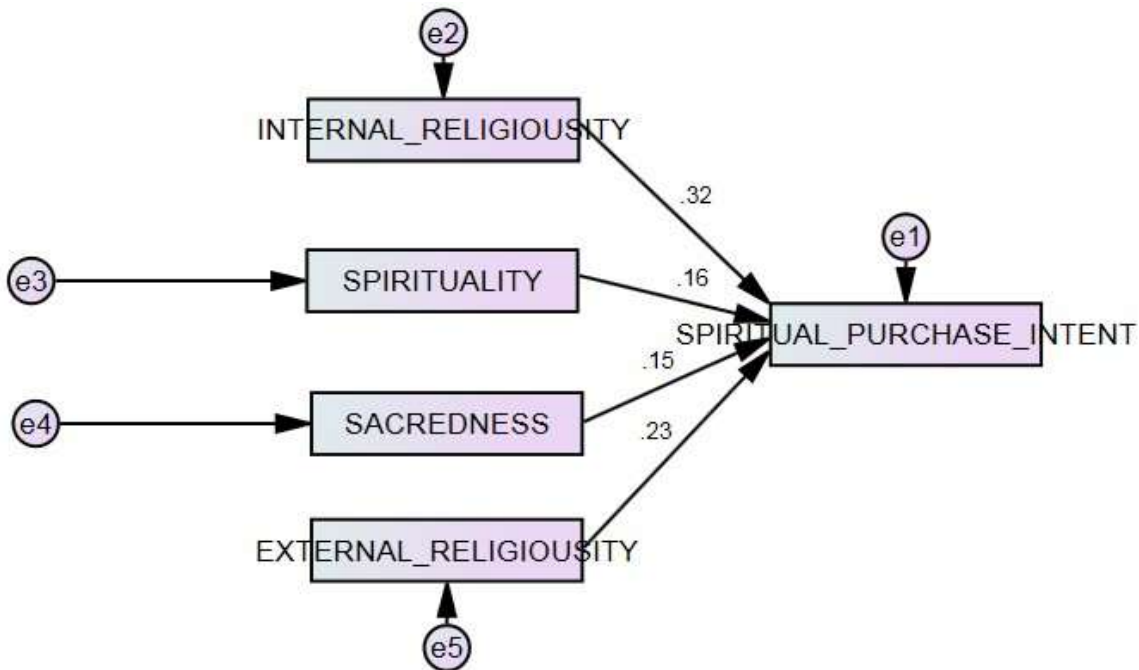
### **1.5.2 Composition of Sample**

The sample frame comprises the working from home individual in age group 20 to 25. The study is based on the perceptions of the individual who were working from home with aid of laptops, desktops or other similar digital assets. Secondly these individual must have an daily work count of more than five hours. Further the sample frame comprises the youngster working from home that operate in any of the pre decided sectors or the clusters spread across modern India. Various criteria were used to segregate the most suitable

for the research study. The study relied on random sampling and attracted a valid sample size of 275 respondents.

### 1.6 Data analysis

The extractive factor analysis methodology comprising KMO Test (For data Adequacy), EFA (For extraction of loading variables or sub scale items and reduction of data), Reliability Assessment with Cronbach Alpha, Correlation Assessment were leveraged. The study leveraged the IBM software SPSS version release 24.0 for the conduct of empirical calculations, validity assessment and reliability exploration. The factor structure was examined with aid of factor analysis and subsequent tests like variance examination, Scree plot analysis and pattern matrix determination. The study leveraged the factor analysis methodology as a tool for exploring the representing dimensions of the factors assumed for the analysis. The extractive factor analysis facilitates the evaluation of the dimensions as well as leads to dimensional validity assessment with regard to data as collected from the Likert based scales.



				Estimate	Outcome
<b>H1</b>	SPIRITUAL_PURCHASE_INTENT	<---	INTERNAL_RELIGIOUSITY	.315	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H2</b>	SPIRITUAL_PURCHASE_INTENT	<---	SPIRITUALITY	.161	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H3</b>	SPIRITUAL_PURCHASE_INTENT	<---	SACREDNESS	.154	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H4</b>	SPIRITUAL_PURCHASE_INTENT	<---	EXTERNAL_RELIGIOUSITY	.225	<b>Supported</b>

## 1.7 Conclusions

The study hence concludes statistically significant impact of religious aspects on the millennial's work style, consumption based decision making and sharpened intent to consume spiritual products and services. The research based outcomes vindicated that work from home has radically altered consumption patterns and marketing tactics. The millennium as working from home comprises the segment that is newly employed or undertaking ICT assisted employment or working from home with aid of digital gadgets and internet connectivity or broadband connection. The segment comprises the most marketing prone segment and presents novel opportunities for marketing acceptance, innovation and marketing strategy interpretation across evolving work class. The pandemic driven lockdown, phased opening up and repetitive consequences of lockdown ushered in unique marketing thrust in conjugation with evolving spiritual values across this vulnerable segment. In line with global trends and studies, the spiritual interference in hour of crisis with the marketing under tones presented a never before opportunity to unlock transforming marketing potential of the millennial working from home. The study hence emphasized the evolving role of spirituality and related values in shaping pro-consumption patterns and marketing values across millennial working from home across the time of pandemic.

## 1.8 Implications for managerial strategy

The branding and marketing strategies across FMCG and other consumer oriented niche need to focus on the spiritual quotient as part of marketing and consumer development strategy. The managerial thinking needs to balance the post COVID marketing with niche spiritual content and signaling. The post COVID branding needs to work on spiritual embedment of aspects in product canvassing, communications and digital reach out.

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### KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.910
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7023.307
	df	378
	Sig.	.000

### Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
INTERNAL_RELIGIOUSITY	1.000	.694
IR2	1.000	.779
IR3	1.000	.727
IR5	1.000	.735
IR6	1.000	.713
SPIRITUALITY	1.000	.716
SP2	1.000	.663
SP4	1.000	.702
SP5	1.000	.683
SP6	1.000	.663
SP7	1.000	.664
EXTERNAL_RELIGIOUSIT Y	1.000	.715
ER3	1.000	.724
ER4	1.000	.712
ER5	1.000	.702
ER6	1.000	.710
SACREDNESS	1.000	.612
SA3	1.000	.654
SA4	1.000	.588
SA5	1.000	.703
SA7	1.000	.703
SA8	1.000	.597
SA9	1.000	.650



PURCHASE_INTENT	1.000	.598
SPI2	1.000	.689
SPI3	1.000	.685
SPI4	1.000	.627
SPI6	1.000	.605

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

**Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
INTERNAL_RELIGIOUSITY	.083	.082	<b>.788</b>	.140	.201
IR2	.026	.133	<b>.822</b>	.202	.209
IR3	.009	.058	<b>.838</b>	.123	.074
IR5	.039	.085	<b>.808</b>	.208	.173
IR6	-.020	.024	<b>.813</b>	.134	.182
SPIRITUALITY	.058	<b>.838</b>	.031	-.005	.100
SP2	.102	<b>.800</b>	.050	.095	.026
SP4	.024	<b>.827</b>	.020	.097	.089
SP5	-.008	<b>.792</b>	.101	.183	.110
SP6	.020	<b>.805</b>	.064	.056	.083
SP7	-.018	<b>.797</b>	.103	-.054	.124
EXTERNAL_RELIGIOUSITY	-.009	.020	.162	<b>.817</b>	.145
ER3	.051	.050	.203	<b>.807</b>	.161
ER4	.044	.105	.101	<b>.819</b>	.130
ER5	.028	.069	.118	<b>.811</b>	.155
ER6	.032	.105	.194	<b>.806</b>	.103
SACREDNESS	<b>.778</b>	.019	.073	-.025	.031
SA3	<b>.802</b>	.036	.013	.006	.097
SA4	<b>.750</b>	-.037	.007	.036	.147
SA5	<b>.828</b>	.060	-.012	.003	.115
SA7	<b>.832</b>	-.006	.030	.100	.010
SA8	<b>.764</b>	.067	.080	-.016	.037
SA9	<b>.800</b>	.048	-.051	.058	.026
PURCHASE_INTENT	.134	.127	.169	.071	<b>.729</b>
SPI2	.084	.084	.133	.154	<b>.796</b>
SPI3	.073	.122	.212	.108	<b>.780</b>
SPI4	.077	.101	.179	.153	<b>.746</b>
SPI6	.075	.088	.105	.209	<b>.733</b>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a.

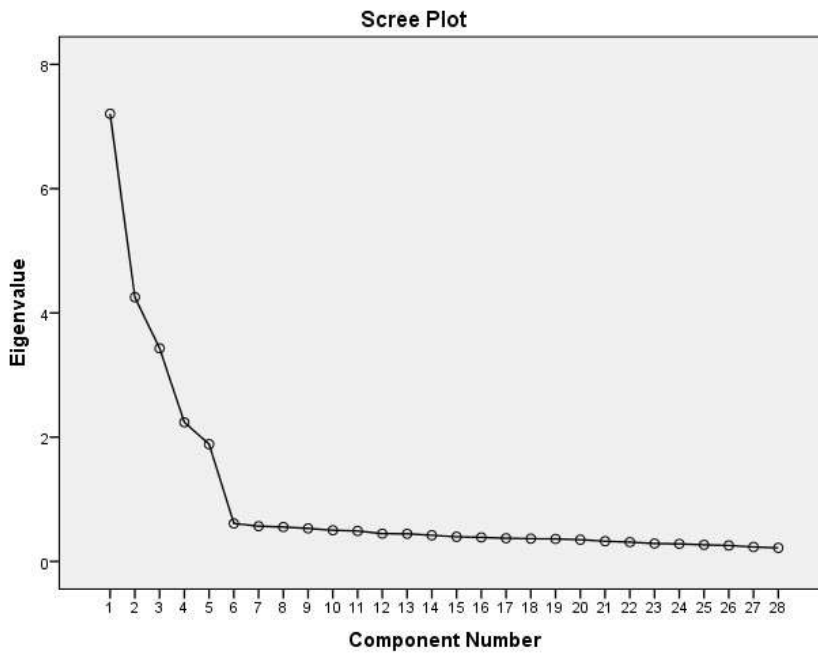
Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

**Total Variance Explained**



Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.206	25.734	25.734	7.206	25.734	25.734	4.487	16.024	16.024
2	4.252	15.186	40.920	4.252	15.186	40.920	4.072	14.542	30.566
3	3.430	12.252	53.172	3.430	12.252	53.172	3.621	12.932	43.498
4	2.238	7.994	61.166	2.238	7.994	61.166	3.617	12.918	56.416
5	1.887	6.739	67.905	1.887	6.739	67.905	3.217	11.489	67.905

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.



### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.889	28