

**CHRIST**(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Lakshmi Raj, Registration Number: 2170041, PhD Scholar at the School of Business and Management, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Friday, 12 September, 2025 at 10.30 am in the Seminar Hall, First Floor, Academic Block, Bannerghatta Road Campus, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560076, Karnataka, India.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Digital Content Marketing of Edtech Firms: A Study on the Effect of Uses and Gratification Motives on Course Enrolment Intention**
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva – voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 29 August 2025

Registrar (Academics)

ABSTRACT

The skewed teacher-student ratio, different learning capabilities of students and practical exposure to subjects are considered a few significant areas of concern in curriculum and pedagogy. EdTech firms are bridging this gap by providing personalized learning, experiential learning and online mentorship by using advanced technology. EdTech firms use both traditional and digital marketing to reach their target market segment. Based on already existing research in digital marketing, there is a knowledge gap in Digital content marketing specific to education industries. Digital content marketing (DCM) is the creation and dissemination of relevant, valuable brand-related content to current consumers or prospective customers on digital platforms to develop their favourable brand engagement, trust, and relationships. Though EdTech firms are practicing DCM, comprehensive research has not been done on DCM respective to Ed Tech firms. Therefore, there is a research gap in identifying the decision role of an Ed-tech firm's consumer base as a consequence of their DCM. The research employs Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Theory and Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) to examine the effect of external stimuli, such as influencers and user-generated content, on DCM based motives (utilitarian, hedonic and authenticity) and their subsequent holistic digital engagement, leading to course enrolment intention. The study adopts an exploratory sequential design, beginning with focus group discussions to generate codes for instrument development, followed by a survey administered to EdTech course enrollees for quantitative validation. The EdTech subsectors considered in this study include test preparation, certification, skill development, and enterprise solutions, where individuals have enrolled for these services. The respondents included undergraduate students, postgraduate students and working professionals. Theoretically, the study extends the Stimulus-Organism-Response and Uses and Gratifications frameworks by showing how utilitarian, hedonic, and authenticity motives mediate the impact of influencer and user-generated content on holistic digital engagement and course enrolment intentions. Practically, the findings guide EdTech firms in designing motivation-driven digital content strategies that enhance trust, engagement, and enrolment among diverse learner groups. From a managerial standpoint, the research emphasizes integrating influencers and user-generated content into campaigns and highlights holistic digital engagement as a key performance indicator for long-term growth.

Keywords: EdTech, Digital Content Marketing, Influencer, Utilitarian motives, Hedonic motives, Authenticity motives, User generated content, Holistic digital engagement, Course enrolment intention.

Publications:

1. Raj, L. & Sankar, M (2022). Exploring the role of social media marketing in the education sector. In *EdTech economy and the transformation of education* (pp.227-244). IGI Global. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-8904-5.ch013
2. Raj, L. & Sankar, M (2023). Exploring the Role of Social Media Influencer Marketing in the Tourism Sector. In *Handbook of Research on Sustainable Tourism and Hotel Operations in Global Hypercompetition* (pp. 100-117). IGI Global. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-4645-4.ch005
3. Raj, L., & Sankar, M. (2024). Digital content marketing. Reference Module in Social Sciences. Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-443-13701-3.00155-9>
4. Raj, L., & Sankar, M. (2025). Unleashing the potential: How influencers drive digital content marketing. In *Contemporary Issues in Social Media Marketing* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003412656>