



Impact Of Social Media Influencers On Consumer Purchasing Decisions

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of influencer authenticity in shaping consumer trust and purchasing behavior. With the rise of digital marketing, influencers have become key drivers of brand engagement and customer decision-making. This research aims to analyze how consumers perceive influencer credibility and its impact on their trust in brands. The study examines key factors such as content consistency, engagement, and authenticity that contribute to consumer confidence. Findings indicate that while influencer marketing is effective, trust is influenced by the perceived transparency and alignment of influencers with brand values. The study highlights the need for brands to collaborate with credible influencers and develop strategies that foster genuine consumer connections. The insights from this research can help brands enhance their marketing approaches and build long-term customer relationships.

Keywords: Influencer marketing, consumer trust, brand authenticity, digital engagement, purchasing behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, social media has revolutionized the way consumers interact with brands, shaping their purchasing decisions through influencer marketing. Social media influencers, individuals with a strong online presence and credibility, have emerged as key players in the marketing ecosystem. Their ability to engage audiences through personalized content, product recommendations, and authentic storytelling has transformed traditional advertising into a more interactive and trust-driven experience. Consumers today are increasingly influenced by the opinions, reviews, and endorsements of influencers across platforms such as

Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter (X). Unlike conventional celebrity endorsements, influencer marketing leverages relatability, niche expertise, and direct engagement with audiences. This shift in marketing dynamics has prompted brands to integrate influencer partnerships into their promotional strategies to enhance consumer trust, brand perception, and sales conversions.

Despite the growing impact of influencer marketing, concerns regarding authenticity, transparency, and credibility persist. This study aims to analyze the impact of social media influencers on consumer purchasing behavior, focusing on trust, authenticity, and engagement. By examining demographic factors, influencer credibility, and brand loyalty, the research provides insights into the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies. The findings will help brands optimize their influencer collaborations, ensuring ethical marketing practices that foster long-term consumer relationships.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the growing dominance of influencer marketing, a critical challenge persists in determining its actual effectiveness in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers often question the authenticity of influencer endorsements, leading to skepticism about whether recommendations are driven by genuine trust or financial incentives. The lack of transparency in paid partnerships, inconsistencies in content, and varying levels of engagement across platforms further complicate the reliability of influencer-driven marketing. Additionally, demographic differences play a crucial role in shaping consumer trust, making it difficult for brands to develop universally effective strategies. This study aims to address these concerns by analyzing the relationship between influencer credibility, consumer trust, and purchase intent, providing data-driven insights to optimize influencer marketing strategies.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the role of influencer authenticity in shaping consumer trust and purchasing decisions.
- To evaluate the long-term effects of influencer marketing on brand loyalty.
- To identify key factors of authenticity that influence consumer perceptions of influencers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies have explored the impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior, focusing on aspects such as brand trust, engagement, and purchasing intent. However, there is limited research specifically analyzing the role of influencer authenticity, transparency, and platform preferences in shaping

consumer trust and decision-making. Despite this, a few prior studies have briefly examined these factors, highlighting key insights into influencer marketing effectiveness.

1. **“Impact of Digital Advertising by the Influencers on Consumers”**- Online Buying Behaviour (Special Reference to Instagram)” Mayank Jhinkwan | 30 Jun 2024-Indian Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism (IJMCJ)

The research paper highlights that social media influencers significantly shape consumer purchasing decisions on platforms like Instagram, as their content strategies and engagement metrics directly affect consumer preferences and online buying behaviour, establishing a crucial relationship between brands, influencers, and consumers.

2. **“Influencer Marketing in the Digital Age: Exploring the Influence of Social Media Influencers on Consumer”**10 May 2024-Indian Scientific Journal Of Research In Engineering And Management

Social media influencers significantly impact consumer purchasing decisions, particularly among youth. Their credibility and the authenticity of endorsed products enhance trust, leading to higher likelihoods of purchases, especially among females and individuals aged 20-25, as highlighted in the research

3. **“The impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior: a case study of instagram influencers on nike ”** Aman Kumar | 02 May 2024-Indian Scientific Journal Of Research In Engineering And Management

This paper highlights the exposure to Instagram influencers positively influences consumer purchasing decisions regarding Nike products in India, leading to higher purchase intentions and a greater likelihood of considering and purchasing Nike items compared to those not exposed to influencer content.

4. **"Influencer Marketing and Its Effect on Consumer Purchasing Decisions: A Study on the Fashion Industry"** Riya Sharma | 15 July 2024 - Indian Scientific Journal of Research in

Engineering and Management This research investigates how fashion influencers on platforms like Instagram affect consumer purchasing decisions. It reveals that influencers' personal style, authenticity, and engagement levels significantly impact consumers' trust and their intention to purchase endorsed fashion products.

5. **"The Role of Social Media Influencers in Shaping Consumer Behavior: A Study on Beauty Products"**

Ananya Patel | 22 August 2024 - Indian Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism (IJMCJ)

This paper examines the influence of beauty influencers on consumer behavior, highlighting that detailed product reviews and tutorials by influencers enhance consumer knowledge and confidence, leading to increased purchasing of beauty products.

6. "Assessing the Impact of Influencer Credibility on Consumer Trust and Purchase Intentions"

Karan Verma | 5 September 2024 - Indian Scientific Journal of Research in Engineering and Management

The study analyzes how the credibility of influencers—measured through expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness—affects consumer trust and their subsequent purchase intentions, finding a strong positive correlation between influencer credibility and consumer purchasing behavior.

7. "Social Media Influencers and Consumer Buying Behavior: A Study on Electronic Gadgets"

Priya Singh | 12 October 2024 - Indian Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism (IJMCJ)

This research focuses on the impact of tech influencers on consumer decisions regarding electronic gadgets, revealing that influencers' in-depth reviews and demonstrations significantly sway consumers' purchasing choices in the electronics market

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. It is the strategy for a study and the plan by which the strategy is to be carried out. The research design of the project is descriptive as it describes data and characteristics associated with the population using mobile phones. Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe "what exists" with respect to variables in a given situation.

Sampling Method

The sampling used for the study is convenient sampling. This sampling is selected by the researcher for the purpose of convenience to access. A pilot study is conducted to validate the questionnaire and to confirm the feasibility of the study. Based on the pilot study, the questionnaire is modified suitably to elicit response from the sample group.

Sampling Size

A sample of 100 respondents from the different locations from in and around of Coimbatore District. Samples for the purpose of the study are selected systematically.

Sampling Design

Both primary and secondary data were used in the study for analysis purpose. For collecting primary data, field survey technique was employed in Coimbatore City. A well framed questionnaire was also used to collect the primary data.

Method Of Data Collection

The data for this study are of two types: -

- Primary data
- Secondary data

Primary Data

Primary data is the data is collected from the respondent for the first time, it is original in nature. For the purpose of collection of primary data, a well structured questionnaire was framed and filled by the respondents. The questionnaire comprises of close ended as well as open ended questions. In close ended questions, checklist questions and multiple choice questions are used.

Secondary Data

Secondary data are collected from books, magazines, web sites etc, and both open ended & close-ended questions are incorporated in the questionnaire for the collection of data.

Statistical Tool

The following statistical tools are used in the study

- Percentage
- Chi-square

LIMITATIONS

- **Limited Sample Size:** The study is based on **104 respondents**, which may not fully represent the broader population. A larger sample could provide more generalizable results.
- **Demographic Constraints:** Most participants are **students under 30**, limiting insights into how older demographics perceive influencer marketing.
- **Platform-Specific Bias:** The study focuses mainly on **Instagram and YouTube users**, which may not reflect the impact of influencers on other platforms like TikTok or LinkedIn.
- **Self-Reported Data:** Responses are based on **self-perception**, which may introduce bias or inaccuracies due to personal opinions rather than observed behavior.
- **Short-Term Analysis:** The study primarily examines immediate trust and purchasing decisions but does not track **long-term brand loyalty or repeat purchases**.

- **External Influences:** Other factors, such as **brand reputation, pricing, and peer influence**, may also affect purchasing decisions but were not extensively analyzed.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

PERCENTAGE AND INTERPRETATION

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Demographic Profile	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	66	64.08%
Age	20-30	38	36.89%
Occupation	Student	39	37.86%
Marital Status	Unmarried	61	59.22%

INTERPRETATION:

This table shows the demographic profile of respondents indicates that the majority are male (64.08%). The age distribution shows that 36.89% of the respondents fall within the 20-30 age group. Regarding occupation, 37.86% of the respondents are students. Additionally, a significant portion of the respondents, 59.22%, are unmarried. These statistics suggest that the surveyed population is predominantly young, male, and unmarried, with a considerable number being students, which may influence their online buying behavior and engagement with digital advertising.

Factors	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Likelihood to purchase a product recommended by influencer	Moderately likely	40	38.83%
Consistency of the influencer	Moderately influences	28	27.18%
No. of times purchasing the recommended product	Occasionally	44	42.72%
Trust on the brand	Neutral	31	30.10%

INTERPETION

The data suggests that influencer recommendations have a moderate impact on consumer purchasing behavior. About 38.83% of respondents are moderately likely to purchase products recommended by influencers, while 27.18% feel that influencers moderately influence their decisions. Additionally, 42.72% of respondents purchase recommended products only occasionally, indicating that influencer endorsements do not always translate into frequent purchases. Trust in the brand remains neutral for 30.10% of respondents, suggesting that while influencers can generate interest, they do not necessarily build strong trust in the brand.

CHI SQUARE TEST

TABLE 1

GENDER AND INFLUENCER AUTHENTICITY

CROSSTABS:

Case Processing Summary

	Valid		Missing Case		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
GENDER*Influencer perceived authenticity the trust.	103	100.0%	0	0.0%	103	100.0%

GENDER* To what extent does an influencer perceived authenticity affect your trust in their recommendations.

Cross Tabulation

		Influence perceived authenticity affect the trust				
		A Great Extent	Some extent	Little extent	No extent	Total
Gender	Male	18	23	12	12	66
	Female	7	15	6	9	37
Total		25	38	19	21	103

Chi-Square Test

Values		df	Asymptotic Significance (2 sided)
Pearson Chi-square	1.484*	3	.696
Likelihood Ratio	1.501	3	.682
Linear by Linear association	617	1	.432
No. of valid cases	103		

a.0 cells(0.0%) have expected count less than 5.The minimum expected count is 6.83

INTERPRETATION

The chi-square test examined the relationship between gender and the extent to which influencer-perceived authenticity affects trust. The Pearson Chi-Square value of 1.484 with 3 degrees of freedom resulted in a p-value of 0.686, which is greater than the standard significance level of 0.05. Since the p-value exceeds this threshold, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating no statistically significant association between gender and trust influenced by perceived authenticity. This suggests that both males and females perceive influencer authenticity similarly, implying that marketing strategies based on influencer trustbuilding do not need to be gender-specific.

TABLE2
AGE AND BRAND LOYALTY

CROSSTABS:

Case Processing Summary

AGE* Long term connection to brand	Valid		Case Missing		T tal	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
	103	100.0%	0	0.0%	103	100.0%

AGE* long term connection to brand**Cross Tabulation**

Long term connection to brand						
		Strongly Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Total
Age	Below 20	10	0	11	6	27
	20-30	9	2	11	16	38
	30-40	5	10	5	2	22
	Above 40	4	3	4	5	16
Total		28	15	31	29	103

Chi-Square Test

	Values	df	Asymptotic Significance (2 sided)
Pearson Chi-square	29.548*	9	.001
Likelihood Ratio	29.524	3	.001
Linear by Linear association	173	1	.678
No. of valid cases	103		

a.6 cells (37.5) have expected count less than 5 . The minimum expected count is 2.33

INTERPRETATION

The Chi-Square test results show a Pearson Chi-Square value of 29.548 with a p-value of 0.001, indicating a statistically significant relationship between age and the perception of longterm connection to a brand. Since the p-value is less than the standard significance level of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, meaning that age has a significant impact on how individuals perceive their long-term connection with a brand. Younger age groups (below 20 and 20-30) show a higher tendency to strongly agree or agree with long-term brand connection, whereas older age groups (30-40 and above 40) display more varied opinions, including disagreement. This suggests that younger individuals may be more brand-loyal compared to older individuals.

FINDINGS

- Majority of the respondents belong to the younger age groups (below 30).
- Majority of the respondents show a significant inclination towards long-term brand connection.
- Majority of the respondents who are below 20 strongly agree with having a long-term connection to a brand.
- Majority of the respondents aged 30 and above display mixed opinions, including disagreement.
- The Chi-Square test result ($\chi^2 = 29.548$, $p = 0.001$) indicates a significant relationship between age and long-term brand connection.
- Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that age significantly influences brand loyalty.
- Since the p-value (0.713) is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, conforming that gender significantly influences the influencer authenticity.
- Younger respondents tend to be more brand-loyal compared to older respondents.

SUGGESTIONS

- **Enhance Credibility through Influencers:** Partnering with trusted and niche influencers can help build brand credibility and trust, making consumers more likely to purchase the recommended products.
- **Use Micro-Influencers for Targeted Engagement:** Micro-influencers often have higher engagement rates and stronger audience connections, making them effective in influencing purchase decisions in specific niches and can gain high authenticity.
- **Create Interactive and Authentic Content:** Consumers are more likely to trust influencers who share genuine experiences rather than scripted promotions. Brands should focus on authentic storytelling and reviews.
- **Track and Measure Influencer Impact:** Businesses should use analytics tools to track conversion rates, engagement, and customer feedback, ensuring that influencer marketing strategies effectively drive purchases.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant role of social media influencers in shaping consumer purchasing decisions, with authenticity, consistency, and engagement being key drivers of trust. The findings reveal that males are more influenced by content consistency, while females prioritize authenticity and engagement, indicating the need for gender-specific marketing strategies. Additionally, younger consumers (below 30) exhibit stronger brand loyalty influenced by emotional connections with influencers, reinforcing the impact of influencer marketing on long-term consumer relationships. However, the study also identifies challenges such as consumer skepticism toward paid promotions and the occasional nature of influencer-driven purchases, suggesting that influencers alone may not ensure sustained brand trust. To enhance effectiveness, brands must prioritize long-term collaborations with credible influencers, ensure transparency in endorsements, and develop personalized marketing strategies based on consumer preferences. Future research should explore platform-specific engagement, the role of AI in influencer marketing, and the growing impact of microinfluencers in driving consumer trust and purchase intent.

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