

A Study on Influence of Social Media, Influencers on Consumer Buying Decisions in Ecommerce

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Abstract

In the modern digital era, social media platforms have transformed from space of social interaction to major drives of consumer behavior. This project focuses on understanding the influence of social media and influencers on consumers buying decisions in the e-commerce sector. The study aims to explore how influencers credibility, authenticity, and engagement affect consumer trust, perception, and purchase intentions. To achieve this, both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires and Google Forms, targeting 104 respondents, mainly college students and young professionals, who are active users of social media and e-commerce platforms. Secondary data was gathered from research papers, journals, and online marketing reports. The study also reveals that visual content such as product reviews, unboxings, and reels effectively drives purchase decisions. Overall, the project concluded that influencer marketing has become an integral part of e-commerce success. Brand that collaborate with authentic influencers can build stronger trust, improve brand image, and influence consumer more effectively than traditional advertisements.

Keywords: Marketing strategy, Influencer marketing, Brand perception, Digital marketing, Consumer buying behavior

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-moving digital era, the way of discovering, evaluating, and purchasing products has changed quite radically. Social media must be the biggest catalyst in this transformation. Take your pick: Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, they occupy the position of a marketplace rather than that of pure social interaction, a place where opinions, trends, and buying decisions change every other day. At the center of this change is a relatively newer but extremely powerful player-the social media influencer. Influencers are those who have built a considerable online presence and established an extensive engaged following through consistently creating content around specific areas of interest-whether that be fashion, tech, beauty, fitness, gaming, or lifestyle.

Influencers owe their power to their perceived credibility and authentic connection with their audience, often far more than even traditional celebrities or advertisements. What the influencers wear, use, eat, or promote often becomes sought-after, especially among the youth. This has led to the emergence of a whole

new marketing strategy called influencer marketing, which is surely fast earning its place as a pillar in e-commerce success.

But then how deep does this influence really cut? Are purchases made by consumers based on the recommendations or say of these influencers? Or is this somehow an overestimation? This field project aims to investigate the actual buying behavior of consumers under the influence of social media celebrity figures within the context of e-commerce. Brands investing money in influencer partnerships must understand what is happening within such partnerships. Consumers are faced with an overwhelming number of choices because of e-commerce. Given this multiplicity of product choices, endorsements by a trusted influencer would amount to wielding social proof, thereby hastening and assuring the decision-making process of the buyer to be influenced. Well, the same social proof may parley into different potentials depending

the niche of the influencer, follower count, content authenticity, and target audience demographics.

Into that, e-commerce by nature has that peculiarity of getting products sold with no prior physical interaction, tutoring trust and relatability further in importance. By means of product reviews, unboxings, tutorials, and scenarios about real-life product usage, influencers narrow the gap between digital products and actual life experiences. Their content can either affirm a consumer's choice to purchase or entirely dissuade him.

With this project, we want to explore how social media influencers shape the journey of online shopping. We will examine the psychological, emotional, and social elements that inform why people trust influencers, and how this trust subsequently manifests in actual buying behavior. The study will also assess whether different types of influencers (macro, micro, and nano) exert influence at varying levels, and how consumer demographics fit into this interaction.

The implications of gathering real data, consumer insights, and existing literature will provide a very nuanced and sober perspective into the emerging relationship between the influencer and the buyer in the digital market. The endpoint of the study will be to provide brands and consumers with cogent insights for thriving in the fast-evolving world of influencer e-commerce

NEED FOR MARKETING STRATEGY

In today's digital marketplace, social media interaction affects consumers and makes this study very important. The role of influencers has shifted from merely entertaining or creating content to influencing the purchasing decisions of millions of followers who regard them as credible opinion leaders. For many reasons, it is important to understand this. The influencer powered marketing can be a great tool for businesses and marketers for brand building, says the study. Businesses can leverage influencer collaborations to create trust in their brand (which results in improving conversion rates), reach niche audiences, and more. The results will help brands shape better promotions and position their marketing budgets accordingly.

For consumers, the study helps evaluate the extent to which social media personalities influence their purchase decisions, often without them realising it too much. When customers are aware of these influences, which will help them to make more informed and rational buying choices as opposed to being swept up by trends or emotional appeals. For the academic and research community, this project will add to the knowledge on digital marketing, consumer psychology and e-commerce. The change in consumer behaviour in the online marketplace will act as a reference for influencer marketing study.

In general, this project is important because it shows the relationship between social media and influencers and decision-making. Because e-commerce is experiencing tremendous growth, the findings will be useful to businesses seeking to obtain a competitive advantage, to consumers wishing to become more knowledgeable about their choices, and to researchers investigating the future of digital marketing.

Another important point about this topic concerns the growth of e-commerce. Shopping today becomes faster, convenient, and more digital with behemoths like Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Nykaa, etc., all going online. However, not being able to physically touch or try a product leads consumers to value influencer reviews and recommendations for confidence before they buy. The above link makes influencers an indispensable link between an e-commerce platform and a customer. This influence has a good way to help organizations build better strategies for marketing while helping customers realize how they are influenced in their buying behavior.

In the business perspective, this is also an important study into the company perspective altogether. Years ago, brands spent considerably on print media, television, and billboards. Nowadays, a large portion of marketing budgets is spent on influencer contracts. This informs the design of better campaigns by knowing how influencers affect the choices of consumers. This also helps one in deciding for the right influencers and thus helps in increasing sales. It also helps correlate the returns in effect with influencer marketing vis the traditional methods. Most importantly, this research is in line with the future of e-commerce as technology expands and newer platforms such as live shopping, AI based influencer marketing, and virtual reality shopping take center stage in entering the public domain. With this, it is conjectured that influencers will play an even more significant role in such developments. By learning how they influence today, it is possible to predict how consumer buying behavior will continue to change in the future.

OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH

1. To study the ways in which social media platforms inform consumers and attract their interest toward the e-commerce products.
2. To examine the effects of social media influencers on building consumer trust when making purchase decisions.
3. To find out which type of influencer-generated content works best for converting toward the e-commerce sales: review, unboxing, reel, etc.
4. To unveil which attributes (follower number, credibility, engagement, etc.) make influencers effective in altering consumer decisions.
5. To capture consumer insight on how consumers perceive the authenticity of the influencer promotions and the effect of that perception on their buying behavior.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This field project is designed to systematically delve into the effects of social media influencers on consumer buying behavior in the e-commerce industry. The efficacy of the data collection was enhanced by utilizing both primary and secondary sources.

Overview of the Research: The study is descriptive in nature. It studies consumer perceptions, attitudes and behaviours under the influence of social media influencers. 104 response of Data for the Research Project:

Data collection method:

- **Primary data:** Primary data for the research will be obtained directly from the consumers through structured questionnaires and surveys. A Google Form will be created based on multiple-choice and rating scale questions representing the consumer views over influencer marketing, trust, brand perception and purchase behaviour.
- **Secondary data:** Data will collect secondary data from existing research papers, journals, articles, and industry reports. Later they will collect information from credible online sources that relates to influencer marketing and e-commerce trends. For this research, the respondents will be college students, young professionals, and other common users of e-commerce.

Sampling method & size: Convenience sampling will be used in this research. The sample size will be inspirational the total of 104 respondents ultimately leading to data generation.

Data Collection: Survey questionnaire – for gathering views and consumer insight Google Forms / Excel – for recording responses. Statistical Tools (percentages, charts, graphs) - to analyze data patterns and present results in a simple and clear way.

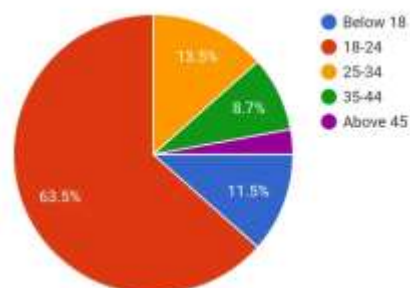
Scope of the data: The study is within the e-commerce domain, which mainly targets researching consumer decisions influenced by social media platform Instagram, YouTube . It shows trends among youth who are the most active followers of influencers.

Limitation: Young consumers follow influencers the most actively; this is a rising trend among them. Due to limited sample size, findings may not be applicable to the entire population. Respondents may give their opinions instead of buying behavior. The study is limited only to online shopping and does not cover the consumer behavior in offline shopping.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

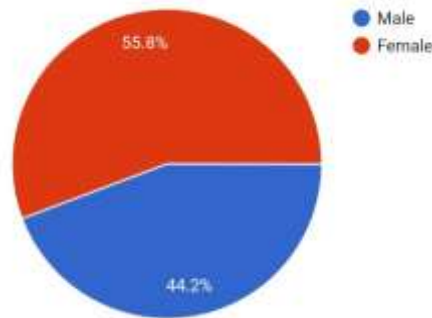
We conducted a online survey to find out how many people know about the research topic .There were a set of 10 question with 4 option to choose.

QUESTION 1:- What is your age?



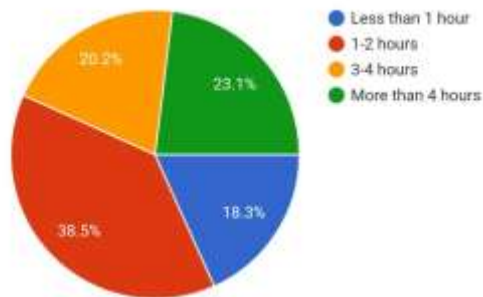
ANALYSIS:- The distributions resulting from the study are largely skewed towards the younger respondents-the 18-24 years, which actually represented 63.5% as well-meaning this survey probably targeted or at least spoke predominantly to a younger audience: extremely low representation in the other age categories and especially the ones above age 45, those only representing a mere 2.9%, indicative of lesser engagement from the older sections.

QUESTION 2:- What is your gender?



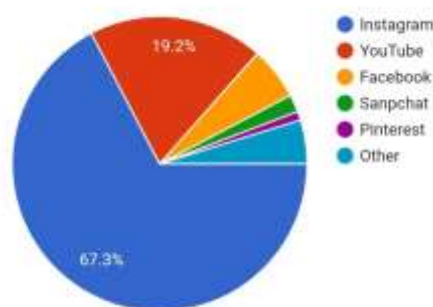
ANALYSIS:- The survey recorded information gender-wise, and what came out in the study was this: Of the 55.8 percent female respondents, there is a marginal difference considering the male respondents who were diverse within the study at 44.2 percent. However, this bias but only slight from males to females makes the sample balanced enough to offer any findings made in the interpretation of gender-biased views contributed by this data.

QUESTION 3:- How much time do you spend on social media daily?



ANALYSIS:- An overwhelming 38.5 respondents say they spend more than four hours a day on social networks, which clearly shows that the majority are members of an active club-23.1, however, confess that they spend less than an hour on it. In general, it indicates that social media occupy quite a space-matter with value in much of what our respondents are up to daily-these would make some worthwhile inputs into making such possible strategies for either the digital marketing industry or mental health awareness campaigns.

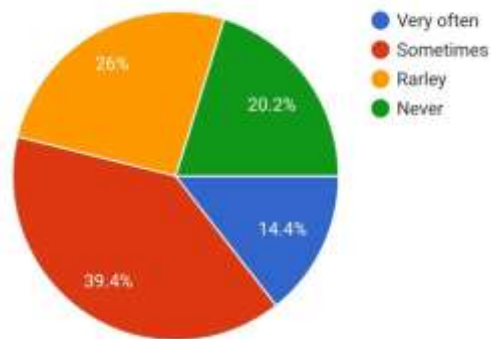
QUESTION 4:- Which platform do you use most often for products-related content?



ANALYSIS:- Instagram has captured the predominant share of consumer preference in relation to product-related content, holding 67.3 percent of users. Behind it is YouTube at a meager 19.2 percent,

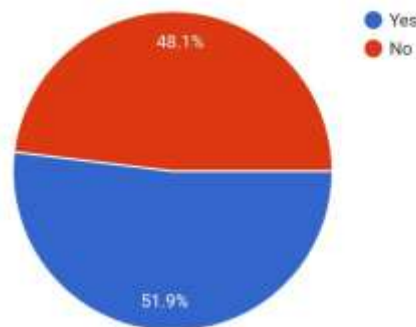
while all other platforms-Facebook, Snapchat, and Pinterest-have less than 2 percent. This points toward a strong engagement trend of visual and influencer-driven targeting that is good to go for promotional product advertising.

QUESTION 5: How often do you follow or engage with social media influencers?



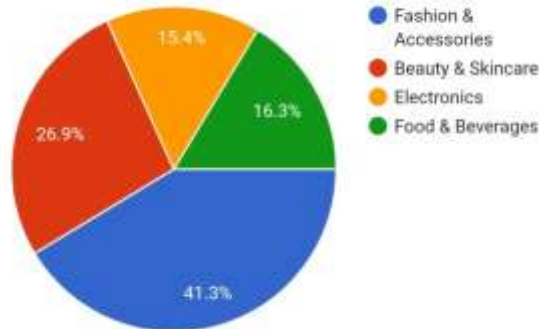
ANALYSIS:- A larger number of respondents-indicating their involvement with social media influencers-39.4% sometimes, while 14.4% very often. A large number-46.2%-(rarely or never) engage, showing the divide in the power of the influencer to reach the audience. This means influencer marketing could work variety-wise, but reach may not be uniform.

QUESTION 6:- Have you ever purchased a product after seeing it promoted by an influencer?



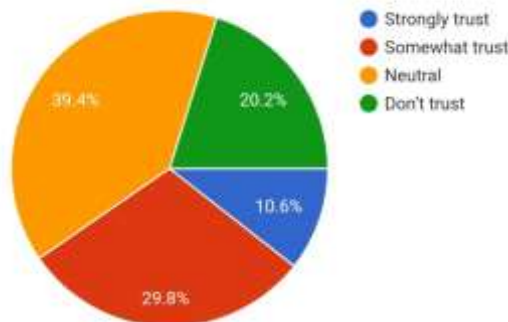
ANALYSIS:- It is a fact that 51.9% of respondents have ever purchased a product because it was shown to them by an influencer, thereby making it manifestly clear that influencer marketing makes a tangible impact on consumer behavior. This near-even-split showcases the truth that even if influencers have a persuasive power, a considerable portion of consumers is still somewhat doubtful by such advertisements. This emphasizes both the reach and limitations of the campaigns being done through the influencer.

QUESTION 7:- What type of products do you most commonly buy through influencer recommendations?



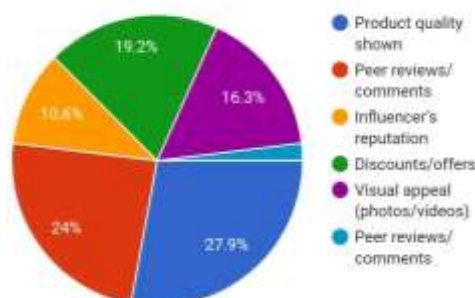
ANALYSIS:- As per the survey, fashion and accessories become the purchases made famous through influencer marketing, at almost 41.3%, together almost half of total consumer interest. Beauty and skin care products follow with a share of 26.9%; then come electronics and food and beverages. This might show that perhaps the ways influence marketing works are more effective in visual and lifestyle contexts.

QUESTION 8:- How much do you trust influencers' product recommendations?



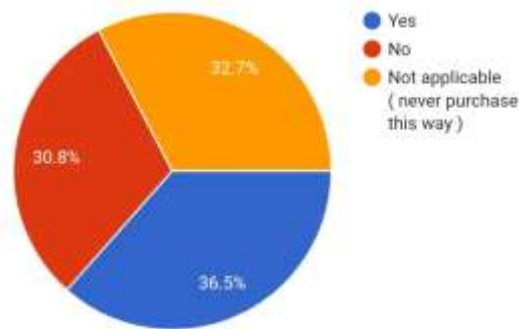
ANALYSIS:- Through the responses gathered, we find that the majority of people 41.3% are influenced into purchases of fashion and accessories, while 26.9% were swayed to purchase beauty and skincare products. Electronics 15.4% and food & beverages 16.3% are both lower on the list, thus showing that mainly lifestyle and appearance-related purchases are impacted by influencers rather than things that are essential in everyday life, suggesting people trust influencers more in the area of style and self-care.

QUESTION 9:- Which factor most influences your decision to buy a product promoted online?



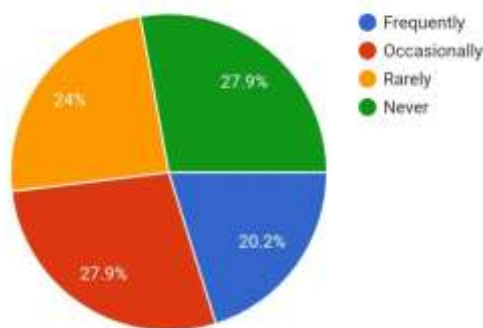
ANALYSIS:- Seventy-seven percent of surveyors consider product quality the primary factor pertaining to online shopping. Following closely was peer reviews at twenty-four percent, thus coming to mean an even greater confirming factor and credibility. Closely related to this last conclusion, eye-catching visual merchandising in discounts and offers is again considered very relevant, showing more aesthetics than value proposition toward the consumer decision-making. On reputation, we are still somewhat there, not much in the least but perhaps something more than just a name.

QUESTION 10:- Have you ever felt disappointed after buying a product based on influencer promotion?



ANALYSIS:- A concern for purchasing behaviors based on an influencer’s recommendation is mainly disappointing in a survey like this. An alarming 32.7% of respondents indicated disappointment with such purchases, signifying a clear breach of faith in influencer marketing. A much higher proportion (36.5%) simply rejects all purchases promoted by any influencer, suggesting either complete distrust or casual indifference to consumerism brought about by influencers. Such polarization warrants even more authentic and transparent forms of incentivizing.

QUESTION 11:- How often do you buy products online after seeing them on social media?



ANALYSIS:- Consumer behavior is polarized. About 27.9% frequently purchase a product online after seeing it on social media, and an equal 27.9% never do. This suggests a polarization of influence effectiveness. There are 44.2% occasional or rare buyers, suggesting there is a moderate impact but leavi

OBSERVATIONS OF RESEARCH

Influencers drive buying choices Many people buy stuff just because their favorite influencers recommend it.

Trust matters People follow influencers who feel real and genuine — not those who promote every brand without using the products.

Young people are most influenced Teens and young adults are the biggest followers of influencers and often buy what's trending online.

Influencers boost brand image Products seem cooler and more trustworthy when influencers promote them, compared to regular ads.

It's not just about price People don't always go for the cheapest option — they're also swayed by influencer reviews and what others are saying online.

Videos work better than text Quick videos like unboxings or demos make people want to buy more than long written reviews.

Some are sceptical Not everyone trusts influencer ads — some think they exaggerate and prefer to double-check the info.

Social media fuels online shopping E-commerce is booming, and influencer marketing is a big reason why — people shop based on what they see on social media.

RESULT & CONCLUSION

RESULT

The study revealed that social media influencers have a strong impact on consumers' purchase intentions, often encouraging them to explore or buy products through their online interactions. People also tend to trust influencers more than traditional advertisements because influencers appear more relatable and authentic. Content that is visually appealing such as product demonstrations and real-life testimonials was found to be the most persuasive.

The influence is particularly strong among younger generations, especially Gen Z and Millennials, who are more likely to follow influencers and act on their recommendations. Influencers also play a significant role in increasing brand awareness, even if consumers do not purchase immediately. Additionally, discount codes and promotional offers shared by influencers further motivate consumers to buy.

Authenticity remains crucial, as genuine and non-pushy influencers create both immediate and long-lasting impact on audience acceptance. The study also noted a rise in impulse buying triggered by influencer content, especially in categories like fashion, beauty, and lifestyle. Moreover, negative reviews or unfavorable experiences shared by influencers can discourage consumers from purchasing. Finally, peer engagement and social proof such as supportive comments and likes strengthen the influencer's ability to convince consumers to try a product.

CONCLUSION

The present-day study shines a clear light on how social media influencers have become one of the most important influencers of consumer behavior in e-commerce. In contrast, a digital extinction today is people spending a large part of their waking hours on social networking platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, where opinions, product reviews, and lifestyle options are exercised by influencers. These influencers position themselves as individuals by being relatable, accessible, and engaging, thus making recommendations more impressive than conventional ads.

The research indicates that influencers serve two significant roles: they create product awareness and help guide the purchase decisions of consumers. Unlike an advertisement that seems distant and untrustworthy, influencer content is basically integrated into the lifestyles of consumers, thereby branding their promotions as credible. Hence, it is logical that opinion of the followers trust these influencers more than the advertising given by brands.

Another strong viewpoint is that Gen Z and Millennials are extremely influenced by social media. They regard these influencers not as endorsers, but trend-setters and lifestyle icons. For them, any live demonstration of a product, unboxing of a product, or an influencer's commentary on it goes a great way in shaping their impressions and encouraging planned purchases or impulse buying. The diffusion effect is further activated, stimulating e-commerce sales when discounts or promo codes are put out on the market by influencers.

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