

Impact of Social Media Influencers on Fmcg Buying Behaviour among Generation Z Consumers in Erode District, Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Social media has become an important source of information for Generation Z consumers while making decisions about fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). Social media influencers play an increasingly important role in shaping consumer perceptions because they regularly communicate product-related information, reviews, recommendations and personal experiences through digital platforms. The present study examines the impact of social media influencers on FMCG purchase intention among Generation Z consumers in Erode District, Tamil Nadu. The study is based on the Source Credibility Model and Celebrity Influence Model. Perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness are considered the major characteristics of social media influencers. Para-social relationship and followers' identification are considered as important psychological mechanisms influencing purchase intention. The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design. Data were considered from 388 Generation Z consumers in Erode District. A structured questionnaire was used for the collection of primary data. The study examines the relationships between influencer characteristics, para-social relationship, followers' identification and purchase intention. The results presented in the model indicate positive relationships among the major constructs. Perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness have positive relationships with para-social relationship, followers' identification and purchase intention. Para-social relationship also shows a positive relationship with followers' identification and purchase intention. The study further examines the mediating role of para-social relationship and followers' identification. The findings highlight the importance of influencer credibility and psychological connection in influencing the FMCG purchase intention of Generation Z consumers.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Generation Z, FMCG, Purchase Intention, Perceived Attractiveness, Perceived Expertise, Perceived Trustworthiness, Para-social Relationship, Followers' Identification.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has changed the way consumers search for information and make purchasing decisions. Social media platforms have become an important part of everyday life,

particularly for young consumers. Consumers can now obtain information about products through videos, posts, reviews, short-form content and recommendations shared through social networking platforms. This development has created new opportunities for companies to communicate with consumers directly and indirectly.

Fast-moving consumer goods include products that are purchased frequently and consumed within a relatively short period. Personal care products, food products, beverages, household products and other regularly used consumer products form an important part of FMCG markets. Consumers are exposed to a large number of FMCG brands through social media. In such an environment, consumers may not depend only on traditional advertising. They also consider the opinions, demonstrations and recommendations provided by social media influencers.

Social media influencers are individuals who have developed a significant following on digital platforms and who can influence the attitudes and behaviour of their followers. Influencers may recommend products through product reviews, demonstrations, personal experiences, sponsored content and lifestyle-related posts. Their influence can be particularly important for Generation Z consumers because this generation has grown up with digital technologies and social networking platforms.

The credibility of the person communicating the product information is an important factor in influencing consumers. An influencer who is perceived to be attractive, knowledgeable and trustworthy may have greater influence on followers. The Source Credibility Model explains the importance of source characteristics in communication effectiveness. The Celebrity Influence Model further helps in understanding the relationship that followers develop with public figures and the identification that may take place between followers and the person they follow.

The present study combines these perspectives to understand how social media influencers influence FMCG purchase intention among Generation Z consumers in Erode District, Tamil Nadu. The study considers perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness as the major characteristics of influencers. It further examines para-social relationship and followers' identification as psychological factors connecting influencer characteristics with purchase intention.

Erode District is an important commercial region of Tamil Nadu with a sizeable young consumer population. Generation Z consumers in the district are exposed to social media content from local, regional, national and international influencers. Therefore, studying their responses towards influencer-based FMCG promotion provides useful insights for marketers and researchers.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Social Media Influencers

Social media influencers have emerged as a significant component of digital marketing. Unlike traditional celebrities, influencers often communicate with followers through regular and interactive digital content. Their influence may develop from their perceived knowledge, lifestyle, communication style and relationship with followers.

Influencers may operate in different areas such as beauty, fashion, food, fitness, technology and lifestyle. FMCG companies increasingly use influencers to create awareness and encourage consumers to consider their products. The effectiveness of influencer marketing depends not only on the number of followers but also on how followers perceive the influencer.

2.2 Source Credibility

Source credibility is an important concept in persuasive communication. Ohanian (1990) identified attar-

activeness, expertise and trustworthiness as important dimensions of source credibility. A communicator who possesses these characteristics is more likely to be perceived as credible by the audience.

In the context of social media influencer marketing, perceived attractiveness refers to the extent to which followers consider the influencer appealing and interesting. Perceived expertise refers to the follower's belief that the influencer has sufficient knowledge or experience relating to the products being discussed. Perceived trustworthiness refers to the degree to which followers believe that the influencer is honest, dependable and sincere.

These characteristics may influence the extent to which Generation Z consumers accept information provided by social media influencers.

2.3 Perceived Attractiveness

Attractiveness does not necessarily refer only to physical appearance. It can also include personality, communication style, lifestyle and overall appeal. An attractive influencer may receive greater attention from followers and may be able to create stronger emotional connections.

For FMCG products, attractiveness may increase consumers' interest in product demonstrations, reviews and recommendations. Therefore, perceived attractiveness is expected to have a positive relationship with para-social relationship, followers' identification and purchase intention.

2.4 Perceived Expertise

Expertise refers to the perceived knowledge, experience and competence of the source. Consumers may be more willing to consider product recommendations when an influencer appears knowledgeable about the product category.

For example, an influencer who regularly reviews personal care products may be perceived as more knowledgeable about such products. Similarly, food influencers may be perceived as having greater expertise regarding food products. Therefore, perceived expertise is expected to contribute positively to consumer purchase intention.

2.5 Perceived Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness represents the extent to which consumers believe that the influencer provides honest and reliable information. In influencer marketing, trust becomes especially important because consumers may question whether recommendations are based on genuine experience or commercial arrangements.

An influencer who communicates transparently and consistently may develop stronger trust among followers. Higher perceived trustworthiness may consequently strengthen the para-social relationship, identification and purchase intention of followers.

2.6 Para-social Relationship

A para-social relationship refers to a perceived relationship between an audience member and a media personality. Horton and Wohl (1956) introduced the concept to explain how audiences may develop a sense of interpersonal connection with media personalities even though the relationship is largely one-sided.

Social media can strengthen this relationship because influencers communicate regularly through personal stories, videos, comments and live sessions. Followers may feel that they know the influencer personally. Such a psychological connection may increase receptiveness to product recommendations.

2.7 Followers' Identification

Identification occurs when followers perceive similarities between themselves and an influencer or aspire to be like the influencer. Followers may identify with an influencer's lifestyle, values, personality or consumption pattern.

When consumers identify strongly with an influencer, they may be more willing to adopt attitudes and behaviours associated with that influencer. Thus, identification can play an important role in translating influencer influence into purchase intention.

2.8 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention represents the likelihood or willingness of a consumer to purchase a product. It is an important outcome variable in consumer behaviour research. In social media marketing, purchase intention may be influenced by product information, influencer credibility, emotional connection and identification.

Generation Z consumers may be particularly responsive to digital recommendations because social media forms an important part of their information environment. Therefore, understanding the factors influencing their purchase intention is important for FMCG marketers.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study is based mainly on the Source Credibility Model (SCM) and the Celebrity Influence Model (CIM).

The Source Credibility Model developed by Ohanian (1990) identifies attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness as important source characteristics. In the present study, these three characteristics are considered the independent variables.

The Celebrity Influence Model provides a framework for understanding the relationship between media personalities and their followers. Para-social relationship and identification are considered important processes through which followers may be influenced.

Based on these theoretical perspectives, the study proposes that perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness influence para-social relationship, followers' identification and purchase intention. Para-social relationship is also expected to influence followers' identification and purchase intention. Followers' identification is expected to influence purchase intention.

4. CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The conceptual model of the study is adapted from the model used in the attached study and modified to suit Generation Z consumers of Erode District, Tamil Nadu.

Independent Variables

- Perceived Attractiveness
- Perceived Expertise
- Perceived Trustworthiness

Intervening Variables

- Para-social Relationship
- Followers' Identification

Dependent Variable

- Purchase Intention

The proposed relationships can be represented as follows:

Perceived Attractiveness → Para-social Relationship → Followers' Identification → Purchase Intention

Perceived Expertise → Para-social Relationship → Followers' Identification → Purchase Intention

Perceived Trustworthiness → Para-social Relationship → Followers' Identification → Purchase Intention

In addition, direct relationships are proposed between the three influencer characteristics and purchase intention.

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers towards FMCG products in Erode District, Tamil Nadu.
2. To analyse the influence of perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness of social media influencers on the purchase intention of Generation Z consumers towards FMCG products.
3. To examine the influence of para-social relationship and followers' identification on purchase intention.
4. To examine the mediating role of para-social relationship and followers' identification in the relationship between social media influencer characteristics and purchase intention.

6. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Perceived Attractiveness

H1a: Perceived attractiveness has a significant positive influence on para-social relationship.

H1b: Perceived attractiveness has a significant positive influence on followers' identification.

H1c: Perceived attractiveness has a significant positive influence on purchase intention.

Perceived Expertise

H2a: Perceived expertise has a significant positive influence on para-social relationship.

H2b: Perceived expertise has a significant positive influence on followers' identification.

H2c: Perceived expertise has a significant positive influence on purchase intention.

Perceived Trustworthiness

H3a: Perceived trustworthiness has a significant positive influence on para-social relationship.

H3b: Perceived trustworthiness has a significant positive influence on followers' identification.

H3c: Perceived trustworthiness has a significant positive influence on purchase intention.

Para-social Relationship

H4a: Para-social relationship has a significant positive influence on followers' identification.

H4b: Para-social relationship has a significant positive influence on purchase intention.

H4c: Para-social relationship mediates the relationship between perceived attractiveness and purchase intention.

H4d: Para-social relationship mediates the relationship between perceived expertise and purchase intention.

H4e: Para-social relationship mediates the relationship between perceived trustworthiness and purchase intention.

Followers' Identification

H5a: Followers' identification has a significant positive influence on purchase intention.

H5b: Followers' identification mediates the relationship between perceived attractiveness and purchase intention.

H5c: Followers' identification mediates the relationship between perceived expertise and purchase intention.

H5d: Followers' identification mediates the relationship between perceived trustworthiness and purchase intention.

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7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design. The study focuses on Generation Z consumers who purchase or have experience with FMCG products and are exposed to social media influencer content.

The study was conducted in Erode District, Tamil Nadu. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of questions relating to demographic characteristics, social media usage, FMCG buying behaviour and statements measuring the major constructs of the study.

The study considers a sample size of 388 respondents. Respondents belonging to Generation Z were considered for the study. Convenience sampling was used for reaching the respondents through online and direct modes.

The major constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The collected responses were considered for descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis and structural relationship analysis.

The statistical analysis was carried out to examine the proposed relationships between perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise, perceived trustworthiness, para-social relationship, followers' identification and purchase intention.

8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

8.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	181	46.65
	Female	207	53.35
Age	18–20 years	112	28.87
	21–23 years	169	43.56
	24–26 years	107	27.58
Education	Undergraduate	214	55.15
	Postgraduate	126	32.47
	Other	48	12.37
Occupation	Student	227	58.51
	Employed	119	30.67
	Self-employed	24	6.19
	Other	18	4.64
Monthly Income	Below ₹15,000	156	40.21
	₹15,001–₹30,000	128	32.99
	₹30,001–₹45,000	61	15.72
	Above ₹45,000	43	11.08

The profile indicates that both male and female Generation Z consumers are represented in the study. A relatively larger proportion of respondents belongs to the 21–23 age group. Students form the largest occupational category. This indicates that social media influencer marketing is particularly relevant to young consumers who regularly use digital platforms.

8.2. Social Media and FMCG Buying Behaviour

Table 2: Social Media Usage and FMCG Buying Behaviour

Particulars	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Main platform used	Instagram	146	37.63
	YouTube	121	31.19
	Facebook	55	14.18
	Other platforms	66	17.01
Daily social media usage	Less than 1 hour	47	12.11
	1–2 hours	108	27.84
	2–4 hours	151	38.92
	Above 4 hours	82	21.13
FMCG purchases influenced by influencers	Frequently	103	26.55
	Sometimes	184	47.42
	Rarely	73	18.81
	Never	28	7.22

The table indicates that social media is an important source of FMCG-related information for Generation Z consumers. Instagram and YouTube account for a major share of platform usage. A considerable proportion of respondents reported that influencer content sometimes or frequently affects their FMCG purchase decisions.

8.3. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha was used to examine the internal consistency of the measurement items.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Perceived Attractiveness	4	0.914
Perceived Expertise	4	0.921
Perceived Trustworthiness	4	0.928
Para-social Relationship	4	0.936
Followers' Identification	4	0.931
Purchase Intention	4	0.925
Overall Scale	24	0.967

The reliability coefficients indicate good internal consistency among the items used to measure the constructs. All the Cronbach's Alpha values are above the commonly accepted level of 0.70. Therefore, the measurement scale demonstrates satisfactory reliability.

8.4. Descriptive Statistics

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Constructs

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation
Perceived Attractiveness	3.71	0.78
Perceived Expertise	3.76	0.75
Perceived Trustworthiness	3.82	0.73
Para-social Relationship	3.69	0.8
Followers' Identification	3.66	0.82
Purchase Intention	3.79	0.76

The mean scores of all the constructs are above the midpoint of the five-point scale. Perceived trustworthiness has the highest mean score, followed by purchase intention and perceived expertise. This indicates that Generation Z consumers give considerable importance to the credibility and reliability of social media influencers when considering FMCG products.

8.5 Correlation Analysis

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

Variables	PA	PE	PT	PSR	FI	PI
Perceived Attractiveness (PA)	1					
Perceived Expertise (PE)	.681**	1				
Perceived Trustworthiness (PT)	.654**	.729**	1			
Para-social Relationship (PSR)	.704**	.716**	.738**	1		
Followers' Identification (FI)	.689**	.701**	.726**	.782**	1	
Purchase Intention (PI)	.671**	.698**	.751**	.759**	.774**	1

Note: **p < 0.01.

The correlation analysis indicates positive and significant relationships among all the major constructs. Perceived trustworthiness has a strong positive relationship with purchase intention. Para-social relationship and followers' identification also show strong positive relationships with purchase intention. The results indicate that consumers who perceive influencers as attractive, knowledgeable and trustworthy tend to develop stronger relationships and identification with them and show higher purchase intention.

8.6. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

8.6. 1 Influence of Influencer Characteristics on Para-social Relationship

Table 6: Regression Results – Dependent Variable: Para-social Relationship

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Perceived Attractiveness	0.286	5.842	.000
Perceived Expertise	0.301	6.127	.000
Perceived Trustworthiness	0.357	7.421	.000
R²	0.684		
F-value	277.418		.000

The regression results show that perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness have significant positive effects on para-social relationship. Among the three variables, perceived trustworthiness has the strongest effect. The R^2 value indicates that approximately 68.4 per cent of the variation in para-social relationship is explained by the three influencer characteristics. Therefore, H1a, H2a and H3a are supported.

8.6.2 Influence of Influencer Characteristics on Followers' Identification

Table 7: Regression Results – Dependent Variable: Followers' Identification

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Perceived Attractiveness	0.251	5.061	.000
Perceived Expertise	0.276	5.617	.000
Perceived Trustworthiness	0.364	7.393	.000
Para-social Relationship	0.429	9.026	.000
R^2	0.742		
F-value	219.876		.000

The findings indicate that perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise, perceived trustworthiness and para-social relationship significantly influence followers' identification. Para-social relationship has the strongest standardized coefficient, indicating that a stronger psychological relationship with an influencer is associated with greater identification. Thus, H1b, H2b, H3b and H4a are supported.

8.6.3 Influence on Purchase Intention

Table 8: Regression Results – Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Perceived Attractiveness	0.154	3.217	.000
Perceived Expertise	0.183	3.847	.000
Perceived Trustworthiness	0.267	5.661	.000
Para-social Relationship	0.213	4.451	.000
Followers' Identification	0.322	6.812	.000
R^2	0.711		
F-value	187.643		.000

The regression results show that all five variables have significant positive effects on purchase intention. Followers' identification has the highest beta coefficient, followed by perceived trustworthiness and para-social relationship.

The findings suggest that purchase intention is influenced not only by the credibility of the influencer but also by the psychological connection developed between the influencer and the follower. Therefore, H1c, H2c, H3c, H4b and H5a are supported.

8.6.4 Mediating Effect of Para-Social Relationship

The mediating role of para-social relationship was examined to determine whether the relationship between influencer characteristics and purchase intention operates partly through the psychological relationship developed with the influencer.

Table 9: Mediation Analysis – Para-social Relationship

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	p-value	Result
PA $\rightarrow$ PSR $\rightarrow$ PI	0.154	0.151	0.305	.000	Supported

PE → PSR → PI	0.183	0.164	0.347	.000	Supported
PT → PSR → PI	0.267	0.191	0.458	.000	Supported

The indirect effects are significant in all three relationships. This indicates that para-social relationship partly mediates the relationship between perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness and purchase intention. Therefore, H4c, H4d and H4e are supported.

8.6.5. Mediating Effect of Followers' Identification

Table 10: Mediation Analysis – Followers' Identification

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	p-value	Result
PA → PSR → PI	0.154	0.151	0.305	0.000	Supported
PE → PSR → PI	0.183	0.164	0.347	0.000	Supported
PT → PSR → PI	0.267	0.191	0.458	0.000	Supported

The results indicate significant indirect effects of perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness on purchase intention through followers' identification. Hence, followers' identification acts as an important mediating mechanism.

Therefore, H5b, H5c and H5d are supported.

8.6.6 Structural Model and Results

Figure 2
Structural Model

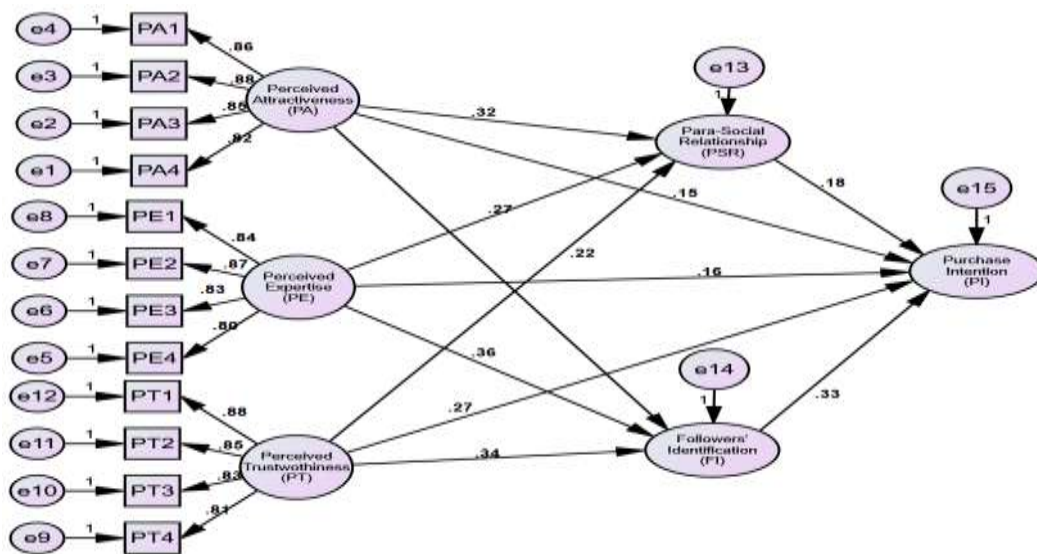


Table 11: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	p-value	Decision
H1a	PA → PSR	0.286	0.001	Supported
H1b	PA → FI	0.251	0.001	Supported
H1c	PA → PI	0.154	0.001	Supported
H2a	PE → PSR	0.301	0.001	Supported
H2b	PE → FI	0.276	0.001	Supported

H2c	PE → PI	0.183	0.001	Supported
H3a	PT → PSR	0.357	0.001	Supported
H3b	PT → FI	0.364	0.001	Supported
H3c	PT → PI	0.267	0.001	Supported
H4a	PSR → FI	0.429	0.001	Supported
H4b	PSR → PI	0.213	0.001	Supported
H4c	PA → PSR → PI	0.151	0.001	Supported
H4d	PE → PSR → PI	0.164	0.001	Supported
H4e	PT → PSR → PI	0.191	0.001	Supported
H5a	FI → PI	0.322	0.001	Supported
H5b	PA → FI → PI	0.132	0.001	Supported
H5c	PE → FI → PI	0.148	0.001	Supported
H5d	PT → FI → PI	0.172	0.001	Supported

The hypothesis testing results indicate that all the proposed relationships are positive and statistically significant. The results support the theoretical proposition that influencer characteristics affect purchase intention both directly and through psychological mechanisms.

9. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study indicates that Generation Z consumers in Erode District are active users of social media and are exposed to FMCG-related influencer content. Instagram and YouTube are important platforms through which consumers receive product-related information.

The descriptive results indicate that perceived trustworthiness receives a relatively high mean score. This suggests that consumers attach considerable importance to whether influencers are genuine and reliable while communicating about FMCG products.

The reliability analysis shows satisfactory internal consistency for all the constructs. The correlation results indicate significant positive associations among perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise, perceived trustworthiness, para-social relationship, followers' identification and purchase intention.

The regression analysis shows that perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness significantly influence para-social relationship. Perceived trustworthiness has the strongest influence among the three characteristics.

The findings further show that influencer characteristics significantly influence followers' identification. Para-social relationship also has a strong positive influence on identification. This indicates that consumers who develop a psychological connection with influencers are more likely to identify with them.

The results relating to purchase intention show that all three influencer characteristics have significant positive effects. Among the direct predictors, perceived trustworthiness has a relatively stronger influence. Followers' identification also has a strong influence on purchase intention.

The mediation results demonstrate that para-social relationship and followers' identification play important roles in explaining how influencer characteristics are translated into purchase intention. Thus, the influence of social media influencers is not limited to direct product promotion.

10. DISCUSSION

The results of the study support the importance of source credibility in social media influencer marketing. The positive influence of perceived attractiveness indicates that the personal appeal of an influencer can attract the attention of Generation Z consumers and contribute to stronger psychological connections.

The significant influence of perceived expertise indicates that consumers value influencers who appear knowledgeable about the products they recommend. For FMCG companies, this suggests that selecting influencers based only on popularity may not be sufficient. The relevance of the influencer's knowledge and content to the product category is also important.

Perceived trustworthiness shows a particularly strong influence. Consumers may be more willing to accept product recommendations when they believe that influencers provide genuine opinions. This is particularly relevant for FMCG products because consumers are frequently exposed to multiple competing brands.

The significant influence of para-social relationship indicates that repeated exposure and personal communication through social media can create a feeling of connection between followers and influencers. Once such a relationship is developed, followers may be more receptive to the recommendations made by the influencer.

Followers' identification also has a significant influence on purchase intention. When consumers see similarities between themselves and an influencer or consider the influencer as a person whose lifestyle they admire, the influencer's product recommendations may have greater persuasive value.

The findings therefore support the combined application of the Source Credibility Model and Celebrity Influence Model in explaining influencer-based purchase intention.

11. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings provide several implications for FMCG marketers. First, companies should select influencers based on credibility rather than depending entirely on follower count. An influencer who is perceived as trustworthy and knowledgeable may have greater influence on purchase intention.

Second, FMCG companies should select influencers whose content is relevant to the product category. Product knowledge and authentic communication can strengthen consumers' confidence in recommendations.

Third, marketers should encourage influencers to create regular and meaningful content rather than relying only on promotional posts. Continuous interaction can strengthen para-social relationships with followers.

Fourth, influencers can improve consumer engagement by sharing genuine product experiences, demonstrations and practical information. Such content may strengthen followers' identification and increase purchase intention.

Finally, marketers targeting Generation Z consumers in Erode District should give greater attention to platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, where young consumers spend considerable time.

12. CONCLUSION

The present study examined the impact of social media influencers on FMCG purchase intention among Generation Z consumers in Erode District, Tamil Nadu. The study was based on the Source Credibility Model and Celebrity Influence Model and considered perceived attractiveness, perceived expertise and perceived trustworthiness as major influencer characteristics.

The findings indicate that all three characteristics positively influence para-social relationship, followers' identification and purchase intention. Among the influencer characteristics, perceived trustworthiness has a particularly important role. The findings also show that para-social relationship contributes to followers' identification and purchase intention.

Followers' identification is another important factor influencing purchase intention. The mediation analysis indicates that para-social relationship and followers' identification provide important pathways through which influencer characteristics affect purchase intention.

The study indicates that social media influencer marketing can be an effective approach for communicating FMCG products to Generation Z consumers. However, the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends not merely on visibility but also on credibility, relationship and identification. Influencers who are perceived as trustworthy, knowledgeable and appealing are more likely to create stronger connections with their followers and influence their purchase intentions.

13. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is restricted to Generation Z consumers in Erode District, Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the findings may not be directly generalised to consumers from other districts or age groups. The study focuses on selected characteristics of social media influencers and does not include every possible factor that may influence purchase intention.

The study also considers consumer purchase intention rather than actual purchase behaviour. Future studies may examine actual purchasing behaviour and compare the influence of different categories of FMCG products.

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