IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION

RESEARCH GUIDE: **SUBMITTED BY :**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The data provides useful insights into social media users' preferences and actions surrounding influencer marketing across various platforms and demographics. Instagram is the most popular platform, with Facebook maintaining a balanced user base and YouTube attracting more male users. Females choose fashion and beauty products, whereas guys prefer technology and electronics. Younger generations are increasingly active in influencer marketing, demonstrating their importance in this space.

Trust in influencer recommendations varies with age, with younger populations showing higher levels of trust. The majority of respondents base their purchases on influencer recommendations, revealing influencers' powerful influence on consumer behavior. Furthermore, the domination of product suggestions based on influencer endorsements reveals social media influencers' immense impact, particularly among younger viewers..

However, there are challenges to authenticity and transparency in influencer marketing. Instagram,in particular, is being questioned about its authenticity, leading users to lose faith. Deceptive endorsements on this media typically lead to unfollowing, highlighting the importance of authenticity in maintaining audience engagement and confidence. Furthermore, there is skepticism regarding influencer transparency when it comes to releasing agreements, indicating that influencer-brand relationships should be more honest and clear.

Overall, these insights highlight the changing nature of influencer marketing and the necessity for businesses and influencers to embrace authenticity and transparency in order to develop meaningful connections with their audience in the digital sphere.

CHAPTER – I

CHAPTER – I INTRODUCTION

The influence of social media influencers on consumer decisions is an important topic in marketing research and practice. Known for having large followings on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, these influencers have become strong advocates for brands looking to connect and engage with their brands. Through their powerful influencers, social media influencers can use their authenticity and perceived expertise in their field to generate customer needs, tastes, and product purchases. Influencer recommendations because people think they have the influence to produce good, reliable information. Influencer marketing strategies, including content promotion and partnerships, enable people to have the confidence and influence to sell products or services to target audiences. its performance demonstrates its ability to raise business awareness, generate engagement and ultimately increase sales. However, issues such as measuring return on investment and ensuring the accuracy of business-

collaboration continue to be researched and discussed. Despite truth and transparency challenges, stakeholders are doing a lot to address these issues, including accepting transparency in their collaborations and trying to build good relationships with their followers. As the industry evolves, influencer marketing platforms and organizations are taking steps to combat fraud and protect the integrity of influencer ratings, creating greater trust and confidence in brands and consumers. Additionally, the saturation of the influencer market creates opportunities for creativity and innovation, encouraging influencers to stand out with unique content and engagement strategies. Influencers collaborating with brands that emphasize openness, integrity, and ethics not only breaks down barriers, but also increases consumer trust and confidence, paving the way for continued growth and success in the ever-changing business world.

1.1 Importance of understanding influencer marketing in contemporary business

Understanding the impact of marketing is important in today's business world because it has a huge impact on customer behavior and business interaction. With the rise of social media platforms, consumers are relying on influencers for product endorsements and insights, making influencer marketing an essential part of today's strategy business. You can attract the attention of your target audience, increase brand awareness and increase sales. In addition, influencer marketing has a lot of personalization and authenticity to advertising, attracting customers who have clear value and authenticity in the brand relationship. Therefore, organizations that understand the complexities of influencer marketing can gain a competitive advantage in today's digital marketplace.

1.2 Concept of influencer marketing

Influencer marketing is a marketing process where brands work with people who have large followings and influence on social media platforms to promote their products or services. Often considered experts in their field, influencers deliver original content that connects with their audiences, drives business engagement, and leads users to make product decisions. The strategy focuses on building relationships between companies, influencers, and consumers, leveraging the influencer's trust and relationship with their followers to seamlessly market products on the street. Influencer marketing allows marketers to connect with their audiences while leveraging the trust and authenticity inherent in interacting with consumers. Therefore, it has become an important part of marketing strategies today in order to increase business awareness, improve brand awareness and increase sales.

1.2.1 Types of influencers (macro, micro, nano) and their reach

Influencers are divided into three groups based on reach and audience size: macro influencers, micro influencers, and nano influencers. Macro influencers often have large followings that include celebrities, business professionals, and social media enthusiasts, often reaching 100,000 followers. They have the potential to reach and expand but may not target the same audience as micro-influencer.

Micro influencers typically have a small following of between 10,000 and 100,000 followers. They are known for highly engaged and niche audiences that make brands effective for specific demographics or interest groups. Engagement and loyal audience or niche. Although the reach of nano influencers is limited compared to macro or micro influencers, nano influencers can develop a high level of authenticity and trust with their audience. While they may have millions of followers and broad appeal, micro-influencers, such as a health blogger with 50,000 followers, can also provide access to healthy consumers. Nano-influencers, such as local food bloggers or enthusiasts, may have a small following but have a large impact on their group.

1.3   Evolution of influencer marketing in digital marketing strategies

The evolution of influencer marketing in digital marketing strategies has changed a lot over time. Originally, influencer marketing often involved celebrities endorsing products in advertisements. However, with the introduction of social media, ordinary people had the ability to create a large following and influence, leading to the influence of social media. There is no longer any work to be done not only with macro influencers, but also with micro and nano influencers that are suitable for certain audiences and have high participation. Additionally, technological advances have made it easier to manage and measure marketing campaigns, allowing companies to evolve their programs to achieve greater success. It was a huge success.

1.3.1   Benefits of Influencer Marketing for Businesses

1.3.1.1   Enhanced brand visibility and awareness

Indian firms such as FabIndia have successfully used influencer marketing to increase theirvisibility and reach on social media channels. By working with influencers like Masoom Minawala and Kritika Khurana, FabIndia has broadened its audience and raised brand recognition among fashion-conscious consumers across the country.

1.3.1.2   Increased consumer engagement and trust

Influencers such as Ranveer Allahbadia and Kusha Kapila, who are known for their real content and relatable personalities, have helped businesses like Myntra and Amazon India develop trust and engagement with their audiences. These influencers have strengthened relationships between brands and consumers in India by providing honest endorsements and suggestions.

1.3.1.3   Impact on sales and revenue growth

Influencer marketing has helped Indian e-commerce platforms like Nykaa and Flipkart increase sales and revenue significantly. These platforms have successfully improved income streams and conversions by engaging with influencers in a variety of industries. Forexample, Nykaa's collaboration with beauty influencers such as Shreya Jain has resulted in increased sales of cosmetic goods on their marketplace.

1.4.   Influencer-Consumer Relationship Dynamics

1.4.1   Influence of influencers on consumer perceptions and behaviors

The influence of influencers on consumer perceptions and behaviors refers to the significant impact that individuals with substantial online followings wield over how consumers view products, brands, and trends, as well as the subsequent actions they take, such as purchasing decisions. This influence stems from influencers' ability to authentically engage and connect with their audience through various social media platforms, often resulting in heightened trust, brand loyalty, and purchasing intent among followers

1.4.2   Building rapport and trust with followers

1.4.2.1   Building relationships and trust with your followers is an important part of successful marketing because it sets the stage for effective communication and interaction. Influencers often achieve this by providing honest and valuable content that resonates with their target audience. For example, an influencer might share a personal story, experience, or experience after looking back at their own life to get people to reconnect with them on a higher level. When followers believe that an influencer is real and trustworthy, they are more likely to engage with their content and follow their recommendations. This relationship increases the effectiveness of influencer marketing by strengthening the loyalty and relationship between the influencer and his followers. and is the basis of cooperation. Influencers often achieve this by providing honest and valuable content that resonates with their target audience. For example, an influencer can share a personal story, experience, or what happened after looking at their life, allowing people to connect with them on a higher level. When followers believe that a person is truly strong and trustworthy, they are more likely to engage with their content and listen to their advice. This relationship can increase the effectiveness of the marketing campaign by strengthening the loyalty and love between the influencer and their followers. An example of how to build relationships and trust. Stakeholders engage with their audiences by offering their lifestyles and unique knowledge, leading to collaboration and joint ventures.*Influencers can build trust with their followers through several key strategies*

1.4.2.1.1.   Authenticity

Authenticity is critical for developing trust. Followers are more likely to trust influencerswho are sincere, open, and honest about their experiences, thoughts, and collaborations.

1.4.2.1.2.   Consistency

Consistent content creation contributes to credibility and reliability. Influencers who consistently give high-quality, relevant information that meets their interests andexpectations are valued by their followers.

1.4.2.1.3   Expertise

Demonstrating competence in a given field or business boosts an influencer's reputation. Followers trust influencers who demonstrate knowledge, abilities, and expertise in theirarea of influence.

1.4.2.1.4   Transparency

Transparency about sponsored content, partnerships, and paid promotions is essential for maintaining trust. Clearly disclosing any commercial relationships helps followers make informed decisions and fosters authenticity.

1.4.2.1.5   Engagement

Engaging with followers through likes, comments, and direct messages creates a sense of community and connection. Responding to inquiries, making recommendations, and demonstrating genuine interest in followers' feedback all help to enhance the influencer- follower relationship.

1.4.2.1.6   Relatability

Being relatable and sharing personal tales and experiences allows influencers to engage with their target audience on a deeper level. Followers are more likely to believe influencers who appear relatable and real.

1.5   Factors influencing the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns

1.5.1   Relevance

The influencer's relevancy to the brand and its target audience is critical. Choosing influencers whose content is consistent with the brand's values, target demographics, and campaign objectives boosts the chances of campaign success.

1.5.2   Authenticity

Authenticity is essential for developing trust with the audience. Influencers that truly incorporate brand messaging into their content and remain open about sponsored partnerships are more likely to connect with their audience.

1.5.3   Engagement

The level of involvement an influencer has with their audience has a substantial impact on campaign success. Influencers with strong engagement rates, such as likes, comments, and shares, reflect an active and loyal following, which can increase the campaign's reach and impact.

1.5.4   Content Quality

The quality of the material generated by the influencer is critical for catching audience attention and increasing engagement. High-quality, visually appealing, and engaging material that effectively delivers the brand's message is more likely to make an indelible impression with viewers.

1.5.5   Frequency and Consistency

The influencer's consistent posting and engagement serve to keep the audience interested and motivated throughout the campaign. Regularly scheduled material keeps the brand top of mind while also reinforcing critical messaging over time.

1.5.6   Call-to-Action (CTA)

A clear and engaging call-to-action in influencer content increases audience interaction andmotivates desired activities, such as website visits, product purchases, or participation in promotions or contests.

1.5.7   Audience Trust

The influencer's integrity and credibility are key to advertising efficacy. Influencers that have developed strong relationships and trust with their audience over time are more able to influence consumer views and actions.

1.5.8   Measurable Metrics

Using the right metrics to track and measure campaign performance is critical for assessingeffectiveness and optimizing future efforts. Key performance indicators (KPIs) such as engagement rates, reach, conversion rates, and ROI provide useful information about the campaign's influence on company objectives.

1.6 Measuring Influencer Marketing ROI

Measuring Influencer Marketing ROI involves assessing the effectiveness of influencer campaigns through various metrics and methods, overcoming challenges in attribution, and implementing strategies for optimization:

1.6.1 Metrics and methods for evaluating campaign effectiveness

1.6.1.1 Reach and Impressions

Measure the total number of people who were exposed to the influencer's content (reach) and the total number of times the content was viewed (impressions).

1.6.1.2 Engagement

Track the level of engagement generated by the influencer's content, including likes,comments, shares, and saves. High engagement rates indicate active audience participation and interest in the campaign.

1.6.1.3 Click-through Rate (CTR)

Calculate the percentage of viewers who clicked on links or CTAs included in the influencer's content to visit the brand's website or landing page. A higher CTR indicates effective content and audience interest in the brand.

1.6.1.4 Conversion Rate

Measure the percentage of viewers who completed a desired action, such as making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter, or downloading a resource, after interacting with the influencer's content.

1.6.1.5   Return on Investment (ROI)

Evaluate the ROI of the influencer marketing campaign by comparing the total costs associated with the campaign (e.g., influencer fees, content production, promotion) to the revenue generated or other predetermined objectives achieved (e.g., increased brand awareness, new customer acquisitions).

1.6.1.6   Brand Sentiment Analysis

Monitor and analyze audience sentiment towards the brand before, during, and after the influencer campaign to assess changes in perception, attitudes, and brand sentiment among the target audience.

1.6.1.7   Surveys and Feedback

Collect feedback from the audience through surveys, polls, or direct messages to gaugetheir perceptions, opinions, and behaviors in response to the influencer campaign. Qualitative insights provide valuable context and understanding of audience sentiment.

1.6.1.8   Social Listening

Monitor social media platforms and online conversations to track mentions, hashtags, and brand-related discussions related to the influencer campaign. Social listening tools can identify trends, sentiment, and user-generated content associated with the campaign.

1.6.2   Challenges in measuring ROI and attribution

1.6.2.1   Multi-Touch Attribution

Determining the exact contribution of influencer marketing to a conversion or sale within a multi-channel marketing environment is complex. Consumers often interact with multiple touchpoints before making a purchase, making it difficult to attribute the entire value of a sale solely to influencer activity.

1.6.2.2   Lack of Standardization

There is a lack of standardized metrics and methodologies for measuring influencer marketing ROI across different platforms and industries. Varying campaign objectives,

audience demographics, and influencer performance metrics further complicate the measurement process.

1.6.2.3   Long-Term Impact

Influencer marketing ROI may extend beyond immediate sales or conversions to include long-term benefits such as brand awareness, brand perception, and customer lifetime value. These intangible benefits are challenging to quantify and attribute directly to influencer activity.

1.6.2.4   Influencer Fraud and Fake Engagement

Fake followers, inflated engagement metrics, and influencer fraud can distort ROI calculations and undermine the credibility of influencer marketing campaigns. Identifying and filtering out fraudulent activity is essential for accurate measurement and attribution.

1.6.2.5   Data Access and Integration

Access to comprehensive data sources and the ability to integrate data from variouschannels and platforms are crucial for accurate ROI measurement and attribution. Limited access to data and challenges in data integration can hinder the effectiveness of measurement efforts.

1.6.2.6   Time Lag and Delayed Effects

Influencer marketing ROI may not be immediately apparent, and its impact on consumer behavior and purchase decisions may unfold over time. Delayed effects, such as brand recall or repeat purchases influenced by exposure to influencer content, pose challenges in accurately attributing ROI to specific campaigns or influencers.

1.6.2.7   Offline Conversions

Attribution becomes more challenging when influencer marketing efforts drive offlineconversions, such as in-store purchases or phone inquiries. Tracking and attributing these conversions to influencer activity require innovative solutions and data collection methods.

1.6.3 *Strategies for optimizing ROI and campaign performance*

To optimize ROI and campaign performance in influencer marketing, consider the followingstrategies:

1.6.3.1 *Set Clear Objectives*

Define specific, measurable goals for the influencer marketing campaign, such as increasing brand awareness, driving website traffic, or generating sales. Clear objectives provide direction and help align campaign activities with desired outcomes.

1.6.3.2 *Identify the Right Influencers*

Choose influencers whose audience demographics, interests, and values align with your brand and target audience. Conduct thorough research to assess influencer authenticity, engagement rates, and past performance to ensure optimal fit and effectiveness.

1.6.3.3 *Collaborate on Content Creation*

Work closely with influencers to co-create authentic and compelling content that resonates with their audience while effectively communicating your brand message and value proposition. Encourage creativity and experimentation to generate unique and engaging content that drives results.

1.6.3.4 *Incorporate Call-to-Action (CTA)*

Include clear and compelling calls-to-action in influencer content to prompt audience interaction and drive desired actions, such as visiting your website, making a purchase, or signing up for a newsletter. CTAs increase engagement and facilitate measurable outcomes.

1.6.3.5 *Monitor and Measure Performance*

Implement robust tracking and measurement mechanisms to monitor campaign performance in real-time and assess key metrics such as reach, engagement, click-through rates, and conversions. Use data insights to identify trends, optimize content, and allocate resources effectively.

1.6.3.6 *Test and Iterate*

Continuously test different campaign elements, such as messaging, visuals, CTAs, and audience targeting, to identify what resonates best with your target audience. Iterate based on performance insights to refine strategies and maximize effectiveness over time.

1.6.3.7 Leverage Influencer Relationships

Foster long-term relationships with influencers who consistently deliver value and align with your brand values. Cultivate mutual trust and collaboration to establish ongoingpartnerships that drive sustained impact and ROI across multiple campaigns.

1.7 Understanding the stages of consumer decision-making

Understanding the steps involved in consumer decision-making with the help of Table no. 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Stages of consumer decision Making

Stages	Explaination
Recognitionof Need	The consumer becomes aware of a need or problem,which triggers the decision-making process.
Information Search	The consumer gathers information about potential solutions to satisfytheir need or solve their problem.
Evaluation of Alternatives	The consumer evaluates different options based on factors such as price, quality, and brand reputation.
Purchase Decision	The consumer makes a decision to purchase a specific product or service.
Post- Purchase Evaluation	After the purchase, the consumer assesses their satisfaction with theproduct or service and considers whether it meets their expectations

Source: https://www.businessstudynotes.com/marketing/marketing-management/stages-consumer-decision-making-process/

1.7.1   Influence of social media influencers on each stage

1.7.1 Recognition of Need or Problem

Social media and influencers can trigger the recognition of a need through content thathighlights lifestyle trends, product recommendations, or problem-solving solutions

1.7.2 Information Search

Consumers turn to social media platforms and influencers for product reviews,recommendations, and comparisons, influencing their information search process.

1.7.3 Evaluation of Alternatives

Influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences byendorsing specific products or brands, thereby influencing the evaluation of alternatives.

1.7.4 Purchase Decision

Social proof, in the form of influencer endorsements or user-generated content, can swayconsumer purchase decisions by providing reassurance and validation.

1.7.5 Post-Purchase Evaluation

Influencers' post-purchase content, such as reviews or testimonials, can influence howconsumers evaluate their satisfaction with a product or service.

1.8   Role of emotions and social proof in purchase decisions

1.8.1   Emotions

1.8.2   Social Proof

Emotions influence consumer behavior and decision-

making processes. Positive emotions such as excitement, happiness and satisfaction can lead to purchase intent ion by creating feelings and happiness about the product or brand. Conversely, negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, or FOMO (fear of missing out) also spur purchases when consumers seek to alleviate discomfort or u nconvincing solutions.

CocaCola's "Share a Coke" campaign evokes feelings of happiness, emotion and personal connection by perso nalizing letters with people's names and encouraging customers to share the Coke with friends and loved ones. By tapping into consumer needs and creating the sense of camaraderie and enjoyment that comes with sharing a drink, the campaign can encourage brand purchases and improve brand preferences.

1.9   Need for the study

Influencer marketing is a powerful tool in digital marketing today, but its long-

term impact on consumers needs to be investigated. An important area that needs further investigation is the lo ng-

term effects of people's perceptions of brand image. Will these partnerships improve the value proposition of t he business, or will more people disrupt the partnership to ensure the integrity of the business? Additionally, t he different ecosystems created by different social media platforms require specific platform research. Content consumption behavior and engagement patterns on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube clea rly influence how audiences respond to influencer marketing. Looking for unique reasons on this platform is c rucial to the success of your marketing efforts and your return on investment. Diverse and inclusive influencer groups are important; The fight against illegal content and AI-

generated "fake influencers" is an urgent issue. Examining consumer reactions to different interactions with pr omotional content can inform the development of open and transparent communication strategies. This knowle dge will bring the brand to this beautiful place beautiful and useful and promote a good partnership between th e brand and the customer. Fundamentally, the potential impact and ethical implications of influencer marketin g underscore the need for continued research and development of strategies in this area.

1.10   Layout of the study

Chapter one deals with the introduction and the need for this study. Chapter two describes the review of literature. Chapter three discusses the research methodology of this study and research gaps. Chapter four deals with the analysis and data interpretation that have been collected through survey. Chapter five defines the findings of this study, and Chapter six deals with the conclusion ofthis study. Finally, Chapter seven include references and Chapter eight includes questionnaire(Annexure

CHAPTER – II

CHAPTER – II   LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase decisions highlights the persuasive power wielded by these digital personalities. Scholars delve into factors such as trust and credibility to understand how influencers shape consumer behavior. Additionally, investigations focus on the role of platform dynamics and influencer characteristics in moderating the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns.

Pallavi   Choudhary,   Dr   Sonali   P   Banerjee   (2024)
Social media has changed the way consumers make purchasing decisions. An indepth study of the influence of YouTube influencers on consumer behavior. It emphasizes the importance of YouTube influencers in building customer trust, opinion and purchasing motivation. This study aims to measure the impact of YouTube influencer endorsements on the consumer's decisionmaking process, while examining the impact of different types of YouTube influencers on consumer interaction. This study uses a quantitative research method using a qualitative survey and simple random sampling. This article will contribute to raising awareness of the role of YouTube influencers in influencing consumer behavior. It can lead to career opportunities and support the intersection of influencer marketing and social media by providing insight.

Bharati   Wukkadada,   Ram   Kishen   Yelamanchili   (2024)
The hotel industry has changed from providing basic services to providing experiences. In this change, microinfluencers are now very important; especially for budget hotels like OYO, Fab and Key and luxury hotels like Ginger and Fairfield. The study, which involved 200 participants across India, examined the impact of micro-influencers on consumer decision-

making in financial markets. Eight factors, including influencer marketing, user-

generated content, and social media, were analyzed through factor and regression analysis using SPSS. The findings confirmed five hypotheses highlighting the important role of micro-

influencers in shaping consumer choice. This highlights the importance of budget hotels encouraging collaboration and user content to generate meaningful purchases and actions.

Muhammad Ahsanullah Qureshi, Shahzadi Tehleel Hussain (2024)
This research addresses the complex area of

fraud on social media, focusing on the important role of trust in consumer decision-

making. Using a quantitative approach, the research examines interactions between influencers, consumers, and products or services to understand pwm behavior. Data were collected through an online survey using a simple survey to generate 450 responses. Analysis using the Hayes Process Macro in SPSS revealed the negative impact of media fraud on product/service perceptions and consumer sentiment. The studies provide a framework for understanding these changes and provide insight for marketers and practitioners to be effective in this area.

Bharat Bogati et.al (2024)

This study uses Sephora as a case study to investigate the impact of social media on consumer decisionmaking. By analyzing Sephora's content and data on influencer marketing, trust, and product features, this research aims to make a difference in the way influencers influence consumer preferences in the beauty industry. The survey will collect information and ensure ethical behavior. This month's study aims to gain insight into the effectiveness of influencer marketing and its impact on businesses like Sephora. It helps understand the impact of marketing on consumer behavior in general and provides practical advice for marketing strategies.

Muskaan Fayaz Sahaf, Arif Nazir (2024) Businesses increasingly turn to social media influencers (SMIs) to sway their target audience due to rapid consumer stratification. Socialmedia's ubiquitous presence and wide reach have rendered it a potent advertising platform, surpassing traditional methods. This study scrutinizes the necessity of employing SMIs in marketing services and their impact on consumers. It evaluates the effectiveness of social media influencing vis-à-vis traditional advertising and delineates the advantages and disadvantages of thisemerging strategy. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, researchers gathered quantitative andqualitative data through surveys and interviews. Despite SMIs wielding significant sway over consumer purchases, the study highlights the burgeoning adoption of influencer marketing in the Kashmir Valley. Overall, the research underscores influencer marketing's dominance in effectivelyinfluencing target demographics, signaling its ascension as a formidable advertising tool in contemporary markets.

Weilan Shi et.al (2023) "Influencer marketing," where companies enlist social media influencers to promote their products, is gaining popularity due to its widespread use. Virtual influencers, digital entities who have a preference for digital items such as NFTs and video game skins, are particularly effective for metaverse-related themes. With increasing demand from consumers, therehas been a rise in the number of active and influential virtual influencers. A survey conducted in March 2022 found that 58% of US customers were already following a virtual influencer. This study aims to investigate whether endorsements from virtual influencers influence consumer purchasing behavior. The research indicates that the presence of virtual influencers enhances consumer intentions to purchase products, both online and offline. Exposure to a virtual influencer increases the likelihood of consumers making a purchase, demonstrating the significant impact of virtual influencers on consumer behavior.

Jakub Horváth, Richard Fedorko (2023) "Influencer marketing," where brands employ social media influencers to endorse their products, is increasingly popular. Virtual influencers, digital entities with a preference for digital products like NFTs and video game skins, excel in promoting metaverse-related themes. With rising consumer demand, there's been a surge in active virtual influencers. A March 2022 survey found 58% of US consumers followed virtual influencers. This study explores whether virtual influencer recommendations affect purchasing behavior. Results indicate that the presence of a virtual influencer enhances consumer buying intentions, both online and offline. Exposure to virtual influencers increases the likelihood of consumers making purchases, highlighting their impact on consumer behavior.

Bal Ram Bhattarai, Sudan Thapa, Deepesh Ranabhat Pokhara, Pradeep Sapkota (2023) This study in Pokhara Valley, Nepal, with 250 respondents, employed a quantitative approach to gauge social media influencers' impact on purchases. Conducted in 2023 over three months, the findings from Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling reveal online communities, perceived usefulness, ratings, and trust significantly influence buying decisions positively. However, recommendations lack significant impact. Consumers active in online communities, perceiving social media as useful, relying on ratings, and trusting the platform, are more inclined to base purchases on online experiences. These insights inform businesses and marketers for tailored strategies.-

Sarthak Chourasia, Avishi Shrivastava, Lokeshver Singh Jodhana, B.L. Verma (2023) With social media emerging as a primary source of travel-related information, tourist service providers increasingly engage social media influencers (SMIs) in their digital marketing. SMIs distribute content to customers, who rely on e-servicescape platforms and user-generated content (UGC) for hotel reviews and ratings. Influencers, valued for their online reputation and trustworthiness,swiftly impact followers' perceptions and behaviors. According to The Influencer Marketing Hub's 2019 survey, businesses gain an average 5x ROI from influencer marketing, with some achieving 20x returns. Influencers' content often sways viewers' judgments, making them pivotal in hotel advertising, reshaping how guests choose accommodations. SMIs endorse products, sparking viral discussions online, fundamentally altering consumer decision-making processes in the hospitality industry.

R.A.S.D.Rathnayake, V G P Lakshika (2023) The growing significance of social media influencers lies in their potent influence on consumer behavior, notably on Instagram, a key platform for influencer marketing. However, limited research focuses on influencer credibility and its impact on purchase behavior, particularly in Sri Lanka's beauty industry. This quantitative studysurveyed 150 Instagram users aged 18 to 34 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Results indicate a positive correlation between credibility dimensions and purchase intention, with "trustworthiness" emerging as the most impactful factor. This research contributes to ongoing discussions on influencer credibility, particularly on Instagram, filling a gap in the literature. Marketers and influencers in the fashion industry can leverage these insights to enhance their strategies effectively.

Kaukab Abid Azhar, Zubair A. Shah (2023) As businesses increasingly invest in influencer marketing, understanding how social media influencers drive consumer behavior becomes crucial. This study addresses this gap by examining the mechanisms through which influencers impact purchase intentions. Applying the theory of planned behavior, semi-structured interviews uncover that followers' attitudes and subjective norms towards influencers significantly influence purchase intentions, shaping consumer behavior. Additionally, authenticity, entertaining content, emotional bond, and personal relevance emerged as key constructs from the interviews. This insight enables marketers to develop more effective strategies by targeting influential influencers for various customer segments. Leveraging these findings, managers can craft impactful campaigns that resonate with consumers, enhancing overall marketing effectiveness in the digital landscape.

Yunita Dwijayanty,Nila A. Windasari (2022) With the surge in social media usage, influencer marketing has become a prevalent strategy for bolstering brand reputations, particularly in the perfume industry where product evaluation is subjective. This study examines the impact of perfume influencers on HMNS Perfumery customer purchasing decisions, employing the Ohanian model to assess perceived attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and storytelling competence. Through a survey of 265 HMNS Perfumery customers in Indonesia, PLS-SEM analysis revealed that trustworthiness and expertise significantly enhance brand image, while attractiveness and storytelling competence did not show significant effects. Moreover, a positive relationship betweenbrand image and purchasing decisions was identified. The study contributes to both theory and practice, shedding light on the influence of social media influencers in the perfume industry.

R. Bhagyalakshmi Ramadas, S M Akila (2022) The rise of technology has reshaped shopping dynamics, with the Internet emerging as a pivotal medium for disseminating information and shaping consumer decisions. Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, play a crucial role in promoting brands and enhancing shopper engagement. This paper delves into the impact ofInstagram marketing on consumer purchase decisions, analyzing data from 100 Instagram users. Findings indicate that the majority of respondents are female, and their purchasing decisions are influenced by celebrity endorsements on Instagram. Additionally, visually appealing content posted on Instagram stores attracts consumers. Chi-square analysis reveals a significant associationbetween age groups and influencers, underscoring Instagram's influence on consumer behavior. Overall, Instagram emerges as a potent tool for driving consumer purchasing decisions.

Charles Alves de Castro, Isobel O'Reilly, TU Dublin,Aiden Carthy (2022) This paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of social media influencers (SMIs), namely their impact on adolescents' lives from a consumer behaviour perspective. Therefore, the main objective of this review is to present valuable information regarding social media influencers as critical players in influencing young people during their purchase decision-making process. The major finding is thatmarketers must consider online marketing strategies using social media influencers as crucial components to reach the attention of younger generations, such as generation Z. Moreover, research suggests that social media influencers have been efficiently promoting both brands and products, using target audiences to effectively enhance communication among peers. In addition, this review offers insights on the importance of encouraging SMIs to promote environmentally friendly products to reduce waste and pollution, as well as to seek to promote awareness to adopt a sustainable lifestyle, helping to achieve the United Nations sustainable development goals, and in particular SDG-13, as per the 2030 climate action agenda.

Rameshkumar Nagaraj et. el (2022) Digital transformation has tremendously changed the life style of the people in recent years. In today's life Social Media become useful tool using by the consumer in buying decisions. Fast Growth and acceptability of social media platform has plays a big role in consumer purchase decision. In current scenario youngsters are called innovator because they adopt any innovation or changes first. So that social media marketers mainly focusingon youngsters. Due to ease of use, the young generations are using the social media for varioususes especially for purchasing goods and services. The present study has been undertaken to analyze how young digital customers perceive social media Influencers and whether they affect their purchasing intentions and buying decisions. For this purpose, primary data was collectedfrom 150 respondents. Data was tabulated and analyzed with the help of statistical tools to achieve the objectives of study.

Koay Kian Yeik,Man-Lai Cheung,Patrick Chin Hooi Soh,Chai Wen Teoh (**2022**)Sunway UniversityThis research investigates the impact of social media influencers' (SMIs) credibility, encompassing trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise, on followers' purchase intention. Utilizing self-administered online surveys with 191 Instagram users, findings reveal that SMIs' trustworthiness and expertise significantly predict purchase intention. Additionally, materialism moderates the relationship between attractiveness and purchase intention, particularly evidentwhen materialism levels are high. Notably, higher materialism strengthens the influence of attractiveness on purchase intention. This study enhances understanding in SMI literature by elucidating the role of credibility factors and materialism in driving followers' purchase intentions, providing valuable insights for marketers aiming to leverage influencer marketing effectively.

Lovedeep Singh Sidhu, Ramandeep Saini (2021) This study investigates the impact of social media influencers on the consumer decision-making process of millennials and plurals. Utilizing a theoretical model developed from literature review, data was collected from 500 respondents through structured questionnaires, with equal representation of millennials and plurals.

Smart PLS 3.0 and structural equation modeling were employed for data analysis. Results indicate that social media influencers significantly influence all stages of the consumer decision-making process for both generations, with the highest impact observed in the need recognition stage, followed by post- purchase behavior, purchase stage, evaluation of alternatives, and information search. While the study has limitations in geographic scope and focuses solely on behavioral aspects, it provides valuable insights for marketers in tailoring digital marketing strategies for targeting millennials and plurals on social media.

Mohd Yusof Zulkefli,Nor Ez-zatul Hanani, Hashima Mohammad, Mohd Fauzi Harun (2021) Social media influencers have become more popular in endorsing a product and it has become a common tactic in marketing strategy to the current advertising field. Most of the company start to switch from using celebrity endorser to social media influencer as their endorser. Promotional marketing has been a chain of cycle used by companies to promote their products. To do that, mostcompanies use endorser as a medium to promote their product and influencing the consumer purchase decision. Celebrity endorser is the most popular type of endorser that affects youth purchase decision. However, nowadays the emergence of social media influencer has also played arole in influencing the youth purchase decision. Therefore, this research has been run to identify which endorser has more influence on youth purchase decision based on endorser characteristics namely attractive, expertise, likeability, meaningful and trustworthy. 400 survey questionnaires have been distributed to the youth age between 18-25 years old. The findings indicate that social media influencer makes the highest influence on youth purchase decision with likeability characteristic has the highest contribution in influencing the youth purchase decision.

Ruhi Lal, G. Sharma (2021) This study delves into the mediating role of brand consciousness in the relationship between social media influencers (SMIs) effectiveness and online purchase behavior. Gathering primary data from 567 youth in Delhi NCR through structured questionnaires, analysis is conducted using SPSS 21 & AMOS 21 via structural equation modeling (SEM). Results reveal that brand consciousness fully mediates the association between SMIs and online purchase behavior. The research contributes by elucidating the explanatory roles of SMIs effectiveness and assessing the mediating influence of brand consciousness on online purchase behavior, offering insights for marketers seeking to leverage influencer partnerships effectively in the digital age.

Mandy Pick, Join GmbH (2020) This study delves into the impact of influencers' evaluation on consumer behavior, filling a research gap in understanding this dynamic. Utilizing the source credibility model, it examines the perceived influencer credibility's (IC) effect on purchase intention, attitude towards advertising, and product. Additionally, it explores the influence of psychological ownership (PO) on consumer behavior, revealing its positive effects on product attitude and purchase intention. Results underscore the significance of perceived IC in determiningconsumer behavior, serving as a conduit for persuasive messaging and enhancing perceived connection with influencers and PO towards advertised products. By integrating theories of source credibility and psychological ownership, the study offers a comprehensive framework for assessingthe role of IC in influencer marketing, shedding light on key interactions shaping consumerperceptions and behaviors.

Szikszai-Németh Ketrin, Adrián Nagy (2020) Influencers, omnipresent across various media platforms, including social media, wield significant influence on consumer decision-making, surpassing the impact of traditional advertising. Their relatable nature and authentic portrayal of daily life foster strong connections with audiences, making influencer marketing an effective alternative for brands seeking to shape consumer perceptions. While follower count was once deemed crucial, recent research suggests that genuine engagement and alignment between the influencer and brand are more impactful drivers of consumer behavior. Despite consumers' awareness of advertised content, they still value and utilize influencer recommendations in their purchasing decisions, underscoring the importance of authenticity in influencer-brand collaborations. Thus, the authenticity of both the product and influencer portrayal emerges as a critical determinant of success in influencer marketing endeavors.

Anjali Chopra,Somaiya Vidyavihar,Vrushali Avhad and Sonali Jaju(2020) The study investigates influencer marketing's impact on consumer behavior, drawing from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Bandura and Walters' Social Learning Theory. Findings reveal that consumers' attitudes toward influencers and perceived behavior control positively influence behavior, while peer influence lacks significance. Additional factors such as personal relevance, inspiration, and trust positively affect behavior, while perceived risk shows no effect. Product- influencer fit is crucial, with consumers seeking influencers aligned with specific product categories. Influencers impact consumers across four levels: brand awareness, subject matterexpertise, brand preference, and preference. Successful influencer marketing entails selectinginfluencers who provide tailored advice and content, fostering audience engagement effectively.

Nor Ez-zatul Hanani, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Mohd Yusof Zulkefli (2020) Promotional marketing has been a chain of cycle used by companies in order to promote their products. In order to do that, most companies use endorsers as a medium to promote their product and influencing a consumer purchase decision. Celebrity endorser is the most popular type of endorser that affects youth purchase decision. However, nowadays the emergence of social media influencers has also played a role in influencing a youth purchase decision. Therefore, this research has been run in order to identify which endorser has more influence on youth purchase decisions based on endorser characteristics namely attractive, expertise, likeability, meaningful and trustworthy. 400 survey questionnaires have been distributed to the youth age between 18-5-25 years old. The findings indicate that social media influencer makes the highest influence on youth purchase decision with likeability characteristic has the highest contribution in influencing the youth purchase decision**.**

Jason Weismueller; Paul Harrigan; Shasha Wang; Geoffrey N. Soutar (2020) This paper explores the impact of social media influencer endorsements on purchase intention, emphasizing the influence of advertising disclosure and source credibility. Findings from a study of 306 German Instagram users aged 18 to 34 suggest that source attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise significantly enhance purchase intention. Additionally, advertising disclosure indirectly affects purchase intention by influencing source attractiveness. Moreover, the number of followers positively correlates with source attractiveness, trustworthiness, and purchase intention. This research offers valuable insights into leveraging social media influencers and advertising disclosure on Instagram to bolster consumer purchase intention, contributing uniquely to product endorsement literature.

Jaywant Singh; La Toya Quamina; Tao Xue (2017) This study investigates the impact of digital brand alliances with online influencers on consumers' value perceptions and purchase intention, addressing a significant gap in current understanding. With the proliferation of online consumption and the growing influence of social media, brands are increasingly partnering with online influencers to extend their reach and influence consumer decision-making. However, the specific effects of these alliances on brand attitudes, consumer value, and purchase intention remain unclear. By exploring these dynamics, the study aims to provide insights into the role of digital brand alliances in shaping consumer behavior and perceptions, thereby informing brands' marketing strategies in the digital age.

2.1   Research Gap

Limited research has addressed trust and authenticity in influencer marketing, key for consumer- brand connections. Understanding how consumers perceive influencer content's trustworthiness and authenticity, and its impact on purchase decisions, offers valuable insights. Investigating influencers' trust-building strategies and consequences of trust breaches enriches understanding of influencer-consumeridynamics.

CHAPTER- III

CHAPTER- III   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the structured framework researchers use to conduct studies, gather data, analyze information, and draw conclusions. It includes approaches, procedures, design selection, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analysis strategies. A strong methodologyensures validity, reliability, and rigor of findings, guiding systematic investigation andinterpretation across fields of study.

3.1   Research Design

This study employs a descriptive research design to investigate the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase decisions. Through surveys and interviews, it aims to understand how consumers perceive and react to products endorsed by influencers, providing a detailed snapshot of current consumer behavior in response to influencer marketing strategies.

3.2   Research objectives

The objectives of the study are;

1)   To examine the relationship between social media influencer recommendation onconsumer purchase behaviour.

2)   To investigate the effect of influencer's ethical behaviour on consumer purchase decision.

3.1   Data

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The sample unit comprises individuals aged 18 and above who regularly use social media platforms. Snowball sampling (non-probability sampling method) was employed to collect data, resulting in a sample size of 70. A structured questionnaire, administered through Google Forms, was used to collect primary data from the 70 respondents. Secondary data will be gathered from existing literature, academic journals and online databases to provide context.

3.2   Variables

The variables used to analyse objective one are; demographic variables (age, gender), social media platforms

mostly used, types of products purchased through influencer recommendation, frequency of research.

The variables used to analyse objective two are; ethical behavior of influencer, feeling misled, distrust and unfollowed behaviour of social media users.

3.3   Methods

The data is analyzed using Excel and SPSS. Descriptive statistics and correlations are the statistical methods employed to analyze the objectives. Cross-tabulation, histogram, bar charts, and pie charts are used to represent the results.

CHAPTER - IV

CHAPTER- IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter explains about the the relationship between social media influencer recommendation on consumer purchase behaviour and investigate the effect of influencer's ethical behaviour on consumer purchase decision.

Figure 4.1 Age of the respondents

The respondent's age is leveled in four category 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 and 45 and above. The figure 4.1 explains about the age of the respondent.

Figure 4.1: Age of the respondent
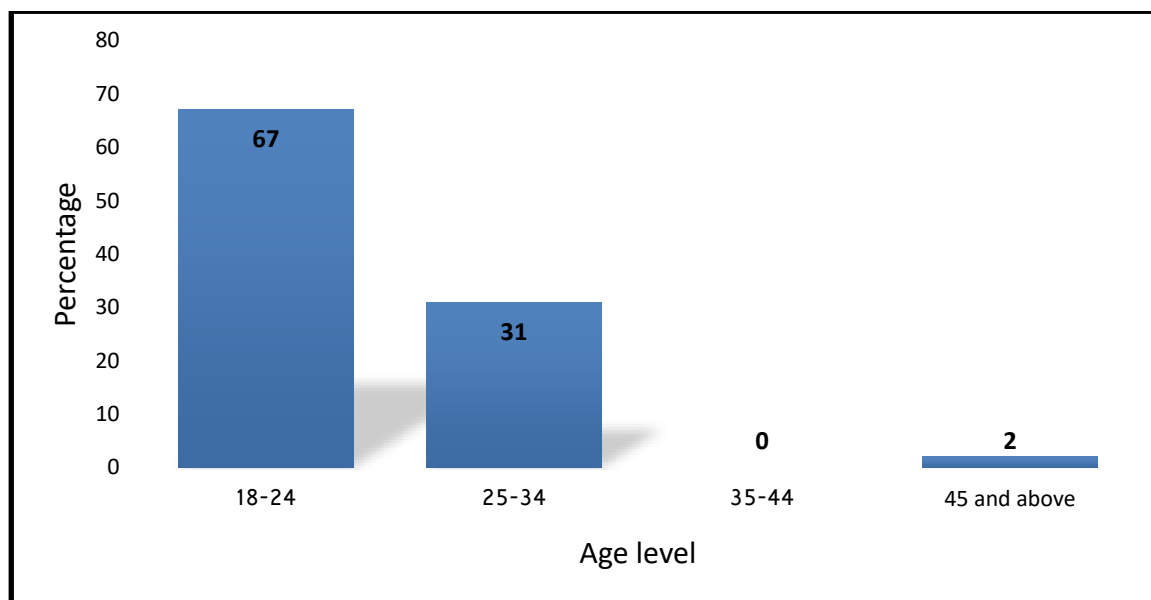
Source: Compiled by author

From figure 4.1, The study reveals that 67% of respondents fall within the 18-24 age group, indicating a strong presence of younger individuals susceptible to social media influencer recommendations. While 31% are aged 25-34, representing a slightly older demographic, only 2% are 45 and above.

The table 4.1 represents the sex of the respondent.

Table 4.1: Sex of the respondent

| Sex	Percentage
Male	48
Female	52

Source: Compiled by author

Table 4.1 indicates that females comprise 52% of the sample, while males represent 48%. This gender distribution is essential in understanding the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase behavior across different demographics.

4.2 The relationship between social media influencer recommendation on consumerpurchase behaviour.

To examine the impact of social media influencer recommendations on consumer purchase behavior it's vital to analyze several factors. This includes comparing the predominant social media platforms, the types of products influenced by these recommendations, the frequency of research conducted by social media users regarding influencer recommendations, and demographic variables such as age and gender.

Figure 4.2 Social Media Users across Social Media Platforms
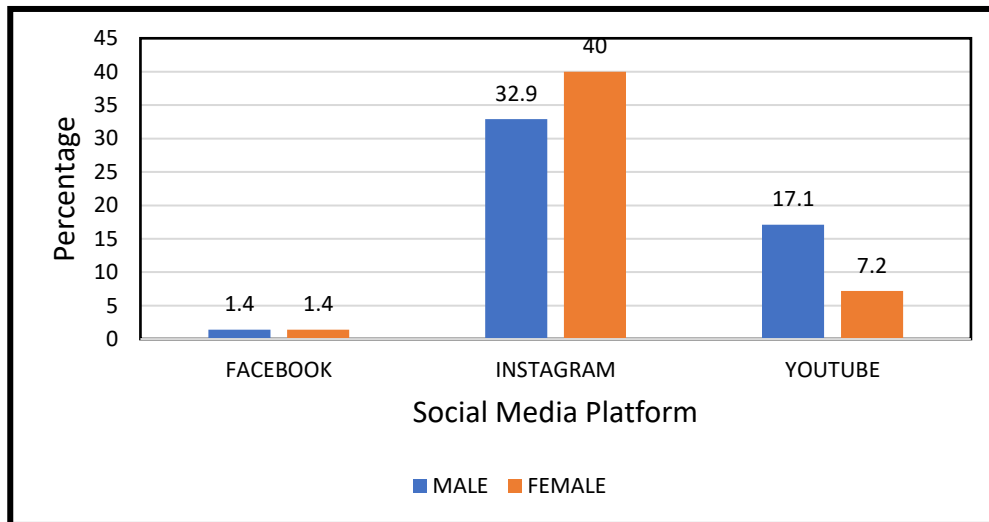
Source: Compiled by author

The social media platform are represented as youtube, instagram and facebook and compared

across male and female. Figure 4.2 highlights Instagram as the most favored social media platform among both males (32.9%) and females (40%), while Facebook shows equal usage across genders (1.4%). However, YouTube demonstrates a gender gap, with 17.1% of males using it compared to 7.2% of females. Overall, Instagram dominates with a combined total of 72.9% of respondents, followed by YouTube (24.3%) and Facebook (2.8%), indicating Instagram'swidespread appeal and YouTube's stronger pull among males.

Most used social media platform that is, facebook, Instagram and youtube is compared across male and female ispresented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Most used social media platform

GENDER	MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM			
	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	YOUTUBE	TOTAL
MALE	1.4	32.9	17.1	51.4
FEMALE	1.4	40	7.2	48.6
TOTAL	2.8	72.9	24.3	100

Source: Compiled by Author

The table 4.2 highlights Instagram as the most favored social media platform among both males (32.9%) and females (40%), while Facebook shows equal usage across genders (1.4%). However, YouTube demonstrates a gender gap, with 17.1% of males using it compared to 7.2% of females. Overall, Instagram dominates with a combined total of 72.9% of respondents, followed by YouTube (24.3%) and Facebook (2.8%), indicating Instagram'swidespread appeal and YouTube's stronger pull among males.

Types of product are represented as Fashion and beauty products, Fitness and Health products, Food and beverages, technology and gadgets as well as travel packages and compared across male and female

Figure 4.3 Type of product purchased the most as a result of influencer's recommendation
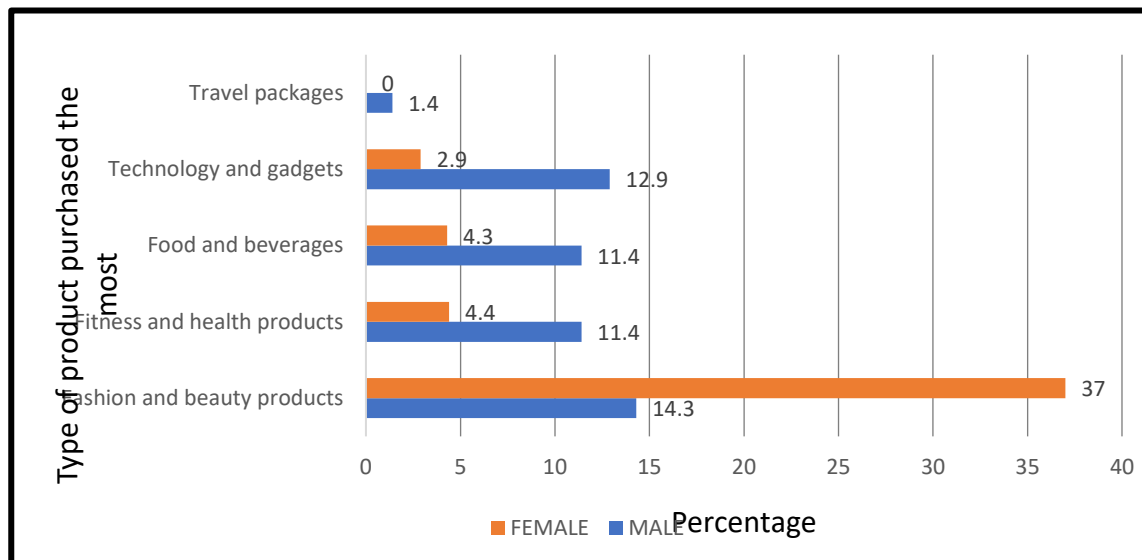
Source: Compiled by author

Figure 4.3 indicates clear gender-based preferences in purchasing habits. Females show a significant preference for fashion and beauty products (37%) compared to males (14.3%), while males exhibit a stronger interest in technology and gadgets (12.9%) than females (2.9%).Both genders demonstrate relatively similar interests in fitness and health products, food and beverages, and travel packages, though these categories collectively contribute to a smaller portion of overall purchases.

Research frequency is categorized as responses as in Always, Never, often, rarely and sometims and compared with male and female and age level represented in table 4.3 and figure 4.4 respectively.

Table 4.3: Research frequency of social media users that are searching for influencer's recommendation

SEX	Always	Never	Often	Rarely	Sometimes	TOTAL
MALE	20	1.4	8.6	7.1	14.3	51.4
FEMALE	18.6	2.9	11.4	4.3	11.4	48.6
TOTAL	38.6	4.3	20	11.4	25.7	100

Source: Compiled by author

Figure 4.4: : Research frequency of social media users that are searching for influencer's recommendation across age level
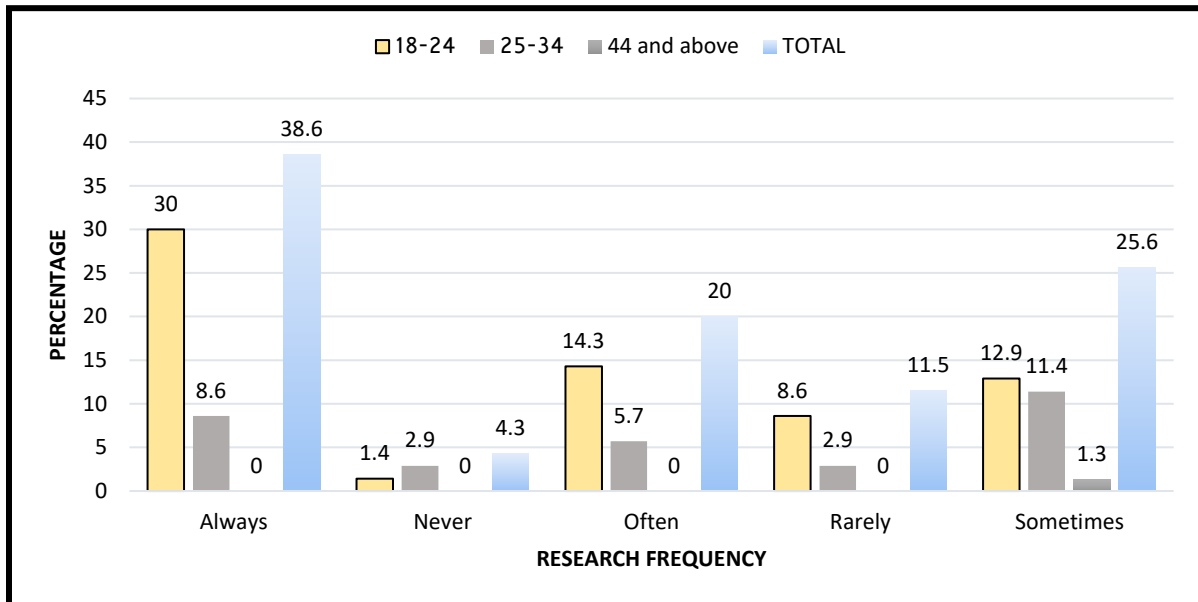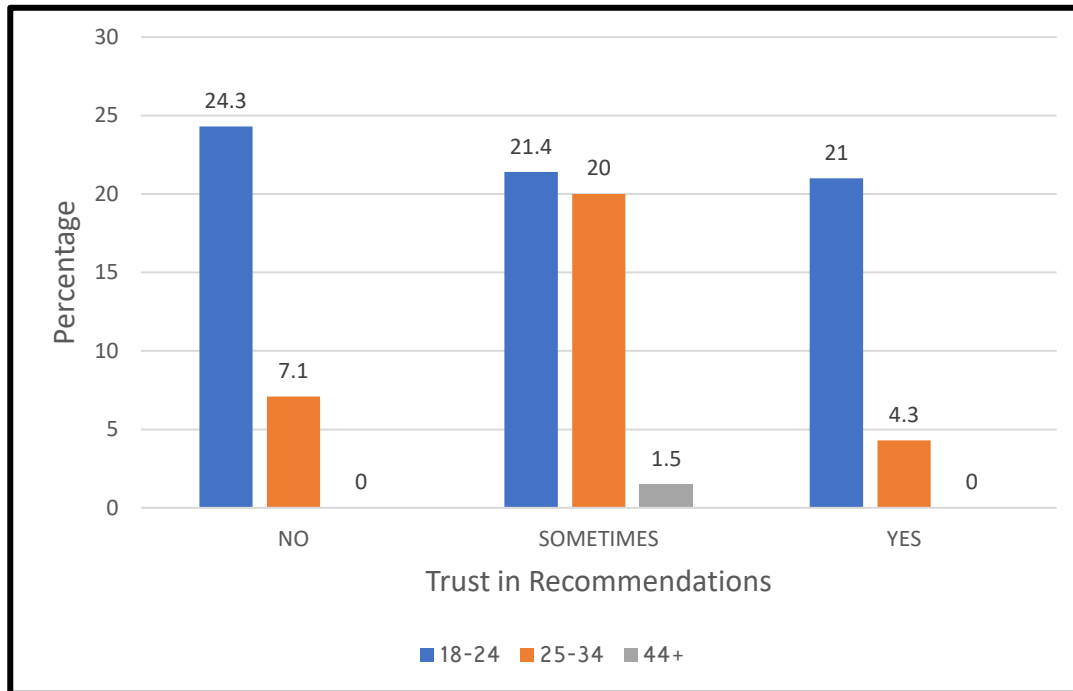
Source: Compiled by author

From table 4.3 and figure 4.4, reveals differences in research frequency for influencer recommendations on social media based on gender and age. Males tend to conduct research more often, with 20% reporting they always do so, compared to 18.6% of females. However, females are slightly more likely to never conduct research (2.9%) compared to males (1.4%). Among age groups, individuals aged 18-24 show the highest research frequency, with 30% reporting they always do research, while older age groups, especially those 44 and above, exhibit significantly lower engagement.

Trust in recommendation are categorized according to responses like Sometimes, Yes and no and are analysed on the basis of age gap of social media user.

Figure 4.5 Trust in recommendation from influencer vs from friends/family

Source:Compiled by author

Figure 4.5 Illustrates varying levels of trust in recommendations from influencers versus friendsor family among different age groups of social media users. Individuals aged 18-24 show a significant level of trust in both influencer recommendations (21%) and recommendations from friends or family (21%). However, trust in influencer recommendations notably declines among those aged 25-34 (4.3%), with minimal trust observed among older age groups.

This table shows if respondents actually purchased the influencer recommened product/service and are defined as Yes or No.

Table 4.4 Purchase experience of social media user through influencer recommendation

Respondents	YES	NO	TOTAL
1 to 70	57.1	42.9	100

Source: Compiled by author

Table 4.4 depicts that 57.1% of social media user have made purchases based on influencer recommendations, while 42.9% have not. This indicates that a majority of social media users in the sample have engaged in purchasing products or services influenced by recommendations from influencers, highlighting the significant impact influencers have on consumer behavior inthe digital age

Figure 4.6 Ever recommended a product due to a social media influencer's endorsement
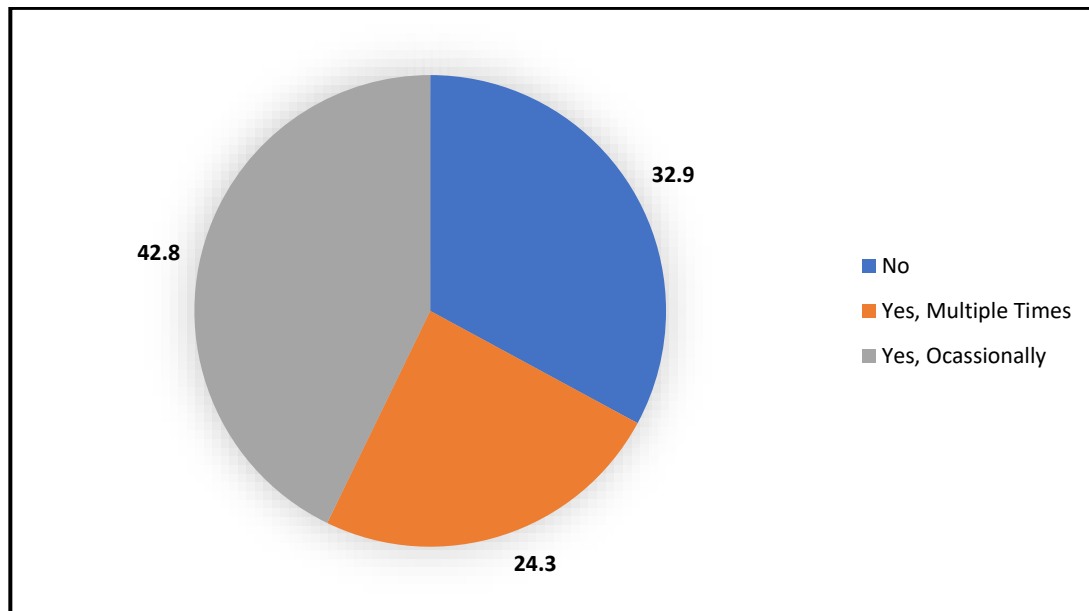
Source: Compiled by author

Figure 4.5 defines approximately 67.1% of respondents have recommended products to their friends and family due to social media influencer endorsements, with 42.8% doing so occasionally do it, and 24.3% multiple times.

4.3 The effect of influencer's ethical behaviour on consumer purchase decision.

To investigate the impact of influencer ethical behavior, such as authenticity in endorsing brands' products/services and transparency in disclosing brand partnerships, an analysis of respondents' experiences is necessary. This entails examining whether they ever felt misled by influencer recommendations and how this behavior contributed to distrust, potentially leading to unfollowing the influencer. This analysis allows for a deeper understanding of how ethical considerations influence consumer perceptions and actions regarding influencer endorsements.

Perception of respondent percieve about authenticity of an influencer on various social media platforms like instagram, facebook and youtube and the responses are categorized as not at all authentic, not very authentic,

somewhat authentic and Very authentic.

Table 4.5 Perception on the authenticity of product or service recommended by social media influencers

PLATFORM	Not at all authentic	Not very authentic	Somewhat authentic	Very authentic	TOTAL
FACEBOOK	0	1.4	1.4	0	2.8
INSTAGRAM	4.3	25.7	32.9	10	72.9
YOUTUBE	1.4	7.1	12.9	2.9	24.3
TOTAL	5.7	34.2	47.2	12.9	100

Source: Compiled by author

Table 4.5 shows emergence of Instagram as a platform where authenticity is most questioned, with 30% of respondents finding recommendations not very or not at all authentic. Conversely, YouTube appears to be perceived as relatively more authentic, with only 10% expressing doubts. Facebook falls in between, with minimal skepticism.

The figure 4.7 represents if respondents ever felt mislead by social media influencer across platforms like facebook, instagram and facebook and responses are categorized in Yes, No and Prefer not to answer.

Figure 4.7 Feeling Misled by Influencer-Endorsed Products
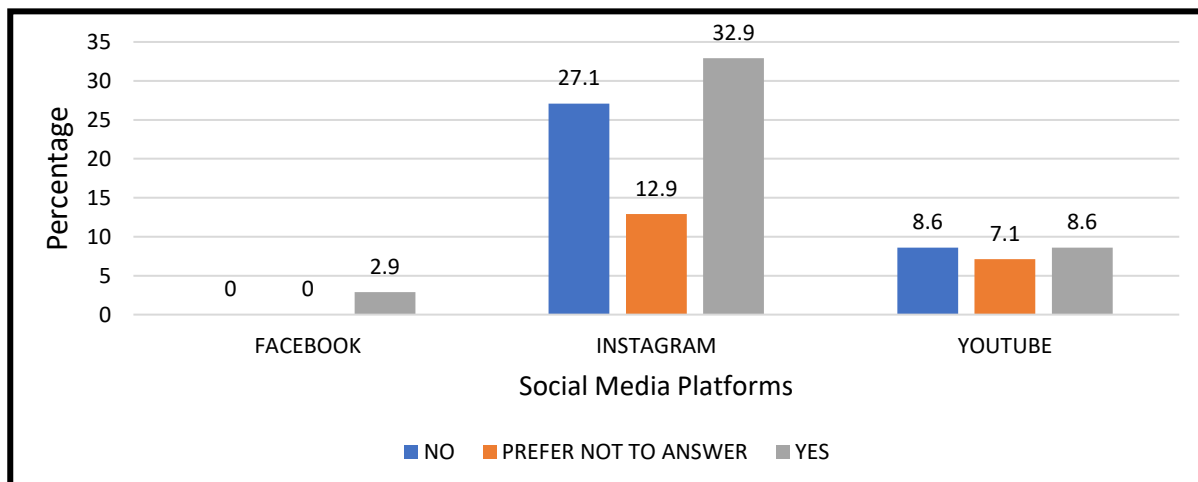
Source: Compiled by author

Figure 4.7 outlines responses regarding feelings of being misled or deceived by products or services endorsed by social media influencers, categorized by platform. Instagram stands out, with 32.9% of respondents admitting to feeling misled, while 27.1% report no such feelings. YouTube and Facebook show lower rates of perceived

deception, with 8.6% and 2.9% respectively.

This table shows whether respondents had a misleading experience due to influencer endorsements, and if they did, the percentage of those who unfollowed or stopped following the influencer due to misleading sponsored content.

**Table 4.6 Response to unfollow influencer because of misleading experience**

UNFOLLOWED DUE TO SPONSOREDCONTENT	MISLEADING EXPERIENCE DUE TO INFLUENCER ENDORSEMENT			
	NO	PREFER NOT TO ANSWER	YES	TOTAL
YES	15.7	12.9	37.1	65.7
NO	20	7.1	7.2	34.3
TOTAL	35.7	20	44.3	100

Source:Compiled by author

Table 4.6 depicts misleading endorsements prompt unfollowing; 37.1% who felt misled unfollowed influencers, compared to 7.2% who didn't. 12.9% preferred not to answer, underscoring the impact of authenticity on audience engagement and trust in influencer marketing.

The figure 4.8 analyzes the perception of respondents regarding whether they believe influencers disclose their partnership with a brand when endorsing product/service and are categorized as No, Not sure, Sometimes and Yes..

Figure 4.8 Influencer transparency in brand partnerships among respondents.
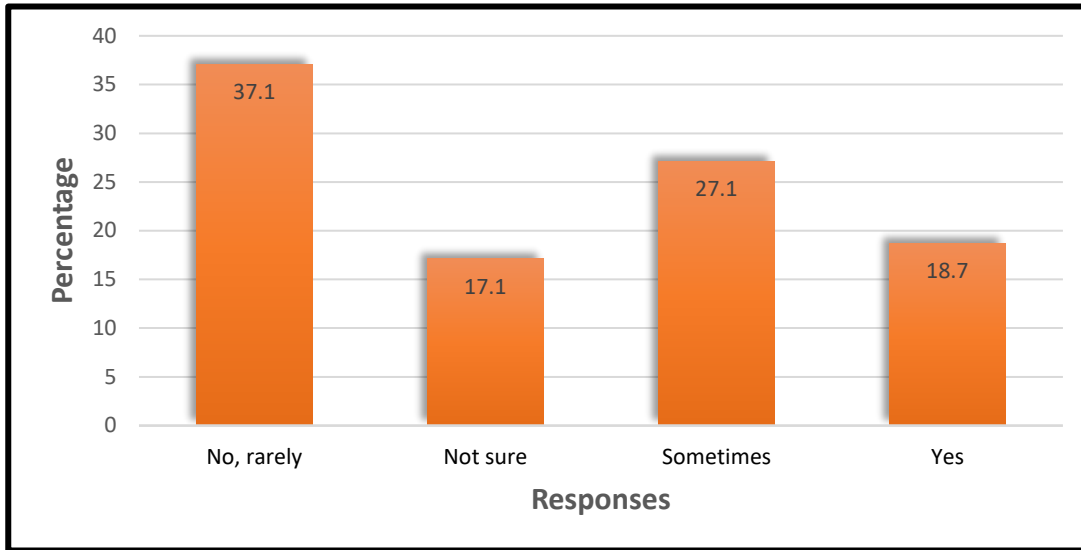
Source:Compiled by author

Figure 4.8 shows significant portion (37.1%) feels that influencers rarely disclose their partnerships, while 27.1% perceive occasional transparency. However, uncertainty isprevalent, with 17.1% expressing uncertainty about influencer disclosures. Only 18.7% believeinfluencers are transparent about their brand partnerships.

CHAPTER - V

CHAPTER- VFINDINGS

The data reveals interesting insights into social media users' tastes and actions around influencer marketing across various platforms and demographics. Instagram emerges as the most popular platform among both male and female users, demonstrating its tremendous popularity and influence. In contrast, Facebook shows equal usage across genders, indicating a rather balanced user base. YouTube, on the other hand, has more male users, indicating a stronger appeal among this group. Gender-based purchasing behaviors are prevalent, with females gravitating toward fashion and cosmetic products and males showing a strong interest in technology and electronics. Furthermore, younger people are more likely to examine influencer suggestions, emphasizing the importance of this demographic in influencer marketing dynamics. Trust in influencer recommendations varies by age, with younger demographics. The data shows that influencerrecommendations have a considerable impact on customer behavior, as indicated by the fact that the majority of respondents make purchases based on them. Furthermore, the predominance of product recommendations based on influencer endorsements highlights the significant effect that social media influencers exert, particularly among younger groups, in determining consumer preferences and buying decisions. These findings highlight the need of understanding and implementing influencer marketing methods in order to effectively engage with target audiences inthe digital realm.

The findings from these tables give light on key trends in consumer attitudes in the context of influencer marketing. As previously said, Instagram emerges as a site where doubts about authenticity are pervasive, causing trust challenges for users. YouTube, on the other hand, has a greater perceived level of authenticity, which could be due to its format enabling more genuine connections. Facebook falls somewhere in the middle of the spectrum. Notably, Instagram is the site where respondents feel the most deceived by influencer endorsements, indicating possiblerisks linked with the platform's influencer content. This view is reinforced by the tendency of deceptive endorsements to result in unfollowing, emphasizing the need of authenticity in retaining audience engagement and confidence.

Moreover, the data underscores a notable level of skepticism regarding influencer transparency in disclosing partnerships, indicating a demand for greater clarity and honesty in influencer-brandcollaborations. These insights emphasize the evolving landscape of influencer marketing and theimperative for brands and influencers alike to prioritize authenticity and transparency to fostergenuine connections with their audience.

CHAPTER - VI

CHAPTER- VICONCLUSION

In conclusion, the thorough analysis of the data provides useful insights into the complex dynamics of influencer marketing across various social media platforms and demographic groupings. Instagram clearly dominates the field of influencer marketing, with extensive popularity among both male and female users. However, the platform confronts authenticity difficulties, as seen by the high prevalence of user inquiries and worries. In contrast, YouTube appears to generate a greater sense of authenticity, most likely because to its format, which allows for more genuine interactions. Facebook, while retaining a gender-balanced user base, falls somewhere in the middle when it comes to authenticity perceptions.

The research also clearly demonstrates the importance of gender preferences in purchasing behaviors. Females show a distinct preference for fashion and cosmetic products, whereas males show a larger interest in technology and electronics. Furthermore, research frequency forinfluencer suggestions varies by age group, with younger people engaging more actively in thisregard. Trust levels in influencer recommendations vary by age group, with younger generations having higher levels of trust.

Importantly, the data show that influencer recommendations have a significant impact on consumer behavior, with the majority of respondents making purchases based on such endorsements. However, the prevalence of misleading endorsements on platforms such as Instagram emphasizes the importance of authenticity in maintaining audience engagement and trust. This is underscored by the fact that inaccurate endorsements are more likely to cause users to unfollow.

Furthermore, widespread skepticism regarding influencer transparency in disclosing ties indicates a growing demand for greater clarity and honesty in influencer-brand partnerships. This demonstrates the shifting environment of influencer marketing, in which authenticity and

transparency are becoming increasingly vital for establishing genuine connections with the target audience.

Finally, the data insights emphasize the need of authenticity and transparency in brand and influencer marketing operations. This enables companies to effectively navigate the complex mechanics of influencer marketing while also establishing long-term relationships with their target audience in an ever-changing digital ecosystem.

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ANNEXURE

QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:_____

1)   What is your sex?

a)   Male

b)   Female

c)   Other

2)   What is your age?
a) 18-24
b) 25-34
c) 35-44
d) 45 and above

3)   What social media platforms do you use the most?

a)   Instagram

b)   Youtube

c)   Facebook

4)   How frequently do you encounter content from social media influencers while browsingthese

platforms?

a)   Very often

b)   Occasionally

c)   Rarely

d)   Almost never

e)   Never

5)   Do you follow any social media influencers?

a)   Yes

b)   No

c)   Prefer not to answer

6)   Have you ever made a purchase based on a recommendation or endorsement from a socialmedia influencer?

a)   Yes

b)   No

7)   On a scale of 1 to 5, how influential do you find social media influencers in yourpurchasing decisions?

a)   1(Not influencial at all)

b)   2

c)   3

d)   4

e)   5(Extreamly influencial)

8)   Do you trust recommendations from social media influencers as much as recommendationsfrom friends or family?

a)   Yes

b)   No

c)   Sometimes

9)   How often do you research a product or service recommended by an influencer beforemaking a purchase?

a)   Always

b)   Often

c)   Sometimes

d)   Rarely

e)   Never

10)   Have you ever felt misled or deceived by a product or service endorsed by a social media influencer?

a)   Yes

b)   No

c)   Prefer not to answer

11)   Do you believe that social media influencers are transparent about their partnerships withbrands when promoting products or services?

a)   Yes,always

b)   No,rarely

c)   Sometimes

d)   Not sure

12)   Have you ever unfollowed or stopped following a social media influencer due to their sponsored content?

a)   Yes

b)   No

13)   How do you perceive the authenticity of product or service recommendations from socialmedia influencers?

a)   Very authentic

b)   Somewhat authentic

c)   Not very authentic

d)   Not at all authentic

14)   Have you ever recommended a product or service to others based on a social media influencer's endorsement?

a)   Yes, multiple times

b)   Yes, occasionally

c)   No