

The Influence of Social Media Personalities on Consumer Buying Behavior: A Study of Marketing Trend

ZIA AAFREEN

MBA Scholar

Galgotais University, Greater Noida

DHEERAJ KUMAR SINGH

MBA Scholar

Galgotais University, Greater Noida

Abstract— Social media usage has increased significantly and has drastically affected modern-day marketing and consumer decision-making. Social media personalities, known as “influencers”, have become the key actors that shape the consumers' opinion, attitude, and purchase behaviour by engaging them through interesting digital content and their personalized representations on social platforms. This study aims at looking at the impact of social media personalities on consumer purchasing behavior and how it is becoming a lucrative marketing technique. The examination focuses on the impact of Influencer credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, content quality, and audience engagement on the consumer's purchase intentions. The method of study employed was quantitative and the technique of data collection was through using a structured questionnaire in the context of active social media users. Findings show social media influencers greatly impact the brand awareness, product perceptions, and buying decisions. Genuine and knowledgeable influencers who connect with their audience are more likely to inspire their followers to follow their advice. In conclusion, while influencer marketing is not new, it is an indispensable part of the current digital marketing scene and a great tool for increasing consumer buying in the digital age.

Keywords— *Social Media Personalities, Influencer Marketing, Consumer Buying Behavior, Purchase Intention, Digital Marketing, Brand Awareness, Consumer Engagement, Social Media Marketing.*

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background and Context

The digital age we're in has altered the marketing landscape. Among customers, social media channels like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok and X are a crucial part of how they're obtaining information, engaging with brands and buying from brands. With this digital evolution, there are others too who have become influencers or social media personalities, who are somehow opinion leaders to whom consumers listen and follow whatever they do. The personalities build great relationships with the followers and encourage a positive attitude towards products and services through engaging content, product reviews, recommendations, and their own experiences. Hence, influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most adopted promotional strategies which can also be seen around today in marketing.

B. Statement of the Problem

Earlier, when people would have listened to anything, those traditional ad formats and approaches are not working anymore because it's all about authenticity, relatable information before it reaches purchase. Social media stars have become very influential, but how that influences consumer decision making is also a topic of academic and managerial interest. These are the reasons for investing in an influencer and many organisations put a lot of money into investing in an influencers campaign without even realising what goes into setting up a successful 'campaign'. Thus, it is important to understand the

role social media celebs play in consumer purchasing decisions and to explore their marketing characteristics.

C. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to study the influence of social media celebrities towards the purchase decision. Our baseline objective for the present study is to find out the impact of influencer, confidence of the influencer, know-how and engagementment of the influencer on consumer trust and to tweak those factors that make for influential marketing strategies.

D. Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to find answers to these research questions: What is the effect of social media personalities on consumer buying behavior? So what makes an effective influencer? Is believability a key factor in influencers' ability to impact consumers buying choices? How does audience intrinsic value influence a person's choice to buy? Before the purchase of products and services, to some extent influence is required from consumers through a person's recommendations from influencers.

E. Significance of the Study

The purpose of the study is to give valuable insights for marketers, businesses, researchers, and consumers. This can be beneficial to business organisations as it can give them an idea of how beneficial the process of promoting their campaign through influencers has been as well as make the campaigns targeted. In the field of literary works, the study makes a contribution by providing more knowledge about digital marketing and the behaviours of the consumers in social media era. Additionally, it creates awareness to the consumers about the role of online personalities in decision making.

F. Scope and Limitations

This study is targeting loyal consumers who actively use social media platforms and consume information by influencers. It delves into things such as credibility, trustworthiness, expertise and involvement with the audience and their impact on consumers buying behavior. Limits to the study are that of sample size, time limits, and the respondent perceptions. The result can be only a fraction of all consumers' groups and all regions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Because of the advent of social networks, companies are now able to communicate with customers and sell their products rather differently online. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, and X have ushered in an era where individuals are constantly consuming information, suggestions, reviews, and promotions. Today, the world is in a digital transformation and social media influencers have become a powerhouse force of opinion leaders with the ability

to shape consumer attitudes, preferences, and behavior. They create large online communities through creating interesting content and engaging followers, and they are more trustworthy and credible than the traditional advertising formats. Everywhere people are looking for information from people who have been influenced and listen to them like friends and family before a purchase decision, so the word is getting larger than ever crazy crazier. IGCs are more personal, more authentic and more experience based than traditional ads which gives them more credibility in the persuasive power. This is because, there are psychological, social, cultural and personal aspects in the process of consumer buying and social media celebrities are now a key part of the consumer decision making process. Influencers can review, demo, tutorial, testimonials, and provide lifestyle content that can give consumers the information they need, and help to lessen their purchasing risk when comparing products. Credibility, expertise, trust, attractiveness, authenticity and engagement with the audience are among the things that go with the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Generally, there's a higher chance of an individual being influenced by an influencer (a person they know as a subject-matter expert and trustworthy). Along with the emerging of the influencer marketing industry, numerous companies in other segments like lifestyle, food, fitness, travelling, technology, beauty and fashion businesses are also forgetting that and begin to include the partnership of influencers in their marketing strategies. Brands can leverage social media personalities for better brand positioning, visibility, engagement, and augment brand awareness, intent to purchase and consumer loyalty. The proliferation of mobile devices and low-cost Internet connectivity has given way to influential marketing even more, since consumers can view content when and where they want. Gen Z and Millennials are some of the largest social media users and frequently listen to influencers regarding their suggestions for products and services. Social Media is interactive, and that allows influencers to have a relationship with their fans based on emotion that creates familiarity and trust that affect purchasing decisions. In digital age, marketing competition is growing and many firms are finding great benefits in relevant influencer marketing opportunities to connect with a particular target market. From the materials it is clear that brands have now discovered that social media influencers are powerful marketing tools that can shape attitude toward the brand, brand perception, and consumer purchasing behaviour. So, it's important for companies to understand what link a handful of features of an influencer has to the purchasing behavior of consumers, particularly in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

These networks have introduced a new dimension as the way enterprises are using it to promote a product and communicate with customers on the Internet has adapted. Thanks to the use of social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, and X, people can regularly view information, suggestions, reviews, and promotions from here. It is signifying another turn in a digital world where "INSTA-STARS" are the opinion leaders who are capable of influencing consumers buying behavior and preferences. There are people on social media who are creating large communities, who regularly engage with their communities, who create content that can be shared, shared it on social media, who engage with their expressions and try to become trust and credible with them, not with ads. By today, with consumers seeking more authentic and relatable content to

help them buy, the concept of "influencer marketing" has been a big talking point lately. The best part is – native content created by influencers is much more likely to be very personal and experience- or relationship-based and therefore is much more persuasive than ads created by official brands. Consumer buying behaviour is defined as complex behaviour which is determined by psychological and social factors, cultural and personal factors and the emergence of social media celebrities into this has been pivotal. Stuff such as reviews, demos, how-tos, testimonials, and lifestyle is created and published by influencers to help introduce the product to consumers and to alleviate that risk. Elements such as credibility, expertise, trustworthy, attractive, authentic and audience engagement are typically associated to the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Influencers are more likely to be trusted when it comes to providing recommendations, and more likely to get customers to pay attention if they indicate the character is knowledgeable. Celebs, bloggers and authors with a bigger following have become the center of the attention and companies all through the range of brands from apparel to stunning, technology to health, travelling to food and even way of life at the moment are considering working with influencers. Social media celebrities create a brand presence as well as customer involvement, awareness, intention of purchase, and customer loyalty. The advent of mobile technology and cheapening of the internet has accelerated the growth of influencer marketing even further, topping users getting information on-the-go, anywhere, anytime. The Generation Z and Millennials are some of the loudest spreaders of social media and often look for influencers for sporting products or services advice. Social media, on the other hand, is an interactive media where influencers can build emotional connections with their followers and deliver a familiar and trusted environment that bolsters decision-making. For now, in the digital era that is increasingly competitive, influencer marketing is an effective way to do so for companies. Literature displays that there is a fact of successful social media personalities that influence what people perceive, how they feel and what they buy as marketing agents. It is therefore important to businesses targeting the optimal action for a dynamic changing digital context to keep this IG user's whole image in mind when linking with consumer buying.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of current study that was taken as "The influence of Social Media Personalities on consumer buying behavior: A study of marketing trend," was to understand the relevance of social media personalities in today's marketing practices and how it affects consumer buying decision. A research methodology provides a systematic way to collect, analyze and interpret the information relevant to a research problem and it aids in conducting the research in a scientific as well as organized way. As the aim of this study the method used was descriptive method which is appropriate to describe or attitude, opinion, perception, and pattern of an individual behavior. The study adopted a quantitative approach because the aim was to quantitatively measure and analyze the relationship between social media personalities influence and their impact on buying behavior of consumers. Cross sectional the study research design was used because information on the problems sought from the respondents at a particular time. The primary data were the biggest source used in the study. The data were collected from social media sources directly with the help of a structured questionnaire which had a specific aim to answer the research objectives. The questionnaire comprised of 15 questions which

were carefully designed to segment the age group, their social media activities, purchase intentions, trust in the influencers' recommendation, engagement with the influencers and buying behaviour of the consumers. Assessment was carried out using the questions in multiple choice question with likert scale to facilitate quantitative analysis and interpretation of the data. The target audience of the study comprised of social media users engaged with Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat, X, and other social media platforms who have a tendency to come across content created by social media influencers during their social media usage. The study involved a sample size which consisted of 60 respondents. The responders were aged, genders and educational level as well as social media usage were diversified so that it was reasonable to expect that their responses should change. Convenience sampling technique was used because it was possible to select the respondents who are easily accessible to the researcher, and are willing to participate in this study. The sampling method was deemed suitable, in view of time limitations and open-endedness of the experiment. Questionnaire was distributed both online as well as offline to the participants and it was made sure to them that the information shared in the questionnaire will only be used for academic purposes. The data collected was critically examined for completeness, consistency and correctness before analysing. Using quantitative and descriptive approach allowed the researcher to get measurable data on consumer attitudes and perceptions about influencer marketing and a solid base for comprehending the relation between social media personalities and consumer buying behavior.

Collected data were analysed through descriptive statistical techniques: the actual collected data to filtered down the practical information as per the intended purposes of the research. Frequency distributions were prepared and percentages were used to summarize prevalent patterns in the data and respondent characteristics. Tabular presentation helped organizing the information into a systematic approach and it helped to easily interpret consumers' opinion and behaviour. Data was presented visually using graphic presentation in the form of pie chart and bar graph to make the findings more clear. Credibility, expertise, trustworthiness of the influencer, engagement with audience, intention to purchase and effect of the influencer on the consumer's purchase decision were the parameters studied. These variables were selected because they have been consistently in other studies and now market theory says that it is important to consider these variables when answering the question of the effectiveness of an influencer. The development of the research instrument was carefully considered for reliability and validity. The questionnaire was prepared with a simple, clear, unambiguous language which minimizes mistakes in interpretation and ensures uniformity in the answers. To ensure content validity, the questions were designed to incorporate all the relevant parts of the influencer marketing concept and the consumer's behaviour. Also during the research process ethical issues have been observed. The survey was voluntary and subjects knew the purpose of the survey before responding. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured to the extent of keeping information and details of those who participated private and keeping their identities anonymous. No personal data was supplied and all data collected for academic research. There were some limitations to the study, which, as would be expected if convenience sampling was used, include a relatively small sample size, self-reported data and a limited extent of generalizability of the results. Over time, consumer perceptions and social media trends also may change, affecting future

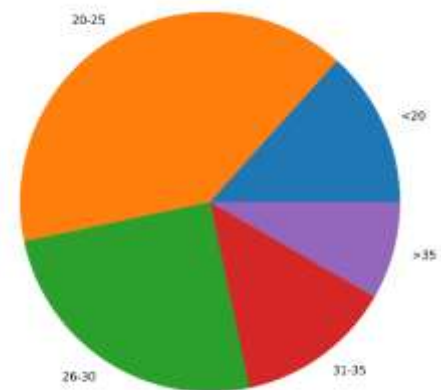
results. The methodology adopted, however, ensured the study to be structured and reliable, as conclusions could be drawn: from the study of the influence of social media celebrities sales on consumer purchases behavior and the effectiveness could be studied to determine if it is a modern marketing technique. It thus forms a good foundation for the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings that are presented in the chapters that follow it.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis and interpretation of data collected from the 60 respondents who returned the survey on influence of personalities from social media on buying habits are presented. Frequencies and percent were used as a technique of analysis because it provides the researchers with a progressing knowledge of the respondents' responsibility solely on perceptions of the effectiveness of influencer marketing on purchasing techniques. Four combined tables are used to give the result of the questions in the questionnaire. The tables also offer details on the 'who was who' set, social media interaction, the influence criteria, and purchasing trends of respondents.

Table 4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Respondents Percentage (%)		
Below 20 Years	8	13.3
20–25 Years	24	40.0
26–30 Years	15	25.0
31–35 Years	8	13.3
Above 35 Years	5	8.4
Total	60	100



Respondents Percentage (%)		
Male	34	56.7
Female	23	38.3
Prefer Not to Say	3	5.0
Total	60	100

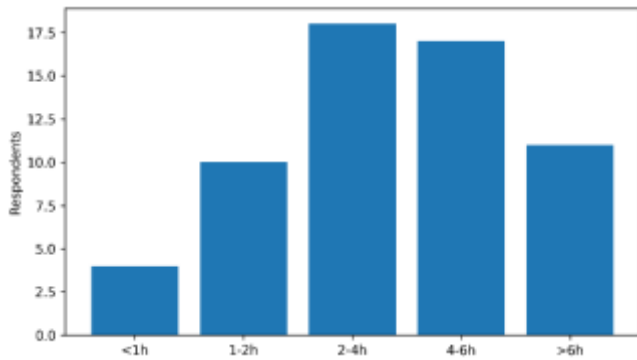


Fig. 4.1. Demographic Distribution of Respondents (Pie Chart)

Interpretation:

Demographic analysis results indicated that the age group between 20 to 25 years (40%) which has high social media usage belongs to the highest age group. Only 8.4% of the respondents are age 35 and above, while 25% are age 26 – 30 years. The percentage of male and female respondents were 56.7% and 38.3% respectively, and 5 % were those who did not disclose the gender. Marketers looking to leverage impactful content to target their audience may find this age group attractive as they are more involved in social media and are more likely to take action on influencer-generated content.

Table 4.2. Social Media Usage and Influencer Engagement

Category		Respondents	Percentage (%)
Social Media Usage	Less than 1 Hour	4	6.7
	1–2 Hours	10	16.7
	2–4 Hours	18	30.0
	4–6 Hours	17	28.3
	More than 6 Hours	11	18.3
Following Influencers	Yes	51	85.0
	No	9	15.0
Viewing Influencer Content	Very Frequently	18	30.0
	Frequently	20	33.3
	Occasionally	13	21.7
	Rarely	6	10.0
	Never	3	5.0

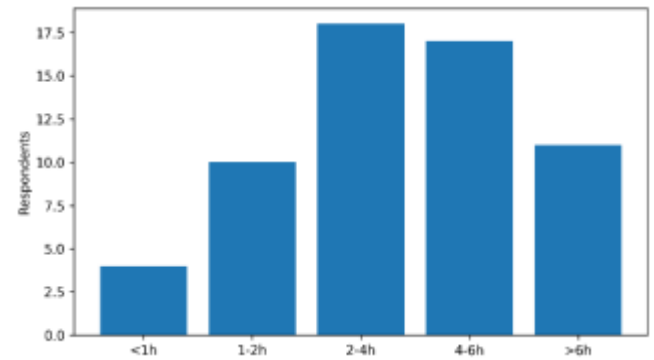


Fig. 4.2. Social Media Usage and Influencer Engagement Pattern (Clustered Bar Graph)

Interpretation:

The findings show that there was a high volume of social media interaction among the participants. There is high exposure to digital media with just almost 58.3% spending two to six hours a day using social media. 85% of the respondents said they follow influencers on social media, showing just how many people are influenced by influencers. In addition, 63.3% said that they observe content created by influencers with frequent or very frequent frequency. From the authors' conclusions and results one can derive the fact that social media personalities are visible and have huge opportunities to influence the attitude and preferences, and maybe even consumption behaviors, of consumers by repeatedly exposing them to content.

Table 4.3. Influencer Credibility, Trust and Engagement Factors

Statement	Positive Responses (%)
Trust Influencer Recommendations	56.7
Influencer Reviews Affect Product Perception	65.0
Influencer Credibility Important in Purchase Decisions	75.0
Influencer Expertise Influences Purchase Intention	70.0
Engagement with Followers Increases Trust	66.7
Statement	Respondents
Credibility Important (Agree + Strongly Agree)	45
Expertise Important (Agree + Strongly Agree)	42
Engagement Builds Trust (Agree + Strongly Agree)	40

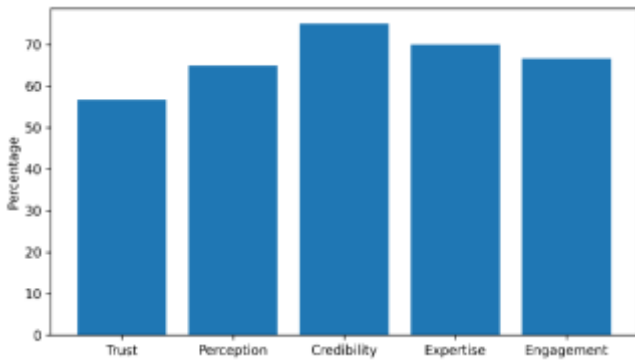


Fig. 4.3. Influence of Credibility, Expertise and Engagement on Consumer Trust (Bar Graph)

Interpretation:

Data shows that the top factors that impact consumer trust of social media personalities are credibility, expertise and engagement. Influencer credibility is the highest rated (75% of responses indicated that it is an important factor in their purchase decisions). Likewise, 70% believe that when looking at product recommendations, expertise of the influencer becomes a crucial point. Almost 66.7% believe that an active, engaging influencer that engages with followers is more trustworthy. The data shows that, more than ever, consumers are looking at influencers to be honest and informed as well as popular. Thus, business that partner with trusted and well-versed influencers are more inclined to get positive reactions from consumers and greater campaign efficiencies.

Table 4.4. Impact of Influencers on Consumer Buying Behavior

Category		Respondents	Percentage (%)
Purchased Product Due to Influencer Recommendation	Yes	42	70.0
	No	18	30.0
Recommend Influencer-Endorsed Products	Agree/Strongly Agree	36	60.0
	Others	24	40.0
Overall Influence on Buying Behavior	Agree/Strongly Agree	43	71.7
	Neutral	9	15.0
	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	8	13.3

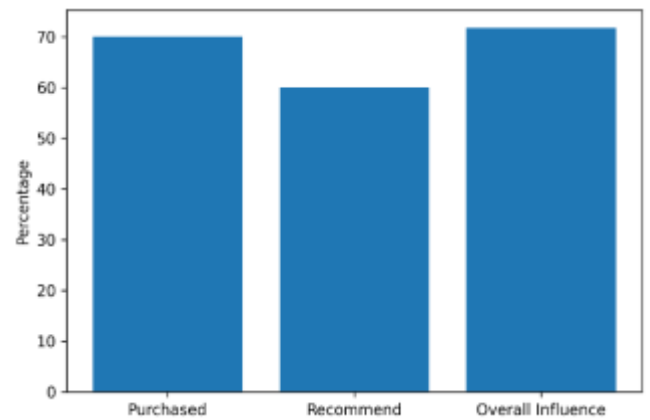


Fig. 4.4. Influence of Social Media Personalities on Consumer Purchase Decisions (Bar Graph)

Interpretation:

These outcomes are certainly evidence of the success of influencers marketing and its impact on consumers' behaviours. Influencer recommendations lead to buying: 70% of the numbers said they purchased a product as a result of an influencer recommendation. Moreover, 60 % of respondents also indicate that they would purchase a product referenced by an influencer meaning that positively, people would be persuaded to buy something they had been suggested by an influencer. The main result is that in general, 71.7% of the total sample feel influenced by the actors on the social networks in their consumption decisions. This is a testament to the fact that influencers can be an important asset when it comes to driving consumer decisions, enhancing product awareness and fostering purchase intent. The findings have significant implications for the increasing prominence of influencer marketing as a marketing tool in today's increasingly influential world, while also impacting market dynamics and consumer perception.

Analysis shows that Social Media Personalities have a significant influence on consumers' purchasing behaviour. Young consumers are the most active and often engage with posts from influencers on platforms. Among the key attributes required of an effective influencer are trust, credibility, expertise and engagements. The most common response was that they were exposed to some influencer content and that they claimed influencers influenced their purchase in some way. From the results, it can be seen that influencer marketing is not only categorized as monstration, but also influencer marketing is categorized as strategic communication that can not only bring sake of consumers, brand awareness, but can also bring purchasing decisions. Based on this data, business owners can recognize the impact of connecting with trusted and appealing social media creators to their digital marketing strategy.

VI. CONCLUSION/FUTURE WORK

The current study was aimed at looking at the influence of the social media celebrities on buying behaviour and the emergence of influencer marketing as the new marketing trend of the modern era. Based on the result of the data analysis obtained from 60 respondents who use social media, it can be concluded that personalities are influential decision makers in shopping. The results show that social media are relevant in terms of product information, brand awareness and product recommendation, especially within the younger segment, where extensive time is spent on social media content. The study also

showed that over half of the respondents are following many influencers on social media and that they are likely to take actions suggested by the influencers content to purchase products and services. Credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, authenticity, and audience engagement all became the essential characteristics of successful influencers. Those who recalled being more trustworthy were content creators with relevant knowledge and who had a clear communication, engaging with their audience. One other important finding was that the findings revealed that high number of the respondents had purchased product as a result of the recommendation from the influencers which meant that the influencers have an influence on the attitudes and perceptions and their purchase behavior. Overall, the findings indicate that businesses can reap significant marketing benefits by collaborating with influencers who are believable, engaging, and adept at conveying their brand message and resonating with their audience. Today, cultivating trust and creating purchase intentions are possible through influencer marketing, which has grown from being a simple promotion to a powerful digital marketing element. Some limitations of the research were the number of participants, geographic scope and the use of self-reports. To be honest, more and more representatives with different demographic and geographic characteristics should be involved in future research to make the outcomes of the research more generalisable. Further research can also look into the impact of various influencers on various channels, product categories and industries. Additional topics of interest for future research include AI influencers, virtual influencers, disclosure by influencers and the implications for consumer loyalty over time. Provided that social media will continue to be used throughout the world and digital technology will keep improving, this form of marketing will stay very relevant in the current marketing landscape – and the study and practice in social media is expected to grow even further.

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