

A Study on Influencer Marketing and Its Effect of Gen Z's Buying Behavior at Mylapore

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Abstract - Influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most effective digital marketing strategies in recent years. Social media influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchasing decisions, particularly among Generation Z consumers. The present study aims to examine the effectiveness of influencer marketing and its impact on Gen Z purchasing decisions. The study focuses on understanding the level of exposure of Gen Z consumers to influencer marketing, analysing the factors influencing trust and engagement with influencers, investigating the relationship between influencer recommendations and purchasing behaviour, and examining the impact of influencer marketing on brand awareness and impulse buying behaviour. Primary data were collected from 150 respondents in Mylapore, Chennai, using a structured questionnaire. The collected data were analysed using Percentage Analysis, Chi Square Test, One Sample T-Test, Correlation Analysis, and One Way ANOVA. The findings reveal that influencer marketing has a significant influence on consumer trust, engagement, brand awareness, and purchasing behaviour. The study also found a positive relationship between influencer marketing and Gen Z purchasing decisions. Influencer recommendations, authentic content, and transparent communication were identified as important factors affecting consumer buying behaviour. The study concludes that influencer marketing serves as an effective promotional tool for businesses seeking to reach and influence Generation Z consumers.

Index-Terms: Influencer Marketing, Generation Z, Purchasing Decisions, Social Media Influencers, Consumer Behaviour, Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, Purchase Intention, Digital Marketing, Impulse Buying Behaviour.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital era, social media has emerged as an integral part of daily life, particularly among Generation Z. Born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, Gen Z has grown up in a technology-driven environment where smartphones, internet access, and social

media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook are deeply embedded in everyday interactions. Consequently, their consumer behavior and purchasing decisions are significantly shaped by online content and digital engagement. Traditional marketing channels such as television, newspapers, and radio are gradually losing relevance among younger audiences, prompting brands to shift toward digital strategies. Among these, influencer marketing has gained prominence as a highly effective promotional tool. Influencers, by creating relatable content such as reviews, tutorials, and lifestyle videos, establish strong trust and credibility with their followers. Gen Z consumers, who value authenticity and transparency, are more likely to respond positively to influencer recommendations than to direct advertisements. Furthermore, influencer-driven content often triggers impulse buying through limited-time offers, trends, and fear of missing out. Thus, influencer marketing has become a cost-effective and engagement-driven strategy for brands to enhance awareness, build trust, and influence purchasing behavior among Gen Z consumers.

1.2 Objectives of The Study

1. To assess the level of exposure of Gen Z to influencer marketing on social media platforms.
2. To analyze the factors that influence Gen Z's trust and engagement with influencers.
3. To investigate the correlation between influencer recommendations and Gen Z's purchasing behavior.
4. To determine the impact of influencer marketing on Gen Z's brand awareness.
5. To measure the role of influencer marketing in driving impulse purchases among Gen Z's.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Lou and Yuan (2019) stated that influencer marketing positively affects consumer buying behaviour by creating trust and credibility among social media users. The study found that Gen Z consumers are highly influenced by influencer recommendations because influencers appear more relatable than celebrities. Authentic content and regular engagement were identified as important factors influencing purchase intention. The research highlighted that social media influencers improve customer interaction and brand awareness. Consumers were more likely to trust influencers who provided honest product reviews and transparent promotions. The findings concluded that influencer marketing plays an important role in shaping Gen Z purchasing decisions.

2. Djafarova and Bowes (2018) examined the impact of Instagram influencers on young consumers. The study revealed that consumers trust influencers who share realistic lifestyle content and honest opinions. Influencer endorsements significantly affected brand preference and impulse buying behaviour among young audiences. The research also showed that repeated exposure to influencer content increases product awareness and customer interest. Consumers considered influencers more relatable and trustworthy than traditional celebrities. The findings concluded that influencer marketing strongly affects youth purchasing behaviour and social media engagement.

3. Casaló, Flavián and Ibáñez-Sánchez (2020) analysed the relationship between influencer credibility and consumer attitudes. The study found that attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness of influencers positively affect purchase decisions. Consumers showed higher engagement with influencers who maintained transparency in sponsored promotions. The research highlighted that authentic influencer content improves customer trust and emotional connection with brands. Social media users were more willing to purchase products promoted by credible influencers. The study concluded that influencer marketing strengthens customer loyalty and brand image among Gen Z consumers.

4. Ki and Kim (2021) investigated the role of influencer authenticity in influencing purchasing behaviour. The findings indicated that authentic influencer content creates stronger emotional relationships with followers. Consumers were more likely to purchase products promoted by influencers they trusted and followed regularly. The study highlighted that interactive communication increases customer engagement on social media platforms. Influencers who shared genuine experiences received higher audience support and engagement. The research concluded that authenticity is one of the most important factors determining influencer marketing effectiveness.

5. Sokolova and Kefi (2020) studied the effectiveness of Instagram influencers on customer engagement. The research identified that trust and parasocial interaction strongly influence purchase intention among social media users. Consumers preferred influencers who shared personal experiences rather than direct promotional advertisements. The study found that influencer recommendations increase brand awareness and product interest among Gen Z consumers. Social media engagement such as likes, comments, and shares improved customer relationships with brands. The findings concluded that influencer marketing positively affects consumer buying behaviour and online engagement.

III. RESEARCH OF METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the framework or overall plan used for conducting the research study. It helps the researcher collect, measure, and analyse data systematically to achieve research objectives effectively.

3.2 Sampling Technique

Sampling technique refers to the method used to select respondents from the population for conducting the study. Sampling helps save time, cost, and effort while collecting data from a large population. The present study uses Convenience Sampling Technique because respondents were selected based on accessibility and availability. Convenience sampling is suitable for survey-based research studies and helps in collecting data efficiently from social media users and Gen Z consumers.

3.3 Data Collection Method

Primary data refers to original data collected directly from respondents by the researcher for the first time. In this study, primary data is collected using structured questionnaires distributed among Gen Z consumers.

Secondary data refers to information already collected and published by others. Secondary data for the study is collected from Books, Journals, Research articles, Websites, Magazines, Online publications.

3.4 Tools For Data Analysis

The collected data is analysed using statistical tools in SPSS software. The following tools are used for analysis: Chi-Square Test, One Way ANOVA, Correlation Analysis, One Sample T-Test.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Demographic details

The demographic profile establishes a baseline understanding of the sample distribution:

- Age: The respondents are mainly young adults, with 48.7% of respondents belonging to the 26–35 age group, followed by 41.3% in the 18–25 age category and 10.0% in the 36–45 age group.
- Gender: The sample represents a balanced gender distribution, consisting of 55.3% female respondents and 44.7% male respondents.
- Education: Respondents are distributed across different educational qualifications, with 57.3% being Graduates, followed by 32.0% having Postgraduate qualifications and 10.7% holding Diploma qualifications.
- Occupation: The majority of respondents are from business backgrounds (41.3%), followed by students and other occupational groups.
- Monthly Income: Most respondents belong to the ₹25,000–₹50,000 income category (32.0%), indicating a middle-income respondent base.
- Purchase Frequency: A major portion of respondents purchase occasionally (32.7%), while 39.3% purchase rarely, showing varied consumer behaviour.

4.2 Pearson Correlation Analysis (Testing Hypothesis 1)

Null Hypothesis (H_0):

There is no significant relationship between influencer engagement and purchase decision.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):

There is a significant relationship between influencer engagement and purchase decisions.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Continuous Indexes	Statistical Parameters	Personal Promotional vs	Unplanned Purchase
Personal Promotional vs	Pearson Correlation (r)	1.000	0.72
	Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.379
	Sample Size (N)	150	150
Unplanned Purchase	Pearson Correlation (r)	0.72	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.379	—
	Sample Size (N)	150	150

The analysis indicates that there is no significant relationship between respondents' engagement with influencers and their purchase decisions. Hence, engagement with influencers does not significantly influence purchase decisions among the respondents. The significance value is 0.379, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. Hence, there is no significant relationship between influencer engagement and purchase decision among the respondents.

4.3 One Way Analysis of Variance (Testing Hypothesis 2)

Null Hypothesis (H_0):

There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents regarding unplanned purchases after seeing influencer promotions on social media.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):

There is a significant difference in the opinions of respondents regarding unplanned purchases after seeing influencer promotions on social media.

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA Summary Table

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	Calculated F-Statistic	Observed Significance (p-Value)
Between Groups	3.374	4	.843	.474	.755
Within Groups	258.200	145	1.781	—	—
Total	261.573	149	—	—	—

The analysis shows that there is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents regarding unplanned purchases after viewing influencer promotions. The respondents have similar opinions regarding impulse buying behaviour. The significance value is 0.755, which

is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. Hence, there is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents regarding unplanned purchases after seeing influencer promotions on social media.

V. FINDINGS

- The study found that the majority of respondents actively follow influencers on social media platforms.
- Most respondents stated that influencer content appears frequently in their social media feeds.
- The study revealed that respondents are regularly exposed to influencer promotions and product endorsements.
- A significant number of respondents actively engage with influencer posts through likes, comments, and shares.
- Most respondents consider influencers to be trustworthy when recommending products and services.
- The study found that transparency in influencer promotions positively affects consumer trust.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

- Brands should collaborate with influencers who maintain authenticity and credibility.
- Influencers should provide honest and transparent product reviews.
- Companies should clearly disclose sponsored content and paid promotions.
- Businesses should select influencers whose values align with their target audience.
- Marketers should focus on creating informative and engaging content rather than excessive promotional content.

VII. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that influencer marketing plays a significant role in influencing the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers. Social media influencers have become important sources of information, product recommendations, and brand awareness among young consumers. The findings indicate that influencer marketing positively affects consumer trust, engagement, brand awareness, purchasing behaviour, and impulse buying tendencies. The statistical analysis conducted in the study confirmed that there is a positive relationship between influencer marketing and Gen Z purchasing decisions. Influencer recommendations, authentic content, and brand endorsements significantly influence consumers' attitudes and buying intentions. Therefore, influencer marketing has emerged as an effective promotional strategy for businesses seeking to attract and retain Gen Z consumers. By maintaining transparency, credibility, and authenticity, organizations can further enhance the effectiveness of influencer marketing and strengthen consumer-brand relationships.

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