

An Analytical Study on the Effect of Influencer Marketing on Young Consumer's Buying Behavior

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 13

Special Issue: 2

Month: January

Year: 2026

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

Citation:

Mhatre, Sayali Vilas, and Vaishali Patil. "An Analytical Study on the Effect of Influencer Marketing on Young Consumer's Buying Behavior." *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2026, pp. 1–6.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v13iS2-i1-Jan.10443>

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Abstract

Influencer marketing has become one of the most powerful tools in digital advertising. Young consumers today rely more on social media influencers than traditional celebrities when making purchase decisions. The study is based entirely on secondary sources of data such as research papers, journals, reports, articles, websites, and published surveys related to influencer marketing and consumer behavior. The analytical approach is used to understand how credibility, trust, content quality, and social media engagement influence the purchasing decisions of young consumers. The study examines the psychological impact of influencers on brand awareness, brand loyalty, and impulse buying behavior among youth. The findings from the reviewed literature indicate that influencer marketing has a major impact on young consumers' buying behavior. Influencers who are perceived as trustworthy, knowledgeable, and relatable have a stronger influence on purchase decisions. Social media platforms provide influencers with direct interaction with consumers, which increases brand visibility and consumer confidence. The study also states that young consumers are more likely to purchase products recommended by influencers compared to traditional advertisements, as influencer content appears more authentic and engaging. This study aims to analyze how credibility, content authenticity, and engagement style affect young consumer's buying behavior and brand trust. The paper provides valuable insights for marketers, businesses, and researchers to understand the growing importance of influencer marketing in modern consumer decision-making. Since the study is based on secondary data, it also highlights the need for future primary research to further validate the findings.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Youth, Consumer Behaviour, Buying Behaviour, Trust

Introduction

Over the past decade, the high growth of digital technology and social media platforms has significantly transformed the way businesses communicate with consumers. Traditional marketing methods are gradually being replaced by digital marketing strategies that focus on engagement, interaction, and personalized communication. One such emerging and highly influential strategy is influencer marketing, which has gained major popularity among young consumers. Influencer marketing involves connecting brands with social media influencers who can influence the opinions, attitudes, and purchasing decisions of their followers. In today's digital era, young consumers spend a substantially high amount of time on social networking platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and

Twitter. These platforms have given rise to social media influencers who act as opinion leaders and content creators. Influencers share product reviews, brand experiences, lifestyle choices, and promotional content, which often appear more authentic and relatable compared to traditional advertisements. As a result, young consumers tend to trust influencer recommendations, leading to a strong impact on their buying behavior.

The increasing use of smartphones, affordable internet access, and growing digital literacy among youth have further strengthened the role of influencer marketing. Young consumers are more likely to seek product information, reviews, and suggestions from influencers before making purchase decisions. Influencers not only create brand awareness but also help shape consumer perceptions, build brand credibility, and stimulate purchase intentions. This shift in consumer behavior highlights the growing importance of influencer marketing as a powerful promotional tool in the modern marketing environment. India, being one of the largest social media markets in the world, offers immense potential for influencer marketing. The youth population in India is highly active on digital platforms and is more receptive to influencer-driven content. Brands across various sectors such as fashion, beauty, electronics, food, and lifestyle increasingly rely on influencers to reach young consumers effectively. However, the extent to which influencer marketing affects buying behavior varies based on factors such as influencer credibility, content quality, trust, and consumer perception. In this context, the present study attempts to analytically examine the effect of influencer marketing on young consumer's buying behavior. The study focuses on understanding how influencer marketing influences purchase decisions, brand trust, and consumer preferences among youth. By analyzing secondary data from research papers, industry reports, and published studies, this research aims to provide insights into the growing role of influencer marketing and its impact on young consumers in the digital age.

Objectives of the study

- To identify the key factors of influencer marketing that affect young consumer's purchase intentions.
- To analyse how content type (reviews, reels, vlogs) influences buying decisions.

Hypothesis of the Study

- **H₁**: Influencer credibility and trust have a significant positive impact on young consumers' buying behaviour.
- **H₂**: Social media influencer content (such as reviews, reels, and vlogs) significantly influences young consumers' purchase decisions more than traditional advertising.

Literature Review

Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K., & Freberg, L. A. (2018) studied the role of social media influencers as opinion leaders and found that influencer credibility and authenticity play a significant role in influencing consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, especially among younger audiences.

Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2020) examined influencer marketing effectiveness and revealed that informative and trustworthy influencer content positively affects brand awareness and purchase intention among social media users.

Sudha, M., & Sheena, K. (2021) studied the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour in India and concluded that young consumers are highly influenced by influencers' product reviews and recommendations, particularly in fashion and lifestyle categories.

De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2023) highlighted that influencer popularity and perceived expertise significantly affect consumer engagement and buying decisions, emphasizing the importance of selecting appropriate influencers for brand promotions.

Introduction to Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is a modern form of digital marketing that focuses on promoting and creating awareness about products and services through individuals who have a strong presence and influence on

social media platforms. These individuals, known as influencers, create content and share opinions that can affect the attitudes and purchasing decisions of their followers. Influencer marketing combines the power of social media, word-of-mouth promotion, and personal recommendation, making it one of the most effective marketing strategies in the digital era.

Influencer marketing operates mainly through social networking platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and blogs. Influencers may be celebrities, industry experts, content creators, or everyday individuals who have gained popularity due to their knowledge, lifestyle, or creative content. Brands collaborate with influencers to promote their products in a more natural and relatable manner, which helps in building trust and credibility among consumers.

Definitions of Influencer Marketing

1. “Influencer marketing is a form of marketing that focuses on using key opinion leaders to drive a brand’s message to a larger market.” — **Brown & Hayes**
2. “Influencer marketing involves identifying individuals who have influence over a specific audience and leveraging their reach to promote products, services, or brands.” — **Freberg et al.**

Silent Features / Advantages of Influencer Marketing

Authenticity and Relatability: Unlike traditional advertisements, influencer content appears more natural and authentic. Influencers share real-life experiences, honest reviews, and personal stories, making the promotional content more relatable for young consumers.

Targeted Audience Reach: Influencer marketing allows brands to reach specific target audiences effectively. Influencers cater to niche markets such as fashion, fitness, technology, beauty, or travel, enabling brands to communicate with the right audience.

Higher Consumer Engagement: Influencer-generated content encourages likes, comments, shares, and discussions. This two-way interaction increases consumer engagement and strengthens the relationship between the brand and consumers.

Improved Brand Awareness: Influencer marketing helps in increasing brand visibility and recognition. Continuous exposure through influencer content helps brands stay in the minds of young consumers.

Word-of-Mouth Promotion: Influencer marketing acts as digital word-of-mouth marketing. Followers tend to share influencer content, further expanding the brand’s reach organically.

Types of Influencers

Mega Influencers: Mega influencers are individuals who have a very large follower base, usually exceeding one million followers. They are often celebrities such as actors, sports personalities, or well-known public figures. Mega influencers have a wide reach and are mainly used for creating mass brand awareness.

Macro Influencers: Macro influencers generally have followers ranging from 100,000 to one million. They are professional content creators who have established a strong presence on social media. Macro influencers are widely used by brands for large-scale promotional campaigns.

Micro Influencers: Micro influencers usually have followers between 10,000 and 100,000. They focus on specific niches such as fashion, fitness, technology, or food. Micro influencers are considered highly effective due to their strong engagement rates and close relationship with their audience.

Industry Experts and Professionals: These influencers are professionals with deep knowledge and expertise in a particular field. Their opinions are valued for their credibility and informative content, influencing consumers’ decisions through expert advice.

Influencer Marketing: Global Scenario

The global influencer marketing industry has witnessed rapid growth in recent years due to the expansion of social media platforms and increased digital engagement among consumers. Worldwide, brands are increasingly shifting their marketing budgets from traditional advertising to influencer-based campaigns because of their higher engagement rates and targeted reach. Influencer marketing has become an essential part of digital marketing strategies across industries such as fashion, beauty, technology, travel, food, and entertainment. Countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, China, and South Korea are leading markets in influencer marketing.

Social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Snapchat have emerged as major channels for influencer promotions. Globally, Instagram remains the preferred platform for influencer marketing due to its visual content and high engagement levels, followed by YouTube for long-form content and product reviews. The growth of influencer marketing has also been driven by the increasing trust consumers place in peer recommendations and online reviews. Research studies indicate that young consumers are more likely to trust influencer recommendations compared to traditional advertisements. Influencers act as digital opinion leaders and play a key role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions.

With advancements in data analytics and artificial intelligence, brands are now able to measure influencer marketing performance more effectively. Metrics such as engagement rate, reach, impressions, and conversion rates help marketers evaluate the success of influencer campaigns. As a result, influencer marketing has evolved from an experimental strategy to a well-structured and data-driven promotional tool at the global level.

The global influencer marketing market is expected to continue growing in the coming years due to increasing internet penetration, smartphone usage, and social media consumption. The rising demand for personalized and authentic content further strengthens the relevance of influencer marketing in the global digital economy.

Influencer Marketing: Indian Scenario

In India, influencer marketing has emerged as a highly effective tool for shaping the buying behaviour of young consumers. Approximately 69% of young consumers aged 18–35 report being influenced by social media influencers, with 58% making purchase decisions based on influencer recommendations. Instagram is the most dominant platform, followed by YouTube and short-video platforms such as Reels and Shorts, while Facebook and Twitter have relatively lower impact. Trust in influencers, their credibility, content quality, and engagement levels are the key factors driving consumer behaviour. Furthermore, 64% of Indian consumers trust influencer recommendations over traditional advertisements, and 73% report higher engagement with brands promoted by influencers. These findings indicate that influencer marketing plays a crucial role in brand awareness, engagement, and purchase decisions, making it a powerful promotional strategy in the Indian digital market.

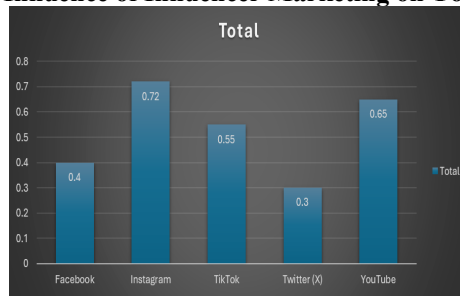
Research Methodology

The study is analytical in nature and is based on secondary data collected from journals, research papers, reports, and websites. Existing literature was analysed to examine the impact of influencer credibility, content quality, and engagement on young consumers' buying behaviour.

Data Sources: This research paper is based on secondary data collected from research papers published in national and international journals, articles, data published by related institutions, websites, etc.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

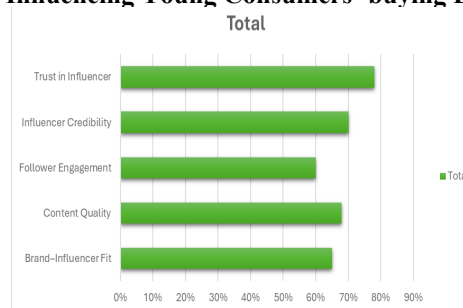
Platform-wise Influence of Influencer Marketing on Young Consumers



Source: Compiled by the author from Statista and published industry reports.

The above chart illustrates how youth are influenced by digital platforms in their purchase decisions. Among young consumers, 72% use Instagram, 65% use YouTube, 55% use TikTok, 40% use Facebook, and 30% rely on Twitter for brand-related updates. This data reveals that young consumers are highly dependent on social media for brand awareness and product information.

Factors Influencing Young Consumers' buying Behaviour



Source: www.statista.com

The chart shows that trust in influencers has the highest impact (around 75–80%), indicating it is the most influential factor in young consumers' buying behaviour. Influencer credibility and content quality also score high (around 65–70%), highlighting the importance of authenticity and meaningful content. Brand–influencer fit has a moderate influence, while follower engagement ranks lowest (around 60%), suggesting engagement alone is less effective without trust and credibility.

Findings

The study reveals that influencer trust and credibility significantly influence young consumers' buying behaviour. Social media platforms, especially Instagram and YouTube, play a major role in shaping purchase decisions, with influencer marketing proving more effective than traditional advertising in enhancing brand awareness and loyalty.

Conclusion

This study shows that influencer marketing has a significant impact on the buying behaviour of young consumers. Young people are highly influenced by social media personalities, and their trust in influencers often affects their purchase decisions. Brands that collaborate with popular influencers can increase product awareness and encourage consumers to try new products. However, the effect may vary depending on the

credibility of the influencer and the relevance of the product. Overall, influencer marketing is an effective tool for shaping the preferences and choices of young consumers in today's digital world.

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