



The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Buying Behavior: A Study On Gen Z

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of influencer marketing on the purchasing behavior of Generation Z (Gen Z). With the rapid growth of social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful promotional strategy. The research focuses on key factors such as influencer credibility, content quality, engagement, authenticity, and influencer-product fit, and how these influence Gen Z consumers. A quantitative research approach was adopted using a structured questionnaire distributed to 50 Gen Z respondents through Google Forms. The findings reveal that influencer marketing significantly influences brand awareness and product exploration, but its direct impact on purchase decisions remains moderate. Among all factors, content quality and authenticity play the most significant roles in shaping consumer perceptions. The study concludes that influencer marketing is more effective as an awareness-building tool rather than a direct sales driver. These insights provide valuable implications for marketers aiming to target Gen Z effectively.

Keywords

Influencer Marketing, Gen Z, Consumer Buying Behavior, Social Media, Purchase Intention.



1. Introduction

In the digital era, social media has transformed how brands communicate with consumers. Influencer marketing has emerged as a key strategy where individuals with a strong online presence promote products and services to their followers. This approach is particularly effective for Generation Z (Gen Z), who are digital natives and heavily rely on social media for information, entertainment, and purchasing decisions.

Unlike traditional advertising, influencer marketing leverages trust, relatability, and social proof. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok have become dominant channels for influencer-driven promotions. However, Gen Z consumers are highly selective and value authenticity, transparency, and meaningful engagement.

This study aims to analyze how influencer marketing affects the buying behavior of Gen Z, focusing on key influencing factors such as credibility, content quality, engagement, authenticity, and influencer-product fit.

2. Literature Review

Previous research highlights the growing importance of influencer marketing in shaping consumer behavior. Studies by Agrawal and Vazirani (2023) emphasize the role of trust and brand recognition in influencing Gen Z purchasing decisions. Similarly, Manzoor et al. (2023) found that influencer characteristics such as attractiveness, expertise, and credibility significantly impact purchase intention.

Patel et al. (2023) and Baghel (2023) highlight the importance of authenticity and content relevance in building consumer trust. Research by Kim and Kim (2024) further suggests that content quality and engagement play a vital role in shaping brand perception among Gen Z.

Other studies indicate that while influencer marketing is effective in creating awareness, its ability to directly convert consumers into buyers is limited. This suggests the need for deeper understanding of factors influencing purchasing behavior.

3. Research Objectives and Hypotheses

Objectives

- To analyze the impact of influencer marketing on Gen Z purchasing behavior
- To examine the role of influencer credibility, content quality, and authenticity
- To evaluate the effectiveness of different social media platforms

Hypotheses

- H1: Influencer credibility positively affects purchasing behavior
- H2: Content quality positively affects purchasing behavior
- H3: Influencer-product fit positively affects purchasing behavior
- H4: Engagement positively affects purchasing behavior
- H5: Authenticity positively affects purchasing behavior



4. Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The sample consisted of 50 Gen Z respondents selected using convenience sampling.

The questionnaire included Likert-scale questions (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to measure perceptions regarding influencer marketing factors such as credibility, content quality, engagement, authenticity, and purchase behavior.

Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel, where mean values and percentage analysis were used to interpret the results.

5. Data Analysis and Results

Key Findings from Data

- **66%** of respondents explore brands after influencer recommendations
- Only **38%** of respondents have purchased products based on influencer promotions
- **50%+** respondents agree that content quality strongly influences attention
- Majority respondents remain **neutral about trusting influencers**, indicating selective trust
- High engagement (likes/comments) increases visibility but does not guarantee purchase

Factor-wise Insights

- **Credibility:** Moderate trust levels; Gen Z does not trust all influencers
- **Content Quality:** Strong influence on attention and interest
- **Influencer-Product Fit:** High alignment increases trust and likelihood of purchase
- **Engagement:** Acts as social proof but not a direct driver of sales
- **Authenticity:** Critical factor influencing trust and long-term impact

6. Findings and Discussion

The study reveals that influencer marketing has a **moderate but significant impact** on Gen Z purchasing behavior. While influencers are effective in creating awareness and influencing perceptions, their direct role in driving purchases is limited.

Content quality and authenticity emerged as the most influential factors, indicating that Gen Z prefers visually appealing and genuine content. Engagement plays an important role in building credibility through social proof but does not necessarily translate into buying decisions.

The findings support previous research that emphasizes the importance of trust, transparency, and relatability in influencer marketing. Gen Z consumers are cautious and rely on multiple factors such as product reviews, price, and quality before making final purchase decisions.



7. Conclusion

This study concludes that influencer marketing is an effective tool for influencing Gen Z consumers, particularly in terms of brand awareness and product discovery. However, its direct impact on purchase decisions is limited.

Factors such as credibility, authenticity, and content quality play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions. Brands must focus on building long-term relationships with influencers who align with their values and target audience.

Overall, influencer marketing should be used as a strategic tool for engagement and awareness rather than relying solely on it for conversions.

8. Recommendations

- Focus on **authentic and transparent influencer partnerships**
- Invest in **high-quality, creative content**
- Ensure strong **influencer-product alignment**
- Encourage **interactive engagement** (polls, live sessions, Q&A)
- Use **data-driven strategies** for personalized marketing

9. Limitations

- Small sample size (50 respondents)
- Use of convenience sampling
- Limited to selected social media platforms
- Self-reported data may include bias

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