



Impact of Influencer Credibility and Content Quality on Purchase Intentions of Generation Z Consumers: A Study in Coimbatore District

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of influencer credibility and content quality on the purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers in Coimbatore District. Using a descriptive and analytical research design, primary data were collected from 400 respondents through a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools including Percentage Analysis, t-test, and One-Way ANOVA were employed. Findings reveal that Instagram and YouTube are the most preferred platforms, and that influencer credibility and content quality significantly influence purchase intentions. The study concludes that authentic influencer communication and high-quality digital content are vital in shaping Generation Z consumer behaviour.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Influencer Credibility, Content Quality, Purchase Intention, Generation Z, Social Media, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 12.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of social media platforms has significantly transformed modern marketing communication. Influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most effective digital strategies for reaching Generation Z consumers — individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s who rely heavily on online recommendations before making purchasing decisions. These consumers prefer authentic, relatable, and interactive content over conventional promotional advertising.

The effectiveness of influencer marketing largely depends on influencer credibility — encompassing trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, and social appeal — and the quality of content produced. This study examines the combined impact of these two constructs on the purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers in Coimbatore District, addressing a gap in the Indian regional context.



2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ohanian (1990) introduced the Source Credibility Model, which identifies trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness as the major determinants influencing consumer responses toward endorsements. The model provides the theoretical foundation for examining how influencer characteristics shape consumer purchase intentions.

Ajzen (1991) proposed the Theory of Planned Behavior, which explains that behavioural intention is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In the context of influencer marketing, this theory explains how consumer purchase intentions are shaped by personal attitudes, social influence, and perceived confidence in making purchase decisions.

Lou and Yuan (2019) examined the effectiveness of influencer-generated content on consumer behaviour, finding that informative and entertaining content enhances influencer credibility, which in turn positively influences consumer trust, brand attitude, and purchase intention.

Sokolova and Kefi (2020) investigated how social media influencers affect consumer purchase decisions on Instagram and YouTube, revealing that influencer credibility, parasocial interaction, and audience engagement significantly contribute to consumers' willingness to purchase endorsed products.

Kavitha and Surendar (2025) examined how influencer marketing affects consumer buying decisions in Coimbatore, finding that influencer recommendations and online reviews strongly influence purchasing behaviour and brand trust. Several recent Indian studies (Priya and Karthik, 2026; Shalini and Dinesh, 2026; Anand and Pavithra, 2026) consistently confirm that authentic influencer communication, content quality, source credibility, and social attractiveness significantly shape consumer purchase intentions, particularly among Generation Z audiences on Instagram and YouTube.

3. OBJECTIVES

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

- (i) To analyse the demographic profile and social media usage patterns of Generation Z consumers in Coimbatore District.
- (ii) To examine consumer perceptions toward influencer credibility factors such as trustworthiness, expertise, likeability, and appearance.
- (iii) To evaluate the impact of content quality on consumer attitudes and perceived value toward promoted products.
- (iv) To identify the relationship between demographic variables and consumer perceptions toward influencer marketing.
- (v) To analyse the influence of influencer credibility and content quality on the purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts both descriptive and analytical research designs. The descriptive design was used to understand the demographic profile, social media usage patterns, and consumer perceptions, while the analytical design was used to examine relationships between influencer credibility, content quality, and purchase intentions through statistical analysis.

The target population consisted of Generation Z consumers residing in Coimbatore District who actively use social media platforms and engage with influencer-generated content. A sample of 400 respondents was selected using convenience sampling. The sample included students, working professionals, entrepreneurs, freelancers, and unemployed respondents from urban, semi-urban, and rural areas of Coimbatore District.



Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A captured demographic and behavioural information, and Section B comprised psychometric items measuring influencer credibility, content quality, and consumer purchase intention using a five-point Likert scale. The theoretical foundation of the instrument rested on the Source Credibility Model and the Theory of Planned Behavior. Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess internal consistency, and values above 0.70 confirmed the reliability of the scales.

The following statistical techniques were employed for data analysis: Percentage Analysis to describe the demographic profile; Descriptive Statistics to measure central tendencies; Independent Sample t-test to identify gender-based differences; and One-Way ANOVA to examine differences across demographic groups including age, occupation, income level, area of residence, preferred platform, and time spent on social media. All analyses were performed using SPSS software.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Demographic Profile

A total of 400 Generation Z respondents from Coimbatore District participated in the study. The sample was nearly equally distributed between male (50.75%) and female (49.25%) respondents, ensuring representational balance. The majority of respondents (71.75%) were aged between 18 and 23 years, indicating that the study primarily captures the most digitally active segment of Generation Z. Working professionals constituted 40.50% of the sample, followed by students at 31.50%, entrepreneurs at 15.75%, freelancers at 8.75%, and unemployed respondents at 3.50%.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	203	50.75%
	Female	197	49.25%
Age Group	14-17	33	8.25%
	18-20	138	34.50%
	21-23	149	37.25%
	24-26	60	15.00%
	27-29	20	5.00%
	Occupation	Working Professional	162
	Student	126	31.50%
	Entrepreneur / Business	63	15.75%
	Freelancer	35	8.75%
	Unemployed	14	3.50%

Source: Primary Data

Regarding social media platform preferences, Instagram (43.75%) and YouTube (29.25%) emerged as the two dominant platforms for accessing influencer-generated content. In terms of daily social media usage, the majority of respondents reported spending between one and three hours on social media, with a significant proportion spending more than three hours daily, indicating high exposure to influencer marketing activities.



5.2 One-Way ANOVA Results

One-Way ANOVA tests were conducted to examine significant differences in influencer marketing perception variables across demographic groups. With respect to gender, no statistically significant differences were observed in most influencer marketing perception variables, suggesting that both male and female respondents respond similarly to influencer marketing strategies.

Age groups demonstrated significant differences in variables related to content engagement, social attractiveness, and purchase intention. Younger respondents within the 18-23 age range were more actively influenced by digital influencer content and exhibited stronger purchase intentions. Occupational categories significantly influenced perceptions toward influencer credibility, content quality, and purchase intention, with students and working professionals showing higher responsiveness to influencer-generated content.

Respondents from urban areas demonstrated relatively higher engagement with influencer marketing activities compared to those from semi-urban and rural backgrounds. Income level also significantly influenced purchasing behaviour, with higher-income respondents showing greater willingness to purchase influencer-endorsed products. Furthermore, respondents who spent more time on social media platforms recorded higher levels of interaction with influencer content and stronger purchase intentions.

6. KEY FINDINGS

The empirical analysis yields the following principal findings:

- Instagram (43.75%) and YouTube (29.25%) are the most preferred platforms among Generation Z consumers for accessing influencer-generated content.
- Influencer credibility dimensions — particularly trustworthiness, expertise, and social attractiveness — positively and significantly influence consumer purchase intentions.
- Content quality variables including attention and retention, ease of processing, and perceived content value significantly affect consumer engagement and product perception.
- Consumers demonstrate a strong preference for authentic, transparent, and informative influencer content over purely promotional advertisements.
- Influencer-generated content improves consumer awareness, perceived product value, and behavioural intention toward purchasing.
- Demographic factors — including age, occupation, income level, area of residence, preferred platform, and daily social media usage — significantly moderate consumer responses to influencer marketing.
- Gender produced no significant differences in most perception variables, indicating that influencer marketing operates comparably across genders within the Generation Z cohort.
- Respondents who spent more than three hours daily on social media exhibited substantially stronger purchase intentions, underscoring the relationship between platform exposure and purchasing behaviour.

7. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Brands should collaborate with influencers who possess higher credibility, demonstrated expertise, and authenticity to improve consumer trust and engagement.
- Influencers should prioritise creating informative, relatable, and transparent content rather than relying on excessive promotional rhetoric.
- Businesses should invest in content quality by ensuring digital content is visually appealing, easy to understand, and audience-focused.



- Marketers should preferentially utilise Instagram and YouTube to effectively target Generation Z consumers.
- Companies should enforce ethical influencer marketing practices, including clear disclosure of paid promotions and sponsored content, to maintain consumer trust and regulatory compliance.
- Influencers should maintain consistent communication and audience interaction to strengthen consumer loyalty over the long term.
- Businesses should leverage data-driven marketing strategies to better understand consumer preferences, behavioural patterns, and platform usage habits.
- Campaigns should be customised according to demographic factors such as age, occupation, income level, and residential background.
- Brands should consider partnering with micro-influencers and niche content creators, who typically maintain stronger audience relationships and higher engagement rates than macro-influencers.

8. CONCLUSION

Influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most influential digital marketing strategies in the modern business environment. Social media influencers significantly shape consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchase-related behaviour through digital communication and online engagement. The increasing dependence on influencer-generated content among Generation Z consumers highlights the growing importance of credibility and content quality in digital marketing practice.

The present study examined the impact of influencer credibility and content quality on the purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers in Coimbatore District. The findings confirmed that influencer credibility dimensions - particularly trustworthiness, expertise, and social attractiveness - and content quality factors - including visual appeal, information clarity, and audience engagement - significantly affect purchase intention and perceived product value. Demographic variables including age, occupation, income level, area of residence, preferred platform, and time spent on social media were all found to moderate consumer responses toward influencer marketing activities.

The research concludes that authentic influencer communication and high-quality digital content play a major role in improving consumer trust, engagement, and purchase intention. The study provides valuable insights for businesses, marketers, influencers, and advertising agencies in developing effective influencer marketing strategies targeted toward younger digital audiences. Organisations that successfully integrate credibility-driven influencer selection with quality content strategy will be best positioned to build sustained consumer relationships and drive purchasing behaviour among the Generation Z market.

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