



Influencer-Driven Consumer Decision-Making: Examining Social Media Exposure, Brand Awareness and Purchase Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how influencer marketing affects consumers' digital purchasing decisions. Through trust, trustworthiness, and content relevancy, social media influencers play a crucial role as middlemen between brands and consumers, influencing brand perceptions and purchasing decisions. The study investigates how demographic characteristics like age and gender influence consumer reactions to influencer marketing using both qualitative and quantitative techniques, including survey analysis. The results indicate that customer behaviour is greatly influenced by the authenticity and relatability of influencers, especially in the fashion, beauty, and lifestyle sectors. They also demonstrate that influencer marketing primarily facilitates well-informed and sensible purchasing decisions. The study also emphasises the significance of clear communication and ethical influencer activities in fostering long-term consumer trust, lowering post-purchase regret, and bolstering enduring brand-consumer connections.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Consumer Decision-Making, Social Media Exposure, Brand Awareness, Purchase Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation and changing consumer behaviour

The rapid growth of digital technologies and social media platforms has fundamentally altered the way consumers search for information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchase decisions. Consumer behaviour, defined as the processes through which individuals select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods and services to satisfy their needs (Solomon, 2018), has traditionally been shaped by cultural, social, psychological, and personal influences. Early research highlights the importance of social interactions and reference groups in guiding preferences and purchase choices (Christopher & Huarng, 2003).

However, the proliferation of the internet has shifted decision-making power from producers to consumers. Digital platforms enable continuous access to product information, reviews, comparisons, and peer opinions, thereby reducing the effectiveness of traditional one-way advertising. As noted by Wertime and Fenwick (2008), interactive and virtual environments have weakened conventional marketing tools while strengthening consumer participation and trust in peer-generated content. Consequently, consumers increasingly rely on online ratings, blogs, and user-generated recommendations when forming brand perceptions and purchase intentions.

Emergence of influencer marketing

Within this evolving digital ecosystem, influencer marketing has emerged as a prominent communication strategy. The theoretical roots of influencer marketing lie in celebrity endorsement models, where Grant McCracken (1989) explains



that endorsers transfer symbolic meanings, values, and credibility to brands, positively shaping consumer attitudes. Nevertheless, over-commercialisation or multiple endorsements may reduce perceived authenticity (Tripp et al., 1994).

With the rise of social media, a new category of influencers—ordinary individuals who build large online communities through relatable content—has replaced traditional celebrities in many contexts. These influencers communicate recommendations that resemble word-of-mouth interactions rather than direct advertisements (Viglia et al., 2016). Research by De Veirman et al. (2017) shows that such influencers significantly affect brand awareness and engagement, while Hsu and Tsou (2018) demonstrate that consumers are more likely to purchase products recommended by influencers perceived as knowledgeable, likeable, and trustworthy. More recent evidence by Migkos et al. (2025) further establishes that authenticity, transparency, and credibility are key determinants of influencer effectiveness.

Influencer marketing and consumer behaviour in India

The impact of influencer marketing is particularly significant in India, where rapid internet penetration and a young demographic structure have accelerated digital consumption and online shopping. Early studies indicate that Indian consumers who exhibit higher materialistic values tend to be more receptive to advertising and innovative products (Mishra et al., 2011). Building on this, Ghosh et al. (2018) find that influencer marketing significantly enhances consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, and actual buying behaviour, particularly when influencers are perceived as relatable and reliable.

Similarly, Sahni et al. (2020) report that social media influencers strongly influence millennials' purchasing habits, especially when promotional content aligns with their interests and lifestyles. Hashim et al. (2021) further show that influencer credibility, congruence with the audience, and content quality positively shape consumer attitudes and brand knowledge. Gupta (2021) identifies influencers as modern opinion leaders who indirectly strengthen brand loyalty through improved brand image and electronic word-of-mouth.

Recent studies also highlight generational and contextual differences. Pradhan et al. (2023) observe that overly commercial or macro-influencer campaigns may increase avoidance behaviour among Generation Z, whereas Singh (2024) emphasises that trust and authenticity significantly enhance purchase intentions. Case-based evidence from Anchal (2025) and Singh et al. (2025) confirms that influencer engagement, credibility, and content relevance positively influence brand switching, product trials, and sales, particularly in visually driven sectors such as fashion, beauty, and lifestyle products.

Motivation and purpose of the study

Although influencer marketing has become an integral component of modern marketing strategies, its influence on consumer buying behaviour remains complex and context dependent. Existing research demonstrates that credibility, relatability, and authenticity are crucial drivers of persuasion, yet the magnitude of influence varies across consumer segments, demographic characteristics, and product categories. Moreover, while international evidence on influencer marketing is expanding, systematic empirical investigation within the Indian context remains fragmented.

Given India's rapidly growing digital consumer base and increasing reliance on social media recommendations, a deeper understanding of how influencers shape consumer perceptions, trust, and purchase decisions is essential. Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the impact of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour, focusing on how engagement, authenticity, and influencer–consumer relationships influence brand attitudes and purchasing decisions across different demographic segments.

Literature Review

Conceptual foundations of consumer behaviour and influence

Consumer behaviour has long been recognised as a complex and multidimensional process involving how individuals search for, evaluate, purchase, use, and dispose of products and services to satisfy their needs and desires. Consumer behaviour refers to the set of actions and decision-making processes that consumers undertake before and after consumption (Solomon, 2018). Early marketing scholars further emphasised that buying behaviour is socially embedded and shaped by environmental and psychological influences. For instance, Reference group effects highlighted by



Christopher and Huarng (2003) suggest that peers and social networks significantly influence consumers during the early stages of decision-making.

With the advancement of digital technologies, traditional marketing tools have gradually lost effectiveness, while interactive and virtual engagements have gained prominence (**Wertime & Fenwick, 2008**). This transition has paved the way for influencer-driven communication, where individuals rather than firms act as persuasive intermediaries between brands and consumers.

Evolution from celebrity endorsements to social media influencers

The roots of influencer marketing can be traced to celebrity endorsement theory. **Grant McCracken (1989)** proposed the meaning-transfer model, arguing that celebrities transfer symbolic meanings, values, and attractiveness to brands, thereby shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. However, later research cautioned against excessive endorsements. **Tripp et al. (1994)** found that consumers perceive celebrities promoting multiple brands as less credible, suggesting that overexposure can dilute trust and effectiveness.

With the growth of social media platforms, a new class of endorsers emerged: social media influencers. Word of mouth-like communication became central to digital persuasion, as noted by **Viglia et al. (2016)**, who observed that influencer content often resembles authentic peer recommendations rather than commercial advertising. **De Veirman et al. (2017)** further characterised influencers as individuals with large online followings capable of shaping opinions through everyday lifestyle content, reviews, and experiences.

Recent empirical work reinforces the importance of credibility-related attributes. Hsu and Tsou (2018) show that reliability, likability, and perceived expertise increase consumer confidence in recommendations, thereby strengthening purchase intentions. Similarly, **Migkos et al. (2025)** report that authenticity, transparency, and trust significantly enhance brand engagement and online buying behaviour across industries. Collectively, international evidence suggests that influencer effectiveness depends less on fame and more on perceived sincerity and relational closeness.

Influencer marketing and consumer behaviour in the Indian context

Within the Indian market, research increasingly documents the growing impact of influencers on consumption patterns, particularly among younger and digitally active consumers. Early work by **Mishra et al. (2011)** indicates that materialistic consumers tend to be more innovative and receptive to advertising, implying that personal values shape openness to promotional communication. This finding provides a psychological basis for understanding why influencer content may resonate with aspirational audiences.

Subsequent studies directly examine influencer-driven effects. **Ghosh et al. (2018)** demonstrate that influencer marketing significantly improves consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, and buying behaviour. Their results highlight perceived similarity, knowledge, and reliability as key determinants of persuasion. In a similar vein, **Sahni et al. (2020)**, focusing on Indian millennials, report that influencers substantially affect purchase decisions when brand messages align with the values and lifestyles of the target audience.

Credibility and content quality emerge as recurring themes. **Hashim et al. (2021)**, employing the tri-component attitude model, show that influencer trustworthiness, congruence with the audience, and informative content positively shape brand knowledge and consumer attitudes. These findings underscore the psychological processes through which influencer attributes translate into favourable brand perceptions.

More recent research highlights generational differences. **Pradhan et al. (2023)** observe that Generation Z consumers may avoid influencers and endorsed brands when campaigns appear overly controlled by brands, with macro-influencers sometimes triggering greater avoidance than micro-influencers. This suggests that perceived commercialization can reduce authenticity. Conversely, **Divyaditya Singh (2024)** finds that trust and genuineness strongly enhance purchase intentions among Gen Z consumers, recommending long-term collaborations to foster credibility.

Studies also explore industry-specific and campaign-level dynamics. **Gupta (2021)** notes that influencers function as modern opinion leaders whose credibility indirectly enhances brand loyalty through improved brand image and electronic word-of-mouth. **Anchal (2023)**, through a case study of a direct-to-consumer brand, shows that combining educational content, demonstrations, and promotional incentives with credible influencers increases consumers'



willingness to try new products, particularly in visually driven sectors such as beauty and personal care. Similarly, **Singh et al. (2025)** demonstrate that authenticity, engagement, and value congruence between influencers and brands positively shape consumer trust and purchase decisions.

Synthesis of existing literature

Taken together, the literature reveals a clear evolution from traditional advertising and celebrity endorsements toward digitally mediated influencer marketing. While early theories emphasised symbolic meaning transfer and celebrity appeal, contemporary research highlights authenticity, expertise, relatability, and trust as the primary drivers of effectiveness. Influencers increasingly act as reference groups and quasi-peers, making their recommendations resemble organic word-of-mouth rather than paid promotions.

In the Indian context, these effects appear particularly pronounced among millennials and Generation Z consumers, who actively engage with social media content and value genuine storytelling over overt advertising. Empirical studies consistently show that influencer credibility, content relevance, and brand–influencer congruence positively shape attitudes, brand perceptions, and purchase intentions. At the same time, over-commercialisation or excessive brand control may reduce trust and lead to avoidance behaviour.

Overall, prior research establishes influencer marketing as a significant determinant of contemporary consumer behaviour. However, variations across influencer types, campaign strategies, and consumer segments indicate the need for deeper contextual investigation, particularly within emerging digital markets such as India.

Significance of the Study

Influencer marketing has emerged as a critical component of contemporary digital marketing strategies, enabling firms to connect with consumers through relatable and trusted personalities rather than traditional advertisements. However, empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness across product categories and consumer segments remains limited, particularly in the Indian context. This study contributes by providing a structured understanding of how influencer attributes such as credibility, trust, and engagement affect consumer preferences and purchase behaviour. The findings are expected to assist marketers in designing targeted campaigns and selecting appropriate influencer collaborations, especially for categories such as fashion, beauty, lifestyle, and services, where influencer impact is comparatively stronger.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

- Examine the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase decisions
- Analyse the psychological and emotional factors driving influencer-based persuasion
- Evaluate the role of credibility, authenticity, and trustworthiness in shaping brand perceptions
- Assess how cultural and demographic factors moderate the effectiveness of influencer marketing.

Research Hypotheses

To empirically test the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer behaviour, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Influencer marketing has a significant relationship with consumer purchase intentions and brand perceptions.

H2: Exposure to influencer marketing significantly correlates with brand awareness, brand perception, and purchasing behaviour.

Limitations of the Study



This study is subject to certain limitations. This study primarily relies on survey-based primary data, which may not fully capture evolving consumer preferences and recent influencer marketing trends. The findings may have limited generalizability across all industries and demographic groups. Additionally, external factors such as changing social media algorithms, economic conditions, and shifts in consumer psychology are not comprehensively examined. Future research incorporating primary data and a broader sample base may provide more robust and generalizable insights

Research Problem

The growing adoption of social media platforms has shifted consumer decision-making from traditional advertising toward influencer-led communication. Despite the increasing use of influencer marketing by firms, the extent to which influencers affect consumers' purchasing authority, brand perceptions, and buying intentions remains unclear. In particular, it is important to understand whether consumers who engage more frequently with influencers are more likely to be persuaded to purchase endorsed products and how these interactions shape the overall decision-making process. Accordingly, the study seeks to examine the role of influencers in influencing purchase decisions and consumer behaviour in digital environments.

Research Gap

Although prior studies establish that influencer marketing positively affects consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, the underlying mechanisms remain insufficiently explored. Existing research provides limited evidence on how different influencer types (macro vs. micro), credibility, authenticity, and trust jointly shape consumer decision-making, particularly in the Indian context. Moreover, the long-term effects of influencer marketing on brand perception and sustained buying behaviour are underexamined. Addressing these gaps, the present study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how influencer characteristics influence consumer purchase behaviour across demographic segments.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a **descriptive research design** to examine the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase decisions. A **mixed-method approach**, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, is employed to capture both measurable behavioural patterns and consumer perceptions.

Primary data are collected through a **structured questionnaire** administered via Google Forms, while secondary data are sourced from academic journals, reports, and prior studies to support contextual analysis. The target population comprises **students and working professionals** who actively use social media. A **purposive sampling technique** is applied, resulting in a sample size of **200 respondents**.

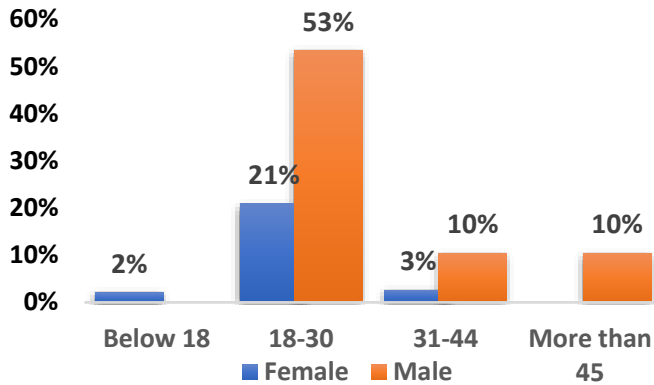
Data are analysed using **percentage and descriptive statistical methods**, and findings are presented through tables and charts for clear interpretation.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

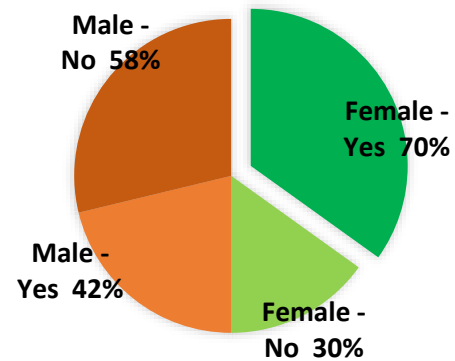
This section presents the findings and discussion based on the primary data collected through a structured survey on consumer purchase behaviour influenced by social media influencers. The responses were analysed using comparative charts, bar graphs, and visual representations to understand how different demographic factors, trust levels, and behavioural aspects affect consumer decisions.



Gender-wise Distribution Across Age Groups



Gender influence decision



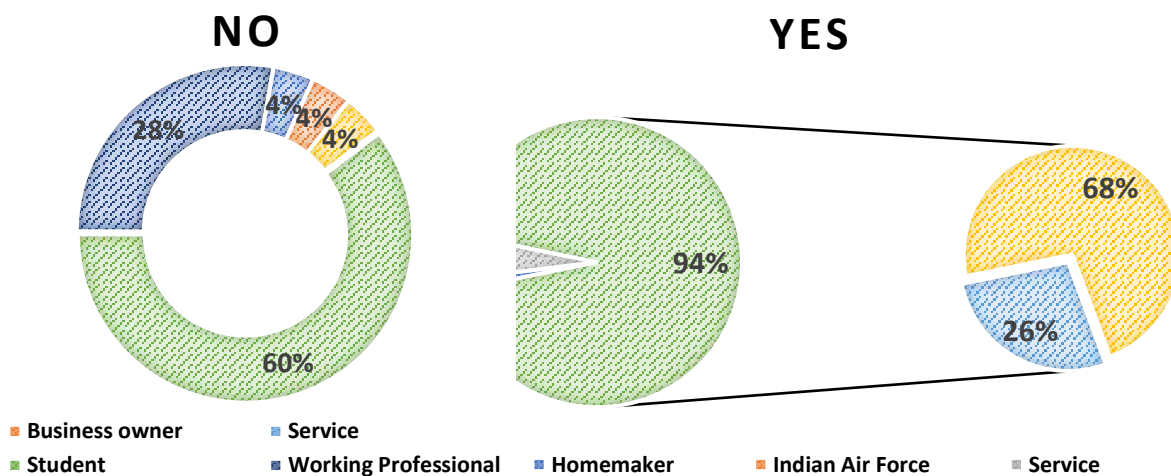
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combined analysis of age–gender distribution and influencer-following behaviour reveals clear demographic differences in engagement with influencer marketing. The sample is predominantly composed of young adults aged 18–30, with male respondents (53%) outnumbering females (21%) in this age group. This concentration indicates that younger consumers—particularly males—form the most digitally active segment, with higher exposure to influencer-driven content due to frequent social media usage. Participation declines sharply beyond the age of 30, with minimal representation from respondents above 45 years, suggesting reduced reliance on influencer platforms and a stronger preference for traditional or experience-based decision-making among older consumers.

Gender-based engagement patterns further highlight behavioural contrasts. A significant majority of female respondents (70%) reported following social media influencers, reflecting stronger emotional, informational, and lifestyle-oriented engagement with influencer content. In contrast, male respondents demonstrated a more selective approach, with 58% indicating that they do not follow influencers and relying more on independent research, peer opinions, or functional product attributes.

Overall, the findings indicate that influencer marketing is most effective among younger consumers and female audiences, while older consumers and male respondents exhibit greater scepticism and lower engagement. These results underline the importance of demographic segmentation in influencer marketing strategies, suggesting that brands should tailor influencer selection, content style, and platform focus according to age and gender-based engagement patterns to enhance marketing effectiveness.

Relationship Between Occupation and Influencer-Recommended Purchase Behaviour



The

occupation-wise analysis reveals a clear relationship between profession and influencer-driven purchasing behaviour. Among respondents who did **not** purchase influencer-recommended products, students constitute the largest share (60%), followed by working professionals (28%), while business owners and service workers account for minimal proportions. This suggests that although students

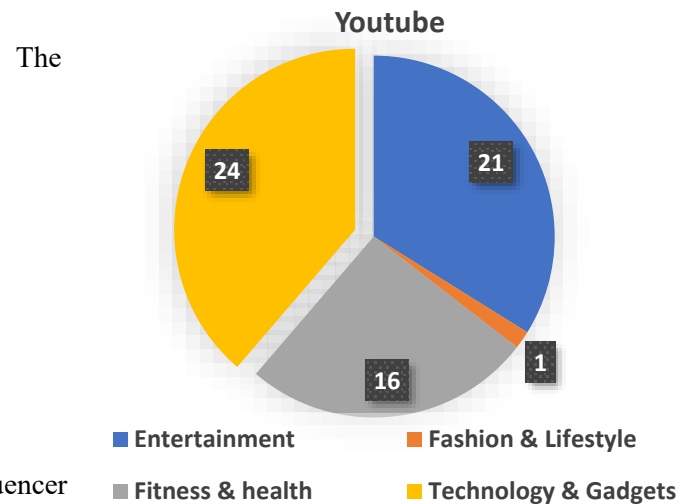
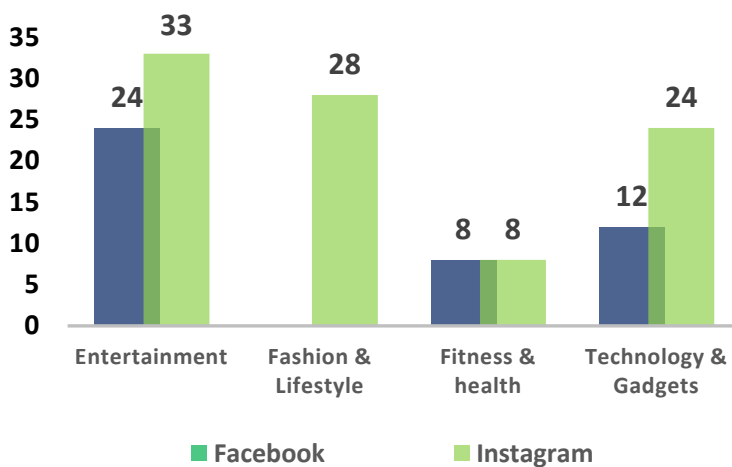


are highly exposed to influencer content, many remain cautious in converting exposure into purchases, possibly due to budget constraints.

However, among those who **did** purchase based on influencer recommendations, students overwhelmingly dominate (94%), indicating that they are the most receptive and responsive segment. Working professionals show moderate influence, whereas homemakers, service workers, and other occupational groups exhibit negligible impact.

Overall, the findings suggest that influencer marketing is most effective among students, moderately effective for working professionals, and least effective for other occupational groups, highlighting the need for occupation-specific targeting strategies.

Social media platform Vs Following Influencers



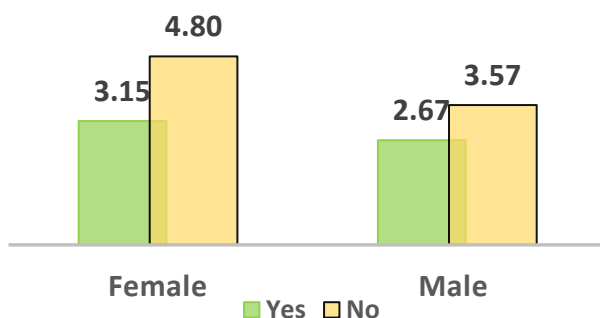
platform-wise analysis highlights clear differences in influencer engagement across social media channels. **Instagram** emerges as the most preferred platform for following influencers, particularly in entertainment, fashion & lifestyle, and technology categories, reflecting its strong appeal for visually driven and trend-based content. Engagement in fitness and health is comparatively lower, suggesting a preference for more detailed formats for such topics.

Facebook shows relatively limited influencer following and is primarily used for general content consumption rather than active influencer engagement.

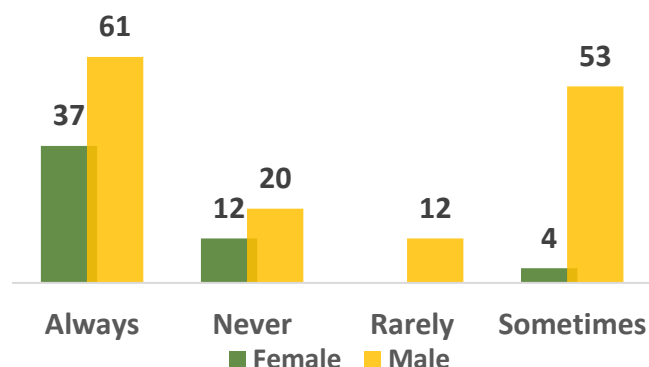
In contrast, **YouTube** is mainly preferred for in-depth and informational content, with higher engagement in technology, entertainment, and fitness-related influencers, while fashion and lifestyle content has minimal impact.

Overall, the findings indicate that Instagram is most effective for lifestyle and promotional influencer marketing, whereas YouTube is better suited for detailed, educational, and review-based content strategies.

Gender-based trust level after purchase decision



Gender based Comparison between Influencer and online reviews



analysis of trust levels and verification behaviour shows that **higher**

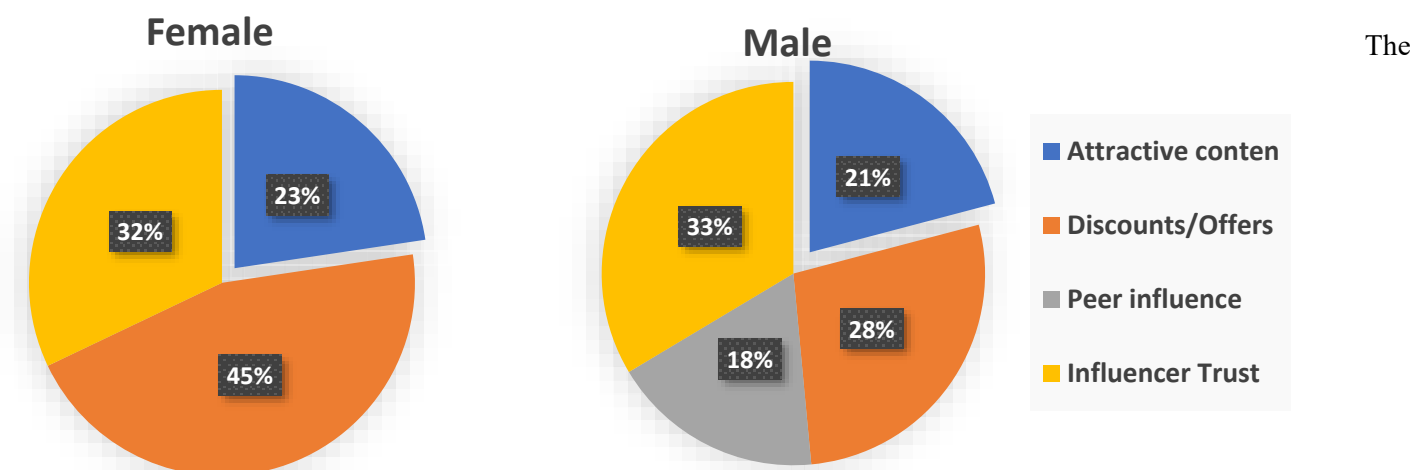


trust in influencers does not necessarily lead to purchases for either gender. Among female respondents, non-buyers report a significantly higher average trust score (**4.80**) compared to buyers (**3.15**). A similar pattern is observed among males, where non-buyers show greater trust (**3.57**) than buyers (**2.67**). This indicates that although influencers are perceived as credible, trust alone is insufficient to trigger purchase decisions, as factors such as price, need, and product suitability also play a role.

Gender differences are also evident in information evaluation behaviour. A majority of male respondents actively cross-check influencer recommendations with online reviews, with **61 always** and **53 sometimes** verifying before purchase, compared to **37 females always** and only **4 sometimes**. Meanwhile, **20 males** and **12 females never** compare sources, suggesting a smaller group relying solely on influencer input.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that while females exhibit relatively higher trust in influencers, males adopt a more analytical and verification-based approach. Influencer marketing therefore primarily builds awareness and credibility, but final purchasing decisions depend on rational assessment and supporting information rather than trust alone

Customer Motivation for Purchase Decision



primary elements influencing consumers'

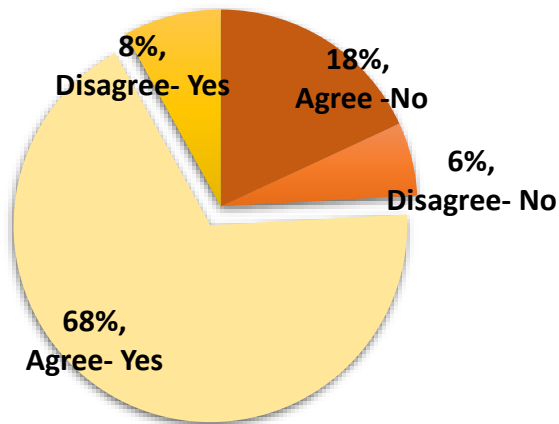
purchasing decisions are depicted in the gender-specific pie charts. Discounts & Offers are the most powerful incentive among female respondents (45%), suggesting a high sensitivity to price advantages and special offers. Influencer trust comes in second at 32%, indicating that female consumers' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by the trustworthiness and dependability of influencers. Attractive material makes up 23% of the total, demonstrating that visually appealing and captivating content also affects purchasing decisions, but less so than trust and financial incentives.

Male responders, on the other hand, exhibit a somewhat different trend. Influencer Trust is the leading factor at 33%, showing a larger dependence on trusted influencer perspectives. Of male consumers, 28% are motivated by discounts and offers, while 21% are motivated by attractive content. Furthermore, peer influence is noteworthy among men (18%), suggesting that suggestions from friends and social circles have a quantifiable effect.

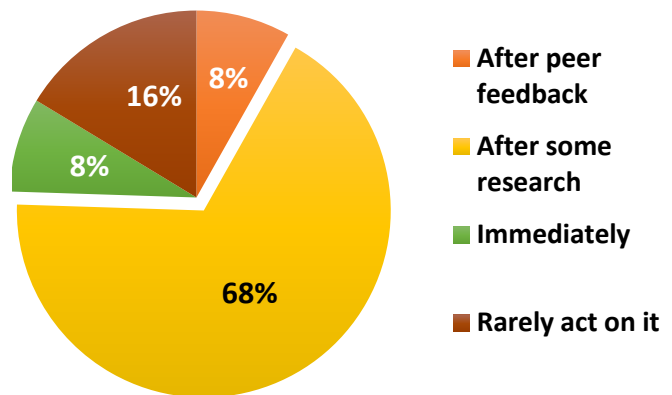
Thus, the data suggests that while discounts strongly attract females, trust and social influence play a more prominent role among males in buying decision-making.



Influence of Influencer Marketing on Brand Awareness and Purchase Decisions



Relationship Between Purchase Decision Timing and Brand Loyalty Changes Due to Influencer Marketing

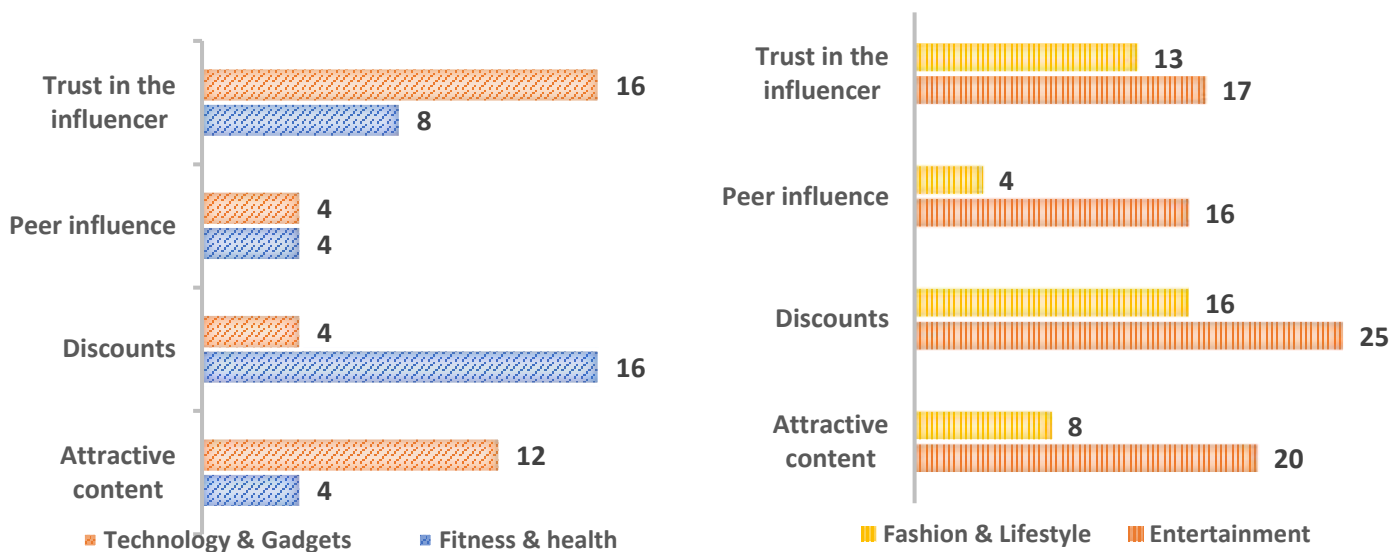


The findings indicate that influencer marketing primarily drives **awareness and consideration rather than immediate purchases**. Regarding purchase timing, a majority of respondents (68%) prefer to buy **after conducting research**, such as comparing reviews and product details, reflecting rational and informed decision-making. Only 8% purchase immediately, 8% act after peer feedback, and 16% rarely follow influencer recommendations, suggesting limited impulsive buying behaviour.

In terms of brand awareness and purchase impact, 68% (**Agree-Yes**) acknowledge that influencer marketing affects their decisions and have acted on recommendations. Another 18% (**Agree-No**) report increased awareness but no immediate purchase, indicating a more informational effect. A smaller share (8% **Disagree-Yes**) purchase despite not perceiving influence, while 6% (**Disagree-No**) remain unaffected.

Overall, the results confirm that influencer marketing is effective in building awareness and influencing consideration, but final purchase decisions are largely guided by research, reviews, and personal evaluation rather than direct impulse.

Association Between Influencer Categories and Consumer Buying Motivation



The analysis shows that purchase motivation varies across influencer categories, with **practical benefits outweighing emotional appeal**. In **Technology & Gadgets**, trust in the influencer (16) and attractive content (12) are the primary

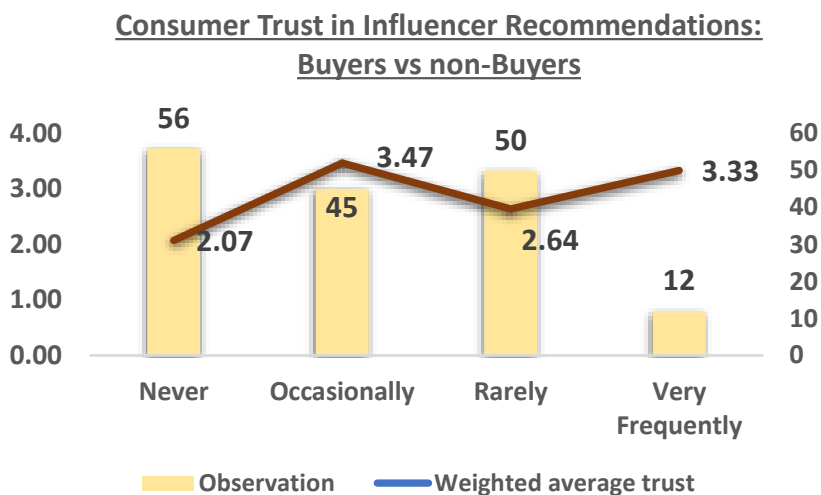


drivers, indicating reliance on expert reviews and demonstrations. In **Fitness & Health**, discounts (16) dominate, followed by trust (8), reflecting higher price sensitivity.

For **Fashion & Lifestyle**, both discounts (16) and trust (13) strongly influence purchases, suggesting a mix of value and credibility. In **Entertainment**, discounts have the highest impact (25), followed by attractive content (20) and peer influence (16), highlighting the importance of engaging content combined with tangible benefits.

Overall, the findings indicate that **discounts, credibility, and informative content** are stronger motivators than emotional appeal alone, suggesting that influencer campaigns should emphasize value and trust to drive purchase decisions.

Consumer Trust in Influencer Recommendations



By incorporating the frequency of reliance on influencer material with the accompanying weighted average trust levels, the graphic depicts consumer trust in influencer recommendations. The bar values represent the number of observations, while the line indicates the weighted average trust score for each category. Respondents who never rely on influencer recommendations comprise the largest category (56 respondents) and show the lowest trust level (2.07). This shows that non-buyers have little faith in influencer-driven advertisements and are skeptical of influencers.

The greatest trust score (3.47) is shown by those who occasionally rely on suggestions from influencers (45 respondents). This group appears to follow a balanced approach—engaging with influencer content while yet exercising independent judgment—which results in comparatively higher trust and potentially improved purchase satisfaction. A moderate trust level (2.64) is reported by respondents who rely on influencers seldom (50 respondents), suggesting partial belief but ongoing caution when taking advice from influencers.

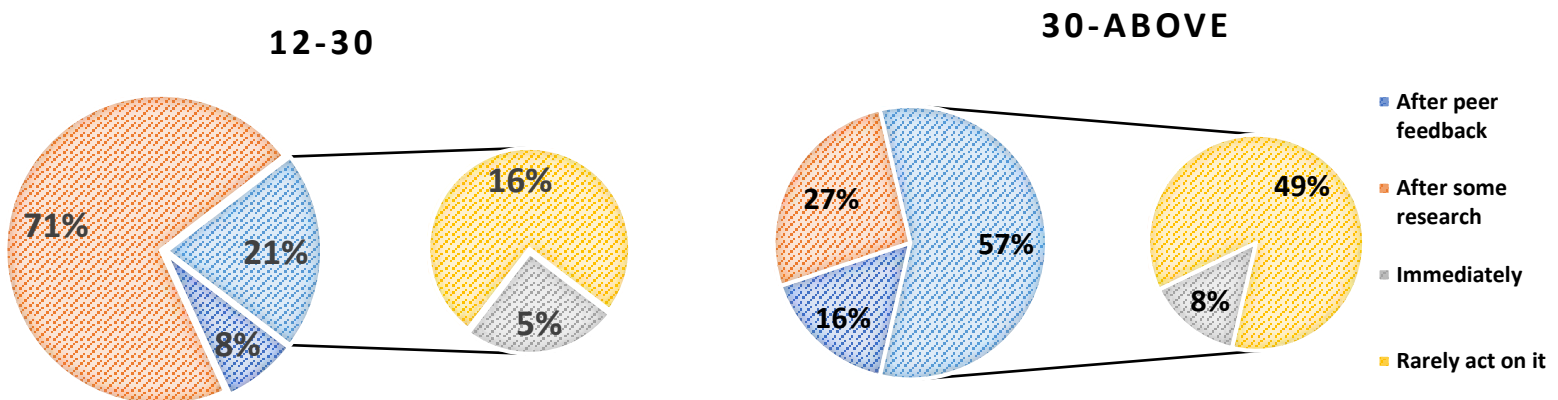
Despite having the fewest responders (12), the very frequently group has a comparatively high trust score (3.33). This shows that although fewer consumers continuously depend on influencers, those who do are more confident in influencer reputation and recommendations.

Thus, the graph shows a direct correlation between trust levels and the frequency of reliance on influencers. Complete avoidance is linked to poorer trust, whereas moderate and consistent interaction with influencer content is linked to higher trust. These results highlight how crucial credibility, openness, and moral behaviour are to influencer marketing in order to boost consumer trust and promote well-informed purchasing decisions.



Relationship Between Age Group and Purchase Decision Timing After Influencer Promotions

The chart shows how different age groups respond to influencer promotions in terms of the timing of their purchase



decisions. It contrasts two age groups—those between the ages of 12 and 30 and those over 30—and shows differences in how quickly or cautiously consumers respond to influencer marketing.

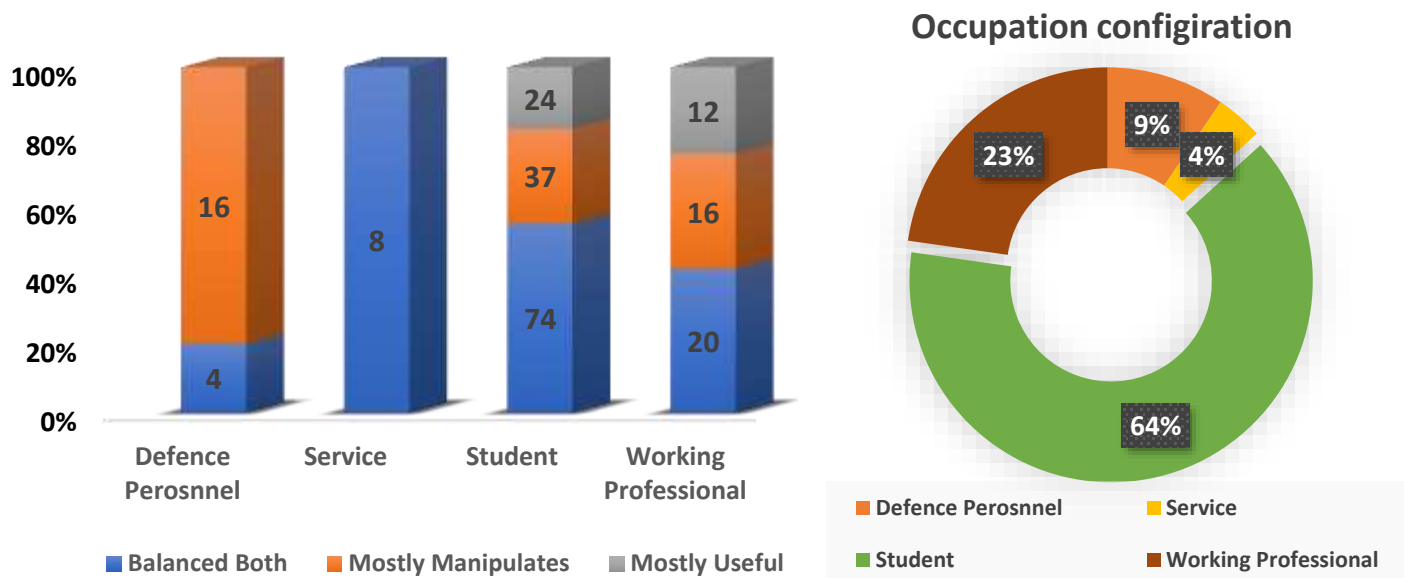
Among respondents aged 12–30, the majority (71%) prefer to make purchases after performing some research. This suggests that younger customers take a deliberate and critical approach before making a purchase, even though they are quite active on social media and frequently interact with influencers. They tend to compare product features, costs, and internet reviews before making final judgments. Furthermore, 21% of this age group responds to peer evaluation, demonstrating the significance of social validation from peers and online networks. Only 8% report making purchases immediately, demonstrating that impulsive shopping motivated entirely by influencers is quite limited.

Respondents above 30, on the other hand, exhibit a more cautious pattern. A considerable minority (49%) rarely act on influencer advertising, showing decreasing dependency on influencer marketing. Nonetheless, after doing some study, 27% still choose to buy, underscoring the need of making well-informed decisions in this demographic. Remarkably, 8% make quick purchases and 16% rely on peer reviews, indicating deliberate yet selective interaction with influencer content.

Overall, the results show that both age groups prioritize research and evaluation before making a purchase, even though younger customers are more open to influencer advertisements. Across all age groups, influencer marketing mostly promotes awareness and thoughtfulness rather than rash purchases.



Occupational Differences in Perceived Influence of Influencer Marketing



The

findings reveal clear **occupational differences** in perceptions of influencer marketing. Students form the largest respondent group (**64%**), followed by working professionals (**23%**), defence personnel (**9%**), and service employees (**4%**), indicating that younger and digitally active individuals dominate influencer exposure.

Perception-wise, most **students** view influencer marketing as **balanced** (**74**), while a notable share consider it **manipulative** (**37**) or **useful** (**24**), reflecting critical awareness. **Working professionals** show a similar but more cautious pattern, with **20** rating it balanced, **16** manipulative, and **12** useful. In contrast, **defence personnel** largely perceive influencer marketing as **manipulative** (**16**), with minimal balanced or positive responses, suggesting higher scepticism. Service employees show limited participation, leaning toward a balanced view (**8**).

Overall, students and working professionals demonstrate a more analytical and balanced perception, whereas defence personnel exhibit greater mistrust. These findings highlight the need for **occupation-specific influencer strategies** to improve credibility and effectiveness.

Hypothesis Testing:

Hypothesis₀: There is no significant relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying intentions.

To examine the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying intentions, a **Chi-Square Test of Independence** was employed. This statistical test is appropriate as both variables under study are **categorical in nature** and the objective is to assess whether an association exists between them.

Independent variable.

In this analysis, perceived impact of influencer marketing on purchase decisions (measured as *Agree* or *Disagree*)- (**Do you feel that influencer marketing impacts your purchase decisions more than traditional ads?**) was considered as the **independent variable**.

Dependent variable.

while **consumer buying intention**, represented by whether the respondent had ever purchased a product recommended by an influencer (Yes/No)- (**Have you ever purchased a product recommended by an influencer?**), was treated as the **dependent variable**.

The Chi-Square test helps determine whether consumers who perceive influencer marketing as impactful are more likely to translate this perception into actual purchase behaviour.

Observed table



Observed table	No	Yes	Grand Total
Agree	89	81	170
Disagree	28	0	28
Grand Total	117	81	198

Expected Frequency Formula

$$\text{Expected} = \frac{(\text{Row Total} \times \text{Column Total})}{\text{Grand Total}}$$

Expected Frequency Table

Expected frequency table	No	Yes	Grand Total
Agree	100	70	170
Disagree	17	11	28
Grand Total	117	81	198

At 5% significance level (0.05):

- $p < 0.05 \rightarrow$ Reject H_0
- $p \geq 0.05 \rightarrow$ Fail to reject H_0

Chi-Square Statistic: 20.90

Degrees of Freedom: 1

P-value: 0.00000483

The relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying intentions was examined using a **Chi-Square Test of Independence**.

The results of the analysis indicate that the Chi-Square statistic is $\chi^2 = 20.90$ with **1 degree of freedom**, and the associated **p-value is 4.83e-06**, which is significantly lower than the conventional **significance level of 0.05**.

This suggests that the variables are not independent of each other. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating **that there is no significant relationship between influencer marketing and consumer buying intentions** is rejected.

The findings provide strong statistical evidence that perceived influence of influencer marketing is **significantly associated** with consumers' likelihood of purchasing products recommended by influencers.

Hypothesis 2

H_0 : Exposure to influencer marketing does not significantly correlate with brand awareness, brand perception, and purchasing behaviour.

Statistical Technique Used

- **Logistic Regression**
- Selected because the dependent variable is **binary (Yes/No)**.
- Enables simultaneous examination of multiple explanatory variables related to exposure, awareness, and perception.

Statistical Technique Used



- **Binary Logistic Regression**
- Selected because the dependent variable is **binary (Yes/No)**.
- Enables simultaneous examination of multiple explanatory variables related to exposure, awareness, and perception.

Dependent Variable

- **Consumer Purchasing Behaviour**
 - Question: *Have you ever purchased a product recommended by an influencer?*
 - Measurement: Yes / No
 - Rationale: Represents **actual purchase behaviour**, providing a stronger behavioural measure than purchase intention.

Independent Variables

- **Exposure to Influencer Marketing**
 - Question: *Do you follow any social media influencers?*
 - Measurement: Yes / No
 - Rationale: Captures direct **exposure** to influencer-generated marketing content.
- **Brand Awareness Through Influencer Marketing**
 - Question: *Do you believe influencer marketing makes you aware of new brands/products faster than traditional advertisements?*
 - Measurement: Yes / No
 - Rationale: Measures the role of influencer marketing in **enhancing brand awareness**, a key marketing outcome.
- **Perceived Impact on Purchase Decisions**
 - Question: *Do you feel that influencer marketing impacts your purchase decisions more than traditional ads?*
 - Measurement: Agree / Disagree
 - Rationale: Reflects **consumer perception and persuasion**, indicating whether influencer marketing is viewed as influential in decision-making.

Logit Regression Results

	Consumer	Purchasing				
Dep. Variable:	Behaviour		No. Observations:	199		
Model	Logit		Df Residuals:	195		
Method	MLE		Df Model:	3		
Date	Sun, 1 Feb 2026		Pseudo R-squ.	0.2461		
Time:	15:32:59		Log-likelihood:	-101.66		
converged:	false		LL -Null	-134.84		
Covariance Type;	nonrobust		LLR p-value;	2.564e-14		
	coef	std err	z	P> z 	[0.025	0.975]



	-					
const	26.8675	6. 52e+04	0.000	1.000	-1.28e+5s	1.28e+05
Exposure	1.5241	0. 346	4.405	0.000	0. 846	2.202
Brand Awareness	1.1689	0.462	2.529	0.011	0. 263	2.075
Perceived Impact	24.966	6. 52e+04	0.000	1.000	1.28e+5s	1.28e+05

A binary logistic regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of exposure to influencer marketing on consumer purchasing behaviour. The model was estimated using 199 observations and was found to be statistically significant overall, as indicated by a likelihood ratio test (**LR p-value < 0.001**).

The results reveal that **exposure to influencer marketing**, measured by whether respondents follow social media influencers, has a positive and statistically significant effect on purchasing behaviour

Coefficient = **1.524**

p-value = **0.000**

Statistically significant at **5% level**

indicating that consumers exposed to influencer content are significantly more likely to purchase products recommended by influencers. Similarly, **brand awareness generated through influencer marketing** was found to have a significant positive influence on purchasing behaviour

Coefficient = **1.169**

p-value = **0.011**

Statistically significant at **5% level**, suggesting that influencer-driven awareness plays an important role in motivating consumer purchases.

However, **perceived impact of influencer marketing on purchase decisions** was not found to be statistically significant (**p = 1.000**), indicating that perceived influence alone does not independently predict purchasing behaviour when exposure and brand awareness are controlled for in the model.

Overall, the findings provide partial evidence against the null hypothesis, demonstrating that exposure to influencer marketing and brand awareness significantly influence consumer purchasing behaviour, while perceived impact does not exhibit a statistically **significant independent effect**. However, collectively the model is statistically significant, with an overall **p-value of 2.56e-14**.

Findings and Conclusion

The study examined the impact of influencer marketing on consumer purchasing behaviour by analysing decision-making patterns, exposure levels, trust, brand awareness, and demographic factors. The results indicate that influencer marketing significantly affects consumer behaviour, though its impact is primarily indirect and informational rather than purely emotional or impulsive.

Young consumers, particularly those aged 18–30, were found to be the most engaged and responsive to influencer content, whereas older consumers relied more on traditional sources and established brand credibility. Gender differences were evident, with female respondents showing higher engagement with lifestyle, fashion, and beauty influencers, while male consumers adopted a more rational and research-oriented approach before purchasing. Occupational analysis revealed that students were the most influenced segment, followed by working professionals, whereas other groups showed comparatively lower responsiveness.

Platform-wise, Instagram emerged as the most effective medium for influencer engagement, followed by YouTube for detailed reviews and tutorials, while Facebook showed limited impact. Although trust and credibility positively shaped brand perceptions, trust alone did not directly translate into purchases. Factors such as price sensitivity, personal needs, and product relevance acted as key moderators between trust and buying action. Most consumers preferred additional



research and peer reviews before purchasing, suggesting that influencer marketing mainly affects the awareness and consideration stages rather than immediate conversion.

Brand loyalty analysis showed that exposure to influencer content encourages product trials and brand switching, especially in fashion, lifestyle, fitness, and technology categories, where demonstrations, reviews, and discounts drive decisions more than emotional storytelling. Statistical tests further confirmed these relationships. The Chi-square test rejected the null hypothesis, indicating a significant association between influencer marketing and purchase intentions, while logistic regression analysis showed that exposure and brand awareness significantly increase the likelihood of purchase behaviour.

Overall, the study concludes that influencer marketing is an effective contemporary marketing strategy that shapes consumer behaviour by enhancing awareness, trust, and engagement. However, consumers remain rational and information-driven, combining influencer recommendations with independent evaluation. The effectiveness of influencer marketing varies across demographic segments and product categories, and its success depends on authenticity, credibility, consistent exposure, and strategic alignment with consumer needs. When implemented ethically and strategically, influencer marketing complements traditional advertising and contributes to both short-term sales and long-term brand equity.

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