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EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary digital landscape, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful strategy for brands to establish connections and engage with their intended audiences. Social media influencers have a considerable impact on consumer behaviour, attributed to their perceived authenticity and strong engagement with followers. This article analyses the effects of influencer marketing on consumers' purchase intention. It clarifies the processes through which influencers build trust, encourage engagement, and influence consumers' buying decisions. Comprehending this relationship allows organisations to customise their digital marketing strategies to effectively convert followers into customers. This research investigates the influence of influencer marketing on the purchase intention of consumers in Chennai. A sample of 160 respondents actively engaged in social media in Chennai was selected for the study, which is descriptive in nature. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection, and a convenience sampling approach was adopted to select the respondents. Multiple regression analysis and one-way ANOVA were employed as the statistical techniques. The instrument demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.847. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 25. The findings suggest that Reach, Engagement Metrics, and Relevance play a significant role in shaping consumers' purchase intention. Among these factors, Reach exerts the greatest influence, underscoring the importance of an influencer's visibility and audience size. In contrast, Influencer Credibility and Content Style do not have a statistically significant effect on purchase intention in the context of this study. The findings also indicate that respondents' responses to influencer marketing differ significantly across age and occupation groups, with respondents in the 15–25 years age group and students recording comparatively higher mean responses.

Keywords: Influencer marketing, Customer purchase intention, Social media, Digital marketing, Buying decision

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I. INTRODUCTION

As digital platforms have evolved, marketing has shifted from traditional tactics to more interactive and personalised approaches. Influencer marketing represents a dynamic approach in which individuals possessing significant online followings promote businesses or services. These influencers often exhibit a high degree of trust and relatability, making their endorsements impactful in shaping consumer preferences. The essence of achieving success in marketing lies in understanding the customer's intention to purchase, which reflects the likelihood that a consumer will acquire a product after being exposed to promotional content. This article aims to examine the impact of marketing strategies utilised by influencers on consumer purchasing intentions and to explore the psychological and behavioural factors that drive conversions.

II. INFLUENCER MARKETING

Influencer marketing refers to the collaboration between brands and individuals who have the ability to sway purchasing decisions due to their authority, expertise, status, or connection with their audience. These individuals may be well-known figures, content producers, online writers, or experts in specific fields who engage actively with their audience on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter).

Key features of influencer marketing

- **Authenticity and Trust:** Influencers often share personal experiences, which bolsters the credibility of their recommendations.
- **Engagement:** Bidirectional contact allows influencers to forge deep connections with their audience.
- **Niche Targeting:** Brands have the potential to connect with specific audience segments through relevant influencers.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Influencer initiatives may present a more cost-effective alternative to conventional advertising methods, potentially yielding a greater return on investment.

Factors Influencing Influencer Marketing Effectiveness on Customer Purchase Intention

Influencer Credibility

It encompasses the qualities of competence, trustworthiness, and sincerity. Consumers tend to exhibit a greater level of trust and responsiveness toward recommendations from influencers whom they perceive as genuine and knowledgeable.

Appeal of the Influencer

Physical appearance, attitude, and lifestyle have the potential to shape consumer perception. Influencers who possess appealing qualities often garner increased attention and engagement, thereby enhancing their ability to persuade.

Pertinence to the Intended Audience

The influencer should be in harmony with the interests, values, and lifestyle of the intended demographic. Improved alignment between the audience and influencer cultivates trust and relatability.

Material Quality and Presentation

High-quality images, effective narrative techniques, and innovative materials significantly enhance brand perception. Compelling, visually appealing content has the potential to significantly boost user engagement and influence purchasing decisions.

Engagement Rate

The metrics of likes, comments, shares, and direct interactions serve as indicators of audience trust and interest. Heightened engagement often leads to a more pronounced impact on the decisions of followers.

Frequency and Consistency

Consistent and regular promotion fosters familiarity with the product and strengthens brand identity. Excessive advertising, however, may undermine authenticity.

Utilised Platforms

Different platforms, such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook, yield varying results based on the target demographic. Content strategies tailored to specific platforms influence both reach and effectiveness.

Product-Influencer Alignment

The promoted product should align harmoniously with the influencer's personal brand. Misaligned promotions can seem disingenuous or forced, leading to a decrease in trust.

Endorsement Type

Explicit versus Subtle Promotion: Subtle integrations generally present themselves as more organic and persuasive. Sponsored Tags: Transparency has the potential to bolster trust; however, an overabundance of it might lead to a decrease in perceived authenticity.

Consumer's Prior Experience and Brand Familiarity

Prior familiarity or engagement with the brand could impact the efficacy of the influencer's communication. Prominent companies endorsed by well-respected influencers significantly bolster credibility.

Social evidence

Testimonials, user evaluations, and follower comments function as forms of social evidence, influencing the purchasing decisions of others. The affirmative reactions of others may reinforce a consumer's intentions.

III. CUSTOMER PURCHASE INTENTION

Customer purchase intention represents a psychological state that indicates a consumer's readiness or likelihood to obtain a particular product or service. This intention is influenced by various factors, including:

- Understanding of product attributes and features
- Assessment of value and quality
- Brand perception
- Social impact and peer evaluations
- Emotional engagement

Influencer marketing utilises various components: enhancing brand visibility, reinforcing perception through trustworthy individuals, and consolidating buying behaviour via social endorsement.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hisashi Masuda and colleagues (2022) presented a model based on persuasion theory to investigate the parasocial relationship (PSR) between social media influencers and their followers. The findings indicated that PSR had a significant positive influence on purchase intentions. Factors such as attitude homophily, physical attractiveness, and social attractiveness contributed to PSR formation, which in turn affected consumers' purchase intentions. Lie Ao et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis of 62 studies involving over 22,000 participants to examine how social media influencer characteristics affect customer engagement and purchase intention. The study identified eight key characteristics—homophily, expertise, trustworthiness, credibility, product congruence, entertainment value, informative value, and attractiveness—as important factors influencing consumer responses. Entertainment value showed the strongest relationship with customer engagement, while credibility had the strongest relationship with purchase intention. Xin Zhao and colleagues (2024) examined the relationship between influencer characteristics and customer purchase intention in

livestreaming e-commerce in China. The findings showed that influencer credibility and attractiveness significantly and positively influenced purchase intention, while brand attitude mediated the relationship between influencer interactivity and purchase intention. However, professionalism did not significantly influence brand attitude or purchase intention. Mukta Garg and Apurva Bakshi (2024) examined the impact of beauty vloggers' credible attributes, parasocial interaction, and trust on consumer purchase intention in the Indian context. Based on responses from 357 social media users, the findings showed that credible influencer attributes significantly influenced consumer behaviour. Trust partially mediated the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention, highlighting the importance of credibility, trust, and parasocial interaction in influencer marketing. Divyaditya Singh (2024) investigated the effects of influencer marketing on the purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers in India, focusing on trust and authenticity. The study found that exposure to influencer content alone did not significantly enhance purchasing behaviour, while trust had a strong positive relationship with purchase frequency. Authenticity contributed to building trust and shaping consumers' purchasing decisions, highlighting the importance of genuine influencer communication. Meizhi Pan and colleagues (2025) conducted a meta-analysis involving 1,531 effect sizes from 251 studies to assess influencer marketing effectiveness using persuasion knowledge theory. The study examined post attributes, follower characteristics, and influencer characteristics and their effects on consumer attitudes, engagement, purchase intentions, purchasing behaviour, and sales outcomes. The findings showed that informational and hedonic post attributes significantly influenced purchase intention, while follower social identity had a stronger impact on attitudes and engagement. Influencer communication also influenced actual purchase behaviour, with social media type and product type moderating influencer marketing effectiveness. Radhika Mahajan and Tasshvi Garg (2026) investigated the impact of influencer marketing on consumer purchase intentions in the Indian context. The study examined influencer credibility, attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and content authenticity. The findings highlighted the growing importance of influencer marketing in India's social media landscape and the influence of influencer traits and authentic content on consumer responses. The study is relevant to the present research as it examines influencer marketing and purchase intention among Indian consumers. Kodiarasi Muthulingam and Nixon Amirtharaj (2026) investigated influencer marketing and the purchase intentions of Generation Z using a structural equation modelling approach. The study examined influencer characteristics, consumer engagement, trust, and content-related factors in relation to purchase intention. The findings highlighted the significance of influencer attributes, trust, and consumer engagement in shaping purchase intention. The study is relevant to the present research as it provides recent evidence on influencer marketing and purchase intention among social media users.

Despite the increasing prevalence of influencer marketing, uncertainty remains regarding the significance of different influencer-related factors in influencing consumers' purchase intentions. Previous studies have highlighted factors such as credibility, trust, authenticity, attractiveness, engagement, content characteristics, and parasocial relationships. However,

findings vary across consumer segments, social media platforms, product categories, and regional contexts. Consequently, this study focuses on Reach, Engagement Metrics, Relevance, Influencer Credibility, and Content Style to examine their impact on customer purchase intention among consumers in Chennai.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To investigate the impact of influencer marketing on customer purchase intention.
2. To examine the influence of demographic variables on influencer marketing.

VI. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

$H_0$1: There is no significant impact of Influencer marketing on Purchase Intention

$H_0$2: There is no significant influence of demographic variables on Influencer marketing

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research investigates the effects of influencer marketing on the purchasing intentions of consumers in Chennai. A sample of 160 respondents actively engaged on social media in Chennai was selected for this descriptive study. A questionnaire served as the tool for data collection, and a convenience sampling method was utilised to choose the respondents. The questionnaire is structured into three distinct sections. The initial section focuses on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The subsequent sections incorporate scales that pertain to influencer marketing and purchase intention, respectively. Multiple regression analysis is utilised to assess the influence of influencer marketing on purchase intention. One-way ANOVA is employed to evaluate the impact of demographic variables on purchase intention. Cronbach's alpha serves as a metric for evaluating the reliability of the research instrument. SPSS Version 25 is employed for the analysis of data.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section outlines the characteristics of the respondents and examines the effects of influencer marketing on purchase intention, as well as the influence of demographic variables on influencer marketing.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Particulars	Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	73	45.6
	Female	87	54.4
Age (in years)	15 – 25	47	29.4
	26 – 35	57	35.6
	36 – 45	23	14.4
	46 – 55	17	10.6

	Above 55	16	10
Education	High School	15	9.4
	UG	62	38.8
	PG	43	26.9
	Professional	31	19.4
	others	9	5.6
Occupation	Student	39	24.4
	Employed	69	43.1
	Business	16	10
	Professional	21	13.1
	Home Maker	15	9.4
Monthly Income	Less than Rs 30,000	25	15.6
	Rs.30,000 – Rs.50,000	42	26.3
	Rs.50,000 – Rs.80,000	29	18.1
	Rs.80,000 – Rs.1,00,000	27	16.9
	Above Rs.1,00,000	37	23.1
Source: Primary data			

The analysis indicates that 54.4% of the respondents are female, whereas 45.6% are male. The predominant group of respondents consists of young adults, with 35.6% belonging to the 26–35 years age group, followed by 29.4% in the 15–25 years age group. This indicates that a substantial proportion of respondents are younger social media users who are likely to engage with influencer-driven content and digital marketing trends. Regarding educational qualification, 38.8% of the respondents are graduates (UG), followed by 26.9% who have completed post-graduation. A smaller proportion of respondents have professional qualifications (19.4%), while 9.4% have studied up to the high school level and 5.6% fall under the others category.

The respondents exhibit a varied occupational background, with 43.1% being employed, while students comprise 24.4% of the sample. A smaller proportion consists of professionals at 13.1%, while business respondents and homemakers represent 10.0% and 9.4%, respectively. This indicates that the respondents belong to diverse occupational groups, providing varied perspectives for examining consumer responses to influencer marketing.

The monthly income distribution among the respondents also exhibits diversity, with 26.3% earning between ₹30,000 and ₹50,000, followed by 23.1% earning above ₹1,00,000. A further 18.1% of respondents earn between ₹50,000 and ₹80,000, while 16.9% earn between ₹80,000 and ₹1,00,000. The remaining 15.6% earn less than ₹30,000 per month. These figures indicate that the respondents represent different income groups, providing a varied economic profile for examining customer purchase intention in the context of influencer marketing.

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Impact of Influencer marketing on Purchase Intention

In this section, an exploration is conducted to analyse the impact of various Influencer marketing factors on Purchase Intention. Multiple regression analysis has been conducted to assess the influence of the independent variables: Credibility of Influencer, Engagement Metrics, Relevance, Content Style, and Reach on the dependent variable: Purchase Intention. The findings of the regression analysis are presented in Table-2.

$H_0$1: There is no significant impact of Influencer marketing on Purchase Intention

Table 2: Impact of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Intention

Independent Variables	R^2	Beta	F-statistics	t- value	p- value	VIF
(Constant)	0.482	1.097		7.006**	.000	
Credibility of Influencer	**Adjusted R^2**	0.053		1.125	.271	1.506
Engagement metrics		0.17	**45.989****	3.489**	.001	1.591
Relevance	0.473	0.125	**(p=.000)**	2.293*	.024	2.074
Content style		0.072		1.519	.120	1.805
Reach		0.275		6.077**	.000	1.693
* Significant at 5% level ** Significant at 1% level						

Analysis of the data presented in the table reveals that the F-statistic value of 45.989 is significant at the 1% level (p = .000), suggesting that the overall regression model demonstrates statistical significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis ($H_0$1) is dismissed, indicating that the variables associated with influencer marketing exert a significant influence on Purchase Intention.

The R^2 value of 0.482 indicates that 48.2% of the variance in Purchase Intention can be accounted for by the independent variables. The Adjusted R^2 value of 0.473 suggests a satisfactory alignment of the regression model with the observed data. Among the five independent variables, Reach demonstrates the most substantial positive and statistically significant influence on Purchase Intention, with a coefficient of β = 0.275 and a p-value of .000. Engagement Metrics (β = 0.170, p = .001) and Relevance (β = 0.125, p = .024) demonstrate a statistically significant positive effect. However, the findings indicate that the Credibility of Influencer (β = 0.053, p = .271) and Content Style (β = 0.072, p = .120) are not statistically significant. This suggests that these factors do not exert a significant direct effect on consumers' Purchase Intention in this study. All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are below the threshold of 5, suggesting that there is no significant multicollinearity present among the independent variables.

The findings demonstrate that Reach, Engagement Metrics, and Relevance play a crucial role in shaping consumers' Purchase Intention. Among these variables, Reach exerts the most significant influence, underscoring the critical role of an influencer's visibility and audience size in determining consumer purchase intention. In contrast, the findings indicate that the

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Credibility of Influencer and Content Style do not exert a statistically significant influence on Purchase Intention within the scope of this study.

Influence of demographic variables on Influencer Marketing

This section examines the impact of demographic variables, including gender, age, education, marital status, occupation, and income, on influencer marketing, with a focus on how these factors shape consumer responses to influencer promotions.

$H_0$2: There is no significant influence of demographic variables on Influencer marketing.

Table 3: Influence of Demographic Variables on Influencer Marketing

	Classification	Mean	S D	F-value
Gender	Male	3.07	0.715	**1.140 (p=.281)**
	Female	3.16	0.633	
Age Group (in years)	15–25	3.33	0.526	**3.314* (p=.027)**
	26–35	3.13	0.667	
	36–45	3.2	0.664	
	46–55	2.84	0.711	
	Above 55	3.27	0.656	
Education	High School	3.24	0.579	**0.401 (p=.752)**
	UG	3.08	0.58	
	PG	3.13	0.738	
	Professional	3.12	0.650	
	Others	3.19	0.787	
Occupation	Student	3.25	0.693	**3.516* (p=.014)**
	Employed	2.81	0.781	
	Business	3.09	0.621	
	Professional	3.01	0.738	
	Home Maker	3.02	0.547	
Monthly Income	Less than Rs 30,000	3.21	0.685	**1.718 (p=.163)**
	Rs.30,000–Rs.50,000	3.14	0.556	
	Rs.50,000–Rs.80,000	2.99	0.779	
	Rs.80,000–Rs.1,00,000	2.97	0.763	
	Above Rs.1,00,000	2.85	0.743	

* Significant at 5% level

A significant difference in responses to influencer marketing is not evident based on gender (F = 1.140, p = 0.281), suggesting that male and female respondents exhibit comparatively similar responses to influencer marketing. Respondents in the 15–25 years age group have the highest response to influencer marketing (Mean = 3.33), followed by those above 55 years (Mean = 3.27). The difference between age groups is statistically significant (F = 3.314, p = 0.027), indicating that respondents' responses to influencer marketing differ significantly across age

groups. Respondents in the 46–55 years age group have the lowest response (Mean = 2.84). No significant difference in responses according to educational qualification is observed (F = 0.401, p = 0.752), suggesting that educational background does not significantly affect respondents' responses to influencer marketing. Students show the highest response to influencer marketing (Mean = 3.25) compared to the other occupational categories, while Employed respondents show the lowest response (Mean = 2.81). The difference between occupational groups is statistically significant (F = 3.516, p = 0.014), indicating that respondents' responses to influencer marketing differ significantly across occupational groups. Respondents earning less than Rs. 30,000 have the highest response to influencer marketing (Mean = 3.21), followed by those earning Rs. 30,000–Rs. 50,000 (Mean = 3.14). Respondents earning above Rs. 1,00,000 have the lowest response (Mean = 2.85). However, the difference in responses across monthly income groups is not statistically significant (F = 1.718, p = 0.163), indicating that monthly income does not significantly differentiate respondents' responses to influencer marketing.

IX. CONCLUSION

Influencer marketing has emerged as a crucial component in contemporary marketing, significantly shaping consumer perceptions and buying behaviours. This article's assessment and analysis indicate that the traits of influencers, such as credibility, attractiveness, engagement, and content relevance, play a crucial role in shaping customer persuasion and purchasing choices. Social media platforms have significantly increased the visibility of influencers and altered the dynamics of brand interaction with their intended audience. Despite its recognised potential, challenges including authenticity, market saturation, and the evaluation of return on investment remain pressing issues for marketers. The findings suggest that Reach, Engagement Metrics, and Relevance play a crucial role in shaping consumers' Purchase Intention. Among them, Reach demonstrates the most significant influence, underscoring the critical role of an influencer's visibility and the size of their audience. On the other hand, the credibility of the influencer and the style of the content do not exhibit a statistically significant impact on purchase intention within this context. Age and occupation play a crucial role in influencer marketing, with younger respondents, particularly students, showing a greater susceptibility to its effects. To improve the outcomes of influencer marketing, organisations should carefully select influencers whose values align with their brand identity and who can genuinely connect with their audiences. Future investigations and practical applications should focus on improving campaign methodologies by considering the dynamics of platforms, the nature of product categories, and the evolving expectations of consumers. When executed with a strategic approach, influencer marketing can serve as a highly effective tool for boosting customer engagement and elevating purchase intention.

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