

Influencer Marketing's Effect on Purchase Intentions: A Cross-Generational Analysis

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To Cite this Article

Kirthiga B, Yuvasree D, Vaishnavi D” **Influencer Marketing's Effect on Purchase Intentions: A Cross-Generational Analysis**” *Musik In Bayern, Vol. 90, Issue 3, Mar 2025, pp212-219*

Article Info

Received: 31-01-2025 Revised: 09-03-2025 Accepted: 20-03-2025 Published: 31-03-2025

Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of influencer marketing on purchase intentions across different generational groups. By analyzing data from a sample of 200 respondents in Chennai, the research evaluates the role of influencer trust, social media platforms, and generational differences in purchase decisions. The findings reveal that younger consumers (18-25 years) are the most influenced, while older generations show a declining impact. Price and product quality are identified as primary factors driving purchase intent, while trust in influencers plays a significant role. The study provides insights for brands to tailor their influencer marketing strategies effectively.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Purchase Intent, Generational Differences, Social Media, Trust, Consumer Behavior.

Introduction

Influencer marketing has become a dominant force in shaping consumer behavior, especially among digital-native generations. Social media influencers play a crucial role in modern marketing strategies, as their credibility and engagement with audiences directly impact purchase intentions. While past studies have explored the influence of social media marketing, there is limited research on how this impact varies across different generational groups. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the effectiveness of influencer marketing in influencing purchase decisions among various age demographics.

Objectives

1. To compare the effectiveness of Influencer Marketing among various generations.
2. To assess the role of trust in Influencers on purchase intent across generations.
3. To explore the impact of social media platforms on purchase intent of across generations.

Need for the study

The increasing reliance on social media for product recommendations has made influencer marketing a critical tool for businesses. However, its effectiveness is not uniform across different age groups. Understanding how different generations respond to influencer marketing can help brands develop targeted strategies that resonate with their intended audiences. This study is essential for marketers seeking to optimize their influencer collaborations and maximize engagement among various consumer segments.

Research Methodology

Sample size: 200

Data collection: Primary data: Questionnaire

Nature of study: Exploratory research

Sampling Method: Simple Random Sampling Method

Area of Study: Chennai

Review of literature

Daud and Basbeth (2022) investigated the impact of Instagram influencer marketing on purchase decisions among followers in Indonesia, using a sample of 774 respondents. The study finds that influencer attributes like credibility, attractiveness, and content quality significantly influence consumer behavior. It highlights the role of trust in influencer-follower relationships and the importance of aligning influencer values with audience preferences. While the large sample size strengthens the findings, the study's focus on Indonesia may limit the generalizability to other cultural contexts.

Meglaj and Zafar (2022) examined the impact of social media influencers on the purchase intentions of tech gadgets among Gen Z and Gen Y in Sweden. Using a quantitative research design, the study collected 217 responses and found that influencer credibility, expertise, and engaging content are key drivers of purchase intentions. Gen Z was more influenced by visually interactive content, while Gen Y placed greater importance on reliability and trustworthiness. These findings offer valuable guidance for tech brands seeking to effectively engage with these distinct generational groups through tailored influencer strategies. While the study provides useful insights, the focus on Sweden may limit its applicability to other cultural contexts.

Daimi and Tolunay (2021) examined the influence of content-related, follower-related, and influencer-related factors on consumers' purchase intentions in influencer marketing, with a sample size of 346 respondents. Published in the 'Istanbul Management Journal', the study reveals that the quality and relevance of content, follower engagement and trust, and influencer credibility all play significant roles in shaping purchase intentions. The research emphasizes the importance of aligning influencer characteristics and content with the preferences of followers to effectively drive consumer behavior. While the study provides valuable insights into influencer marketing dynamics, its findings are based on a single market and may benefit from cross-cultural comparisons to enhance generalizability.

Lou and Yuan (2019) explore how message value and influencer credibility impact consumer trust in branded content on social media. Published in the 'Journal of Interactive Advertising', the study finds that both the perceived value of the message and the credibility of the influencer play crucial roles in building consumer trust. Higher message value and influencer credibility lead to stronger trust, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of branded content. The research

emphasizes the importance of aligning influencer content with consumer interests to foster trust and drive engagement.

Lim et al. (2017) examined how social media influencers affect purchase intentions by focusing on attributes like credibility, attractiveness, and relatability. Published in the ‘Asian Journal of Business Research’, the study finds that these factors influence customer attitudes, which in turn drive purchase decisions. Based on data from 200 respondents and analyzed using PLS-SEM, the research emphasizes the importance of trust and relatability in influencer marketing. While providing valuable insights, the study’s use of purposive sampling and a small sample size may limit its broader applicability.

Data analysis and interpretation

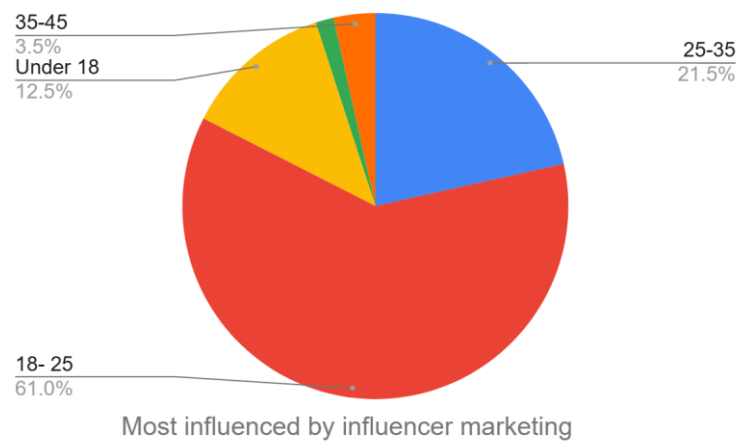
Percentage analysis

Demographic profile of the respondents

Category	Subcategory	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 18	27	13.50%
	18-25	126	63.00%
	25-35	24	12.00%
	35-45	18	9.00%
	Above 45	5	2.50%
Gender	Male	60	30.00%
	Female	140	70.00%
Education	High School	51	25.50%
	Undergraduate	124	62.00%
	Postgraduate	24	12.00%
	Doctorate	1	0.50%
Current Occupation	Student	138	69.00%
	Working Professional	41	20.50%
	Homemaker	15	7.50%
	Self-Employed	6	3.00%
	Urban	142	71.00%

Residential Area	Rural	34	17.00%
	Semi-Urban	24	12.00%
Monthly Income	Less than 10,000	134	67.00%
	10,000-30,000	37	18.50%
	30,000-60,000	23	11.50%
	60,000-90,000	5	2.50%

MOST INFLUENCED AGE GROUP



Interpretation

The pie chart illustrates the impact of influencer marketing across different age groups. The 18-25 age group is the most influenced, accounting for 61.0% of the total, indicating that young adults are the primary audience for influencer-driven promotions. The 25-35 age group follows at 21.5%, showing a moderate level of influence. The under-18 category represents 12.5%, suggesting that teenagers are also significantly impacted by influencer marketing. In contrast, the 35-45 age group accounts for only 3.5%, highlighting that older individuals are far less influenced by this form of marketing. Overall, the data suggests that influencer marketing is most effective among younger audiences, particularly those in their late teens and early twenties.

Garrett Ranking

Factors	Total Score	Garrett Mean Score	Rank
Price of the product	12485	65.02	1
Product quality	11375	59.24	2
Influence of the post itself	9290	48.38	3
Personal need for the product	8445	43.98	4
Trust in the brand	6405	33.35	5

Interpretation

The Garrett ranking analysis indicates that price of the product is the most influential factor in purchase decisions influenced by social media, with the highest mean score (65.02). Product quality follows closely, suggesting that consumers prioritize both affordability and value before making a purchase. The influence of the post itself ranks third, showing that while social media content plays a role, it is not the primary determinant. Personal need for the product comes next, indicating that consumers assess necessity before buying. Surprisingly, trust in the brand ranks lowest, suggesting that while brand reputation matters, it is less critical than price, quality, and persuasive social media content. These insights highlight the importance of competitive pricing, product quality, and well-crafted influencer content in driving purchase intent.

Major Findings

- The 18-25 age group is the most influenced by influencer marketing, accounting for 61.0% of the total respondents.
- The 25-35 age group follows at 21.5%, while the influence on individuals above 35 is significantly lower.
- Price (mean score: 65.02) and product quality (59.24) are the most critical factors influencing purchase decisions.
- Trust in influencers plays a significant role in shaping purchase intentions, particularly among younger consumers.
- Social media platforms serve as key channels for influencing buying behavior, with Instagram and YouTube being the most preferred.

- The under-18 category also exhibits a considerable level of influence (12.5%), indicating that teenagers are actively engaging with influencer content and making purchase decisions accordingly.
- The 35-45 age group accounts for only 3.5%, highlighting a steep decline in influencer marketing effectiveness as age increases.
- Garrett ranking analysis indicates that price and product quality outweigh trust in the brand, meaning that consumers are more likely to prioritize affordability and value over brand reputation.
- Visual and engaging content significantly affects purchase behavior among Gen Z, while Gen Y prefers informative and trustworthy endorsements.
- Consumers are more likely to purchase when influencers align with their values and interests, reinforcing the need for brands to choose influencers carefully.

Suggestions

- Brands should create influencer campaigns tailored to specific age groups, emphasizing interactive and visually appealing content for Gen Z and reliability-based content for older consumers.
- Influencers should focus on authenticity, transparency, and credibility to enhance trust among their followers.
- Companies should leverage social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube, which have the highest engagement rates.
- Marketing strategies should highlight competitive pricing and superior product quality, as these are key purchase drivers.
- A hybrid approach involving micro and macro influencers can help brands appeal to both younger and older demographics.

Conclusion

Influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool in shaping consumer purchase intentions, with younger generations being the most susceptible. While influencer credibility and social

media engagement play significant roles, price and product quality remain the primary determinants of purchase decisions. Brands must adopt a strategic approach to influencer collaborations, focusing on trust-building and tailored content to maximize marketing effectiveness. By understanding generational differences, companies can refine their influencer marketing strategies to drive better engagement and higher conversion rates.

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