A Study on the Effectiveness of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Mindset

Sakshi Kshirsagar[1], Sakshi Pandit Tilbile[2]

[1](MBA 1st Year) (sakshikshirsagar255@gmail.com)
[2](MBA 1st Year) (tilbilesakshipandit15@gmail.com)
(College Name- ASM IBMR Pune)

Abstract:

Influencer marketing has become a potent tool for organisations looking to engage with consumers in the digital era. The purpose of this study is to investigate how well influencer marketing changes the attitudes and actions of consumers. The study provides insight into how brands may use social media influencers to their full potential by examining consumer perceptions, trust levels, and purchase intentions. Influencer marketing has a major impact on consumer trust, brand impression, and purchase decisions, according to data gathered using a structured questionnaire.

Introduction

Traditional marketing has changed as a result of social media's emergence. The views and recommendations of influencers—people who have built reputation and a sizable following on social media sites like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok—have a greater and greater impact on consumers today. Influencers interact directly with their fans, unlike traditional celebrities, which builds relatability and trust. This essay investigates the ways in which consumer mindset is impacted by influencer marketing, affecting attitudes, perceptions, and eventually, buying behaviour.

Social media's ascent has changed how companies interact with their target markets. Digital marketing tactics that emphasise interaction and two-way communication have complemented—and in some cases even supplanted—traditional advertising techniques like print media and television ads. Influencer marketing has become one of these tactics' most effective means of connecting with customers in a genuine and approachable manner.

Partnerships between brands and people who have built credibility, trust, and a sizable following in a certain field are known as influencer marketing. By using their content to influence consumer views and purchase behaviour, these influencers serve as opinion leaders. Influencers now operate and have an impact on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and even LinkedIn.

Influencer marketing is frequently seen as more authentic and intimate than celebrity endorsements. Influencers' recommendations are more convincing to followers since they are perceived as reliable peers rather than far-off celebrities. Consumer perceptions of brands are greatly influenced by the emotional bond that exists between influencers and their audiences.

Furthermore, younger generations like Millennials and Generation Z are increasingly depending on digital material, which has increased the efficacy of influencer marketing. Influencers are in a unique position to provide the relatability, authenticity, and transparency that consumers increasingly demand in brand communications.

Literature Review

Influencer marketing has been widely discussed in recent literature.
- Influencers were first defined by **Freberg et al. (2011)** as "a new type of independent third party who shapes audience attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media."
- According to **De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017)**, influencers with a larger following were thought to be more reputable but not always more likeable.
- According to **Lou and Yuan (2019)**, influencer relatability, attractiveness, and credibility are important determinants of consumer trust and buy intentions.
- **Djafarova and Rushworth (2017)** pointed out that non-celebrity influencers have a bigger impact because of their perceived genuineness, particularly among younger customers.

Existing studies conclude that authenticity, credibility, and personal connection are key drivers in how influencers affect consumer mindset.

Research Methodology

Research Objective:

- **To assess** the level of consumer engagement with influencer content across different social media platforms.
- **To evaluate** the extent of consumer trust in product recommendations made by influencers.
- **To analyze** the factors (e.g., authenticity, expertise, relatability) that contribute to building trust toward influencers.
- **To examine** the impact of influencer marketing on consumers' brand perceptions and purchase intentions.
- **To identify** how demographic factors (such as age, gender, and platform preference) influence the effectiveness of influencer marketing.

Research Design:

Type of Research: Using a quantitative research methodology, this study seeks to identify trends and connections between influencer marketing and consumer behaviour by gathering numerical data that can be statistically examined.

Research Nature: The study is both descriptive and analytical. Descriptive, as it aims to explain the state of consumer interactions with influencer marketing at the moment. Analytical, as it makes an effort to decipher and clarify the ways in which influencers affect customer behaviour.

Sampling Technique: Practicality Sampling was used because it was affordable and accessible. The selection of respondents was based on their willingness to engage and their active use of social media sites.

Sample Size and Target Population: With a focus on social media users between the ages of 18 and 35, who are the most engaged on sites like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, the study gathered responses from 100 participants.

Data Collection Instrument: The main instrument utilised to gather data was a structured questionnaire. To guarantee clarity, uniformity, and ease of analysis, the questionnaire included closed-ended questions.

Data Analysis: The collected data were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics (percentages and frequency distributions) to interpret consumer behavior patterns and perceptions.

Data Collection

1.   **How often do you engage with content from social media influencers?**

| Particular	Respondent	Percentage
Very Often	20	20%
Often	30	30%
Occasionally	10	10%
Rarely	25	25%
Never	25	25%
Total	**100**	**100%**
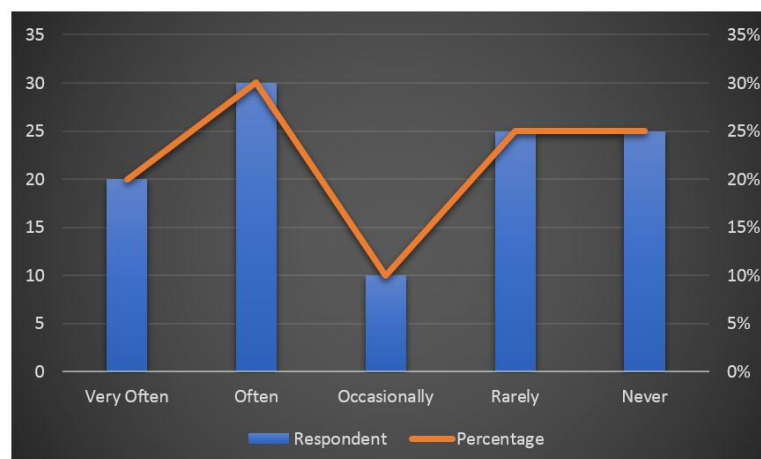
Interpretation

According to the survey, 50% of participants actively interact with influencer content (Very Often + Often), demonstrating a high degree of engagement. A moderate level of interest is indicated by the 10% of people who only rarely participate. The audience was divided, as evidenced by the 50% who claimed little to no interaction (Rarely + Never). The largest group (30%) interacts "Often," emphasising the consistent visibility of influencers. The 25% who "Never" engage, however, indicate that a sizable portion of the market is still unaffected by influencers. In general, consumers engage with influencer material to a considerable but not universal degree.

2. **Do you trust product recommendations made by influencers?**

| Particular	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	40	40%
Agree	10	10%
Neutral	30	30%
Disagree	20	20%
Total	**100**	**100%**
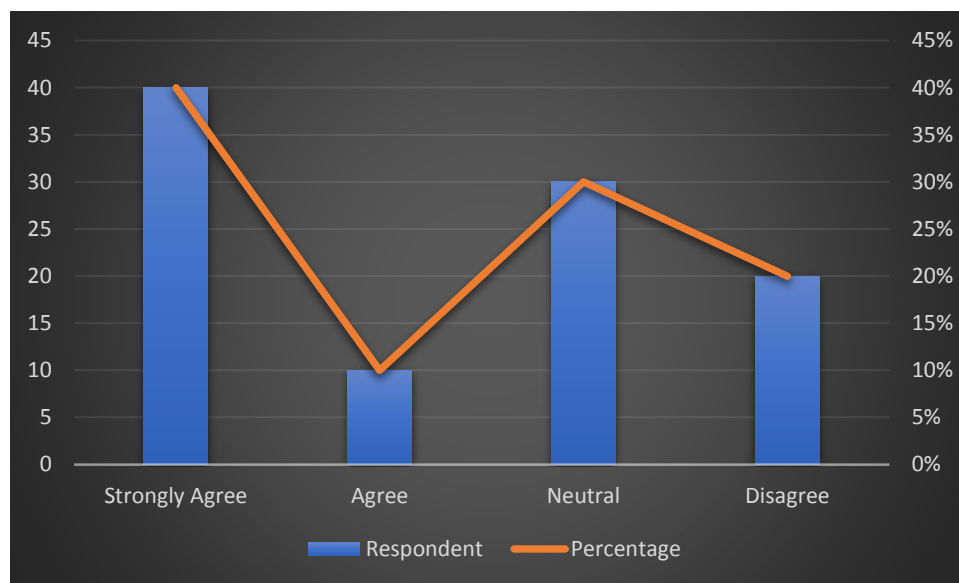
Interpretation

According to the research, 50% of respondents (Strongly Agree + Agree) believe that influencers' recommendations for products are trustworthy. A sizable 30% are still neutral, suggesting hesitancy or selective faith in influencer marketing. 20% of respondents disagreed, indicating scepticism about endorsements from influencers. At 40%, "Strongly Agree" was the most common individual response, indicating that many customers were quite confident.
The Neutral group proposes a chance for companies and influencers to gain more legitimacy.

Although they still encounter occasional opposition, influencer endorsements generally enjoy a high level of consumer confidence.

3. **Have you ever purchased a product based on an influencer's recommendation?**

| Particular	Respondent	Percentage
Yes	70	70%
No	30	30%
Total	**100**	**100%**
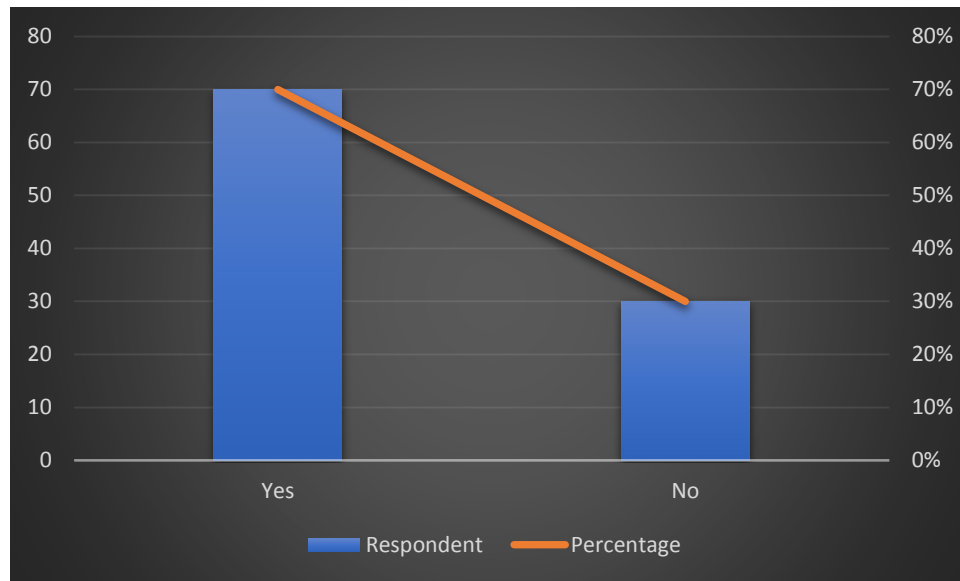
Interpretation

The data clearly shows that a significant majority — 70% of respondents — have purchased a product based on an influencer's recommendation. This highlights the strong persuasive power that influencers hold over consumer purchasing decisions. Only 30% of participants reported not buying products influenced by social media endorsements, suggesting that while a portion of the audience remains unaffected, the majority are influenced. The results indicate that influencer marketing is not just building brand awareness but also successfully driving conversions. Brands partnering with influencers can therefore expect measurable returns in terms of customer acquisition. Overall, influencer recommendations have a substantial and direct impact on consumer buying behavior.

4.   **Which factor most influences your trust in an influencer?**

| Particular	Respondent	Percentage
Authenticity	35	35%
Expertise	15	15%
Relatability	40	40%
Popularity	10	10%
Total	**100**	**100%**
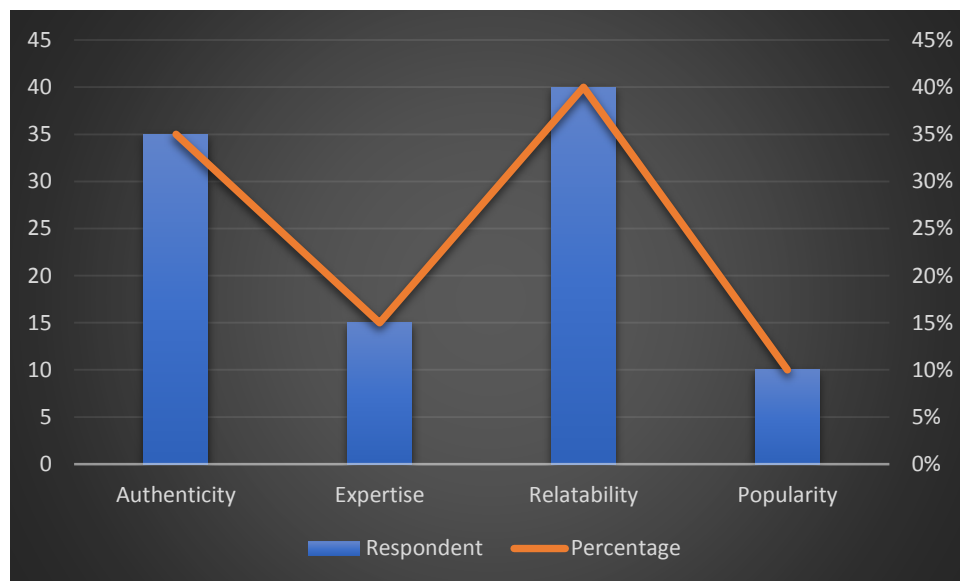
Interpretation

According to the results, 40% of respondents said relatability was the most important component in fostering trust in an influencer. At 35%, authenticity comes in second, indicating that customers place a significant importance on sincere actions from influencers. 15% of the participants are influenced by expertise, suggesting that although knowledge is important, emotional connection is more important. Popularity was only mentioned as a trust factor by

10% of respondents, indicating that having a large number of followers is not a guarantee of customer trust. These findings demonstrate that in influencer marketing, relatability and authenticity are more important than notoriety or technical know-how. Therefore, influencers who are sincere and have a personal connection to their audiences should be given priority by brands.

5.   **How likely are you to try a new brand because it was endorsed by your favourite influencer?**

Particular	Respondent	Percentage
Very Likely	30	30%
Likely	10	10%
Neutral	30	30%
Unlikely	20	20%
Very Unlikely	10	10%
Total	**100**	**100%**
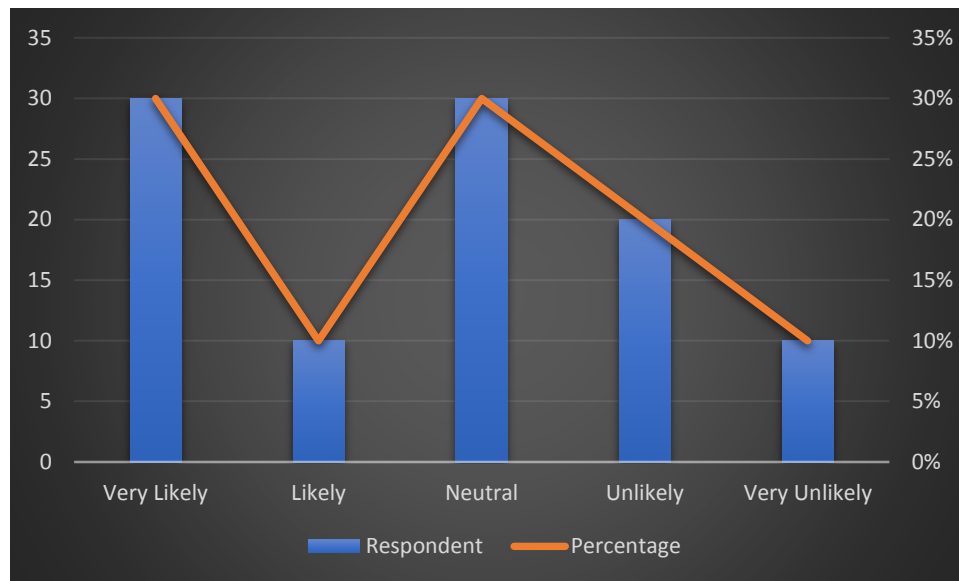
Interpretation

Based on influencer recommendations, 40% of respondents (Very Likely + Likely) are willing to test a new brand, according to the findings. 30%, on the other hand, are neutral, meaning they are not firmly committed but may be swayed by specific situations. However, 30% of respondents (Unlikely + Very Unlikely) are unwilling to change brands based only on suggestions from influencers. The largest percentage of respondents (30%) are "Very Likely" to try a new brand, suggesting that influencer-driven brand discovery has a lot of promise. The indifferent and negative answers, however, imply that although influencers are useful, personal tastes and brand quality are still quite important. In general, influencers greatly encourage consumers to try new brands, but they do not always ensure conversion.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, influencer marketing significantly alters consumers' attitudes. When influencers are seen as genuine and approachable, consumers are very interested in their material and show trust in their recommendations. Because purchasing decisions are frequently influenced by this trust, influencer marketing is an essential tactic for firms. To be as effective as possible, marketers should concentrate on collaborating with influencers that share their brand values and have a true connection with their audience.

The study unequivocally shows that consumer thinking and purchasing behaviour are significantly changed by influencer marketing. Many customers actively interact with influencer-generated material, and many of them give their suggestions a high degree of credibility. The results show that when it comes to gaining the trust of customers, elements like relatability and authenticity are more crucial than popularity or experience alone. Additionally, a sizable portion of participants have made purchases based on recommendations from influencers, demonstrating how successful this marketing tactic is at influencing actual purchases. All things considered, influencer marketing offers businesses a vibrant and changing chance to interact with, sway, and win over new clients. Instead of depending solely on one-time promotions, marketers should concentrate on creating genuine, long-term relationships with influencers for optimal efficacy. Future studies should examine the effects of distinct content formats (reels, tales, podcasts) and influencer types (micro vs. macro) on different consumer segments in diverse businesses.

References

- De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: Impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798-828.
- Djafarova, E., & Rushworth, C. (2017). Exploring the credibility of online celebrities' Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of young female users. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 68, 1-7.
- Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K., & Freberg, L. A. (2011). Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public Relations Review*, 37(1), 90-92.
- Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 58-73.
- Statista. (2024). Influencer Marketing Market Size Worldwide. Retrieved from www.statista.com