

Influencer Marketing Effectiveness and Consumer Purchase Intention for Apparels: An Empirical Study of Generation Z Customers

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Abstract:

Influencer marketing has emerged as an important marketing strategy for apparel brands, particularly among Generation Z consumers who actively engage with social media platforms. This study examines the effectiveness of influencer marketing and its impact on the purchase intention of Generation Z customers in the apparel sector. The study focuses on key dimensions of influencer marketing, including influencer credibility, attractiveness, expertise, authenticity, content quality, and social media engagement, and investigates their influence on consumer's intention to purchase apparel products. Influencers can influence consumers by providing product reviews, styling suggestions, product demonstrations, recommendations, and engaging visual content, thereby increasing product awareness and consumer interest. The authenticity and relatability of influencers may further enhance trust and strengthen consumer's attitude towards promoted apparel brands. The study also considers the role of promotional activities such as discount codes, giveaways, affiliate links, and limited-time offers in encouraging purchase intentions. The findings can help apparel brands identify suitable influencers, develop authentic and engaging promotional campaigns, enhance brand awareness, and build stronger relationships with Gen Z consumers. A sample of 355 was collected to find the result of the study. The factors affecting Influencer Marketing Effectiveness and Consumer Purchase Intention for Apparels are Influencer Credibility, Influencer Expertise, Content Quality and Engagement and Purchase Intention. The study concludes a significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer's purchase intention.

Keywords: influencer marketing, influencer credibility, social media engagement, customer trust, social media marketing

Introduction

A substantially important and evolving role is played by influencer marketing in shaping decisions of apparel purchasing, mainly among Generation Z customers who form the dominating segment of the market. It is indicated that visually driven digital platforms like YouTube and Instagram are working as a strong medium for discovery of products, awareness of trend, and evaluation of purchase. Authenticity and credibility of influencers, their alignment with the brand identity make significant improvement in trust and engagement of customers. Real-time demonstrations like reels, shorts and try-on hauls helps in the reduction of perceived risk, it increases relatability providing styling inspiration, it has appeared as a powerful motivational element behind buying decisions of customers. Influencer marketing might not always work as the sole or immediate trigger for purchasing, it constantly makes influence on attitude of customers, helps in strengthening brand recall, supporting buying decisions as it acts as a persuasive tool of reinforcement throughout the process of purchasing (Khan & Singh, 2026). The rapidly growing social media has completely transformed the traditional practices of marketing; it leads to the rising prominence of social media influencer marketing being an effective strategy of promotion. In the apparel industry, a vital role is played by influencers that shapes the purchase intention of customers, their preference and buying intention through their credibility and visually appealing content. The rising usage of social media influencer marketing by fashion apparel brands has raised important concern with regards its actual efficacy in influencing purchase intention of consumers, mainly across distinct regional and customer context (Mythili & Sindhu, 2025). For promotional activities, influencer marketing is being used rapidly as an advertising platform.

Sustainability has started making influence on Indian marketing, mainly in fashion industry. Abrupt rise in consciousness is main reason of this surge. The study concentrates on the analysis of the relations between attitude, belief and intentions of consumers to purchase sustainable apparels that are being promoted through influencer marketing, their credibility, social influence and perceived effectiveness of consumers. For altering the attitude of consumer proactively towards the brand majority of businesses are dependent on influencer marketing that has evolved over the time. Sustainable apparel is attaining prominence in this digital era as it need and brands are focusing as has less wastage and release less carbon footprint (Shravya, 2022).

Influencer marketing has been considered as one of the powerful strategies of digital marketing, especially in markets, which is socially connected with people in India. With the growing social media platforms, the brands are turning social media influencer for influencing attitude and buying intentions of consumers. It is shown that credibility and perceived authenticity among social media influencers is a key element that influence customers to purchase the products that are endorsed, and the popularity of influencers is not enough for ensuring effectiveness. It is affirmed by the results that the impact of influencer marketing on the purchase intentions of consumers is substantial, mainly when the influencers are credible, authentic and trustworthy. The knowledge and open connections between influencers are essential for establishment of trust among customers and just being relevant would not be able to influence buying behavior of customers. Companies are struggling to find influencers who do not imitate to the brand values but are showing expertise and are authentic in their content. Partnering with niche creators and micro-influencers can bring great engagement as well as trust compared to huge celebrity endorsements. Confidence and credibility of customers can be increased with clear disclosure of content which is sponsored (Mahajan & Garg, 2026). Rapidly growing social media has strengthened the use of influencer marketing in the fashion and apparel industry; it has reshaped the way consumers form the buying intentions. Among the main traits of influencer are expertise, credibility and familiarity that makes a substantial as well as positive impact on the purchase intentions of customers. Among these, familiarity has appeared as highly significant and influencing element, which suggests that customers are more possibly to be influenced by them with whom they feel connected emotionally and engaged. Credibility and expertise also show to be making substantial influence, which indicates that customers tend to be trusting influencers who are found to be reliable and professional (Das & Mittal (2003).

Literature Review

To promote fashion products and brands, Instagram has become one of the most popular platforms of marketing that have made it main tool for fashion business brands. Equity theory has been applied by this work for exploring equity payment, where customer's perception regarding service has evolved over the time, it influences their sense of fairness in communication with the providers of services. Social media networking, e-commerce platforms etc. plays an important role that shapes the favorable behavior of consumers, the behavioral model theory is used for analysing how social media network and designs of websites make influence on engagement behavior, perceived value and positive electronic word-of-mouth intentions to improve understanding behavior of consumers. Features of Instagram enables influencers to build followers, get connected with the brand, and develop social interactions with customers that make Instagram a popular and ideal platform to promote luxury brands (Madhavedi et al. 2025). Recently, influencer marketing has appeared as a vital marketing strategy withing the landscape of digital marketing, it has reshaped the consumer's behavior profoundly along with their purchase intention. This approach of marketing has leveraged the reach as well as persuasive power of customers with substantial following on social media who are known as influencers, they endorse products, brands and services on the social media platforms. Consumer purchase intentions have observed to be shifting towards digital platforms in majority of developed nations, with a rising intent to purchase from e-commerce websites. Influencer marketing has been now considered to be more effective to reach and engage targeted customers, mainly among young customers and niche market. The findings highlight the significance of creating convincing and applicable content of influencer resonating with value, preference and lifestyle of customers. Brand and influencer collaboration are suggested to be more strategic with the aim of long-term relations building trust among customers and driving sustainable purchase intentions (Joyce, 2024). The main negative aspects of Artificial Intelligence in online retailing are trust of customers, security, AI autonomy, financial information, issues related to reliability and malfunctioning of system that

reduces customer purchase intention significantly. While Artificial Intelligence bring efficacy in the system, it also brings risks and uncertainties that can weaken the confidence of customers in AI-enabled e-retail platforms (Mittal et al. (2024). With the rising social media, social media fashion influencers (SMFIs) have become important channel for brands for communicating with their target customers, and an important role is played by relatability in promotion of customer's purchase intention. Relatability of SMFI makes a direct as well as positive influence on customer purchase intention as well as indirect and positive influence on consumer's purchase intention through perceived emotional value. The relationship between perceived emotional value and customer's purchase intention is negatively moderated by consumer's expertise (Wang et al. 2025).

A digital space is being offered by social media for people to get connected with social media influencers like YouTubers, bloggers and celebrities from Instagram. It is indicated by the findings that influencers on social media platforms if perceived as reliable source showing higher level of trustworthiness, expertise and homophily, it stimulates FOMO (fear of missing out) among customers and establishing parasocial relations with influencers that eventually improve customer's purchase intention. Moreover, customers perceiving higher level of providence, the relation between purchase intention and FOMO will get strengthened. A close collaboration with social media influencers possessing deep understanding of the taste and interest of their followers, presentation and format of product information can be refined by marketers, it ensures alignment with both the platform's context, and browsing experience of customers across numerous pages and situations (Liu, 2025). The impact of social media network has increased on people as there are many ways of sharing and interacting with them on such platforms. An influencer can share and exchange their experience, thoughts and interest with the power of social media in order to reach massive audience with their unique personality. Social media influencers are also involved in industries and areas like lifestyle, food, fashion and beauty. Reliable connection between influencer and followers on social media is the foundation of influencer marketing. Social media users who have built good level of following and get significant attention from other users are called social media influencers. People following another user willingly consent to receive an automated feed of the post of that person. In the last ten years, influencer marketing has flourished that is being used widely by brands as a successful strategy in order to reach massive public (Tabish, Bashir & Nadeem, 2025). A significant role is played by celebrity influencers in development of tendency of consumer's impulse buying and purchase intention. In this modern era of advertising, the celebrity endorsement features have driven company's promotion campaigns, stimulates purchasing behavior of customers through celebrity branding. It is shown by the results that trustworthiness of celebrities, the attractiveness, credibility and expertise of celebrity endorser make positive influence on buying intentions of customers as well as on their impulse buying tendency. Customer's purchase intention has got intensified because of the rising concept of celebrity endorsements. Celebrity characteristic endorsement has become a worldwide trend that accelerates the impulse buying behavior of customers (Liu, 2022).

In this digital wave, social media is not just a hub to exchange information but is shaping the model of business marketing. On purchase decisions of customers, the influence of influencer economy is increasing in a pronounced way. Influencer marketing in integrating deeply with the lifestyle concepts and trends of consumption majorly among young generation. Mainly in content creation and strategies of dissemination, it is important to streamline the core information and utilization of formats like short videos, a blend of text and graphics, and live interaction for improving the efficacy of disseminating information and engagement of audience. On consumer purchase intention, the impact of influencer credibility mainly involves user experience, recommendation of objectives, and quality of content presentation. Customers are found to be satisfied with the quality of content and objective recommendation that are being provided by the influencer, but the rating for user experience were neutral (Chen et al. 2024). In digital marketing, one of the most influential tools is influencer marketing particularly in fashion industry where preference of consumers is shaped up strongly by the content on social media, online reviews and feedback and promotions are personality-driven. This strategy, in fashion industry has become effective as customers often look for style inspiration, review of products, and guidance of trend from the influencers they trust. Fashion influencers on social media showcase clothing, accessories, and lifestyle products in ways appearing relevant and aspirational making the message more persuasive compared to traditional advertising. Customers usually depend on such content while making decision which product to purchase, mainly when they feel that opinion of influencer os authentic and relevant for their lifestyle. Influencers at social media platform are able to

impact trust, awareness, perception and purchase intention of customers through their relatable and engaging content (Kavinkumar & Jayanthi, 2026). Marketing strategies have been transformed with the rapidly growing social media in fashion industry, with influencer marketing appearing as an essential approach for influencing purchase decisions and consumer behavior. Credibility of influencer shows a powerful impact than influencer marketing, which suggests that consumers make great emphasis on credibility characteristics of influencers while making buying decisions of fashion and apparel products. Customers exposed to relevant, attractive, engaging and informative influencer content might develop strong confidence and interest towards products that are promoted for these influencers (Sjukun, 2026).

Objective

1. To know the factors associated to “Influencer Marketing Effectiveness and Consumer Purchase Intention for Apparels”
2. To measure the impact of influencer marketing on consumer’s purchase intention.

Methodology

355 participants were surveyed from participants using different product type. The method of sampling was “Random sampling” for collection of data and examination was done by “Explanatory Factor Analysis” for results.

Findings

Table 1 demonstrates demographic details, it shows that 51.83% are Male, 48.17% are female. Looking at the age, 34.08% are below 20 years of age, 30.70% are between 20 to 30 years of age, and 35.22% are above 30 years of age. With regards to Product type, 32.96% Fashion & Apparel, 36.34% are Food & Beverages and 30.70% are Electronics & Home Appliances.

Table. 1 Respondent’s Details

Variables	Participants	Percentage
Gender		
Male	184	51.83%
Female	171	48.17%
Total	355	100
Ages in years		
Below 20	121	34.08%
20 to 30	109	30.70%
Above 30	125	35.22%
Total	355	100
Product type		
Fashion & Apparel	117	32.96%
Food & Beverages	129	36.34%
Electronics & Home Appliances	109	30.70%

Total	355	100
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“Factor Analysis”**“KMO and Bartlett's Test”****Table. 2 “Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy”**

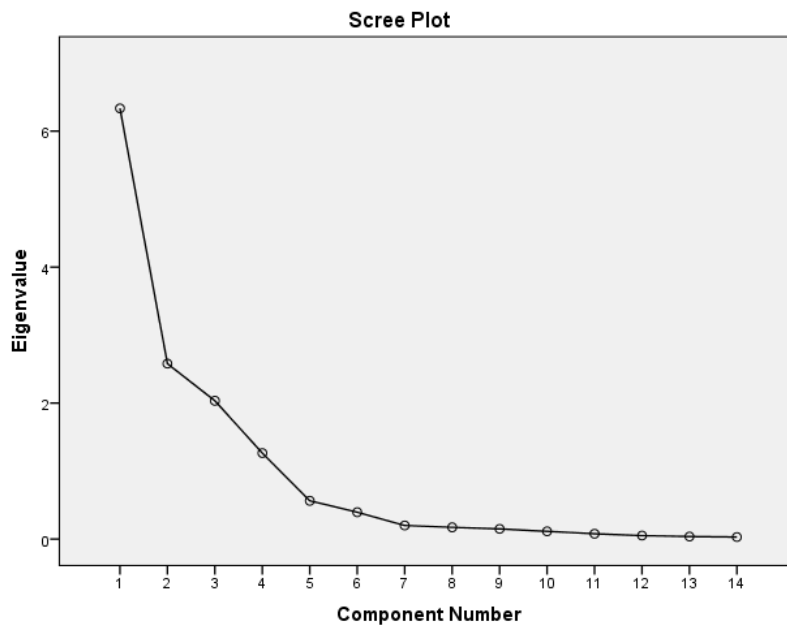
“Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy”		.774
“Bartlett's Test of Sphericity”	“Approx. Chi-Square”	6124.515
	df	91
	Significance	.000

“KMO and Bartlett's Test”, value of KMO is .774 (Table 2).

Table 3 “Total Variance Explained”

“Component”	“Initial Eigenvalues”			“Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings”		
	“Total”	“% Of Variance”	“Cumulative %”	“Total”	“% Of Variance”	“Cumulative %”
1.	6.336	45.254	45.254	3.873	27.661	27.661
2.	2.580	18.429	63.683	3.604	25.743	53.403
3.	2.034	14.527	78.210	2.414	17.246	70.649
4.	1.265	9.033	87.243	2.323	16.594	87.243
5.	.562	4.016	91.260			
6.	.395	2.820	94.080			
7.	.199	1.423	95.503			
8.	.172	1.229	96.732			
9.	.149	1.064	97.797			
10.	.113	.807	98.604			
11.	.078	.559	99.163			
12.	.051	.362	99.525			
13.	.037	.264	99.789			
14.	.030	.211	100.000			

The four factors contribute towards explaining total 87.243% of variance. Variance explained by Influencer Credibility is 27.661%, Influencer Expertise is 25.743%, Content Quality and Engagement is 17.246%, and Purchase Intention is 16.594%. (Table 3).



“Scree Plot”

Table. 4 “Rotated Component Matrix”

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading	Factor Reliability
	Influencer Credibility		.948
1.	Apparel influencers are considered to be trustworthy source of information	.957	
2.	Influencers are believed to be providing reliable information about product	.910	
3.	Influencer’s opinion influence customer’s perception of apparel brands	.848	
4.	Customers consider products recommended by trustworthy influencer	.842	
	Influencer Expertise		.959
1.	Apparel influencers have good knowledge about fashion and clothing	.957	
2.	Influencers provide useful information about apparel products	.903	

3.	Customers value influencers who understand current fashion trend	.895	
4.	Expert influencers make apparel products more appealing to customers	.867	
	Content Quality and Engagement		.865
1.	High-quality influencer content attracts attention of customers	.902	
2.	Creative fashion content increases interest in apparel brands	.858	
3.	Interactive influencer content encourages customers to explore apparel products	.748	
	Purchase Intention		.833
1.	Customers purchase apparel recommended by influencer they follow	.928	
2.	Influencer promotions increase willingness to buy apparel products	.922	
3.	Influencer marketing can encourage customers to choose one apparel brand over another	.643	

Factors of the study and its related variables

The first factor of the study is Influencer Credibility, the variables it includes are Apparel influencers are considered to be trustworthy source of information, Influencers are believed to be providing reliable information about product, Influencer's opinion influence customer's perception of apparel brands and Customers consider products recommended by trustworthy influencer. Influencer Expertise is the second factor, it includes variables like Apparel influencers have good knowledge about fashion and clothing, Influencers provide useful information about apparel products, Customers value influencers who understand current fashion trend and Expert influencers make apparel products more appealing to customers, third factor is Content Quality and Engagement, its variables are High-quality influencer content attracts attention of customers, Creative fashion content increases interest in apparel brands and Interactive influencer content encourages customers to explore apparel products. Last and fourth factor is Purchase Intention, it includes variables like Customers purchase apparel recommended by influencer they follow, Influencer promotions increase willingness to buy apparel products and Influencer marketing can encourage customers to choose one apparel brand over another.

Table 5 "Reliability Statistics"

"Cronbach's Alpha"	"Number of Items"
.896	14

Total reliability of 14 items that includes variables for "Influencer Marketing Effectiveness and Consumer Purchase Intention for Apparels" 0.896 (Table 5).

“Table 6 Model Summary”

“Model”	“R”	“R Square”	“Adjusted R Square”	“Std. Error of the Estimate”
1	.848 ^a	.720	.717	.40794
Predictors: (Constant), Influencer Credibility, Influencer Expertise, Content Quality and Engagement, and Purchase Intention				

The adjusted R-squared value is 0.717 with approximately 72% of the variation.

“Table 7 ANOVA”

“Model”		“Sum of Squares”	“df”	“Mean Square”	“F”	“Sig.”
1	“Regression”	149.737	4	37.434	224.944	.000 ^b
	Residual	58.246	350	.166		
	Total	207.983	354			
a. Dependent Variable: Overall impact of influencer marketing on consumer’s purchase intention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer Credibility, Influencer Expertise, Content Quality and Engagement, and Purchase Intention						

Value under significant column indicates a significant relationship between (Influencer Credibility, Influencer Expertise, Content Quality and Engagement, and Purchase Intention) and consumer’s purchase intention

“Table 8 Coefficients”

“Model”	“Un standardized Coefficients”		“Standardized Coefficients”	“t”	“Sig.”
	“B”	“Std. Error”	“Beta”		
(Constant)	3.946	.022		182.275	.000
influencer Credibility	.324	.022	.423	14.955	.000
influencer Expertise	.072	.022	.095	3.344	.001
Content Quality and Engagement	.265	.022	.345	12.200	.000
Purchase Intention	.493	.022	.643	22.718	.000
DV: Overall impact of influencer marketing on consumer’s purchase intention					

All the factors Influencer Credibility, Influencer Expertise, Content Quality and Engagement, and Purchase Intention are showing significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer’s purchase intention. Highest impact is shown by Purchase Intention (.643), Influencer Credibility (.423), Content Quality and Engagement (.345), and Influencer Expertise (.095).

Conclusion

The study concludes that influencer marketing has a significant role in shaping the purchase intention of Generation Z customers towards apparel products. Generation Z consumers are highly active on social media and

are strongly influenced by opinions, recommendations, reviews, and content shared by influencers. The findings indicate that factors such as influencers credibility, attractiveness, expertise, authenticity, content quality, and perceived trustworthiness contribute positively to consumer's attitudes towards apparel brands and their willingness to purchase. The study further highlights that Generation Z prefers influencers who appear genuine, relatable, and knowledgeable rather than those who rely solely on celebrity status. Engaging and visually appealing content, product demonstrations, styling ideas, reviews and personalized recommendations can increase consumer interest and encouraging purchase decisions. At the same time, excessive promotional content or lack of authenticity may reduce consumer trust and negatively affect purchase intention. Overall, influencer marketing can be considered an effective promotional strategy for apparel brands targeting Generation Z. The factors affecting Influencer Marketing Effectiveness and Consumer Purchase Intention for Apparels are Influencer Credibility, Influencer Expertise, Content Quality and Engagement and Purchase Intention. The study concludes a significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer's purchase intention.

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