

Impact of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Buying Behaviour of Beauty Products: A Study of Gen Z Consumers in Buldhana Region

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Abstract: *This study examines the impact of social media influencer marketing on the buying behaviour of beauty products among Gen Z consumers in the Buldhana region. With the rapid growth of platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful promotional tool. The research is based on primary data collected through structured questionnaires from 100 respondents belonging to Gen Z. The study analyzes factors such as trust, credibility, relatability, and content quality of influencers. The findings indicate that influencer marketing significantly affects purchase decisions, with authenticity and engagement being key determinants. The study concludes that brands should strategically collaborate with influencers to effectively target Gen Z consumers.*

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Gen Z, Buying Behaviour, Beauty Products, Social Media

I. INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, social media has transformed the way brands communicate with consumers, giving rise to influencer marketing as a powerful promotional strategy. Rushworth (2017) explain that social media influencers have a strong impact on the purchase decisions of young consumers, particularly through platforms like Instagram. This influence is especially visible among Gen Z consumers, who actively engage with digital content and rely on influencer recommendations for product information.

In the beauty industry, influencer marketing plays a crucial role due to the visual and experiential nature of products. Lou and Yuan (2019) highlight that influencer-generated content, such as product reviews and tutorials, helps in building trust and credibility among consumers. Similarly, Freberg et al. (2011) emphasize that the perceived authenticity, expertise, and relatability of influencers significantly shape consumer attitudes and buying intentions. As a result, consumers are more likely to develop positive brand perceptions and make purchase decisions based on influencer endorsements.

Gen Z consumers, typically aged between 18 and 27 years, are considered digital natives who are highly influenced by online interactions and peer opinions. Pradhan et al. (2023) state that Gen Z values authenticity and transparency, making them more responsive to influencers who appear genuine and relatable. In semi-urban and small-town regions like Buldhana, increasing internet penetration and smartphone usage have further enhanced the reach of influencer marketing, although limited research has focused specifically on such contexts.

Therefore, the present study aims to examine the impact of social media influencer marketing on the buying behaviour of beauty products among Gen Z consumers in the Buldhana region. It focuses on understanding how influencer attributes and online engagement influence purchase decisions within the categories of cosmetics, skincare, and personal care products.



1.1 Objectives of the Study

- To assess how loyalty and brand perception are created by influencers in the beauty industry
- To study the level of awareness created by influencers on the buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers.

1.2 Scope of the Study

The present study is confined to Gen Z consumers aged 18–27 residing in the Buldhana region, with a specific focus on the semi-urban and small-town context of this area. It exclusively examines beauty products, including cosmetics, skincare, and personal care items, to understand consumer preferences and behaviour. The research primarily explores the impact of social media influencer marketing on the buying behaviour of these consumers. However, it does not extend to other product categories such as fashion, gadgets, or food, thereby maintaining a clear and focused scope of analysis within the beauty segment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sharma (2018) conducted early Indian research on the effectiveness of influencer marketing among the Gen Z consumers of Pune city's cosmetics market. The study found that Gen Z are more relatable in the trusted cosmetics market. The study found that Gen Z relies more on trusted sources. The influencers who share the everyday videos about beauty routines rather than celebrity endorsements. The findings reveal that authenticity and recommendations encourage purchase behaviour of consumers. These studies find that influencer marketing affects Gen Z and young customers. The study prioritizes Gen Z consumers of Pune city for research. This study highlighted relative content of social media marketing and purchase decisions among Generation Z.

In a doctoral thesis, Denton (2019) examines psychological techniques employed by social media to reach the youthful consumer such as Gen Z. He discovered that the effect of social evidence, emotional appeal, and expertise were present in the beauty products market among the younger people. Gen Z purchase decisions are influenced by the decisions made by the influential marketer as motivations and emotional factors are affected because of the continuous exposure.

A number of researches are concerned with the authenticity and credibility of the influencer in the beauty industry. Rathnayake and Lakshika (2022) discovered credibility and authenticity dimensions. These dimensions are the expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness, which directly influence the purchase intention of the consumers of the beauty market. The results prove that Gen Z is a social media-driven generation that is more prone to purchasing beauty products that have been advertised by influencers who seem to be knowledgeable and make actual communication on behalf of their audience. Social media becomes the platform for marketing, which creates more sales of any products. Social media appears to be more friendly towards Gen Z consumers. It also becomes a fashion market, which affects buying behaviour.

A number of studies made deeper research for understanding Gen Z's beauty product buying behaviour. Nair (2024) found that influencer marketing affects the consumer purchase decision. It studies the format from awareness and interest to evaluation and final purchase, especially in the beauty product category. This paper indicates that influencers are the key sources of product information. It demonstrates that it tends to substitute the classic advertisements.

The research by Timsina (2024) was aimed at exploring the influence of social media influencers on the decision-making process and purchase behaviour of consumers of Generation Z. Gen Z highly depends on the content created by social media when making product purchases. The most effective influence of an influencer is on their subordinates by their relatable lifestyle and reviews of beauty products. Gen Z is very sensitive to the micro influencers who seek authenticity and loyalty and demand a greater degree of trust. Another finding of the research is that the Generation Z perceived authenticity concerning opinions and trustworthiness. The research attests to influencer marketing as a central factor of Generation Z beauty and fashion purchase. The generation Z is more dependent on influencers in the decisions they make when buying beauty products and their decision-making in purchasing fashion.



III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the impact of social media influencer marketing on the buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers in the Buldhana region. A stratified random sampling method is used to capture differences among respondents, ensuring proper representation of various income subgroups within the Gen Z population. The target population consists of individuals aged 18–27 years residing in Buldhana. Data for the study is collected from both primary sources, including questionnaires and interviews, and secondary sources, such as journals, reports, and case studies. For data analysis, tools like SPSS and Microsoft Excel are utilized to perform statistical testing. The sample size for the research is 100 respondents, which is considered adequate for drawing meaningful conclusions. This research design allows for hypothesis testing through quantitative methods, while also incorporating qualitative insights from interviews to better understand consumer motivations, attitudes, and perceptions that cannot be fully captured through numerical data alone.

Table 3.1: Income Strata

Income Strata	Assumed Proportion	Sample Size
Middle Income (₹25,000–₹39,999)	40%	40
Upper-Middle Income (₹40,000–₹59,999)	35%	35
(₹60,000 and above)	25%	25
Total	100%	100

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

This analysis is conducted using Likert scale-based questions.

4.1 Enhancing understanding of beauty brands by influencer marketing

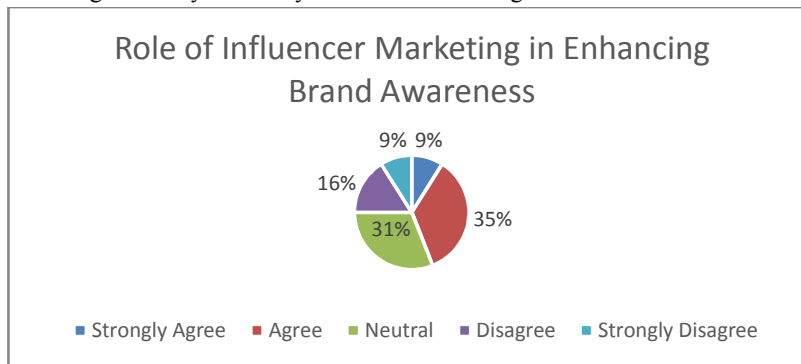


Fig 4.1: Role of influencer marketing in enhancing brand awareness

Interpretation:-

The data shows that 35% agree and 9% strongly agree that influencer marketing enhances their understanding of beauty brands, while 31% remain neutral and a smaller proportion disagrees.

This indicates that influencer content plays a significant educational role in informing consumers about product features, usage, and brand positioning. Influencers act as intermediaries who simplify complex product information for consumers.

However, the presence of a considerable neutral segment suggests that not all respondents fully rely on influencers for brand knowledge, indicating the continued importance of alternative information sources such as official brand communication and reviews.



4.2 Repeated promotions by same influencer and their recommendations increases beauty brand trust

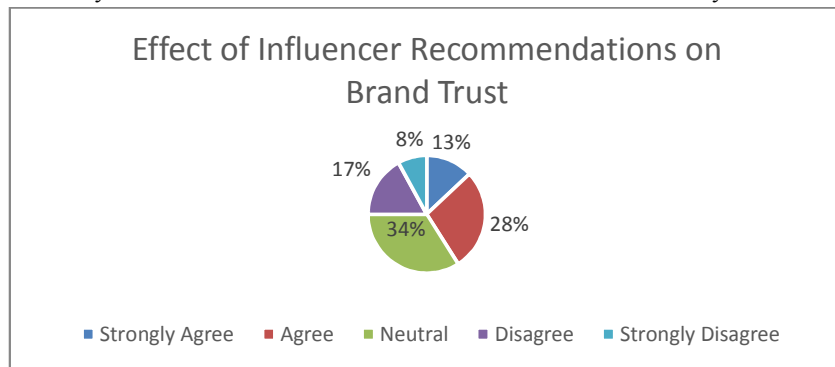


Fig. 4.2: Effect of influencer recommendations on brand trust

Interpretation:-

The findings reveal that 28% agree and 13% strongly agree that repeated promotion by the same influencer increases their trust in a brand, while 34% remain neutral and 17% disagree.

This suggests that consistency in influencer endorsement can positively impact brand trust and loyalty, as repeated exposure reinforces familiarity and credibility.

However, the high neutral response indicates that repetition alone may not be sufficient; consumers may perceive excessive promotion as inauthentic, highlighting the need for balanced and genuine influencer collaborations.

4.3 Awareness of new beauty products, features and brands through social media influencers

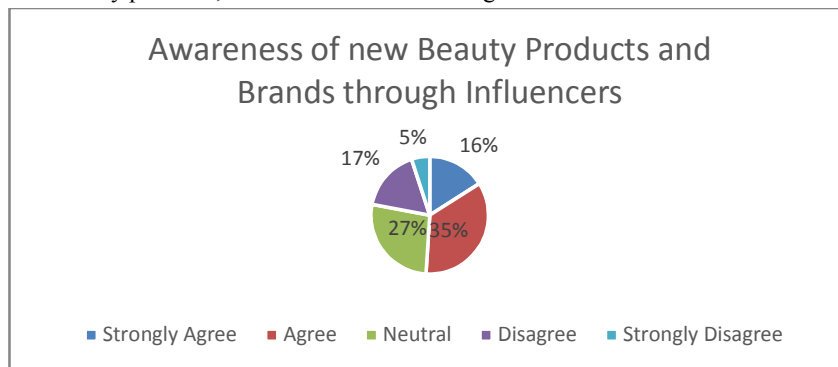


Fig. 4.3: Awareness of new beauty products and brands through influencers

Interpretation:-

The data indicates that 35% agree and 16% strongly agree that influencers help them learn about new beauty products and their features, while 27% are neutral and a smaller proportion disagrees.

This demonstrates that influencer marketing is highly effective in creating awareness and disseminating product-related information among Gen Z consumers.

It highlights the role of influencers as key information sources, particularly in introducing new products and educating consumers, thereby influencing the early stages of the buying decision process.



4.4 Effect of influencers in beauty brands comparison in purchase decision

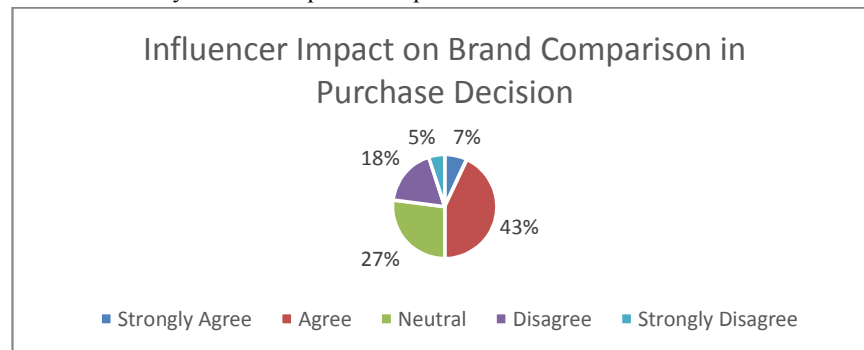


Fig. 4.4: Influencer impact on brand comparison in purchase decision

Interpretation:-

The findings show that 43% agree and 7% strongly agree that influencer content helps them compare different beauty brands before making a purchase, while 27% are neutral and 18% disagree.

This indicates that influencers contribute to the evaluation stage of the consumer decision-making process, where consumers assess alternatives before purchasing.

The ability of influencers to provide comparative insights, reviews, and demonstrations enhances consumer confidence and supports more informed purchasing decisions, though some consumers may still prefer independent research.

V. CONCLUSION

Influencer marketing plays a significant role in shaping both brand perception and awareness among Gen Z consumers in the beauty industry. It helps improve understanding of beauty brands, introduces new products, and supports comparison during purchase decisions, thereby influencing buying behaviour. Consistent promotion by influencers also contributes to building trust and familiarity, which can enhance brand loyalty. However, a considerable number of neutral responses suggest that influencer impact is not absolute, as consumers still rely on other sources of information and value authenticity over repetitive promotions.

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