

A Study on The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour Towards Online Skin Care Products

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Abstract- *The rapid growth of social media usage has significantly transformed marketing practices, particularly in the skincare industry. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook have become powerful channels for product promotion, consumer engagement, and brand communication. Among various digital strategies, influencer marketing has emerged as a highly effective approach for promoting online skincare products and shaping consumer buying behaviour. Influencers create product awareness, demonstrate usage, share personal experiences, and provide recommendations that consumers often perceive as trustworthy and relatable. This study aims to examine the impact of influencer marketing on consumers' purchase decisions toward online skincare products. It analyses key influencing factors such as influencer credibility, expertise, attractiveness, authenticity, trustworthiness, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). In addition, the study explores how consumers evaluate other aspects—including product ingredients, price, brand reputation, customer reviews, and perceived risk—before making a purchase decision. The study also finds that consumers are more likely to be influenced by relatable influencers who provide honest reviews and demonstrate genuine product usage. Furthermore, transparency in sponsored content and alignment between influencer image and product type strengthen consumer confidence. The study concludes that influencer marketing plays a crucial role in shaping consumer buying behaviour in the online skincare market. Credible, authentic, and knowledgeable influencers can effectively drive consumer engagement and conversion, making them valuable partners for skincare brands in the competitive digital marketplace.*

Keywords: Consumer Buying Behaviour, Online Skincare Products, Social Media Marketing and Brand Trust.

I. INTRODUCTION

Digitalization has revolutionized the marketing environment across the globe, fundamentally changing how businesses communicate with consumers. The widespread

adoption of the internet, smartphones, and social networking platforms has shifted traditional marketing methods toward more interactive and personalized digital strategies. Social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook have become powerful tools for brand promotion, consumer engagement, and information sharing. These platforms enable businesses to reach a vast audience instantly while allowing consumers to interact, share opinions, and influence others' perceptions.

One of the most significant developments in digital marketing is the emergence of influencer marketing. Influencer marketing refers to the practice of collaborating with individuals who possess a strong online presence, credibility, and a loyal follower base to promote products or services. Unlike traditional advertisements, influencer promotions appear more authentic and relatable because influencers often share personal experiences, tutorials, product reviews, and recommendations. As a result, followers tend to trust influencers' opinions, perceiving them as knowledgeable peers rather than corporate advertisers. This trust can strongly shape consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchasing decisions. The skincare industry, in particular, has experienced rapid growth in online retailing due to increasing awareness of personal grooming, beauty standards, and wellness. Consumers today are more informed and conscious about skincare routines, ingredients, product safety, and effectiveness. Online platforms provide easy access to a wide range of skincare products, detailed product information, customer reviews, and expert opinions. Influencers play a crucial role in this process by demonstrating product usage, explaining benefits, comparing alternatives, and showcasing real-time results. Their content often simplifies complex skincare knowledge, making it more accessible to the general public. However, despite the persuasive power of influencers, consumers do not rely solely on influencer recommendations. Modern buyers tend to engage in extensive information search before making a purchase decision.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To analyse the level of awareness of influencer marketing among consumer.
- To examine the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase decisions.
- To identify the social media platforms most effective for influencer marketing among consumer.
- To examine the relationship between influencer marketing and brand preference of consumer.
- To evaluate the overall effectiveness of influencer marketing in shaping youth buying behaviour.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Influencers play a significant role in shaping opinions, preferences, and purchase decisions of youth, who are highly active on digital platforms. Unlike traditional advertising, influencer marketing relies on perceived authenticity, trust, and peer-like communication, which may strongly affect youth buying behaviour. However, despite its increasing use by brands, there is limited clarity on how far influencer marketing actually impacts the purchasing decisions of youth, the factors that drive their trust in influencers, and whether such influence leads to rational or impulse buying. Excessive exposure to sponsored content may also result in unrealistic expectations, brand confusion, and financially impulsive decisions among young consumers. Therefore, it becomes essential to study the impact of influencer marketing on youth buying behaviour in order to understand its effectiveness, influence on decision-making patterns, and implications for both consumers and marketers. This study aims to analyse the extent to which influencers affect youth purchase intentions, brand preferences, and buying decisions.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Lou, Chen Yuan & Shupe** (2019) in their study analysed that influencers content affects consumer trust and purchase intention toward promoted products, including beauty skincare items. The objective was to analyse how perceived informativeness, entertainment value, and credibility of influencer posts influence consumer attitudes and buying behaviour. An empirical study using structured online surveys distributed to social media users who follow influencers. Statistical analysis was applied to evaluate relationships between message value, credibility, trust, and purchase intention. The study revealed that influencer credibility and informative content significantly increase consumer trust, which in turn enhances purchase intention. Consumers were more likely to buy products when influencer recommendations appeared authentic and useful. Trust acts as a mediating
2. **De Veirman, Marijke, Cauberghe, Veroline, Hudders & Liselot** (2017) in their study investigates how the number of followers purchase intention, particularly in lifestyle and beauty product promotions. The objective was to determine whether micro-influencers or celebrities are more effective in influencing consumers. Experimental research using simulated Instagram profiles with varying follower counts. Participants evaluated brand perceptions and purchase intentions after viewing influencer posts. Results showed that influencers with a moderate number of followers often generated higher trust and relatability than those with extremely high follower counts. Consumers perceived them as more authentic and less commercially motivated. Relatability and perceived authenticity are key drivers of consumer response. Micro-influencers can be highly effective in promoting skincare products due to closer audience connections.
3. **Djafarova, Elmira, Rushworth & Chloe** (2017) in their article explored how young female consumers perceive social media celebrities decisions in fashion and beauty categories. The objective was to examine the role of trust, attractiveness, and perceived similarity in influencer effectiveness. Qualitative research using semi-structured interviews with social media users. Thematic analysis was used to interpret participants' views on influencer endorsements. Participants trusted influencers who appeared genuine and relatable rather than overtly promotional. Recommendations were more persuasive when influencers shared personal experiences and honest reviews. Perceived authenticity and similarity between influencer and audience significantly affect consumer buying behaviour, especially for personal care and skincare products.
4. **Ki, Chung-Wha, Kim & Yong-Ki** (2019) in their study examined that the psychological mechanisms through which influencers affect consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. The objective was to analyse how parasocial relationships (one-sided emotional bonds with influencers) influence trust and brand loyalty. Quantitative research using survey data collected from followers of beauty and lifestyle influencers. Structural equation modelling was used for analysis. Strong parasocial relationships increased perceived credibility and emotional attachment, leading to higher purchase

factor between influencer marketing and consumer buying behaviour. High-quality content combined with credible influencers can strongly influence purchasing decisions for beauty and skincare products.

intention. Followers often felt as though influencers were friends, which strengthened persuasion. Emotional connection plays a vital role in influencer marketing effectiveness. Influencers who build personal relationships with followers can significantly shape buying decisions for skincare products.

5. **Lim,et.al.(2017)** in their study investigated that the influenced that of attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and similarity of influencers on consumer purchase intention in beauty and personal care markets. The objective was to identify which influencer characteristics most strongly affect buying behaviour. Survey-based quantitative study with statistical analysis including regression techniques. Respondents were active social media users exposed to influencer promotions. Trustworthiness and expertise emerged as the most significant predictors of purchase intention, while attractiveness played a supportive role. Consumers preferred influencers who demonstrated knowledge about products. Expert and trustworthy influencers are more effective than merely popular or attractive personalities in driving skincare product purchases.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:** Descriptive and Analytical
- **Sample Size:** 150 Respondents
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience Sampling
- **Tools used:** Percentage Analysis, Weighted Average Score Analysis.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The research focuses only on online skincare products and does not consider offline purchasing behavior.
- The study considers selected social media platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, excluding other emerging influencer platforms.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

TABLE 1 – DEMOGRAPHICS VARIABLES OF THE RESPONDENTS

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE	
Age	Below20	75	50.00%
	20–40	30	20.00%
	41–60	22	14.67%
	Above60	23	15.33%
Gender	Male	87	58%
	Female	63	42%
Occupation	Working Professional	50	33.33%
	Student	37	24.67%
	Homemaker	27	18.00%
	Unemployed	19	12.67%
	Self-employed	17	11.33%
Income	Below₹25,000	38	25.33%
	₹25,001–50,000	58	38.67%
	₹50,001–75,000	34	22.67%
	Above ₹75,000	20	13.33%
AwarenessLevel	Low	19	16.73%
	Medium	79	60.60%
	High	51	22.67%

Table 1 shows that the demographic analysis reveals that the majority of respondents (50%) are below 20 years of age, indicating strong participation from younger individuals, followed by 20% in the 20–40 age group, while respondents aged 41–60 (14.67%) and above 60 (15.33%) form a smaller portion of the sample. In terms of gender, males constitute 58% and females 42%, showing slightly higher male representation. Regarding occupation, working professionals (33.33%) and students (24.67%) form the major groups, followed by homemakers (18%), unemployed (12.67%), and self-employed individuals (11.33%). The income distribution shows that most respondents (38.67%) earn between ₹25,001–50,000, indicating a dominant middle-income group, while 25.33% earn below ₹25,000, 22.67% earn ₹50,001–75,000, and only 13.33% earn above ₹75,000. Furthermore, the majority of respondents (60.60%) possess a medium level of awareness, with 22.67% having high awareness and 16.73% having low awareness, suggesting that most participants demonstrate moderate knowledge levels.

TABLE 2 - FREQUENCY OF ONLINE PURCHASE

FREQUENCY	NO.OFRESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Weekly	61	40.67%
Rarely	37	24.67%
Monthly	29	19.33%
Daily	23	15.33%

Table 2 shows that the analysis shows that most respondents (40.67%) purchase weekly, followed by 24.67% who purchase rarely. Monthly buyers account for 19.33%,

while daily purchases are the least at 15.33%. This indicates that weekly purchasing is the most common buying pattern.

TABLE 3 - MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

PLATFORM	NO.OFRESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YouTube	54	36%
WhatsApp	41	27.33%
Instagram	28	18.67%
TikTok	27	18%

Table 3 shows that the analysis of YouTube (36%) is the most preferred platform among respondents, followed by WhatsApp (27.33%). Instagram (18.67%) and TikTok (18%) have nearly equal usage. This indicates that YouTube is the dominant platform among the respondents.

TABLE 4 - MAIN INFLUENCE ON PRODUCT CHOICE

INFLUENCINGFACTOR	NO. OFRESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Friends	56	37.33%
Dermatologist	42	28%
Influencers	27	18%
OnlineAds	25	16.67%

Table 4 indicates that friends (37.33%) are the most influential factor affecting respondents' decisions, followed by dermatologists (28%). Influencers (18%) and online ads (16.67%) have comparatively lesser influence. This shows that personal recommendations play a stronger role than promotional sources.

TABLE 5 – FREQUENCY OF SHOPPING

FREQUENCY	NO. OFRESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Occasionally	44	29.33%
Never	43	28.67%
Rarely	35	23.33%
Frequently	28	18.67%

Table 5 shows that 29.33% occasionally purchase due to influencers, while 28.67% never purchase. This shows influencer marketing has moderate but not dominant impact.

TABLE 6 - BENEFITS OF INFLUENCER MARKETING

BENEFITS	NO. OFRESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Discounts	46	30.67%
Promotions	46	30.67%
Honest Reviews	44	29.33%
Product Awareness	14	9.33%
Brand Reputation	15	10.00%
InfluencerImpact	15	10.00%

Table 6 shows that consumers value discounts and promotions most (30.67%). Product awareness is least valued, indicating consumers expect financial benefits.

TABLE 7 – FACTORS TO BE PROMOTED BY INFLUENCER BEFORE PURCHASE - WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE ANALYSIS

FACTORS	TOTALSCORE	WEIGHTEDSCORE	RANK
Ingredients	566	3.77	1
Side Effects	562	3.75	2
Reviews	554	3.69	3
Product Consideration	524	3.49	4
Brand	512	3.41	5
Price	510	3.40	6
Refund Policy	456	3.04	7
Manufacturing Details	452	3.01	8
Quantity	430	2.87	9

Table 7 Consumers primarily check ingredients before purchasing skincare products promoted by influencers. Side effects are also a major concern, indicating high awareness about product safety. Reviews significantly influence purchase decisions, showing the importance of social proof. Factors like price, brand, and certifications have moderate influence on buying behavior. Refund policy, manufacturing details, and quantity are less important compared to safety and effectiveness.

Overall, consumers focus more on product quality and safety rather than promotional appeal alone.

TABLE 8 – IMPACT OF PURCHASING DECISIONS BY THE INFLUENCERS - WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE ANALYSIS

FACTORS	TOTAL SCORE	WEIGHTED SCORE	RANK
a)IntroduceNewProducts	525	3.50	5
b)HelpdecideBetweenProducts	505	3.37	7
c)No Impact	370	2.47	9
d) StrongMotivation	540	3.60	3
e)Brand Preference	500	3.33	8
f)IncreaseTrust	497	3.31	8
g)HelpUnderstandUsage	534	3.56	4
h)CreateAwareness	550	3.67	1
i)ImpulseBuying	494	3.29	9

Table 8 shows that Influencers mainly create awareness and motivate trial. They significantly help consumers understand usage and benefits. Very few respondents believe influencers have no impact. Impulse buying influence is moderate but not dominant.

V. SUGGESTIONS

- Focus on creditable and knowledgeable Influencers:** Brands should collaborate with influencers who possess expertise in skincare and provide scientifically accurate information. Consumers trust influences who demonstrate product knowledge and authenticity.
- Promote Transparency in sponsored content:** Influencers should clearly disclose paid promotions and

provide honest reviews. Transparent communication enhances consumers trust and long-term brand loyalty.

3. **Emphasize product safety and ingredients:** Since consumers prioritize ingredients and side effects before purchase, brands should highlight product composition, dermatologist testing, and safety certifications in influencers campaigns.
4. **Encourage Educational content over direct promotion:** Consumers engage more with skincare routines, tutorials, and product demonstrations than with direct advertisements. Educational content builds awareness and confidence.
5. **Offer value-based promotions:** Discounts, offers, and combos deals attract consumers significantly. Brands can integrate promotional incentives with influencers campaign to increase conversions,
6. **Utilize video-based platforms effectively:** Platforms with strong visual content such as video tutorials are highly influential. Brands should engage visual demonstrations showing real results and usage methods.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study on the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour toward online skincare products highlights the significant role of social media influencers in shaping consumer awareness, perceptions, and purchase decisions. The findings reveal that influencer marketing has a moderate but meaningful influence on consumers, particularly in introducing new products, creating brand awareness, and motivating trial purchases. However, consumers do not rely solely on influencer recommendations. They carefully evaluate factors such as product ingredients, side effects, brand reputation, and customer reviews before making a purchase. This indicates that modern consumers are more informed and rational in their decision-making process. Trustworthy, authentic, and knowledgeable influencers are more effective in influencing buying behaviour than those who promote products purely for commercial reasons. The study also shows that friends and dermatologists remain strong sources of influence, suggesting that influencer marketing works best when supported by credible information and social proof. Educational content such as skincare routines and reviews generates higher engagement than direct promotional messages. Overall, influencer marketing is a powerful digital strategy for skincare brands, but its success depends on authenticity, transparency, product quality, and alignment with consumer needs. As social media continues to evolve, brands that adopt ethical, informative, and consumer-centric influencer strategies will be better positioned to build trust, enhance brand image, and drive sustainable growth in the competitive online skincare market.

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