

**IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON THE PURCHASING
BEHAVIOR OF INDIAN MILLENNIALS**

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the award of the Degree of

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By

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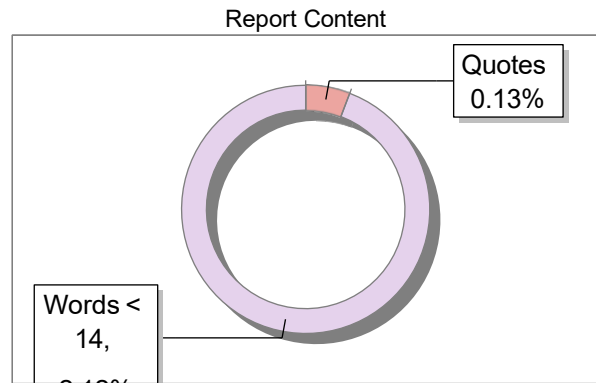
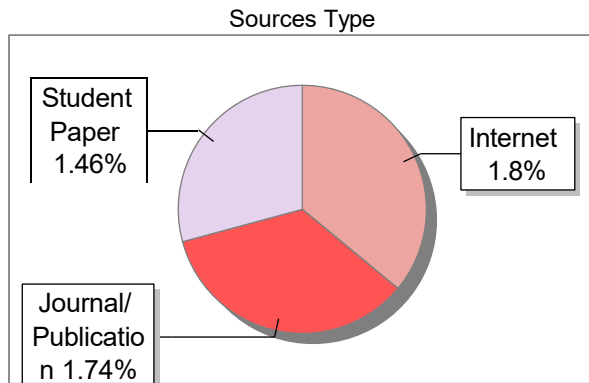
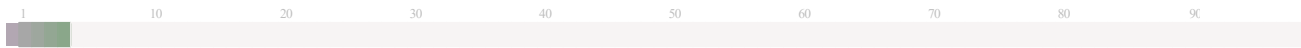
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ABSTRACT

Background: Influencer marketing is an essential tactic in influencing customer behavior as a result of the quick expansion of digital platforms and the growing hegemony of social media. Millennials, or those born between 1981 and 1996, make up a significant portion of India's tech-savvy, socially active consumer base and often interact with online influencers. Their purchase decisions are impacted by emotional, psychological, and parasocial connections with influencers in addition to conventional marketing components. Data-driven, empirical research that looks at the complex interactions between these variables and purchase intentions is still needed, however.

Aim: This study's main goal is to find out how influencer marketing affects Indian millennials' actual and intended purchase behavior. In particular, the study investigates the ways in which consumer decision-making is influenced by constructs from the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2), such as performance expectations, effort expectations, hedonic motivation, social influence, and enabling circumstances, as well as other constructs like price value, habit, influencer credibility, and perceived influence quality.

Methods: According to a quantitative research methodology, a structured questionnaire was developed and verified by pilot testing. In order to assure variety across gender, income, education, and region, data were gathered from 600 Indian millennials between the ages of 22 and 40 using simple random selection. The selection of respondents was predicated on their active participation in social media and interaction with online influencers. Both online and offline methods were used to acquire the data, and secondary data from institutional and governmental sources was also included. The study model was validated and the associations between latent variables were investigated using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using SPSS.

Results: Purchase intentions and actual purchase behavior are significantly predicted by influencer credibility, trust, engagement, and content quality, according to the SEM study. Millennial consumer behavior was strongly positively correlated with UTAUT2 model constructs, including performance expectation, hedonic drive, and social influence. Price value, habit, and perceived influencer quality were among the other characteristics that made a significant contribution to the prediction model. The results highlight how crucial emotional ties and authenticity are in influencing customer choices.

Conclusion: This research offers important new information on how influencer marketing affects Indian millennial consumers' purchasing decisions. It demonstrates that perceived influencer knowledge, trust, and emotional resonance often have a greater effect than conventional marketing strategies. The study emphasizes the strategic importance of micro-influencers in increasing customer engagement. In order to maximize the efficacy of campaigns, marketers are encouraged to use a data-driven and customized strategy, using technologies such as SEM. Further study is necessary to stay up with changing consumer characteristics and technology advancements as influencer marketing becomes increasingly integrated into India's digital economy.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Indian Millennials, Purchasing Intentions, Consumer Behavior, Digital Marketing.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASCI	Advertising Standards Council of India
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAMAI	Internet and Mobile Association of India
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
ML	Machine Learning
PEOU	Perceived Ease of Use
PLS	Partial Least Squares
PU	Perceived Usefulness
ROI	Return on Investment
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
UGC	User Generated Content
UGT	Uses and Gratifications Theory
UTAUT2	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2

CHAPTER-1

1 INTRODUCTION

Influencer marketing has emerged as a major digital marketing strategy in recent years, especially in India. The rising popularity of social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter has elevated influencers by captivating audiences with relevant, real, and visually striking material. These influencers are being used by brands more and more to mould customer tastes and influence purchases. This change reflects a trend in commercial marketing away from static celebrity endorsements and toward more dynamic, personalized campaigns. A large portion of India's population falls within the millennial age bracket, which includes those born between 1981 and 1996. Technology, social media, and digital literacy are all strengths of the millennial generation. They react strongly to social affirmation and online material. Digital experiences, peer recommendations, and influencer endorsements often affect their purchasing choices. The intersection of the digital revolution and consumer culture necessitates an understanding of the impact of influencer marketing on the purchasing intentions of this demographic.

The rise of influencer marketing has deep ties to the broader digital revolution taking place in India. The expansion of e-commerce platforms, reduced data costs, and heightened smartphone use have fundamentally transformed consumer interactions with businesses. For marketers seeking to influence customer behavior, influencers are a powerful tool due to the fact that millennials in this digital era spend a great deal of time engaging with others who share their interests and opinions.

Even with influencer marketing's widespread use, empirical research that methodically looks at its factors is still needed, especially with strong analytical methods. This research seeks to identify the critical factors influencing Indian millennials' purchase choices. These attributes include beauty, trustworthiness, credibility, and the quality of content generated by influencers, along with user engagement. This work uses Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to elucidate the links among these aspects, therefore enhancing both theoretical literature and practical marketing techniques.

1.1 Emergence of Influencer Marketing in India

Influencer marketing's meteoric ascent in India represents a turning point in the evolution of brands' online customer service strategies. Billboards, print advertisements, and television commercials exemplify classic advertising methods that have progressively diminished in efficacy for engaging tech-savvy Indian customers. Influencer marketing has grown in popularity due to two main reasons: consumers' growing distrust of traditional forms of advertising and their rising dependence on the word-of-mouth recommendations of influential people online. The rise of prominent users with substantial followings on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter is a direct consequence of their strategic and continuous content creation.

The core tenet of influencer marketing is the Source Credibility Theory, which holds that the communicator's perceived competence, attractiveness, and trustworthiness are directly related to how successful a persuasive message is (Rathod, 2022). Influencers in India are typically seen to be more trustworthy than celebrities or corporate spokespeople due to the greater frequency and intimacy of their interactions with followers. This relatability factor is very important for millennial and Gen Z consumers when making purchases.

The widespread availability of mobile phones and inexpensive internet connectivity in India have greatly contributed to the fast growth of influencer marketing in the country. By the end of 2022, there were more than 750 million smartphone users in India, and by 2026, there will be more than 1 billion, according to a Statista analysis (Shah & Agarwal, 2020). Additionally, the democratisation of digital content consumption brought about by telecom companies like Reliance Jio's inexpensive bandwidth has boosted screen time on social media sites. More than 80% of Indian internet users actively use at least one social networking site every day, according to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) (Patel, 2024). These advancements have improved influencers' efficacy and reach in addition to growing the digital audience.

The two predominant influencer marketing campaigns may be conducted on YouTube and Instagram. YouTube provides comprehensive analyses and tutorials, but Instagram's visually-oriented format allows influencers to promote products via striking photographs and videos. Among the most popular industries in India where influencers have amassed sizable fan bases and influenced purchasing habits include food, fashion, technology, fitness, and beauty. For example,

Indian beauty influencers such as Shreya Jain and Malvika Soltani have partnered with both local and international firms to promote goods, and their suggestions often result in quantifiable increases in website traffic and product sales (S. Kumar, n.d.).



Figure 1-1 Depiction of influencer marketing engaging digital consumers via social media platforms.

In recent years, India's influencer marketing sector has seen phenomenal growth. The Indian influencer marketing market was estimated to be worth INR 900 crore in 2021 and is projected to reach INR 2,200 crore by 2025 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 25%, according to research by GroupM and Exchange4Media (Rathod, 2022). This trend demonstrates how influencer marketing offers more measurable results, businesses are investing more in it, individualised, and targeted outreach than conventional advertising. The emergence of micro-influencers is a key development fueling the expansion of influencer marketing in India. Most micro-influencers have between tens of thousands and one hundred thousand followers, whereas superstars and macro-influencers have millions. Despite having a smaller audience overall, micro-influencers may generate more revenue because of their highly engaged and niche fan base. For local and up-and-coming firms trying to build trust in certain market sectors, this makes them more useful (Nayak & Das, n.d.). Micro-influencers are the go-to option for direct-to-consumer marketers in industries including beauty, nutrition, fashion, and education because of their relatability and reliability.

Additionally, marketers increasingly prioritise ongoing interaction with the influencer's audience above one-time promotions and long-term partnerships. This change is in line with the idea of relationship marketing, which prioritises developing enduring relationships with customers above making rapid purchases. Influencers' perceived sincerity and genuineness aid in bridging the gap between businesses and customers, resulting in less transactional and more conversational marketing (Kartajaya et al., 2019). Formalising the influencer marketing industry has also been aided by government and regulatory participation. In 2021, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) issued rules mandating that influencers use hashtags such as #sponsored, #ad, or #collab to explicitly reveal paid advertisements (Patnaik, 2021). By encouraging openness and preventing consumer deception, these rules hope to increase confidence in influencer-generated material.

To facilitate brand-influencer partnerships, influencer marketing platforms and talent agencies have also surfaced. Based on follower demographics, engagement metrics, and content topics, these middlemen pair businesses with relevant influencers using artificial intelligence and data analytics. Because of this development, influencer marketing has evolved from a casual, ad hoc activity to a scalable, data-driven sector. In India, well-known platforms that support organised influencer marketing initiatives include One Impression, Plixxo, and Chatterbox.

The emotional and psychological effects influencers have on their audiences are another element driving this increase. To develop parasocial connections with their followers, many Indian influencers share their life stories, hardships, and thoughts. The influencer's capacity to sway attitudes and motivate action is strengthened in this kind of contact, in which followers have an emotional bond without real two-way communication. Millennials and Gen Z, who prioritise community and genuineness above celebrity glitz, respond especially well to this (Kaur, 2021).

Influencer marketing saw a sharp increase during the COVID-19 epidemic. Brands increasingly looked to digital influencers to sustain consumer engagement and boost e-commerce as lockdowns limited conventional retail and advertising. In response, influencers modified their content strategy to better reflect the shifting emotional states and lifestyles of their audiences by including wellness, mental health, remote work advice, and at-home product use. In order to be visible and engage with customers in a socially conscious way throughout the epidemic, 78% of firms boosted their

influencer marketing budgets, according a poll conducted by Influencer.in (Dimitrieska & Efremova, 2021).

Influencer marketing's meteoric rise in India portends a dramatic change in the country's approach to advertising. Factors like the emotional resonance of peer-to-peer communication, changes in consumer trust dynamics, and the greater accessibility of digital platforms are quickly propelling influencers to the forefront of the marketing value chain. It is anticipated that as digital consumption rises, consumer behaviour changes, and legal frameworks solidify, influencer campaigns will become even more integrated into mainstream marketing efforts. In addition to ushering in a new age of brand-consumer connection, this shift creates opportunities for scholarly research and marketing strategy innovation.

1.1.1 Digital Transformation and Millennial Consumer Behavior

India's fast digital development has changed customer behaviour, especially among millennials. Among the most tech-savvy customers are millennials, who were born between 1981 and 1996. The prevalence of mobile internet, fast smartphone penetration, and increased dependence on digital platforms have made millennials essential to the new digital consumer wave in India. Digital influences alter their behaviour, interests, and decision-making, distinguishing them from earlier generations.

The millennial generation is completely used to and built on mobile devices and the internet. Therefore, they are active participants in digital ecosystems rather than passive content receivers. This is especially visible in their brand interactions, information seeking, and purchase choices. The customer journey is increasingly interconnected and dynamic due to social media, mobile applications, influencer content, and e-commerce platforms. Brands are designing marketing and engagement strategies around millennials' expectations for seamless, personalised, and value-driven experiences across platforms.

The phenomena may be understood by referring to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). TAM believes that perceived utility (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) drive technology adoption (Grover et al., 2019). Indian millennials find digital solutions that ease product discovery, speed checkouts, and compile suggestions beneficial and simple to use. Amazon and Flipkart's "buy now, pay later" and one-click payment options improve the functionality and experience of

online buying. Mobile-friendly interfaces, personalised dashboards, and AI-powered recommendations decrease cognitive burden and promote reuse.

In addition to TAM, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) sheds light on the effects on society and the illusion of behavioral control. TPB adds subjective norms (peer influence) and perceived behavioural control (behaviour ease or difficulty) to TAM (Conner, 2020). Social impact matters for Indian millennials. Social networks, internet reviews, and influencers shape millennial brand impression and buy intent. The digital world amplifies these impacts. Instagram and YouTube allow users to exchange thoughts and disseminate trends quickly. Thus, influencer marketing may change attitudes and behaviour. Influencers—especially honest and accessible ones—often outperform conventional ads.

Influencer marketing in India is driven by millennials' visual content consumption and affinity for peer-recommended material. Influencers' lifestyle, product choices, and endorsements are trusted and compelling. According to the Social Influence Theory, people are more prone to emulate trusted or admired persons (Carter et al., 2021). In fashion, cosmetics, tech devices, cuisine, and travel, influencers are aspirational personalities and relevant mentors for millennials. Local content makers are also becoming popular among millennials in Tier II and Tier III cities.

The digital revolution has increased millennials' usage of UGC and online peer evaluations. Millennials read reviews, evaluate features and costs, and look for likes, shares, and comments before buying. Content democratisation has allowed customers to make educated selections, minimising online purchase risk. It pushes companies to communicate more openly and collaboratively.

Digital revolution also introduced personalised marketing. Millennials want personalised messaging and offer that match their interests, behaviours, and beliefs. Data analytics, AI, and machine learning allow marketers to target campaigns by browsing behaviour, historical purchases, geography, and time of day. While privacy-conscious, millennials are more likely to disclose personal data for convenience, better services, or prizes than previous generations. The exchange of data for value underpins modern marketing techniques.

Gamification is another excellent engagement method. On their digital platforms, many Indian firms use awards, points, badges, and leaderboards to engage millennials. These methods improve

consumer satisfaction and brand advocacy. Millennials like gamified experiences because they are competitive and want fast satisfaction.

When considering millennial consumer behaviour, digital payment infrastructure is crucial. Google Pay, Ponape, Paytm, and the government-supported Unified Payments Interface (UPI) have transformed millennial transactions. Mobile payments have become common due to contactless, rapid, and secure payments (Radzikhovska, 2021). Digital wallets and UPI are preferred by many millennials over cash or cards. Digital payments improve customer happiness and online platform confidence due to their ease and quickness.

Millennials' brand awareness and affinity for value-driven businesses are also impacting company positioning. Millennials prioritise quality, usefulness, and principles including environmental sustainability, social justice, and ethical sourcing. Digital platforms enable customers to investigate brand ethics, evaluate options, and hold firms responsible. Marketers looking to connect with millennials must embrace this mindful consumerism change. COVID-19 pushed digital adoption even further. Digital consumption rose due to remote employment, online learning, and screen time. E-commerce, virtual product samples, live shopping events, and influencer-led webinars became commonplace, and millennials adapted swiftly. Post-pandemic consumers will combine digital and physical experiences with a greater emphasis on convenience, flexibility, and personalization—all characteristics of digital transformation.

1.1.2 Development of Social Media as a Marketing Platform

The ever-changing landscape of social media has necessitated ongoing assessments of digital marketing strategies. Due to rising internet use, smartphone accessibility, and a youthful population that is tech-savvy, the Indian market in particular has become a thriving area for social media marketing. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which holds that users are active agents in media consumption and seek out media to satisfy particular psychological and social needs, such as information, entertainment, personal identity, and social interaction, can be used to critically analyse the phenomenon (Haridakis & Humphries, 2019).

Social media platforms inherently fulfill these criteria, making them ideal forums for marketing communications. There are more chances than ever prior to advertisers engaging with their target audience on social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. These platforms boast billions of users globally, including hundreds of millions in India alone. By

2025, it is anticipated that there will be over 600 million social media users in India, demonstrating a broad digital audience that cuts across age, geography, and socioeconomic levels (Hruska & Maresova, 2020).

Businesses often use influencer marketing, a kind of social media marketing, to target members of Generation Z and millennials. Social media fosters bilateral communication, enabling users to like, debate, share, and co-create content, unlike traditional advertising, which disseminates information unidirectionally. A key component of UGT, which places an emphasis on audience agency, is the high degree of interaction and user engagement. The interaction and genuineness that social media influencers provide appeal to millennials in particular, who often value their views on par with or even higher than those of conventional superstars (Tiwari et al., 2024).

Startups and well-established companies in India have started to deliberately devote large amounts of their marketing expenditures to social media-based initiatives. Influencer partnerships, product unboxing videos, live events in real time, and challenges for viral content are a few examples. The ability to immediately evaluate engagement metrics like impressions, click-through rates, and conversions, as well as the comparatively cheap cost of digital marketing in comparison to more conventional media like TV or print, promote this trend (Qian et al., 2019).

The growing focus on User-Generated Content (UGC), which encompasses any kind of content—text, videos, photos, and reviews—produced by customers rather than businesses, is one of the main forces behind this change. Because digital audiences see user-generated content (UGC) as more genuine and reliable, many firms actively encourage their customers to produce and distribute material about their goods. UGC's importance in marketing efforts is further supported by studies that reveal over 90% of customers trust it more than corporate messages (Wibowo et al., 2020).

The rise of short-form video content as the primary communication medium on social media platforms is another noteworthy trend. Brand communication has been transformed by TikTok (before to its restriction in India), YouTube Shorts, and Instagram Reels. These little movies are perfect for the fast-paced digital world of today since they are simple to watch and often quite captivating. These formats are used by brands to show off how to utilise their products, produce how-to videos, or even provide behind-the-scenes material that humanises their brand (Belanche et al., 2021) According to psychology, social media marketing plays on users' demand for personal identity, which is one of the main UGT constructions. Customers often identify with brands that

reflect their ideals or sense of self. Users show their identities and ideals to their peers by interacting with or supporting brands on social media. Higher levels of engagement and loyalty are often seen by brands that are successful in integrating their message with the emotional and cultural narratives of their target audience (Tyrväinen et al., 2023).

Another important factor that social engagement is one of the strategies used in social media marketing. Platforms let users to take part in community-driven campaigns, comment on postings, and share material relevant to brands. Examples of strategies that not only increase brand awareness but also help consumers feel more connected to one another include hashtag challenges, competitions, and interactive surveys. Compared to conventional marketing, when the brand was the only one telling the narrative, this co-creation of value represents a fundamental change (Naeem, 2020). Customers no longer spend as much time considering their buying options because to the integration of online shopping into social networking platforms. Shoppable posts, swipe-up links, and in-app checkout make it easy for customers to find products and buy them without ever leaving the platform. Social media is no longer only a promotional tool but rather a whole marketing ecosystem due to the confluence of social and commercial activities (Alghizzawi, 2019).

Data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) have also been crucial in increasing the efficacy of social media marketing. Nowadays, brands are able to serve individualised content that suits each user's preferences, segment audiences based on interests, and analyse user behaviour in real-time. Higher conversion rates are guaranteed by this hyper-targeting capabilities, which also makes marketing communications more relevant (Jarek & Mazurek, 2019).

Social media marketing is not without its difficulties, despite its benefits. Because platforms are dynamic, algorithms are always changing, which affects organic exposure and reach. Furthermore, consumers' interactions with sponsored content may be impacted by problems like disinformation, data privacy, and digital weariness. In order to preserve customer engagement and trust, marketers must constantly innovate and modify their approaches.

1.2 Relevance of Studying Indian Millennials

Millennials in India, who are generally defined as individuals born between 1981 and 1996, make up one of the biggest consumer groups in the nation right now. This generation is unique in its

attitudes, tastes, and purchasing patterns since they were raised in a period of tremendous technical advancement and socioeconomic upheaval. Studying Indian millennials is important because of their sizeable population, economic potential, and crucial role in determining the country's digital and consumer future.

The demographic advantage is clear: millennials make up about 30% of India's population, making it one of the youngest countries in the world (Bohini et al., 2022). This generation will persist in dominating the workforce for decades and constitutes a significant segment of the working-age population. Unlike previous generations, Indian millennials have matured in an environment where social media, mobile phones, and widespread internet access are ubiquitous, profoundly influencing their product research and purchasing decisions. In order to get into India's growing consumer market, marketers must understand the unique habits of Indian consumers.

Immersion in digital technology is one of the traits that distinguish Indian millennials. Over 800 million people in India use the internet, according to current industry figures, and the vast majority of them are millennials who are engaged on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube (Wahab et al., 2021). These platforms have become into effective marketing avenues and brand engagement, in addition to serving as means of communication. Millennials consume a lot of material online and often depend on digital word-of-mouth, influencer endorsements, and peer evaluations instead of conventional advertising techniques (Rayyan, 2022). Influencer marketing is especially pertinent to this group as a result of this paradigm shift.

The millennial generation in India is very responsive to influencer marketing, which uses popular people to promote goods and services. Influencers who seem sincere and reliable have a greater chance of influencing this generation's purchase choice since they prioritise relatability and authenticity. According to research, millennials' opinions about a company and their propensity to purchase are greatly influenced by the credibility, dependability, and attractiveness of influencers (Manzoor et al., 2023). Unlike conventional superstars, social media influencers communicate with their followers on a more intimate and engaging level, creating a feeling of community and connection. It is common for this interaction to lead to increased influence over consumer behavior.

Economic considerations further highlight how important Indian millennials are. They are a group with rising disposable incomes as a result of greater access to financial services, entrepreneurship,

and formal job sectors. Millennials' fondness for high-end, cutting-edge, and lifestyle-focused items is influenced by their economic empowerment, which also gives them the ability to make their own purchase choices (Francis & Sarangi, 2022). Millennials are more experience-driven than previous generations, and they value goods and services that provide ease, emotional fulfilment, and personalisation. These demands may be successfully met by brands using influencer marketing to provide content that relates to the goals and lifestyles of millennials.

One of the main factors facilitating this change is India's increasing digital penetration. Millennials in urban and semi-urban regions may now actively engage in online ecosystems because to the democratisation of access to digital platforms brought about by the development of low-cost smartphones and 4G/5G networks (Farooq & Raju, 2019). Because of this connectedness, influencer marketing initiatives may now reach new areas outside of major cities. Additionally, the growth of regional influencers and vernacular content enables marketers to reach a variety of millennials from different language and cultural backgrounds.

The rising mistrust of conventional advertising among Indian millennials is another crucial area of research. Before making a purchase, this group is more likely to look for peer and social approval and is often more sceptical of direct brand messaging. When done correctly, influencer marketing may be a potent tool for overcoming this scepticism by offering relevant testimonials and firsthand accounts (A. Kumar & Garga, n.d.). A thorough grasp of influencer-consumer interactions and how they affect purchase intentions is necessary in light of this change in trust dynamics. Additionally, Indian millennials have a high affinity for businesses that exhibit sustainability, diversity, and social responsibility. Millennials want companies to reflect their ethical beliefs and are becoming more aware of local and global social concerns. Millennial followers are more loyal and engaged with influencers that support issues and uphold openness (Shettigar & Jha, 2024). Therefore, these value-driven aspects must also be taken into account while studying millennials in the context of influencer marketing.

Theoretically, a number of theories, including the Social Learning Theory and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), have been used to explain how digital interactions affect millennial consumer behaviour (Conner, 2020). In terms of what influences customers' intentions to purchase, the TPB identifies three primary factors: attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived behavioral control. The Social Learning Theory says that people pick up routines from the people they look

up to, yet this is not the case. The importance of perceived influencer involvement, trust, and credibility in influencing millennial purchase intentions has been validated by empirical study in India using these ideas (Sethuraman, 2023). It is impossible to exaggerate the practical significance for companies and marketers. Businesses who successfully comprehend and interact with India's millennial generation, which is predicted to reach its peak in the next ten years, would have a major competitive edge. Influencer marketing is a powerful strategy for brand development and client acquisition because it caters to millennial desires for authenticity, engagement, and experience. Additionally, it provides quantifiable results in terms of engagement, reach, and conversions, giving marketers data-driven insights to help them improve their tactics.

1.2.1 Literature Gap Regarding Influencer Marketing and Purchase Intentions

Social media's explosion in popularity has boosted influencer marketing to new heights as a form of online promotion. The ultimate goal is to use digital information to promote products and services. There is little research on how influencer marketing affects Indian customers' purchasing intentions, especially millennials, even though this tactic has proven successful in other countries. This is especially true of empirical and analytical studies. Although there is a wealth of research on Western consumers, there are still few, poorly designed, or disjointed studies on Indian audiences (Wu et al., 2023).

According to a survey of the literature, the majority of studies on influencer marketing are exploratory or descriptive in nature, mostly depending on qualitative insights or simple statistical analysis techniques like regression or correlation. The complexities of consumer psychology are sometimes overlooked by this research, despite their value, particularly when it comes to concepts like perceived influencer authenticity, trust, credibility, and parasocial interactions. Their inability to provide strong, empirically supported models that can forecast or explain buying intentions across various populations is another weakness (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Indian millennials represent a significant market segment due to their extensive engagement with online platforms, buying capacity, and digital proficiency. Nevertheless, there is a paucity of comprehensive study on this demographic in the literature, despite their significance to brand outreach strategies in India. Despite companies' heavy reliance on influencer marketing on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to reach millennials in India, few studies have looked into what factors really impact this demographic's purchase decisions. A noteworthy

deficiency in the literature is the restricted use of sophisticated analytical instruments like Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). SEM is very helpful in marketing research because it enables the simultaneous examination of many variables and their connections, including latent constructs that are not readily apparent (such emotional connection, perceived competence, and trust). Although SEM has been extensively used in Western research to comprehend customer behaviour in influencer marketing, it is still seldom utilised in Indian contexts. Consequently, academics and marketers lack theoretical models that have been verified to describe the dynamics of influencer-consumer interactions in the Indian context (Černikováitè, 2019).

The functions of certain influencer traits—like social engagement, trustworthiness, attractiveness, credibility, and content quality—are either not well defined or operationalised in the Indian research environment. The cultural subtleties that impact trust in India are distinct and so need for separate research, even if Western Research has shown a strong relationship between influencer trust and purchase intention. Indian customers may give varying weights to personal recommendations, particularly those from micro- or nano-influencers with comparable cultural origins, due to their collectivist societal norms.

Furthermore, the psychological idea of parasocial interaction—a one-sided emotional connection a customer forms with an influencer—has been investigated in Western settings to explain behavioural effects like purchase intent and brand loyalty. In India, however, this idea has not received enough attention(Manzoor et al., 2023) . Although parasocial ties are seldom discussed in the research that is currently accessible, they may be a significant driver of purchase intentions given the emotional character of Indian consumer behaviour.

Another drawback of current research is that it does not segment the Indian customer base. Studies often overlook millennials as a unique demographic, extrapolating results to all age groups and economic levels. Indian millennials' expectations of companies, preferred media outlets, and receptivity to influencer messaging are all quite different from those of previous generations. In contrast to direct endorsements or celebrity-driven advertisements, millennials are more inclined to embrace authenticity, story-driven content, and peer validation. Ignoring these variations may result in poor marketing tactics and lost chances for interaction.

Another factor contributing to the literature gap is the dynamic and often changing character of digital platforms in India. India's digital environment evolves more quickly than many Western

countries due to the country's young population, rising smartphone penetration, and cheaper data plans. Because of this ongoing change, consumer attitudes and behaviours are also constantly evolving (Hapsari et al., 2024). Therefore, in order to capture new trends—something that has not been sufficiently addressed in previous research—periodic empirical surveys are required.

The real difficulties that marketers encounter is often not reflected in academic publications. Few studies examine these elements in a framework that can be applied to actual marketing tactics, despite the fact that theoretical debates place a strong emphasis on concepts like influencer trust and brand fit. Research on return-on-investment (ROI), which is crucial for allocating marketing budgets, is also lacking in influencer initiatives aimed at Indian millennials. In terms of technique, the majority of current Indian research likewise rely too much on convenience sampling or small sample sizes. This restricts how broadly the results may be applied. Furthermore, whereas influencer marketing often entails repeated exposure and changing interactions between the influencer and the audience, longitudinal studies that monitor changes in consumer perception and behaviour over time are almost non-existent (Kemeç & Yüksel, 2021). With many firms using influencers to keep customers engaged during lockdowns, the COVID19 epidemic hastened the transition to digital marketing. This modification emphasises even more how current, context-specific research is required. However, there are still few post-pandemic studies documenting this change in Indian consumer behaviour. Due to their increased social media use at this time, millennials probably formed closer bonds with online celebrities, which may influence their buying patterns in the future.

1.2.2 Practical Importance for Marketers and Brands

In today's digital economy, influencer marketing is no longer seen as an optional extra but rather an integral part of digital brand interaction. It would be wise for brands to research the mental and behavioral aspects that impact purchasing decisions, particularly for the millennials in India. The exposure that millennials get from the many influencers they follow on Social media along with other online resources often influence their buying patterns.

- **Influencer Marketing as a Tactical Instrument**

Social media's stratospheric ascent in the ever-changing world of online communication has fundamentally changed how companies interact with their target customers. Traditional media

commercials, including those on TV, radio, and print, have a lot of varying opinions when it comes to how trustworthy and invasive they are. By using social media influencers' fame and perceived authority to promote products and services, influencer marketing has developed into a more accessible method.

To build connections With well-known users on social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, companies use influencer marketing. By acting as intermediaries, these influencers transform brand messages into content that complements their own narratives. These endorsements are seen as more credible and convincing as they often resemble peer recommendations rather than corporate advertising (Kanwar & Huang, 2022).

People born between 1981 and 1996, known as Indian millennials, are particularly vulnerable to influencer-driven marketing. This group is tech-savvy, prefers mobile devices, and uses digital material extensively. For advice on products, lifestyle ideas, and indications to help them make decisions, they usually go to social media influencers. Crucially, millennials like sincerity and relatability. Influencers who represent their cultural background, beliefs, and desired lifestyle are thus more likely to be trusted (Chakola, 2022). Influencer marketing's strategic efficacy stems from its capacity to humanise businesses and create emotional bonds with customers. Important factors that greatly affect millennials' reactions to influencer messaging include perceived legitimacy, knowledge, attractiveness, and content relevance (Tanha, 2020). Credible influencers that regularly provide top-notch material and interact with their fans in a meaningful manner to influence buyers' attitudes and, in the end, their purchase choices.

Influencer marketing strategies may also be tailored to fit specific hobbies, regional identities, and consumption patterns, which makes them particularly useful in a nation with a varied population like India. Higher engagement and improved campaign resonance are achieved via the use of regional languages, locally relevant topics, and localised storytelling (Belanche et al., 2021). Influencer marketing, then, provides organisations with a highly flexible, targeted, and affordable way to connect with Indian millennials as a strategic tool. When done well, it fosters long-term customer connections, trust, and loyalty in addition to increasing brand awareness.

- **Data-Driven Decision Making and ROI**

As more and more businesses invest in influencer marketing, the need for measurable, data-driven strategies is at an all-time high. In contrast to traditional marketing approaches that mostly relied on broad appeal and one-way communication, influencer marketing is built on three pillars: personalization, trust, and engagement. To ensure ROI, these principles must be empirically proven. To find out what influence's customers' buying habits the most, marketers are shifting their attention from intuition-based planning to evidence-based decision-making.

The influencer marketing space is seeing a rise in the significance of KPIs, including click-through rate, conversion, engagement, and size of the actual audience. These indicators are crucial parts of more advanced analytical frameworks like Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), and they also help in evaluating the overall effectiveness of campaigns. Because SEM enables the simultaneous investigation of many correlations between observable and latent variables, it is especially well-suited for influencer marketing research (Lopez & Arjunan, 2023).

SEM makes it easier to comprehend in-depth how influencer qualities—like relatability, knowledge, trustworthiness, and attractiveness—affect the attitudes and intentions of consumers. For instance, a consumer's emotional engagement with material may be boosted by an influencer's perceived credibility, which might ultimately improve brand perception and increase the consumer's intention to buy (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Perceived authenticity and consumer participation are two mediating aspects that SEM allows researchers to examine, providing a holistic view of the decision-making process.

Brands may determine which particular influencer attributes result in the greatest levels of customer engagement by integrating SEM into their marketing plan. This is especially helpful in India, where millennials exhibit sophisticated digital behaviours and are impacted by both regional cultural quirks and worldwide trends (Kadam et al., 2021). A data-driven approach improves platform selection, content strategy, and message framing in addition to helping to optimise influencer selection.

Additionally, SEM's predictive ability facilitates ongoing campaign improvement. In order to predict results and reallocate resources as necessary, brands may run many ad iterations and enter real-time data into SEM algorithms. As a result, marketing becomes more dynamic and nimbler, matching changing customer demands and online trends. Therefore, for businesses looking to create genuine, powerful, and high-ROI digital campaigns in a content-rich environment,

integrating SEM into influencer marketing is not only a methodological decision but also a strategic need.

- **Enhancing Brand-Consumer Relationships**

Influencer marketing is increasingly essential for building emotional and psychological bonds between businesses and their consumers, going beyond just increasing sales. Authenticity has become a crucial distinction in a competitive online marketplace where consumers are constantly exposed to advertisements. Millennials in India, in particular, look for businesses that align with their beliefs, way of life, and goals. Emotional brand engagement is made possible by this generation's propensity to accept influencers as lifestyle role models as well as product suggestions (Kanwar & Huang, 2022). Influencers may increase a brand's relatability by endorsing it in ways that organically fit into their life, including storytelling, tutorials, or daily use. Viewers feel more connected and trusting as a result of this natural portrayal. Because of the influencer's apparent authenticity and knowledge, influencer material is seen as more reliable than conventional ads, which are often regarded with suspicion (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Because of this apparent legitimacy, customers are more inclined to believe in the brand and ultimately stick with it.

In influencer-mediated brand-consumer connections, trust is a crucial component. According to studies, followers are more inclined to trust influencers that communicate consistently, disclose sponsorships in a clear and concise manner, and only recommend things that fit their expertise (Tanha, 2020). This degree of openness lowers the possibility of audience alienation while bolstering the integrity of the brand message. In addition to improved engagement metrics, brands that work with these influencers get improved brand recognition and favourable word-of-mouth. Furthermore, influencer-brand collaborations that last tend to be more successful in creating long-lasting brand equity. Repeated and regular partnerships, as opposed to one-time endorsements, indicate a strong brand-influencer alignment and strengthen the consumer's perception of familiarity and credibility. Over time, this consistent exposure creates a relatable brand story that strengthens advocacy behaviour and purchase intention (Belanche et al., 2021). The use of influential people in a company's marketing strategy may dramatically improve customer-brand interactions. Brands can use influencer collaborations to enhance conversions and cultivate strong emotional connections that foster lasting brand loyalty by prioritizing authenticity,

transparency, and consistency. This is particularly applicable to Indian millennials, who prioritize significant and socially endorsed brand experiences.

- **Market Responsiveness and Personalization**

Influencer marketing's flexibility in responding swiftly to customer input and industry movements is one of its clear benefits. In a market that is evolving quickly, such as India, socioeconomic conditions, cultural influences, and customer preferences change often. In order to stay relevant and responsive to the ever-changing demands of their audiences, businesses may adapt or recalibrate influencer programs in real-time. This flexibility is especially important when marketing to Indian millennials, who appreciate social approbation and the relevance of current material.

Marketers want real-time consumer action tracking technologies to stay up with the constantly shifting digital environment. Businesses may use ML and AI to can now filter through massive amounts of data in quest of engagement patterns, mood swings, and emerging trends. With the use of these data, influencer content can be created that reflects the values of the target audience at any given time, whether those values include affordability, sustainability, or an aspirational lifestyle (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Additionally, accurate audience segmentation is made possible by AI-powered analytics. By targeting content to certain psychographic profiles, such as urban professionals, students, or young entrepreneurs, companies may increase the impact of their messages rather than treating millennials as a monolithic population. In this regard, micro-influencers have become very effective marketing tools. Because of their greater degrees of honesty and intimacy, they tend to develop deeper parasocial ties with their viewers, despite having fewer followers (Belanche et al., 2021). Their recommendations so often seem more genuine and provoke more powerful behavioural reactions, such as purchase intention.

Additionally, micro-influencers' affordability gives small and mid-sized firms looking to break into cutthroat markets like India an extra edge. Influencers may be assessed by businesses using AI-powered influencer discovery tools based on interaction quality, content relevancy, and alignment with brand values in addition to follower counts (Tanha, 2020). In addition to ensuring a larger return on investment, this lessens the danger of investing in influencers who have a large or fake following. To sum up, organisations can remain flexible, current, and customer-focused by

combining influencer marketing with AI/ML. In the Indian market, where digital behaviour is changing quickly, these solutions enable advertisers to make better choices in real time and build closer relationships with the younger audience.

CHAPTER-2

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

(Chopra, Avhad, et al., 2021) Influencer marketing is gaining popularity as consumers increasingly turn to social media platforms for purchase decisions. This research uses social learning theory and TPB to determine what factors significantly affect consumers' actions. Consumers' views of influencers and their sense of power over their own conduct have a positive effect on their behaviors, according to studies. Perceived danger little affects behavior; nevertheless, personal significance, motivation, and trust significantly influence it. Consumers carefully evaluate specific influencers for distinct product categories, rendering the choice of the suitable one essential. Influencer posts have an effect on consumers in four dimensions: familiarity with the brand, expertise in the subject matter, preference for the brand, and propensity to agree with the influencer's position. Successful influencer marketing involves identifying the right type of influencer who offers curated advice, stories, and suggestions to create engagement with the audience.

(Dogra et al., 2024) Investors' behavioral intentions are linked to financial advertising; gender and marital status mediate this connection, whereas perceived risk acts as a moderator. The results were examined using PLS-SEM once the survey and data collection from 481 participants were finished. The impact of marital status and gender on group-to-group mediation factors may be seen by multigroup analysis (MGA). The findings confirmed the hypothesized strong relationship between informativeness, honesty, and perceived risk, as well as a sizable relationship between credibility and the inclination to invest. No evidence was found that perceived threat served as a moderator. Gender has a role in how credibility, informativeness, and honesty are linked to investment intentions, perceived risk, and truthfulness, respectively. Conversely, the correlations between honesty and perceived risk, engagement and credibility, and credibility and perceived risk are all moderated by married status. The study helps understand millennial investment decision-making when exposed to financial promotions and advertisements, providing insights for government policy framing.

(Muralidharan et al., 2016) The aim of this study is to address a deficiency in the literature via analysis the cultural factors that impact the choice of socialization agents and integrating previous

studies on Millennials' environmentally conscious purchasing habits. The study's subjects were younger Millennials from both India and the US, and they were asked to fill out an online survey. Results indicated that personal relationships were more influential than mass media in raising environmental awareness and encouraging green purchasing behavior. Concern for the environment acted as a mediator in the socialization process, and gender inequalities were seen in every nation. Prospects are examined.

(Vidani, 2023) Nowadays, influencer social media has become a significant medium for businesses to interact with customers, marketing has become an essential strategy for contemporary enterprises. How does customer behaviour change as a result of influencer marketing? Combining Bandura's and Walters' theories of social learning with TPB, this research seeks to answer the issue. Two important traits that have a beneficial effect on consumer behavior are the degree to which people feel they can control their own behavior and their attitude toward influences. Peer pressure, however, had little effect on patron behavior. Perceptions of risk, however, did not influence action to the same extent as other categories, including trust, personal meaning, and inspiration. Product influencer fitting is vital for customers, since they follow many influencers for various products. In addition to influencing readers' opinions about the company and the expert's expertise on the subject, influencer posts also impact readers' own preferences and the products they end up buying. Finding the right influencer to engage your target audience with well-chosen stories, advice, and recommendations is essential for successful influencer marketing. As social media platforms continue to grow in popularity, influencer marketing is likely to become an even more significant part of the marketing landscape in the coming years.

(Caraka et al., 2022) This study looks at how famous social media personalities like Raffi Ahmad and Nagita Slavina influence the vacation plans of young adults. The information was analysed using hierarchical likelihood employing structural equation modeling after a representative sample of Millennials was selected via snowball sampling. Here in the digital age, data show that visitors are successful and provide light on what factors impact their visit intentions. To determine each element's relative relevance, the study used logistic regression using hierarchical likelihood modelling of structural equations and variational approximation. The used approach is an advanced iteration of the structural equation model that incorporates logistical variational approximation for feature selection and hierarchical likelihood estimation.

2.1 Influencer Marketing: Definition and Evolution

(Vidani & Das, 2021) New marketing challenges have emerged as a result of the proliferation of social networks and users: noise. With 615 million users and a 30% yearly growth rate, ad-blocking software and programs are making paid social media advertising less efficient thanks to the noise generated by online users. Despite marketers reevaluating their ads in pursuit of more effective strategies, consumers are drowned out in the din, making it impossible for them to form genuine connections with brands. Customer-centric tactics include influencer marketing, content marketing, native advertising, and product placement that might assist them in achieving their objectives. Brands now have a fresh and powerful tool at their disposal to interact with consumers on social media. It's called social media influencer marketing. Key individuals may promote a company and spread the news to their followers. This paper focuses on the evolution of influencer marketing from traditional marketing, e-WOM, derived from various online literature.

(A. Ahmed & Rathore, 2024) Influencer marketing (IM) has markedly transformed into a potent marketing communication instrument for companies owing to the proliferation of the internet and social media. This chapter investigates the origins of influencer marketing, shifting from conventional celebrity endorsements to examine how influencer marketing has expanded and the potential and difficulties it poses for modern marketers. Further, it delves into the present state of the IM sector and its development, offering a thorough and illuminating analysis of the phenomena and ideas related to IM. The chapter draws from academic literature and theory to enhance understanding of IM and its impact on businesses.

(Tanwar et al., 2022) Using social media influencers (SMIs) to disseminate brand messaging is a common tactic among digital marketers. Through the use of bibliometric and content analysis, this research surveys the scholarly work on influencer marketing that has been published between 2011 and 2019. This article reviews how knowledge frameworks, performance assessments, and research on influencer marketing have developed throughout time. The main areas of concentration in this evaluation include important methods, theories, models, variables, platforms, data sources, industry priorities, and research streams. The goals of this debate are to deepen our understanding of influencer marketing and SMIs, review recent developments in the field, and suggest avenues for further study. The study uses the Bibliometrix R-tool and the BiblioShiny app for data analysis and scientific mapping.

(Selvakkumar, 2012) Influencer marketing is an effective method for firms aiming to engage with their target consumers on social media. It rose to popularity after a long history of evolution from more conventional forms of advertising. Driving brand exposure, trust, and consumer loyalty are key ideas, advantages, and problems of influencer marketing. Emphasizing honesty and openness, ethical issues of influencer collaborations are vital. As influencer marketing continues to redefine the marketing landscape, understanding its intricacies is essential for businesses to thrive in the digital realm.

(Y. Chen, 2023) Social media influencer marketing is a well-liked method of reaching certain demographics and increasing product recognition. Its intricacies, efficacy, and influence on customer behavior and brand results are all examined in this article. Gain a comprehensive understanding of influencer marketing as it has developed and grown in prominence. Delve into the fundamental principles and how they relate to consumer psychology. The study also highlights successes and failures in influencer marketing, highlighting the importance of understanding its dynamics and effectiveness.

(Vangelov, 2019) This paper delves into how the emergence of influential figures in fields such as journalism, public relations, advertising, and marketing has changed the way people communicate. New forms of communication have evolved, and digital channels are crucial for reaching target audiences. Opportunities for businesses to enhance their marketing communication are offered, influencers are defined and categorized, and their communicative features are examined. It provides examples of influencers communicating with their audience through social networks and analyzes how influencer marketing presents opportunities for communication evolution.

(Latifah, 2025) Celebrity endorsements have mostly been replaced by social media advertising in the last 10 years. This essay revisits the origins of influencer marketing and stresses the significance of authenticity in persuading sceptical customers and in the way, influencers engage with their online fan bases. Organisations can maximise their influencer marketing initiatives by making smart data analytics decisions, working with the right influencers, and creating engaging content. The report, Current Trends and Best Practices, provides valuable insights for organizations seeking to manage influencer marketing in the digital environment, increasing brand awareness and consumer loyalty.

(Usta, 2023) By allowing companies and consumers to have a two-way conversation and by making it easier for consumers to have positive opinions of these brands, Web 2.0 has completely changed the face of online advertising. Using social media to set your business apart and build a solid reputation is more crucial than ever in today's industry due to the abundance of competition. Influencer marketing came about because of the proliferation of social media users who have large followings and can reach a large audience. Individual views and preferences may be shaped by influencers by their capacity to establish a rapport with their target market, inspire desire, and increase sales. By appealing to customers' beliefs, experiences, and trust, brands may improve their reputation, increase brand recognition, and encourage organic conversions. This study's main goal was to ascertain the extent to which influencer marketing had an effect strategy had on company expansion. Findings from the literature study and interviews with seven influencer marketing experts demonstrated that these strategies improved brand awareness and revenue. Nevertheless, this reputation might be at risk due to a few clumsy preparations.

(Khan & Shalini, 2024) Brands may reach their target customers via influential people with big social media followings through influencer marketing. Authenticity, trust, and focused reach allow influencers to affect attitudes, habits, and purchase choices. Images, videos, and live streaming are just a few examples of the many content forms offered by social media, which allows for high engagement and connection and provides adaptable brand presentations. By amplifying brand messages, influencers increase the likelihood that they will go viral and attract more attention. They make things more relevant by showing how they are used in everyday life, which makes businesses more human. In order to get insights, automate processes, and improve decision-making, data analytics and AI solutions are essential. Combining influencer marketing with these tools enhances campaign precision, efficiency, and effectiveness, allowing brands to make informed decisions, optimize strategies, and build meaningful audience connections, driving growth and engagement in a competitive digital landscape.

(Bognar, Zrinka Blazevic, Nikolina Plesa Puljic, 2019) Managing a marketing campaign is putting theory into practice by analyzing, planning, executing, and controlling initiatives to create and sustain profitable relationships with specific target audiences. There is a higher degree of risk for businesses since they often operate in unpredictable environments. For this reason, in order to make good judgments that will ensure their survival and generate profit, businesses need to

conduct information investigations in different methods. Maintaining a database of marketing-related information is one approach to data collection. Included in the company's marketing information system, this system will help the business deal with current and future tasks. It should provide extensive knowledge of the environment and information obtained through the system, which is responsible for creating special conditions for the company, improving its business, and enhancing its relationship with consumers.

(Marketing, n.d.-b) Online influencers came into being as a result of the internet's revolutionary impact on the communication methods used by bloggers and vloggers. Influencers are defined and discussed in this chapter along with their function in influencer marketing. The definition it offers merges the notion of influencers with influencer marketing. Electronic word of mouth and user-generated content for companies are also covered in the chapter as ways in which influencer marketing is made possible. It goes on to talk about the fundamentals of influencer marketing as well as the consequences for both companies and influencers.

(Santiago et al., 2020) Because the internet age has changed consumer behavior, it has created both possibilities and problems for digital influencers. Marketing experts' views on modern digital influencers and Instagram influencer marketing efforts are the focus of this research. To get to the heart of the cosmetics industry's influencer marketing scene, it employed semi-structured interviews and a convenience sample that is not probabilistic. The study used a qualitative approach. The significance of digital influencers, their independence in expression, genuineness, and trustworthiness are highlighted by the findings. The research does show that experts have a hard time with things like managing incentives, differentiating influencer efforts, and calculating ROI. The study's main value lies in documenting all stages of the influencer marketing process and highlighting the challenges and success factors of an influencer campaign.

(Marketing, n.d.-a) The emergence of influencer marketing enables brands to target their ideal consumers with enhanced accuracy and efficiency. The marketing and advertising strategies of firms are being shaped by important individuals, who are increasingly using both digital and traditional communication methods. Finding the correct influencers, measuring their performance, the dark side, legal and ethical framework, and more are all topics covered in this book that delves into the theoretical and practical ramifications of influencer marketing. From the Kardashians to Joe Wicks, it covers it all with in-depth case studies and contributions from writers all around the

globe. Influencer Marketing is essential reading for advanced, postgraduate, and executive education students in Marketing, Digital Marketing, Marketing Communications, Brand Management, and Public Relations, as well as Marketing Communications, Branding, and PR specialists.

(Ahuja & Loura, 2020) Influential individuals, scholars of consumer socialization, and advertising and public relations specialists are the primary subjects of this investigation into the growth of influencer marketing in Indian businesses. The study's in-depth interviews highlighted the significance of aligning brand goals with influencer identification, strategy, and expectations. Also highlighted are the intricacies of the eWOM methodology and consumer socialization theory. The findings provide valuable insights for researchers, academicians, digital marketers, and marketing professionals in devising their communication strategies, contributing to the development of new ways of reaching customers on social media platforms.

(Okonkwo & Namkoisse, 2023) "Influencer marketing" is a kind of digital marketing that targets certain demographics by using popular social media users to promote products and services. The rise of popular video-sharing platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok has contributed to the meteoric rise of this trend. Influencer marketing allows businesses to engage in a more personalized dialogue with their target customers. A wide variety of tactics, such as sponsored content, product placements, user-generated content, and brand endorsements, have emerged as part of the influencer marketing ecosystem. Famous people, micro-influencers, and nano-influencers are only a few types of influencers. Campaign success hinges on well-defined goals, carefully chosen influencers, compelling content, a multi-channel strategy, and active audience participation. The following factors must be considered in order to measure success: scalability, authenticity, audience relevance, metrics, regulatory compliance, content quality, and any unfavorable publicity. Influencer marketing is evolving towards authentic, enduring partnerships, while virtual influencers and AI-driven campaigns are emerging.

2.2 Characteristics of Indian Millennials as Digital Consumers

(Nawaz, 2020) This chapter delves into the attitudes and behaviors of Millennials, a rapidly growing generation in business circles. It delves into their way of life, how they work, CSR, cultural differences, education, buying habits, IT, and social media. Personal factors like gender identity, money, education, geography, political affiliations, and religion impact Millennial

consumers' actions, according to the authors. Non-personal factors like organizational efforts, branding, technological influences, and societal pressures also play a role. As the active workforce, organizations are adapting their practices to cater to Millennials' evolving needs.

(Thangavel et al., 2021) The decision-making processes of Generation Z and Millennial internet shoppers in India are compared and contrasted in this study. In order to deduce the preferences of 503 survey takers, the study used the GCT framework in conjunction with psychographic statements. The most common motivations for internet purchasing among Millennials and Gen Zers in India are social desirability, ease of use (home), and cost-effectiveness (Price). Online purchasing is something that Generation Z is far more excited about compared to Millennials, according to ANOVA data. The research emphasizes the need of marketers tailoring their value propositions and marketing messages to connect with different generations. The research is unique as most existing studies on generational cohorts are from Western and European countries, which may not be applicable to developing nations like India, which is a complex and diverse country with unique language, customs, religion, and practices.

(Vaghela, 2022) Millennials, born from 1980 to 2000, are the first digital generation and form a unique consumer demographic with increased buying power. In a study conducted in Surat, Ahmedabad, and Vadodara, Gujarat, millennials' online shopping intentions for consumer electronics were found to be significantly affected by trust, e-service quality, subjective norms, and perceived risk. This suggests that online retailers should develop customer acquisition and retention strategies for millennials.

(Eastman et al., 2016) examined the views of Millennials from the United States and India on the topics of media relatability, the informativeness of advertisements, and gender disparities. The findings indicate that in comparison with their American counterparts, Millennials in India are more likely to find advertisements offensive, believe that commercials drive up costs, and generally despise them. Regardless, Millennials in the US see advertisements as more trustworthy and informative. These cultural differences may affect the efficacy of advertisements to different groups, highlighting the importance of understanding and addressing these differences.

(S. Joshi et al., 2021) This research looks at how and why young people's perceptions and preparedness for digital transactions differ when they purchase online. It finds 30 factors that influence their purpose and adaptation, such as human traits, technological capabilities, perceived

utility, security, and transaction risk. The research further investigates the impact of these traits on both the intention and actual implementation of digital transactions. The results indicate that the correlation between variables and digital transaction adoption behavior is affected by the customer's propensity to participate in digital transactions. This study investigates the factors that micro-enterprises think about when deciding to use technology solutions. Using a mix of TAM and TPB, it assesses things like subjective norms, transaction costs, perceived risk, perceived ease of use, and perceived risk. The goals of digital adoption were investigated by surveying 130 micro firms in Mumbai. The results show that perceived ease of use, peer influence, and transaction costs are significant factors driving intention to adopt digital transactions, while perceived risk is not significant.

(Chopra, Vidyavihar, et al., 2021) The study used standardised scales, statistical techniques, and two-stage research. Studies found that subjective norms and perceived usability were the essential criteria influencing whether or not micro firms planned to use technology-based solutions. When it came to implementing technology-driven solutions, a key consideration was the reduction of transaction costs, whereas the risk connected with technology usage was not. A broader sample including other cities could improve the study's weaknesses, which are mostly related to its narrow emphasis on Mumbai. Nonetheless, this study's ramifications are substantial since digital inclusion enables the settlement of transactions via a digital medium connected to a bank account. Optimized digital payment solutions for small businesses may increase consumer engagement, loyalty, repeat purchases, cross-selling, and up-selling possibilities. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights for marketers and policymakers in developing economies, particularly in the micro enterprise segment.

(Mahajan, 2017) There has been rapid expansion in India's retail industry, which now accounts for almost 10% of GDP and 8% of jobs. By 2026, the retail market in India would have grown to US\$ 1.6 trillion, a 10% compound annual growth rate. It is now the fifth-largest retail industry in the world. Amazon and Flipkart are just two examples of the many online retailers using innovative marketing strategies to attract customers. It is essential to comprehend the factors that affect the online store choice of Indian millennials. The study reveals that millennials are generally satisfied with the services of selected online retailers, and four factors are statistically significant for their selection.

(Sharma et al., 2020) This research sought to identify the favored digital marketing methods among millennials in Punjab and to compare the purchasing behaviors of male, female, and transgender customers. Millennials, having been raised in a social media environment, represent a crucial target demographic for several digital marketing initiatives. In a survey with 250 participants, researchers discovered that Instagram was men's favorite site, while women's preferred platforms were videos, blogs, and social media postings. First and second, Instagram and Facebook, respectively, impacted transgender consumers' purchasing choices. Marketers would do well to pay attention to these demographics' purchasing habits in light of the results. This research highlights the importance of understanding the diverse tastes and preferences of consumers in the digital marketing landscape.

(Purani et al., 2019) This research delves at the ways in which millennials' online loyalty is shaped by their own traits as well as the influence of their peers. Researchers gathered this information from 380 millennials in India who had shopped online in the last six months. Millennials' e-loyalty intentions are more influenced by personal qualities and social influence, according to the data. With this knowledge, online stores may create more successful marketing efforts, which in turn increases client loyalty. Results from the research are grounded in the broader framework of technology adoption.

2.3 Theoretical Frameworks in Influencer Marketing Research

(Vrontis et al., 2021) The increasing popularity of social media influencers (SMIs) has led to a growing interest in influencer marketing (IM) in firm strategies. However, the scholarly work on IM remains fragmented and divergent. This research compiles and synthesizes previous work on instant messaging (IM) in social media settings from peer-reviewed academic journals. A comprehensive grasp of the processes that make SMIs appealing and how they impact customer attitudes and behaviors is gained by reading 29 publications recognised by the Chartered Association of Business Schools, including 68 papers. It provides a comprehensive multidimensional framework to take into consideration the plethora of elements that impact consumer behavior, including antecedents, mediators, moderators, and contextual factors. The study reveals new areas and unexplored terrain, and it proposes directions for further research in theory, context, and methodology. Based on the study's findings, both theory and practice are discussed.

(Liu, 2021) Marketing managers are taking notice of influencer marketing as it grows in popularity on social media. To comprehend its influence on consumer involvement with the brand, this article suggests a study paradigm based on the dual-route effect. Parasocial relationships, according to the concept, boost brand credibility by increasing trust in the authenticity of content sources when users engage with that information. Additionally, content immersion increases brand content enjoyment, ultimately fostering brand engagement. This framework offers potential for future research and managerial implications.

(Johansen et al., 2017) The majority of industry analysts concur that influencer marketing will dominate in 2017. However, it is inadequately comprehended and devoid of a theoretical foundation in scholarly discourse. This master's thesis uses the Theory of Reasoned Action to analyse how influencer marketing affects consumers' propensity to purchase. By examining the connection between marketing strategy and customer activities, the research contrasted influencer marketing with more conventional types of internet advertising. A modified experiment included 180 participants who were asked to complete an online survey on Facebook. Theoretically grounded research indicates that influencer marketing positively affects customers' behavior attitudes but has little impact on their subjective standards. Yet, unlike traditional web ads, influencer marketing does not sway customers' decision to buy. The study encourages further research into influencer marketing to further examine this result.

(Veissi, 2017) examined influencer marketing on Instagram, a prominent site for this kind of marketing. The research topic and investigation inquiries are presented, followed by a theoretical framework that encompasses influencer marketing, the five Ps of the marketing mix, and the honeycomb structure. Secondary data gathering is used, focusing on a subject examined in the last one to two years. The empirical data are examined, emphasizing consumer perceptions of Instagram marketing and the extent to which marketers have engaged in influencer marketing. The analysis section presents the gathered data within theoretical frameworks and elucidates its application to these theoretical constructs. Influencer marketing is integrated into the 5P's marketing mix from the viewpoint of a marketer. The result indicates that influencer marketing is seen ambivalently, however it is regarded as more trustworthy than conventional advertisements. Future proposals include investigating the legality and efficacy of this marketing approach on a broader scale. The reflection on the writing process is also included.

(Iqbal, Aslam, et al., 2023) Influencer marketing (IM) has become more commonplace due to the proliferation of social media influencers (SMIs). Conversely, there is a lack of consistency and coherence in scholarly studies on IM. This study aims to go deep into IM by exploring its history, effects, theoretical underpinnings, and possible avenues for further investigation. Researchers found the necessary theoretical underpinnings of our research and the elements that led to influencer marketing's efficacy via a thorough literature analysis. The analysis only took into account publications published in English from 2017 to 2022. Finding reputable and engaged influencers, measuring the efficacy of influencer marketing, and consistently communicating corporate values via influencers are all areas where this research has applications for businesses thinking about influencer marketing. As far as we are aware, this study is the first to investigate the theory, practice, and potential future of influencer marketing. Ultimately, the study aims to help companies enhance their influencer marketing strategies while avoiding common mistakes. The review offers a comprehensive examination of the existing body of research on the phenomenon of influencer marketing, providing an assessment of the present state of knowledge and suggesting potential avenues for future research.

(Marketing, 2024) The research project "Innovative Strategies in Influencer Marketing: Development and Application to Drive Business Competitiveness" aims to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework for influencer marketing, based on academic works. The project uses a mixed type of research, including theses and scientific papers, literature review, and bibliographic analysis, to collect data and create a conceptual framework. The study concludes that a strong conceptual framework is created for influencer marketing, offering a roadmap to the general objective of driving business competitiveness. The goal is to provide guidance on objectives, strategies, performance metrics, and best practices in the field.

(Fine & Gu, 2022) Marketers often fail to grasp the breadth, efficacy, and possible dangers of online influencer marketing (OIM), despite its rapid ascent in firms' marketing tactics. Using findings from interviews with practitioners and consumers as well as social capital theory, this paper defines OIM and discusses its distinctive characteristics. It implies that OIM use influencers' personal positioning, communication content, trust, and networks of followers to enhance marketing messages. The essay lays out critical tactics for managing OIM, presents six new

hypotheses that show its advantages and disadvantages, and finds literature-practice gaps that need to be filled in order to do further research.

(Hugh Wilkie et al., 2022) This research examines the efficacy of influencer marketing by examining the roles played by the two parties. The key aspects driving influencer marketing effectiveness are clarified in this study by using the source credibility model with signaling theory. Using information from 281 influential people on social media, the model is tested using partial least squares. The results show that influencer effectiveness is evaluated using heuristic indicators like influencer popularity and beauty guide reviews. The weight that followers assign to these signals is determined by their degree of category engagement and their level of benevolence. The influencer and partner brand are crucial for achieving three goals: improving brand authenticity, increasing brand engagement, and fostering favorable opinions of influencer content. This is shown via a sequential mediating effect. Subsequent study need to examine other heuristic signals and emphasize the influence of the partner brand. The study presents a step-by-step visual framework to help marketers and influencers develop more effective and collaborative partnerships.

(Bakker, 2018) With the advent of influencer marketing, companies may pay well-known figures in the social media sphere to provide product endorsements. Academic discourse does not provide a theoretical basis for this strategy, much like word-of-mouth marketing. This study lays forth a plan for successfully using the new field in practical settings. It proposes a method for companies to choose optimal influencers for collaboration and demonstrates how to maximize audience engagement. The paper also emphasizes the relevance of influencer marketing in consumer purchase decisions.

(Mero et al., 2023) This study examines business-to-business (B2B) influencer marketing from a consumer marketing perspective. Twelve senior marketing managers and ten marketing agency specialists made up the twenty-two people that took part in the study. Influencer marketing in business-to-business (B2B) marketplaces is complex; however, our research uncovered four main strategies used by these organizations. This research advances our knowledge of influencer marketing by defining it more broadly to include more extensive contact with influencers and by presenting the first empirical analysis of the business-to-business (B2B) influencer marketing phenomena. There is a plethora of influencer marketing tactics that managers may choose from,

and each one has the ability to help achieve certain corporate goals. Both B2B and B2C influencer marketing may be better understood with the knowledge you get from this study.

2.4 Determinants of Purchasing Intentions in Influencer Marketing

(Niloy et al., 2023) The study investigates the impact of attitudes towards food influencers on consumer purchase intention and identifies factors affecting consumers' attitudes towards them. Data was collected from 500 randomly selected consumers and tested using multivariate linear regression analysis. The results demonstrated a good correlation and considerable impact of influencer attitude on intention to buy. Product compatibility, familiarity with the source, and attractiveness of the source were all factors that were positively correlated with attitude toward influencers. The correlation between people's perceptions of influencers and the reliability of their sources was slight but discernible. To better understand how influencer marketing might increase consumers' propensity to buy food, marketers and brand practitioners may find it useful to delve into the study's findings. This is the first of its kind to investigate the impact of attitudes toward influencers on purchase intention in the food industry.

(Y. Li & Peng, 2021) The major objective of the research is to find out how much of impact social media influencers have on customers' ultimate purchasing decisions. Competence, creativity, and homophily are some of the source traits of influencers that impact customers' favorable attitudes, including image satisfaction and advertising trust, according to research involving 510 Chinese Weibo users. Interactivity enhances trust in commercials, while beauty boosts visual pleasure, according to the research. According to the research, customers' self-brand attachment moderated the relationship between these opinions and intents to buy. The study proposes a theoretical framework for influence marketing based on communication-persuasion matrix.

(Saima & Khan, 2020) Social media influencer marketing is an emerging kind of digital advertising that leverages user-generated content (UGC) such as product evaluations, photographs, and status updates. This research looks at social media influencers' legitimacy and the likelihood that their followers will really make a purchase, with a particular emphasis on the Delhi National Capital Region (NCR) in India. The data was analyzed using structural equation modeling after data collection via an online survey. The findings show that trustworthiness, information quality, and entertainment value have significant direct effects on influencers' credibility and indirect effects on consumers' purchase intention.

(Nguyen et al., 2022) The primary purpose of this research is to determine if and how much young Vietnamese consumers have been influenced by influencer marketing. Among other quantitative research approaches, this study's data was analyzed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). An online poll was administered to 250 members of Generation Z. Credibility of influencers, product utility, content pleasure, influencer expertise, and the existence of peer evaluations and recommendations were shown to be the five most important elements influencing Gen Z's purchasing behavior. Perceptions of the influencers' expertise, entertainment value, and legitimacy, as well as peer counsel and appraisal, were the most critical elements impacting customers' intents to purchase. However, when it comes to purchasing decisions, statistics reveals that Vietnamese Gen Z aren't much impacted by RE (relevance between things and customers). The study provides managerial recommendations to improve influencer marketing's effectiveness in influencing purchase intention among Vietnamese Gen Z consumers.

(Yap & Ismail, 2022) Using the TEARS paradigm and the concept of planned behavior, this study examines the impact of virtual influencer marketing on Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. Perceived realism and trustworthiness were shown to have less of an effect on purchase intention, according to a poll of 450 individuals. Parasocial interaction and attractiveness were found to be the most relevant traits. When considering these variables in regard to intent to buy, one's attitude towards virtual influencers acts as a mediator. Gender and persuasion knowledge also play a role, but not significantly, in the relationship between parasocial interaction and purchase intention.

(Chetioui et al., 2020) Combining the TEARS model with the concept of planned behavior, this research investigated how virtual influencer marketing affected millennial consumers in Malaysia. Perceived realism and trustworthiness were shown to have less of an effect on purchase intention, according to a poll of 450 individuals. Parasocial interaction and attractiveness were found to be the most relevant traits. When considering these variables in regard to intent to buy, one's attitude towards virtual influencers acts as a mediator. Gender and persuasion knowledge also play a role, but not significantly, in the relationship between parasocial interaction and purchase intention.

(Daimi & Tolunay, 2021) Due to the platform's enormous user base and quick growth, marketing via social media influencers has become more important. Rather than adopting a thorough approach that considers the influencers' impact on consumers' purchase intentions, most prior research has concentrated on the sender, the message, or the recipient's viewpoint. Several

variables affect the likelihood that an influencer's followers will make a purchase, including the authenticity, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and skill of the influencer. The social, ego, and self-actualization demands of followers are additional considerations, along with the regularity, quality, and interaction of the material. In order to address that gap, our research will examine these aspects. The results demonstrate that the credibility and genuineness of an influencer, in conjunction with the ego requirements of their followers, greatly impact the likelihood that they will make a purchase. Implications for theory and practice are also covered in the paper.

(Bu et al., 2022) This research explores at the ways in which influencers' affinity for their audiences impacts the way consumers co-create value, leading to elevated brand value and buy intent. Evidence from a survey of 910 American adults suggests a relationship between homophily and brand value and propensity to buy. Homophily contributes to the success of customer value co-creation initiatives. The study suggests further research on value co-creation in influencer marketing and serves as a valuable reference for marketing practitioners and influencers.

(Farivar et al., 2023) Finding out if and how social media influencers' content affects their followers' subsequent behavior is the driving force behind this study. To do this, it makes use of the elaboration probability model, which looks for central and peripheral factors that make followers want to purchase more things and expound on messages. Interactions between perceived physical beauty, trustworthiness, and self-presence and core characteristics impact purchase intention, according to research involving 487 Instagram users. Perceived distinctiveness, informativeness, and originality, on the other hand, have direct consequences. The impact of informativeness is constant across various influencer traits, although the impact of post originality is more pronounced. The results highlight how influential post content is for influencer marketing and how influencer and post characteristics interact to affect the efficacy of influencer marketing.

2.5 Influencer Credibility and Its Impact on Consumer Behavior

(Mishra & Ashfaq, 2023) The rise of social media influencers has significantly impacted marketing strategies, influencing businesses to promote their products and services. Various viewpoints exist about how consumer behaviour and decision-making are impacted by influencer marketing. Researchers want to find out what factors into these choices by doing this study. As a whole, the literature review examines influencer marketing research from every angle, including message

value, influencer traits, and content accuracy. Finding out how influencer marketing affects customer behavior is the main goal of the study.

2.6 Role of Influencer-Consumer Relationships:

(Karaila, 2021) Studied, the primary objective was to identify the characteristics of social media influencers that have an effect on consumer behaviour and to evaluate the impact that these influencers have. It was decided to conduct a survey in order to pre-test these qualities and establish the impact they have on customers' behaviour. The data indicate that attractiveness positively affects word-of-mouth, purchase intention, and attitudes towards streamers, indie games, and AAA games. There is a favourable influence that trustworthiness has on these aspects. There was no moderating effect of the type of game on the link between the attributes of the influencer and the behaviour of the customer.

(Nayak & Megha, 2024) Examined influencing industry consumer decision-making processes, market data, and scholarly study. Important subjects to address include influencer traits, content types, social media sites, and ethical standards. Insight into consumer trends and patterns is provided by the study's findings, which help us comprehend the evolution of customers' preferences. Because it draws on several sources, this study significantly expands our understanding of the topic. It also serves as a valuable reference for academics, marketers, and industry professionals who are interested in gaining an understanding of the complexity of influencer marketing.

(Iqbal, Aleem, et al., 2023) Determined how much trust, attractiveness, perceived knowledge, and trustworthiness influenced customers' perceptions towards influencers. The findings revealed that out of 250 social media users surveyed, trustworthiness, knowledge, and beauty had the most impact on influencer opinions and the desire to purchase. Trust was seen to have a little effect, and one's attitude towards influencers moderated the relationship. The purpose of this study is to give fashion marketers and advertisers with data that will help them better their connections with influencers and develop campaigns that are effective in the rapidly evolving world of digital marketing.

(Farrell et al., 2022) Aimed increasingly popular tactic in recent years, influencer advertising uses popular social media users as spokespeople to boost product recognition and sales. The authors

stepped back to find out what makes customers follow influencers, even though there is an increasing amount of data on what makes influencers effective. In order to answer two study objectives, the authors looked at consumer heterogeneity to see how followers of influencers get value. Using latent class segmentation, the authors were able to identify six separate consumer classes after conducting an exhaustive survey over five social media sites, including YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, and others. Individuals in various fields follow influencers for different reasons and respond differently to their posts. Brands and influencers alike may use the results to inform their strategies for managing connections with consumers.

(Qureshi et al., 2024) designed to examine the impact of social media frauds on consumers' decision-making processes, with a primary emphasis on the trustworthiness of influencers. This study used a quantitative research paradigm, collecting answers from 450 social media users. The results highlight how social media scams damage customers' perceptions of goods and services, which influences their propensity to buy. The findings offer practitioners and marketers significant insights that may be used in their work.

(Ghosh et al., 2024) Investigated the factors that impact the choices that Gen Z customers in India make about fast-food outlets, including the characteristics of influencers, the feelings of consumers, their own self-perceptions, and their behavioural intents. However, self-construal was shown to be a major predictor of behavioural intentions, whereas influencer qualities were revealed to have a considerable impact on behavioural intentions. These intentions were negatively impacted by the emotions of the consumers. Based on the data, it appears that marketers have the ability to intentionally select microinfluencers that possess qualities that correspond with the feelings and self-perceptions of Generation Z in order to promote different fast-food enterprises.

(Chavda & Chauhan, 2024) Examined this abstract covers the most recent studies on the impact of social media influencers on purchasing decisions. It draws attention to three significant studies: one that examined the psychological consequences of influencer marketing, which looked studied how various types of female social media influencers affected consumers' desire to buy these goods and their level of confidence in them, and a third that examined the ways in which cultural factors moderate influencer-consumer relationships. The research shows that influencer marketing is complex and that while developing campaigns, it's important to think about influencer kinds,

psychological processes, and cultural variations. Important elements influencing consumer behaviour in the digital era include the veracity of influencers, psychological processes, and cultural moderation.

(Erwin et al., 2023) This quantitative study looks at how Generation Z in Indonesia's buying behavior is affected by social media influencers. In all, 450 young individuals from all walks of life and all corners of the globe (with ages ranging from sixteen to twenty-four) took part in the study. In a survey asking people about their buying habits, 85 percent said that social media influencers had a big effect. With an average daily user engagement of two hours, Instagram easily surpasses all other social media platforms in terms of popularity. Reviews of honest and direct lifestyles and products accounted for the bulk of views (65%). While 72.5% of people said that being honest and transparent was important for establishing trust, 30.0% said that inconsistent brand endorsements and 22.5% said that non-transparency about finances eroded trust. Despite the fact that 80% of consumers found sponsored content useful, 60% still valued authentic connections more. Influencer engagement, consumer behavior, and sponsored content all showed a positive link in a regression analysis ($R\text{-squared}=0.754$). The results of the research have important implications for marketers in Indonesia who are aiming to connect with Generation Z.

(Tian et al., 2023) Examined the effect of influencers' identification and social comparison on the response of Generation Z consumers to sponsored posts. Optimism, appreciation, and assimilative comparison emotions are favorably impacted by perceived similarity, but contrastive comparison feelings are adversely impacted by despair, anger, and envy, according to an online poll of 295 college students. Wishful identification positively affects both assimilative and contrastive comparison emotions, enhancing consumers' motivation to follow influencers for self-improvement and enhancing brand attitude, purchase intention, and engagement behaviors.

(Taillon et al., 2020) Focused on the ways in which social media influencers run their own companies and the significance of close relationships between them and their followers. According to two studies, the positive effects of attractiveness and likeability on perceptions, recommendations, and intents to buy were attenuated by proximity. Although the research has certain drawbacks, such as using a student sample and relying on influencers to self-identify, it

does provide marketers and advertisers with some practical consequences. Closeness is identified as a moderator of consumer behaviors towards influencers.

(Aw & Chuah, 2021) Marketers and influencers alike could benefit from studies examining the advertising possibilities presented by influencers enhanced the capacity to establish a personal rapport with their audience due to the explosion of social media engagement. When well-known people on social media interact with their fans, this research looks at the parasocial interactions that occur. Parasocial interactions, such as the connection between customers' own purchase intents and how they perceive the motives of endorsers, are the focus of this research. An important part of these interactions is the function of social media influencers. It does this by using an attribution framework, theories of parasocial interaction, and theories of influence. Three hundred sixty-one actionable survey responses were examined by the researchers using structural equation modeling with partial least squares. The findings indicate that parasocial relationships, such as those involving attractiveness, social standing, and power, are more positively impacted by (1) influence attempts. (2) When people believe that an endorser is just looking out for themselves, parasocial ties suffer and fewer people buy the product. (4) The relationship between the two is moderated by self-discrepancy. Two follow-up studies show that gender and number of followers affect the predicted correlations. Both the theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

(Maqbool et al., 2022) Investigated 2020-21, monetary policy and liquidity operations minimised the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper aims to analyse monetary policy changes during COVID-19, including the operational framework, drivers, and liquidity management. The goal is to determine operating objectives and policy rates during COVID-19. The study draws on literature review and secondary data from research papers, yearly reports, and websites. This information is mostly from the Monetary Policy Operations section of the RBI Annual Report. In 2020-21, monetary policy had to balance restoring growth after COVID-19 and maintaining inflation below the upper tolerance range and aligning with the objective. Research indicates that inflation persists, hindering monetary authorities from promoting growth. More efforts are needed to lower supply-side inflationary pressures.

2.7 Effect of Content Characteristics on Purchase Intention:

(Zhang et al., 2020) Examined Digital marketing methods are being adopted by e-retailers to deliver more real information to customers. This research looks at the effects of live video streaming (LVS), which is characterized by broadcasts that happen in real-time and is used for B2C and B2B communication online. E-retailers have implemented LVS as a marketing tactic, although its impact on online buy intention is uncertain. This study uses construal level theory to analyse how LVS affects online purchase intention, taking into account psychological distance and perceived ambiguity. Researchers evaluate the research framework with the use of secondary data from Taobao.com, the biggest online commerce platform in China, using a quasi-experiment and two experimental designs. This study's results show that LVS may boost online shopping behavior by decreasing psychological distance and perceived ambiguity. On top of that, different types of products mitigate LVS's effect on perceived uncertainty. The research concludes with practical and management ramifications of our results.

(Sokolova & Kefi, 2020) Influencers on social media have a significant impact on advertisements because of the things they endorse to their fans. Popular figures in the fashion and beauty sectors who have a significant online following are the subject of this piece. This research looks at how factors including para-social interaction (PSI) among viewers, trustworthy online influencers, purchase intention, attitude homophily, and physical and social attractiveness are all connected. This research takes into consideration criteria such as influencer category and participant age while examining four famous French beauty influencers. While attitude homophily positively correlates with PSI, physical beauty has a negative or no correlation. Purchase intention is positively correlated with both influencer credibility and PSI.

(N. Ahmed et al., 2021) utilized structural equation modeling to examine data from 515 individuals. Researchers found that young consumers' attitude (A), subjective norms (SNs), and perceived behavioral control (PBC) were positively correlated with their intentions to buy organic food. In terms of environmental concerns (EC), perspective is helpful. One further way EC helps is by increasing the likelihood that young people will purchase organic food. There was a correlation between young customers' attitudes and their likelihood of buying organic food, and EC mediated this relationship. More crucially, environmental awareness moderates the connection

between all latent variables (A, SNs, PBC) and purchase intention by young customers in a favourable way.

(Rehman et al., 2019) Researched the relationship between TPB and TAB variables, as well as sales intent. The association between the TPB and TAM variables and online purchasing is mediated by purchase intention. Customer purchasing intention and online buying behaviour are moderated by trust and commitment. Data from Punjab universities accredited by HEC were analyzed using PLS-SEM. In this study, researchers apply TAM and TPB theory to the question of how consumers' attitudes, trust, commitments, perceptions of behavioral control, perceived ease of use, utility, and purchase intentions influence their actions. Research shows that factors including attitude, perceived utility, behavioral control, and subjective standards have a favorable and substantial impact on customers' propensity to buy. The five independent variables and online buying behavior are moderated by consumer purchase intention (CPI). Customer buying intention and online shopping behaviour are directly affected by commitment and trust.

(Ikonen et al., 2020) Aimed to simplify nutrition information for customers facing challenges associated to unhealthy intake. Many FOP labels exist in the market, but their genuine impact and effective approach to changing views and behaviours are uncertain. An interdisciplinary meta-analysis examines the effects of FOP labelling on consumer outcomes, including healthier choice identification, product perceptions, purchasing behaviour, and consumption, based on 114 papers. Results indicate that while FOP labels aid in identifying healthier items, their impact on promoting healthier choices is limited. Importantly, FOP labelling can have halo effects, positively impacting both virtue and vice goods, such as interpretative nutrition. Labels enhance health perceptions for vice and virtue items, but solely affect the purchasing intention of virtues.

(Pop et al., 2022) Since it encourages companies to cultivate lasting connections with their consumer's, established trust is vital in influencer and tourist marketing. This research found that SMI trust has a substantial influence on vacation planning by examining how SMI trust is related to the stages of the consumer journey: desire, information gathering, weighing options, making a purchase, satisfaction, and sharing experiences. Smart PLS data analysis showed that customers' trust in social media influencers has a favourable effect on vacation planning in general. In addition, the trust impact on the next phase is affected by each decision-making stage, thus SMI

input is continuous throughout the process. Tourism marketers could employ SMIs to enhance travel interest and facilitate consumers' search for trip information. SMIs' reputation is crucial for influencing tourists' destination decisions, in addition to being a marketing tool.

(Ismagilova et al., 2020) Analyzed 69 studies in order to forecast purchase intention, rank the following criteria in order of significance: argument quality, valence, eWOM utility, trust in message, and eWOM credibility, emotional trust, and attitude towards the website; and lastly, volume, existing eWOM, and source credibility. Researchers also made use of meta-analysis to establish the significance of each predictor. Marketers may potentially improve their tactics by studying what makes customers purchase more often. By deducing the factors that impact customers' propensity to make a purchase, academics may chart a course for future studies.

(Bashir, 2019) Examined factors influencing international buyers' purchasing intentions for halal food goods in South Africa. Data were gathered from 230 international customers via a self-administered questionnaire and structural equation modeling approach. The correlation between a customer's understanding of halal, recognition of the halal mark, attitude, purchase intent, and actual buying behavior is significant. Non-Muslim customers had superior attitudes and knowledge of halal compared to Muslim consumers. The study's limitations include its focus on Cape Town and its originality as one of the first to explore these factors.

(Lee & Kim, 2020) As a marketing communication tool, celebrity influencers are becoming more and more famous. However, there are still some unanswered questions about how customers see influencer promotional posts based on the credibility of the influencer and the firm. There has been a recent uptick in the number of individuals questioning whether or not influencer promotional posts that disclose funding really encourage viewers to critically evaluate the advertised product or service. Consequently, this research aims to find out how the effectiveness of promotional posts produced by Instagram influencers is affected by various kinds of disclosure, influencer reputation, and brand credibility. Trustworthy businesses' inclusion in Instagram postings boosts message trustworthiness, ad attitude, buy intent, and word of mouth (eWOM). The implications for theory and management are the focus of this discussion.

(Alsubari et al., 2022) Aimed the fast growth in the number of transactions, fake reviews, also known as false opinions, are becoming an increasingly significant aspect of internet marketing.

The goal of this research is to build a smart system that can detect bogus reviews on online marketplaces by analyzing n-grams of review text and sentiment ratings. A method known as term frequency-inverse document frequency (TF-IDF) was utilised for the purpose of data preprocessing in the study, which utilised a common dataset consisting of bogus hotel reviews. The detection and classification processes were carried out using four distinct machine-learning algorithms, with the suggested methods achieving a higher level of accuracy than the methods that were previously utilised.

(Hudders et al., 2021) Aimed Scopus search identified 154 peer-reviewed academic papers on influencer marketing, primarily from 2018-2020. Most studies employed empirical methods such as survey research, experimental designs, content analysis, or interviews. Although some studies looked at how influencers affect public opinion or behavior, the majority concentrated on how influencers are employed in commercial marketing. According to Stern's Revised Communication Model for Advertising, research was grouped according to three factors: source, message, and audience. The initial stream of study focused on communication experts and powerful individuals. The second train of thought analyzed the sponsored post content strategy of influencers. Promoted suggestion efficacy and influencer appeal were the last areas of investigation. Several studies from the third school of thought examined the transparency of clandestine advertising.. In conclusion, the report suggests further research and consequences for marketing and public policy.

(Roh et al., 2022) Researched organic food consumption using a broader paradigm that combines TCV and TRA, the theories of thought and action. This research examines how five consumption values, identified as green perceived value (GPV), influence sustainable purchasing choices. The study examines many factors including trust, perceived knowledge, subjective norms, attitude, and behavioral intention. The results demonstrate that GPV and perceived competence significantly influence consumers' choices about organic food consumption.

(Brewer & Sebby, 2020) Aimed to limit the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, dine-in services were temporarily banned. numerous restaurants went out of business, millions of people lost their jobs, and billions more were lost. Internet meal ordering is the new norm for businesses. They used the Stimulus-Organism-Response paradigm to forecast participants' desire to buy in this research, which included online meal ordering. The results of this research show that utilizing

structural equation modeling, menu informativeness, visual attractiveness, and customers' perceptions of COVID-19 dangers all have an indirect effect on customers' intents to buy. Food demand and the perceived simplicity of online ordering impacted the causal connection. This research offers insights on product selection, content marketing, and customer acquisition to help restaurants adjust to COVID-19 and stay competitive.

(X. Li et al., 2019) This study focusses on how internet reviews affect businesses. It examines the effects of both numerical and qualitative assessments on product sales performance via the use of empirical research. To extract the themes and feelings from review texts, employ a Joint Sentiment-Topic model. They further suggest that numerical ranking serves as a mediator between textual emotions and their outcomes. The results provide light on the interaction between numerical ratings and textual evaluations in influencing product sales and improve our understanding of the effect of eWOM on these sales. The findings, when put into effect, aid e-commerce vendors' business analytics operations strategy by drawing attention to the most important factors that generate revenue.

2.8 Consumer Attitudes and Perceptions Toward Influencer Marketing:

(Grafström et al., 2018) Designed to relatively new phenomena that started gaining traction in 2016, "influencer marketing" makes use of people who have a large online following. Businesses rely on these opinion leaders to successfully communicate with their desired demographic. The article delves at the effects of Instagram and blog influencer marketing on the perceptions of millennials. Jönköping University students and faculty participated in focus groups, and category indexing was used to evaluate the collected data. Promotional alignment, message credibility and trustworthiness, and style shifts by influencers are factors that impact millennials' perceptions, according to the study's results. This research adds to existing literature and explores the impact of influencer marketing on millennial attitudes.

(Singh, 2021) Examined how social media influencers alter purchasers' attitudes and trust while buying. This study's main goal is to measure the relative effectiveness of social media influencers (WoM). There was a correlation between a favorable attitude towards influencers and a greater propensity to purchase advertised items. The sensation of being connected, honesty, and the knowledge of the influencer are all factors that contribute to increased confidence. An investigation

of influencer marketing from the point of view of consumers will be carried out through the use of semi-structured interviews, which will be conducted using a qualitative methodology.

(Simon Abraham et al., 2022) researched current and future trends in Philippine digital influencer marketing. This research examined the reactions of 226 individuals using a structural equation model. According to the findings, consumers' perceptions and propensity to purchase are greatly impacted by the trustworthiness of the influencer and the kind of the post. Customers' propensity to buy or recommend was unaffected by the kind of content or sponsorship disclosure labels. This study is advantageous for those engaged in the beauty and cosmetics industry, including marketing agencies, cosmetic companies, and prospective scholars.

(Vidani et al., 2023) Designed to be one of the most crucial channels for companies to contact their target audiences nowadays is influencer marketing. Through the application of TPB and social learning theory, Bandura and Walters demonstrated that customers' attitudes about influencers and their belief in their own behavioral control positively impacted their actual buying behaviors. Peer pressure, however, had little effect. Furthermore, behavior was positively impacted by trust, motivation, and personal importance. To ensure the effectiveness of influencer marketing, it is crucial to identify the right influencers to provide hand-picked suggestions and guidance. As social media platforms continue to grow, influencer marketing is expected to become even more significant.

(Olsson & Wärme, 2020) confirmed that engaging with individuals online via social media is an excellent strategy for attracting new customers. Thanks to social media, influencers may potentially reach a wider audience and raise awareness of brands. As of yet, there has been no thorough evaluation of the performance of these new platforms. Examining how online marketing and influencers affect customers' opinions and purchases of energy drinks was the primary goal of this research. An investigation of this topic was carried out through the use of an experiment in the thesis. It is possible to construct a conclusion for this thesis by combining the findings of prior research in this field with the information obtained from the questionnaire used in the study. According to the findings of the study, there was no statistically significant difference in the efficacy of utilising an influencer or an online advertisement when it comes to the factors that impact consumers' views and intentions to purchase energy drinks.

(Amagsila et al., 2022) New forms of advertising have emerged as a result of people discovering and sharing each other's holiday experiences on social media. Important in the era of contemporary marketing are influencers. When this happens, how will consumers feel about the brand and their intentions to purchase it change? Research in this descriptive-correlational study relied on self-administered questionnaires. It utilized Cronbach's alpha and had a trusted academic practitioner double-check the results to find out how reliable the surveys were. Millennials and Gen Zers living in the Philippines' National Capital Region who are keen in exploring the world will be the focus of this study, which will also look at the country's online travel agencies. By using a Raosoft calculator to collect 385 responses, researchers were able to guarantee that this study fulfilled the requirements for a minimum sample size. Influencer marketing positively correlates with consumers' impressions of travel app companies, according to the Spearman's Rho test. The data that was obtained demonstrated this strong correlation. On the other hand, there are particular qualities that respondents seek for in an influencer, the most important of which are the capacity "to inspire" and the trustworthiness of the influencer themselves when it comes to marketing travel applications.

(Waltenrath, 2024) Investigated the influence that both revealed and secret advertising have on the level of interaction that consumers have with adverts and subsequent postings that do not contain advertising. It does this by employing a conceptual framework in conjunction with a substantial dataset taken from the actual world. Moreover, the results demonstrate that advertising posts exhibit decreased engagement levels relative to non-advertising posts, and that the credibility of the source elucidates the influence of disclosures on future postings. The Persuasion Knowledge Model may be used to demonstrate the influence of disclosures on contemporary advertising. The analysis indicates that most customers' coping techniques include advertisements.

(Eklöf et al., 2018) Learned that conventional techniques of promotion have been supplanted by influencer marketing as the go-to method for increasing brand awareness on social media. Nevertheless, consumers' opinions may be negatively impacted if Swedish influencers' sponsored material is shown too often. The issue was investigated using an interpretive, qualitative approach and an abductive philosophical framework in this study. Findings indicated that influencer marketing reached a wider audience than other approaches. But there has to be a balance between

companies and consumers, between consumers and those who have an impact on their purchasing decisions, and among consumers themselves. Overexposure to too many marketing messages can lead to inefficiency, emphasizing the need for marketers to balance their influencer marketing efforts.

(Y. Joshi et al., 2023) investigated the expanding role of social media influencers in advertising, this research reviews 214 publications published between 2008 and 2021. These four areas—parasocial interactions, sponsorship, authenticity, engagement, and effect—are the focus of this inquiry. Customers' reactions to influencer marketing are influenced by several factors, which the research delves into. These include brands, audiences, comparisons, content, influencers, social media, and technology. Marketing and social media influencer researchers can benefit from these findings by identifying key features and trends that might inspire new research and approaches.

2.9 Influence of Social Factors on Purchasing Decisions:

(Amaldoss & Jain, 2005) Investigated the influence that conformity and exclusivity have on the pricing and profitability of conspicuous items. For the purpose of satisfying societal requirements, marketing managers employ tactics such as limited production, high pricing, and exclusive distribution agreements. The paradigm of rational expectations is utilised in this study to conduct an analysis of conspicuous consumption in monopoly and duopoly marketplaces simultaneously. It has been demonstrated through research that the presence of weakly conformist customers can result in an upward-sloping demand curve when exclusivity is present. Impact varies depending on the structure of the market.

(Rouzbahani M.T., M Rezai., AA Goudarzi. & Naghibi., 2013) Assessed the influence of individual factors on purchasing decision. These factors include human attributes, age, life cycle phase, job status, economic conditions, lifestyle choices, personality traits, self-perception, and decision-making methodologies. The research is descriptive, and it contains both field research and examination of library materials. There were 73 patients included in the sample, which was comprised of merchants and vendors in the city of Borujerd. The findings demonstrated that internal personal characteristics, such as age, life cycle stage, economic situations, employment, lifestyle, and character sketch, do not have a major influence on the decisions that buyers make.

(Kim & Srivastava, 2007) Examined the role of social influence on online purchasing choices, paying special attention to how websites might learn from consumers' behaviour to better serve their needs. Here we see both the potential of social network analysis tools and the challenges of studying how social influence plays a role in online shoppers' final decisions. In addition to this, the article offers direction to scholars and businesses who are interested in topics that are linked.

(Auger et al., 2007) Aimed variety of industrialised and developing economies as case studies, this article analyses how social factors, including labour and environmental circumstances, influence product choice. We utilise a multi-attribute design to have customers give up certain intangibles—like brand and place of origin—in exchange for more concrete ones, and we also make them give up some social qualities. First, social attributes have a greater impact in developed economies than in emerging ones. Second, the significance of social attributes is consistent across products with high and low levels of involvement. Third, social attributes can still impact product choice when other intangible attributes are incorporated into the design. Our findings provide a more realistic depiction of the significance of social features, since they stem from a multi-cue, multi-product design that compelled customers to compromise between concrete and abstract qualities.

(Budzanowska-Drzewiecka, 2011) Examined how social variables (parents, siblings, and friends) affect the market behaviour of 9-11-year-old consumers. This article reports a replication of McLeod and Chaffee's communication typology patterns. The focus is on interpersonal communication inside the family, with mass communication (mostly advertising) being the most commonly examined factor. The study examines the impact of social variables (parents, siblings, and peers) in Poland. Information was collected using quantitative research (questionnaires). The study highlights how social variables might differ based on family communication patterns and product type. Research indicates that children view parents as having the greatest influence on their decisions. This article explores social conditioning and its impact on young customers' purchasing behaviour, offering research opportunities.

(Elzbieta & Joanna, 2023) Investigated how CSR influences the shopping decisions of Polish and Ukrainian customers. Data from 836 Ukrainian and Polish consumers was examined with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 and Microsoft Excel 2019. The results suggest that customer service does not significantly affect consumers' final purchasing choices. There are other important factors,

according to the results, such as quality, affordability, positive reviews, warranty conditions, and repair network. In order to enhance customer attitudes towards corporate social responsibility (CSR), marketing managers and firms may benefit from the findings.

(Kidane & Sharma, 2016) Aimed The fast-changing internet has created a competitive corporate climate, offering online options. Online transaction systems allow consumers to purchase and pay for goods and services via the internet. Customer engagement in internet shopping is a major trend. E-commerce enterprises face challenges from varying consumer behaviour due to the market's diverse population and cultures. It is crucial to understand the elements that influence customers' e-commerce purchases in different cultures and communities. To address this argument, this study examines factors influencing clients' e-commerce purchase decisions. Factors such as trust, contentment, return policy, after-sales service, warranty, reputation, and individual attitude are taken into account. Currently, the factors impacting online buying decisions are hypothesised to assess the causal link inside the framework.

(Yogesh & Yesha, 2014) Explored Social media has revolutionized the way people share information, views, and opinions. Especially in developing economies like India's, the explosion of social media has given marketers a new way to contact customers. Spending on social media is on the rise, but companies still struggle to see a return on investment (ROI) from their campaigns. In this article, we'll look at how social media impacts buying decisions. The five steps of the purchase process and how your habits affect them are the main points of this post. A lot of individuals get their news and information from social media because of its reliability, effectiveness, and user-friendliness. Although reviews and opinions shared on social media might influence consumers to make a purchase, sharing experiences after the fact is more rare.

(Amatulli et al., 2014) Investigated the impact of SNSs on users' social lives and found that the amount of friends a person has online has no effect on their spending habits or other lifestyle decisions. The perceived intensity of a user's friendships influences their popularity, but the perceived coolness of their online friends influences their popularity. Newly coined from the research is the term "Friendoolness," a portmanteau of "friendship" and "coolness" that refers to the behaviors associated with having many "cool" friends.

2.10 Purchase Intention in the Context of Digital Marketing:

(Khwaja et al., 2020) Examined the exponential growth of internet information transmission. Social media networks have increased consumer exposure to misdirection, misinformation, and accurate information. Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on social media accelerates knowledge dissemination. It is now challenging for customers to distinguish between real information and user-generated material. The study tries to identify characteristics that inspire customers to embrace knowledge and acquire items and services. The study offers a framework to restructure aspects influencing customers' buying intentions in the digital economy. Study participants were individuals who had purchased things online. Researchers used structural equation modelling (SEM) to ascertain how variables are correlated. The relationship between information quality, usefulness, perceived risk, and argument quality and purchase intentions was found to be influenced by trust tendency and information adoption.

(Pranasakya Ananda Gilang Umbara & Rinawati, 2023) Examined how digital marketing influences customer decision-making. The study's overarching goal was to catalog Jordanian internet marketing channels by product category and to ascertain the influence these platforms had on consumers' final purchasing choices. Furthermore, surveys were collected in the Jordanian market using a simple sampling strategy. The response rate was 73%, with 220 samples gathered from 300 surveys (not counting questions with incomplete responses). This research used a variety of statistical methods, including multiple regressions, correlation analysis, reliability evaluations, and descriptive statistics. Research shows that digital marketing via platforms like social media and mobile applications significantly influences customers' ultimate purchase decisions. Hypothesis testing shows that various popular digital media channels in Jordan impact student behaviour. Jordanian students use internet media to make purchases and digital marketing influences their choices. This study suggests that enterprises should harness digital technologies and build brand recognition through digital platforms to be competitive in today's market.

(Xiao et al., 2019) Investigated Since it is the world's biggest buyer and destination of cross-border e-commerce, China is spending a lot of money to promote online consumer buying in order to make sure it stays. This study identifies four signals that encourage cross-border online purchasing activity: those related to online advertising, content marketing, personalized

suggestions, and social reviews. The theory explores the mediating role of perceived emotional value and perceived functional worth, building on the stimulus-organization-response model and cue usage theory. Evidence suggests these signals have a positive impact.

2.11 Research Gap

After reviewing the literature, significant study gaps exist in influencer marketing (IM), notably in its efficacy, generational impact, and theoretical foundation. Numerous studies have shown how influencer marketing evolved from conventional advertising and how it affects customer attitudes, purchase intentions, and brand involvement, but no standard theoretical framework exists. The processes by which influencers effect consumer behavior are still debated in most studies. Although studies have examined influencers' traits (e.g., trustworthiness, attractiveness, credibility) and their impact across platforms and industries, there is little cross-cultural analysis, especially in emerging economies like India, where consumer behaviour may differ from Western norms. Despite Millennials and Gen Z's increased interest in influencer marketing, few research has contrasted their behavioural differences or studied how psychographic and socio-cultural aspects affect their interaction with social media influencers. Few longitudinal or experimental studies have confirmed influencer attribute-consumer reaction causal correlations. Overreliance on cross-sectional surveys and bibliometric reviews shows a need for empirical, theory-driven research that may provide marketers with generalizable insights and practical tactics. Finally, the ethical and transparency issues surrounding influencer collaborations are understudied, making it difficult to determine how authenticity and perceived manipulation effect long-term customer trust and brand loyalty. These gaps provide opportunities for future study to understand influencer marketing's involvement in digital consumer behaviour holistically and culturally.

2.12 Framework for concepts:

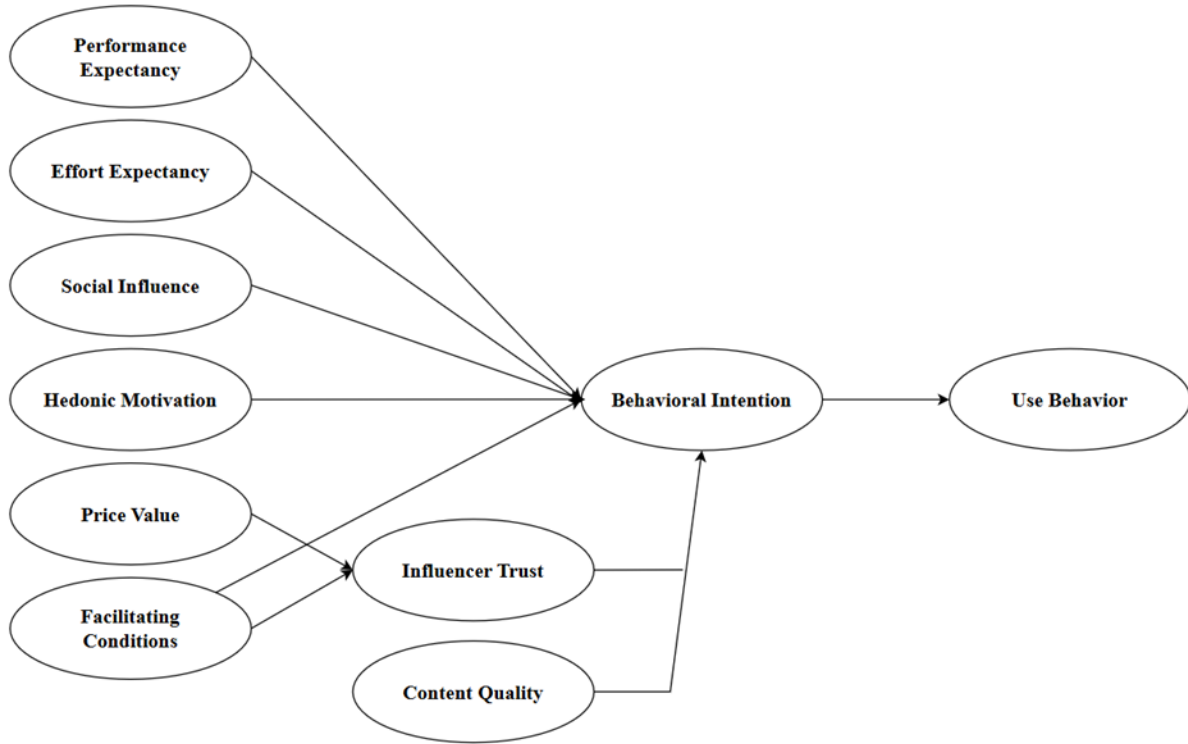


Figure 2 Framework for concepts

CHAPTER-3

3 Methodology

Introduction

Research methodology denotes a structured approach that directs the course of research. All the things that researchers employ to gather, process, and evaluate data for answering a particular research topic are part of it. Acquiring knowledge about research technique is essential for doing research systematically, rigorously, and scientifically. A research approach functions as a guide for doing an investigation. It assists in selecting the most effective methods for data collection, such as surveys, experiments, or observational studies, as well as the most effective instruments for data processing, such as quantitative analysis and statistical methods. The process must include assessing the validity and reliability of the chosen techniques to ensure that the research findings are trustworthy and relevant to a wider array of contexts. This chapter covers measurements, variable definitions (both conceptual and practical), SEM analysis, and statistical procedures. This section delves examining how the marketing tactics of social media superstars affect consumers' purchase decisions of India's millennials.

3.1 Research design

The purpose of this quantitative study was to ascertain how influencer marketing impacted Indian millennials' purchase decisions. The first stage in collecting data was the distribution of structured questionnaires. This study aimed to better understand the social media habits and online followings of young people in India, namely those in the 22–40 age range. Finding out how hedonic motivation, social influence, effort expectation, enabling circumstances, and performance expectations affect millennials' purchase intentions and behaviors was the driving force behind this study, which aimed to apply the UTAUT2 paradigm to this generation. The purpose of the research was to fill gaps in our knowledge about influencer marketing effectiveness by including other factors such perceived impact quality, confidence in the influencer, habit, and pricing value. The study used both descriptive and causal methodologies to examine consumer behavior patterns and evaluate cause-and-effect correlations among variables.

40 individuals served as pilot research to assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Modelling Structural Equations (SEM) is a powerful statistical tool that supports our study. It

facilitates comprehension of the intricate interactions among latent variables. Utilizing SPSS for structural equation modeling.

3.2 Population

The majority of the participants in the research are young adults (those whose ages range from 22 to 40) from India. This demographic is hand-picked for its influence on digital consumption patterns and strong social media engagement. Millennials are widely recognized for their technological savviness, online spending habits, and openness to digital content, making them an ideal group to explore influencer marketing effectiveness. The focus on Indian millennials is justified by their pivotal role in shaping purchasing trends in India's fast-evolving digital marketplace.

3.3 Sampling Method

In order to acquire responses from the intended audience, a basic **random sampling method** was used. This probabilistic method ensured that any millennial who participated in social media and saw influencer content had an equal possibility of selection. This strategy improved the sample's representativeness by mitigating researcher bias and ensured a varied array of respondents across many categories, including gender, location (urban/semi-urban), income, and educational attainment. Both online (Google Forms) and offline modes (physical questionnaires) were utilized to ensure inclusivity and wide reach.

3.4 Sampling Frame

The sample group included young people from India who often used social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Participation was contingent upon participants' having interacted with or followed digital influencers during the previous six months. Because of this stipulation, researchers know that every single one of our participants received enough exposure to the right kinds of influencer material to draw valid conclusions about how they interacted with it. The sampling frame was constructed by leveraging social media group memberships, university and professional networks, and digital marketing communities, facilitating a realistic representation of the digital millennial user base.

3.5 Calculations for Sample Size

A total of 600 people were considered for the study's final sample. For models that include several latent variables, the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) requirements need a sample size of at least 200. This number is derived from the rules that were just discussed. Maintaining a stable model, decreasing estimating bias, and increasing generalizability were all requirements of the conceptual framework's incorporation of several constructs. Performance and effort expectations, together with social influence, hedonic motivation, the trustworthiness of influencers, and the desire to buy are all part of this complex framework. A larger sample was therefore considered necessary. The data were screened for completeness, and responses with excessive missing values were excluded from analysis.

3.6 Objectives

1. To analyze the influence of performance expectancy on millennials' purchasing intentions in response to influencer marketing
2. To evaluate the role of effort expectancy in shaping millennials' purchasing intentions when engaging with influencer content
3. To examine the impact of social influence on purchasing intentions among Indian millennials
4. To assess the effect of facilitating conditions on actual purchasing behavior inspired by influencer marketing

3.7 Hypothesis

H0: Performance expectancy has no significant impact on the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

H1: Performance expectancy has a positive impact on the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

H0: Effort expectancy does not positively influence the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials when engaging with influencer content

H2: Effort expectancy positively influences the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials when engaging with influencer content.

H0: Social influence does not significantly affect the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

H3: Social influence positively affects the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

H0: Facilitating conditions do not significantly influence the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

H4a: Facilitating conditions positively influence the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

H0: Facilitating conditions do not significantly affect the actual purchasing behavior of Indian millennials.

H4b: Facilitating conditions positively affect the actual purchasing behavior of Indian millennials.

H0: Hedonic motivation has no positive impact on the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

H5: Hedonic motivation has a positive impact on the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

3.8 Sample Design

A statistically valid sample of millennials from India was used to investigate how influencers affect consumers' choices to buy. In terms of gender, the sample was representative, economic status, level of education, and geographic location, among other crucial demographic characteristics. A basic random sample strategy was used to accomplish this. This strategy will allow us to recruit a representative sample of people from all walks of life, regardless of their level of social media activity or familiarity with influencer material. A total of 500 people will make up the sample.

3.9 Data collection

This research used a variety of data sources to look at how 600 millennials in India were influenced by social media celebrities' marketing efforts to buy things. Accurate and consistent data collection was achieved via the use of standardized questionnaires. Millennials, who are heavy users of social media and offline and online influencer content consumers, were the intended respondents

to the survey that was carried out in many cities throughout India. Several aspects were considered in this technique, including the following: hedonic motivation, social influence, conducive circumstances, confidence in the influencer, habit, perceived quality of influence, price-value ratio, and performance and effort expectations. These factors may be used to forecast not only the respondents' actual buying behavior but also their intentions to purchase. Gender, age, education, wealth, and location were all considered as important demographic factors in the study's quest to enhance segmentation analysis. The conclusions were further supported by including secondary data derived from official papers, academic research, and institutional records, which supplemented the original data. Using this all-encompassing method of data collecting, we could find out more about how influencer marketing affects the buying habits of millennials in India.

3.10 Source of data

The goal of the research was to combine primary and secondary sources in order to provide a thorough and sophisticated grasp of the difficulties. Marketing initiatives using well-known Indian social media personalities figures and their effects on millennials' spending habits were the primary research focuses.

3.10.1 Primary source:

This study used structured surveys, questionnaires, and Google Forms as the main data collection methods.

3.10.1.1 Structured questionnaires:

The structured surveys sought to collect extensive data on the impact of influencer marketing on Indian millennials' buying habits. Surveys designed to systematically collect comprehensive data on influencer marketing among Millennials included factors such as hedonic motivation, price value, habit, confidence in influencers, perceived quality of influence, social influence, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and performance expectancy. To measure respondents' actual purchasing behaviors and intentions to buy, the surveys used Likert-scale questions. Using this methodical approach, it was able to consistently and quantitatively learn about millennials' buying habits and influencer marketing.

Surveys:

The participants in this research were young adults (22–40 years old) in India who are very engaged on social media and who follow digital influencers on a daily basis. Data was gathered from a diverse group of respondents, spanning various socioeconomic backgrounds and geographical areas, using both online and offline methods. This ensured that the data was inclusive and representative. Researchers used the UTAUT2 paradigm to inform our survey questions, which sought to learn how often millennials' intentions to purchase and their actual behavior were influenced by factors including performance expectation, social influence, effort expectancy, enabling circumstances, and hedonic incentive. Including people of both sexes to represent the range of opinions and actions impacted by social media purchases. The investigation of trends and differences in the experience and effects of influencer marketing by age, gender, and place was made possible by the broad demographic coverage.

3.10.1.2 Google forms:

Google Forms was used to distribute the surveys and questionnaires in order to increase reach and guarantee effective data collecting. This approach made it simple for millennials who were used to using digital platforms to participate, guaranteeing simplicity and anonymity, both of which are essential for promoting candid answers about delicate situations. Additional offline techniques including paper-based questionnaires and in-person interviews were used in places with poor internet connectivity. By reducing biases associated with the digital divide and guaranteeing inclusion across various technical and socioeconomic settings, our quantitative approach assisted in capturing a balanced sample.

3.10.2 Secondary data:

Secondary data was sourced from reputable entities, including official papers, academic journals, government reports, and publications from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as global studies on how influencer marketing affects millennials. The impact of online influencers on millennial buying behavior was clarified by these sources, which framed the key findings within broader commercial and social contexts. The research was conceptually and analytically substantiated by examining previous studies in social media marketing, consumer psychology, and technology adoption frameworks such as UTAUT2.

3.11 Pilot Study – Results and Actions Taken

To ensure the instrument was clear, relevant, and reliable, a **pilot research with 50 participants** selected from the target demographic was carried out before the main survey. Results from the pilot showed satisfactory levels of internal consistency; all main constructs had **Cronbach's alpha values more than 0.70**. Minor issues were noted in the wording of items related to influencer trust and content quality, which were subsequently rephrased for greater clarity. Feedback was also received regarding the layout of the questionnaire, which was reorganized to group related items and improve the flow of responses. Based on the pilot, the final instrument was revised and finalized for large-scale deployment.

3.12 Time Period of Survey

The survey was conducted over a **two-month period from January to February 2024**. Data collection occurred in phases to allow for quality checks, follow-ups, and improved response rates. This timeframe was chosen to avoid festive seasons and examination periods that might affect participation.

3.13 Survey Instrument

The data collecting tool was a **structured questionnaire** that was based on validated measures from earlier research. Several important concepts from the **UTAUT2** model were modified for this study. These included the following: hedonic motivation, social influence, enabling circumstances, performance expectation, and effort expectancy. Relevance to influencer marketing literature led to the inclusion of other constructs, such as **influencer credibility, trust, and content quality**.

Each concept was assessed using five-point Likert scales, spanning from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Items were modified slightly to suit the Indian millennial context, ensuring cultural relevance and comprehension. The instrument underwent expert validation by academics and practitioners in marketing and consumer psychology.

3.14 Data Analysis Tools

The **AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures)** tool was used for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), whereas **IBM SPSS Statistics** was used for preliminary analysis. Using SPSS, researchers performed descriptive statistics, reliability testing (Cronbach's alpha), and frequency analysis. This study used AMOS to examine both the **measurement model (Confirmatory Factor Analysis - CFA)** and the **structural model** (showing supposed relationships).

The decision to adopt SEM was based on its ability to evaluate many dependent connections among both observable and latent variables all at once. The method was particularly effective for validating constructs such as influencer trust, behavioral intention, and purchase behavior, where indirect and direct effects needed to be estimated.

The tools and their purposes included:

- **SPSS:** Demographics, frequency analysis, reliability checks.
- **AMOS:** CFA, path analysis, model fit indices, regression weights, and hypothesis testing.

3.15 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) augmented the quantitative phase to get more nuanced qualitative information regarding how millennials perceive influencer marketing. The format of the FGD is appended in **Annexure A** of the thesis.

The modality of the FGDs involved:

- A **semi-structured format**, with open-ended questions related to trust in influencers, perceived authenticity, emotional engagement, and purchasing behavior.
- Each session included **6–8 participants**, ensuring rich interaction without overwhelming moderation.
- Discussions were held across three cities (Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Pune) to incorporate regional diversity.

Moderation was carried out by the researcher, who used probing techniques to elicit nuanced responses. Discussions were audio-recorded (with consent), transcribed, and thematically analyzed. Insights from the FGD helped refine the constructs used in the questionnaire and validated emerging themes related to parasocial relationships and influencer credibility.

3.16 Measures

The data was gathered using a structured questionnaire. Using a Likert-type scale, researcher have developed a questionnaire that ask participants to share their opinions on the many study topics under investigation. To get accurate data on the examined subjects, carefully formulated questions have been created. A distinct questionnaire has been created for each of the five respondent categories included in the survey.

3.17 Variables

Behavioral Intention

Use Behavior

Education

income level

geographical location.

3.18 Sampling Technique

This study employed the random sample approach since it was the most effective way to pick research participants. According to the principle of random sampling, an equal number of people from a given demographic will be chosen to participate in the study. As a result, we are certain that our results will be impartial and generalisable. This process eliminates any systematic preferences or tendencies since each person or component is chosen at random. The external validity of study findings is improved by the widespread use of random sampling, which offers an objective and equitable representation of a population. After dividing the population into these pertinent strata, it's easy to create a representative and balanced sample by selecting individuals at random from the organisations.

$$P = 1 - \left(\frac{N-1}{N} \right) \left(\frac{N-2}{N} \right) \dots \left(\frac{N-n}{N-(n-1)} \right)$$

3.19 Inclusion and exclusion Criteria

Inclusion

- Millennials aged between 22 to 40 years.
- Individuals who have regular access to the internet and social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, Twitter.).
- Inhabitants from many geographical areas around India, embodying a range of socioeconomic and educational profiles.
- Participants who agreed to participate in the research did so willingly.

Exclusion

- Individuals aged under 22 or beyond 40 years.
- Individuals who abstain from social media or do not engage with digital influencers.
- Participants who submitted incomplete or contradictory answers in the survey.
- Individuals who are incapable of giving informed consent or who refuse to participate.

3.20 Tools and techniques

Tools:

The statistical software SPSS (Statistical package for the social sciences) and the AMOS tool are used in this study.

Methods:

3.20.1 Measurement model and validity

The reliability and practicality of research findings are supported by measurement and validity models, which provide a structured framework. In order to evaluate complicated topics, measurement models clearly show how observed occurrences relate to fundamental principles. On the other side, validity serves to prevent inaccurate or deceptive findings by making sure the measuring instruments accurately reflect the desired structures. Essential parts of every study are

reliable measurement models. Their findings are credible and authoritative, which is important for making informed decisions and advancing knowledge in several sectors.

3.20.1.1 FACTOR ANALYSIS

KMO and Bartlett's Test

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test assesses the appropriateness of data for Factor Analysis. The assessment evaluates the adequacy of sampling for the whole model and for each variable individually. The statistic quantifies the degree of variation across variables that may indicate shared variance. Factor analysis is more appropriate for your data if the percentage decreases.

There is a range of 0–1 for the KMO statistic. A comprehensive framework for statistical analysis:

- A KMO value between 0.8 and 1 indicates an appropriate sample size.
- KMO values below 0.6 indicate the need for corrective actions owing to insufficient sampling. Exercise your own judgment for values ranging from 0.5 to 0.6, since several authors have established this value at 0.5.
- Significant partial correlations in respect to the overall correlations are shown when KMO values are close to zero. Component analysis is greatly hindered by the existence of correlations.

The formula for the KMO test is as follows:

$$MO_j = \frac{\sum_{i \neq j} r_{ij}^2}{\sum_{i \neq j} r_{ij}^2 + \sum_{i \neq j} u}$$

- As a correlation matrix, $R = [r_{ij}]$,
- The partial covariance matrix, denoted as $U = [u]$,
- The summation notation, translated as "add up," is represented by Σ

The Reliability and Validity of the scale:

Assessment of the measuring scale's validity and reliability is a crucial task for academics. Reliability and validity assessments of all research measures validated the significance of the findings.

Reliability

A measurement's reliability is defined as its consistency. When tested again under the same circumstances, a trustworthy instrument always gives the same findings. If, for instance, a thermometer reads the same temperature for a liquid under the same circumstances in several tests, then may say that the findings are dependable.

Factor loading

Factor loadings are numerical representations of the correlations between observable and latent variables. Factor loadings may often be found between 0 and 1, although when dealing with large datasets, it's possible to find values higher than 1. If the factor loadings are larger, then the link with the latent variable is stronger. The survey found that the anxiety latent variable was 0.85 on the first question and 0.33 on the second, indicating a high level of factor loading. Compared to Question two, Question one probably has more factor loading, making it better at detecting anxious responses. This is because question one has a larger correlation with the latent variable than question two, according to the factor loading (Team, 2024).

Cronbach's alpha:

The dependability of a research is often measured using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. There is a range of 0 to 1 for this coefficient dependability is indicated by a minimum score of 0.6, according to several research, and a high dependability is frequently considered a score over 0.7. At the pilot study stage, however, a reliability score between 0.5 and 0.6 is considered adequate for early-stage fundamental research.

This study used Cronbach's alpha to ensure the data was reliable. Its marketing research applications are extensive. The items do not represent the concept effectively if the alpha value is low, and the research variables are well-correlated if the alpha value is high.

Average Variance Extracted

Multiple studies have used criteria for evaluating convergent validity via the analysis of standardized factor loadings. Convergent validity is shown for an indicator when a latent concept

accounts for half or more of the variance in that indicator. They suggested representing the average amount of variation explained by a construct in its indicators in relation to the total variance of its indicators using the average variance extracted (AVE) (Cheung et al., 2024). A value of more than half for the average variance extracted (AVE).

A convergent validity level of 0.5 or greater is indicated by an average variance (AVE) that is calculated by dividing the sum of squared loadings. Reliability is enhanced by raising the value. Values between zero and one are possible for both AVE and CR.

Composite Reliability (CR)

Composite dependability assesses the scale items' internal consistency. One definition of composite dependability is a measure of the common variance among observable variables that is utilised as an indication of a hidden concept. Each construct's CR may be found by dividing the sum of squares of fully standardized factor loadings (Shrestha, 2021).

If the correlation matrix exceeds 0.00001, multicollinearity is absent. If the determinant value is below 0.00001, it is essential to exclude variable pairs with correlation coefficients over 0.8 from the analysis. The threshold for item deletion should be modified until a lower score, indicating robust inter-correlations across groups of three or more questions or statements, is achieved.

Validity

A measurement's validity may be defined as the degree to which its outcomes are consistent with its stated goals. Importantly, it shows how well a measurement captures the substance of the idea being studied. To ensure the questionnaire was valid, Content Validity was used in this study. Subject Matter Experts were consulted in order to evaluate the measurement tool's face validity, which refers to its appropriateness and accuracy. Since the measures used in this study were based on previous research, their content validity was guaranteed. The study supervisor and members of the Scrutiny Committee were also consulted to ensure the questionnaire was accurate and comprehensive. Integrating their comments into the measuring instrument further strengthened the validity. The questionnaire was also piloted with a small group to get input before making any final revisions.

Discriminant Validity test

This dependability indicates the absence of unnecessary factors in the conceptual measurement model. AMOS used a discrepancy indicator called Modification Indices (MI) to identify superfluous components within the model. The associated items are likely superfluous if the MI score is high. The researcher might run the measurement model after removing one of the detected items. A "free parameter estimate" might potentially be used by the researcher to limit the redundant pair. A correlation between exogenous constructions of no greater than 0.85 is required for discriminant validity, which is an additional condition. If the correlation coefficient is higher than 0.85, it indicates that either the two external variables are superfluous or that multicollinearity is strongly present (Awang, 2014).

Model fit summary

Improving the mode's efficacy is the role of model fitness evaluation. To assess if the model is adequate, this step uses the following metrics: degree of freedom (df), χ^2 , Chi-square value, P value, CMIN/Df ratio, fit indices (GFI, RFI, NFI, CFI, IFI, RMR, and RMSEA), and so on. All model indices are defined with their acceptable ranges in the tables that follow. One way to measure how well a model fits the data is by looking at the acceptance level.

Model fit indicators provide a thorough evaluation of the structural equation model's goodness-of-fit. A Goodness of Fit (GFI), Relative Fit (RFI), Normed Fit (NFI), Incremental Fit (IFI), or Comparative Fit Index (CFI) score of 0.90 or above is considered an appropriate fit. To be more precise, the p-value has to be under 0.05 and the Chi-square value needs to be under 3.00 in respect to the degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF). A appropriate and well-fitting model would have an RMR less than 0.05 and an RMSEA less than 0.08.

Applying CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis)

One of the most cutting-edge statistical methods for validating the dataset's component structure is Confirmatory component Analysis (CFA). A correlation between visible variables and their hidden components may be tested by researchers using this method. While EFA attempts to uncover the data structure, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) checks whether it already exists.

Assessing the data's congruence with a predetermined measuring model grounded in theoretical frameworks or previous research is a key objective of content analysis. There are a number of essential steps involved in this:

- **Defining structures:** The method starts with the precise delineation of the theoretical constructions. At this point, researchers often pretest the elements of the construct to assess their clarity and confirm their appropriate representation of the notion.
- **Formulating the Measurement Model:** In Confirmatory component Analysis (CFA), researchers define the principle of one-dimensionality, whereby many observed variables exclusively assess a singular component or construct. Generally, an effective approach entails possessing a minimum of three things for each build.
- **Defining the Model:** The number of components and their configuration (which variables are associated with which ones) must be defined by the researchers. This specification is based on theoretical anticipations or outcomes from prior research.
- **Model Fit Assessment:** By contrasting the theoretical model with the empirical data, the validity of the measurement model may be determined. Fit indices like Chi-square, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) must be evaluated, in conjunction with factor loadings, which are often deemed acceptable when they are 0.7 or above.

Hypothesis testing

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Structured equation modeling (SEM) is a sophisticated statistical method that has the potential to unearth previously unknown relationships between variables. Its unique features include the ability to investigate complex causal pathways, manage measurement error, include latent variables, and test many hypotheses simultaneously, evaluate model fit, and combine components of regression testing and component analysis. The disciplines of sociology, economics, and psychology all rely heavily on structural equation modeling (SEM) as a research tool. Theoretical model evaluation, policy and initiative impact analysis, and complicated dataset refinement may all benefit from this. One may now evaluate our hypothesis and conduct a more comprehensive study of the data because of this.

CHAPTER-4

4 RESULTS

Introduction:

Research methodology is the term used to describe the methodical framework that guides the research process. In order to contain all of the instruments and methods needed to answer a certain research topic, and strategies that researchers employ to collect, process, and evaluate data. Acquiring knowledge about research technique is essential for doing research systematically, rigorously, and scientifically. In essence, a research technique serves as a roadmap for conducting an inquiry. It assists in identifying the most efficient techniques for data collecting, including surveys, experiments, or observational studies, as well as the optimal tools for data processing, such as quantitative analysis and statistical methodologies. To make sure the study is accurate and applicable to other situations, it also includes checking the methodologies' validity and dependability. In addition to the measurements that were used and the conceptual and operational definitions of variables, the chapter examines SEM analysis and the use of different statistical techniques. The results of the study are shown in the section that follows in the " Exploring the Determinants of Indian Millennials' Purchasing Intentions in Influencer Marketing: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach ".

4.1 Frequency Analysis

Demographic

Table 4-1 Demographic Variables

		Frequency	Percent
Age	22-25	118	23.6
	26-30	126	25.2
	31-35	123	24.6
	36-40	133	26.6
	Total	500	100.0
Gender	Male	240	48.0
	Female	260	52.0
	Total	500	100.0

Education level	UG	176	35.2
	PG	170	34.0
	Ph.D.	154	30.8
	Total	500	100.0
Monthly Income	Below 25000	128	25.6
	25000-50000	130	26.0
	50000-75000	114	22.8
	Above 75000	128	25.6
	Total	500	100.0
Location	Hyderabad	139	27.8
	Bangalore	128	25.6
	Chennai	113	22.6
	Others	120	24.0
	Total	500	100.0
Social Media Usage	1 hour	123	24.6
	2 hours	131	26.2
	3 hours	99	19.8
	More than 3 hours	147	29.4
	Total	500	100.0

Age

Among the 500 respondents, 118 are aged 22 to 25, 126 are aged 26 to 30, 123 are aged 31 to 35, and 133 are aged 36 to 40. This distribution shows that people of all ages are quite evenly spaced out, with a little more in the 36–40 age bracket.

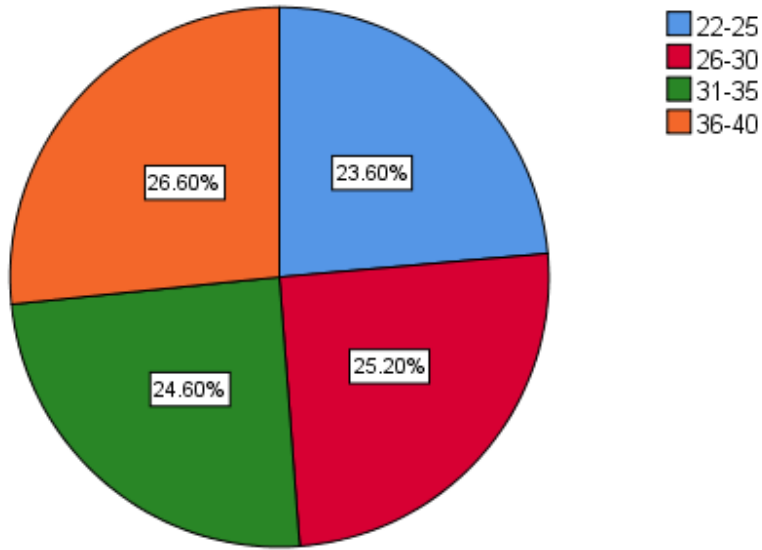


Figure 3 Age

Gender

There are 240 men and 260 women among the participants, which is about equal, however there are a few more women than men.

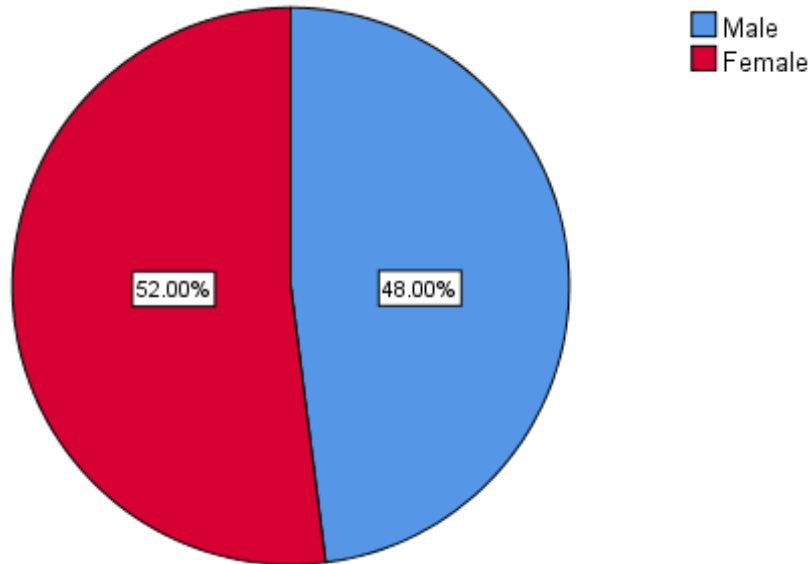


Figure 4 Gender

Education level

176 of the respondents have finished their undergraduate (UG) education, 170 have finished their postgraduate (PG) studies, and 154 have a Ph.D. This demonstrates that the sample is well-educated and has a good mix of people from all levels of education.

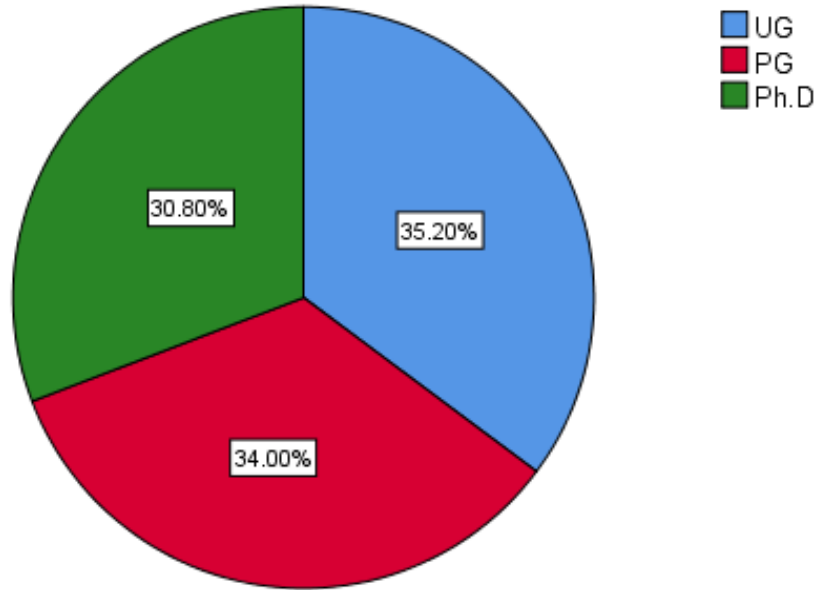


Figure 5 Education level

Monthly Income

Out of the 500 people who took part, 128 earn less than ₹25,000, 130 earn between ₹25,000 and ₹50,000, 114 make between ₹50,000 and ₹75,000, and 128 earn more than ₹75,000. The income distribution is rather even, with each group making up a big part of the sample.

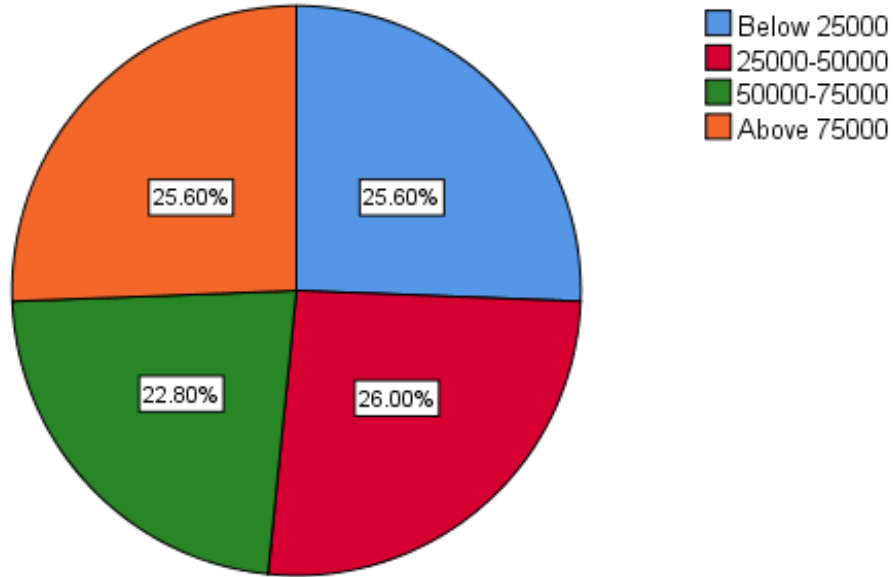


Figure 6 Monthly Income

Location

The geographical distribution reveals that 139 of the respondents are from Hyderabad, 128 from Bangalore, 113 from Chennai, and 120 from other places. Hyderabad has the most representatives, followed closely by Bangalore and the "Others" group.

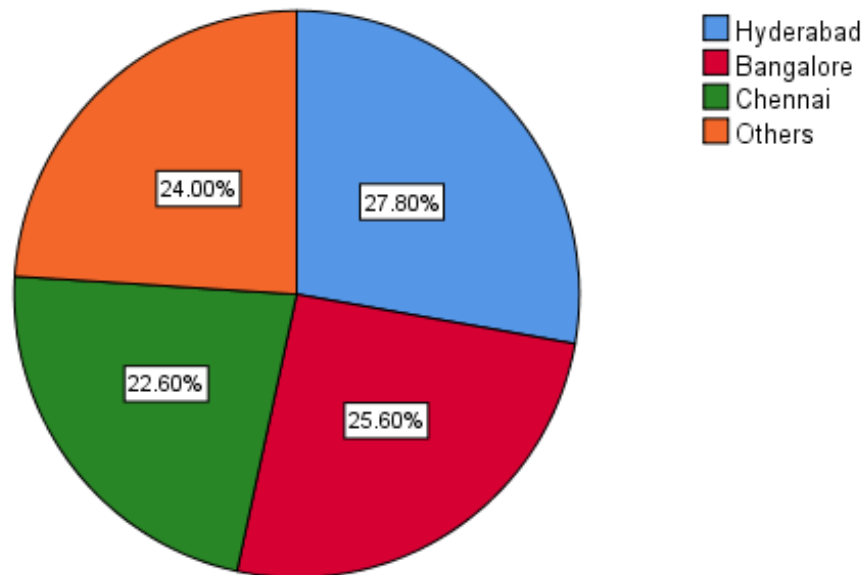


Figure 7 Location

Social Media Usage

123 individuals reported using social media for 1 hour daily, 131 for 2 hours, 99 for 3 hours, and 147 for more than 3 hours. The research indicates that a significant number of respondents (147) dedicate over three hours daily to social media, demonstrating their substantial engagement.

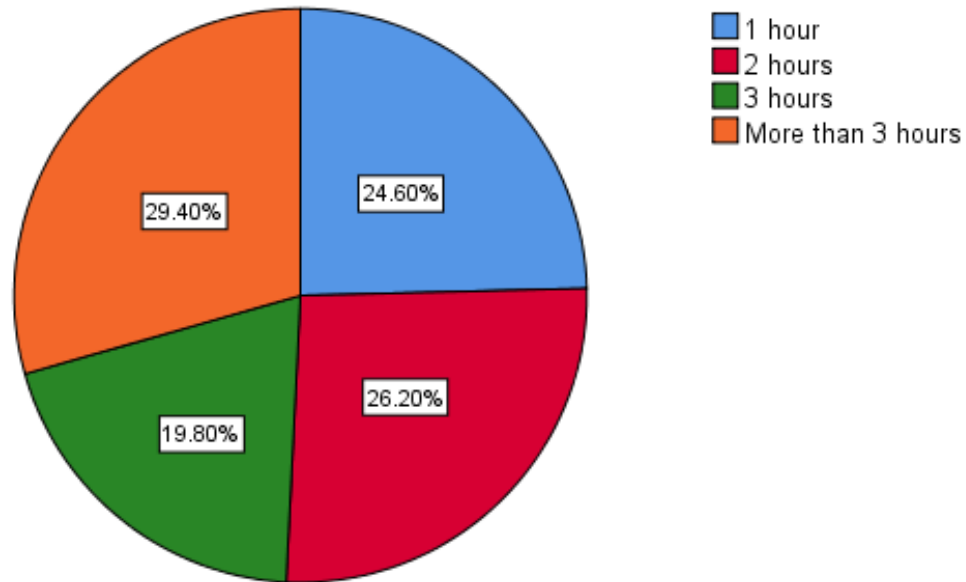


Figure 8 Social Media Usage

Table 4-2 PERFORMANCE EXPECTANCY

		Frequency	Percent	Mean
Influencer recommendations help me make better purchase decisions.	Strongly Disagree	25	5.0	3.986
	Disagree	72	14.4	
	Somewhat Disagree	106	21.2	
	Neutral	152	30.4	
	Somewhat Agree	45	9.0	
	Agree	27	5.4	
	Strongly Agree	73	14.6	
	Total	500	100.0	
Following influencers	Strongly Disagree	13	2.6	4.022

improves the efficiency of my online shopping.	Disagree	43	8.6	
	Somewhat Disagree	155	31.0	
	Neutral	150	30.0	
	Somewhat Agree	47	9.4	
	Agree	32	6.4	
	Strongly Agree	60	12.0	
	Total	500	100.0	
Influencer marketing enhances the usefulness of social media for product discovery.	Strongly Disagree	13	2.6	3.994
	Disagree	55	11.0	
	Somewhat Disagree	150	30.0	
	Neutral	132	26.4	
	Somewhat Agree	61	12.2	
	Agree	32	6.4	
	Strongly Agree	57	11.4	
	Total	500	100.0	
I find influencer recommendations valuable in meeting my shopping needs.	Strongly Disagree	14	2.8	4.17
	Disagree	44	8.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	112	22.4	
	Neutral	162	32.4	
	Somewhat Agree	74	14.8	
	Agree	29	5.8	
	Strongly Agree	65	13.0	
	Total	500	100.0	

Influencer recommendations help me make better purchase decisions

Out of 500 people who answered, the most (152) said they were ambivalent about how influencer recommendations affected their buying choices. A large number of people disagreed: 106 slightly disagreed, 72 disagreed, and 25 definitely disagreed. There were 45 people who slightly agreed, 27 who agreed, and 73 who completely agreed. The average score of 3.986 implies that people generally had a relatively favourable view, although there were some differences.

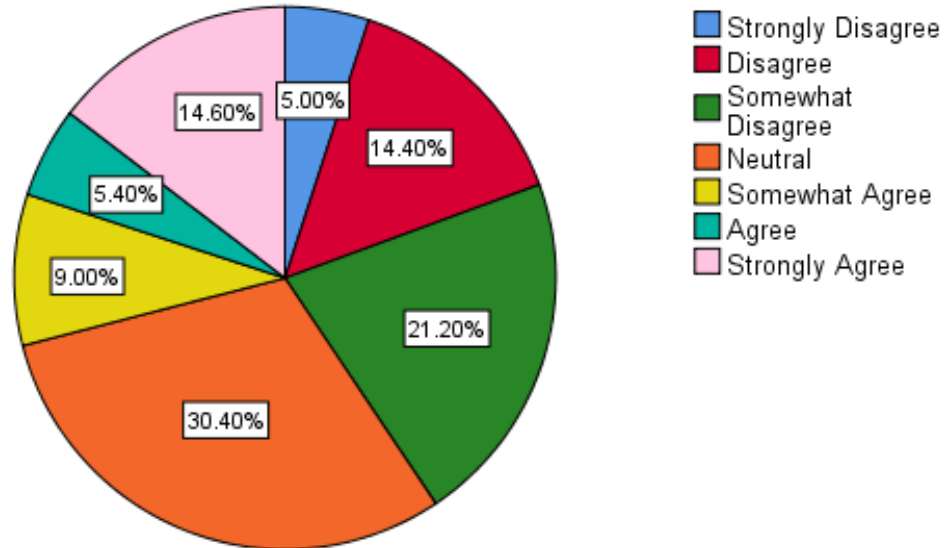


Figure 9 Influencer recommendations help me make better purchase decisions

Following influencers improves the efficiency of my online shopping

A lot of people said they weren't sure or didn't agree very strongly. 30.0% were indifferent, 31.0% slightly disagreed, and 8.6% disagreed. Only a tiny number (2.6%) strongly disagreed. 9.4% slightly agreed, 6.4% agreed, and 12.0% definitely agreed with the statement. The average score of 4.022 shows that most people had a somewhat good reaction, but a lot of people were unsure or didn't want to say.

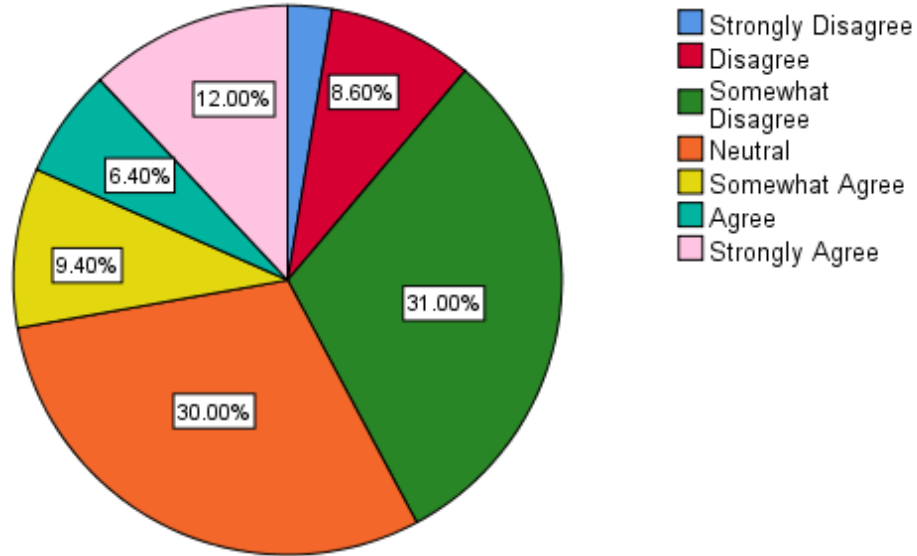


Figure 10 Following influencers improves the efficiency of my online shopping

Influencer marketing enhances the usefulness of social media for product discovery

The majority of the answers were either neutral (26.4%) or slightly disagreeing (30.0%), which shows that people were being careful. In the meanwhile, 11.0% disagreed and 2.6% severely disagreed. 12.2% slightly agreed, 6.4% agreed, and 11.4% firmly agreed on the positive side. The average score of 3.994 shows that people generally think positively, although there seems to be a lot of disagreement.

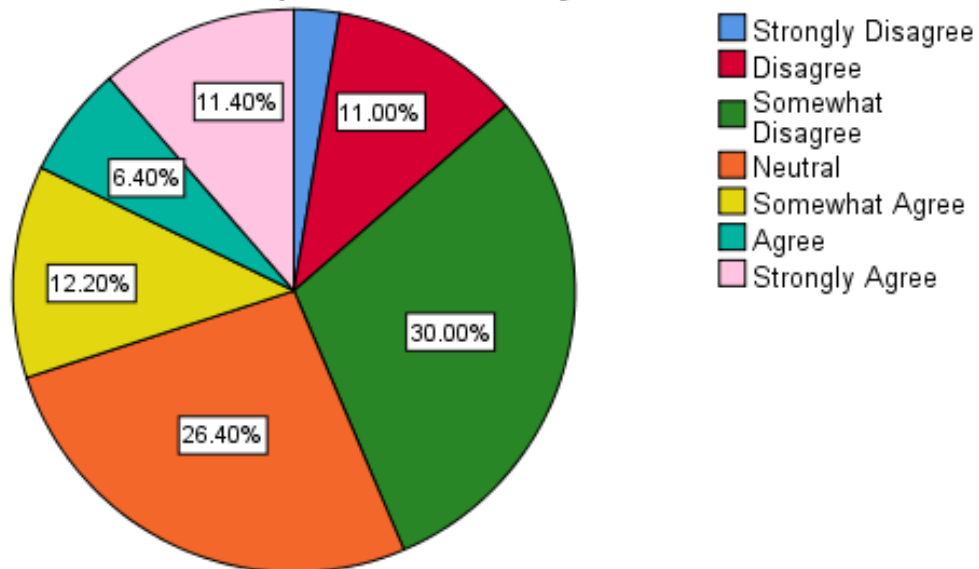


Figure 11 Influencer marketing enhances the usefulness of social media for product discovery

I find influencer recommendations valuable in meeting my shopping needs

A majority of the answers (32.4%) stayed neutral, although most of them (32.4%) were favourable. There was some disagreement among 33.6% of the people (22.4% slightly disagree, 8.8% disagree, and 2.8% definitely disagree). But 14.8% slightly agreed, 5.8% agreed, and a significant 13.0% definitely agreed. This topic had the best response out of the four, with an average score of 4.17. This indicates that individuals generally see influencer recommendations as beneficial in fulfilling purchasing needs.

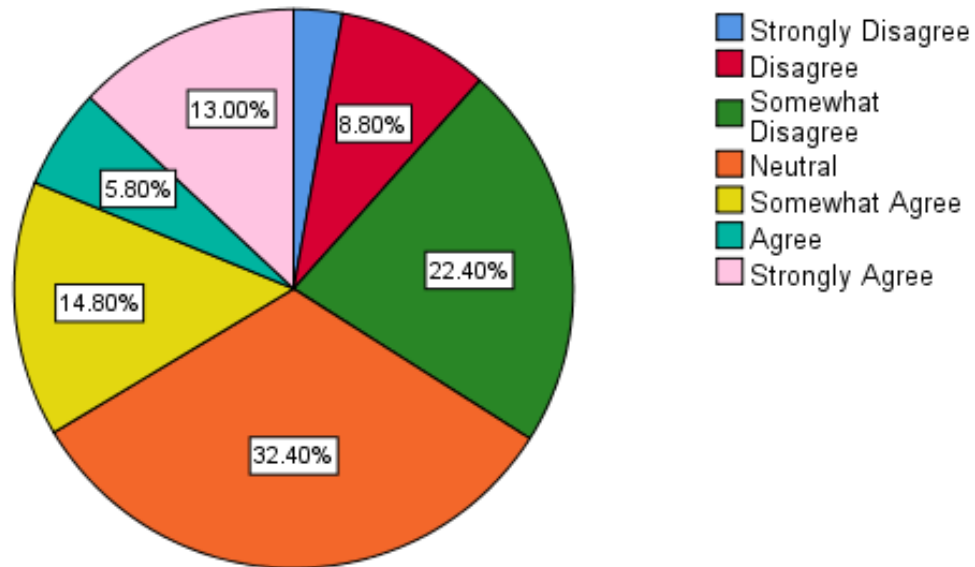


Figure 12 I find influencer recommendations valuable in meeting my shopping needs

Table 4-3 EFFORT EXPECTANCY

		Frequency	Percent	Mean
It is easy to understand the product information provided by influencers.	Strongly Disagree	29	5.8	4.084
	Disagree	30	6.0	
	Somewhat Disagree	120	24.0	
	Neutral	162	32.4	
	Somewhat Agree	67	13.4	
	Agree	34	6.8	

	Strongly Agree	58	11.6	
	Total	500	100.0	
Interacting with influencer content is clear and understandable.	Strongly Disagree	23	4.6	4.082
	Disagree	50	10.0	
	Somewhat Disagree	117	23.4	
	Neutral	141	28.2	
	Somewhat Agree	69	13.8	
	Agree	42	8.4	
	Strongly Agree	58	11.6	
	Total	500	100.0	
Following product recommendations from influencers is simple.	Strongly Disagree	23	4.6	4.128
	Disagree	44	8.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	93	18.6	
	Neutral	168	33.6	
	Somewhat Agree	81	16.2	
	Agree	40	8.0	
	Strongly Agree	51	10.2	
	Total	500	100.0	
Learning how to follow influencer recommendations requires little effort.	Strongly Disagree	11	2.2	4.19
	Disagree	38	7.6	
	Somewhat Disagree	126	25.2	
	Neutral	157	31.4	
	Somewhat Agree	69	13.8	
	Agree	36	7.2	

	Strongly Agree	63	12.6	
	Total	500	100.0	

It is easy to understand the product information provided by influencers.

Of the 500 people who answered, 162 said they didn't have an opinion on how easy it was to absorb product information from influencers. There were 120 people who slightly disagreed, 30 who disagreed, and 29 who definitely disagreed with the assertion. On the other side, 67 people somewhat agreed, 34 people agreed, and 58 people definitely agreed. The average score of 4.084 shows that most people had a moderate to good view, although a lot of them were unsure or somewhat disagreed.

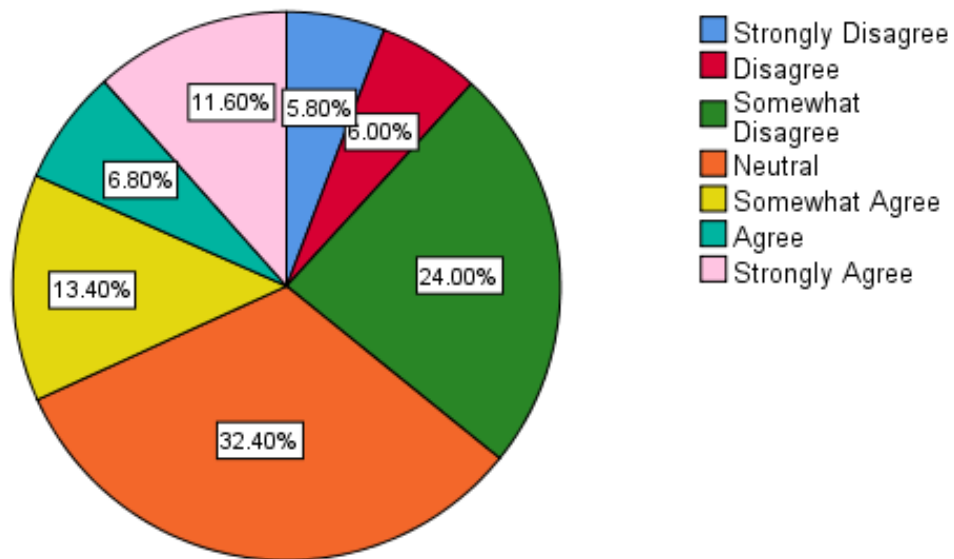


Figure 13 It is easy to understand the product information provided by influencers.

Interacting with influencer content is clear and understandable.

141 of the people who answered chose a neutral answer, which means they weren't sure how clear the influencer material was. At the same time, 117 people slightly disagreed, 50 disagreed, and 23 strongly disagreed. 69 people slightly agreed, 42 people agreed, and 58 people definitely agreed. The replies reveal a relatively positive opinion, with a mean of 4.082, yet a significant number of people in the sample voiced concerns.

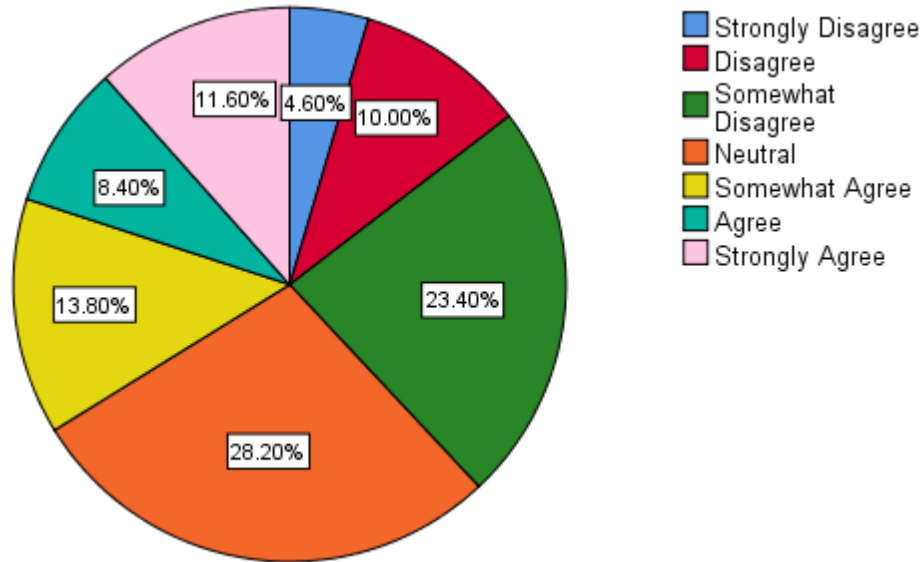


Figure 14 Interacting with influencer content is clear and understandable.

Following product recommendations from influencers is simple.

168 respondents to this question did not choose a side. Of the those who disagreed, 93 slightly disagreed, 44 disagreed, and 23 strongly disagreed. 81 people slightly agreed, 40 people agreed, and 51 people completely agreed. The average score of 4.128 indicates a little more favorable trend, suggesting that the majority found it simple to adhere to the guidance of influencers.

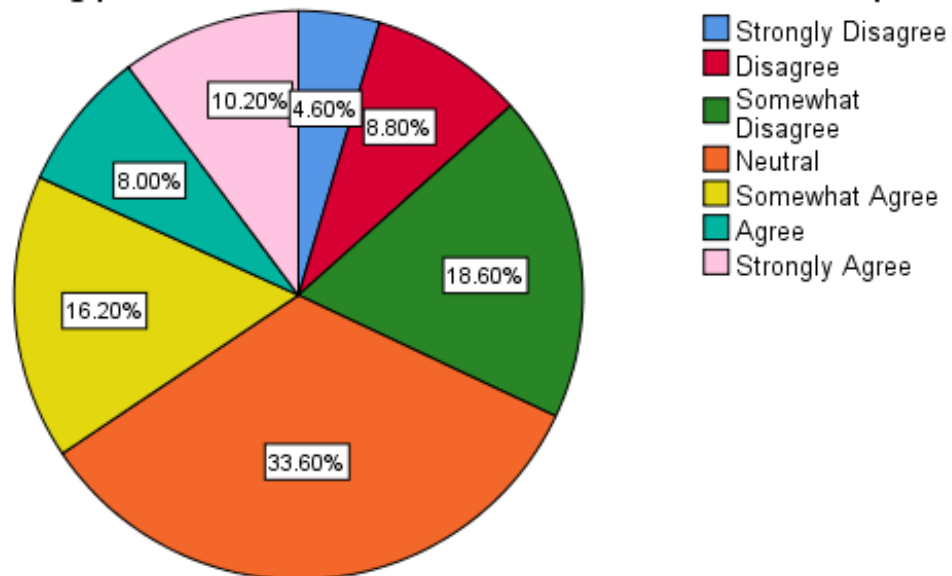


Figure 15 Following product recommendations from influencers is simple.

Learning how to follow influencer recommendations requires little effort.

A total of 157 people said they didn't care about this issue. 126 people said they slightly disagreed, 38 people said they disagreed, and 11 people said they completely disagreed. At the same time, 69 people somewhat agreed, 36 people agreed, and 63 people definitely agreed. The highest average score of the four categories, 4.19, indicating that most people thought it was rather easy to learn from influencer suggestions, even if there were some differences of opinion.

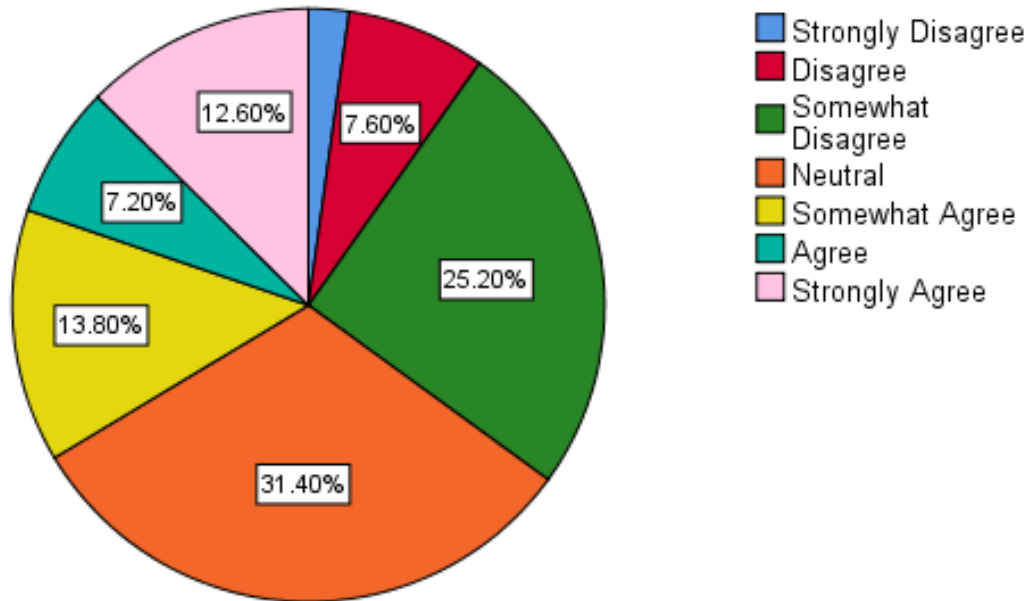


Figure 16 Learning how to follow influencer recommendations requires little effort.

Table 4-4 SOCIAL INFLUENCE

		Frequency	Percent	Mean
People important to me follow influencer recommendations.	Strongly Disagree	49	9.8	3.286
	Disagree	85	17.0	
	Somewhat Disagree	156	31.2	
	Neutral	132	26.4	
	Somewhat Agree	50	10.0	
	Agree	18	3.6	
	Strongly Agree	10	2.0	

	Total	500	100.0	
I follow influencers because others in my circle do the same.	Strongly Disagree	41	8.2	3.482
	Disagree	69	13.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	153	30.6	
	Neutral	137	27.4	
	Somewhat Agree	64	12.8	
	Agree	17	3.4	
	Strongly Agree	19	3.8	
	Total	500	100.0	
Influencers shape the opinions of people around me.	Strongly Disagree	38	7.6	3.42
	Disagree	64	12.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	177	35.4	
	Neutral	137	27.4	
	Somewhat Agree	53	10.6	
	Agree	17	3.4	
	Strongly Agree	14	2.8	
	Total	500	100.0	
I feel social pressure to consider influencer-endorsed products.	Strongly Disagree	41	8.2	3.58
	Disagree	43	8.6	
	Somewhat Disagree	147	29.4	
	Neutral	173	34.6	
	Somewhat Agree	65	13.0	
	Agree	12	2.4	

	Strongly Agree	19	3.8	
	Total	500	100.0	

People important to me follow influencer recommendations

A total of 132 out of the 500 persons who answered said they didn't care whether those close to them followed influencer suggestions. Most people disagreed, with 156 slightly disagreeing, 85 disagreeing, and 49 strongly disagreeing. Fifty people slightly agreed, eighteen people agreed, and just ten people completely agreed. With a mean score of 3.286, this shows that most people are sceptical and likely to disagree.

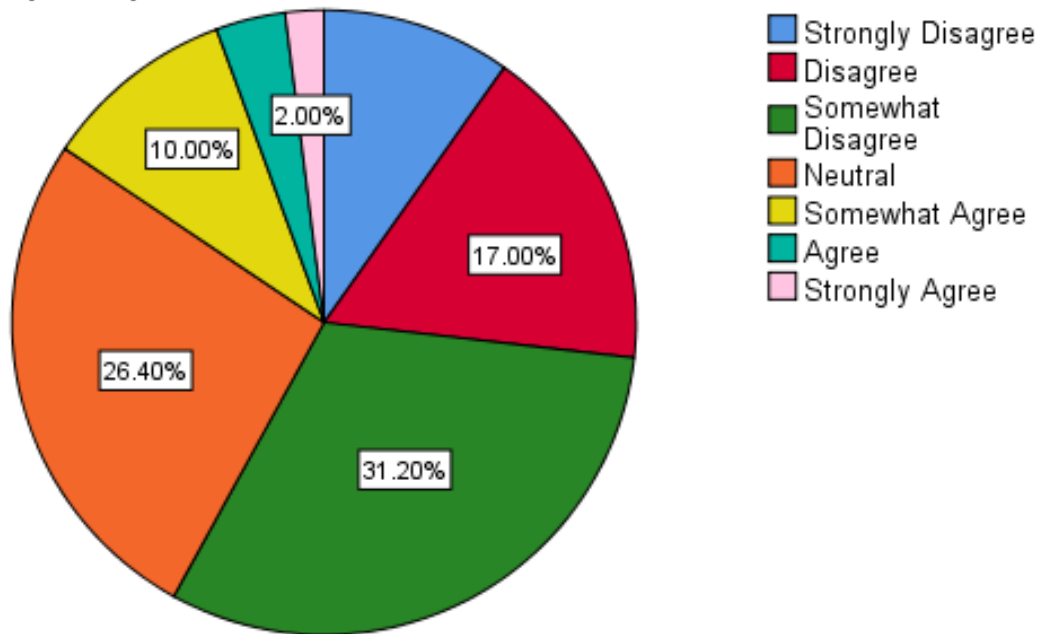


Figure 17 People important to me follow influencer recommendations

I follow influencers because others in my circle do the same.

Of the people who answered, 137 said that their social circle did not affect how they acted while following influencers. A lot of people disagreed: 153 slightly disagreed, 69 disagreed, and 41 definitely disagreed. On the other hand, 64 people somewhat agreed, 17 people agreed, and 19 people definitely agreed. The average score of 3.482 shows that people have a somewhat negative to neutral attitude and don't think social influence is very strong.

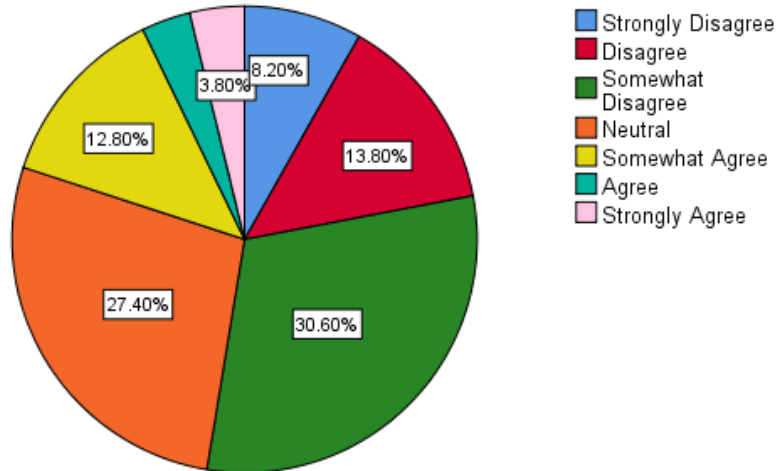


Figure 18 I follow influencers because others in my circle do the same.

Influencers shape the opinions of people around me.

In this situation, 137 people picked a neutral answer, 177 people slightly disagreed, 64 people disagreed, and 38 people definitely disagreed. On the good side, 53 people somewhat agreed, 17 people agreed, and 14 people completely agreed. According to the average response of 3.42, the majority of individuals do not believe that influencers significantly affect the attitudes of others around them.

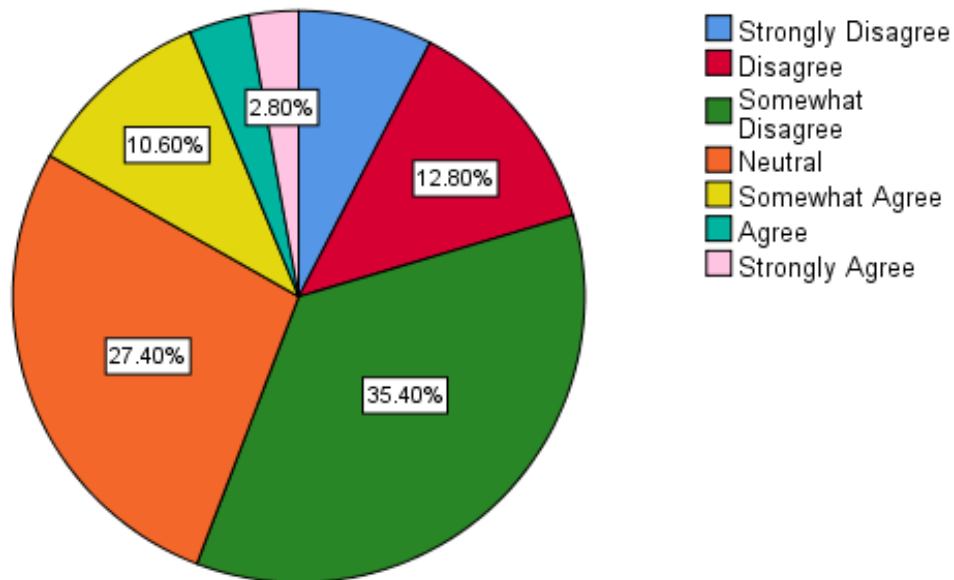


Figure 19 Influencers shape the opinions of people around me.

I feel social pressure to consider influencer-endorsed products.

173 people chose "neutral," which was the most popular answer. There was also a lot of disagreement: 147 people slightly disagreed, 43 people disagreed, and 41 people definitely

disagreed. At the same time, 65 people somewhat agreed, 12 people agreed, and 19 people definitely agreed. The average score of 3.58 shows a moderate position that leans slightly towards dissent. This means that although some respondents sense societal pressure, most do not feel it strongly.

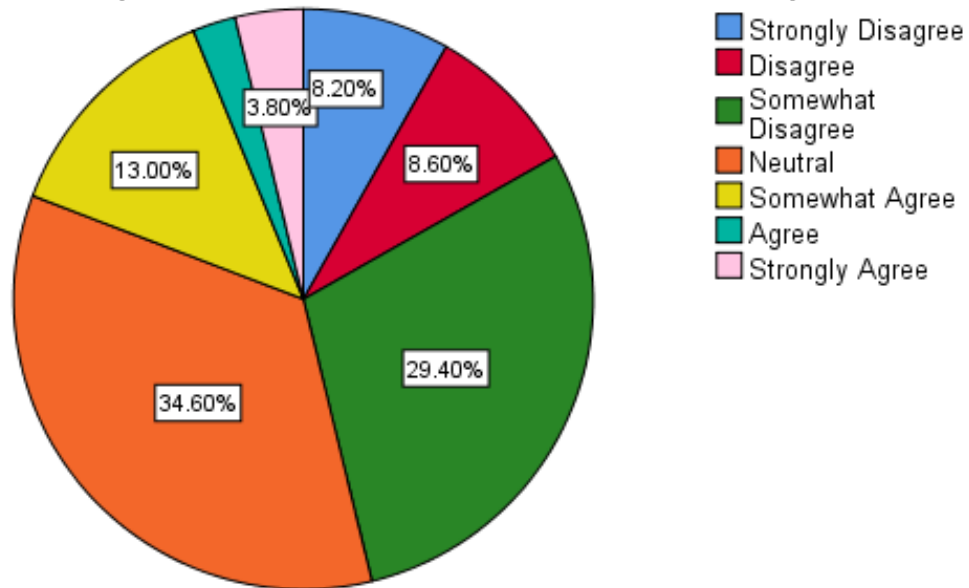


Figure 20 I feel social pressure to consider influencer-endorsed products.

Table 4-5 FACILITATING CONDITIONS

		Frequency	Percent	Mean
I have the resources necessary to follow influencers' recommendations (e.g., smartphone, internet).	Strongly Disagree	45	9.0	3.838
	Disagree	92	18.4	
	Somewhat Disagree	87	17.4	
	Neutral	126	25.2	
	Somewhat Agree	48	9.6	
	Agree	29	5.8	
	Strongly Agree	73	14.6	
Total	500	100.0		
I have the knowledge to use social media	Strongly Disagree	48	9.6	3.792
	Disagree	84	16.8	

platforms where influencers promote products.	Somewhat Disagree	100	20.0	
	Neutral	132	26.4	
	Somewhat Agree	39	7.8	
	Agree	22	4.4	
	Strongly Agree	75	15.0	
	Total	500	100.0	
The apps I use support easy access to influencer content.	Strongly Disagree	34	6.8	3.788
	Disagree	97	19.4	
	Somewhat Disagree	112	22.4	
	Neutral	120	24.0	
	Somewhat Agree	44	8.8	
	Agree	21	4.2	
	Strongly Agree	72	14.4	
	Total	500	100.0	
I can get help from others when I have trouble understanding influencer content.	Strongly Disagree	17	3.4	4.118
	Disagree	74	14.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	76	15.2	
	Neutral	166	33.2	
	Somewhat Agree	68	13.6	
	Agree	31	6.2	
	Strongly Agree	68	13.6	
	Total	500	100.0	

I have the resources necessary to follow influencers' recommendations (e.g., smartphone, internet).

126 of the 500 people who answered were ambivalent about having the tools they needed to follow influencer suggestions. On the other hand, 87 people slightly disagreed, 92 people disagreed, and 45 people definitely disagreed. In the meanwhile, 48 people somewhat agreed, 29 people agreed, and 73 people definitely agreed. The average score of 3.838 implies a little upward trend, however a lot of people said they had trouble getting resources.

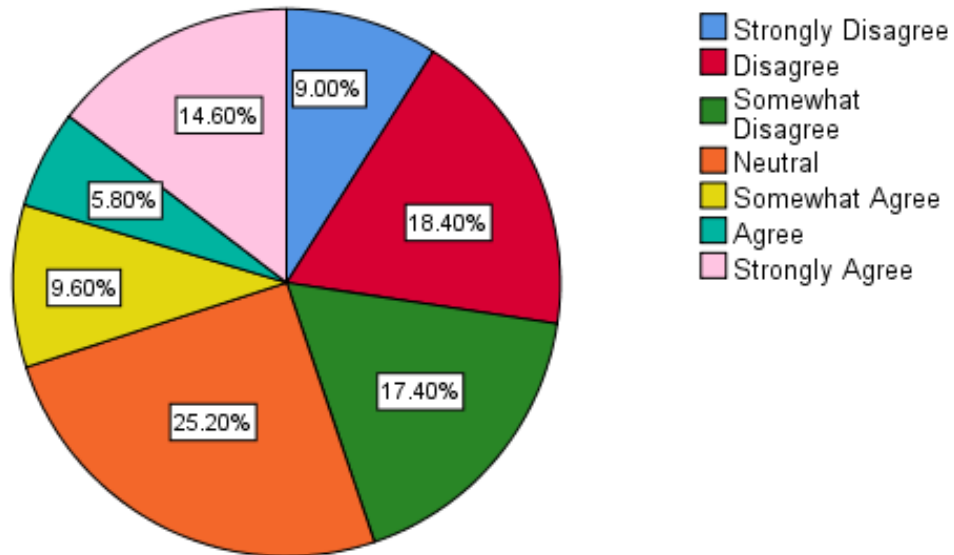


Figure 21 I have the resources necessary to follow influencers' recommendations (e.g., smartphone, internet).

I have the knowledge to use social media platforms where influencers promote products.

132 people chose "neutral." Of those who disagreed, 100 slightly disagreed, 84 disagreed, and 48 strongly disagreed. On the agreement side, 39 people somewhat agreed, 22 people agreed, and 75 people definitely agreed. The average score of 3.792 shows that people have different opinions, and a lot of the people in the sample weren't sure or didn't feel confident about their social media expertise.

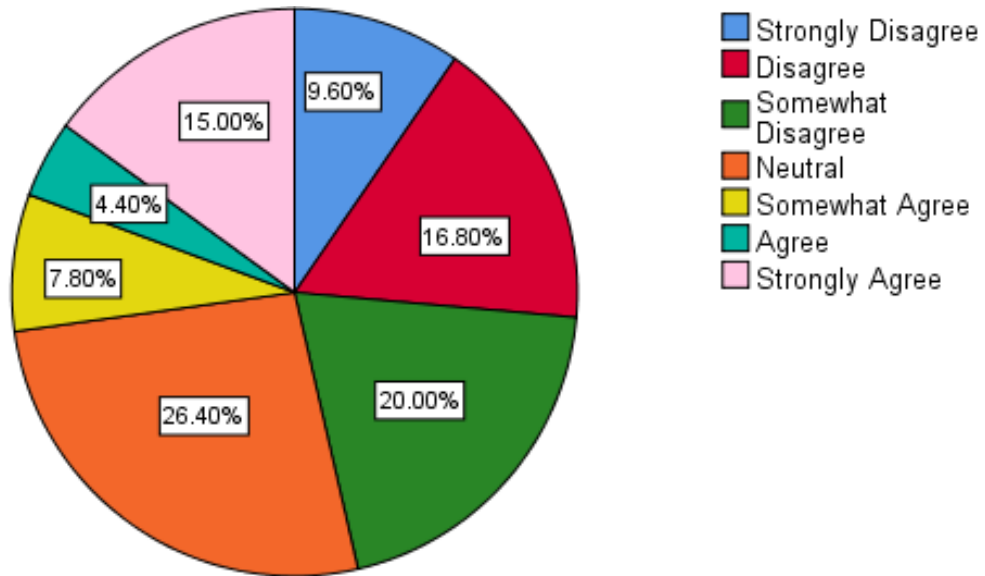


Figure 22 I have the knowledge to use social media platforms where influencers promote products.

The apps I use support easy access to influencer content.

A lot of people were neutral, with 120 saying they didn't agree or disagree. There was also a lot of disagreement: 112 people slightly disagreed, 97 people disagreed, and 34 people definitely disagreed. 44 people said they somewhat agreed, 21 said they agreed, and 72 said they definitely agreed. The average score of 3.788 shows that people are mostly neutral or somewhat negative, and many are unclear or have trouble getting influencer material via applications.

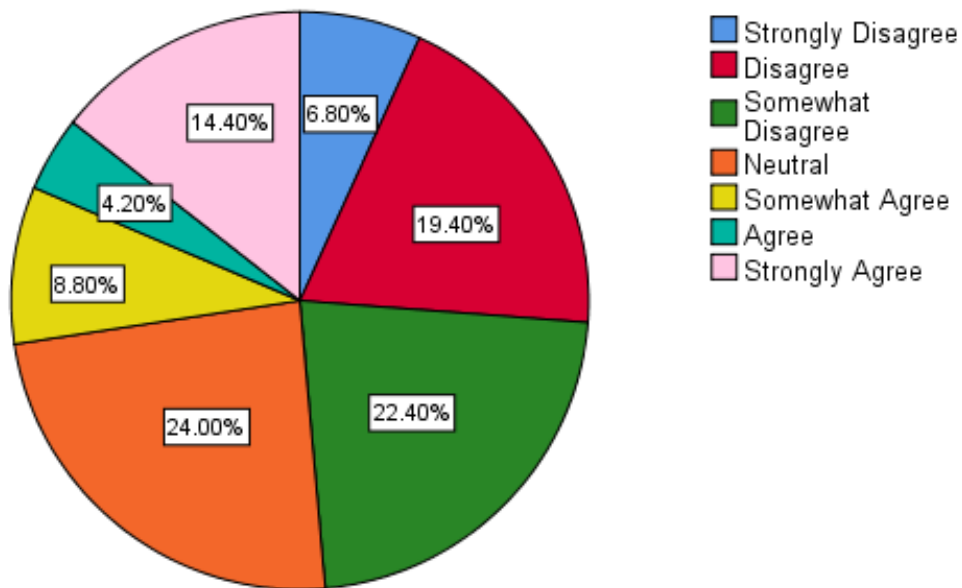


Figure 23 The apps I use support easy access to influencer content.

I can get help from others when I have trouble understanding influencer content.

There were 166 people who picked "neutral," which means they weren't sure whether they would get aid. A total of 167 people said they disagreed: 76 said they slightly disagreed, 74 said they disagreed, and 17 said they definitely disagreed. 68 people slightly agreed, 31 people agreed, and 68 people definitely agreed on the opposite side. The data reveals a generally favourable opinion, with the highest mean score of 4.118 among the questions in this collection. This indicates that many individuals believe they can rely on others for assistance in times of need.

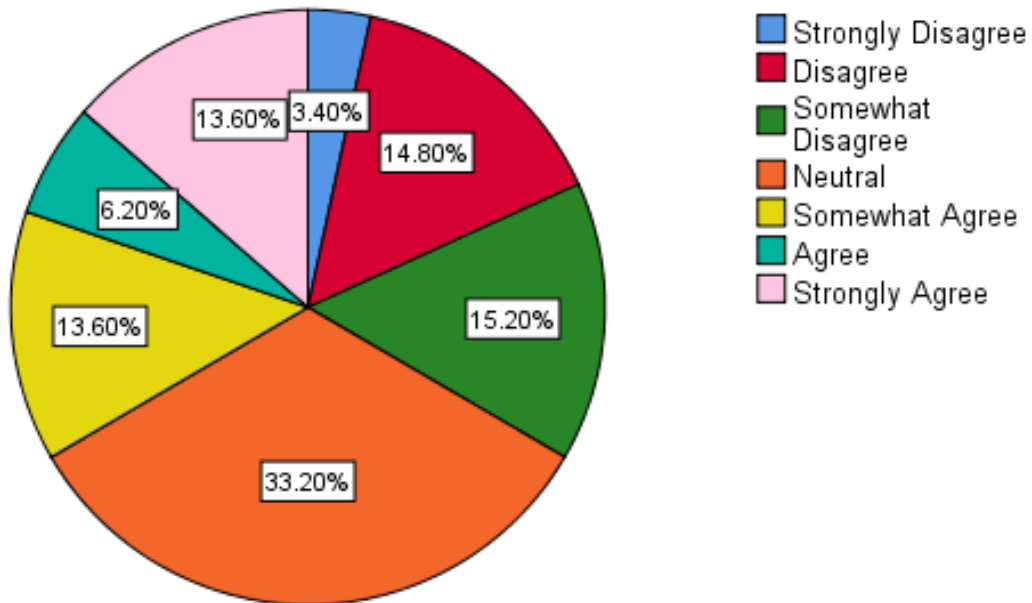


Figure 24 I can get help from others when I have trouble understanding influencer content.

Table 4-6 HEDONIC MOTIVATION

		Frequency	Percent	Mean
I enjoy watching influencers talk about products.	Strongly Disagree	8	1.6	4.248
	Disagree	32	6.4	
	Somewhat Disagree	54	10.8	
	Neutral	242	48.4	
	Somewhat Agree	99	19.8	
	Agree	28	5.6	

	Strongly Agree	37	7.4	
	Total	500	100.0	
Following influencer content is entertaining.	Strongly Disagree	6	1.2	4.284
	Disagree	23	4.6	
	Somewhat Disagree	74	14.8	
	Neutral	221	44.2	
	Somewhat Agree	111	22.2	
	Agree	26	5.2	
	Strongly Agree	39	7.8	
	Total	500	100.0	
I find pleasure in discovering new products through influencers.	Strongly Disagree	15	3.0	4.004
	Disagree	49	9.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	126	25.2	
	Neutral	154	30.8	
	Somewhat Agree	81	16.2	
	Agree	35	7.0	
	Strongly Agree	40	8.0	
	Total	500	100.0	
Shopping through influencer recommendations is fun.	Strongly Disagree	9	1.8	4.228
	Disagree	26	5.2	
	Somewhat Disagree	69	13.8	
	Neutral	237	47.4	
	Somewhat Agree	95	19.0	
	Agree	25	5.0	

	Strongly Agree	39	7.8
	Total	500	100.0

I enjoy watching influencers talk about products

A lot of the 500 people who answered (242) said they didn't care if they liked seeing influencers talk about items. 54 people slightly disagreed, 32 people disagreed, and 8 people definitely disagreed. There were 99 people who somewhat agreed, 28 who agreed, and 37 who completely agreed. The average score of 4.248 shows a somewhat good view, but a high degree of neutrality means that they were not very engaged.

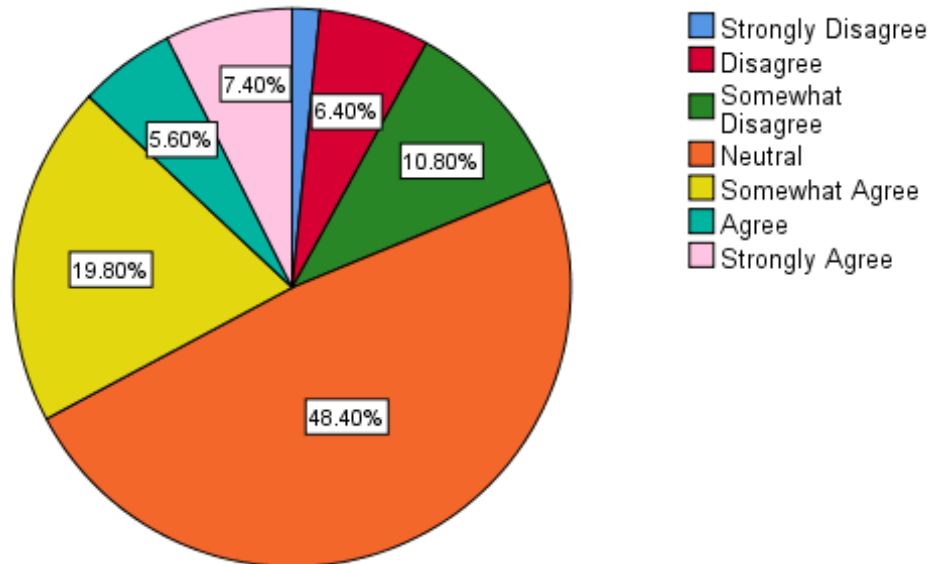


Figure 25 I enjoy watching influencers talk about products

Following influencer content is entertaining

Out of all the people who answered, 221 were indifferent, 74 slightly disagreed, 23 disagreed, and 6 definitely disagreed. On the other side, 111 people agreed slightly, 26 people agreed, and 39 people strongly agreed. With a mean of 4.284, this item got a little more favourable feedback, which shows that a lot of people actually find influencer material fun, even if most people were neutral.

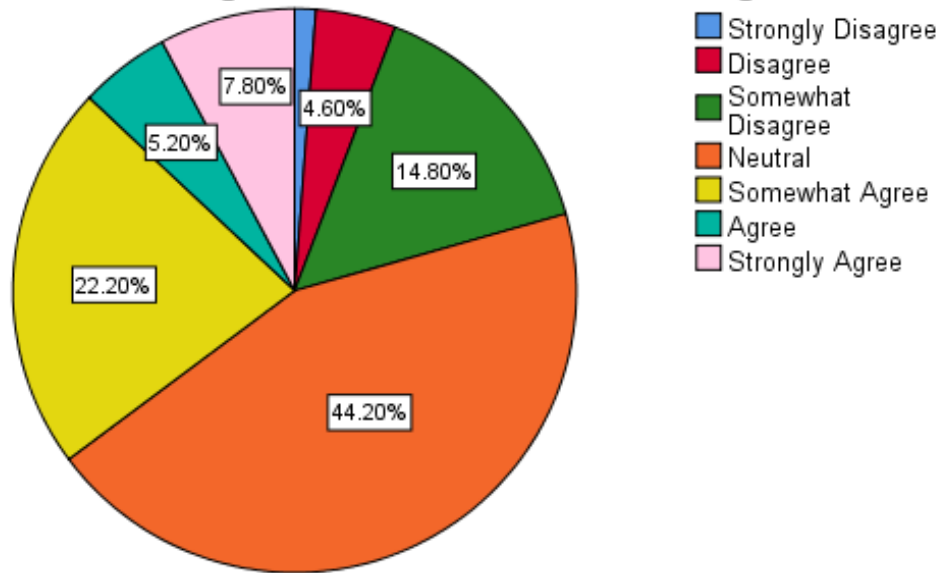


Figure 26 Following influencer content is entertaining

I find pleasure in discovering new products through influencers.

154 people who answered this question were neutral. There was a lot of disagreement: 126 people slightly disagreed, 49 people disagreed, and 15 people definitely disagreed. On the other hand, 81 people slightly agreed, 35 people agreed, and 40 people definitely agreed. The average score of 4.004 shows a cautious but balanced view on the legitimacy of influencer material, with a clear divide between sceptical and positive replies.

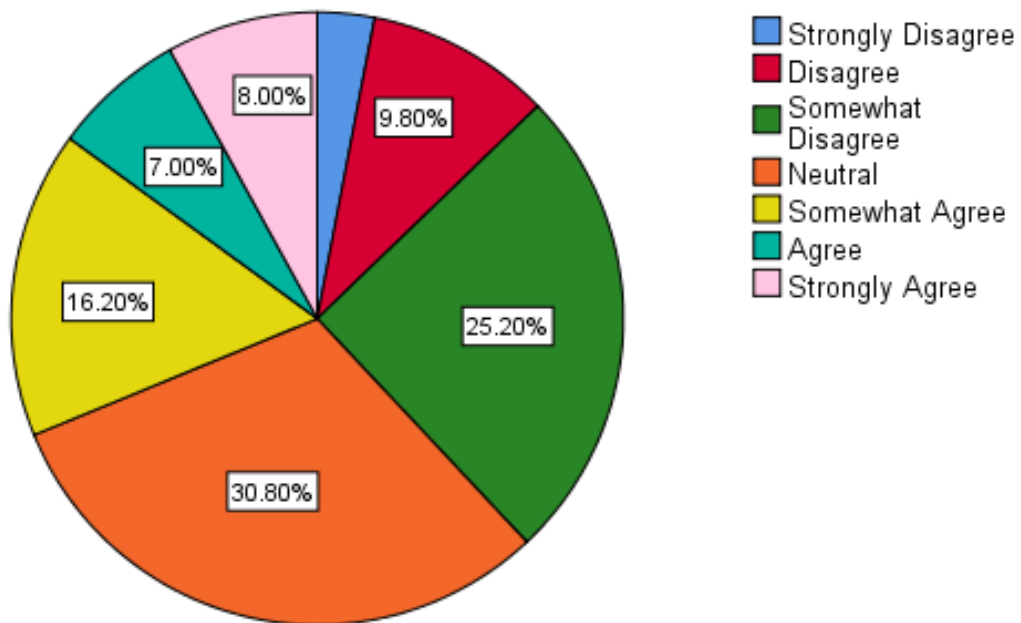


Figure 27 I find pleasure in discovering new products through influencers.

Shopping through influencer recommendations is fun.

Out of 500 people who answered, 237 said they didn't care about how much they liked shopping based on influencer recommendations. There were 69 comments that slightly disagreed, 26 that disagreed, and 9 that completely disagreed. At the same time, 95 people somewhat agreed, 25 people agreed, and 39 people definitely agreed. The findings show a somewhat good assessment, with a mean of 4.228. However, over half of the participants did not agree or disapprove.

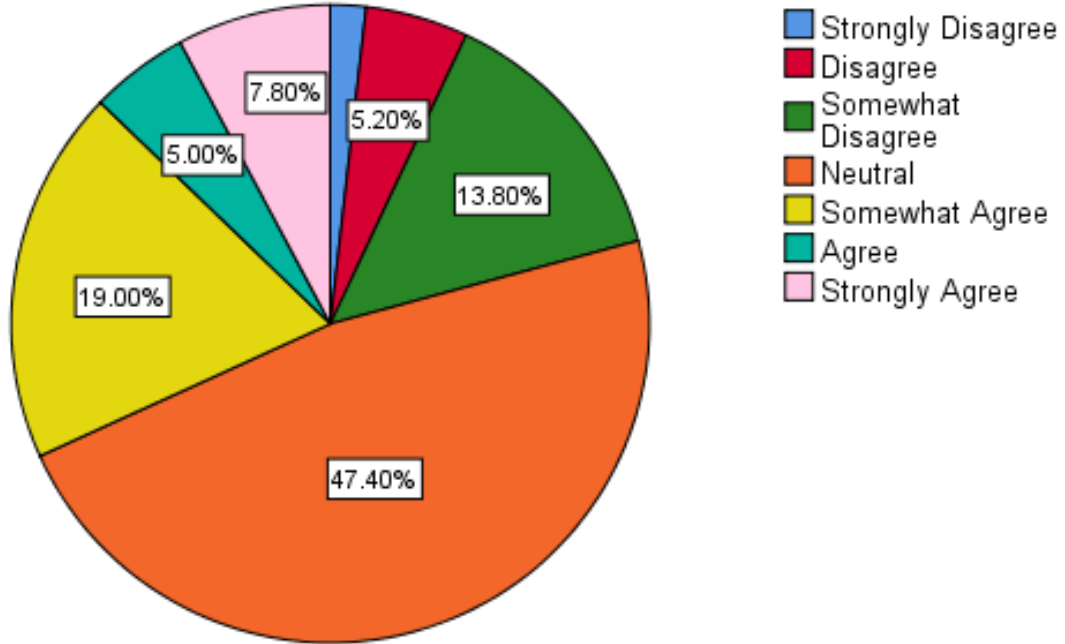


Figure 28 Shopping through influencer recommendations is fun.

Table 4-7 BEHAVIORAL INTENTION

		Frequency	Percent	Mean
I intend to consider influencer recommendations when shopping.	Strongly Disagree	22	4.4	4.148
	Disagree	39	7.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	87	17.4	
	Neutral	192	38.4	
	Somewhat Agree	73	14.6	
	Agree	29	5.8	

	Strongly Agree	58	11.6	
	Total	500	100.0	
I will continue to follow influencers for purchase guidance.	Strongly Disagree	16	3.2	4.014
	Disagree	40	8.0	
	Somewhat Disagree	118	23.6	
	Neutral	178	35.6	
	Somewhat Agree	77	15.4	
	Agree	37	7.4	
	Strongly Agree	34	6.8	
	Total	500	100.0	
I plan to use influencer content more frequently for product decisions.	Strongly Disagree	8	1.6	4
	Disagree	50	10.0	
	Somewhat Disagree	127	25.4	
	Neutral	174	34.8	
	Somewhat Agree	73	14.6	
	Agree	26	5.2	
	Strongly Agree	42	8.4	
	Total	500	100.0	
I am likely to rely on influencers for future purchases.	Strongly Disagree	17	3.4	3.986
	Disagree	41	8.2	
	Somewhat Disagree	141	28.2	
	Neutral	155	31.0	
	Somewhat Agree	68	13.6	

Agree	35	7.0
Strongly Agree	43	8.6
Total	500	100.0

I intend to consider influencer recommendations when shopping

192 of the 500 people who answered said they were ambivalent about whether or not they would accept influencer advice. There was a lot of disagreement: 87 people slightly disagreed, 39 people disagreed, and 22 people completely disagreed. 73 people slightly agreed, 29 people agreed, and 58 people firmly agreed on the positive side. The average score of 4.148 indicates to a somewhat good overall aim, however a significant number of the sample either didn't know what to think or inclined towards disagreeing.

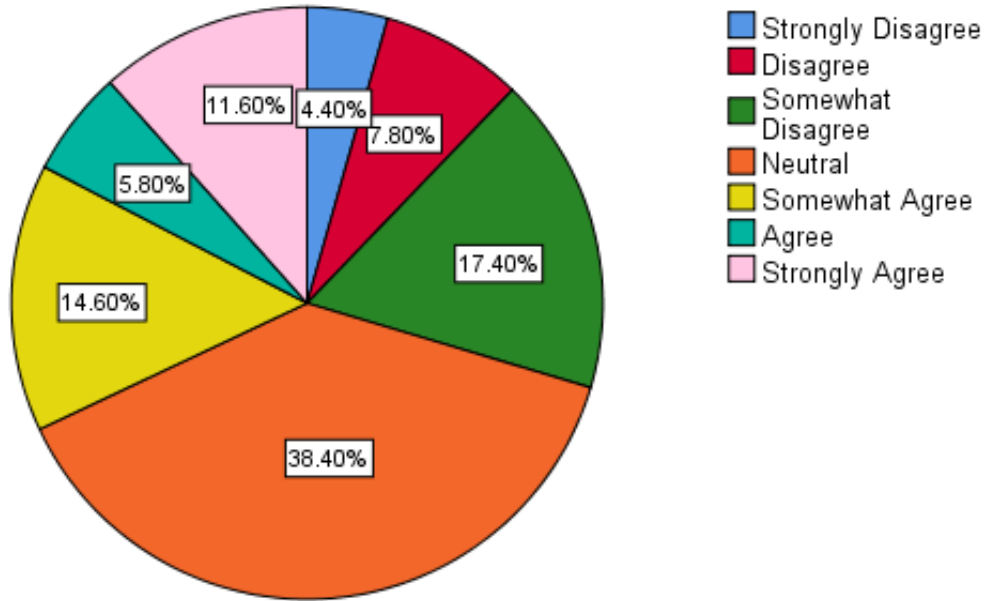


Figure 29 I intend to consider influencer recommendations when shopping

I will continue to follow influencers for purchase guidance

Again, the most common answer was "neutral," which was picked by 178 people. There were 118 people who slightly disagreed, 40 completely disagreed, and 16 who definitely disagreed. On the other hand, 77 people somewhat agreed, 37 people agreed, and 34 people definitely agreed. The findings show that people are somewhat optimistic yet cautious about continuing to depend on influencers for advice on what to buy in the future, with a mean of 4.014.

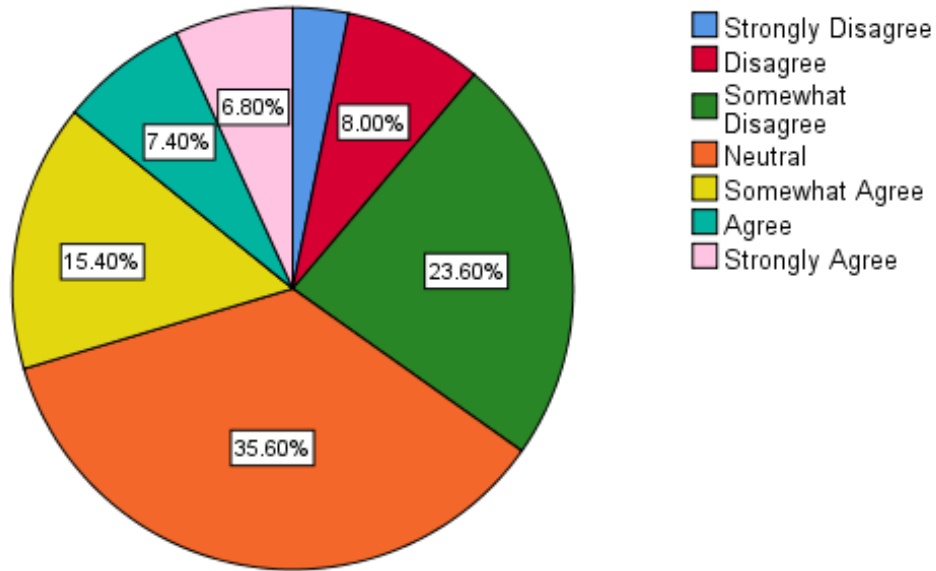


Figure 30 I will continue to follow influencers for purchase guidance

I plan to use influencer content more frequently for product decisions

Here, 174 people chose "neutral." There were 127 people who slightly disagreed, 50 who disagreed, and 8 who completely disagreed. There were 73 people who slightly agreed, 26 who agreed, and 42 who completely agreed. The average score of 4.000 shows that the person is mostly neutral, although they do lean slightly towards using influencer material more in the future.

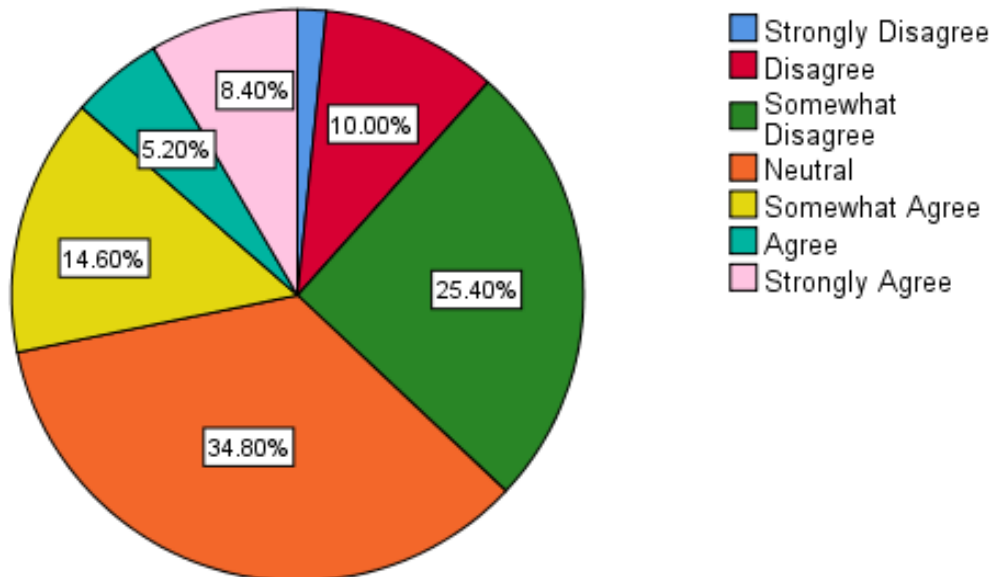


Figure 31 I plan to use influencer content more frequently for product decisions

I am likely to rely on influencers for future purchases

The most frequent answer was neutral (155). A lot of people had doubts: 141 slightly disagreed, 41 disagreed, and 17 definitely disagreed. 68 people slightly agreed, 35 people agreed, and 43 people completely agreed. The mean of 3.986 shows that the fourth item has the lowest favourable leaning. This shows that a lot of people are still unsure or don't trust influencers when they buy things in the future.

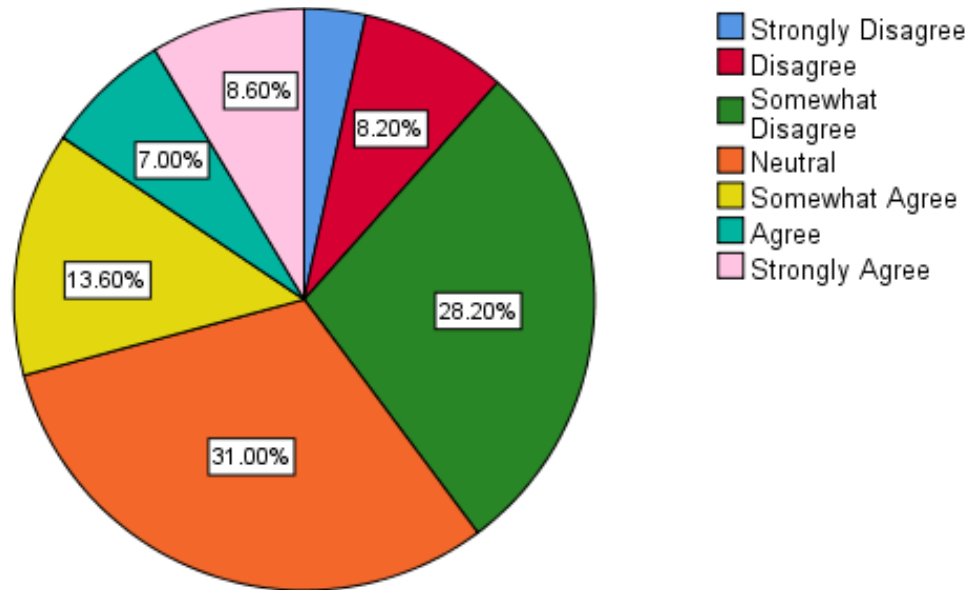


Figure 32 I am likely to rely on influencers for future purchases

Table 4-8 USE BEHAVIOR

		Frequency	Percent	Mean
I have purchased products recommended by influencers.	Strongly Disagree	17	3.4	4.23
	Disagree	37	7.4	
	Somewhat Disagree	104	20.8	
	Neutral	174	34.8	
	Somewhat Agree	70	14.0	
	Agree	20	4.0	
	Strongly Agree	78	15.6	

	Total	500	100.0	
I often browse influencer content for shopping ideas.	Strongly Disagree	16	3.2	4.24
	Disagree	41	8.2	
	Somewhat Disagree	104	20.8	
	Neutral	164	32.8	
	Somewhat Agree	71	14.2	
	Agree	29	5.8	
	Strongly Agree	75	15.0	
	Total	500	100.0	
I follow multiple influencers for product-related content.	Strongly Disagree	22	4.4	4.118
	Disagree	53	10.6	
	Somewhat Disagree	96	19.2	
	Neutral	171	34.2	
	Somewhat Agree	62	12.4	
	Agree	23	4.6	
	Strongly Agree	73	14.6	
	Total	500	100.0	
I regularly act on influencer recommendations when shopping online.	Strongly Disagree	5	1.0	4.244
	Disagree	39	7.8	
	Somewhat Disagree	120	24.0	
	Neutral	179	35.8	
	Somewhat Agree	57	11.4	
	Agree	22	4.4	

	Strongly Agree	78	15.6	
	Total	500	100.0	

I have purchased products recommended by influencers.

The biggest group of the 500 people who answered (174) said they didn't care about buying things that influencers suggested. On the side that disagreed, 104 slightly disagreed, 37 disagreed, and 17 strongly disagreed. Seventy people slightly agreed, twenty people agreed, and seventy-eight people strongly agreed. The average score of 4.23 suggests that people had a relatively positive experience with purchases made via influencers, however most people were ambivalent.

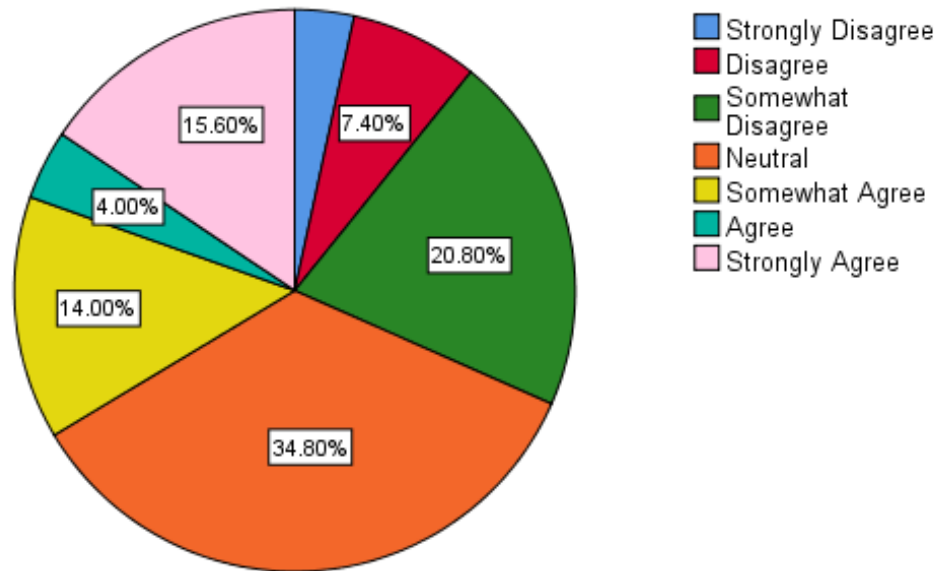


Figure 33 I have purchased products recommended by influencers.

I often browse influencer content for shopping ideas

Of the 500 people who took part, 164 said they didn't have an opinion on looking at influencer material for purchasing suggestions. There were 104 people who slightly disagreed, 41 completely disagreed, and 16 who definitely disagreed. In contrast, 71 people somewhat agreed, 29 people agreed, and 75 people definitely agreed. The average of 4.24 shows that people are a little more likely to look for purchasing ideas from influencer material.

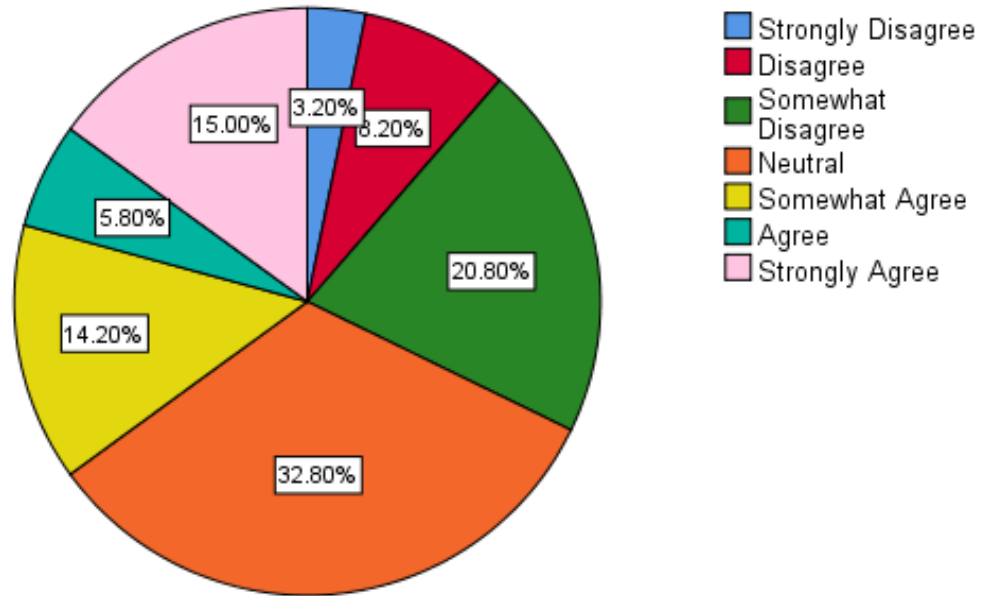


Figure 34 I often browse influencer content for shopping ideas

I follow multiple influencers for product-related content

A total of 171 people didn't care one way or the other about following more than one influencer for product-related information. There were 96 people who slightly disagreed, 53 who disagreed, and 22 who completely disagreed. In the meanwhile, 62 people somewhat agreed, 23 people agreed, and 73 people definitely agreed. The average of 4.118 shows that most people had a positive outlook, yet a lot of people were still unsure.

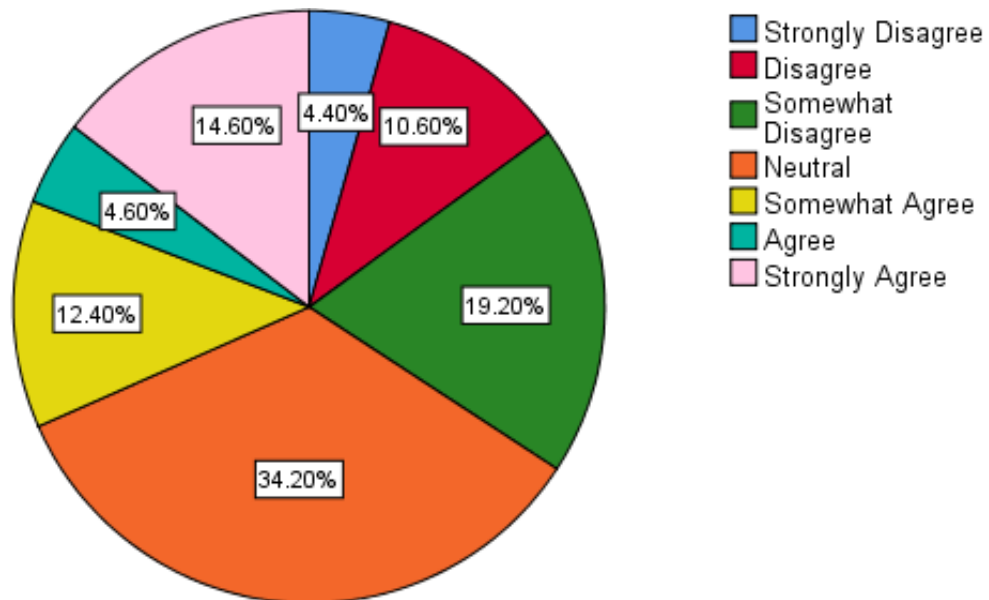


Figure 35 I follow multiple influencers for product-related content

I regularly act on influencer recommendations when shopping online.

179 people said they didn't care about following influencer suggestions while purchasing online. Of the those who disagreed, 120 slightly disagreed, 39 disagreed, and just 5 strongly disagreed. There were 57 people who slightly agreed, 22 who agreed, and 78 who completely agreed. The average score of 4.244 shows that people are rather likely to follow the recommendations of influencers when they purchase online.

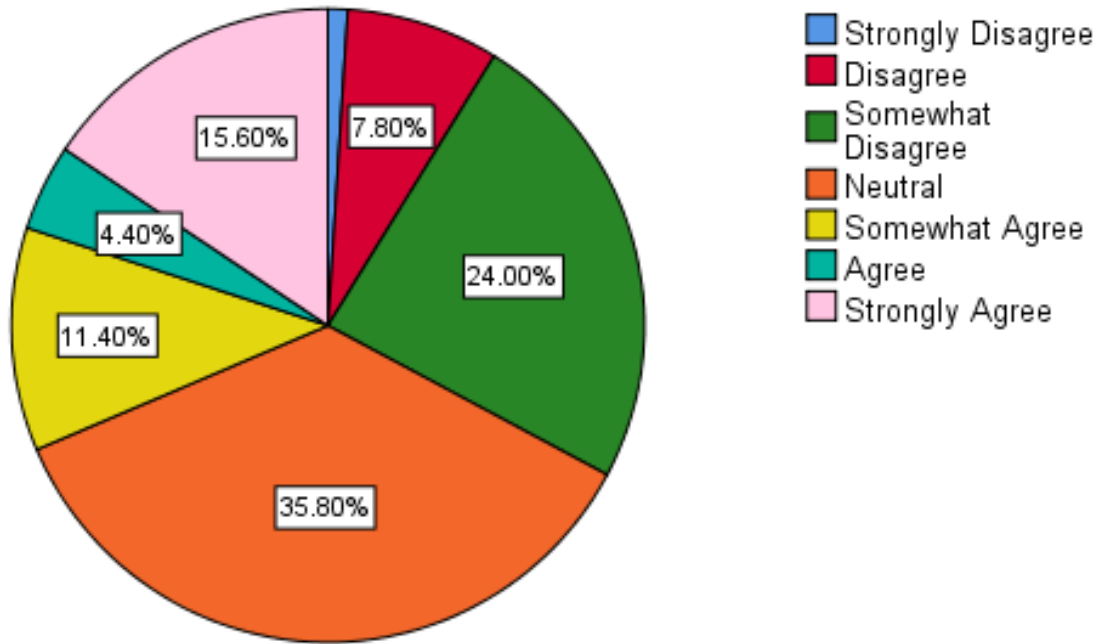


Figure 36 I regularly act on influencer recommendations when shopping online.

SEM (structural equation modelling)

An adaptable statistical tool, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) helps to reveal hidden and obvious connections between variables. Its unique features include, among other things, the ability to combine aspects of component analysis and regression, account for measurement error, integrate latent variables, test several hypotheses at once, and examine complicated causal pathways. Because it simplifies complex datasets, helps validate theoretical models, and analyses the implications of interventions or policies, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is an essential tool for research in a number of disciplines, including economics, sociology, and psychology. Because of this, hypothesis testing and data analysis are both made easier and more accurate.

4.2 Measurement model and validity

Validity and measurement models provide a systematic framework for ensuring the accuracy and importance of data, which is crucial in research. In order to assess complex ideas, measurement models clarify the relationships between empirical facts and underlying assumptions. To avoid deceptive or incorrect results, validity ensures that measurement instruments properly capture the desired constructs. Accurate and reliable findings are essential for informed decision-making and the progress of knowledge across diverse sectors. Research relies on measurement models and validity to provide this foundation.

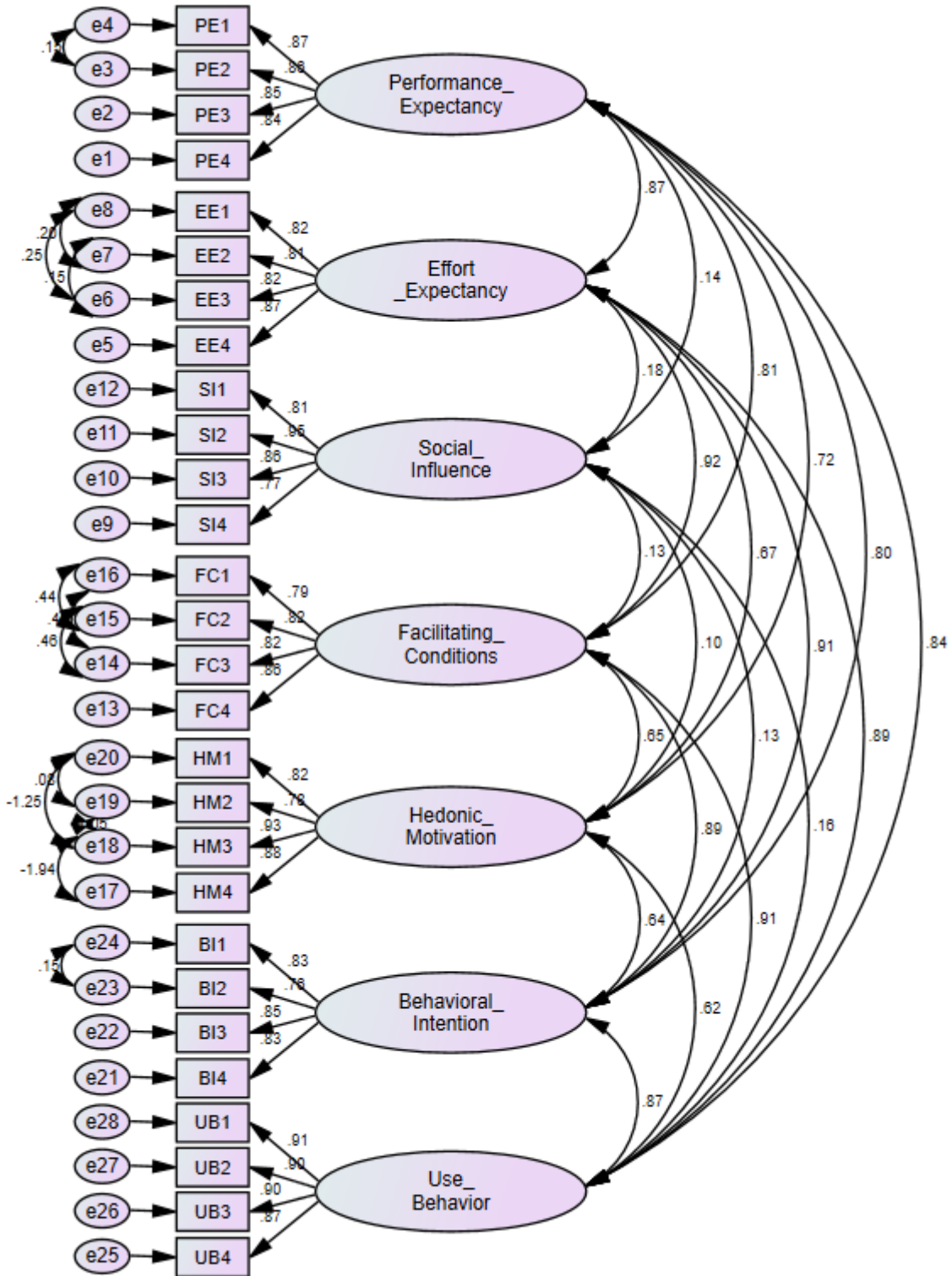


Table 4-9 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PE4 <--- Performance Expectancy	1.000			
PE3 <--- Performance Expectancy	1.016	.043	23.641	***
PE2 <--- Performance Expectancy	1.017	.043	23.880	***
PE1 <--- Performance Expectancy	1.138	.047	24.196	***
EE4 <--- Effort Expectancy	1.000			
EE3 <--- Effort Expectancy	.955	.041	23.480	***
EE2 <--- Effort Expectancy	.987	.043	22.948	***
EE1 <--- Effort Expectancy	.975	.042	23.388	***
SI4 <--- Social Influence	1.000			
SI3 <--- Social Influence	1.102	.052	21.173	***
SI2 <--- Social Influence	1.289	.055	23.274	***
SI1 <--- Social Influence	1.054	.054	19.475	***
FC4 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.000			
FC3 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.031	.046	22.612	***
FC2 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.070	.047	22.962	***
FC1 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.037	.048	21.596	***
HM4 <--- Hedonic Motivation	1.000			
HM3 <--- Hedonic Motivation	1.227	.088	13.935	***
HM2 <--- Hedonic Motivation	.868	.050	17.484	***
HM1 <--- Hedonic Motivation	.927	.050	18.651	***
BI4 <--- Behavioral Intention	1.000			
BI3 <--- Behavioral Intention	.972	.042	22.882	***
BI2 <--- Behavioral Intention	.866	.045	19.186	***
BI1 <--- Behavioral Intention	1.038	.047	21.983	***
UB4 <--- Use Behavior	1.000			
UB3 <--- Use Behavior	1.108	.038	29.073	***
UB2 <--- Use Behavior	1.078	.037	28.951	***
UB1 <--- Use Behavior	1.082	.037	29.559	***

The structural equation model's standardized estimates demonstrate that all latent constructs have strong convergent validity, as shown by very significant factor loadings ($p < 0.001$) and critical ratios (C.R.). For Performance Expectancy, the item loadings were between 1.000 and 1.138, and the C.R. values were over 23.6, which shows that the measurements were quite reliable. The loadings for the Effort Expectancy items were between 0.955 and 1.000, and the C.R. values were above 22.9, which shows that the items are consistent with each other. Social Influence has strong

loadings between 1.000 and 1.289 and C.R. values over 19.4, which supports construct validity. Facilitating Conditions had loadings between 1.000 and 1.070 and C.R. values over 21.5. Hedonic Motivation elements had loadings between 0.868 and 1.227 and C.R. values between 13.9 and 18.6, which are still acceptable. The item loadings for Behavioural Intention were between 0.866 and 1.038, and the C.R. values were always high (≥ 19.2). Lastly, Use Behaviour had very high loadings between 1.000 and 1.108, and C.R. values around 29, which meant that the measurements were quite accurate. The model has been tested in the actual world and regularly exhibits high standardised estimates and statistical significance, indicating that it is a strong fit.

4.3 Factor Analysis

Table 4-10 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.959
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12971.806
	df	378
	Sig.	0.000

Applying KMO and Bartlett's tests, we were able to ascertain whether factor analysis was the right choice. Both the computed KMO value of 0.959 and the very significant Bartlett's test ($P = 0.00$) provided strong evidence for the factor analysis, suggesting that the samples were adequately representative.

Table 4-11 Post CFA, Cronbach alpha, factor loadings

	Cronbach's Alpha	Factor Loadings	AVE	CR
Performance Expectancy				
PE1	0.917	0.802	0.80574	0.8389
PE2		0.814		
PE3		0.828		
PE4		0.779		
Effort Expectancy				
EE1	0.911	0.828	0.78722	0.83252
EE2		0.785		
EE3		0.773		
EE4		0.762		

Social Influence				
SI1	0.911	0.771	0.8083	0.83976
SI2		0.882		
SI3		0.816		
SI4		0.764		
Facilitating Conditions				
FC1	0.924	0.836	0.8206	0.84378
FC2		0.867		
FC3		0.848		
FC4		0.731		
Hedonic Motivation				
HM1	0.843	0.793	0.79534	0.83536
HM2		0.787		
HM3		0.796		
HM4		0.806		
Behavioral Intention				
BI1	0.891	0.740	0.75138	0.81912
BI2		0.785		
BI3		0.757		
BI4		0.723		
Use Behavior				
UB1	0.941	0.845	0.83124	0.84715
UB2		0.829		
UB3		0.838		
UB4		0.814		

Performance Expectancy

The construct's Cronbach's Alpha is 0.917, indicating extremely high levels of internal consistency. An indication of the indicators' reliability is the high factor loadings, which ranged from 0.779 (PE4) to 0.828 (PE3). An AVE of 0.80574 was obtained, above the recommended minimum of 0.50. This proves that the findings are valid for convergent analysis. The Composite dependability (CR) rating of 0.8389 also shows that the internal consistency and build dependability are excellent.

Effort Expectancy

This build was quite reliable, having a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.911. The item loadings were all over the permitted standard of 0.70, with EE4 having a loading of 0.762 and EE1 having a loading of

0.828. The AVE was found to be 0.78722, which means that the construct captures a lot of variation instead of just error. This construct is reliable and valid since it has a CR of 0.83252.

Social Influence

The Cronbach's Alpha for Social Influence was 0.911, which means that the data was quite consistent within itself. The factor loadings ranged from 0.764 for SI4 to 0.882 for SI2, which shows that the indicators are reliable enough. The AVE score of 0.8083 shows that there is good convergent validity. The CR was 0.83976, which shows that this part of the measurement model is reliable and high quality.

Facilitating Conditions

This build was likewise quite reliable, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.924. The loadings were all over the suggested 0.70 level, with FC4 having the lowest at 0.731 and FC2 having the highest at 0.867. The AVE of 0.8206 and the CR of 0.84378 both show that there is good convergent validity and internal consistency.

Hedonic Motivation

With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.843, Hedonic Motivation was reliable enough. Item loadings were always high, between 0.787 (HM2) to 0.806 (HM4). The AVE was 0.79534, which is an excellent sign of convergent validity. The construct's internal consistency is confirmed by the CR value of 0.83536.

Behavioral Intention

Behavioural Intention has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.891, which means it is quite reliable on the inside. The item loadings went from 0.723 (BI4) to 0.785 (BI2). The loadings are still adequate, even if they are a little lower than those of other constructions. The AVE was 0.75138 and the CR was 0.81912, which showed that the construct is reliable and has convergent validity.

Use Behavior

Use Behaviour has the greatest internal consistency of all the structures, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.941. The factor loadings were relatively high, between 0.814 (UB4) to 0.845 (UB1). An AVE of 0.83124 and a CR of 0.84715 show that the convergent validity and internal consistency reliability are quite good.

Table 4-12 Discriminant Validity Test

	Performance Expectancy	Effort Expectancy	Social Influence	Facilitating Conditions	Hedonic Motivation	Behavioral Intention	Use Behavior
Performance Expectancy	0.898						
Effort Expectancy	.774**	0.887					
Social Influence	.131**	.149**	0.899				
Facilitating Conditions	.699**	.769**	0.070	0.906			
Hedonic Motivation	.707**	.645**	0.075	.616**	0.892		
Behavioral Intention	.721**	.804**	.115*	.751**	.598**	0.867	
Use Behavior	.775**	.809**	.154**	.808**	.620**	.796**	0.912

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Discriminant validity matrices display off-diagonal construct correlations as well as square roots of AVE along the diagonal. All latent constructs are compared to see how distinct they are. On the diagonal, you can see numbers ranging from 0.867 to 0.912. To be considered discriminantly valid according to Fornell-Larcker, they must all be greater than the inter-construct correlations in their respective rows and columns. To illustrate, each concept remains separate thanks to the high levels of internal convergence and low levels of correlations among Use Behaviour (0.912), Facilitating Conditions (0.906), and Social Influence (0.899). Performance Expectancy and Use Behaviour ($r = 0.775$)** and Effort Expectancy and Behavioural Intention ($r = 0.804$)** are two

examples of moderate to high correlations that demonstrate a theoretical relationship between the two variables but no practical relationship in reality. Alternatively, lower correlations provide more support to the idea of discriminant separation; for example, $r = 0.075$ between social influence and hedonic motivation and $r = 0.070$ between social influence and enabling situations. The model's high discriminant validity is supported by the fact that all components are evaluating distinct conceptual domains, as seen in the matrix.

Table 4-13 Model fit summary

Variable	Value
Chi-square value(χ^2)	826.004
Degrees of freedom (df)	317
CMIN/DF	2.606
P value	.896
GFI	.926
RFI	.901
NFI	.938
IFI	.961
CFI	.960
RMR	.070
RMSEA	.057

A satisfactory structural equation model fit is shown by the model's fit statistics. A total of 317 degrees of freedom provide a Chi-square value (χ^2) of 826.004. The model fits well since the CMIN/DF (χ^2/df) value is 2.606, which is less than 3. A p-value of 0.896 indicates that there is little to no difference between the observed data and the model. Nevertheless, keep in mind that the sample size impacts chi-square. Both the comparison and addition fits are superb, with a Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) of 0.926 and other incremental fit indices such as RFI (0.901), NFI (0.938), IFI (0.961), and CFI (0.960) all above the necessary cut-off of 0.90. The Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) is 0.070, which is acceptable but somewhat higher than the suggested 0.05 standard. Given that the RMSEA is below the cutoff of 0.06, which signifies a good fit after parsimony adjustment, we may conclude that the fit is satisfactory. The model fits the data well and is statistically and practically good enough, as shown by these indices in general.

4.4 Hypotheses:

H1: Performance expectancy has a positive impact on the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

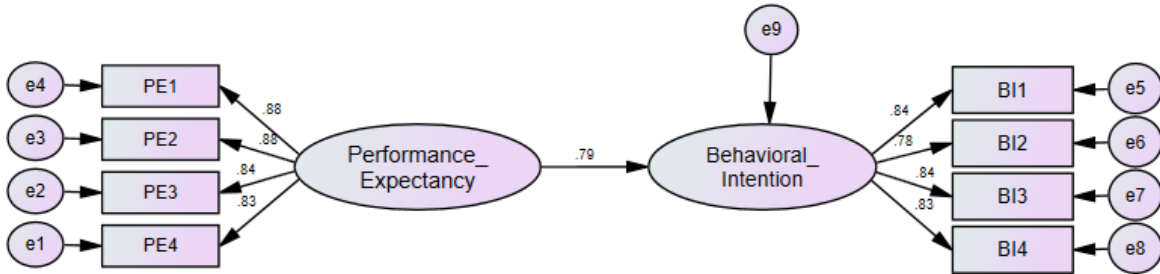


Table 4-14 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

Path		Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Behavioral Intention	<--- Performance Expectancy	.791	.046	17.214	***
PE4	<--- Performance Expectancy	1.000			
PE3	<--- Performance Expectancy	1.011	.044	22.719	***
PE2	<--- Performance Expectancy	1.046	.043	24.460	***
PE1	<--- Performance Expectancy	1.166	.047	24.605	***
BI1	<--- Behavioral Intention	1.000			
BI2	<--- Behavioral Intention	.841	.042	19.999	***
BI3	<--- Behavioral Intention	.909	.041	22.380	***
BI4	<--- Behavioral Intention	.940	.043	21.881	***

The structural path analysis demonstrated a robust and statistically significant positive link between behavioural intention and performance expectation. With a standard deviation of 0.046 and a critical ratio (C.R.) of 17.214 ($p < 0.001$), the standardized estimate is 0.791. What this indicates is that the impact of performance expectation on the intention to use is substantial. The

items are dependable and the construct is real since all of the Performance Expectancy indicators have strong and statistically significant loadings, with C.R. values over 22. A loading of 1.166 (PE1) corresponds to a PE3 loading of 1.011. With C.R. values beyond 19, the Behavioural Intention indicators also exhibit robust loadings, ranging from 0.841 (BI2) to 0.940 (BI4). This shows that the measurement is consistent and that the construct can explain the model.

Table 4-15 Model fit summary

Variable	Value
Chi-square value(χ^2)	42.472
Degrees of freedom (df)	19
CMIN/DF	2.225
P value	.002
GFI	.980
RFI	.979
NFI	.986
IFI	.992
CFI	.992
RMR	.036
RMSEA	.050

The route model's fit indices provide a good overall match to the data, validating the suggested link. With 19 degrees of freedom, the Chi-square value is 42.472, resulting in a CMIN/DF = 2.225. Since this is less than the threshold of 3, we may conclude that the model provides a good fit to the data. While a p-value of 0.002 indicates statistical significance, this is typical for samples ranging from modest to large and has no bearing on the model's generalizability. Overall, the fit is strong, both incrementally and compared to other fits, with GFI (0.980), RFI (0.979), NFI (0.986), IFI (0.992), and CFI (0.992) all being more than the minimum of 0.90. After controlling for parsimony, the model fits well since the RMR is 0.036, which is less than the typical limit of 0.05, and the RMSEA is 0.050, which is just at the optimum level. When taken as a whole, these metrics demonstrate that the model provides a good statistical fit to the data.

H2: Effort expectancy positively influences the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials when engaging with influencer content.

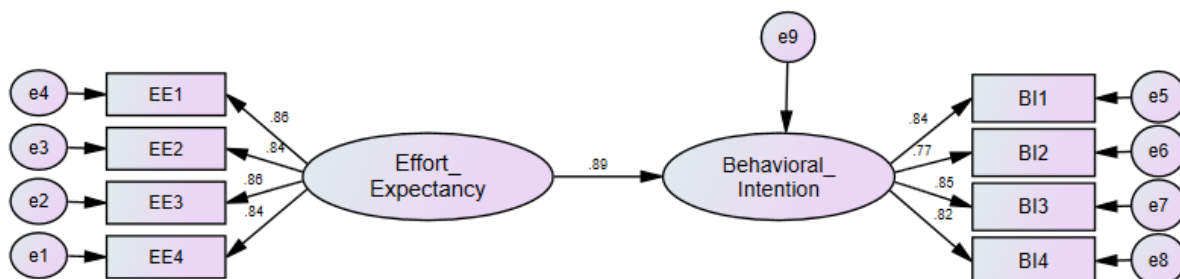


Table 4-16 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Path	Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Behavioral Intention	<--- Effort Expectancy	.894	.045	19.706	***
EE4	<--- Effort Expectancy	1.000			
EE3	<--- Effort Expectancy	1.034	.044	23.614	***
EE2	<--- Effort Expectancy	1.063	.046	22.959	***
EE1	<--- Effort Expectancy	1.068	.045	23.976	***
BI1	<--- Behavioral Intention	1.000			
BI2	<--- Behavioral Intention	.840	.042	19.955	***
BI3	<--- Behavioral Intention	.928	.040	23.130	***
BI4	<--- Behavioral Intention	.939	.043	21.861	***

A strong and statistically significant positive correlation between Effort Expectancy and Behavioural Intention is shown by the structural path analysis. The standardised estimate is 0.894, the standard error is 0.045, and the critical ratio (C.R.) is 19.706 ($p < 0.001$). This means that people who think the system is easier to use are much more likely to want to use it. The measurement model for Effort Expectancy has strong and substantial item loadings, with estimates between 1.034 (EE3) and 1.068 (EE1). All C.R. values are over 22, which demonstrates that the

model is very reliable and convergent. The indicators for Behavioural Intention—BI2 (0.840), BI3 (0.928), and BI4 (0.939)—also have substantial loadings and high C.R. values over 19, which shows that the assessment of the construct is reliable. The findings as a whole support the strength and validity of the hypothesised connection and the measurement model that goes with it.

Table 4-17 Model fit summary

Variable	Value
Chi-square value(χ^2)	42.280
Degrees of freedom (df)	19
CMIN/DF	2.541
P value	.000
GFI	.976
RFI	.977
NFI	.984
IFI	.990
CFI	.990
RMR	.036
RMSEA	.056

Fit indices for the route model that evaluates the hypothesised relationship reveal good model fit across the board. The CMIN/DF is 2.541, which is derived from a Chi-square value of 42.280 with 19 degrees of freedom. The model is likely adequate since this is below the 3 predetermined cutoff. Even if the p-value is 0.000, which is considered statistically significant, it is not always indicative of a poor fit as it is typical for moderate to large samples. Fit is strong incrementally and comparably, as all five fit metrics—GFI(0.976), RFI(0.977), NFI(0.984), IFI(0.990), and CFI (0.990)—are much higher than the recommended threshold of 0.90. Not only is the RMSEA value of 0.056 lower than the desired threshold of 0.06, but the RMR value of 0.036 remains below the acceptable limit of 0.05 as well. This means that the fit is satisfactory when you take into account the parsimony. All of these numbers together show that the proposed model matches the data effectively.

H3: Social influence positively affects the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

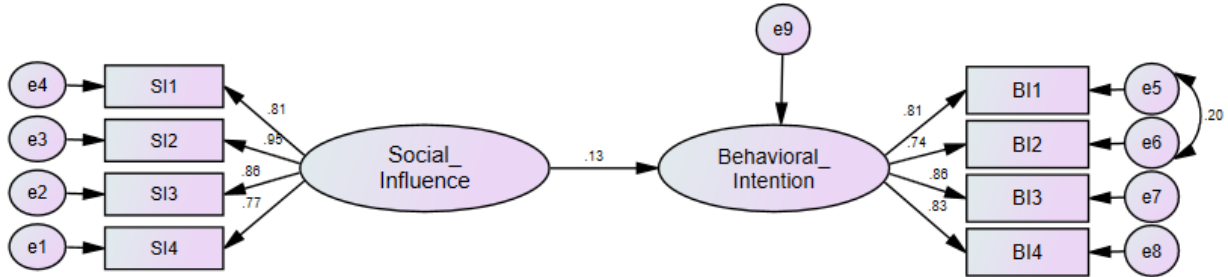


Table 4-18 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Path	Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Behavioral Intention	<--- Social Influence	.160	.059	2.717	.007
SI4	<--- Social Influence	1.000			
SI3	<--- Social Influence	1.101	.052	21.178	***
SI2	<--- Social Influence	1.289	.055	23.284	***
SI1	<--- Social Influence	1.053	.054	19.472	***
BI1	<--- Behavioral Intention	1.000			
BI2	<--- Behavioral Intention	.834	.042	19.733	***
BI3	<--- Behavioral Intention	.974	.048	20.418	***
BI4	<--- Behavioral Intention	.985	.050	19.874	***

With a standardized estimate of 0.160, a standard error of 0.059, and a critical ratio of 2.717 ($p = 0.007$), the route analysis reveals that Behavioural Intention is positively impacted by Social Influence, but to a limited extent. This proves that people's intentions to behave are influenced by social influences. The measurement model for Social Influence has item loadings that are strong and substantial, ranging from 1.053 (SI1) to 1.289 (SI2), with critical ratios above 19, which demonstrates that it is very reliable and convergent. The indicators for Behavioural Intention—

BI2 (0.834), BI3 (0.974), and BI4 (0.985)—also have substantial loadings and critical ratios over 19, which shows that the measurements are quite consistent. Overall, the results support the idea that social influences affect behavioural intentions, and the measuring constructs used were trustworthy and valid.

Table 4-19 Model fit summary

Variable	Value
Chi-square value(χ^2)	63.452
Degrees of freedom (df)	18
CMIN/DF	3.525
P value	.000
GFI	.970
RFI	.963
NFI	.976
IFI	.983
CFI	.983
RMR	.064
RMSEA	.071

The path model that examines the relationship between social influence and behavioral intention fits the data well according to the fit indices. This chi-square test has a value of 63.452 with 18 degrees of freedom. The result is a CMIN/DF of 3.525, which is somewhat higher than the generally accepted threshold of 3, but falls within an acceptable range. In large samples, a p-value of 0.000 is common and does not always indicate poor fit. Goodness of fit indices such as GFI (0.970), RFI (0.963), NFI (0.976), IFI (0.983), and CFI (0.983) are all more than the minimum requirement of 0.90, indicating an excellent fit when compared to other models and when included in the model itself. While 0.064 for RMR and 0.071 for RMSEA are slightly beyond the optimal cutoffs of 0.05 and 0.06, respectively, they are within the acceptable range. Nonetheless, these outcomes demonstrate that both the residual error and parsimony are acceptable. In general, these numbers show that the proposed model matches the data that was seen well enough.

H4a: Facilitating conditions positively influence the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

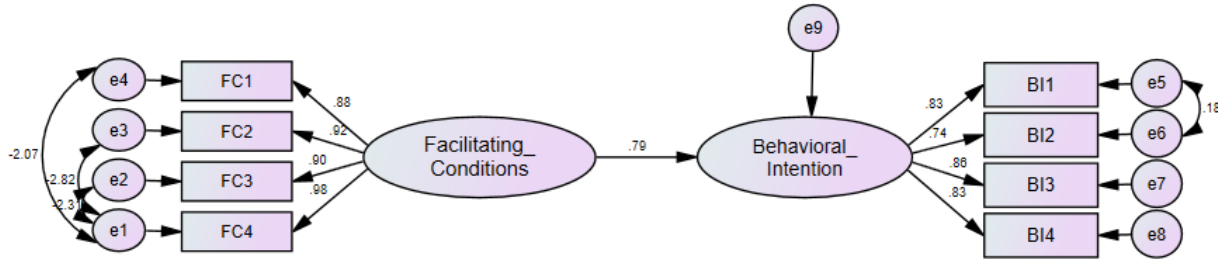


Table 4-20 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

Path	Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Behavioral Intention <--- Facilitating Conditions	.617	.041	15.035	***
FC4 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.000			
FC3 <--- Facilitating Conditions	.989	.047	20.931	***
FC2 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.040	.049	21.122	***
FC1 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.006	.049	20.641	***
BI1 <--- Behavioral Intention	1.000			
BI2 <--- Behavioral Intention	.822	.040	20.324	***
BI3 <--- Behavioral Intention	.950	.043	22.292	***
BI4 <--- Behavioral Intention	.962	.045	21.237	***

The findings of the path analysis demonstrate that Facilitating Conditions have a strong positive influence on Behavioural Intention, with a standardised estimate of 0.617 (S.E. = 0.041, C.R. = 15.035, $p < 0.001$). The factor loadings for the Facilitating Conditions indicators are strong and important, ranging from 0.989 to 1.040. All of them have p-values below 0.001 and critical ratios over 20, indicating that the measurements are reliable. Additionally, there are very significant (p

< 0.001) loadings for the Behavioural Intention markers ranging from 0.822 to 0.962. This shows that the observed measures in the model are a good representation of the latent variables.

Table 4-21 Model fit summary

Variable	Value
Chi-square value(χ^2)	28.392
Degrees of freedom (df)	15
CMIN/DF	1.893
P value	.019
GFI	.986
RFI	.983
NFI	.991
IFI	.996
CFI	.996
RMR	.030
RMSEA	.042

The route model fits the data well, according to the fit indices. A Chi-square value of 28.392 with 15 degrees of freedom yields a CMIN/DF of 1.893, much below the permissible threshold of 3. A bit higher than the ideal threshold, the p-value is 0.019. The overall fit of the model is unaffected by this, and it is typical for larger samples. With a value of 0.986, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) is rather high. Fit is superb in comparison and increment, since other incremental fit indices including RFI (0.983), NFI (0.991), IFI (0.996), and CFI (0.996) are all more than the recommended threshold of 0.90. Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) = 0.030 and Root Mean Square Error (RMSEA) = 0.042, both falling inside the ideal range. Both the simplicity of the model and the low residual error are shown by this. A combination of these metrics demonstrates that the suggested model satisfactorily accounts for the observed data.

H4b: Facilitating conditions positively affect the actual purchasing behavior of Indian millennial.

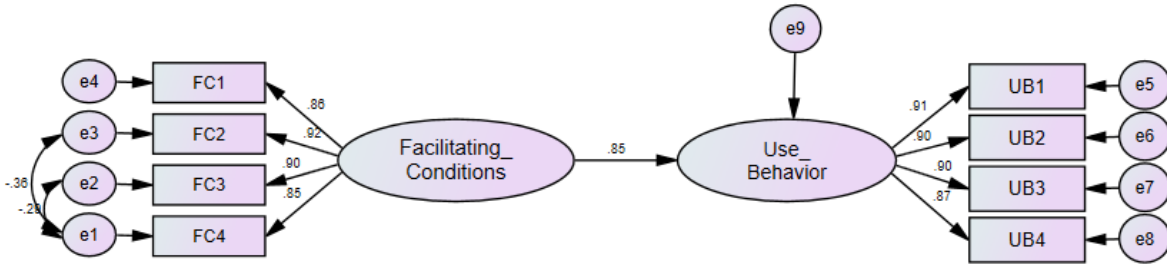


Table 4-22 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

Path	Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Use Behavior <--- Facilitating Conditions	.878	.043	20.301	***
FC4 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.000			
FC3 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.154	.050	23.249	***
FC2 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.203	.051	23.360	***
FC1 <--- Facilitating Conditions	1.137	.049	23.106	***
UB1 <--- Use Behavior	1.000			
UB2 <--- Use Behavior	1.003	.032	31.820	***
UB3 <--- Use Behavior	1.029	.032	31.785	***
UB4 <--- Use Behavior	.919	.032	28.732	***

The findings of the path analysis show that Facilitating Conditions have a considerable positive influence on Use Behaviour, with a standardised estimate of 0.878 (S.E. = 0.043, C.R. = 20.301, $p < 0.001$). The separate indicators of Facilitating Conditions have high and important factor loadings, from 1.000 to 1.203, with critical ratios over 23 and p-values less than 0.001. This shows that the measurements are quite reliable. The Use Behaviour indicators also have strong factor loadings between 0.919 and 1.029, all of which are very significant with critical ratios over 28 ($p < 0.001$). This shows that the model's latent variables are valid and reliable.

Table 4-23 Model fit summary

Variable	Value
Chi-square value(χ^2)	43.928
Degrees of freedom (df)	17
CMIN/DF	2.584
P value	.000
GFI	.979
RFI	.982
NFI	.989
IFI	.993
CFI	.993
RMR	.051
RMSEA	.056

Overall, the route model fits well according to the fit indices. A Chi-square test with 17 degrees of freedom yields a result of 43.928; this indicates that the CMIN/DF is 2.584, falling below the acceptable standard of 3. Other fit indices demonstrate that the model is adequate, and the p-value is 0.000, which is typical for large samples. There are many incremental fit indices that are more than the acceptable cut-off of 0.90; they include the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) at 0.979, the NFI at 0.989, the IFI at 0.993, and the CFI at 0.993. Both the incremental and comparative fits are satisfactory, indicating that the model is well-fitting. When compared to the industry norm, an RMSEA of 0.056 and an RMR of 0.051 are both deemed satisfactory. This demonstrates the simplicity and minimal residual error of the model. These results demonstrate, in aggregate, that the suggested model agrees with the obtained data.

H5: Hedonic motivation has a positive impact on the purchasing intentions of Indian millennials in response to influencer marketing.

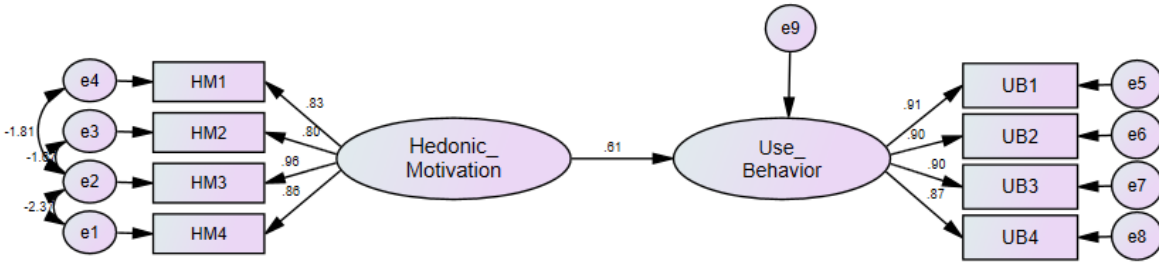


Table 4-24 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

Path	Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Use Behavior <--- Hedonic Motivation	.812	.061	13.270	***
HM4 <--- Hedonic Motivation	1.000			
HM3 <--- Hedonic Motivation	1.288	.105	12.246	***
HM2 <--- Hedonic Motivation	.911	.046	19.984	***
HM1 <--- Hedonic Motivation	.960	.046	20.808	***
UB1 <--- Use Behavior	1.000			
UB2 <--- Use Behavior	1.002	.031	31.920	***
UB3 <--- Use Behavior	1.019	.033	31.281	***
UB4 <--- Use Behavior	.918	.032	28.796	***

The path analysis shows that Hedonic Motivation and Use Behaviour are strongly linked, with a standardised estimate of 0.812 (S.E. = 0.061, C.R. = 13.270, $p < 0.001$). The various indicators of Hedonic Motivation have large and significant loadings. For example, HM4 is set at 1.000 for scale identification, whereas HM3 (1.288), HM2 (0.911), and HM1 (0.960) all have high standardised estimates and significant critical ratios. The Use Behaviour indicators also show great reliability, with UB1 set at 1.000 and UB2 (1.002), UB3 (1.019), and UB4 (0.918) all displaying high standardised estimates and very significant critical ratios. This confirms that the measurement model is adequately stated.

Table 4-25 Model fit summary

Variable	Value
Chi-square value(χ^2)	40.567
Degrees of freedom (df)	16
CMIN/DF	2.535
P value	.001
GFI	.981
RFI	.976
NFI	.987
IFI	.992
CFI	.992
RMR	.032
RMSEA	.055

Path model fit indicators demonstrate good model fit across the board. The Chi-square value, with 16 degrees of freedom, is 40.567. Thereby, the CMIN/DF falls short of the allowed limit of 3, coming in at 2.535. Though p-values of 0.001 are statistically significant, it is not always indicative of poor fit since this happens often in large samples. A number of incremental fit indices, including the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) at 0.981, NFI at 0.987, IFI at 0.992, and CFI at 0.992, are all more than the necessary cut-off of 0.90. When looking at incremental fit as well as comparative fit, this demonstrates that the model fits well. At 0.055 and 0.032, respectively, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) are below the acceptable thresholds. This means that the model is simple and has minimal residual error. In general, these numbers show that the proposed model matches the data that was seen well.

CHAPTER-5

5. Discussion

This study set out to examine, within the context of influencer marketing, the elements that affect the purchase intentions of millennials in India using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as an analytical framework. According to the results, influencers' credibility, trustworthiness, attractiveness, amount of engagement, and the quality of their content all play a big role in customers' choice to buy. By factoring in all of these aspects, we can create a complete behavioral and psychological profile of millennials' perceptions and reactions to influencers on different social media platforms. The substantial association that exists between trust and the efficacy of influencers is one of the most important discoveries that was realized. Due to the fact that they were born and raised in the internet age, millennials in India approach conventional forms of advertising with a greater degree of cynicism. On the other hand, people respond positively to trustworthy and relevant digital personas. This remark bolsters the use of the Social Learning Theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

These ideas propose that attitudes, societal norms, and modeled behaviors all come together to influence consumer intentions. In addition, the research underscores the fact that parasocial contacts, which are the one-sided connections that followers build with influencers, are not only emotionally resonant but also behaviorally predictive. Because of these interactions, trust and perceived authenticity are fueled, particularly among micro- and nano-influencers, which in turn inspire higher intents to make a purchase. This bolsters the findings of previous research that was centered on the Western world and verifies its application to the Indian environment. In addition, the data indicate that the quality of the material, which includes the informativeness, originality, and aesthetic appeal of the content, considerably increases the level of customer engagement. Due to the fact that millennials prefer material that is bite-sized, emotionally engaging, and visually rich, visual-centric platforms has shown to be highly successful. Examples of such platforms are Instagram and YouTube. This movement is explained by the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which states that millennials seek amusement, knowledge, and identity validation via the consumption of digital media. Furthermore, it has been shown that the connection between an influencer and a customer is more influential when there is cultural or demographic congruence.

This suggests that the importance of relatability and contextual relevance cannot be overstated. Local and regional influencers that use vernacular material have a more significant impact on millennial audiences residing in Tier-II and Tier-III cities. Another aspect that is stressed in this study is the significance of making decisions based on facts. Using search engine marketing (SEM), this research demonstrates how predictive analytics may provide marketers with insights that can be put into action. It gives companies the ability to optimize influencer selection, campaign timing, and content strategy, which ultimately results in an increase in return on investment (ROI) in a market that is extremely competitive and dynamic.

4.5 Workable Suggestions

In order to improve the efficacy of influencer marketing campaigns aimed at Indian millennials, this research offers a number of **workable and actionable suggestions** for companies, digital marketers, influencers, and policymakers.

1. Strategic Selection of Influencers

Brands should carefully vet influencers based on **credibility, authenticity, and content quality** rather than follower count alone. Micro-influencers, who maintain a niche but engaged audience, may offer higher conversion rates due to their perceived trustworthiness and relatability. Brands must prioritize long-term relationships with such influencers to foster consistency and brand loyalty.

2. Focus on Emotional Resonance and Authenticity

Emotional trust was found to be a powerful predictor of purchase intention. Therefore, marketers should move beyond promotional content and encourage influencers to share **personal stories, product experiences, behind-the-scenes content**, and relatable narratives that build emotional connections. Genuine storytelling is more impactful than scripted promotions, particularly for millennial audiences.

3. Content Should Be Purpose-Driven and Value-Oriented

Content that aligns with **social values** such as sustainability, inclusivity, and ethical consumption resonates more with Indian millennials. Brands should ensure their influencer campaigns are not only persuasive but also reflect **corporate social responsibility (CSR)** to enhance brand image and consumer loyalty.

4. **Measure Engagement, Not Just Reach**

Marketers are advised to shift their metrics of success from vanity metrics (likes, impressions) to more meaningful KPIs such as **engagement rates, sentiment analysis, click-through rates, and conversion metrics**. These measures more accurately reflect consumer interest and intention to purchase.

5. **Personalized Influencer Campaigns**

Given the diversity within the millennial population, influencer campaigns should be **segmented** based on psychographic variables such as lifestyle, income level, digital behavior, and regional preferences. Personalized content delivered through targeted influencer partnerships can yield better ROI.

6. **Compliance with Transparency Guidelines**

Influencers and brands should adhere to **regulatory frameworks** such as the ASCI guidelines in India, which require disclosure of paid partnerships through hashtags like #Ad or #Sponsored. Transparency builds trust and enhances credibility.

4.6 **Implications of the Study**

The results of this research carry significant implications across three major domains: **theoretical, practical, and societal**.

1. **Theoretical Implications**

- This study extends the applicability of the **Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2)** by integrating influencer-specific variables such as **credibility, emotional trust, and content quality**, which are not traditionally part of the model.

- The integration of **parasocial interaction theory** within the framework provides a new dimension to understanding consumer-influencer relationships in digital marketing contexts.
- The research contributes to literature on **Indian millennials**, an under-explored consumer segment in global influencer marketing research, thereby enhancing cross-cultural applicability of existing models.

2. Practical Implications

- The findings offer clear guidelines to **digital marketing professionals, brand strategists, and social media consultants** for crafting more effective and targeted influencer campaigns.
- By understanding the psychological drivers behind millennial purchase behavior—such as hedonic motivation, trust, and social influence—brands can design more **emotionally intelligent and experience-driven campaigns**.
- The insights can also help platforms like Instagram and YouTube develop **algorithmic tools** to better match influencers with appropriate brand campaigns based on behavioral predictors.

3. Societal Implications

- The research highlights the significance of **ethical influencer behavior and responsible advertising**, especially in a digital world where disinformation and materialism are prevalent.
- It emphasizes the increasing need of **customers becoming digitally literate**, particularly when it comes to identifying sponsored material from original content.
- Furthermore, by encouraging the use of **value-driven messaging** and socially conscious content, the study advocates for marketing practices that are **not only profitable but also ethically constructive**.

4.7 Comparison of Findings with Existing Literature and Theoretical Debate

The findings of the present study have been critically evaluated in light of existing academic literature, and notable congruence as well as divergence has been observed. This section outlines

both the alignment and contradiction of the current results with previously published work, thus providing a balanced and scholarly interpretation of the outcomes.

The study's identification of influencer credibility, content quality, and emotional trust as significant predictors of purchase intention is strongly aligned with the findings of Lou and (Lou & Yuan, 2019), who emphasized the critical role of authenticity and trustworthiness in influencer-follower relationships. Similarly, highlighted that perceived behavioral control and personal relevance significantly affect consumer behavior, supporting the present study's inclusion of psychological constructs adapted from the UTAUT2 framework.

Research by confirms the positive effect of hedonic motivation on behavioral intention. Millennials' digital purchasing journeys are motivated by fun, self-expression, and emotional gratification, according to this study. This further substantiates the argument that emotional aspects have become increasingly prominent in marketing effectiveness among younger consumer cohorts.

In terms of social influence, the findings are consistent with those of (J. Chen, 2021) and (Vrontis et al., 2021), both of whom recognized that subjective norms and peer validation act as important motivators for digital engagement and consumer decision-making. These studies reinforce the notion that collectivist tendencies, particularly in Indian society, heighten the role of social networks and influencer impact.

Contrary to some prior studies such as those by, which emphasized the importance of facilitating conditions and performance expectancy, this study observed these variables to have a weaker influence on behavioral intention. This divergence suggests that Indian millennials, having matured digitally, do not perceive technical barriers or ease of access as crucial concerns in influencer-driven decisions. This finding offers a new perspective: digital fluency has likely normalized the use of social commerce tools, diminishing the role of traditional usability constructs.

Another point of divergence lies in the comparatively lower significance of habit, a finding that challenges earlier UTAUT2-based studies where habit was found to be a direct predictor of use behavior (Venkatesh et al., 2012). In the current context, it appears that millennial consumers may

be more selective and reflective in their influencer interactions, driven more by episodic emotional trust than by routine or habitual consumption.

Further, while studies like those by (ASHENI, 2024) argued that peer influence had little effect on consumer purchase decisions, the present research finds moderate support for social influence among Indian millennials. This contradiction may stem from contextual differences, as Indian consumers typically rely more on social cues and interpersonal influence due to collectivist societal norms.

4.8 Limitations

Although this research might provide some insight on the influencer marketing purchase intentions of millennials in India, it is important to keep in mind that it does have certain limitations. At first glance, the research doesn't cover much ground since most of the data come from cities. This may not accurately reflect the variety of India's millennial population, particularly those from semi-urban or rural areas. Second, the research uses self-reported data, which may be biased due to social desirability or memory errors. Thirdly, the study's cross-sectional design impairs its capacity to document shifts in customer behavior over time or in reaction to changing digital trends. Uncontrollable elements like influencer scandals, changes in social media algorithms, and quick technical advancements could also have affected participant perceptions throughout the data collecting period. It is possible that external socio-political or macroeconomic factors influence customer attitude and behavior, but this is not taken into consideration by the model. These restrictions point to the necessity for more longitudinal and multi-regional research to fully comprehend the effect of influencer marketing and care in extrapolating the results.

4.9 Scope of future research

This study provides vital insights into the elements impacting the purchase intentions of Indian millennials in influencer marketing, but there is still lot of potential for further research in this area. Future research may further develop the behavioral framework by examining other dimensions like perceived pleasure, customer innovativeness, or brand trust. Also, a comparison across cohorts of different generations, such Gen Z and Gen X, may show how each age reacts to influencer marketing differently. Additionally, useful for documenting how consumer behavior changes over time, particularly in reaction to shifting digital trends and technical breakthroughs,

would be longitudinal research. The research's generalizability may also be improved by extending it to other geographical areas within India. And last, using qualitative techniques like focus groups or interviews may help reveal more about the psychological and emotional foundations of influencer-consumer connections.

CHAPTER-6

6. Conclusion

This research offers an empirically supported and context-specific knowledge of how influencer marketing affects Indian millennials' purchase inclinations. The research is based on UTAUT2, or the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, and employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for its analysis. Important factors that impact consumers' decisions to buy include social influence, enabling environment, performance expectation, and effort expectancy. The statistical analysis provides strong support for the study hypotheses by confirming that these dimensions impact behavioral intention and transfer into actual buying behavior.

This study adds significant value by using the UTAUT2 paradigm, which is often used in situations involving technology adoption, to influencer marketing, particularly in the Indian digital context. By connecting behavioral theory with new marketing tactics, this cross-domain application adds something fresh to the literature. In contrast to earlier research that mostly examined Western audiences or social media use in general, this study provides insights specific to Indian millennials, a population that is both economically significant and technologically competent. In doing so, the research contributes fresh theoretical nuance and significance to the developing conversation on the behavior of digital consumers.

The results demonstrate that Indian millennials are not passive consumers of digital content; rather, they actively interact with influencers in response to peer pressure (social influence), the availability of enabling technologies (facilitating conditions), and the perceived utility and ease of use of the content (performance and effort expectancy). Furthermore, it was shown that the fundamental forces behind consumer engagement were emotional connection, trust, and authenticity—all of which are often fostered via parasocial connections. These findings support the increasing significance of environmental and psychological elements in marketing efficacy and are in line with the statistical results.

Practically speaking, the research emphasizes how important it is for marketers to concentrate on producing high-quality, easily comprehensible, and emotionally impactful content. Better engagement and conversion rates are expected to result from partnerships with micro-influencers that share the target audience's social values. Furthermore, in today's data-driven marketing

environment, it is crucial to strategically employ analytics to monitor, assess, and improve influencer programs.

In conclusion, by applying well-established behavioral theories to the field of influencer marketing, this study significantly advances the field and offers practitioners and academics useful information. It supports future research that adapts to changing consumer habits, technical advancements, while reaffirming the crucial role influencer marketing plays in India's digital economy.

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APPENDICES

‘PROJECT TITLE: IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON THE PURCHASING BEHAVIOR OF INDIAN MILLENNIALS’

INTRODUCTION:

Invitation to Participate in a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study titled “Impact of Influencer Marketing on the Purchasing Behaviour of Indian Millennials.” Please take time to read the details below and consider participating. Your participation is entirely voluntary.

This study seeks to explore how influencer marketing on social media platforms affects the purchasing intentions and actual buying behavior of Indian millennials. We aim to examine the role of influencer credibility, content quality, trust, engagement, and other related factors that influence consumer decisions.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY?

You will be asked to complete a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher.

The survey will be administered in person and will take approximately 10–15 minutes to complete.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any point without any penalty or loss of benefits.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

By participating, you contribute to academic research that may help marketers, brands, and policymakers better understand consumer behavior in today’s digital environment. While there may be no direct personal benefits, your input will support insights that could shape future marketing strategies and improve digital experiences for other consumers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your name and any identifying details will not be included in any reports or publications. All responses will be kept strictly confidential, securely stored, and used only for research purposes. We will take all necessary precautions to protect your data from unauthorized access or misuse.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse or withdraw from the study at any time without facing any penalty or consequences. Declining to participate will not affect your academic status, opportunities, or any benefits you are otherwise entitled to.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

If you have questions about the study or in case you experience any unexpected discomfort, please contact:

Researcher: Koti Vinod Babu

Supervisor: Prof (Dr.) JB Patnaik

ICFAI University, Jharkhand

QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE - IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON THE PURCHASING BEHAVIOR OF INDIAN MILLENNIALS

Respondents Demographic:

Name: _____

Age:

1. 22-25
2. 26-30
3. 31-35
4. 36-40

Gender:

1. Male
2. Female

Education: Level:

- 1. UG
- 2. PG
- 3. PHD

Monthly Income:

- 1. Below 25000
- 2. 25000-50000
- 3. 50000-75000
- 4. Above 75000

Location:

Hyderabad

Social Media usage:

- 1. 1 Hour
- 2. 2 Hours
- 3. 3 Hours
- 4. More than 3 Hours

How do you consider Internet and social media role in the consumer decision making process ?

(Rank your choice 1-Strongly agree, 2-Agree 3-Neither agree nor disagree,4-Disagree; 5- Strongly disagree)

PERFORMANCE EXPECTANCY

	Statements	SD= Strongly Disagree	D= Disagree,	N= Neutral	A= Agree	SA= Strongly Agree
1	Influencer recommendations help me make better purchase decisions.					
2	Following influencers improves the efficiency of my online shopping					
3	Influencer marketing enhances the usefulness of social media for product discovery.					
4	I find influencer recommendations valuable					

	in meeting my shopping needs.					
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EFFORT EXPECTANCY

	Statements	SD= Strongly Disagree	D= Disagree,	N= Neutral	A= Agree	SA= Strongly Agree
1	It is easy to understand the product information provided by influencers.					
2	Interacting with influencer content is clear and understandable.					
3	Following product recommendations from influencers is simple.					
4	Learning how to follow influencer recommendations requires little effort.					

SOCIAL INFLUENCE

	Statements	SD= Strongly Disagree	D= Disagree,	N= Neutral	A= Agree	SA= Strongly Agree
1	People important to me follow influencer recommendations					
2	I follow influencers because others in my circle do the same.					
3	Influencers shape the opinions of people around me.					
4	I feel social pressure to consider influencer-endorsed products.					

FACILITATING CONDITIONS

	Statements	SD= Strongly Disagree	D= Disagree,	N= Neutral	A= Agree	SA= Strongly Agree
1	I have the resources necessary to follow influencers' recommendations (e.g., smartphone, internet).					
2	I have the knowledge to use social media platforms where influencers promote products.					
3	The apps I use support easy access to influencer content.					
4	I can get help from others when I have trouble understanding influencer content.					

HEDONIC MOTIVATION

	Statements	SD= Strongly Disagree	D= Disagree,	N= Neutral	A= Agree	SA= Strongly Agree
1	I enjoy watching influencers talk about products.					
2	Following influencer content is entertaining.					
3	I find pleasure in discovering new products through influencers.					
4	Shopping through influencer recommendations is fun.					

BEHAVIORAL INTENTION

	Statements	SD= Strongly Disagree	D= Disagree,	N= Neutral	A= Agree	SA= Strongly Agree
1	I intend to consider influencer recommendations when shopping					
2	I will continue to follow influencers for purchase guidance.					
3	I plan to use influencer content more frequently for product decisions.					
4	I am likely to rely on influencers for future purchases					

USE BEHAVIOR

	Statements	SD= Strongly Disagree	D= Disagree,	N= Neutral	A= Agree	SA= Strongly Agree
1	I have purchased products recommended by influencers.					
2	I often browse influencer content for shopping ideas.					
3	I follow multiple influencers for product-related content.					
4	I regularly act on influencer recommendations when shopping online.					

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS BY THE SCHOLAR IN THE RESEARCH AREA

1. Published a paper titled “Revitalizing a Traditional Heritage Hotel for Modern Tourism in Asia Pacific Using Influencer Marketing”, International, 2024, ISBN: 978-981-97-6046-6, Scopus.
2. Published a paper titled “Impact of Influencer Marketing on the Purchasing Behavior of Indian Millennials: An Empirical Study”, in Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research, Impact Factor: 7.95, ISSN: 2349-5162, Volume 12, Issue 7, Jul-25. UGC Approved / Peer-Reviewed / Refereed Journal.
3. Presented a paper titled “Influencer Marketing: A Literature Review”, at the International Conference on Business Management and Social Innovation (ICBMSI-25), Jul-25, India.
4. Presented a paper titled “The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Indian Millennials”, at the International Conference on Marketing Innovation & Analytics, Dec-23, India.