



A Study on Impact of Social Media Influencers on Purchase Decisions Among College Students

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Abstract:

This study examines the impact of social media influencers on the purchase decisions of college students. With the rapid growth of platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter, influencers have become key sources of information and inspiration for young consumers. The research focuses on understanding how factors such as influencer credibility, content quality, relatability, and trust affect students' buying behavior. Data was collected through surveys conducted among college students to analyze their preferences and responses to influencer promotions. The findings show that social media influencers have a strong impact on students' purchase decisions. Influencers who are genuine, knowledgeable, and relatable are more trusted, which increases the chances of students buying the products they recommend. The study also finds that peer influence, brand image, and discounts or promotional offers shared by influencers play an important role in decision-making. Influencer marketing is especially effective in areas like fashion, beauty, technology, and lifestyle. However, excessive promotions, misleading information, or lack of transparency can reduce trust and negatively affect buying behavior. Overall, the study shows that influencer marketing is important, and being real, honest, and connected with people helps influence the young generation.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Purchase Decisions, College Students, Consumer Behavior, Influencer Marketing, Credibility, Trust, Digital Marketing, Buying Behavior.

Introduction:

In recent years, social media has become an essential part of daily life, especially among college students who spend a significant amount of time on various online platforms. Applications such as Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat are widely used not only for communication and entertainment but also for exploring new ideas, trends, and lifestyles. These platforms allow users to share content, interact with others, and stay constantly connected to the digital world. Over time, their role has expanded beyond simple social interaction, as they now have a strong influence on individual's opinions, preferences,

and even their purchasing behavior. College students, in particular, are highly active users who regularly engage with posts, videos, and reels, making them more exposed to new products, brands, and trends. This continuous exposure often shapes their likes and dislikes and plays an important role in their decision-making process when it comes to buying products or services.

One of the most significant developments in this digital environment is the rise of social media influencers individuals who have gained popularity by consistently creating engaging, relatable, and informative content for their followers. These influencers build a strong

connection with their audience by sharing personal experiences, honest reviews, and recommendations across various areas such as fashion, beauty, fitness, travel, and technology. Because of this close and relatable connection, followers often trust influencers more than traditional advertisements.

Social media influencers create content about fashion, beauty, technology, lifestyle, fitness, and many other topics. They often promote products and services by sharing their opinions and experiences. Many people trust influencers more than traditional advertisements because they feel more real and relatable. Because of this, influencers have become an important marketing tool for companies.

Problem Statement:

In today's digital world, social media influencers play a major role in promoting products and influencing people, especially college students. However, it is not clearly understood how much these influencers actually affect student's purchase decisions. There is a need to study whether students buy products based on their own needs or are influenced by social media content, and to identify the factors like trust, credibility, and content that impact their decisions.

Literature Review:

According to Freberg et al. (2011), social media influencers are perceived as independent third-party endorsers who shape audience attitudes through blogs, posts, and social media content.

Similarly, Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) found that young consumers, especially students, are highly influenced by Instagram influencers. The study revealed that trust and relatability are key factors that drive purchase intentions, as followers tend to value personal opinions and real-life experiences shared by influencers.

Research by Lou and Yuan (2019) emphasized that influencer credibility, content quality, and informativeness significantly affect consumer trust and purchase intention. The study concluded that well-presented and authentic content leads to higher engagement and positively influences buying decisions.

Another study by Jain and Kumar (2023) focused specifically on college students and found that social media platforms strongly influence their buying behavior.

Research conducted by Subitha et al. (2024) on college students showed that social media influencers act as key decision-makers in the purchasing process.

A systematic literature review by Sardar and Vijay (2025) highlights that influencer marketing has become an important area of research, combining concepts from marketing, psychology, and consumer behavior. The study reviewed multiple research articles and found that social media influencers significantly affect consumers' purchase intention by creating engagement and trust with their audience.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To examine how social media influencers impact the purchase decisions of college students.
2. To study the overall impact of social media influencers on college students' purchase decisions.
3. To identify key influencer traits (credibility, attractiveness, expertise, authenticity) that affect buying behavior.

Research Questions:

1. How do social media influencers affect the purchase decisions of college students?
2. What factors (such as credibility, content quality, and popularity) influence students to trust and follow influencers?

- To what extent do college students rely on influencer recommendations compared to traditional advertising?

Research Methodology:

1. Research Design:

The study uses a descriptive and analytical research design with a quantitative approach.

2. Sample Size:

The sample size of the study is 50 respondents.

3. Sample Area:

The data was collected from nearby colleges / known student groups

4. Data Collection:

The study uses both primary and secondary sources of data.

- Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire survey from respondents.
- Secondary Data: Books, research articles, and online sources

5. Sampling Technique:

The study uses the convenience sampling technique to select respondents.

Data Analysis:

Table 1: Social Media Usage of Respondents

Usage Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Daily	30	60%
Several times/weeks	10	20%
Occasionally	7	14%
Rarely	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Graph 1: Social Media Usage (Pie Chart Data)

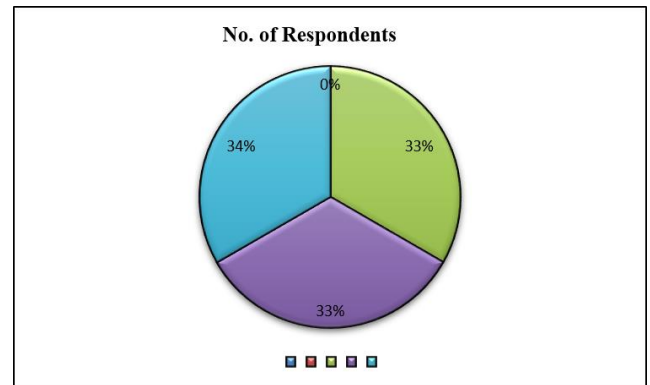
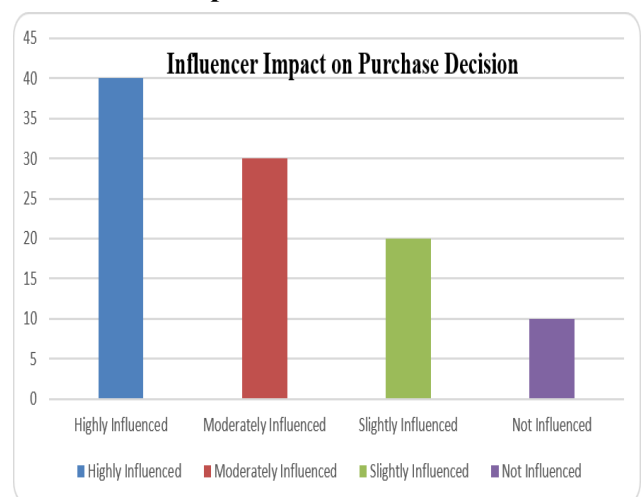


Table 2: Influence of Social Media Influencers on Purchase Decisions

Influence Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Highly Influenced	20	40%
Moderately Influenced	15	30%
Slightly Influenced	10	20%
Not Influenced	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Graph 2: Influence Level



Findings:

- Most students use social media daily.
- Majority follow influencers.
- Many students have purchased products based on influencer recommendations.

- Discounts and reviews are key influencing factors.
- Influencers have a moderate to high impact on buying decisions.

Suggestions:

- Influencers should give honest reviews.
- Students should compare products before buying.
- Brands should focus on quality and trust.
- Paid promotions should be clearly disclosed.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that social media influencers play a significant role in shaping the purchase decisions of college students. With the increasing use of social media platforms,

influencer marketing has become a powerful tool for brands to reach young consumers.

However, while influencers do impact buying behavior, students do not rely entirely on them and often consider other factors such as price, quality, and peer opinions. Therefore, the influence can be described as moderate but growing.

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