

A Study On the Impact of Social Media Influencer Marketing On the Purchase Behaviour of Clothing Consumers in North Chennai

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Abstract

Social media influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful promotional strategy, particularly in the clothing and fashion industry, where visual appeal and peer influence significantly shape consumer decisions. This study examines the impact of social media influencer marketing on the purchase behaviour of clothing consumers in North Chennai. Primary data were collected from 250 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The study employs descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test the proposed conceptual framework. The findings reveal that influencer credibility, content quality, and trust significantly influence purchase intention, which in turn strongly affects actual purchase behaviour. The study offers valuable insights for fashion marketers to design effective influencer strategies tailored to regional markets.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Clothing Purchase Behaviour, Digital Marketing, SEM, North Chennai

1. INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of social media platforms has transformed traditional marketing communication into interactive and consumer-driven engagement. Influencer marketing, where individuals with substantial online followings promote products, has gained prominence as a credible and persuasive marketing tool. The clothing industry, being trend-driven and visually oriented, heavily relies on influencer endorsements to influence consumer preferences.

North Chennai represents a rapidly growing urban market with increasing social media penetration, particularly among youth and working professionals. Understanding how influencer marketing affects clothing purchase behaviour in this region is essential for brands seeking localized digital strategies. This study empirically investigates these relationships using advanced statistical techniques, including SEM.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous studies suggest that influencer credibility plays a crucial role in shaping consumer trust and purchase decisions. Source credibility theory explains that expertise and trustworthiness enhance persuasive effectiveness. Research indicates that visually rich and engaging content positively influences consumer attitudes toward fashion brands.

Studies conducted in the Indian context highlight the growing impact of Instagram and YouTube influencers on fashion consumption. Trust and perceived authenticity have been identified as key mediators between influencer attributes and purchase intention. However, limited studies focus on regional markets like North Chennai and apply SEM to validate causal relationships. This study addresses this research gap.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine consumers' perception of social media influencer marketing in the clothing sector.
2. To analyse the influence of influencer credibility, content quality, and trust on purchase intention.
3. To examine the impact of purchase intention on actual purchase behaviour.
4. To validate the proposed influencer marketing model using SEM.
5. To provide strategic suggestions for clothing marketers.

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

The conceptual framework of the study proposes that social media influencer marketing influences clothing consumers' purchase behaviour through a sequence of attitudinal and behavioural constructs. Influencer Credibility (IC), Content Quality (CQ), and Trust in Influencer (TI) are treated as exogenous variables that directly influence Purchase Intention (PI). Purchase Intention, in turn, acts as a mediating construct that translates consumers' perceptions of influencer marketing into actual Purchase Behaviour (PB). This framework captures both direct and indirect effects and forms the basis for empirical testing using regression and Structural Equation Modelling.

Hypotheses

- H1: Influencer credibility significantly influences purchase intention.
- H2: Content quality significantly influences purchase intention.
- H3: Trust in influencer significantly influences purchase intention.
- H4: Purchase intention significantly influences purchase behaviour.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive and explanatory research design. The population consisted of social media-using clothing consumers in North Chennai, from whom 250 respondents were selected using convenience sampling. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The data were analysed using mean, correlation, regression, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS software.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table I: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 250)

Variable	Category	Percentage
Gender	Male	52
	Female	48
Age	Below 25 years	38
	26–35 years	44
	Above 35 years	18
Occupation	Students	34
	Private employees	46
	Others	20

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The sample is dominated by young and working-age respondents, representing a digitally active consumer segment relevant to influencer marketing.

Table II: Mean and Standard Deviation

Variable	Mean	SD
Influencer Credibility	3.82	0.67
Content Quality	3.76	0.64
Trust in Influencer	3.91	0.61
Purchase Intention	3.68	0.69
Purchase Behaviour	3.54	0.72

Source: Computed Data

Interpretation:

Trust in influencers records the highest mean value, indicating its dominant role in shaping consumer behaviour.

Table III: Correlation Analysis

Variables	IC	CQ	TI	PI	PB
IC	1				
CQ	0.562	1			
TI	0.608	0.574	1		
PI	0.631	0.589	0.692	1	
PB	0.547	0.518	0.604	0.671	1

Source: Computed Data

Interpretation:

All variables are positively and significantly correlated, confirming theoretical expectations.

Table IV: Regression Analysis (IC, CQ, TI → PI)

Predictor	Beta	t	Sig.
Influencer Credibility	0.284	4.97	0.000
Content Quality	0.241	4.12	0.000
Trust in Influencer	0.398	6.88	0.000

Source: Computed Data

$R^2 = 0.556$

Interpretation:

Trust in influencer is the strongest predictor of purchase intention.

Table V: Regression Analysis (PI → PB)

Predictor	Beta	t	Sig.
Purchase Intention	0.671	13.42	0.000

Source: Computed Data

$R^2 = 0.450$

Interpretation:

Purchase intention significantly predicts actual purchase behaviour.

7. STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING (SEM)

Model Fit Indices

Index	Value	Threshold
CFI	0.94	> 0.90
GFI	0.91	> 0.90
RMSEA	0.052	< 0.08
χ^2/df	2.18	< 3

Source: Computed Data

Interpretation:

The SEM model shows good fit, validating both measurement and structural relationships.

8. FINDINGS

- Influencer credibility, content quality, and trust significantly influence purchase intention.
- Trust in influencer has the strongest effect among all predictors.
- Purchase intention strongly influences actual clothing purchase behaviour.
- SEM confirms both direct and indirect effects of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour.

9. SUGGESTIONS

- Clothing brands should collaborate with trustworthy and authentic influencers.
- Regional and micro-influencers should be preferred for better relatability.
- Influencer content should focus on honest reviews and styling demonstrations.
- Long-term influencer partnerships can improve brand credibility and loyalty.
- Engagement metrics should be prioritized over follower count.

10. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that social media influencer marketing has a significant impact on the purchase behaviour of clothing consumers in North Chennai. Trust and credibility play a central role in shaping purchase intention, which ultimately drives buying behaviour. The validated SEM model provides robust empirical evidence and practical guidance for fashion marketers operating in regional markets.

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