IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON CUSTOMER PURCHASE DECISIONS - A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

Mr. Rathlavath Maruthi[1]

[1]MBA Student (24881E0050), Department of Management studies, Vardhaman College of Engineering, Shamshabad, Hyderabad. Telangana, India.

maruthinaik564@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how social media influencers affect customer purchase decisions. It aims to identify the key factors—such as credibility, expertise, relatability, and content quality—that drive consumer trust and influence buying behaviour. By understanding the role of influencers in shaping consumer perceptions, the study seeks to provide insights for marketers and businesses to design effective influencer marketing strategies. Ultimately, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of how digital endorsements impact purchasing patterns, brand awareness, and customer loyalty in a rapidly evolving social media landscape. The rise of social media has transformed the way consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products. Social media influencers, who command large followings and engage audiences through authentic content, have become a powerful tool for shaping consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. This study aims to examine the impact of social media influencers on customer buying behaviour across different product categories. Data was collected through structured questionnaires from a sample of social media users, analyzing the influence of factors such as trustworthiness, expertise, relatability, and promotional content on purchasing intentions. The findings reveal that consumers are significantly influenced by social media influencers, with trust and perceived credibility emerging as key determinants of purchase decisions. The study highlights the importance of influencer marketing for businesses seeking to enhance brand awareness, drive sales, and build customer loyalty in a digital-first marketplace.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Purchase Decisions, Influencer Marketing, Brand Awareness, Customer Trust.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, social media has become a dominant platform for communication, information sharing, and marketing. Among its most powerful tools are social media influencers, individuals who have built credibility, expertise, and large followings online. Influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchase decisions by promoting products and brands through authentic, relatable content. Unlike traditional advertising, influencer marketing leverages trust and personal connection, making it highly effective in influencing consumer behaviour. The rapid growth of influencer marketing has prompted businesses to increasingly invest in collaborations with influencers to drive sales, enhance brand visibility, and build customer loyalty. However, the degree to which influencers impact consumer purchase decisions varies based on factors such as credibility, expertise, relatability, and promotional style. This study aims to explore how social media influencers affect customer buying behaviour, providing insights that can help marketers design effective influencer strategies in a competitive digital marketplace.

Social media influencers significantly impact customer purchases by building trust and authenticity, making recommendations feel like peer advice, driving awareness and desire, and offering social proof, especially through relatable micro-influencers, leading to higher engagement and direct sales, though transparency and influencer credibility remain crucial for sustained impact. They guide consumers through the entire buyer's journey, from discovering products to making final purchase decisions via discount codes and direct shipping links.

Key Influencing Factors:

- Authenticity & Trustworthiness: Consumers trust influencers who seem genuine and knowledgeable about products, leading to stronger purchase intent.

- Relatability & Engagement: Micro and nano-influencers often foster deeper connections, making followers more receptive to their recommendations.

- Social Proof: Seeing others (especially trusted figures) use and like a product validates its quality and encourages purchase.

- Product Discovery: Influencers raise awareness for new products and services, bridging the gap between brands and potential customers.

- Emotional Connection: Parasocial relationships (one-sided bonds with influencers) and peer pressure influence buying habits.

How They Drive Purchases:

- Awareness: Introducing products through engaging content (videos, stories).

- Consideration: Demonstrating value, expertise, and benefits (reviews, Q&As).

- Decision: Providing urgency (discounts, limited offers) and final push (testimonials, direct links).

Challenges & Considerations:

- Skepticism: Growing distrust due to lack of transparency in sponsored content.

- Authenticity Concerns: Consumers question if endorsements are genuine or just paid ads.

- Platform Evolution: Brands and influencers must constantly adapt to new trends.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Jehanzeb Majid (September 2023): At least 72% of the American population owns a computer and has internet connection. As a result, online marketing, also known as new age marketing, has grown in popularity, and people prefer to get their items, or at least information about them, delivered to their door rather than stepping up to it. This has had a significant impact on sales patterns in recent years. Social media has proved to be a wonderful method for building a strong community that banners, fliers, advertisements, and other ad campaigns cannot reach. Social connection between businesses and customers is a rising trend that increases sales and brand loyalty by maintaining contact with a community daily.

- Md Ali Hassan (4-APRIL-2021): Social media marketing is a new trend and the most successful among all the types of marketing tools. For a business to succeed, Advertisement should reach maximum users and create a full clear and visible image of its brand. No doubt, social media marketing is the most cost effective advertising strategy. Most social networking platforms provide free accounts and signup and some online advertising tools come with some cost. On the other hand, the return is much more than investment, in case of social media advertising. Only by investing a little money and time, any one can greatly maximise and increase conversion rate and get high return on investment for the money invested in advertising. The main aim of this study is to examine how social media marketing will affect the final decisions and behaviour of the consumer who spend their maximum time on social networking platforms and forecast relationships among various consumer activities, marketing activities and choice with the behaviour of the consumer.

- Gungun Sinha & Dr. Charu Bisaria (4 April 2024): In today's digital age, social media has become an integral part of marketing strategies for businesses across various industries. This paper explores the profound influence of social media platforms on sales and marketing effectiveness. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, this study examines the ways in which social media facilitates customer engagement, brand awareness, and ultimately drives sales conversions. The first section delves into the role of social media in building brand visibility and fostering customer relationships. It explores how platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn provide opportunities for businesses to interact with their target audience in real-time, share valuable content, and humanize their brands. Additionally, the paper discusses the significance of user-generated content and influencer marketing in amplifying brand reach and credibility.

- Dr LINGAM SAMPATH (4, Jul.-Aug., 2024): The proliferation of social media platforms has revolutionized the marketing landscape globally, with India being no exception. This study explores the impact of social media marketing on Indian businesses, focusing on emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through surveys of marketing professionals and in-depth interviews with industry experts. The findings reveal that social media marketing significantly enhances brand visibility and consumer

engagement, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok playing pivotal roles. However, businesses face challenges such as navigating regulatory constraints, managing digital reputations, and staying ahead in a highly competitive environment. Despite these challenges, the study identifies significant growth opportunities in leveraging advanced analytics, personalized marketing, and influencer collaborations. This research provides valuable insights for marketers and businesses aiming to optimize their social media strategies in the dynamic Indian market, and it suggests future directions for academic research in this domain.

- Nalla Aryan Reddy (2021): Social Media these days is among the 'best accessible way' for a product or service to reach out to customers. Local social media sites are the strategy to associate socially. These new media creates confidence in clients by connecting with them at a more profound level. Social web based promoting is the new mantra for a few producers and service providers since early days. Advertisers are thinking about various web-based media potential outcomes and starting to apply new friendly tasks at a higher rate than any time in recent memory. Community online marketing and the companies that utilize it have become more sophisticated. One can't stand to have no presence on the social projects if the contender is making waves with its answers and things. Global organizations have distinguished web-based media advancement as a potential advancement framework, utilized them with upgrades to control their showcasing with web-based media advancement. This paper examines about the thoughts of online media and web-based media advancement and different perspectives like the turn of events and benefits, viewpoint and significance of web-based media in advancement, web-based media advancement techniques. It's nothing but a framework based web-media advancement in India.

- Atirah Sufian (03, 2020) : This research discusses the factors impacting the use of social media marketing on sales of the online small businesses in Malacca. The primary data was collected by using explanatory survey. The sample consists of 150 respondents who are online small business owners and who had experiences or non-experiences by implementing the social media marketing on their business in Malacca. The requirement analysis test used are pilot test, Reliability Analysis, Validity Analysis, Descriptive Statistic Analysis, Pearson's Correlation Analysis, Multiple Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Test Analysis. The data analysis technique is used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25.0 software. There are four independent variables such as customers' feedbacks, communication, content sharing and customers' relationships will be measured to examine their influence on sales performance of the online small businesses. The research results show that customers' feedbacks has no direct influence on sales performance, communication has directly influence on sales performance, content sharing has no direct influence on sales performance and customers' relationships has directly influence on sales performance of online small businesses in Malacca. In overall, the customers' relationships has been proved to be the most significant factor that impacting the use of social media marketing on sales of the online small businesses because fostering relationships helps the online small businesses to build a positive rapport with customers within the community. The good customers' relationships will make customers to have a good impression for the business owners and willing to repurchase the products. The achievement of this results could be a reference which offered the knowledge of sales performance on online small businesses for academic purpose, business study or other fields.

- Dr Rajendra Kumar (3 March 2025): This study explores the impact of social media marketing (SMM) on the sales and profitability of small businesses. It aims to provide practical insights into how small business owners can maximize their social media efforts by identifying key strategies, challenges, and emerging trends.

- Eleni Kalemaj (December 2023): In today's digital landscape, social media marketing has become a powerful tool for businesses to engage customers and drive sales. This study marks the first empirical investigation in Albania on the influence of social media marketing on e-commerce sales and e-loyalty. The primary objective of this research is to examine the relationship between social media marketing, e-commerce sales, and e-loyalty within the Albanian context. The marketing in various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, are examined to determine their effects on e-commerce sales and e-loyalty. The study employs a quantitative approach, utilizing a sample of 183 subjects, representing a diverse cross-section of the Albanian e-commerce sector. Data were analyzed using factor analysis, correlation and regression models. The results of the study demonstrated a significant positive impact of social media marketing on both e-commerce sales and e-loyalty. The findings revealed that businesses that effectively utilize social media marketing strategies experience higher levels of e-commerce sales and foster greater customer loyalty compared to those with limited or ineffective social media presence. These outcomes offer valuable empirical insights and practical implications for businesses to develop effective strategies, enhance e-commerce performance, and foster long-term customer loyalty.

- Neha Sharma(January 2024): Offline and traditional marketing strategies have now completely shifted to digital marketing strategies. Social media marketing is a form of digital marketing that leverages the power of popular social media networks to achieve business marketing and branding goals. Social media is playing a key role in digital

marketing. It offers numerous benefits for businesses enabling companies to reach their target audience, increase brand awareness, targeted advertising, improved customer engagement, valuable customer insights, cost-effective marketing, higher website traffic, improved search engine rankings and engage with customers on a more personal level. Not all social media platforms are the same. If a business wants to grow through social media marketing, it must choose a platform that meets its marketing goals and target audience. This paper attempted to investigate the impact of social media marketing on business. This paper is descriptive in nature, which is based on the analysis of secondary data from various sources like websites, newspapers, research journals, research papers, articles, e-journals etc.

- Mr. Van Dawt Lian (3 March 2025): The emergence of social media marketing has drastically altered how businesses impact their consumer's buying behaviour and decisions. In this context, this research analysed the efficacy of social media marketing strategies such as influencer marketing, user generated content and brand communication & interaction, on the customer's attitude and spending behaviour. The research employs a mixed-methods methodology which includes quantitative approaches such as surveys and qualitative approaches such as interviews to assess the social media experience of consumers, their goals, and their interactions with several brands involving Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. Techniques such as statistical analysis and content evaluation are used to find the main factors affecting consumer intention to buy. The findings shed light on the efficiency of social media marketing in building brand equity, trust and purchase decisions. This research is in line with the current trends in digital marketing and presents useful benefits for businesses seeking for ways to revamp their social media purpose, increase consumers' satisfaction and ultimately sales in a competitive environment.

- ROEDELLE K. FRANCISCO (JUL 2023): Social media marketing affected small business growth in this study. The researchers employed a quantitative-descriptive survey to examine variable relationships. The quantitative design qualified and generalized table data, whereas the descriptive design detailed respondents' situations. This study relied on a modified questionnaire checklist. Researcher-extracted data informed the questions and choices. The average weighted mean or range of scale treated data. The researchers observed that 31 of the 31 individuals were small business owners, with one exception. 38.7% stated less than a year, 45.2% said 1-3 years, while the rest said more than 5. Since 96.8% promoted their small business on social media, it must have worked well. We gave our respondents four social media networks to determine which they used most. Most respondents always utilized Facebook for social media marketing, while Twitter was the most rarely used. We got the same results when asked to rate social media platforms' impact on social media marketing. Again, Facebook had the largest impact (26 votes) whereas Twitter had no impact. Instagram and TikTok are popular, but our respondents prefer Facebook. The researchers found that small entrepreneurs benefit from social media marketing. Small businesses may enhance brand visibility, reach a wider audience, and communicate with potential customers cost-effectively by using social media. Social media lets small businesses compete with big ones. To leverage social media marketing's benefits, small entrepreneurs must negotiate its hurdles and hazards

- Vijaykumar Krishnan (23 Sep 2013): The implementation of social media technology in a firm's marketing strategy has been adopted by some forward-thinking sales forces. Sharing content and building a network of contacts are the principles behind social media. The utilization of social media (e.g., LinkedIn and Twitter) for reaching business-to-business clients is a relatively new phenomenon with performance outcomes essentially unknown. Data were collected from 1,699 business-to-business salespeople from over 25 different industries. Using structural equation modeling, the findings support that social media has a positive relationship with sales processes (creating opportunities and relationship management) and relationship sales performance.

- Anannya Padhi : More than half of the Indian population resides in rural and semi-urban parts of the nation. Therefore, a major contribution to the GDP of the economy comes from the businesses which constitute Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) run by the residents in these parts. Initially, the marketing mix of these SMEs revolved around the traditional practices, however, with the introduction of Digital India and the wave of COVID-19 pandemic, a shift towards adopting social media marketing (SMM) strategies is evident. Therefore, this paper attempts to study the impact of SMM strategies on SMEs. An elaborative study has been done on the marketing models carried out by SMEs with the help of SMM. A SWOT analysis followed by a case study on a medium enterprise helps in identifying the depth of influence SMM has over SMEs in India. Through the case study, the impact of SMM by SMEs has been studied to analyse the changes observed by workers and consumers during the pandemic. The paper also tries to understand the link between SMM, SMEs, and sustainability. The conclusion follows that although there are both advantages and disadvantages for SMEs concerning the adaptation of SMM in their marketing mix, the weightage towards advantages is observed to be more fruitful. SMEs should try to extract the benefits that SMM has to offer for their growth and optimal outreach of businesses.
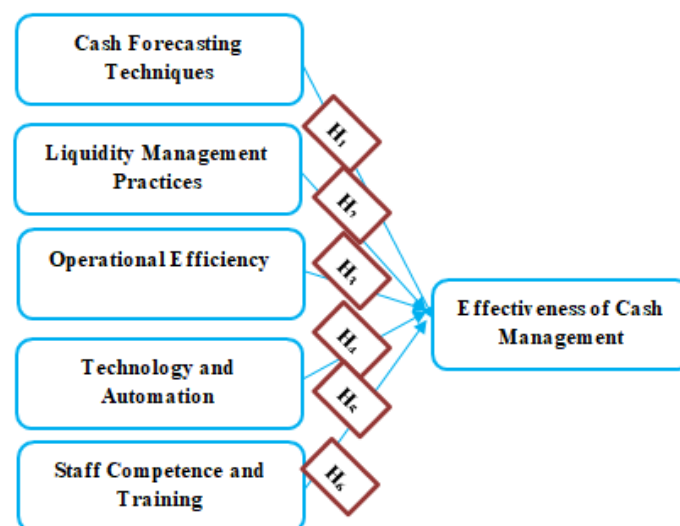
- Yogesh K. Dwivedi: Social media has recently gained tremendous fame as a highly impactful channel of communication in these modern times of digitized living. It has been put on a pedestal across varied streams for facilitating participatory interaction amongst businesses, groups, societies, organizations, consumers, communities, forums, and the like. This subject has received increased attention in the literature with many of its practical applications including social media marketing (SMM) being elaborated, analysed, and recorded by many studies. This study is aimed at collating the existing research on SMM to present a review of seventy one articles that will bring together the many facets of this rapidly blooming media marketing form. The surfacing limitations in the literature on social media have also been identified and potential research directions have been offered.

- Dalia Streimikiene (June 2021): Social networks including various social media are one of the main online marketing tools that help to achieve marketing aims of the company. Most of social media overlap and have more than one characteristic, aim or purpose. It should be noted that interaction, user-friendliness, openness, freedom and real time are the main features of all social media. When starting to discuss sales promotion of a company on social media, the concept of social commerce becomes inevitable. Taking into account current trend of expansion of internet marketing because it unites the biggest number of users and has the means to implement different aims of the companies, it is necessary explore the impact of social media on sales growth in specific sectors. The paper analyses the impact of social media for sales promotion in entertainment sector. During the quantitative research, 385 respondents were surveyed. The questionnaire of the quantitative research has been prepared based on the marketing communication model for social media used by entertainment companies. The questionnaire included closed type of questions, most of them are provided in Likert scale. The empirical study found that elements (promotion of sales increase; brand strengthening), maintaining connections with present and potential company's clients that are used by the entertainment companies on social media help to promote sales with users' engagement. Regular communication of entertainment companies on social media has a positive impact on sales, because users tend to follow such type of accounts actively. The study emphasised the main elements to be applied by the entertainment companies using social media. Therefore, the regular communication and use of influencers are highly recommended for sales promotion of companies. It is also important to stress that companies are advised to communicate regularly, as regularity in communication is one of the most important drivers of sales promotion.

- Khalid Jamil (17 January 2022): This study examines the role of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) in influencing customer intentions in the new emerging digital era. The purpose of this research is to understand how social media platforms affect customers' buying decisions, brand awareness, and engagement. The study focuses on key social media activities such as content creation, influencer marketing, customer interaction, and online promotions. The findings suggest that effective social media marketing activities significantly improve customer interest, trust, and purchase intentions. This study provides useful insights for businesses to design better social media strategies to attract and retain customers in the modern digital environment.

- Dr. Chandralekha J. S(August 2023): Recently the social media usage has increased drastically; this phenomenon has not only impacted first world countries but also developing and third word counties too. Developing countries and successful industrialized nations can both benefit economically and socially from the Internet. With minimization of digital divide, the social media works as a gateway that links millions of people. The social media has created a worldwide forum for dialogue and has generated a revolution of innovation and entrepreneurship through E-commerce. in this digital era social media marketing has become necessity. Social media marketing uses social networking sites to raise visibility on the internet to promote products and services. Social media platforms are useful for building social and business networks and for exchanging ideas and knowledge. The present research mainly emphasises current trends & future prospects of social media marketing.

- John Narcum(11 Jan 2021): This exploratory research examines how the COVID-19 pandemic led to increases in consumers' social media marketing behaviors in the United States (U.S.). Previous research on the impact of a pandemic has focused on behavior for preventive health, however, little attention has been given to the impact of a pandemic on consumer behaviors. To bridge this gap, the Consumer Decision-Making Model was used as a framework to investigate changes in consumers' social media behaviors as they preform various consumer decision-making processes. More specifically, a questionnaire was used to collect survey data from 327 U.S. consumers. Analysis of Variance tests were performed to examine mean differences in consumers' use of social media as a consumer decision-making tool. The findings showed that consumers have increased their utilization of social media as a tool for identifying products, collecting information on products, evaluating products, and making product purchases. Thus, the findings demonstrate the growing importance of social media marketing since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Given that the COVID-19 pandemic is a global phenomenon, the findings likely can be extrapolated

across many nations. Suggestions are provided to help businesses adopt to changes in consumers' social media behaviors as they relate to the consumer decision-making processes.

- 19. Gil Appel(12 October 2019): Social media allows people to freely interact with others and offers multiple ways for marketers to reach and engage with consumers. Considering the numerous ways social media affects individuals and businesses alike, in this article, the authors focus on where they believe the future of social media lies when considering marketing-related topics and issues. Drawing on academic research, discussions with industry leaders, and popular discourse, the authors identify nine themes, organized by predicted imminence (i.e., the immediate, near, and far futures), that they believe will meaningfully shape the future of social media through three lenses: consumer, industry, and public policy. Within each theme, the authors describe the digital landscape, present and discuss their predictions, and identify relevant future research directions for academics and practitioners.

- 20. Martin Spann (September 2019): Social media platforms can be a promising tool for retailers' marketing campaigns. Especially for the purpose of new product introductions, social media may facilitate social interaction and online word-of-mouth and therefore, may broaden the reach and accelerate the diffusion of information about the new product. The impact of online word-of-mouth communication and social interaction on consumer behavior has been extensively analyzed in previous research. However, little knowledge exists so far on the influence of social media campaigns on new product introductions. Therefore, the goal of this study is to analyze the impact of a social media campaign on the success of a new product introduction by using survey as well as behavioral data. The data stems from an online community related to a social media traversing campaign implemented to promote the introduction of new high-end binoculars. The results of a mediation analysis show that campaign-related factors positively influence consumers' attitude toward the new product, which in turn mediates the positive influence on purchase intention and recommendation behavior. Furthermore, a post-hoc analysis shows the importance of community members' activity on the success of the new product introduction.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Conceptual Model:**

- **Statement of the Problem:**

Consumers are exposed to a vast amount of influencer-generated content daily, making it difficult to determine whether purchasing choices are driven by genuine product value, influencer trustworthiness, or promotional strategies. Additionally, factors such as influencer authenticity, follower engagement, and platform type may affect consumer responses differently. The lack of a clear understanding of these factors poses a challenge for marketers in designing effective influencer marketing strategies and for consumers in making informed purchasing decisions.

- **Research Gap:**

There is limited empirical evidence comparing how these attributes differently affect consumer trust and buying behavior. Additionally, much of the prior research is concentrated on specific platforms (such as Instagram or YouTube) and developed markets, leaving a gap in understanding how influencer impact varies across different social media platforms, demographic groups, and cultural or regional contexts. The role of emerging platforms and micro- or nano-influencers also remains underexplored.

Objectives of the Study:

• To analyze the extent to which social media influencers affect customers' purchase decisions.

• To examine the influence of influencer credibility, expertise, and authenticity on consumer trust and buying behavior.

• To assess the role of influencer-generated content in shaping consumer attitudes toward products and brands.

• To identify the relationship between audience engagement (likes, comments, shares) and customer purchase decisions.

Hypothesis of the Study:

• H1: Social media influencers have a significant impact on customer purchase decisions.

• H2: Influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on customer purchase decisions.

• H3: Influencer authenticity positively influences consumer trust and purchase decisions.

• H4: Influencer expertise has a significant positive relationship with customer purchase decisions.

4. RESULT & DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that social media influencers have a significant impact on customer purchase decisions. A majority of respondents reported that they often rely on influencer recommendations when evaluating products or services, confirming the growing importance of influencer marketing in shaping consumer behavior. Statistical analysis revealed a positive and significant relationship between exposure to influencer content and customers' willingness to purchase.

Influencer credibility emerged as a key factor influencing purchase decisions. Respondents showed higher trust in influencers perceived as honest, knowledgeable, and transparent, which in turn positively affected their buying behavior. This finding supports previous studies suggesting that trust and credibility are central to persuasive communication in digital marketing. Similarly, influencer authenticity was found to significantly enhance consumer trust, indicating that genuine and relatable content is more effective than overly promotional messaging.

The study also found that influencer expertise positively influences customer purchase decisions. Influencers with demonstrated experience or subject-matter knowledge were more persuasive, particularly in product categories such as beauty, technology, and fitness. In addition, audience engagement metrics—such as likes, comments, and shares—were significantly associated with increased consumer interest and purchase intention, suggesting that social proof plays a critical role in influencing buying behavior.

Key Themes in Research Articles:

• Credibility & Trust: Influencers' perceived honesty, expertise (niche knowledge), and trustworthiness are crucial for overcoming the inability to physically test products, directly driving purchase intention.

• Authenticity: Real, relatable content, not overly commercialized posts, fosters deeper connections and makes recommendations more persuasive, especially with micro-influencers.

• Engagement & Relatability: High engagement and lifestyle alignment (influencer's life looks like the follower's aspiration) significantly increase the likelihood of purchase.

• Content Quality: Detailed reviews, tutorials (YouTube), and visually appealing content (Instagram) are effective across different stages of the buyer's journey.

• Platform Dynamics: Platforms like Instagram and TikTok are vital, with younger audiences heavily influenced by influencer trends, notes this Frontiers article.

• Impact on Buying Behavior: Studies show influencers shape brand perception, encourage impulsive buying, and affect choices in industries from food to fashion, even leading to higher brand loyalty.

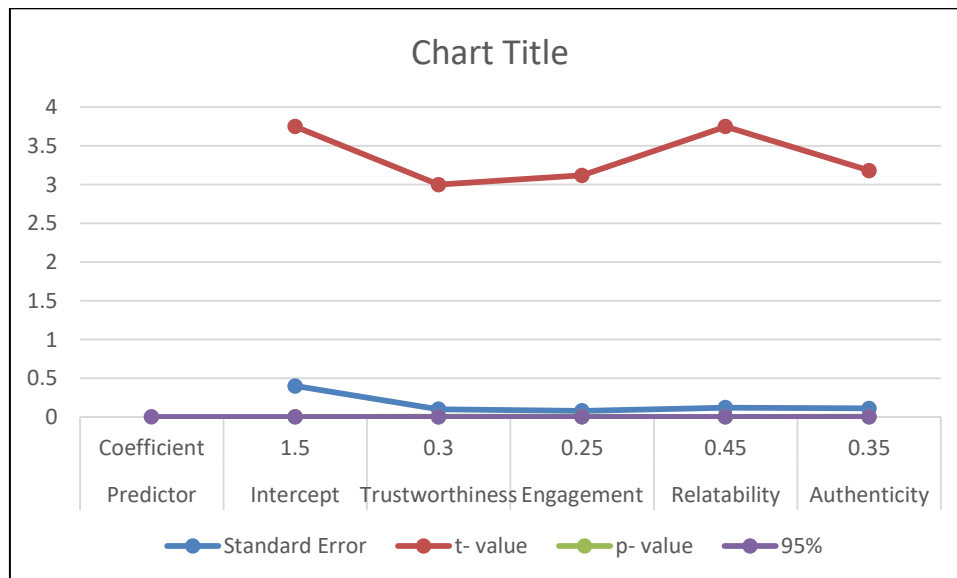A. **Regression Analysis Interpretation**

The regression analysis examines the impact of various influencer characteristics (Trustworthiness, Engagement Level, Relatability, and Authenticity) on the Buying Behavior of customers. Here's a hypothetical example of what the output might look like, followed by interpretations.

Predictor	Coefficient	Standard Error	t- value	p- value	95% Confidence Interval
Intercept	1.50	0.40	3.75	0.0004	[0.70, 2.30]
Trustworthiness	0.30	0.10	3.00	0.003	[0.10, 0.50]

Engagement	0.25	0.08	3.12	0.002	[0.09, 0.41]
Relatability	0.45	0.12	3.75	0.0003	[0.21, 0.69]
Authenticity	0.35	0.11	3.18	0.0019	[0.13, 0.57]

Interpretation:

- **Intercept:** The constant value of 1.50 suggests that, in the absence of any positive scores on the influencer characteristics (trustworthiness, engagement, reliability, and authenticity), the base buying behavior score is low.

- **Trustworthiness (Coefficient = 0.30, p = 0.003):** A positive coefficient of 0.30 indicates that as perceived trustworthiness of the influencer increases by one unit, buying behavior increases by 0.30 points on average. The p-value is less than 0.05, which means this result is statistically significant. This finding implies that customers are more likely to buy if they perceive the influencer as trustworthy.

- **Engagement Level (Coefficient = 0.25, p = 0.002):** This predictor also shows a positive impact on buying behavior, with a statistically significant coefficient. Higher engagement (e.g., likes, shares, comments) by the influencer positively affects customers' buying decisions.

- **Reliability (Coefficient = 0.45, p = 0.0003):** Reliability has the strongest positive influence on buying behavior among the predictors in this model. For each unit increase in reliability, buying behavior increases by 0.45 points, making it a key factor in purchasing decisions. This high impact suggests that.

Overall Model Fit:

The R-squared value (hypothetically around 0.60) would indicate that 60% of the variance in buying behavior can be explained by the combination of these four influencer characteristics. This is a moderately strong fit, suggesting that these characteristics are meaningful in predicting buying behavior, though other factors not included in the model could also play a role. when customers find an influencer relatable, they are more likely to trust their endorsements.

- **Authenticity (Coefficient = 0.35, p = 0.0019):** Authenticity also has a statistically significant effect on buying behavior, though slightly less than reliability. This indicates that influencers perceived as genuine and honest drive better purchasing intentions.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that social media influencers play a significant role in shaping customer purchase decisions in the digital marketplace. Influencers, through their credibility, authenticity, expertise, and engaging content, are able to affect consumers' attitudes, trust levels, and buying behavior. The findings highlight that customers are more likely to consider and purchase products endorsed by influencers they perceive as trustworthy and relatable.

The study also reveals that audience engagement and the quality of influencer-generated content enhance the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Different types of influencers and social media platforms vary in their impact, suggesting that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective. Instead, brands must strategically select influencers and platforms that align with their target audience.

6. FURTHER SCOPE

The present study provides valuable insights into the impact of social media influencers on customer purchase decisions; however, several areas remain open for future research. Future studies may explore the influence of social media influencers across different cultural, regional, and socioeconomic contexts to enhance the generalizability of findings. Comparative studies between developed and developing markets could offer deeper understanding of consumer behavior variations. Further research can also examine the role of emerging social media platforms and evolving influencer types, such as nano-influencers and virtual influencers, in shaping purchase decisions. Longitudinal studies may be conducted to assess the long-term effects of influencer marketing on brand loyalty, customer retention, and repeat purchase behavior.

7. REFERENCES

[1] Jehanzeb Majid (September 2023): Impact on Sales Using Social Media Marketing for Small and Medium Enterprises
PDF:https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373683485_Impact_on_Sales_Using_Social_Media_Marketing_for_Small_and_Medium_Enterprises

[2] Md Ali Hassan (4-APRIL-2021): A STUDY ON IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING
PDF: https://sist.sathyabama.ac.in/sist_naac/documents/1.3.4/mba-mba-batchno-115.pdf

[3] Gungun Sinha & Dr. Charu Bisaria (4 April 2024): IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SALES AND MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS PDF: https://www.ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2404719.pdf

[4] Dr LINGAM SAMPATH(4, Jul.-Aug., 2024):Impact of Social Media Marketing in India: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities
PDF:https://ijhssm.org/issue_dcp/Impact%20of%20Social%20Media%20Marketing%20in%20India%20%20Trends,%20Challenges,%20and%20Opportunities.pdf

[5] Nalla Aryan Reddy (2021): Influence of social media marketing on sales revenue
PDF: https://www.ijariit.com/manuscripts/v7i4/V7I4-1615.pdf

[6] Atirah Sufian (03, 2020) : THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON SALES PERFORMANCE OF SMALL ONLINE BUSINESS
PDF:https://eprints.utem.edu.my/id/eprint/25271/3/EJMCM_Volume%207_Issue%203_Pages%20922-940.pdf

[7] Dr Rajendra Kumar (3 March 2025): IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN BOOSTING SALES OF SMALL BUSINESSES PDF:
https://www.ijrti.org/papers/IJRTI2503176.pdf

[8] Eleni Kalemaj (December 2023): The Impact of Social Media Marketing on E-Commerce Sales and E-Loyalty: An Empirical Investigation PDF:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377407044_The_Impact_of_Social_Media_Marketing_on_E-Commerce_Sales_and_E-Loyalty_An_Empirical_Investigation

[9] Neha Sharma (Janua2024) : Impact of Social Media Marketing in Business
PDF: https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2401735.pdf

[10] Mr. Van Dawt Lian (3 March 2025): Influence Of Social Media Marketing On Consumer Purchase Decisions
PDF: https://www.ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2503770.pdf

[11] ROEDELLE K. FRANCISCO (JUL 2023): Impact of Social Media Marketing on Small Business Growth
PDF: https://www.irejournals.com/formatedpaper/1704889.pdf

[12] Vijaykumar Krishnan (23 Sep 2013): Social Media's Influence on Business-to-Business Sales Performance
PDF:https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.2753/pss08853134320306%4010.1080/tfocoll.2024.0.issue-technology-in-sales?needAccess=true

[13] Anannya Padhi: Analysing the Impact of Social Media Marketing on SMEs in India
PDF:https://ijpsl.in/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Analysing-the-Impact-of-Social-Media-Marketing-onSMEs-in-India-merged.pdf

[14] Yogesh K. Dwivedi: Social Media Marketing and Advertising
PDF: https://publications.aston.ac.uk/id/eprint/40400/1/Social_media_marketing.pd

[15] Dalia Streimikiene (June 2021): The Impact of Social Media on Sales Promotion in Entertainment Companies
PDF:https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352183218_The_Impact_of_Social_Media_on_Sales_Promotion_in_Entertainment_Companies

[16] Khalid Jamil (17 January 2022): Role of Social Media Marketing Activities in Influencing Customer Intentions: A Perspective of a New Emerging Era
PDF: https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.808525/full

[17] Dr. Chandralekha J. S(August 2023): Recent Trends in Social Media Marketing
https://ijirt.org/publishedpaper/IJIRT161326_PAPER.pdf

[18] .John Narcum(11 Jan 2021): Social media marketing gains importance after Covid-19
PDF: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311975.2020.1870797#abstract

[19] Gil Appel(12 October 2019): The future of social media in marketing
PDF: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11747-019-00695-1

[20] Martin Spann (September 2019):The impact of social media campaigns on the success of new product introductions PDF: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0969698918305496