

# EFFECT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON CONSUMER PREFERENCES AND BRAND LOYALTY WITH REFERENCE TO CHENNAI CITY

**Dr. R. Aarthi Alamelu**

*Assistant Professor,  
Department of Commerce (Accounting & Finance)  
SRM Institute of Science and Technology,  
Faculty of Science & Humanities, Vadapalani Campus, Chennai.  
E-mail: draarthialamelu@gmail.com*

**Dr. A. Meera**

*Assistant Professor  
School of Management Studies  
Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34293/blp.9789395659819.ch003>*

## **Abstract:**

*Consumer behaviour and brand perceptions are increasingly shaped by social media influencers in the contemporary digital landscape. The study examines the extent to which influencer marketing informs consumer decision-making processes and enhances customer loyalty. The findings indicate that influencer promotions exert a significant influence on consumer preferences and purchasing intentions, particularly among younger cohorts who are highly active on social media platforms. The development of consumer trust and long-term loyalty depends substantially on key factors such as the influencer's credibility and perceived authenticity. The research tool consists of a structured questionnaire intended to collect information on variables such as consumer preferences, brand loyalty, satisfaction, trust, social media usage, and interactions with influencers.*

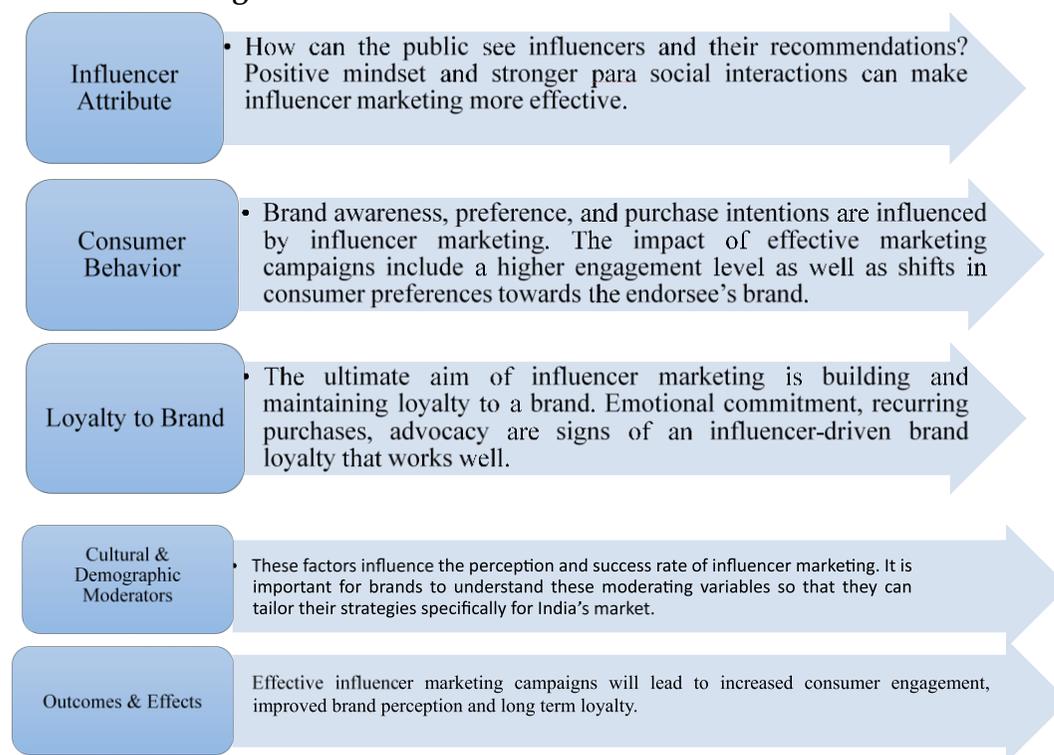
*However, the study also highlights several challenges associated with influencer-driven product promotion, including the oversaturation of influencer content and concerns regarding influencer credibility. The findings demonstrate that, when executed effectively, influencer marketing can lead to notable enhancements in brand loyalty and consumer engagement.*

**Key Words:** *Influencer marketing; consumer preferences; brand loyalty; social media; consumer behaviour.*

## **1. Introduction**

**S**ocial media has become an indispensable component of contemporary communication and consumer decision-making, with influencer marketing emerging as a prominent promotional strategy. In India, the rapid expansion of internet accessibility and the dynamic growth of social media platforms have accelerated this phenomenon. Influencers – ranging from celebrities to niche digital creators engage diverse consumer segments, particularly younger audiences on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and Twitter. In order to better understand influencer marketing's global significance and success in a rapidly changing digital marketplace, more research is necessary. This paper examines the impact of influencer marketing on consumer preferences and brand loyalty within the Indian context.

## Theoretical Background:



## 2. Review of Literature

The rapid growth of social media has transformed contemporary marketing practices, positioning influencer marketing as a critical approach for reaching targeted consumer segments. Influencers, who cultivate dedicated and often niche follower communities, leverage their perceived authenticity and personal connection with audiences to enhance brand visibility, strengthen brand image, and support favourable business outcomes (digitalmarketinginstitute.com).

Endorsements on consumer behaviour. Vidani, Meghrajani, and **Das (2023)** employed the “Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Bandura’s Social Learning Theory” to analyse how influencers shape consumer responses. Their findings identified attitudes toward influencers and perceived behavioural control as key determinants of consumer actions. The study underscored the importance of relevance, trust, and congruence between the influencer and the endorsed product in fostering brand awareness, preference, and loyalty. Interestingly, peer influence and perceived risk were found to have minimal impact, indicating opportunities for brands to formulate more nuanced influencer strategies.

**Kumar (2023)** adopted a mixed-methods approach. The research focused on variables such as trust, authenticity, consumer attitudes, and purchase decision-making. While the study reaffirmed the strategic value of influencer marketing, it also emphasized the necessity for additional research to obtain a comprehensive understanding of its behavioural implications.

*Alamelu, R. A., (2018)* this research aims to explore consumer preferences prior to purchasing durable white goods, including refrigerators, air conditioners, and washing machines. Consumers have a significant influence on purchasing decisions, making it challenging to comprehend their preferences during a purchase, as they rank products and services based on the benefits they receive. In this research, the focus is on various product characteristics such as innovation, after-sales service, imported items, additional or special features, utility, technical support, electricity consumption, recent technology, energy star ratings, brand reputation, noise levels, and size/capacity/space to determine customer preferences. The researcher has employed statistical methods such as percentage analysis and t-tests to draw conclusions. Demographical factors such as age, education, income and family structure also plays a key role in selecting the product and services.

*Joshi, Lim, Jagani, and Kumar (2023)* conducted a systematic literature review using bibliometric and content analysis techniques to map the overlap between influencer marketing, social media, and consumer behaviour. Drawing on 214 scholarly articles, the review identified dominant themes including parasocial interaction, sponsorship effects, authenticity, and engagement. Their findings offer a strategic framework for marketers by demonstrating how factors related to audience characteristics, brand identity, content quality, influencer attributes, and technological affordances shape consumer responses.

*Chan (2022)* explored personality traits and content attributes on consumer decisions among UK adults. The study found that influencers significantly affect decision imitation and strengthen customer loyalty, while also reducing scepticism compared to traditional celebrity endorsements. Results further revealed that higher income levels intensified the effect of influencer content, whereas gender and education differences were statistically insignificant.

*Khawash, Chakravarty, Pahari, and Shome (2023)* concentrated on Instagram influencers and their effect on brand preference and consumer buying behaviour. Their quantitative findings demonstrated that Instagram-based endorsements strongly influence brand preference, which in turn contributes to consumer satisfaction. However, the study acknowledged limitations related to the absence of qualitative insights, indicating that future research should adopt mixed-method designs to provide deeper interpretive perspectives.

Addressing the fragmented nature of influencer marketing research, *Vrontis, Makrides, Christofi, and Thrassou (2021)* conducted a systematic review of 68 peer-reviewed publications. Their work synthesized existing scholarship into an integrative framework, identifying core themes related to influencer appeal, persuasive mechanisms, and consumer engagement. The study also highlighted methodological gaps and provided directions for future theoretical advancements.

*Kukreja (2021)* investigated how consumer loyalty and brand trust are affected by social media influencers. The results showed that brand awareness, purchase intentions, and trust in branded posts are all significantly increased by informative, relatable, and credible content. Additionally examined were demographic elements like gender, income, and education, which provided information for developing more successful loyalty-building tactics.

*Srivastava (2021)* presented a bibliometric analysis of influencer marketing using VOS viewer and Biblioshiny. The analysis identified six major thematic clusters, including persuasive cues, authenticity, engagement mechanisms, likability factors, and techniques used to measure impact. This scholarly mapping contributes to understanding the intellectual structure of the field and suggests promising directions for future inquiry.

### 3. Objectives:

- To investigate consumer behavior and brand preference are affected by social media use and influencer contact.
- To assess the role of influencer authenticity and trust in strengthening brand loyalty among consumers in Chennai.
- To develop and validate a Structural Equation Model (SEM) linking social media engagement, influencer marketing, and consumer purchase intention.

### 4. Research Methodology

In order to examine how influencer marketing affects consumer preferences and brand loyalty in India, this study uses a descriptive research design. Finding patterns, correlations, and new trends in social media users' interactions with influencers and brands is made easier by descriptive research. 112 respondents in all completed structured questionnaires to take part in the study. In order to gather pertinent information about influencer driven marketing strategies and consumer behavior, the study was carried out in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, with a focus on active social media users.

### 5. Data Analysis & Interpretation:

**Table: 1 Demographic profile of the Respondent**

Demography Profile		Number of Respondents	Frequency in (%)
Gender	Male	62	55.3
	Female	50	44.7
Age	18-25	48	42.9
	26-35	36	32.1
	36-45	18	16.1
	46+	10	8.9
Education	Undergraduate	52	46.4
	Postgraduate	44	39.3
	Others	16	14.3
Daily Social Media Use	<1 hr	14	12.5
	1-3 hrs	42	37.5
	3-5 hrs	36	32.1
	>5 hrs	20	17.9

Source: Primary data

### **Interpretation:**

The demographic results show a nearly balanced distribution with a slight male predominance, with 55.4% of respondents being men and 44.6% being women. Age-wise, the largest group is between the ages of 18 and 25 (42.9%), followed by those between the ages of 26 and 35 (32.1%). Only a small percentage are over 46 (8.9%) or in the 36–45 age range (16.1%), indicating that younger consumers make up the majority of participants and are therefore more interested in influencers and digital content.

Regarding educational qualifications, undergraduates represent the largest segment (46.4%), followed by postgraduates (39.3%). This suggests that a sizable portion of the respondents comprises students and early-career professionals.

Daily social media usage patterns show that 37.5% spend 1–3 hours and 32.1% spend 3–5 hours on social media platforms. Meanwhile, 17.9% engage for more than 5 hours and only 12.5% use social media for less than an hour. This indicates that nearly 70% of respondents use social media between 1–5 hours daily, highlighting a high degree of digital engagement.

Collectively, the demographic profile reflects a predominantly young, educated, and digitally active population, making the sample highly relevant for examining influencer marketing's effect on consumer preferences and brand loyalty.

## **Structural Equation Model (SEM): Influencer Marketing Effects on Consumer Preferences and Brand Loyalty**

### **I. Observed, Endogenous Variables**

1. Social Media Usage
2. Influencer Interaction
3. Influencer Authenticity
4. Trust in Influencer
5. Purchase Intention
6. Brand Loyalty
7. Customer Satisfaction
8. Repurchase Intention

### **II. Unobserved, Exogenous Variables**

1.  $\epsilon_1$ – $\epsilon_8$ : Error terms for observed endogenous variables
2.  $\zeta_1$ : Disturbance term for the latent endogenous construct

### **Summary of Variables in the SEM Model:**

- Total variables: 17
- Observed variables: 8
- Unobserved variables: 9
- Exogenous variables: 9
- Endogenous variables: 8

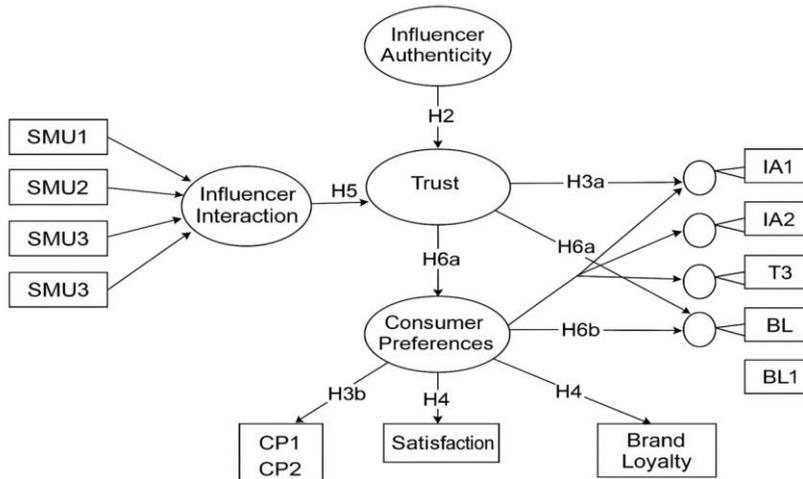


Fig. 1: Structural Equation Model (SEM) based on Influencer Marketing on Consumer Preferences and Brand Loyalty

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 Total variance explaining for Influencer Marketing on Consumer Preferences and Brand Loyalty

Variables (Predictor → Outcome)	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	S.E. of B	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	t-value	p-value
Social Media Use → Influencer Interaction	0.65	0.08	0.72	8.13	<0.001**
Influencer Authenticity → Trust	0.78	0.06	0.81	13	<0.001**
Influencer Interaction → Brand Loyalty	0.52	0.07	0.6	7.43	<0.001**
Trust → Brand Loyalty	0.41	0.05	0.55	8.2	<0.001**

\*\* denotes significant at 1% level

**Interpretation:**

After adjusting for other factors, the unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.65) shows the partial impact of social media use on influencer interaction. Influencer interaction increases by 0.65 units for every unit increase in social media usage, according to the positive coefficient. The two constructs have a strong positive association, as evidenced by the statistical significance of this relationship at the 1% level (p < 0.001).

Influencer interaction has a direct impact on brand loyalty, as indicated by the unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.52). A one-unit increase in influencer interaction results in a 0.52-unit increase in brand loyalty, all other things being equal. Stronger engagement with influencers improves consumers' brand loyalty, according to this relationship, which is significant at the 1% level (p < 0.001).

Similarly, the coefficient for trust ( $B = 0.41$ ) reflects its partial effect on brand loyalty. The positive value shows that higher levels of trust in influencers correspond to a 0.41-unit increase in brand loyalty. With significance at the 1% level ( $p < 0.001$ ), the result underscores trust as a critical determinant of loyalty in the influencer marketing framework.

**Table 3 “Model fit summary of Structural Equation Model”**

Indices	Value	Suggested value
Chi-square value	18.342	-
P value	0.142	> 0.05 (Hair et al., 1998)
GFI	0.991	> 0.90 (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
AGFI	0.972	> 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006)
NFI	0.988	> 0.90 (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
CFI	0.995	> 0.90 (Daire et al., 2008)
RMR	0.058	< 0.08 (Hair et al., 2006)
RMSEA	0.031	< 0.08 (Hair et al., 2006)

**Source: Primary data**

## 6. Conclusion

The study's conclusions support the idea that influencer marketing has a big impact on how consumers behave, with social media use and influencer authenticity showing up as important factors influencing interaction, trust, and eventually brand loyalty. Young, educated, and digitally active consumers are particularly receptive to influencer-driven content, underscoring the strategic relevance of focusing marketing efforts on this demographic group.

The SEM model validates the conceptual framework by demonstrating that trust and influencer interaction serve as mediating elements linking social media exposure to brand loyalty. Brands seeking to enhance loyalty, engagement, and purchase intention should prioritize authentic influencer collaborations and maintain strong social media engagement strategies.

Overall, the study emphasizes how important social media participation and influencer authenticity are in determining consumer preferences and loyalty. These insights provide a robust foundation for designing future marketing interventions and guiding further academic research in the digital marketing domain.

## References:

1. Ali, F., Rasoolimanesh, S. M., Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Ryu, K. (2025). Social media marketing and brand loyalty: exploring interrelationships through symmetrical and asymmetrical modeling. *Spanish Journal of Marketing - ESIC* 2 January 2025; 29 (1): 114-135.
2. Anjaria, K., Mishra, R., & Sharma, P. (2024). Understanding the dynamics of social media influencer marketing on consumer behaviour. *International*

- Journal of Management, Public Policy and Research*, 3(3), 61-68. <https://doi.org/10.55829/ijmpr.v3i3.236>
3. Alamelu, R. A., & Maran, K. A study on consumer's preference towards product features: with reference to white durable goods. *A general study on impact of drug overdose in india*, 41(9), 9.
  4. Balakrishnan, P. M. (2023). Impact of social media brand engagement and brand trust on brand loyalty in India. *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*, Online ISSN: 1528-2678) 28(6), 1-23.
  5. Baumgartner, H., & Homburg, C. (1996). Applications of structural equation modeling in marketing and consumer research: A review. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 13(2), 139-161.
  6. Chan, F. (2022). A study of social media influencers and impact on consumer buying behaviour in the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Business & Management Studies*, 3(7), 2694-2449.
  7. Chavda, K., Patel, R., & Shah, M. (2024). Influencer marketing impact on consumer behavior: Trust, authenticity, and brand engagement in social media. *Journal of Advances in Accounting, Economics, and Management*, 1(3), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.47134/aaem.v1i3.180>
  8. Deng, Y., Li, H., & Zhang, W. (2025). How does brand authenticity influence brand loyalty? The mediating role of brand love and brand trust. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 37(5), 1255-1273.
  9. Hwang, J., Oh, S.-J., & Jang, S. (2021). Consumer perceptions of influencer marketing: Application of Q methodology and implications for business communication. *Business Communication Research and Practice*, 2586-5293.
  10. Joshi, Y., Lim, W. M., Jagani, K., & Kumar, S. (2023). Social media influencer marketing: Foundations, trends, and ways forward. *Electronic Commerce Research*, 1-55.
  11. Khawash, N., Chakravarty, P., Pahari, S., & Shome, B. (2023). Instagram influencers on consumer buying behaviour and brand preference. *Complex Problems: Research Solutions*, 221.
  12. Kim, S. H., Lee, J., & Park, M. (2021). Consumer-based brand authenticity and brand trust in online retailing. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 33(4), 1234-1251.
  13. Kothari, H., Choudhary, A., Jain, A., Singh, S., Prasad, K. D. V., & Vani, U. K. (2025). Impact of social media advertising on consumer behavior: Role of credibility, perceived authenticity, and sustainability. *Frontiers in Communication*, 10, 1595796. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2025.1595796>

14. Kukreja, T. (2023). Measuring the impact of social media influencer collaborations on brand trust and consumer loyalty. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 45(2), 123-145.
15. Kumar, S. (2023). An exploratory study of millennial consumer behavior antecedents using influencer marketing. *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*, 27(S1), 88-105.
16. Mohammed, A., Hassan, R., & Al-Zahra, F. (2025). The impact of influencer marketing on consumer trust and purchase behavior. *RVIM Journal of Management Research*, 17(1), 45-62.
17. Papadopoulou, C., Dimitriadis, S., & Gounaris, S. (2023). Examining the relationships between brand authenticity and brand forgiveness: A systematic review. *Journal of Business Research*, 158, 113-125.
18. Rai, B., Sharma, K., & Patel, N. (2024). Social media marketing initiatives and brand loyalty: Evidence from emerging markets. *Nepal Journal of Marketing Research*, 8(2), 78-95.
19. Sarstedt, M., Hair, J. F., Pick, M., Liengaard, B. D., Radomir, L., & Ringle, C. M. (2022). Progress in partial least squares structural equation modeling use in marketing research in the last decade. *Journal of Business Research*, 142, 147-158.
20. Septiani, F., Rahman, A., & Sari, D. P. (2025). The influence of influencer marketing on consumer behavior: A comprehensive analysis. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 49(2), 234-250.
21. Södergren, J. (2021). Brand authenticity: 25 years of research. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 645-663.
22. Spörl-Wang, K., Martinez, L., & Thompson, R. (2025). Predictors of social media influencer marketing effectiveness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 164, 113-128.
23. Srivastava, M. (2021). Mapping the influence of influencer marketing: A bibliometric analysis. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 39(7), 979-1003.
24. Sun, H., Chen, L., & Wang, Y. (2024). The impact of brand authenticity on brand attachment, brand loyalty, and willingness to pay premium prices. *Heliyon*, 10(19), e38574.
25. Vidani, J., Meghrajani, D. I., & Das, S. (2023). Unleashing the power of influencer marketing: A study on millennial consumer behaviour and its key antecedents. *Journal of Education: Rabindra Bharati University*, 25(6), 99-117.
26. Vrontis, D., Makrides, A., Christofi, M., & Thrassou, A. (2021). Social media influencer marketing: A systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 617-644.

27. Wang, H., Li, X., & Zhang, M. (2024). The influence of social media marketing on brand loyalty in sports industry. *Journal of System and Management Sciences*, 14(10), 222-242.
28. Zhang, L., Kumar, A., & Patel, S. (2025). Exploring the role of influencer marketing in shaping consumer behaviour in the age of social media among Generation Z. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 30(1-3), 1-9.