

Factors Influencing Consumer Purchase Decisions Through Social Media Influencers: A Study with Special Reference to Kannur City

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Abstract: In today's digital landscape, social media has recently gained tremendous fame as a highly impactful channel of communication in these modern times of digitized living. Social media influencers have emerged as an influential marketing force, significantly shaping consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions in the digital era. This study examines the factors influencing consumers purchasing decisions through social media influencers with special reference to Kannur City, Kerala. The study adopts a descriptive research design and is based on primary data collected from 147 consumers using a structured questionnaire through convenience sampling. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, websites, and published reports. The collected data were analysed using percentage analysis, Cronbach's Alpha and factor analysis with the help of IBM SPSS. The results indicate that Instagram is the most preferred social media platform, and the majority of respondents spend two to four hours daily on social media and regularly follow influencer content. The findings reveal that credibility, authenticity, informative content, promotional strategies, and trust are the key determinants that influence consumers' purchasing behaviour through social media influencers. The study concludes that influencer marketing has become an effective promotional strategy capable of enhancing consumer confidence, increasing brand awareness, and stimulating purchase intentions. The findings provide useful insights for marketers and businesses in designing effective influencer marketing strategies.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Purchasing Decision, Influencer Marketing, Purchase Intention, Consumer Behaviour.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the digital landscape has experienced a seismic shift with social media platforms emerging as the dominant arena for brand consumer interactions. Social media is the most dominant medium of communication, entertainment and marketing for this digital era, altering the dynamic between consumer and brands and hence the basis of their buying decisions. Social media also serves as a platform for digital marketing activities such as content marketing, influencer marketing, social media advertising and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). Through these activities, businesses can reach targeted audiences more efficiently than through traditional advertising methods. The ability to personalize content, measure customer engagement, and communicate directly with consumers has made social media an indispensable component of modern marketing strategies (Kotler & Keller 2022).

Technology has eased the life of both business owners and customers (Atika et al.2019). The widespread availability of smartphones and affordable internet services has further accelerated the adoption of social media across the world. The emergence of social media has significantly changed consumer behavior by providing easy access to product information, reviews, recommendations, and user-generated content. As social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter pitched in, everyone looked at the chance to share their everyday life through online media. A handful of people started gathering large followers due to their highly engaging content and interaction. Because of their ability to influence the decisions of their followers, these people became famous as influencers (Joan et al., 2019).

Social media influencers are becoming the key players in digital marketing. In fact, influencers by nature have to work with huge followings based on their expertise, personality, or niche content, which enables them to have

significant influence over consumer attitudes and behaviours (Freberg et al., 2011). Influencer endorsements are perceived to be quite authentic and trustworthy in comparison with more traditional adverts because of the parasocial relationships created between them and their audience (Labrecque, 2014). Because influencer marketing establishes intimacy and credibility between the followers and the influencer, it can play a significantly efficacious role in the consumer's decision-making process. Consumers increasingly rely on social media to compare products, seek opinions from peers and influencers, and gather information before making purchase decisions. For businesses, social media has become an effective marketing tool for promoting products, building brand awareness, engaging customers, and developing long-term relationships. Its interactive nature allows organizations to receive immediate customer feedback and tailor their marketing strategies to meet consumer preferences (Kotler et al., 2021).

In recent years, the influence of social media has expanded beyond communication and entertainment to become a significant factor in consumer purchasing behavior. Consumers are increasingly exposed to product recommendations, reviews, demonstrations, and promotional campaigns while browsing social media platforms. These interactions shape consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchase intentions, making social media one of the most influential channels in the consumer decision-making process. According to Statista (2025), the continuous growth in social media users worldwide highlights the increasing importance of these platforms for businesses to connect with consumers and influence their purchasing decisions. This paper aims at exploring factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions through social media influencers with special reference to Kannur City.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

George et al. (2025) analysed the influence of content quality, expertise, entertainment value, and aesthetics on consumers' purchase intention using Structural Equation Modelling. The study reported that content quality, influencer expertise, and aesthetics significantly affect perceived influence and consumer attitudes, which subsequently enhance purchase intention. However, entertainment value did not have a significant effect on perceived influence. Akshaya et al. (2024) study finishes off that social media influencer have a positive and considerable influence on consumer buying behaviour among social media users. The Purchase intention turned out as the most prominent dimensions among consumers' purchasing behaviours whereas the most influential characteristics of SMI was attractiveness. Moreover, the results of positive and significant relation found between SMI and consumers' buying behaviour also confirmed the importance of increasing importance of influencer marketing in today's digital marketplace. Shikha et al. (2024) found that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp significantly influence consumer behavior through personalized advertising, influencer marketing, and real-time engagement. It also highlighted that cultural, economic, and

regional differences affect consumers' responses to digital marketing. Despite challenges such as privacy concerns and content overload, the study concluded that social media has become a powerful marketing tool, emphasizing the need for region-specific strategies to enhance consumer engagement and purchasing decisions the role of social media in influencing females' online cosmetic purchase intentions. Khan, et al. (2023) investigated the influence of social media on millennials' purchase decisions for fashion apparel. The study identified influencer marketing as the most influential factor, followed by digital privacy, social media advertising, and brand narratives. It concluded that influencer marketing plays a dominant role in shaping millennials' buying behaviour toward fashion products. Mandhare and Khan (2021) found that social media significantly influences shopping behavior by providing information on current trends and through attractive advertisements. Discounts and promotional offers were identified as major factors affecting purchase decisions. While social media improved connectivity and access to information, it also reduced physical interaction among users. The study concluded that social media marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumer purchasing behavior. Chopra et al. (2020) examined the impact of social media on consumers' decision-making process in New Delhi. The study found that social media serves as an important source of electronic word-of-mouth, with online reviews and consumer recommendations significantly influencing purchase decisions. The findings also revealed that social media enhances consumer satisfaction throughout the decision-making process, including information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decisions, and post-purchase evaluation.

➤ Need for the Study

In the modern digital world, social media has transformed the way consumers interact with brands and make purchasing decisions. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook are widely used not only for communication but also for marketing and promotion. Social media influencers are individuals who have a large number of followers and can influence the opinions and decisions of their audience. They promote products through reviews, posts, and videos, which build trust among consumers. Social media has significantly changed this process by providing easy access to product information, reviews, and recommendations.

Although several studies have examined influencer marketing in metropolitan cities and specific product categories, limited empirical evidence is available regarding the factors influencing purchasing decisions through social media influencers among consumers in Kannur City. Moreover, previous studies have mainly focused on purchase intention rather than identifying the underlying dimensions influencing consumer decisions. Therefore, this study attempts to bridge this gap. This study focuses on understanding how social media influencers impact consumer purchasing decisions. Moreover, it serves as a fertile ground where trends are cultivated and propagated at a rapid pace, giving consumers a constant source of inspiration and a medium to express their style preferences.

➤ *Objectives of the Study*

- To study the socio-economic profile of the selected consumers.
- To examine consumers social media usage patterns and their exposure to social media influencers.
- To identify the factors influencing consumers purchasing decisions through social media influencers.

III. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the factors influencing consumers' purchasing decisions through social media influencers. The study is conducted in Kannur City, Kerala, and the target population comprises consumers who actively use social media platforms and follow social media influencers. A convenience sampling technique is employed to select the respondents and a sample of 150 consumers is considered for the study. Both primary and secondary data are used. Primary data are collected through a structured questionnaire from those who used social media networks and employed information from influencers to purchase a particular product. A total of 150 filled questionnaires were received and a final of 147 was taken for analysis after removing those which lack completeness and clarity in responses, while secondary data

are gathered from books, journals, research articles, websites, and other relevant published sources.

The questionnaire consists of four sections: demographic profile, social media usage patterns and exposure to social media influencers, factors influencing consumers' purchasing decisions, and purchasing decision behaviour. The statements measuring the influencing factors and purchasing decisions are assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The collected data are analyzed using IBM SPSS. Percentage analysis is employed to examine consumers' demographic characteristics, social media usage patterns, and exposure to social media influencers. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) is performed to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scale, followed by Factor Analysis to identify the underlying factors influencing consumers' purchasing decisions through social media influencers.

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The socio-economic profile of respondents provides essential background information that helps in understanding their demographic and economic characteristics, which may influence their perceptions and purchasing behaviour. Table 1 presents the socio-economic profile of the selected respondents.

Table 1 Socio-Economic Profile of the Selected Consumers

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	61	41.5
	Female	86	58.5
Age	Less than 25 years	43	29.3
	25–30 years	80	54.4
	Above 30 years	24	16.3
Educational Qualification	SSLC	19	12.9
	Higher Secondary	30	20.4
	Degree	60	40.8
	Postgraduate	38	25.9
Marital Status	Married	63	42.8
	Unmarried	84	57.1
Occupation	Government Sector	50	34.0
	Private Sector	35	23.8
	Self-employed	40	27.2
	Others	22	15.0
Monthly Income	Less than ₹25,000	57	38.8
	₹25,000–₹50,000	77	52.4
	Above ₹50,000	13	8.8
Total		147	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1 presents the socio-economic profile of the 147 respondents selected for the study. The results indicate that female respondents constituted the majority, accounting for 58.5% (86 respondents), while male respondents represented 41.5% (61 respondents). This suggests that female consumers were more actively represented in the study and may exhibit greater engagement with social media influencers and online purchasing activities. With respect to age, the majority of the

respondents (54.4%) belonged to the 25–30 years age group, followed by 29.3% who were less than 25 years and 16.3% who were above 30 years. This indicates that young adults form the largest segment of consumers influenced by social media influencers, reflecting their higher exposure to digital platforms and influencer-generated content.

Regarding educational qualification, 40.8% of the respondents possessed a degree, followed by 25.9% who had completed postgraduate education, 20.4% with higher secondary education, and 12.9% with SSLC. The findings reveal that a considerable proportion of the respondents were well educated, suggesting that educated consumers actively use social media platforms and rely on influencer content while making purchase decisions.

In terms of marital status, 57.1% of the respondents were unmarried, whereas 42.8% were married. This indicates that unmarried consumers formed the majority of the sample, which may be attributed to their higher social media usage and greater interaction with influencer marketing.

The occupational distribution shows that 34.0% of the respondents were employed in the government sector, followed by 27.2% who were self-employed, 23.8% working in the private sector, and 15.0% belonging to other occupations. This demonstrates that the respondents represented diverse occupational backgrounds, ensuring a

broad perspective on the influence of social media influencers.

With regard to monthly income, the majority of the respondents (52.4%) earned between ₹25,000 and ₹50,000 per month, while 38.8% earned less than ₹25,000, and only 8.8% reported a monthly income above ₹50,000. This indicates that most respondents belonged to the middle-income category, suggesting that social media influencers have a significant impact on the purchasing decisions of consumers with moderate income levels.

➤ *Social Media Usage Patterns and Exposure to Social Media Influencers*

Social media has become an integral part of consumers' daily lives, providing a platform for communication, information sharing, and product discovery. The increasing popularity of social media influencers has transformed the way consumers search for product information and make purchasing decisions. Table 2 presents the social media usage patterns and exposure of the selected respondents.

Table 2 Social Media Usage Patterns and Exposure of the Selected Respondents

Particulars		Number of Respondents	Percentage
Most Frequently Used Social Media Platform	Instagram	64	43.5
	YouTube	25	17.0
	Facebook	33	22.4
	X (Twitter)	13	8.8
	Snapchat	12	8.2
Daily Time Spent on Social Media	Less than 2 hours	31	21.1
	2–4 hours	67	45.6
	More than 4 hours	49	33.3
Number of Influencers Followed	Less than 5	32	21.8
	5–10	52	35.4
	More than 10	63	42.9
Most Followed Influencer Category	Fashion & Beauty	47	32.0
	Technology	19	13.0
	Food	24	16.3
	Health & Fitness	26	17.7
	Travel	31	21.0
Frequency of Viewing Influencer Content	Daily	73	49.6
	Several times a week	43	29.3
	Weekly	31	21.1
Type of Influencer Content Preferred	Product Reviews	43	29.3
	Tutorials	22	15.0
	Entertainment	41	27.9
	Sponsored Posts	18	12.2
	Live Sessions	23	15.6
Purchased Influencer Recommended Product	Yes	91	61.9
	No	56	38.1
Total		147	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 2 presents the social media usage patterns and exposure of the selected respondents to social media influencers. The findings indicate that Instagram is the most frequently used social media platform, with 64 respondents (43.5%) using it regularly, followed by Facebook (22.4%), YouTube (17.0%), X (Twitter) (8.8%), and Snapchat (8.2%).

This suggests that Instagram has emerged as the dominant platform for influencer marketing due to its visual content and strong user engagement.

With regard to the daily time spent on social media, the largest proportion of respondents (67 respondents; 45.6%)

spend 2–4 hours per day on social media platforms. Meanwhile, 49 respondents (33.3%) spend more than 4 hours, whereas 31 respondents (21.1%) spend less than 2 hours. These findings reveal that the majority of respondents are active social media users, increasing their likelihood of being exposed to influencer-generated content.

The table further shows that 63 respondents (42.9%) follow more than 10 influencers, while 52 respondents (35.4%) follow 5–10 influencers, and only 32 respondents (21.8%) follow fewer than 5 influencers. This indicates a high level of engagement with influencers and suggests that influencer content is a regular part of respondents' online experience.

Regarding the most followed influencer category, Fashion and Beauty influencers are the most popular, attracting 47 respondents (32.0%), followed by Travel (21.0%), Health and Fitness (17.7%), Food (16.3%) and Technology (13.0%). This implies that lifestyle-related content has greater appeal among the selected respondents than technology-focused content.

In terms of frequency of viewing influencer content, nearly half of the respondents (73 respondents; 49.6%) watch influencer content daily, while 43 respondents (29.3%) view it several times a week and 31 respondents (21.1%) watch it weekly. This demonstrates that influencer content is consumed regularly by a majority of respondents, increasing its potential to shape consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour.

The analysis of the preferred type of influencer content reveals that Product Reviews are the most preferred, with 43 respondents (29.3%), closely followed by Entertainment content (27.9%). Other preferences include Live Sessions (15.6%), Tutorials (15.0%), and Sponsored Posts (12.2%). The preference for product reviews indicates that respondents rely on influencers for product-related information before making purchasing decisions.

Finally, the table shows that 91 respondents (61.9%) have purchased a product recommended by a social media influencer, whereas 56 respondents (38.1%) have not. This finding highlights the significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer purchasing behaviour, suggesting that influencer recommendations effectively encourage consumers to make purchase decisions.

➤ *Factors Influencing Consumers Purchasing Decisions through Social Media Influencers*

Consumers purchasing decisions are affected by a range of factors related to social media influencers, such as credibility, expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, content quality, electronic word-of-mouth, and brand awareness. Recognizing these fundamental factors is crucial for comprehending how influencer marketing impacts consumer behavior. Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.704 for 20 items, signifying an acceptable degree of internal consistency among these items. Given that the coefficient surpasses the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, the scale is deemed reliable for assessing the factors that affect consumers' purchasing decisions via social media influencers.

A Factor Analysis was performed to uncover the underlying factors that affect consumers' purchasing decisions via social media influencers. Before extracting factors, the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis was evaluated using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO statistic assesses the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis, while Bartlett's Test determines whether the variables are sufficiently correlated to warrant factor extraction.

To determine the appropriateness of applying factor analysis, the KMO and Bartlett's test measure were computed and the results are presented in table 3 KMO statistics is .760 which is signifying higher than acceptable adequacy of sampling. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 705.681$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the variables are sufficiently correlated for factor analysis.

Table 3 KMO and Bartlett's Test Measures

KMO and Bartlett's Test	
Kaiser-Mayer -Olkin measures of sampling adequacy	.760
Bartlett's test of sphericity Approx. Chi-square	705.681
Degrees of freedom	190
Significance level	.000

Source: Estimation Based on Field Survey, 2026

The communalities for each variable were assessed to determine the amount of variance accounted by the variable to be included in the factor rotations. All the variables had value greater than 0.50 signifying substantial portions of the variance accounted by the factors. Table 4 enlists the Eigen values, their relative explanatory powers and factor loadings for 20 linear components identified within the data set.

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Table 4 Rotated Component Matrix

Factors	Components							8
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I believe the influencer provides genuine product reviews.			.846					
I trust the influencer's recommendations.				.888				
The influencer has sufficient knowledge about the products.				.676				
I find the influencer attractive and appealing.					.779			
The influencer's personality attracts me.	.655							
The influencer creates informative content.	.722							
Sponsored recommendations seem genuine.	.834							
Positive comments influence my purchase decisions.		.705						
Customer reviews increase my confidence.	.814							
Influencers help me discover new brands.	.694							
Influencers increase my awareness of product features.			.855					
I intend to purchase products recommended by influencers.						.664		
I am willing to try new products promoted by influencers.							.625	
I often buy products after watching influencer reviews.							.761	
Influencer recommendations reduce my purchase risk.							.743	
Discounts shared by influencers encourage me to purchase.						.609		
Limited-time offers promoted by influencers increase my purchase intention.						.722		
I believe the influencer actually uses the products they recommend.		.696						
The influencer recommends products that match their image.		.806						
I would repurchase products recommended by trusted influencers.								.901
Eigen value	3.126	2.657	2.122	1.683	1.504	1.350	1.113	1.042
Percentage of variance	15.631	13.285	10.611	8.415	7.521	6.751	5.564	5.208
Cumulative percentage	15.631	28.916	39.527	47.942	55.463	62.214	67.779	72.986

- Extraction method: principal component analysis
- Rotation method: varimax with kaiser normalization

Factor 1 explains 15.631% of the total variance and consists of five variables: The influencer's personality attracts me (.655), The influencer creates informative content (.722), Sponsored recommendations seem genuine (.834), Customer reviews increase my confidence (.814), and Influencers help me discover new brands (.694). These variables indicate that respondents value influencers who provide informative and authentic content, supported by positive customer reviews, which enhances confidence and helps consumers discover new brands.

Factor 2 accounts for 13.285% of the total variance and includes Positive comments influence my purchase decisions (.705), I believe the influencer actually uses the products they recommend (.696), and the influencer recommends products that match their image (.806). These variables reflect the

importance of authenticity, consistency, and positive social proof in shaping consumer trust.

Factor 3 explains 10.611% of the variance and comprises I believe the influencer provides genuine product reviews (.846) and Influencers increase my awareness of product features (.855). These items emphasize the role of influencers in providing credible product information and improving consumer awareness.

Factor 4 contributes 8.415% of the variance and consists of I trust the influencer's recommendations (.888) and the influencer have sufficient knowledge about the products (.676). These variables represent respondents' confidence in the expertise and trustworthiness of influencers.

Factor 5 explains 7.521% of the total variance and includes I find the influencer attractive and appealing (.779). This factor highlights the influence of the influencer's physical attractiveness and appeal on consumer perceptions.

Factor 6 accounts for 6.751% of the variance and comprises I intend to purchase products recommended by influencers (.664), Discounts shared by influencers encourage me to purchase (.609), and Limited-time offers promoted by influencers increase my purchase intention (.722). These variables reflect consumers purchase intentions driven by influencer promotions and promotional offers.

Factor 7 explains 5.564% of the variance and includes I am willing to try new products promoted by influencers (.625), I often buy products after watching influencer reviews (.761), and Influencer recommendations reduce my purchase risk (.743). These variables indicate the behavioural impact of influencer recommendations on trial purchases and perceived risk reduction.

Factor 8 contributes 5.208% of the total variance and consists of I would repurchase products recommended by trusted influencers (.901). This factor reflects consumers' continued loyalty and repeats purchase intention based on trusted influencer recommendations. The factor analysis extracted eight underlying dimensions influencing consumer purchasing decisions through social media influencers. Together, these eight factors explain 72.986% of the total variance, indicating that the selected variables effectively capture the major aspects of influencer-driven consumer behaviour.

These findings suggest that content quality, authenticity, credibility, trust, attractiveness, promotional influence, purchase behaviour, and repurchase intention are the key determinants shaping consumers' purchasing decisions through social media influencers. The results of the current study align with the findings of De Veirman et al. (2017) highlighted that influencer characteristics and online popularity positively affect brand attitudes and consumer responses. Casalo et.al and Sokolova et.al (2020) reported that opinion leadership and the perceived quality of influencer content significantly enhance followers behavioural intentions and demonstrated that influencer credibility and parasocial interaction increase consumers' purchase intentions.

V. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that social media influencers play a significant role in shaping consumers purchasing decisions in the contemporary digital marketplace. The findings indicate that consumers are highly engaged with social media platforms, particularly Instagram, and frequently rely on influencer-generated content for product information and purchase recommendations. The exploratory factor analysis identified eight major dimensions influencing consumer purchasing decisions, namely content quality and consumer engagement, authenticity and social proof, credibility and product awareness, influencer trustworthiness and expertise, influencer attractiveness, purchase intention and promotional influence, purchase behaviour and risk reduction, and repurchase intention.

The study further reveals that consumers are more likely to purchase products recommended by influencers who are perceived as knowledgeable, trustworthy, authentic, and capable of producing informative and engaging content. Promotional activities such as discounts, limited-time offers, and genuine product reviews also positively influence purchase intentions, while positive customer reviews and influencer credibility reduce consumers' perceived purchase risk and encourage repeat purchases. Overall, the study confirms that influencer marketing has become a powerful and effective digital marketing strategy that significantly influences consumer decision-making. Therefore, businesses should collaborate with credible and authentic influencers who maintain strong engagement with their followers and provide transparent, value-oriented content. Such strategies will help organisations strengthen consumer trust, improve brand awareness and achieve sustainable marketing success in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

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