

Effectiveness of Influencer Marketing on Gen Z Consumer Behaviour

Dr. S. Nagarajan¹

Associate Professor in Management Studies, Department of Commerce,
Vivekanandha College of Arts and Sciences for Women (Autonomous), Tiruchengode
Email: drnagarajanprofessor@gmail.com

Ms. Vishnupriya. S²

III B.Com A&F, Department of Commerce,
Vivekanandha College of Arts and Sciences for Women (Autonomous), Tiruchengode

Sohag Datta³

Associate Professor,
Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Business Studies,
Dhaka International University, Dhaka
Email: sohag.bba@diu.ac

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Abstract: Influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most powerful digital marketing strategies, especially in influencing Generation Z consumers. Generation Z, comprising individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, is highly active on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. This study examines the effectiveness of influencer marketing on the consumer behaviour of Generation Z, with a special focus on college students. The primary objective of this study is to analyze how influencer credibility, content authenticity, and social media engagement affect the purchasing decisions and brand perceptions of Gen Z consumers. The research also aims to understand the level of trust Gen Z places in social media influencers compared to traditional advertisements. A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data were collected through structured questionnaire distributed among college students. Secondary data were gathered from journals, websites, and previous research studies related to influencer marketing and consumer behaviour. The findings of the study reveal that influencer marketing has a significant impact on the buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers. Factors such as relatability, honesty, and consistent content creation play a major role in influencing purchase intentions. The study also indicates that Gen Z consumers are more likely to trust influencers who provide genuine reviews rather than promotional content alone. The study concludes that influencer marketing is an effective tool for reaching Generation Z consumers and shaping their purchase decisions. The results of this research will be useful for marketers and brands to design effective influencer marketing strategies targeting young consumers.

Introduction

In recent years, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful component of online marketing, particularly in influencing the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers. Generation Z, commonly defined as individuals born between the mid-

1990s and early 2010s, are digital natives who spend a significant portion of their time on social media platforms. Their exposure to content created by influencers on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok has reshaped traditional consumer decision-making processes. Unlike conventional advertisements, influencer marketing relies on relatability, authenticity, and trust, which significantly affect the perceptions and purchasing intentions of young consumers, especially college students.

Social media serves as the primary medium through which influencer marketing operates. College students, being active users of social media, are highly responsive to product endorsements, reviews, and lifestyle promotions shared by influencers. These students often perceive influencers as credible sources of information, which enhances brand awareness and shapes their attitudes towards products and services. The interactive nature of social media also enables two-way communication, allowing consumers to engage with influencers, seek product feedback, and develop emotional connections with brands.

The effectiveness of influencer marketing on Gen Z consumer behaviour is closely linked to factors such as influencer credibility, content quality, and perceived authenticity. When influencers align with the values and interests of college students, their recommendations tend to create a stronger impact on purchase intentions. Micro-influencers, in particular, play a vital role in online marketing strategies, as their niche audience engagement often leads to higher trust and influence compared to celebrity endorsements.

Furthermore, Gen Z consumers exhibit a tendency towards online buying behaviour due to convenience, accessibility, and peer influence. Influencer marketing accelerates this behaviour by providing real-time product demonstrations, discount codes, and personalized recommendations. It also reduces perceived risk associated with online purchases, as students rely on influencer experiences before making buying decisions.

Overall, the integration of influencer marketing within online marketing strategies has significantly transformed the buying behaviour of Gen Z college students. It not only enhances brand visibility but also influences consumer preferences, attitudes, and purchase intentions. As social media continues to evolve, influencer marketing will remain a crucial tool for marketers aiming to effectively target and engage Generation Z consumers in the digital marketplace.

Generation Z consumer behaviour has become a significant area of interest in marketing research due to the cohort's unique digital orientation, evolving preferences, and strong influence on contemporary market trends. Generation Z, generally comprising individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, are widely recognized as digital natives who have grown up in a technology-driven environment. Their consumer behaviour is characterized by high internet usage, strong engagement with social media platforms, and a preference for online shopping, making them a critical target segment in modern digital marketing strategies.

- Generation Z consumer behavior: refers to the buying patterns, preferences, and decision-making processes of individuals born in the digital era, who are highly influenced by technology and online environments.
- Social media platforms: play a dominant role in influencing Gen Z consumer behaviour, as they rely heavily on online content for product discovery and brand evaluation.
- Online shopping: is a preferred mode of purchase among Gen Z due to convenience, accessibility, and the availability of multiple options on digital platforms.
- Purchase intention among Gen Z: is strongly influenced by online reviews, ratings, and peer recommendations rather than traditional advertising methods.

Personalization and customization are central to Gen Z buying preferences they expect brands to offer tailored advertisements, personalized recommendations, and interactive marketing campaigns that align with their lifestyle trends. Content authenticity and brand transparency significantly affect their perception and trust. Brands that communicate honestly and demonstrate social responsibility are more likely to build long-term relationships with Gen Z consumers.

- Purchase: intention among Gen Z is strongly influenced by online reviews, ratings, and peer recommendations rather than traditional advertising methods.
- Influencer: content also shapes their attitudes towards products, as they perceive influencers as relatable and credible sources of information.
- Personalization: is a key expectation of Gen Z consumers, as they prefer customized products, targeted advertisements, and tailored brand experiences.

They compare prices and seek discounts; they are also willing to invest in innovative, high-quality, and ethically produced products. Sustainability awareness and ethical consumption influence their brand loyalty and long-term purchasing patterns. However, brand loyalty among Gen Z tends to be moderate, as they are open to exploring alternative brands that offer better value or align with their personal beliefs.

In conclusion, Generation Z consumer behaviour is characterized by digital engagement, social media influence, personalization expectations, and value-driven decision-making. Their strong reliance on Value consciousness and price sensitivity are evident in Gen Z consumer behaviour. Although technology, preference for authentic content, and emphasis on ethical practices distinguish them from earlier generations. Marketers must adopt innovative digital marketing strategies that focus on trust, transparency, and interactive engagement to effectively capture and retain the attention of Generation Z consumers in today's competitive marketplace.

- Environmental awareness and social responsibility influence their long-term brand preferences and loyalty.
- Brand loyalty among Gen Z is relatively lower compared to previous generations, as they frequently explore new brands and alternatives.
- Their exposure to diverse digital content encourages experimentation and brand-switching behaviour.
- Customer experience plays a vital role in retaining Gen Z consumers, as they expect fast service, easy returns, and responsive customer support.
- Interactive marketing strategies, including polls, live sessions, and engagement campaigns, effectively attract Gen Z audiences.

Online marketing has become a dominant force in shaping the buying behaviour of college students, particularly among Generation Z, who are highly active on social media platforms. As digital natives, Gen Z college students spend a significant amount of time online, using platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and other social networking sites for communication, entertainment, and product discovery. This constant exposure to digital content has transformed their purchasing patterns, making online marketing a crucial tool for influencing their consumer decisions.

Social media plays a vital role in influencing the buying behaviour of college students by providing easy access to product information, reviews, and promotional content. Unlike traditional marketing, online marketing uses interactive and engaging strategies such as influencer promotions, sponsored advertisements, and personalized recommendations to attract young consumers. College students are more likely to trust peer reviews, user-generated content, and influencer endorsements, which significantly impact their purchase intention and brand perception.

Furthermore, the convenience and accessibility of online shopping platforms encourage Gen Z students to make quicker and more frequent purchasing decisions. Features such as mobile-friendly apps, digital payment systems, discounts, and flash sales enhance their overall shopping experience. Social media advertisements and targeted marketing campaigns also create awareness and stimulate impulse buying behaviour among college students.

Another important aspect of online marketing is personalization. Gen Z consumers prefer customized content that matches their interests, lifestyle, and preferences. Algorithms on social media platforms analyze user behaviour and display relevant advertisements, which increases engagement and conversion rates. This personalized approach strengthens customer satisfaction and brand engagement.

In addition, online marketing fosters brand interaction and engagement through comments, likes, shares, and live sessions, allowing students to connect directly with brands. This two-way communication builds trust and reduces perceived risk in online purchases. Overall, online marketing significantly influences the social media buying behaviour of Gen Z college students by enhancing brand awareness, convenience, engagement, and purchase intention in the digital marketplace.

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