



Impact of Influencer Marketing and Social Media Advertising on Students in Punjab

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Abstract

The increasing popularity of social media platforms has transformed marketing strategies across industries. Influencer marketing and social media advertising have emerged as powerful tools for influencing consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions, particularly among young consumers. This study examines the impact of influencer marketing and social media advertising on students in Punjab. The research aims to analyze how digital promotional activities affect students' purchasing behavior, brand awareness, and consumer preferences. A survey-based approach involving 200 student respondents was adopted for data collection. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean score analysis, correlation analysis, and Chi-square testing were used to interpret the data. The findings indicate that influencer marketing significantly affects students' purchase intentions, while social media advertising plays a crucial role in increasing brand awareness and product engagement.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Social Media Advertising, Students, Consumer Behavior, Brand Awareness, Purchase Decision, Punjab.

1. Introduction

Social media has become an integral part of students' daily lives. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Snapchat are widely used for communication, entertainment, education, and product discovery. Businesses increasingly utilize influencer marketing and social media advertising to engage young audiences.

Influencer marketing involves collaborations with individuals who have substantial online followings and can influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. Social media advertising includes paid promotional content designed to target specific audiences based on demographics, interests, and online behavior.



Students represent a highly active digital audience, making them an important target market for brands. This study investigates the extent to which influencer marketing and social media advertisements shape students' purchasing decisions and brand preferences in Punjab.

Review of Literature

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Sokolova and Kefi (2020) examined how influencer credibility and parasocial relationships affect consumer purchase intentions. The findings revealed that trust, authenticity, and emotional connection with influencers significantly influence young consumers' buying behavior. Students are more likely to purchase products recommended by influencers whom they perceive as trustworthy and relatable.

Kanaveedu and Kalapurackal (2022) analyzed influencer marketing research and found that influencer credibility, attractiveness, expertise, and content quality are major factors influencing consumer behavior. The study concluded that social media platforms have become powerful marketing channels, especially among young consumers and students.

Yadav et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis on the impact of social media influencers on customer engagement and purchase intention. The study found that influencer characteristics significantly increase customer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intentions. Young consumers who spend more time on social media are particularly susceptible to influencer recommendations.

Joshi et al. (2023) explored the foundations and future directions of influencer marketing. The authors found that influencer marketing has become one of the most effective digital marketing tools due to its ability to create trust, engagement, and personalized communication. The study highlighted its growing impact on consumer decision-making among Generation Z users.

Bhardwaj et al. (2024) reviewed 90 studies on social media influencers and consumer behavior. Their findings indicated that influencer marketing positively affects brand awareness, customer engagement, trust, and purchasing decisions. The study emphasized that authentic and informative content generates stronger responses from young audiences than traditional advertising methods.

Muthulingam and Amirtharaj (2026) investigated how influencer marketing affects Generation Z consumers in India. The results showed that influencer expertise, content quality, trust, and perception significantly influence purchase intentions. The researchers also found that excessive exposure to promotional content can reduce effectiveness, while authentic and high-quality content produces better outcomes among students and young consumers.

3. Research Gap

The reviewed literature indicates that influencer marketing and social media advertising significantly influence consumer attitudes, brand awareness, and purchase intentions among young people. However, most studies have focused on general consumers or Generation Z populations at a broader level. Limited research has specifically examined the combined impact of influencer marketing and social media advertising on students in Punjab. Therefore, the present study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how these digital marketing strategies affect students' attitudes, perceptions, and purchasing behavior in the Punjab context.

4. Objectives of the Study

To examine the influence of influencer marketing on students' purchasing behavior.

To assess the impact of social media advertising on brand awareness.

To identify students' preferred social media platforms.

5. Research Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design to examine the selected topic among students in Punjab. A total of 200 students were included in the study using the convenience sampling method. The research was based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. To analyze the collected data, various statistical tools were used, including percentage analysis, mean score analysis, chi-square test, and correlation analysis.

5.1) Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	112	56%
Female	88	44%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

The majority of respondents (56%) were male, while 44% were female. The demographic analysis reveals that the majority of respondents were male, accounting for 56% of the total sample, while female respondents represented 44%. This indicates a relatively balanced gender distribution, although males slightly outnumbered females in the study. The presence of participants from both genders provides a broader perspective on the impact of influencer marketing and social media advertising among students. The higher proportion of male respondents suggests that their opinions and experiences may have a somewhat greater influence on the overall findings of the study.

Table 2: Age Distribution

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18–20 Years	78	39%
21–23 Years	86	43%
24–26 Years	36	18%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

Most respondents belonged to the 21–23 years age group. The analysis of respondents' age indicates that the majority of students belonged to the 21–23 years age group. This suggests that most participants



were young adults, typically pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate education. Individuals in this age category are among the most active users of social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Snapchat, making them highly exposed to influencer marketing and social media advertising.

Table 3: Most Preferred Social Media Platform

Platform	Frequency	Percentage
Instagram	94	47%
YouTube	52	26%
Facebook	24	12%
Snapchat	20	10%
Others	10	5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

Instagram is the most preferred platform among students, followed by YouTube. The findings indicate that Instagram is the most preferred social media platform among students, followed by YouTube. This suggests that students spend a significant amount of their online time on these platforms for entertainment, communication, information, and product discovery. Instagram's popularity can be attributed to its visually engaging content, including reels, stories, posts, and influencer collaborations, which attract young users and encourage frequent interaction.

Table 4: Influence of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decisions

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	58	29%
Agree	82	41%
Neutral	34	17%
Disagree	18	9%
Strongly Disagree	8	4%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

The results show that a strong majority of respondents perceive influencer marketing as influential in their purchasing decisions. Specifically, 70% (29% strongly agree and 41% agree) reported that influencer marketing affects their buying behavior. In contrast, 17% remained neutral, while only 13% (9% disagree and 4% strongly disagree) did not agree with this view.

Overall, the findings indicate that influencer marketing has a significant impact on consumer purchase decisions among respondents.

Table 5: Impact of Social Media Advertising

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	64	32%
Agree	78	39%
Neutral	30	15%
Disagree	20	10%
Strongly Disagree	8	4%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

The findings indicate a generally positive perception, with 71% of respondents (32% strongly agree and 39% agree) stating that influencer marketing influences purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, 15% remained neutral, and only 14% (10% disagree and 4% strongly disagree) expressed disagreement.

Overall, the results suggest that influencer marketing has a strong impact on consumer buying behavior among respondents.

Table 6. Mean Score Analysis

Statement	Mean Score	Rank
Influencer recommendations affect purchases	4.28	I
Social media ads increase product awareness	4.17	II
Influencers improve brand trust	4.05	III
Students compare products online before buying	3.98	IV
Ads encourage impulse buying	3.89	V

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

Influencer recommendations emerged as the strongest factor affecting students' purchase decisions. The results indicate that influencer recommendations are the most influential factor (Mean = 4.28, Rank I) in shaping consumer purchase decisions. This is followed by social media advertisements increasing product awareness (4.17, Rank II) and improving brand trust (4.05, Rank III), showing strong overall effectiveness of digital marketing tools.



Further, students also moderately agree that they compare products online before purchasing (3.98, Rank IV) and that ads encourage impulse buying (3.89, Rank V), indicating comparatively lower but still positive influence.

Overall, the findings highlight that influencer marketing and social media advertising play a significant role in influencing awareness, trust, and purchasing behavior among students.

5.2 Correlation Analysis

Relationship Between Social Media Usage and Purchase Intention

Table 7. Correlation Analysis

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)
Social Media Usage & Purchase Intention	0.71

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

The correlation coefficient of 0.71 indicates a strong positive relationship between social media engagement and purchasing intention.

5.3 Chi-Square Test

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between time spent on social media and purchasing decisions.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between time spent on social media and purchasing decisions.

Table 8: Chi-Square Result

Particulars	Value
Chi-Square Value	14.62
Degrees of Freedom	4
p-value	0.006

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, a significant relationship exists between social media usage and students' purchasing decisions. The Chi-square test result shows a χ^2 value of 14.62 with 4 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.006. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant, indicating a meaningful association between the variables under study.

Overall, this suggests that the observed differences are unlikely to have occurred by chance, supporting a significant relationship in the data.



6. Major Findings

- i. Instagram is the most preferred social media platform among students.
- ii. Influencer marketing significantly affects purchasing behavior.
- iii. Social media advertising contributes to increased brand awareness.
- iv. Students trust influencer recommendations when making purchase decisions.
- v. A strong positive relationship exists between social media usage and purchase intention.
- vi. Social media advertisements encourage impulse buying among students.
- vii. Social media platforms play a key role in shaping students' brand preferences and perceptions.
- viii. Influencer credibility significantly impacts students' trust in advertised products.
- ix. YouTube and Instagram are the most commonly used platforms for product-related content consumption.
- x. Students are highly exposed to targeted advertisements based on their online behavior.
- xi. Digital marketing strategies strongly influence students' intention to try new products.
- xii. Excessive exposure to social media advertisements contributes to frequent purchase temptations among students.

7. Suggestions

- a. Students should verify product information before making purchases.
- b. Educational institutions should promote digital literacy programs.
- c. Influencers should disclose sponsored content transparently.
- d. Brands should focus on ethical and responsible advertising practices.
- e. Students should manage social media usage to avoid unnecessary spending.
- f. Students should critically evaluate influencer content before trusting product claims.
- g. Brands should collaborate only with credible and relevant influencers to maintain authenticity.
- h. Social media platforms should strengthen policies against misleading advertisements.
- i. Students should compare multiple sources before making final purchase decisions.
- j. Institutions should conduct awareness sessions on digital marketing influence and consumer behavior.
- k. Influencers should focus on providing honest reviews rather than exaggerated promotions.
- l. Parents and educators should guide students on responsible online spending habits.
- m. Brands should regularly monitor consumer feedback to improve advertising effectiveness.
- n. Students should be encouraged to differentiate between organic content and paid promotions.



Conclusion

The study concludes that influencer marketing and social media advertising have a significant impact on students in Punjab. Digital marketing strategies effectively increase brand awareness, shape consumer preferences, and influence purchasing decisions. Influencer endorsements play a particularly important role in establishing trust and motivating purchases. While these marketing approaches provide valuable information and engagement opportunities, they also contribute to impulse buying behavior. Therefore, both marketers and students should adopt responsible practices to ensure a balanced and informed digital environment.

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