



Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions for Fashion Retail Among Youth

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Abstract

This paper explores how social media elements (influencers, targeted ads, brand collaborations, reels, trends) shape fashion purchase intentions and impulsive buying among young adults. The survey-based study emphasizes the strong role of influencers and ads, and highlights the need for transparency and mindful consumption due to mixed trust in digital fashion quality.

Keywords: Young Adults, Fashion retail, buying behavior, Social media.

1. Introduction

The presence of social media has become a vital part of young adult's lives that it often influences their fashion choices subconsciously. Instagram, in particular, has a way of pulling people into new trends through influencer, short reels, ads, and constant brand updates. When you see so many styles and ideas every time you open the app, it's only natural that your own taste and buying habits start shifting along with what appears on your feed.

For many young people, influencer feel more like friends with good fashion sense than advertisers. Their recommendations feel personal, and the likes, comments, and excitement around trending reels add to the push. The survey results mirror this everyday experience. A lot of respondents shared that social media makes trends spread quickly and sometimes encourages impulsive shopping. At the same time, many still worry about whether the products they see online are actually reliable. This mix of influence and uncertainty shows why honest communication from brands and more mindful shopping are becoming increasingly important.

This study takes a closer look at how all these subtle, everyday influences shape the fashion preferences and buying decisions of young adults today.

2. Literature Review

1.Bommawar Rohit Charandas and Dr. Tiwari Deepak (2022) "Consumer Engagement and Purchase Behavior in Fashion via Influencer Marketing" This study examines how fashion brands leverage influencer partnerships, interactive campaigns and content

richness to enhance consumer engagement and purchases. This paper discovers the notable psychological motivations which would have a strong effect on today's youth purchase decision through social networking sites: Social proof & FOMO.

2. Darshan, Soni, Godara, et al. (2024)
"Social Media's Role in Shaping Trends and Identity Among Youth"

This research examines the influence of social media on youth's fashion trend and design identity development. It is an indication of the level of influence and user-generated content in that process, which demonstrates growing awareness to issues about sustainable fashion via social media.

3. Ismael AS et al. (2025)

"Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Young Consumers' Purchase Intention"
The former understanding of social commerce is allowed to move into sales and makes use of information from a quantitative study in Bangladesh with the aim to examine how the content, engagement, brand awareness and influencer marketing in social media affects young consumers between 18–30 years old in terms of brand trust and influencer credibility as drivers of purchases.

4. Chowdhury, S., Faruque, M., Sharmin, etc (2024)

"The Influence of social media marketing on consumer behavior"

Reviews research that discovered social media marketing strategies positively correlate with fashion consumers purchase behavior, highlights platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok democratizing fashion marketing.

5. Vanshika Panjabi et al. (2025)

"A study on influence of social media trends on fashion consumer behaviour"

Paper by indicates that platforms such as Instagram, TikTok or Facebook have a profound impact on young people and their clothing preferences by influencing trends and purchases through influencer marketing, user-generated content and interactive brand experiences. Social media has the effect of not only spreading brand awareness but also promoting impulse purchasing, personalized product recommendation and peer-validation, all increasing social media's role as a driving force in young fashion consumer behaviour.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Objective of the study

- 1) To study how social media influences young adults' fashion choices.
- 2) To analyze the impact of influencer, reels and ads on purchase intention.
- 3) To examine how visual appeal and brand visibility shape consumer interest.
- 4) To evaluate the role of trust in influencer and peer engagement.
- 5) To identify the fashion content types most preferred by youth.
- 6) To assess how social media drives impulsive buying behavior.
- 7) To understand perceptions of product quality in social-media promotions.
- 8) To determine the online shopping platforms and product categories most influenced.

3.2 Research Design

The research design is descriptive, as it aims to gain detailed understanding on how young people act, react and assimilate attitudes around social media marketing in fashion retail. The method is essentially quantitative, drawing on observable data collected from respondents to evaluate the effect of social media on their buying behavior.

3.3 Sources of Data

- **Primary Data:** Data were collected by way of a highly organized online questionnaire distributed to young social media users.
- **Secondary Data:** Obtained from scholarly journals, books, research articles, digital reports, and online publications to support and strengthen the conceptual framework of the study.

3.4 Sample size

There were 71 respondents. The majority of these influencers were aged 18 – 30 years old, an age group that makes the most use of social media and is heavily influenced by online fashion content.

3.5 Hypothesis

H0 - It is observed that a large portion of the youth tend to make impulsive purchases under the influence of social media.

H1 - The youth of today are open to try new things showcased on social media exhibiting lower level of skepticism and show a tendency to be more receptive to new products.

Hypothesis 2:

H0- Social media advertisements do not significantly influence the fashion purchase decisions of youth.

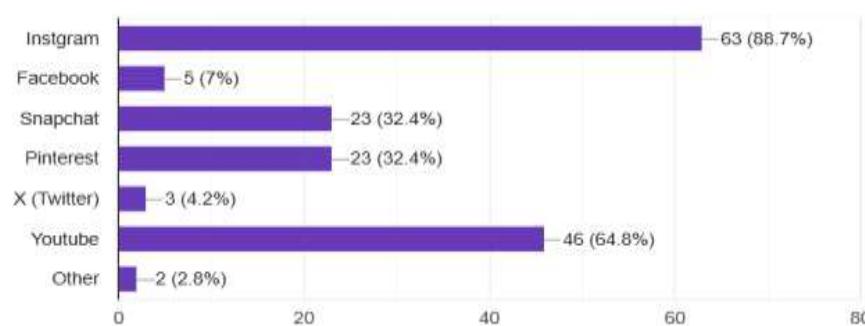
H1- Social media advertisements significantly influence the fashion purchase decisions of youth.

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The following was data was collected and interpreted from the questionnaire provided to the respondents. The questionnaire followed three major sections:

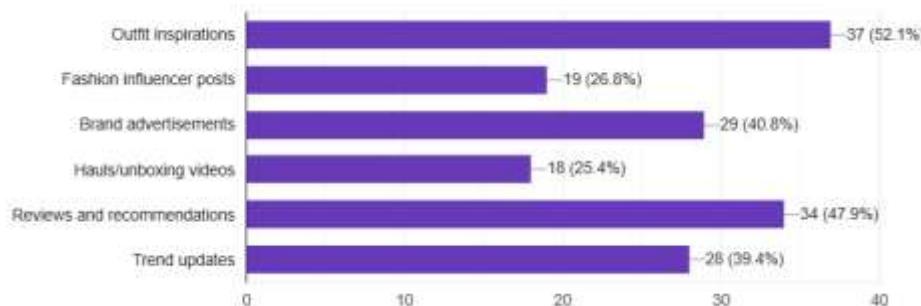
Social Media Consumption

1. Apps used by respondent



The data shows that Instagram is the most popular platform among youth, used by 88.7% of respondents, followed by YouTube.

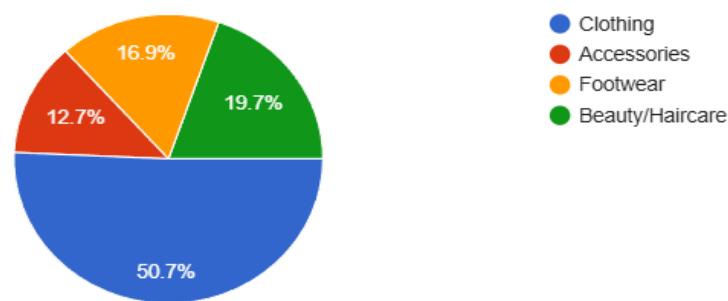
2. Type of content



Youth prefer watching fashion content related to outfit inspiration (52.1%), closely followed by Reviews and recommendations (47.9%). The finding also reveals that the targeted audience are least interested in Hauls/unboxing videos (25.4%)

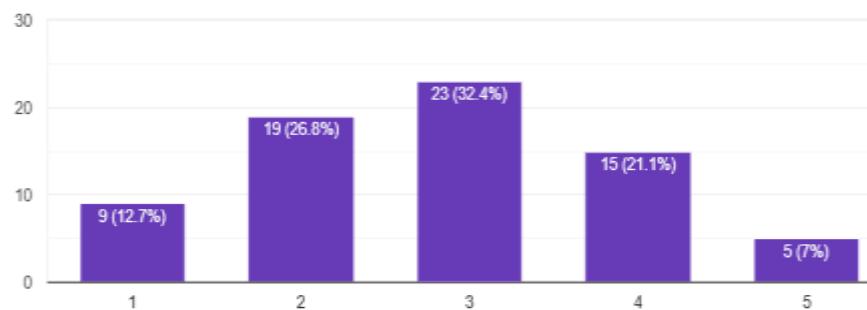
Types of Products and Purchase decisions:

1. Type of products consumers are influenced to buy through social media



The chart shows that clothing is the most influenced purchase category (50.7%), followed by beauty/haircare (19.7%), footwear (16.9%), and accessories (12.7%).

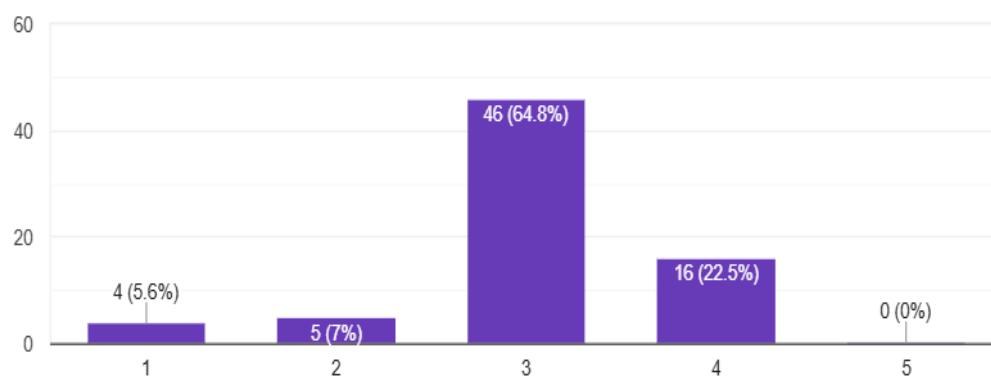
2. Degree of influence by social media on consumer preferences



The chart shows that most respondents felt a moderate influence of social media on their preference for certain fashion brands (32.4% at neutral), while only a small portion reported very strong influence (7%).

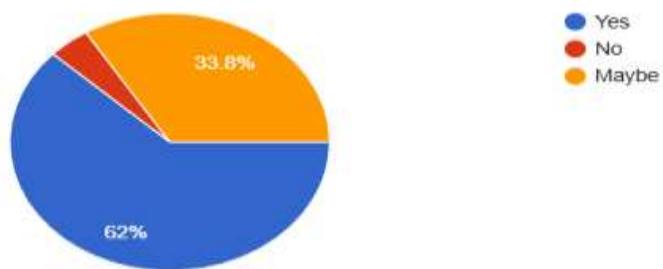
Opinionated Questions

1. Opinion on the consistency of the product quality



The results show that most respondents (nearly two-thirds) believe social-media-promoted products only somewhat match their real quality, with very few saying they “never” or “always” do.

2. Influence of social media on the purchase decision of the youth for fashion products.



A clear majority of respondents (62%) believe that social media strongly influences fashion purchase decisions among youth, with only a small fraction disagreeing.

4. Findings

1. Platform usage and exposure

Instagram is the most commonly and dominant platform by the youth (88.7%) with the combination of Youtube, Snapchat and Pinterest for fashion content. It is seen that there is a continuous exposure of fashion content with the respondents which is frequent.

2. Content preferences

The finding of the survey indicates that a larger chunk of the youth prefer watching fashion content that is outfit related inspiration (52.1%) and closely followed by Reviews and recommendations (47.9%). The finding also reveals that the targeted audience are least interested in Hauls/unboxing videos (25.4%)

3. Purchase behaviour

The purchasing trend varies greatly among people ranging from frequent buyers to those who rarely give a second thought to it. Clothing is the most purchased product (50.7%), with beauty and haircare, footwear, and accessories following behind. After seeing products online, respondents mostly head to Amazon Fashion (62%) followed by Flipkart, Myntra, Messho and others.

4. Perceived quality and influence

Most respondents believe that the products advertised on social platforms typically meet their expectations, though some remain unsure. Overall, the majority think that social media significantly influences the fashion preferences and buying habits of young people today.

From these findings, a consistent four-stage model can be proposed:

1. Exposure (Platform stage)

Youth spend significant time on Instagram (plus YouTube/Snapchat/Pinterest), where they frequently encounter fashion posts and ads.

2. Engagement (Content stage)

They interact with outfit inspiration, influencer content, hauls and reviews that create aspiration and provide reassurance about products and brands.

3. Evaluation (Trust stage)

Repeated exposure and positive reviews build perceived popularity and quality; most respondents feel products match expectations, reducing purchase risk.

4. Conversion (Purchase stage)

Youth then purchase mainly via established e-commerce apps (Myntra, Amazon, Flipkart, Ajio, Meesho), with clothing and beauty as primary categories.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion of the overall data collected through primary and secondary methods, it is observed that the exposure of youth to social media applications influence the purchase decisions. Brands feed the consumers with continuous and looping advertisements, promotions and digital campaigns to keep the consumers engaged with the brand products. The clothing and beauty industry is one of the most dynamic and everlasting industries in the market. The trends in these industries keep changing rapidly and the brands use peer influence to manipulate consumers into buying their products.

As for the applications concerned with buying products, the consumers are inclined to buy products from apps that offer quality and convenience (with regards to price, deliveries and returns). These apps access consumer search history and algorithms to give relevant inputs to the consumers. The reviews and recommendations provided by individuals on social media about a certain product or brand have been seen to cause a lasting impact on purchase decisions of the consumers. Summarizing this entire research, it is apparent that the advertisements by brands on social media applications keep influencing purchase decisions of the consumers through relevant posts, advertisements and marketing campaigns.

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