

Study on Fashion Influencers and Their Role in Shaping Generation Z's Clothing Purchase Intentions in Vadodara

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Abstract—social media has become a dominant force in shaping consumer behavior, particularly among Generation Z, a demographic that heavily engages with digital content. This research explores the influence of social media platforms in determining fashion preferences among Gen Z consumers, analyzing how they interact with influencers, brands, and peer communities. The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative content analysis to examine key trends, brand influence, and peer interactions that drive fashion choices.

Findings indicate that platforms such as Instagram, Youtube, and Pinterest act as digital fashion ecosystems where trends emerge rapidly and evolve through user-generated content. Influencers play a pivotal role in setting trends, as their recommendations often lead to increased engagement and brand loyalty. Additionally, social media fosters a sense of community where peer influence significantly impacts fashion decisions, with Gen Z consumers prioritizing authenticity and sustainability. Brands leverage this digital landscape through influencer collaborations, targeted advertising, and interactive content strategies to shape purchasing behavior.

This study highlights the implications of these digital trends for fashion marketers, emphasizing the need for data-driven strategies that align with Gen Z's values and online behaviors. The research also underscores the growing importance of personalized content, short-form videos, and interactive shopping experiences in driving engagement. Future studies could explore the long-term impact of social media on sustainable fashion choices and brand trust. This research contributes to the evolving discourse on digital marketing, consumer psychology, and fashion branding in the age of social media.

Index Terms—Social Media, Gen Z, Fashion Preferences, Influencer Marketing, Digital Trends, Brand Engagement, Consumer Behavior, Online Shopping, Content Creation

I. INTRODUCTION

The advent of social media has revolutionized consumer behavior, particularly in the fashion industry. Fashion, once dictated by designers, magazines, and runway shows, is now shaped by digital platforms where trends emerge and evolve in real time. Social media has become a dynamic space where brands, influencers, and consumers interact, creating a continuous exchange of fashion ideas. Generation Z, born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, has played a crucial role in this transformation. As digital natives, they consume and engage with fashion content primarily through online channels such as Instagram, Youtube and Pinterest. Unlike previous generations, their purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by peer recommendations, influencer endorsements, and viral fashion trends. Despite the growing body of research on digital marketing, there remains a gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which social media drives fashion preferences among Gen Z consumers. Traditional marketing models are no longer sufficient to explain how young consumers navigate an ecosystem dominated by influencers, brand collaborations, and algorithm-driven content. This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining how social media platforms shape Gen Z's fashion choices, exploring the role of influencer marketing, peer interactions, and brand engagement in digital spaces. By investigating these factors, this research aims to provide insights into the evolving landscape of fashion consumption, offering valuable implications for brands, marketers, and industry professionals. Understanding Gen Z's digital behavior is essential for businesses looking to develop effective marketing strategies and maintain relevance in an increasingly competitive market. This study will contribute to the

broader discourse on digital consumerism and the intersection of social media and fashion trends.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Jin & Phua (2014)

Fashion influencers act as intermediaries between brands and consumers, creating authentic, relatable content that resonates with their followers. This study highlights how influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube promote fashion brands and foster direct engagement with their audience. Influencers provide a personal touch to brand promotions, making fashion more accessible and appealing to their followers.

2. Lim et al. (2017)

Instagram's visual-centric platform is particularly effective for fashion influencers to promote trends. The study emphasizes how influencers engage their followers through stories and posts, showcasing clothing items and generating immediate feedback. This interaction enhances consumer engagement and drives fashion consumption among younger audiences.

3. Priporas et al. (2017)

Generation Z is characterized as digitally fluent and socially conscious, with a preference for authenticity. This research explores how Gen Z's digital nativity influences their fashion purchase decisions. Gen Z engages deeply with influencers who promote personalized, value-driven experiences, aligning with their desires for sustainability and inclusivity.

4. Francis & Hoefel (2018)

This study provides insight into Generation Z's loyalty patterns, suggesting that they favor brands that align with their social values, such as sustainability and authenticity. The role of influencers in promoting these values significantly impacts their fashion choices, making influencer marketing a powerful tool for reaching Gen Z consumers.

5. Djafarova & Bowes (2021)

Fashion influencers shape the preferences of Gen Z by making fashion trends relatable and accessible. This study examines how influencers introduce new brands and set trends that resonate with the lifestyle and

identity of young consumers. Influencers are viewed as trendsetters, particularly for Gen Z, who actively seek out fashion inspiration online.

6. Sokolova & Kefi (2020)

The effectiveness of influencer marketing is explored through trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness. This research demonstrates that influencers' credibility plays a pivotal role in shaping followers' purchase intentions. Gen Z consumers, in particular, form parasocial relationships with influencers, which boosts trust and drives clothing purchases based on influencer recommendations.

7. Schouten et al. (2020)

This study delves into parasocial relationships between influencers and followers, highlighting how followers feel a personal connection with influencers, even without direct interaction. This sense of connection makes influencers highly persuasive in shaping consumer behavior, particularly among Gen Z, who often rely on these relationships when making fashion-related decisions.

8. Huang et al. (2020)

Influencers play a crucial role in reducing the perceived risks associated with online shopping. By sharing personal experiences, reviews, and recommendations, influencers provide social proof, making Gen Z consumers feel more confident in their clothing purchases. This study underscores the importance of influencer content in facilitating e-commerce decisions.

III. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To analyze the role of social media in shaping fashion preferences among Gen Z consumers.
- To explore the impact of influencer marketing on Gen Z's purchasing behavior.
- To examine the significance of peer interactions and user-generated content in fashion trends.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys of 400 Gen Z respondents (aged 18-25) with qualitative content

analysis of social media platforms like Instagram, Youtube, and Pinterest. The surveys assess fashion preferences and influencer impact using structured, Likert-scale questions, while content analysis examines trends, brand collaborations, and engagement metrics. A non-probability sampling

method is used, targeting fashion-conscious Gen Z individuals through social media ads and influencer collaborations. Additionally, hypothesis testing was conducted to validate the statistical significance of social media’s influence on Gen Z’s fashion choices.

Section	Details
Title	Study on Fashion Influencers and Their Role in Shaping Generation Z's Clothing Purchase Intentions in Vadodara
Hypotheses	<p>1: Influence of Following Fashion Influencers on Purchase Intentions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H_0 (Null Hypothesis): Following fashion influencers on social media has no significant impact on Generation Z’s clothing purchase intentions. • H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): Following fashion influencers on social media significantly influences Generation Z’s clothing purchase intentions. <p>2 : The preferred social media platform influences the type of fashion content that impacts Generation Z’s clothing purchase decisions.</p> <p>H_0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between the preferred social media platform and the type of fashion content influencing Gen Z’s clothing purchases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H_1(Alternative Hypothesis) : There is a significant relationship between the preferred social media platform and the type of fashion content influencing Gen Z’s clothing purchases. <p>3: Trust in social media fashion influencers significantly impacts Generation Z’s purchase intention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H_0 (Null Hypothesis): Trust in social media fashion influencers does not significantly impact Generation Z’s purchase intention. <p>H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis: Trust in social media fashion influencers significantly impacts Generation Z’s purchase intention.</p>
Data Collection Method	The primary data was collected through online surveys of 400 Gen Z respondents (aged 18-25), using closed-ended and Likert-scale questions to assess fashion choices and social media influence. Respondents were recruited via social media ads, influencer collaborations, and targeted outreach.

Tools of analysis	The study utilizes Excel for hypothesis testing, employing the Chi-Square test and Pearson correlation coefficient to analyze the relationship between social media influence and Gen Z's fashion choices.
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V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Influence of Following Fashion Influencers on Purchase Intentions

OBSERVED VALUES			
Purchase Frequency	Follow Influencer	Don't Follow Influencer	Total
Always	25	6	31
Often	65	27	92
Sometimes	112	57	169
Rarely	46	35	81
Never	12	15	27
Total	260	140	400

EXPECTED VALUES			
Purchase Frequency	Follow Influencer	Don't Follow Influencer	Total
Always	20.15	10.85	31
Often	59.8	32.2	92
Sometimes	109.85	59.15	169
Rarely	52.65	28.35	81
Never	17.55	9.45	27
Total	260	140	400

CHI SQUARE COMP	
1.16737	2.167972
0.452174	0.839752
0.04208	0.078149
0.839934	1.559877
1.755128	3.259524

Interpretation:

Expected frequencies were computed based on the marginal totals. The chi-square statistic was calculated as $\chi^2(4, N = 400) = 12.16$, with a corresponding p-value of approximately 0.02. As $p < 0.05$, the null

hypothesis that there is no association between following fashion influencers and purchase frequency was rejected, indicating a statistically significant relationship.

2. The preferred social media platform influences the type of fashion content that impacts Generation Z's clothing

purchase decisions.

OBSERVED VALUES					
Preferred Platform	Brand Collaborations	Try-On Hauls	Outfits of the Day	Fashion Tips	Total
Instagram	50	55	30	31	166
YouTube	35	20	15	22	92
Pinterest	20	15	30	27	92
Others	15	15	9	11	50
Total	120	105	84	91	400

EXPECTED VALUES					
Prefered Platform	Brand Collaborations	Try-On Hauls	Outfits of the Day	Fashion Tips	Total
Instagram	49.8	43.575	34.86	37.765	166
YouTube	27.6	24.15	19.32	20.93	92
Pinterest	27.6	24.15	19.32	20.93	92
Others	15	13.125	10.5	11.375	50
Total	120	105	84	91	400

CHI SQUARE COMP			
0.000803	2.995539	0.677556	1.211842
1.984058	0.713147	0.965963	0.054701
2.092754	3.46677	5.903851	1.760387
0	0.267857	0.214286	0.012363

Interpretation:

The results of the chi-square test indicate a statistically significant relationship between the preferred social media platform and the type of fashion content influencing Generation Z's clothing purchase decisions ($\chi^2 = 11.52$, p-value = 0.0092). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, confirming that the type of fashion content that impacts Gen Z's purchase behavior varies depending on the social media platform they primarily use.

- Trust in social media fashion influencers significantly impacts Generation Z's purchase intention.

To assess the relationship between trust in fashion influencers and the likelihood of purchasing fashion products they promote, a Pearson correlation test was conducted. This test measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables, ranging from -1 (strong negative correlation) to +1 (strong positive correlation). A Pearson correlation test was performed to determine the association between respondents' trust in fashion influencers' advice and their likelihood of purchasing a fashion product promoted by an influencer. The analysis was conducted using Excel, on survey responses from 400 Gen Z participants. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale.

Variables	Pearson's r	p-value	Interpretation
Trust in influencers & Purchase liklihood	0.2818	0.0368	Weak to moderate positive correlation

Interpretation:

The results indicated a weak to moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.2818$) that was statistically significant ($p = 0.0368$). This suggests that individuals who trust fashion influencers more are slightly more likely to purchase products they endorse.

VI. FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1: Gen Z individuals who follow fashion influencers on social media are more likely to purchase fashion products. The Chi-Square test results suggest no strong association between following fashion influencers and actual purchase behavior, as most values do not indicate statistical significance. However, Pearson correlation analysis shows a significant positive correlation ($p = 0.036$, $\alpha = 0.05$) between influencer trustworthiness and purchase intention. This means that while following influencers alone may not guarantee a purchase, trust in influencers does influence buying decisions.

Hypothesis 2: The most preferred social media platform influences the type of fashion content that impacts Gen Z's clothing purchase decisions. The Chi-Square test results show mixed significance, indicating that while some platforms have a stronger influence on fashion purchases, the impact varies. Social media platforms with higher engagement, such as Instagram Youtube, Pintrest, and others show a stronger correlation with fashion purchases compared to others like Pinterest.

Hypothesis 3: Trust in social media influencers influences Gen Z's purchase decisions. The Pearson correlation test confirms a positive relationship between trust in influencers and purchase behavior, meaning the more Gen Z consumers trust influencers, the more likely they are to make purchases based on their recommendations.

VII. CONCLUSION

The study finds that trust in influencers plays a crucial role in influencing purchase decisions among Gen Z, more than simply following influencers. While preferred social media platforms do impact the type of fashion content consumed, the purchase decision is largely driven by influencer credibility and engagement. The findings emphasize the importance

of building authentic and trustworthy influencer-brand collaborations to drive consumer behavior.

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