Impact Of Influencer Marketing on Tourist Preferences in Coimbatore City

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Abstract- **In today's digital era, influencer marketing has become a powerful tool that significantly decides consumer choices, especially in the tourism industry. This study explores how influencer marketing affects tourist preferences, focusing on travellers from the Coimbatore city. The main goal is to understand the extent to which social media influencers impact various aspects of travel decisions, such as choosing destinations, planning itineraries, and making spending choices. The results indicate that content shared by influencers - particularly on platforms like Instagram and YouTube - greatly influences travellers by increasing their awareness, shaping their opinions, and sparking interest in particular places and experiences. These insights can be highly useful for tourism professionals, local authorities, and travel-related businesses aiming to tap into the potential of influencer marketing to boost regional tourism and better connect with modern travellers.**

Key Words: **Tourist preferences, Influencer marketing and Social-media platforms.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Influencer marketing has developed a new way for the consumers in finding and experiencing travel and tourism. Influencers post their own travel experiences and necessary tips for the travellers which forms a feel of familiarity among their followers and so, more times than not, someone will book a trip simply because their favourite influencer suggested it to visit after seeing it promoted by an influencer in the social media applications. This is particularly the case for Millennials and Generation Z, where 71% opt for travel advice from influencers compared to conventional advertisement. Such a trend being identified, tourism companies are presently investing up to 60% of their advertisement budget in influencer collaboration, which may yield returns on investment up to 11 times greater than that of traditional marketing methods. Influencer marketing has gone through multiple phases: from initial celebrity endorsements, social media influencers in the 2010s, data-driven marketing, the emergence of short-form video content, and the development of AI and virtual influencers. Hence, the present research aims to analyse the travel plans in the study area, find the travel influencers' impact on travel decisions of tourists and assess the opinion on influencers' services.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To find the socio- economic background of the respondents
- ✓ To analyse the travel plans in the study area
- ✓ To find the travel influencers' impact on travel decisions of tourists.
- ✓ To assess the opinion on influencers' services

III. METHODOLOGY

The present study was confined to Coimbatore city, TamilNadu. Convenience sampling technique was adopted in the selection of samples. Database for the study was drawn from 105 respondents who often travelled to places and used social media platform contents. On completion of data collection appropriate research analytical tools such as simple percentage, Chi square, Average score ranking, Charts and graphs were used.

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

TABLE 1 - SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

Socio-Economic Variables	%	Socio-Economic Variables	%

Gender	Male	62	Age (in years)	18-24	51.4
	Female	38		25-32	34.3
Occupation	Private sector	41.9		33-38	10.5
	Public sector	21		39-47	3.8
	Business	9.5	Marital status	Married	38
	Dependent	27.6		Unmarried	62
Educational qualification	Under graduation	56	Monthly Income (in Rs.)	20,000 to 40,000	30
	Post-graduation	40		41,000 to 60,000	41.9
	Professional studies	3		61,000 to 80,000	16
	Diploma	1		81,000 to 1,00,000	11
Monthly expenses (in Rs.)	5,000 to 15,000	19	Monthly savings (in Rs.)	1,000 to 10,000	40
	16,000 to 25,000	53		11,000 to 20,000	47
	26,000 to 35,000	21		21,000 to 30,000	18
	36,000 to 45,000	7	Community	Backward community	56
	45,000 to 55,000	1		Most Backward Community	27
Religion	Hindu	82		Scheduled Caste	15
	Muslim	9		Scheduled Tribes	2
	Christian	9			
	Others	0			

Source: Primary data, 2025

Findings revealed that about 62% of respondents were Male, 51.4% were between the age of 18-24, 41.9% worked in Private sector, 62% were Unmarried, 56% have completed under graduation, 41.90% earned between Rs.41,000/- to Rs.60,000/-, 53% spent between Rs.16,000/- to Rs.25,000/- a month, 45% saved between Rs.11,000/- to Rs.20,000/- a month, 56% belonged to Backward Community and 82% of the respondents followed Hinduism.

TABLE 2 - TRAVEL PLANS

Variables		%	Variables		%
Frequency of travel	Once	26	Visit within the district	Always	52.38
	2-3 times	55		Sometimes	29.52
	4-5 times	14		Once in a while	10.47
	Multiple times	5		Rarely	5.71
Travel companion	Family	48		Never	1.92
	Friends	30	Visit within the state	Always	29.52
	Individual	17		Sometimes	47.63
	Organized groups	5		Once in a while	15.23
Travel budget	5,000-10,000	42.85		Rarely	1.90
	11,000-15,000	18.09		Never	5.72
	16,000-20,000	17.14	Visit other states	Always	14.28
	20,000-25,000	9.52		Sometimes	19.04
	26,000-30,000	12.38		Once in a while	52.38
Mode of transport	Car	43		Rarely	12.38
	Bike	36		Never	1.90
	Bus	14	Visit abroad	Always	2.85
	Flight	7		Sometimes	4.76
				Once in a while	10.47
				Rarely	59.04
				Never	22.85

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Findings of travel plans reveal that about 55% of respondents travelled about 2-3 times a year, 48% of respondents travelled along with their Family members, 52.38% of respondents always liked to travel Within the district, 42.85% allocated separate budget for travel ranging between Rs.5,000/- to

Rs.10,000/- and 43% of respondents used Car as a mode of transport.

TABLE 3 - FACTORS INFLUENCING IN MAKING TRAVEL DECISION

Factors influencing in making travel decision		%	Factors influencing in making travel decision		%
Recommendations from influencers	Strongly agree	60	Friends and family	Strongly agree	48.5
	Agree	25		Agree	43
	Neutral	8.5		Neutral	6.7
	Disagree	3		Disagree	1
	Strongly disagree	4		Strongly disagree	1
Travel agencies	Strongly agree	3	Passion to travel	Strongly agree	25
	Agree	8.5		Agree	44
	Neutral	28		Neutral	23
	Disagree	28.5		Disagree	4
	Strongly disagree	32.3		Strongly disagree	5
Social media reviews and ratings	Strongly agree	26	Travel apps and mobile guides	Strongly agree	4
	Agree	37		Agree	5
	Neutral	15		Neutral	19
	Disagree	12		Disagree	30
	Strongly disagree	9		Strongly disagree	42
Celebrity endorsements or sponsorships	Strongly agree				3
	Agree				2
	Neutral				6.7
	Disagree				24
	Strongly disagree				65

Source: Primary data, 2025

"Recommendations from influencers like Tamil Arasan, Cherry Vlogs etc." were strongly agreed by 60% of the respondents as an influencing factor in making travel decision. "Friends and Family" were considered as influencing factor by 43% of the respondents. For "Travel agencies", respondents expressed neutrality (28%), "Social media reviews and rating" were agreed by 37% respondents, "Travel apps and mobile guides" were disagreed by 30% and "Celebrity endorsements and sponsorships" were strongly disagreed by 65% of the respondents.

TABLE 4 - TRAVEL INFLUENCERS

Travel influencers		%	Travel influencers		%
Trust factor of influencer's travel content	Personal experience and transparency	37.14	Type of content consumed	Short videos	29.5
	High follower counts and engagement	35.23		Long videos	35
	Sponsored partnerships with brands	8.58		Photos or captions	28
	Realistic and unbiased review	19.05		Live streams	7.5
Shift in changes in travel plans based on influencers' recommendation	Frequently	9.5	Importance of influencers recommendations	Very important	43.8
	Occasionally	44		Somewhat important	35.23
	Rarely	33		Neutral	0
	Not sure	9.5		Not very important	6.7
	Never	4		Least important	14.2
Benefits from travel influencers	Authentic and relatable content				14.28
	Visual storytelling				25.17
	Realtime updates and live contents				35.23

	Honest and unbiased reviews	14.28
	Personalised recommendations	10.4

Source: Primary data, 2025

Findings revealed that about 37.14% of respondents stated that personal experience and transparency was trust factor of influencer's travel content, 35% of the respondents watched "long videos" for travel contents, 44% of respondents "occasionally" made changes in the travel plans, 43.8% considered influencers recommendations as "very important" factor for travel motivation and 35.23% of respondents agreed that "Real time updates and live contents" as a benefit from social media influencers.

TABLE 5 – TRAVEL PRACTICES: AVERAGE SCORE RANKING

Purpose of travel	Average score	Rank	Accommodation preferred by respondents	Average score	Rank
Relaxation	1.65	I	Cottages	1.83	I
Creating memories with loved ones	2.81	II	Resorts	3.27	III
Experiencing new places	2.98	III	Lodges	2.66	II
Strengthening the relationships	4.18	V	Dormitory	3.62	IV
Love to travel	3.08	IV	Star Hotels	3.63	V
Social media platforms	Average score	Rank	Influencing factors for travel contents	Average score	Rank
Instagram	4.52	I	Visually appealing content	1.82	I
YouTube	3.88	II	Informative travel tips	2.20	II
Facebook	3.14	III	Authentic experiences	2.84	III
X/Twitter	2.13	IV	Relatability	3.43	IV
Reddit	1.37	V	Exclusive deals and offers	4.71	V

Source: Primary data, 2025

Results revealed that "Relaxation" was the main reason for traveling, "Cottages" were highly preferred for accommodation, "Instagram" was the most prioritised social media platforms and "Visually appealing content" was the most influencing factors for travel contents. It was found that Sense of urgency for popular destinations (28%) and Clear and detailed cost information (28.5%) was the main reason for preferring travel influencers. Realtime updates and live contents (35.23%) and Visual storytelling (25.17%) were the benefits of travel influencers. More honest and transparent reviews was highly expected by 62% of the respondents. Relationship between monthly family income and frequency of travel and social media reviews relationship between education and influence of social media reviews and ratings and travel apps and mobile guides was founded by using Chi- square test

TABLE 8 - RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND TRAVEL FACTORS: CHI SQUARE TEST

Variables	Chi square value	Difference of freedom	P-value	Inference
Monthly family income and Frequency of travel	105.269[a]	105	0.474	Accepted
Education and Social media reviews and ratings	30.603[a]	51	0.990	Accepted
Travel apps and mobile guides	54.326[a]	68	0.886	Accepted

Source: Calculated data, 2025

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between Monthly family income & Frequency of travel

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between Education & Social media reviews and ratings

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between Travel apps & mobile guides

Chi-square results (Table 8) revealed that since p-values are higher than the commonly accepted levels of .05 or .10, we cannot reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there is no significant relationship between Monthly family income and frequency of travel. Also, there is no significant relationship between

education and social media reviews and rating, and Travel apps and mobile guides

V. CONCLUSION

The study highlights a significant role of social media in influencing travel decisions, particularly among young travellers aged between 18-24. Instagram emerges as the dominant platform for tourism marketing, with visually appealing content playing a crucial role in shaping travel preferences. The findings indicate that influencers hold considerable sway over travel choices, with a strong preference for transparency and personal experiences in their recommendations. Overall, the study reinforces the importance of digital marketing strategies for travel businesses, emphasizing authenticity, influencer credibility, and visually engaging content. By aligning with consumer preferences, tourism marketers and influencers can enhance their impact and better cater to modern travellers' expectations.

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