The Role of Social Media Influencers in Shaping Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour Among Women

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***Abstract*—In the present world, the fashion industry is changing rapidly. The main reason is the increasing use of social media, and social media influencers play a major role in influencing individuals' buying decisions. This study examines how social media influencers shape impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women. Specifically, the study examines the relationship between social media influencers and impulsive fashion purchase behaviour and evaluates how influencer characteristics such as credibility, expertise, and attractiveness shape this behaviour. A quantitative research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from 154 women consumers in Mangaluru Taluk using a structured questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences through descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis.**

The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between social media influencers and impulsive fashion purchase behaviour. Regression analysis indicated that credibility was the only significant predictor of impulsive fashion purchase behaviour, while expertise and attractiveness did not have a significant influence. The study concludes that women are more likely to make impulsive fashion purchases when they perceive influencers as trustworthy and credible. The findings contribute to the existing literature on influencer marketing and consumer behaviour and provide practical implications for fashion brands and marketers in selecting credible influencers to promote fashion products effectively.

***Index Terms*—Social Media Influencers, Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour, Credibility, Expertise, Attractiveness, Women Consumers, Influencer Marketing.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The increasing growth of social media has changed the way of digital marketing, enabling brands to connect with consumers through interactive, personalized, and visually attractive information. Social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, etc., have become popular channels for promoting fashion products, where social media influencers play an important role in shaping consumer perceptions and buying decisions. Social media influencers build stronger and closer relationships with their followers by sharing their daily routine, reviewing products, and communicating with their followers, unlike traditional celebrities. This practice helps followers to believe their suggestions and can get advice and recommendations from them, especially when making buying decisions.

The fashion industry was among the first to adopt influencer marketing because of its visual appeal and the changing tastes and preferences of customers. Fashion labels regularly partner with social media influencers across various scales like macro, micro, and nano to display products, improve brand recognition, and encourage consumer involvement. These collaborations motivate consumers to find out the recent trends and make spontaneous buying decisions. Furthermore, merging content created by influencers with social media algorithms enhances product visibility and strengthens the emotional connection between brands and their customers.

An unplanned and immediate decision to buy fashion products without prior planning or detailed evaluation is known as impulsive fashion buying.

These purchases are influenced by emotions, limited-time offers, promotional offers, social pressure, etc. As followers trust influencers more, and based on their recommendations make unplanned fashion buying decisions. This is mainly because they consider influencers to be people, they can easily connect with rather than just advertisers.

Women are active consumers in the online fashion industry, continuously in touch with influencers, trends, promotions, and product demos. This constant exposure can increase impulsive fashion purchases, providing instant satisfaction but can also result in unwanted spending and after-purchase dissatisfaction. Previous research indicates that influencer marketing positively affects customers' buying decisions. However, fewer studies have focused particularly on how social media influencers increase impulsive fashion buying among women. Many studies have studied purchase intention, brand loyalty, and customer engagement. Therefore, more studies need to be conducted to understand how credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, and social media interaction influence women to make spontaneous fashion purchases.

The present study mainly aims to examine the influence of social media influencers on impulsive buying behaviour among women. It adds to existing research on digital marketing and consumer behaviour. The findings may also help marketers, influencers, and government organizations develop more effective and suitable influencer marketing strategies to influence consumer buying decisions.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Social Media Influencers and Consumer Purchase Behaviour

The research investigating the credibility of influencers was published by Djafarova and Rushworth (2017). They studied how Instagram influencers influence the buying behaviour of young women customers in the UK. By interviewing women in the age group of 18 and 30, the research revealed that female customers considered social media influencers as authentic and trustworthy, unlike traditional celebrities.

Sokolova and Kefi (2020) highlighted how trustworthiness and emotional connection with beauty influencers on Instagram and YouTube influence consumers' desire to buy the products. Their survey found that trust and emotional bond with the influencers increased willingness of customers to buy the fashion products. Physical attractiveness alone did not have a strong effect on purchase intention, proving that the emotional connection and loyalty play a major role rather than appearance.

Chetioui et al. (2020) examined the impact of fashion influencers on consumers' purchase intention. The findings revealed that influencer credibility, expertise, and trust significantly improved consumers' attitudes toward fashion brands, which increased their purchase intention. The research highlighted that influencer marketing fosters stronger customer involvement than traditional advertising methods because consumers view influencers as knowledgeable and authentic product users rather than promotional entities.

2.2 Social Media Influencers and Impulsive Buying Behaviour

The association between impulsive buying and influencer marketing has gained a lot of attention from researchers. Djafarova and Bowes (2021) studied the influence of Instagram marketing on impulsive buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers in the fashion sector. They used focus groups and the S-O-R framework to find that advertising and influencer endorsements stimulated positive emotional responses that provoked buying behaviour. The research also highlighted that Instagram had a substantially greater influence on female consumers than male consumers; hence, they are more likely to buy when influenced through this platform.

Furthermore, Abbas et al. (2024) investigated how social media influencers drive impulsive purchasing within social commerce platforms. Using structural equation modelling, the authors found that influencer credibility, trust, fear of missing out, and emotional attachment significantly increased consumers' urge to make impulsive purchases. The study also highlighted that the emotional bond followers feel with influencers acts as a bridge between influencer communication and impulse buying behavior.

2.3 Systematic Reviews on Influencer Marketing

In response to the rapid expansion of influencer-led marketing research, Vrontis et al. (2021) carried out a systematic review synthesizing more than 150 studies

on social media influencer marketing. The review found that attributes such as influencer credibility, authenticity, expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness are the most commonly investigated variables affecting consumer behaviour. The researchers also pointed out that the majority of existing studies concentrated on purchase intention and brand attitude, while very few studied actual purchase behaviour or impulsive buying. Consequently, they suggested that future studies focus on behavioral consequences and newly developing digital channels.

Similarly, Hudders, De Jans, and De Veirman (2021) reviewed the commercialization of social media influencers and revealed that the majority of existing research concentrated on advertising effectiveness and sponsored content disclosure. Their conceptual framework highlighted that instead of limiting research to purchase intention alone, further research should study psychological outcomes, ethical concerns, consumer well-being, and long-term behavioural consequences of influencer marketing rather than limiting investigations to purchase intention alone.

Recently, Sardar et al. (2025) synthesized contemporary studies on influencer marketing and purchase intention. They determined that influencer authenticity, trustworthiness, expertise, and consumer engagement consistently predicted favourable buying outcomes.
However, they emphasized that limited evidence exists regarding impulsive buying behaviour, especially among women consumers in emerging economies. The review advocated for further empirical studies integrating both psychological and demographic variables into influencer marketing research.

2.4 Research Gap
The prior studies indicate that social media influencers play a major role in influencing consumers' buying decisions by building trust, demonstrating expertise, and emotional engagement.

However, there are still a few areas that need more research. The studies mainly focus on purchase intention, brand loyalty, and customer engagement, while very few examine impulsive purchase behaviour, especially in the fashion sector. Although women are one of the largest consumer groups in online fashion shopping, limited studies explore how the characteristics of social media influencers shape impulsive buying behaviour among women.

Most of the existing studies are carried out in developed countries, with very little study is conducted in the Indian context. Therefore, the present research aims to study these gaps by examining the role of social media influencers in shaping impulsive fashion buying behaviour among women in the Indian context, thereby contributing to a better understanding of digital marketing and consumer behaviour.

III. OBJECTIVES

1) To examine the relationship between social media influencers and impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women.
2) To identify the key influencer characteristics that stimulate impulsive fashion purchases among women.
3) To evaluate the impact of influencer marketing on women's impulsive fashion purchase behaviour.

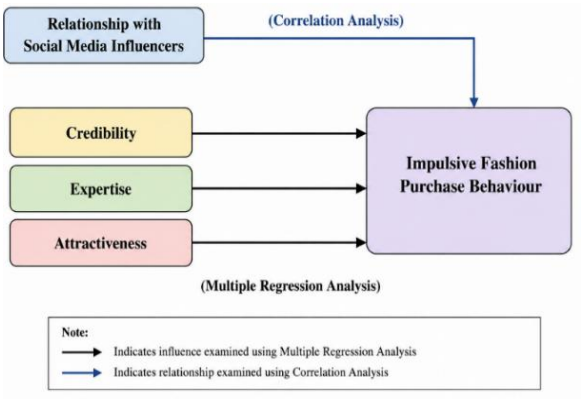
IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present research is based on the Source Credibility Theory proposed by Hovland and Weiss (1951). The theory states that the effectiveness of a message depends on the credibility of the person delivering it. Consumers are more likely to trust and accept information from a source that is perceived as credible, knowledgeable (expert), and attractive.

In the social media era, influencers give information about fashion products and share their experiences with followers. Consumers are more likely to believe recommendations when influencers are considered knowledgeable, attractive, and trustworthy, which leads to impulsive fashion buying.

Thus, the Source Credibility Theory supports this research by explaining that the credibility, expertise, and attractiveness of social media influencers can build trust and influence women to buy fashion items impulsively.

V. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Relationship with Social Media Influencers and Impulsive Fashion Buying Behaviour

Social media influencers play a vital role in providing fashion information and motivation. Regular interaction with social media influencers exposes consumers to product recommendations, fashion trends, and promotions, which results in unplanned purchases. Prior research highlights that more interaction with influencers can increase the buying interest of consumers and encourage unplanned buying (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between relationship with social media influencers and impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women.

Credibility and Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour

As per the Source Credibility Theory (Hovland & Weiss, 1951), individuals trust and follow recommendations from sources they perceive as trustworthy. In influencer marketing, credibility mainly refers to the extent to which consumers believe an influencer is honest, trustworthy, and provides reliable information.

Consumers' confidence in these recommendations usually enhances when they consider the influencer as credible, therefore increasing the likelihood of impulsive purchases (Ohanian, 1990; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

H2: Credibility positively influences impulsive fashion buying behaviour among women.

Expertise and Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour

Expertise means the knowledge and experience the influencers have relating to fashion products. Customers' buying decisions are strengthened mainly because of these influencers' professional knowledge and experience. Prior research shows that consumers' attitudes and buying habits are positively affected by the influencer's knowledge (Ohanian, 1990; Ki & Kim, 2019).

H3: Expertise positively influences impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women.

Attractiveness and Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour

Attractiveness refers to the appearance, style, and appeal of influencers. Influencers who are attractive can capture customers' attention easily and can also increase interest in fashion items. This can lead to impulsive purchases. Previous studies indicate that influencer attractiveness influences purchase intention and consumer behaviour (Ohanian, 1990; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

H4: Attractiveness positively influences impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a quantitative research approach to examine the role of social media influencers in shaping impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women.

Population and Sample:

The target population under investigation is the women customers in the Mangaluru taluk of Karnataka State. In this survey, data were collected from 150 women (N=150).

Data Collection:

Both raw and secondary data were used in this study. Primary data were collected from samples using a questionnaire, and existing data were obtained from published sources such as websites, journals, and articles.

Instrument Design:

The questionnaire was developed based on previously validated scales from existing literature, with suitable modifications to align with the objectives of the present study. The questionnaire consisted of two sections:

Section A: Demographic Profile of Respondents
Section B: Statements measuring key constructs.
All the statements were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, varying from 1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree
Variables of the Study:

Study Variables:
- Relationship/Influence of Social Media Influencers
- Credibility
- Expertise
- Attractiveness
- Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour

Reliability:
To ensure the accuracy of the statements, Cronbach's Alpha was computed for all the constructs. This study reflected high internal consistency as all the values exceeded the threshold of 0.70.

Data Analysis Tools:
The collected data were examined using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The following tools were used in the study:
- Descriptive Statistics (Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation) – to describe the demographic profile of respondents and summarize the study variables.
- Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) – to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales.
- Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to examine the relationship between Relationship with Social Media Influencers and Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour.
- Multiple Regression Analysis was used to identify the influence of Credibility, Expertise, and Attractiveness on Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour.

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

TABLE 4.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age	Below 18	11	7.1
	18–25	112	72.7
	26–35	17	11.0
	36–45	13	8.4
	Above 45	1	0.6
Educational Qualification	PUC	14	9.1
	Undergraduate	99	64.3
	Postgraduate	41	26.6
Occupation	Student	109	70.8
	Private Employee	42	27.3
	Homemaker	1	0.6
	Self-employed	1	0.6
	Tuition Teacher	1	0.6
Monthly Family Income	Below ₹20,000	22	14.3
	₹20,001–₹40,000	32	20.8
	₹40,001–₹60,000	42	27.3
	₹60,001–₹80,000	37	24.0
	Above ₹80,000	21	13.6
Frequency of Fashion Purchase	Never	1	0.6
	Rarely	24	15.6
	Occasionally	58	37.7
	Frequently	64	41.6
	Very Frequently	7	4.5

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation
Table 4.1 presents the demographic profile of the 154 respondents. A majority of the respondents (72.7%) belonged to the 18–25 years age group, indicating that the study mainly represents young adults. With regard to educational qualification, 64.3% were undergraduates, followed by postgraduates (26.6%) and PUC holders (9.1%). In terms of occupation, 70.8% were students, while 27.3% were private employees, with only a few respondents belonging to other occupational categories.
Regarding monthly family income, the largest group (27.3%) reported an income between ₹40,001 and ₹60,000, followed by ₹60,001–₹80,000 (24.0%).

Concerning purchasing behaviour, 41.6% of respondents reported purchasing fashion products frequently, while 37.7% purchased them occasionally, indicating active engagement in fashion-related purchases.

TABLE 4.2: Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Relationship between Social Media Influencers and Fashion Purchase Behaviour	5	0.892	Excellent
Credibility	3	0.723	Acceptable
Expertise	3	0.782	Good
Attractiveness	3	0.796	Good
Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour	6	0.891	Excellent

Interpretation

Table 4.2 presents the reliability statistics of the study constructs. The Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.723 to 0.892, showing that all the variables under study were reliable.

The highest reliability was found for the Relationship between Social Media Influencers and Fashion Purchase Behaviour ($\alpha = 0.892$), followed by the Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour ($\alpha = 0.891$). Expertise ($\alpha = 0.782$) and Attractiveness ($\alpha = 0.796$) showed good reliability, while Credibility ($\alpha = 0.723$) had acceptable reliability. Since all the values were above 0.70, the questionnaire was considered reliable for further analysis.

TABLE 4.3: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Relationship	3.234	0.879
Credibility	3.212	0.767
Expertise	3.372	0.734
Attractiveness	3.465	0.790
Impulsive Buying	2.814	0.881

Interpretation

Table 4.3 shows the descriptive statistics of the study variables. Out of all the variables, Attractiveness resulted in the highest mean score of 3.465, showing that respondents considered fashion influencers to be attractive and stylish. Expertise (M = 3.372) also resulted in a high mean, showing that respondents considered influencers to have good fashion knowledge. The relationship between social media influencers and fashion purchase behaviour (M = 3.234) and Credibility (M = 3.212) showed moderate agreement among respondents. Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour had the lowest mean score of 2.814, resulting in a moderate level of impulsive buying behaviour.

TABLE 4.4: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Relationship	1				
2. Credibility	0.683**	1			
3. Expertise	0.691**	0.716**	1		
4. Attractiveness	0.644**	0.654**	0.673**	1	
5. Impulsive Buying	0.517**	0.606**	0.431**	0.402**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$

Interpretation

Table 4.4 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients among the study variables. The findings reveal that all independent variables are positively and significantly correlated with one another as well as with impulsive fashion purchase behaviour ($p < 0.01$). Among the independent variables, Credibility and Expertise exhibited the strongest positive relationship ($r = 0.716$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that respondents who perceived fashion influencers as highly credible also tended to perceive them as knowledgeable and competent. Similarly, Relationship showed strong positive correlations with Expertise ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$), Credibility ($r = 0.683$, $p < 0.01$), and Attractiveness ($r = 0.644$, $p < 0.01$).

Furthermore, Expertise and Attractiveness were also positively associated ($r = 0.673$, $p < 0.01$), while Credibility and Attractiveness demonstrated a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.654$, $p < 0.01$).

With respect to the dependent variable, Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour was found to have a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with all four predictor variables. The strongest relationship was observed between Credibility and Impulsive Fashion Purchase Behaviour ($r = 0.606$, $p < 0.01$), followed by Relationship ($r = 0.517$, $p < 0.01$), Expertise ($r = 0.431$, $p < 0.01$), and Attractiveness ($r = 0.402$, $p < 0.01$). These results indicate that an increase in the level of credibility, expertise, attractiveness, and their relationship with influencers leads to an increase in unplanned fashion purchase behaviour.

The correlation analysis showed that all influencer-related factors had a positive relationship with impulsive fashion buying behaviour. However, it only shows that the factors are related and does not identify which factors are actually influencing impulsive buying. Therefore, to find out which characteristics influence impulsive fashion purchasing behaviour, regression was carried out.

TABLE 4.5: Model Summary

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error
0.606	0.367	0.354	*(From SPSS output)*

Interpretation

The R value 0.606 shows a moderate positive association between influencer credibility, expertise, attractiveness, and impulsive fashion purchase behaviour. The R^2 value of 0.367 means that these three factors together explain 36.7% of the changes in impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women. This shows that credibility, expertise, and attractiveness strongly influence women's impulsive fashion purchases. The remaining 63.3% of the changes are affected by some other factors that were not included in the present research.

TABLE 4.6: Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.	Conclusion
Credibility	0.694	0.604	6.125	0.000	Significant
Expertise	-0.013	-0.011	-0.111	0.911	Not Significant
Attractiveness	0.016	0.015	0.157	0.876	Not Significant

Interpretation

Table 4.6 presents the regression coefficients of the predictor variables. The results highlight that credibility has a significant positive influence on impulsive fashion purchase behaviour ($\beta = 0.604$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that customers who perceive social media influencers as more credible are more likely to exhibit impulsive fashion purchase behaviour. In contrast, expertise ($\beta = -0.011$, $p = 0.911$) and attractiveness ($\beta = 0.015$, $p = 0.876$) did not significantly influence impulsive fashion purchase behaviour, as their significance values were greater than 0.05. Therefore, credibility was observed as the only significant predictor of impulsive fashion purchase behaviour in the present study.

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Relationship with social media influencers is positively related to impulsive fashion purchase behaviour.	Supported
H2	Credibility positively influences impulsive fashion purchase behaviour.	Supported
H3	Expertise positively influences impulsive fashion purchase behaviour.	Not Supported
H4	Attractiveness positively influences impulsive fashion purchase behaviour.	Not Supported

DISCUSSION

The findings show that social media influencers play a vital role in shaping women's impulsive fashion buying behaviour. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between social media influencers and impulsive fashion purchase behaviour among women. However, multiple regression analysis proved that credibility was the only significant predictor, while expertise and attractiveness did not significantly influence impulsive buying. The findings show that, from the influence of trustworthy influencers, women tend to buy fashion products spontaneously.

VIII CONCLUSION

The survey concludes that women's impulsive fashion-buying behaviour is primarily influenced by social media influencers. All the influencer characteristics

had a positive relationship with impulsive buying behaviour. Among all, credibility significantly influenced the impulsive buying behaviour of women. It is mainly because of the influence of credible and dependable influencers that women tend to buy fashion items impulsively. To market their products, companies and fashion brands can make best use of these findings in selecting trustworthy influencers.

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