# FACTORS INFLUENCING INFLUENCER MARKETING IN SHAPING FMCG PURCHASE DECISIONS AMONG URBAN CONSUMERS

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**Abstract:** The emergence of social media platforms has profoundly transformed the marketing landscape for Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) brands, positioning influencer marketing as an essential promotional strategy. This study investigates the factors that affect influencer marketing in shaping the purchase decisions of consumers regarding fast-moving consumer goods in Chennai. The process of purchasing FMCG involves a systematic approach characterised by five distinct stages: the recognition of needs, the search for information, the evaluation of alternatives, the decision to purchase, and the subsequent behaviour following the purchase. This study is categorised as descriptive, with a total of 154 respondents participating in the survey conducted in Chennai. The respondents are selected using the convenience sampling method. The study instrument utilised is a questionnaire. The application of exploratory factor analysis serves to identify the various factors that influence influencer marketing and its role in shaping the purchasing decisions of consumers within the FMCG sector. The calculated value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.841. The data analysis is performed using SPSS version 26. The factors that influence the effectiveness of influencer marketing on consumer purchasing decisions regarding fast-moving consumer goods include attractiveness, expertise, content quality, engagement and authenticity. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on consumer behaviour by integrating aspects of influencer marketing into the decision-making framework specific to the fast-moving consumer goods sector. This research outlines the managerial implications, emphasising strategies for fast-moving consumer goods brands to forge influencer partnerships that bolster trust, engagement, and purchase loyalty within urban Indian consumer segments.

**Keywords:** *Influencer marketing, FMCG, consumer decision-making, social media. Chennai, brand trust, purchase behaviour*

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## I.INTRODUCTION:

The fast-moving consumer goods sector demonstrates a high level of competition, marked by regular consumer purchasing patterns, tendencies for brand-switching, and abbreviated product life spans. Conventional advertising mediums, such as television and print, are witnessing a reduction in their prominence as consumers progressively rely on digital platforms for the exploration and evaluation of brands. Social media influencers serve as effective intermediaries that merge entertainment with brand communication, thereby shaping consumer perceptions and behaviour. India boasts a substantial population of over 820 million internet users, coupled with a rapid rise in smartphone adoption. This trend renders urban markets, such as Chennai, particularly favourable for the implementation of influencer-driven marketing strategies (IAMAI, 2024). Influencers serve as a bridge between brands and consumers by providing genuine and relatable content that corresponds with the everyday consumption behaviours associated with fast-moving consumer goods. Despite its importance, there is a lack of empirical studies examining the factors that affect Influencer marketing in FMCG purchases within metropolitan India. This research aims to fill the identified gap by conducting an empirical analysis of the impact that influencers have on consumer decision-making processes related to fast-moving consumer goods in Chennai.

The fast-moving consumer goods sector in India plays a crucial role in shaping consumer expenditure, driven by factors such as swift urbanisation, rising disposable incomes, and improved internet accessibility (PwC, 2023). In Chennai, a metropolitan centre marked by a varied consumer demographic, the factors influencing purchasing decisions are progressively shaped by interactions with digital media. The role of influencer marketing in the positioning of FMCG brands is substantial, as it serves to humanise brand messaging.

## EVOLUTION OF INFLUENCER MARKETING IN INDIA

The evolution of influencer marketing over the past decade is noteworthy, as it has shifted from traditional celebrity endorsements to the engagement of micro- and nano-influencers who specifically target niche audiences (Kapoor & Dwivedi, 2020). Companies like Hindustan Unilever, ITC, and Nestlé have used Instagram and YouTube influencers in their marketing to reach young people in cities. In Chennai, there is a notable trend among consumers, particularly within the Gen Z and millennial demographics, who engage with short-form video content and rely on peer-like influencers for the discovery of products (KPMG, 2024).

## Consumer Decision-Making in FMCG

The fast-moving consumer goods sector often characterises consumer decision-making as a swift process, linked to the affordability and frequent occurrence of these transactions. Digital exposure, particularly through influencer content, significantly enhances the process by facilitating the following:

➢ The demonstration of lifestyle requirements by influencers, which aids in the recognition of needs.

➢ Information retrieval encompasses evaluations, instructional materials, and comparisons.

➢ The evaluation of alternatives includes peer endorsements and product testing videos.

➢ Purchase Decisions: discount codes and influencer

promotions.

➢ The behaviour exhibited by consumers after a purchase includes the provision of feedback, the writing of reviews, and the probability of making subsequent purchases.

The strategies employed by influencers have the potential to influence multiple touchpoints throughout the consumer journey (Kotler & Keller, 2016), such as increasing brand awareness, shaping consumer perceptions, and driving engagement with products.

**Relevance of Influencer Attributes**

Research identifies several influencer attributes that influence consumers' FMCG purchase decisions:

* **Attractiveness:** Refers to the influencer's physical appeal, personality, and lifestyle that make them appealing to followers.

* **Expertise:** Represents the influencer's knowledge and ability to provide reliable information about promoted products.

* **Content Quality:** Refers to the creativity, clarity, and visual appeal of the influencer's content shared on social media.

* **Engagement:** Indicates the level of interaction between influencers and their followers through likes, comments, and shares.

* **Authenticity:** Reflects the extent to which influencers are perceived as genuine and honest in their product recommendations.

The combined influence of these attributes shapes consumer perceptions and affects the effectiveness of influencer marketing in influencing FMCG purchase decisions (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Jin et al., 2019).

**Urban Consumer Behaviour in Chennai**

In urban Chennai, consumers exhibit unique characteristics, such as extensive smartphone usage, a pronounced preference for Instagram reels and YouTube shorts, and a notable trust in content produced by local language influencers in both Tamil and English. While exhibiting sensitivity to pricing, they concurrently maintain an awareness of brand image. The interplay of cultural and demographic factors positions Chennai as a compelling context for examining the influence of marketing on consumer purchasing behaviours within the FMCG sector. While various international studies have established connections between influencer marketing and sectors such as fashion, luxury, and technology, there is a notable lack of empirical evidence that specifically examines the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer decision-making in the FMCG sector within India (Sharma & Verma, 2022). This study investigates the gap by analysing consumers in urban Chennai, a demographic that represents a swiftly growing and digitally

active portion of the FMCG market.

## II.LITERATURE REVIEW

Lim (2025) examined the increasing commercialisation of influencer marketing on social media platforms and its impact on consumer responses to sponsored content. The research underscored the potential adverse effects of excessive promotional activities conducted by influencers on followers' perceptions of authenticity, as well as the possible weakening of the parasocial relationships established between influencers and their audiences. The results indicated that an excessive commercialisation of influencer content could lead followers to view endorsements as less authentic, potentially diminishing consumer trust and engagement with the brands being promoted. The research highlighted the importance of preserving authenticity and achieving a balanced integration of promotional and non-promotional content. This balance is crucial for fostering robust influencer-follower relationships and improving consumers' intentions to purchase endorsed products. Liu et al. (2024) conducted a study examining the influence of social media influencers on brand credibility and the intention of consumers to make purchases. The study employed the Elaboration Likelihood Model to examine the influence of influencer characteristics and message quality on consumer perceptions of brands. The analysis of survey data collected from social media users revealed that factors such as authenticity, homophily, and the provision of informative content significantly enhance the parasocial relationships that exist between influencers and their followers. The established relationships contribute to the enhancement of brand credibility, which in turn leads to an increase in consumers' intention to purchase the products that are recommended. The findings suggest that influencer marketing is integral to contemporary digital advertising, as it enhances consumer trust and positively influences brand assessments. Zhou (2024) conducted an analysis on the dynamics of parasocial interactions and the relationships that develop between Instagram influencers and their followers. This research examined the impact of influencer-generated content and interaction dynamics on the perceptions and behavioural intentions of followers. Through empirical analysis of social media data, the results indicated that more robust parasocial relationships between influencers and their followers contribute to heightened brand trust and a notable increase in consumers' intentions to purchase recommended products. Sharkasi and Rezakhah (2023) investigated the impact of social media influencer credibility on consumers' purchase intentions, focusing on the mediating effect of parasocial relationships. The research involved the collection of survey data from consumers located in Europe and Southeast Asia, utilising structural equation modelling and machine learning techniques for data analysis. The results indicated that the expertise and trustworthiness of influencers are key factors that determine purchase intentions, mediated by parasocial relationships and the perceived alignment between the brand and the influencer. Hudders, De Jans, and De Veirman (2021) investigated the

increasing significance of influencer marketing as a compelling communication tactic within digital contexts. This research examined the impact of influencer credibility, authenticity, and expertise on consumer attitudes regarding sponsored content on social media platforms. Through the analysis of empirical evidence and prior marketing studies, the findings indicate that influencers exhibiting authenticity and product expertise tend to foster greater consumer trust and more favourable brand perceptions. The research findings indicate that influencers serve as critical intermediaries connecting brands with consumers, offering credible and engaging product information that notably impacts purchase intentions. Audrezet, Kerviler, and Moulard (2020) examined the concept of authenticity in influencer marketing, emphasising its impact on consumer trust and brand perception. The research examined the ways in which followers understand influencer endorsements and the impact of perceived authenticity on consumer reactions to marketed products. The results indicate that clear and authentic communication from influencers significantly boosts consumer trust and amplifies the efficacy of influencer marketing initiatives. Consumers tend to acquire products endorsed by influencers they perceive as genuine and trustworthy. Schouten, Janssen, and Verspaget (2020) conducted an analysis on the comparative effectiveness of social media influencers versus traditional celebrity endorsers in shaping consumer attitudes and intentions to purchase. The research utilised an experimental design to investigate the impact of influencer relatability and authenticity on consumer reactions to brand endorsements. The results indicated that influencers exhibiting relatability and authenticity foster deeper emotional connections with their followers, subsequently enhancing brand attitudes and consumer purchase intentions. The research showed that social media influencers often receive higher credibility than traditional celebrity endorsers.

### III.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research aims to examine the factors that affect influencer marketing and its role in shaping the purchasing decisions of consumers regarding FMCG in Chennai. This research is categorised as descriptive, with a total of 154 respondents participating in the survey conducted in Chennai. The respondents are selected using a convenience sampling method. The questionnaire consists of two sections: the first section includes demographic information, while the second section contains scales pertinent to influencer marketing. Exploratory factor analysis is utilised to discern the factors that impact influencer marketing in shaping the purchasing decisions of consumers regarding fast-moving consumer goods. The estimation of study reliability is achieved through the application of Cronbach's alpha. The analysis of data is conducted utilising SPSS version 26.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The reliability of the study is limited to 84.1% (Cronbach's alpha = 0.841). A total of 56.1% of the participants in the study identify as male, whereas 43.9% identify as female. A total of 46.7% of participants reported having completed their undergraduate education, while 33.9% indicated that they hold a postgraduate degree. A minor segment of 10.5% has attained education at the school level, whereas 8.9% falls under the category of "others." The analysis of marital status indicates that 65.5% of the population is classified as unmarried, while 34.5% is identified as married. In the analysed population, 40.9% engaged in salaried employment, while 39.6% identified as students. A smaller proportion consists of self-employed individuals or business owners at 8.3%, while homemakers and others represent 4.5% and 6.7%, respectively. Additionally, 36.7% report an income of less than ₹5 lakhs, and 26.5% indicate no income. 24.2% of individuals are categorised within the ₹5–10 lakh income bracket, while 12.6% report annual earnings of ₹10 lakh or greater.

### Factors influencing Influencer marketing

The process of data reduction is crucial for ensuring that the research comprehensively incorporates all standard characteristics of the variables discussed in this study. The data reduction procedure accurately encapsulates variables via dominant factors, underpinned by suitable mathematical frameworks. In the field of social science research, the identification of a research gap generates a range of variables for analysis, which are systematically expressed through a meticulously designed interview schedule. The studies on perception are contingent upon the responses gathered from participants utilising 5-point Likert scales. The allocation of numerical values in 5-point Likert scales for each variable results in the emergence of covariances among variables within the same domain. The covariances and coefficients of correlation function as essential statistical parameters for the classification of potential variables aimed at developing a novel factor. This objective is achieved through the application of Factor Analysis utilising the Principal Component Method. This methodology consolidates various variables into principal factors, where each factor encompasses related variables that demonstrate the highest covariance and correlation values.

This section examines the influence of marketing strategies employed by social media personalities on the purchasing behaviours of fast-moving consumer goods among urban populations in Chennai. The evaluation of influencer marketing is conducted through the analysis of 21 distinct items. Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was employed to categorise the data into distinct factors, informed by the responses of the chosen participants. The KMO measure of 0.833 suggests that the sample size is adequate, while Bartlett's test of sphericity produces a Chi-square value of 389.485 (p=.000), indicating statistical significance. The findings pertaining to the factors influencing influencer marketing are illustrated in Table I.

### Table-I: Eigen values for Influencer marketing

| Factor | Eigen value | Variance explained (%) | Cumulative variance explained (%) |
|--------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | 10.332 | 32.632 | 32.632 |
| 2 | 1.695 | 11.895 | 44.527 |
| 3 | 1.444 | 10.426 | 54.953 |
| 4 | 1.206 | 8.441 | 63.394 |
| 5 | 1.148 | 7.921 | 71.315 |

*Note: Eigen value >1*

A total of 21 items has been condensed into 5 distinct factors through an analysis of the associations among the items. This reduction is substantiated by the Eigenvalues of 10.332, 1.695, 1.444, 1.206, and 1.148, all of which exceed the threshold of 1. The five factors accounted for 32.632%, 11.895%, 10.426%, 8.441%, and 7.921% of the total variance. This analysis condenses 21 items into 5 factors, which account for a significant portion of the original data. The analysis of the cumulative percentage column indicates that the five factors accounted for 71.315% of the total variance observed. The five factors, along with their respective components, are presented in Table II.

**Table-II: Factor scores of Influencer marketing**

| Factor | Component | Score |
|--------|-----------|-------|
| **Attractiveness** | The influencer is physically appealing | .728 |
| | I think they are chic and up to date | .611 |
| | I think I might be friends with this person | .592 |
| | They are memorable because of their appearance | .524 |
| **Expertise** | The influencer knows a lot about the things they recommend | .799 |
| | The influencer seems to be an authority in their profession | .731 |
| | They exhibit a thorough understanding of the product | .652 |
| | They have the potential to work as a product consultant | .589 |
| **Content Quality** | The influencer produces excellent, well-written pieces | .802 |
| | The influencer produces recognisable and consistent material | .711 |
| | Their content follows current trends | .636 |
| | I like the storytelling they employ | .542 |
| | The influencer works hard to edit and present articles | .509 |
| **Engagement** | Feel like I'm a part of a community because the influencer frequently answers comments | .721 |
| | I speak with the influencer directly or through their content, and when they share personal anecdotes | .689 |
| | I feel emotionally attached | .601 |
| | The influencer starts a meaningful dialogue in both directions | .547 |
| **Authenticity** | The influencer is perceived as sincere and real | .689 |
| | Their endorsements are consistent with who they are | .612 |
| | Rather than being unduly commercial, the influencer's messages sound genuine | .578 |
| | The information is based on actual experiences rather than prefabricated assertions | .516 |

*Note: Factor scores >0.5*

According to Table II, "Factor-1" comprises four items: "The influencer is physically appealing", "They are chic and up-to-date", "I could be friends with this person", and "They are memorable because of their appearance." This factor has been designated as "Attractiveness".

"Factor-2" comprises four components: "The influencer possesses extensive knowledge regarding the items they endorse"; "The influencer appears to hold authority within their field"; "They demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the product"; and "They have the capability to function as a product consultant." This construct is designated as "Expertise".

"Factor-3" comprises five distinct items: "The influencer produces excellent, well-written pieces." "The influencer produces recognisable and consistent material." "Their content follows current trends." "I appreciate the storytelling they employ" and "The influencer diligently edits and presents articles." This collective is designated as "Content Quality".

"Factor-4" comprises four components: "Feeling a sense of community due to the influencer's frequent responses to comments", "Engaging in direct communication with the influencer or through their content, particularly when they share personal stories", "Experiencing emotional attachment", and "The influencer initiating a meaningful two-way dialogue". This collective is referred to as "Engagement".

"Factor-5" comprises four components: "The influencer is perceived as sincere and real". "Their endorsements align with their true identity." "The influencer's messages convey a sense of genuineness rather than excessive commercialism," and "The information is derived from real experiences instead of fabricated claims." This collective is referred to as "Authenticity".

The factors that influence the effectiveness of influencer marketing on consumer purchasing decisions regarding fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) include attractiveness, expertise, content, quality, engagement, and authenticity. The following factors are critical in the context of influencer marketing and its impact on FMCG purchase decisions: the physical attractiveness of the influencer; the influencer's expertise regarding the products they endorse; the quality and coherence of the influencer's content; the sense of community fostered by the influencer's engagement with their audience; and the perception of the influencer as authentic and genuine.

## IV.CONCLUSION

This study examines the factors that influence the impact of influencer marketing on the purchasing decisions of urban consumers in Chennai, with particular reference to the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. The findings indicate that social media influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer behaviour by increasing brand visibility and building trust, particularly among younger consumers. Influencers act as effective communication channels for brands, enabling the dissemination of product information in an engaging and relatable manner, which ultimately enhances consumer interest and purchase intentions (Vijaya Deepika & Pranev, 2024; Praveen Kumar, Rajalakshmi, & Ganesh, 2024). The study also highlights the importance of aligning influencer content with consumer lifestyles and preferences in order to improve audience engagement and marketing effectiveness.

The results of the factor analysis reveal five key dimensions that significantly influence the effectiveness of influencer marketing in shaping FMCG purchase decisions: Attractiveness, Expertise, Content Quality, Engagement, and Authenticity. Attractiveness refers to the influencer's physical appeal and overall presentation, which helps capture consumer attention. Expertise represents the influencer's knowledge and authority regarding the products they promote. Content quality relates to the influencer's ability to produce informative, engaging, and well-structured content that effectively communicates product benefits. Engagement reflects the interactive relationship between influencers and their followers, including responding to comments and creating a sense of community. Authenticity refers to the extent to which influencers are perceived as genuine and trustworthy in their product endorsements, often based on personal experience.

In conclusion, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful strategy for FMCG brands seeking to engage urban consumers in Chennai. By leveraging the attractiveness, expertise, authenticity, and engagement capabilities of influencers, brands can enhance consumer awareness, strengthen brand trust, and positively influence purchase decisions. Future research may further explore the long-term impact of influencer marketing on brand equity, customer loyalty, and sustained purchasing behaviour within the FMCG sector.

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