**1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, Consumer buys good and services on the basis of recommendations of the people they trust. The influencers and the celebrities are the ones who initiate the feeling of trust in the people following them, due to which many consumers watching the lifestyle of these influencers try to adopt the habits in their routine but they forget about their living standard, their own choices and their basic necessities that is on top of their priority list. Before studying the part of social media influencers on consumer and the choices they make in the online environment, it is important to understand the types of to select the right influencers for product placement. Social media influencers can be classified in many ways.

The typology of social media influencers (https://grin.co/blog/types-of-social-mediainfluencers/). Bloggers and Vloggers: They are the individuals who practice their text related content to circulate their blog frequently. They are dynamic on innumerable platforms of social media to endorse their content. Vloggers share their information in the form of video. To advertise the content platforms like YouTube and Instagram are used by them.

Social networking sites have developed more than just being a communication channels used by individual consumers to create content, allot materials, share ideas, express views. These sites have resulted in authority shift between consumers and more product owners and through these influencers, a vast generation of information has been evolved. The study suggested the importance of clearly understanding the usage of mobile devices and the social networking sites in ways they access and use it. The objective of this study was to examine the role of social media influencers on consumer buying behavior.

**1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Nowadays, Consumer buys good and services on the basis of recommendations of the people they trust. However, in Indian context, every individual doesn’t follow social media influencers on different social media platforms. And due to trust issues, it is not easy for social media influencers to influence the users. Although social media influencers are gaining the acceptance and popularity in online purchase, still there is a need to analyze which factors makes them an impactful influencer.

**1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Social media was introduced to digitally connect people who otherwise may not be having chance to have continuous meeting and interaction. From Six degrees to Facebook, the world changed in the way people connect and socialize. Social media as an industry has grown that not only provides people the ability to connect but are now providing jobs opportunities that were never imagined. From content writer to influencers, social media has given opportunity to earn name, fame and money and act as a platform for online shopping as well. One of the social media marketing form is Influencing where an individual having master knowledge of their field of their field uses it to promote the brand and product of others. The purpose of this study was to examine how social media influencer impact buying behavior of customers.

**1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

* To analyses influence of social media channels on buying behaviour of consumers.
* To identify the factors that motivate consumers to shop through social media platforms.
* To know the consumer’s perception towards social media advertisement
* To know the level of satisfaction on purchase influenced by social media advertisement.

**1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study is focused on social media influencers that influences the purchase behavior of the consumers. The factors that influence its usage in online purchase have been identified. However, the scope of the study is limited to customers OF Kannur area and only 100 respondents were considered, which may not be a representative of the large population size of online shoppers in India.

**1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology is a process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making decisions. The methodology may include publication research, interviews, surveys and other research techniques.

**Data Collection**

The data is collected from both primary and secondary sources.

**Primary Data**

The source of primary data is through questionnaire based on the objectives.

**Secondary Data**

The secondary data were collected from books, journals, websites and other published sources.

**Sample Design**

A self- designed questionnaire was developed and given to general public. The questionnaire is related to impact of social media on consumer behavior.

**Sample Population**

The population of the study is general public.

**Sample Size**

The sample size of the study is 100.

**Sampling Technique**

The technique used for selecting the sample is non-random sampling techniques. Convenient sampling is used for collecting data in this study.

**Tool for analysis**

Major tool used in the analysis process has been tables and charts for interpreting the data collected.

**1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

* Respondents bias towards the questions.
* The study is conducted within limited time.
* Lack of face to face interaction with respondents.
* Primary data obtained may not be accurate to great extent.

**2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Lee, Ethel (2013) The objective of the study was to explain why, when, and how social media has impacted on consumer decision process. This study also gave explanation on how individuals are attending, processing, and selecting the information on social media before a purchase. The findings indicated that individuals pursue an active role in information search on social media comparing to mass media, yet information exposure is selective and subjective during the course of information search.

Kristina Heinonen (2011) The aim of the study was to conceptualize consumers' activities in social media by examining the motivations behind the activities. One limitation of the study was the large number of consumption and participation activities emerging from the data compared to the number of production activities. The study showed that only a minority of web users were active contributors. Some activities in social media may influence the company image and brand positively whereas other consumer activities are perhaps not favorable.

M. Nick Halji (2014) The study was conducted to exami ne how social media facilitate the social interaction of consumers and to understand the role of social media in the development of e-commerce into social commerce. The study showed that trust has a significant direct effect on intention to buy.

Elham Al-Mukhaini, Israa Al-Dhuhli and Sara Ismael (2013) The aim of the study was to understand which consumers are mostly influenced by online purchasing, reasons that tempt consumer to purchase online, types of products that are mostly purchased using Social Media and types of Social Media that are mostly used by consumers in Oman. They found that Instagram has made significant change in consumers' buying decision towards choosing particular products.

Elenica Pjero and Donika Kёrcini (2015) The study focused on Social Media and their ability to influence consumer behavior world-wide and specifically in Albania reality. The study showed the reasons for the use of Social Media and user attitudes towards them and also revealed consumer behavior.

Duangruthai Voramontri and Leslie Klieb (2019) The goal of the paper was to research empirically the role of social media in consumers' decision-making process for complex purchases - those characterized by significant brand differences, high consumer involvement and risk, and which are expensive and infrequent. The result showed that social media usage influences consumer satisfaction in the stages of information search and alternative evaluation, with satisfaction getting amplified as the consumer moves along the process towards the final purchase decision and post- purchase evaluation.

Fred Bronner and Robert de Hoog(2014) The study was focused upon the relation between the information people search regarding aspects or properties of choice options and the types of social media used for finding it. They found that domain- specific social media with limited opportunities for self-disclosure, like Tripadvisor, are more frequently used for search-determined sub-decisions than for experience- determined sub-decisions. For domain-independent social media with large opportunities for self-disclosure, like Twitter and Facebook, it was found that they are used with equal frequency for both types of subdecision.

Leslie Martinka (2012) The study was conducted to determine if Facebook and Twitter communities influence consumers’ online purchasing behaviors. From the study, it was found that Facebook communities have a significant influence on a consumer’s online purchasing behavior and Twitter communities had almost no influence.

Abdul Bashiru Jibril, Michael Adu Kwarteng, Miloslava Chovancova and Michal Pilik(2019) This paper aims at examining the mediating role of online based- brand community (OBBC) through social media platforms (SMP) given the interplay of consumers’ purchasing attitude in a virtual space. The findings generated through the partial least square and structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) showed that OBBC on the social media platform positively initiates consumer-brand engagement and user-brand relationship.

Yong Wang, Shamim Chowdhury Ahemed, Shejung Deng and Haizhong Wang(2019) The study examined the overall performance achievement of social media marketing (SMM) in Bangladesh by determining whether social media is successful in creating brand consciousness (i.e., brand preference, brand attachment, brand association, and brand loyalty) toward online consumers, which in turn may lead to buying commitment. They found strong evidence that SMM efforts (SMMEs) of the local Bangladeshi fashion industry are successful in establishing consumer attachment and preference.

**3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Social media refers to a variety of technologies that facilitate the sharing of ideas and information among their users. From Facebook and Instagram to X platform (formerly Twitter) and YouTube, more than 4.7 billion people use social media, equal to roughly 60% of the world's population. In early 2023, 94.8% of users accessed chat and messaging apps and websites, followed closely by social platforms, with 94.6% of users.

An influencer is someone who has:

* the power to affect the purchasing decisions of others because of his or her authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with his or her audience.
* a following in a distinct niche, with whom he or she actively engages. The size of the following depends on the size of his/her topic of the niche.

Over the last decade, we have seen social media grow rapidly in importance. According to the most recent statistics, the projected number of global social media users in 2023 is 4.89 billion, indicating a 6.5% rise from the previous year.

Inevitably these people look up to influencers in social media to guide them with their decision making.

Influencers in social media are people who have built a reputation for their knowledge and expertise on a specific topic. They make regular posts about that topic on their preferred social media channels and generate large followings of enthusiastic, engaged people who pay close attention to their views. Brands love social media influencers because they can create trends and encourage their followers to buy products they promote.

**Types of Influencers**

You can separate different types of influencers in multiple ways. Some of the most common methods are by follower numbers, by types of content, and by the level of influence. You can also group influencers by the niche in which they operate. This means that influencers who may appear in a low category by one measure may seem more influential when looked at in another way. For example, many mega-influencers are also celebrities. Yet both these groups often have less real influence on their audience because they lack expertise in a dedicated narrow niche. Some micro and even nano-influencers can have a tremendous impact on followers in their specialist niche. They may be of significant benefit to a firm selling a product targeting that sector.

1. **By Follower Numbers**
* **Mega-Influencers**

Mega influencers are the people with a vast number of followers on their social networks. Although there are no fixed rules on the boundaries between the different types of followers, a common view is that mega-influencers have more than 1 million followers on at least one social platform. Many mega-influencers are celebrities who have gained their fame offline – movie stars, sportspeople, musicians, and even reality television stars. Some mega-influencers have gained their vast followings through their online and social activities, however.

* **Macro-Influencers**

Macro-influencers are one step down from the mega-influencers, and maybe more accessible as influencer marketers. You would consider people with followers in the range between 100,000 and 1 million followers on a social network to be macro-influencers. This group tends to consists of two types of people. They are either B-grade celebrities, who haven't yet made it to the big time. Or they are successful online experts, who have built up more significant followings than the typical micro-influencers. The latter type of macro-influencer is likely to be more useful for firms engaging in influencer marketing.

* **Micro-Influencers**

Micro-influencers are ordinary everyday people who have become known for their knowledge about some specialist niche. As such, they have usually gained a sizable social media following amongst devotees of that niche. Of course, it is not just the number of followers that indicates a level of influence; it is the relationship and interaction that a micro-influencer has with his or her followers. A micro-influencer may not be aware of the existence of a company before that company tries to reach out to him or her. If that is the case, the company will have first to convince the influencer of its worth. Micro-influencers have built up specialist followings, and they will not want to harm their relationship with their fans if they are seen to promote a lemon. This requirement for the relationship between micro-influencers and brands to align with target audiences means that influencers are often picky about with whom they work. Some micro-influencers are happy to promote a brand for free. Others will expect some form of payment. Regardless of the price, any influencer is unlikely to want involvement with an "inappropriate" brand for their audience.

* **Nano-Influencers**

The newest influencer-type to gain recognition is the nano-influencer. These people only have a small number of followers, but they tend to be experts in an obscure or highly specialized field. You can think of nano-influencers as being the proverbial big fish in a small pond. Nano Influencers have between 1,000 and 10,000 followers. Regardless, these are keen and interested followers, willing to engage with the nano-influencer and listen to their opinions.

1. **By Types of Content**

The bulk of influencer marketing today occurs in social media, predominantly with micro-influencers, and blogging. With an increased interest in video, YouTubers are rapidly becoming more important too.

* **Bloggers**

Bloggers and influencers in social media (predominantly micro-bloggers) have the most authentic and active relationships with their fans. Brands are now recognizing and encouraging this. Blogging has been connected to influencer marketing for some time now. There are many highly influential blogs on the internet. If a popular blogger positively mentions your product in a post, it can lead to the blogger’s supporters wanting to try out your product. Many bloggers have built up sizeable followings in specific sectors. For instance, there are highly influential blogs about personal development, finance, health, childrearing, music, and many other topics, including blogging itself. The critical thing successful blogs have in common is the respect of their readers.

A variation on having a blogger write something that recommends your product is to participate in guest posting. If you can grab a guest posting spot on a large blog, you can control the content, and you will typically be allowed to place a link to your own site in your author bio.

* **YouTubers**

Of course, a blog is not the only type of popular content on the internet. Another favorite type of content is video. In this case, rather than each video maker having their own site, most create a channel on YouTube. Brands often align with popular YouTube content creators.

* **Podcasters**

Podcasting is a relatively recent form of online content that is growing in popularity. It has made quite a few household names now, possibly best epitomized by John Lee Dumas of Entrepreneurs on Fire. If you haven’t yet had the opportunity to enjoy podcasts, Neal Schaffer has put together a comprehensive list of the Best Digital Marketing Podcasts to listen in 2023.

* **Social Posts Only**

Of course, bloggers, podcasters, and YouTubers rarely rely solely on their existing audiences to just turn up to their site, hoping there is new material. They usually promote new posts or videos heavily on social media - which makes most of these bloggers and content creators micro-influencers as well.

In fact, the vast majority of influencers now make their name on social media. While you will find influencers on all the leading social channels, the standout network in recent years has been Instagram, where many influencers craft their posts around a stunning image.

1. **By Level of Influence**
* **Celebrities**

Celebrities were the original influencers, and they still have a role to play, although their importance as influencers is waning.

Influencer marketing grew out of celebrity endorsement. Businesses have found for many years that their sales usually rise when a celebrity promotes or endorses their product. There are still many cases of companies, particularly high-end brands, using celebrities as influencers.

The problem for most brands is that there are only so many traditional celebrities willing to participate in this kind of influencer campaign, and they are unlikely to come cheaply. The exception will if a firm makes a product that a celebrity already likes and uses. In that situation, the celebrity may well be prepared to use his or her influence to say how good he/she believes the product to be. I am sure many musical instrument producers benefit from musicians playing their instruments by choice.

* **Key Opinion Leaders**

Industry experts and thought leaders such as journalists can also be considered influencers and hold an important position for brands.

Industry leaders and thought leaders gain respect because of their qualifications, position, or experience about their topic of expertise. Often, this respect is earned more because of the reputation of where they work. For instance, a journalist at a major newspaper is probably no expert on the subjects he writes a news report on, but he is respected for being a good enough writer to work as such a prestigious publication.

These experts include:

* Journalists
* Academics
* Industry experts
* Professional advisors

If you can gain the attention of a journalist in a national newspaper, who in turn talks positively about your company in an article, then you are using him or her as an influencer in much the same way as you would a blogger or a social media influencer. There is a bonus in this situation in that the journalist will most probably write his/her report for free.

Bloggers and content creators often work with industry leaders and thought leaders, and it is not uncommon to see them quoted in blog posts and even used in social media campaigns. The line between traditional media and social media is blurring.

One thing to be aware of when working with key opinion leaders is that many have built up their reputation in an offline setting and may not have a large or active social following.

**People with Above Average Influence on Their Audience**

In many ways, the best influencers have built their reputation online for being an expert in some particular niche. They are similar to key opinion leaders but usually have gained their reputation more informally through their online activity. And they have created that reputation through the quality of the social posts they make, the blog posts they write, the podcasts they speak, and the videos they craft and post on their YouTube channels.

Although nobody has yet created a generic term for these people, the British agency, PMYB, has come up with their trade-marked name - Chromo-Influencers. These are the agency's highest-performing influencers, based on 46 crucial factors that impact consumer behavior.

These influencers have the best communication skills and engagement with their audience. They have enticed their followers and become recognized as experts in their field.

Their follower numbers very much depend on their subject of expertise. However, you will find that these people have incredibly high followings in comparison to others in their niche.

**Importance of social media influencer**

These days, word of mouth and peer recommendations are more reliable to customers when it comes to brands. In simple words, if my friends trust or recommend a brand, then so will I. Mass advertisements are still paramount for their powerful reach but they more often than not succeed in creating brand awareness alone. For customers to truly consider purchasing your products or services, personal approaches are necessary too. But it is obviously not possible for you to directly engage with innumerable potential customers. This is where social media influencers come in.

These “influencers” as they are called, are individuals who can sway the sentiments of their online audience in a particular direction regarding a brand, idea, business or person. And there just might be such people out there who are already making or breaking the reputation of your brand and those who have the potential to help you increase your popularity. Let’s take PepsiCo, which was the first brand to effectively use social media influencers, as an example. When the company decided to revamp its entire brand, it sent out cans bearing the new design to select bloggers, who then blogged about the changes resulting in brand awareness. But it didn’t end there. These bloggers also influenced their audience to have a favorable attitude towards the change.

* **Wide and Loyal Audience**

Social media influencers generally have a large Twitter following, long Facebook friends list or heavy blog traffic which means that through them you can reach a wide audience. If they mention your brand name, talk about it or retweet or share your posts, they are amplifying your brand communication.

* **Good Networks**

Influencers build good networks. Their contacts engage in conversations or discussions on the various subjects the influencers post about, which can lead to more brand building. Not just that, they share or retweet these posts which means that your audience multiplies, increasing your visibility. Also, through them you can identify other influential people as well, who are a part of their audience. They can in turn influence their own audience’s opinion of your brand.

* **Content**

In a survey conducted by Vocus and Brian Solis, 62% of the respondents said that they follow an influencer because of the content they create. Quality content is crucial to any marketing campaign. And Influencers can create great content that would easily strike a chord with the audience, and reduce the work for you. They might even come up with creative ideas for content marketing that your brand itself did not think of. Some post reviews of your products and services, its features, quality etc., some write stories related to your brand, so on and so forth.

* **Credibility**

Another important factor that contributes to their large following is credibility. In the same survey, 51% of the respondents said that they follow an influencer because they consider them as opinion leaders and 40% follow them because of their relationship with the influencer.

Their opinion of your brand will most likely become the general opinion among their audience. A word from an influencer can make or break your brand. What better approach to build your brand’s reputation than to team up with a genuine person who your potential customer base values, and then meet them where they are, on social media? Influencer marketing on social media achieves both goals. We at Germin8 provide an online brand reputation management service that builds your brand’s online reputation by highlighting the positives and removing the negatives that can hurt your business.

* **New Trends & Insights**

Influencers are usually aware of the latest trends of the evolving social media platforms. They tend to be among the first to try these new trends, to discover new platforms to reach and engage with their audience. Through them, you too can get acquainted with such new ideas and employ them to interest prospective customers. And seeing as they are experts in the field, you could gain deeper insights about your industry from them.

* **More often than not, influencers fall under the category of lead users or early adopters.**

Marketers are heavily engaging social media influencers these days and it is indeed important to identify them. Building good relationships with them will help strengthen their advocacy or convince them to be associated with your brand.

But identifying these influencers from the vast ocean of social media users is not an easy task. That’s where social media listening can come in handy, tools such as Explic8 can help you identify your loyalists or even the ones who hate your brand. You can not only identify the top authors in terms of numbers but also measure their influence and categorize them as your promoters or detractors, and engage with them in real time.

**The Pros & Cons of Being an Influencer**

**Pros**

* They Are Passionate About Their Job
* Flexibility
* Opportunities to work with brands they love
* Building a community & inspiring others
* Being sent products & invited to events

**Cons**

* Influencers are “on” all the time
* Critics Or “Haters”
* Career Uncertainty
* Maintaining Integrity Can Be Difficult, But It Is Essential

**Role of influencers in customer’s decision-making process**

The recent past has been eventful. The global crisis has put everything together; we once took for granted at risk and has drastically altered how we live, work, and play as individuals. It has also been challenging for businesses to stay afloat. Although few may argue the pandemic’s mass retail doomsday, the new environment has offered numerous opportunities to revitalize the brands by focusing on innovations and current trends. One of the major marketing strategies the pandemic led to was a revolution in Digital Marketing. While traditional channels’ influence is waning, digital media is growing. Due to digitalization, consumers have become more educated as media users and more critical of commercial messages. As we all know it is becoming increasingly difficult for brands to stand out among the crowd of advertisers, so many have turned to influencers. Thanks to digitalization, we are constantly exposed to influencer marketing, whether we are aware of it. Influencer marketing is an intriguing phenomenon and plays a crucial part of the Go-to-Market strategies.

Tapping the influencers online has its advantages—directly penetrating the highly targeted audience and engaging the content consumers and ultimately generating leads, increasing sales, and building brand awareness—in other words, it’s quick and effective.

In this part, we look at the role of influencers in customers’ decision-making process. Influencer marketing is a vital spoke of the marketing domain that focuses on utilizing the already built goodwill of the influential people to spread a brand’s message to a broader audience in a much convenient and inexpensive way. Instead of directly marketing to a vast group of consumers via TV commercials, offline advertisement and more, the brands collaborate with influencers to spread the word for them.

Influencer marketing comprises social media marketing and content marketing. Most influencer campaigns include a social media component, where influencers create the brand buzz via their personal social media channels. Numerous influencer marketing campaigns have a content component, in which the brands either offer the influencers with content or have them create it themselves—however, social media and content marketing strategies are used frequently. However, both are distinguished strategies.

Social media influencers align with psychological principles and motivate their audiences to take action.

* **Increase Brand Awareness**

A key advantage of social media influencers is that they have a thorough understanding of their platforms and create impactful and engaging content that can garner more engagement and increase brand awareness with their followers and subscribers. These influencers have frequently spent years building their audiences and maximizing their groups’ sense of belonging and inclusion. They know how to forge effective relationships with their audiences and seamlessly tell your brand story to them, thanks to their refined presentation and storytelling skills.

One of the most critical stages of this trip is laying the groundwork for your brand’s positioning among customers. The positioning of your brand in the market is an essential process because it helps establish your identity, captures the attention of your target audience, and gives you a competitive upper hand over other industry players.

* **Improve Buying Decision with Unbiased Opinions**

Influencers have a knack for telling stories and sharing their experience with their followers on a daily basis. These individuals have mastered communicating effectively with their audiences, and they can do so without being too “salesy.” Consumers trust influencers for various reasons, one of which is that they can relate to them on a personal level. They are familiar with them and like their company. It all comes down to ‘making friends’ and ‘achieving status.’

Influencers don’t just post an ad on their feeds; they go into great depth about the product/s, including how to use them, whether they’re good value for money, and what buyers should expect, among other things. Influencers, in general, answer the most frequently asked questions that consumers have about any business or product. A powerful strategy is to use trust among these communities to increase your brand’s reputation and produce significant outcomes.

* **Strengthen Customer Relationships**

The necessity of forming better connections with your target market is the target of every marketer. Still, to do so, you must first get your brand in front of your target consumers and cultivate that affiliation within their tribe, which plays into the ‘attaining status’ part.

Consumers are more likely to trust peer recommendations because they are perceived to be more trustworthy than claims in brand advertisements, and social media influencers can be extremely powerful in this regard. Suppose a product is accepted within their circle. In that case, it immediately boosts its reputation and affiliated connection, implying that the most influential voices within any group have enormous sway over that initial relationship.

Influencers on social media appeal to basic human interaction needs, evoking a response motivating consumers to purchase or convert. As a result, using influencers to reach out to potential customers might be an effective marketing strategy. By aligning with psychological principles, understanding how influencers fit within that scope, and allocating budgetary resources to Influencer Marketing, brands can better target the right influencers for their digital outreach initiatives. Brand loyalty and equity are increased through cultivating beneficial relationships with customers. As a result, it appears to be more reliable when a blogger or other influencer recommends a product.

**Table 4.1**

**Familiar with the social media influencers**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PARTICULARS** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Never heard of them | 2 | 2 |
| Heard of them but never watched their content | 3 | 3 |
| Watch their contents occasionally  | 59 | 59 |
| Watch their content regularly  | 36 | 36 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.1**

**Familiar with the social media influencers**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 59% of the respondents watch social media influencer’s contents occasionally. 36% of the respondents watch their content regularly while 3% of the respondents heard of social media influencers but never watched their content. 2% of the respondents never heard about social media influencers.

**Table 4.2**

**Frequency of the use of different social media platforms**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PARTICULARS** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Daily  | 67 | 67 |
| Rarely  | 20 | 20 |
| Once in a week  | 8 | 8 |
| Once every two days | 5 | 5 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

 Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.2**

**Frequency of the use of different social media platforms**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 67% of the respondents daily use different social media platforms. 20% of them rarely use it while 8% of the respondents use different social media platforms once in a week. 5% of the respondents of the respondents use different social media platform once every two days.

**Table 4.3**

**Sources do you follow a social Media Influencer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONSES** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Youtube  | 80 | 80 |
| Instagram  | 12 | 12 |
| Twitter  | 5 | 5 |
| Other  | 3 | 3 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.3**

 **Sources do you follow a social Media Influencer**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 80% of the respondents follow social media influencer on youtube. 12% said follow them in Instagram, 5% follow them in twitter and 3% of the respondents follow social media influencer on other sources.

**Table 4.4**

**How much do you like to follow influencers on social media**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Not at all | 3 | 3 |
| Rarely  | 10 | 10 |
| Occasionally  | 15 | 15 |
| Frequently  | 38 | 38 |
| Very frequently  | 34 | 34 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.4**

**How much do you like to follow influencers on social media**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 38% of the respondents frequently follow influencers on social media. 34% of them very frequently follow while 15% of the respondents occasionally follow them on social media. 10% rarely and 3% not at all follow influencers on social media.

**Table 4.5**

**Type of content do you watch the most**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Life style  | 33 | 33 |
| Health & fitness | 10 | 10 |
| Beauty  | 19 | 19 |
| Food  | 18 | 18 |
| Fashion  | 9 | 9 |
| Other  | 11 | 11 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100.00** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.5**

**Type of content do you watch the most**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that the 33% of the respondents watch life style contents more in social media platform. 19% of them watch beauty, 18% of them watch food related contents and 11% watch other. 10% of the respondents watch health & fitness and 9% of the respondents watch fashion contents more in social media platform.

**Table 4.6**

**Most preferred language**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| English  | 30 | 30 |
| Hindi | 8 | 8 |
| Tamil  | 9 | 9 |
| Malayalam  | 50 | 50 |
| Other  | 3 | 3 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100.00** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.6**

**Most preferred language**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows the 50% of the respondents prefer Malayalam. 30% prefer English and 9% prefer Tamil. 8% of the respondents prefer Hindi. 3% of them prefer other languages.

**Table 4.7**

**How many followers does the influence you follow in the social media have at least**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| 10,000-30,000 | 10 | 10 |
| 30,000-50,000 | 18 | 18 |
| 50,000-1,00,000 | 8 | 8 |
| 1,00,000-1,50,000 | 34 | 34 |
| More than 1,50,000 | 30 | 30 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.7**

**How many followers does the influence you follow in the social media have at least**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that the 34% of the respondents said that 1,00,000-1,50,000 follow them in the social media. 30% of the respondents said that more than 1,50,000 follow them in the social media. 18% of the respondents said 30,000-50,000, 10% said that 10,000-30,000 follow them in the social media. 8% of them said that 50,000-1,00,000 follow them in the social media.

**Table 4.8**

**What factors do you consider while choosing influencer on social media**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Number of followers | 9 | 9 |
| Reach to the audience  | 15 | 15 |
| Quality of engagement  | 60 | 60 |
| Voice  | 10 | 10 |
| Other | 6 | 6 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.8**

**What factors do you consider while choosing influencer on social media**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that the 60% of the respondents said that quality of engagement they consider while choosing influencer on social media. 15% of the respondents said reach to the audience, 10% said voice, 9% said number of followers and 6% of them said that they consider other factors while choosing influencer on social media.

**Table 4.9**

**Reasons to follow influencers**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Influence demonstrate | 5 | 5 |
| Better knowledge of the product | 43 | 43 |
| I feel like they make me discover new things | 28 | 28 |
| They make me discover new things | 9 | 9 |
| I feel like their content is entertaining  | 15 | 15 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.9**

**Reasons to follow influencers**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 43% of the respondents follow influencers because the better knowledge of the product. 28% of the respondents feel like they make them discover new things. 15% of the respondents feel like their contents entertaining. 9% of the respondents make them discover new things and 5% of the respondents said that they influence demonstrate.

**Table 4.10**

**To what extent does a social media influencer influence your purchasing decision**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| To large extent  | 90 | 90 |
| Seldom  | 5 | 5 |
| Never  | 5 | 5 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.10**

**To what extent does a social media influencer influence your purchasing decision**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 90% of the respondents said that social media influence their purchase decision in large extent. 5% seldom and 5% said that social media never influence their purchase decision in large extent.

**Table 4.11**

**How often do you seek an influencer before purchasing a product**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Never  | 1 | 1 |
| Rarely  | 3 | 3 |
| Sometimes  | 29 | 29 |
| Always  | 47 | 47 |
| Often | 20 | 20 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.11**

**How often do you seek an influencer before purchasing a product**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 47% of the respondents said that they always seek and influencer before purchasing a product. 29% sometimes and 20% often seek and influencer before purchasing a product. 3% rarely and 1% never seek and influencer before purchasing a product.

**Table 4.12**

**How often do you purchase a product from social media influencer that appeals you the most**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Always  | 30 | 30 |
| Often | 45 | 45 |
| Sometimes  | 20 | 20 |
| Rarely  | 2 | 2 |
| Never | 3 | 3 |
| **Total** | **100** | **100** |

 Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.12**

**How often do you purchase a product from social media influencer that appeals you the most**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 45% of the respondents often purchase a product from social media influencer that appeals them the most. 30% said always, 20% said sometimes, 3% said never and 2% rarely purchase a product from social media influencer that appeals them.

**Table 4.13**

**Do the presence of influencers help you recognize a brand**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Always  | 60 | 60 |
| Often  | 31 | 31 |
| Sometimes  | 5 | 5 |
| Rarely  | 3 | 3 |
| Never  | 1 | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.13**

**Do the presence of influencers help you recognize a brand**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 60% of the respondents opined that the presence of influencers always helps them recognize a brand. 31% of the respondents said often, 5% said sometimes, 3% said rarely and 1% said the presence of influencers never help them recognize a brand.

**Table 4.14**

**How much does an influencer affect your decision to switch from a product you**

**currently use to different brand product**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| A lot | 12 | 12 |
| Some what  | 50 | 50 |
| Not much  | 20 | 20 |
| Not at all | 18 | 18 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.14**

**How much does an influencer affect your decision to switch from a product you**

**currently use to different brand product**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 50% of the respondents opined that an influencer somewhat affects their decision to switch from a product they currently use to different brand product. 20% of the respondents said that not much, 18% said that influencer not at all affects their decision to switch from a product they currently use to different brand product. 12% of the respondents said that an influencer always affects their decision to switch from a product they currently use to different brand product.

**Table 4.15**

**Social media influencer influence your product Choice**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Yes  | 80 | 80 |
| No | 20 | 20 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.15**

**Social media influencer influence your product Choice**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 80% of the respondents said that social media influencers influence their product choice. 20% of the respondents disagreed with it.

**Table 4.16**

**Social media Influencer are genuine about their recommendation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Yes | 70 | 70 |
| No  | 30 | 30 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.16**

**Social media Influencer are genuine about their recommendation**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 70% of the respondents agreed that social media influencer is genuine about their recommendation. 30% disagreed that social media influencer is genuine about their recommendation.

**Table 4.17**

**Influencer affect your purchase decisions more than TV, Radio,**

**Newspaper & Other Advertisement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Always  | 50 | 50 |
| Often | 30 | 30 |
| Sometimes  | 18 | 18 |
| Rarely  | 2 | 2 |
| Never  | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.17**

**Influencer affect your purchase decisions more than TV, Radio,**

**Newspaper & Other Advertisement**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 50% of the respondents said that influencers always affect their purchase decisions more than TV, radio, newspaper & other advertisement. 30% said often, 18% said sometimes and 2% of them said that influencer rarely affect their purchase decisions more than TV, radio, newspaper & other advertisement.

**Table 4.18**

**Willing to pay higher prices for a product recommended by influencer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Yes  | 50 | 50 |
| No  | 50 | 50 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.18**

**Willing to pay higher prices for a product recommended by influencer**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 50% of the respondents are willing to pay higher prices for a product recommended by the influencer. Another 50% of them not ready to pay higher prices for a recommended by the influencer.

**Table 4.19**

**Ever decided to purchase a product just because of an influencer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Yes  | 56 | 56 |
| No  | 44 | 44 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.19**

**Ever decided to purchase a product just because of an influencer**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 56% of the respondents decided to purchase a product just because of an influencer. 44% of the respondents not decided to purchase a product just because of an influencer.

**Table 4.20**

**I believe that influencer is trust worthy**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RESPONSES** | **NO. OF RESPONDENTS** | **PERCENTAGE** |
| Strongly agree | 28 | 28 |
| Agree | 36 | 36 |
| Neutral  | 17 | 17 |
| Disagree  | 10 | 10 |
| Strongly disagree  | 9 | 9 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary Data

**Figure 4.20**

**I believe that influencer is trust worthy**

**INTERPRETATION**

Above table and graph shows that 36% of the respondents agreed that they believe that influencer is trust worthy. 28% of the respondents strongly agreed and 17% of the respondents have neutral opinion. 10% disagreed and 9% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they believe that influencer is trust worthy.

**5.1 FINDINGS**

* 59% of the respondents watch social media influencer’s contents occasionally.
* 67% of the respondents daily use different social media platforms.
* 80% of the respondents follow social media influencer on youtube.
* 38% of the respondents frequently follow influencer on social media.
* 33% of the respondents watch life style contents more in social media platform.
* 50% of the respondents prefer Malayalam.
* 34% of the respondents said that 1,00,000-1,50,000 follow them in the social media.
* 60% of the respondents said that quality of engagement they consider while choosing influencer on social media.
* 43% of the respondents follow inferences because the better knowledge of the product.
* 90% of the respondents said that social media influence their purchase secession in large extent.
* 47% of the respondents said that they always seek and influencer before purchasing a product.
* 45% of the respondents often purchase a product from social media influencer that appeals them the must.
* 60% of the respondents opined that the present of influence always help them recognize a brand.
* 50% of the respondents opined that an influencer somewhat affects their decision to switch from a product they currently use to different brand product.
* 80% of the respondents said that social media influencers influence their product choice.
* 70% of the respondents agreed that social media influencer is genuine about their recommendation.
* 50% of the respondents said that influencers always affect their purchase decisions more than TV, radio, newspaper & other advertisement.
* 50% of the respondents are willing to pay higher prices for a product recommended by the influencer.
* 56% of the respondents decided to purchase a product just because of an influencer.
* 36% of the respondents agreed that they believe that influencer is trust worthy.

**5.2 SUGGESTIONS**

* The influencers should try to promote reliable products through social media.
* The social media influencers should refrain form the promotion of fake and low-quality products.
* Promotional way of advertising is best: the usual banner ads and video ads attract them. So advertising must be interactive, promotional and in innovative form to hold the audience.
* Advertisement should target the individuals than the mass. If an ad is hosted for a group then that would be no advantage in delivering specified information.
* Adding more multimedia elements to have more interactive factors in fan pages and group would benefit the brand user.
* Facebook and Whatsapp is the most popular social networking applications and must be used for social media promotions.
* The cost of social media advertising is much lower than other media advertisement. So Entrepreneurs try to spend some amount in social media websites. This will increase the brand image of the organization.

**5.3 CONCLUSION**

Nowadays, Consumer buys good and services on the basis of recommendations of the people they trust. However, in our society, every individual doesn’t follow social media influencers on different social media platforms. And due to trust issues, it is not easy for social media influencers to influence the users. Although social media influencers are gaining the acceptance and popularity in online purchase. Social media influencers represent a highly visible subset of digital content creators defined by their substantial following, distinctive brand persona, and patterned relationship with commercial sponsors. Despite widespread variance in influencer practices and economies across sites like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, most earn revenue by promoting branded goods and services to their community of followers.

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**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER ON CONSUMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

Name:

Age:

Gender:

1. How familiar are you with social media influencers?

a. Never heard of them

b. Heard of them but never watched their content.

c. Watch their contents occasionally

d. Watch their content regularly

2. Frequency of the use of different social media platforms.

a. Daily

b. Rarely

c. Once in a week

d. Once every two days

3. Which of the sources do you follow a social Media Influencer.

a. You tube

b. Instagram

c. Twitter

d. Other

4. How much do you like to follow influencers on social media.

a. Not at all

b. Rarely

c. Occasionally

d. Frequently

e. Very Frequently

5. What type of content do you watch the most?

a. Life style

b. Health & Fitness

c. Beauty

d. Food

e. Fashion

f. Other

6. What language do you prefer watching influencer content?

a. English

b. Hindi

c. Tamil

d. Malayalam

e. Other

7. How many followers does the influencers you follow in the social media have at least?

a. 10,000-30,000

b. 30,000-50,000

c. 50,000-1,00,000

d. 1,00,000-1,50,000

e. More than 1,50,000 followers

8. What factors do you consider while choosing influencer on social media?

a. Number of followers

b. Reach to the audience

c. Quality of engagement

d. Voice

e. Other

9. Reasons to follow Influencers

a. Influencers demonstrate

b. Better knowledge of the product

c. They make me discover new things

d. I feel like their content is entertaining

10. To what extent does a social media influencer influence your purchasing decision.

a. To a large extent

b. Seldom

c. Never

11. How often do you seek an influencer before purchasing a product.

a. Never

b. Rarely

c. Sometimes

d. Always

e. Often

12. How often do you purchase a product from social media influencer that appeals you

the most?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

e. Never

13. Do the presence of influence help you recognize a brand

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

e. Never

14. How much does an influencer affect your decision to switch from a product you

currently use to different brand product?

a. A lot

b. Some what

c. Not much

d. Not al all

15. Do social media influencer influence your product Choice

a. Yes

b. No

16. Do you think that social media Influencer are genuine about their recommendation?

a. Yes

b. No

17. Do the influencer affect your purchase decisions more than TV, Radio,

Newspaper & Other Advertisement?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

e. Never

18. Are you willing to pay higher prices for a product recommended by influencer?

a. Yes

b. No

19. Have you ever decided to purchase a product just because of an influencer?

a. Yes

b. No

20. I believe that influencer are trust worthy

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly disagree