

A comparative study of influencer marketing and traditional advertising in affecting consumer behaviour

¹Dr.S.Kiruthika

¹Assistant Professor

¹Department of Commerce

¹Bharathidasan College of Arts and Science (Autonomous) Erode

¹mohanprakashrs@gmail.com

Abstract—This study will compare the effectiveness of influencer marketing and traditional advertising in affecting consumer behaviour. With the rapid rise of digital platforms like Instagram and YouTube, influencer marketing has emerged as a potent promotional tool, challenging traditional advertising tactics like television, radio, and print media. The study is based on primary data obtained from 112 respondents via a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and Chi-Square analysis were used to investigate consumer preferences, trust, engagement, and purchase intent. The data suggest that both influencer marketing and traditional advertising have a statistically significant impact on customer behaviour; however, neither has a dominant influence. Consumers have moderate levels of trust and involvement with both marketing tactics, indicating a balanced effectiveness. According to the report, while influencer marketing is gaining popularity owing to its reliability and digital reach, traditional advertising remains credible and relevant. These insights can help marketers build integrated marketing strategies that effectively mix both tactics.

Index Terms—Influencer Marketing, Traditional Advertising, Consumer Behaviour, Purchase Intention, Brand Engagement

I. Introduction

In today's dynamic and digitally-driven industry, businesses are continuously looking for new ways to attract, engage, and keep customers. Marketing has developed substantially over the last few decades, from traditional channels such as television, radio, and print media to digital platforms that allow for real-time interactions and focused outreach. Traditional advertising has historically served as the foundation of brand promotion, providing credibility, widespread awareness, and the potential to influence customer attitudes on a large scale. Companies spent extensively on TV advertisements, magazine ads, and radio campaigns to raise brand awareness and influence purchasing decisions.

However, the rise of social media and digital communication platforms like Instagram and YouTube has changed the way people discover, assess, and interact with products. Influencer marketing, a practice in which social media personalities recommend things to their followers, is becoming a more potent tool for marketers.

This trend has generated concerns regarding the relative efficacy of influencer marketing versus traditional advertising. While traditional media offer authority and vast reach, influencers use interaction, authenticity, and niche targeting to attract younger and more technologically savvy audiences. Understanding the relative influence of different marketing methods is critical for organizations looking to maximize their return on marketing investments.

Multiple factors influence consumer behaviour, including trust, perceived credibility, levels of participation, and social proof. Influencer marketing leverages these characteristics through interactive content, storytelling, and endorsements, whereas traditional advertising depends on repetition, brand messaging, and established media reputation. Despite the growing popularity of influencer marketing, many firms still invest in traditional advertising because of its proven impact on brand awareness and market penetration. According to research, today's consumers are more discriminating, knowledgeable, and critical of promotional content. As a result, firms must strike a delicate balance between digital influencer marketing and traditional advertising to ensure effectiveness and authenticity. Comparative research in this field are scarce, particularly in terms of understanding how each technique influences purchase intentions, brand loyalty, and engagement levels across diverse consumer demographics.

This study seeks to address this research gap by evaluating and contrasting the impact of influencer marketing and traditional advertising on consumer behaviour. It investigates consumer trust, engagement, and purchasing decisions, as well as how social and traditional media influence overall brand perception. The findings of this study will give marketers with evidence-based direction for developing integrated marketing strategies that use the capabilities of both methodologies.

Objectives of the study

- To compare the effectiveness of influencer marketing to traditional advertising in influencing consumer behaviour.
- Compare customer trust and engagement with influencer marketing versus traditional advertising.
- Study the impact of influencer marketing and traditional advertising on customer purchasing decisions.

II. Review of Literatures

Hongjie Liu(2024) the author stated that this study investigates the movement of advertising from traditional media to social media platforms, as well as how consumer participation on various social media platforms influences advertising efficacy. Starting with print advertising, then radio, television, and finally digital channels, study explores the historical history of advertising, emphasizing on the distinct

characteristics of social media advertising. We conduct a comprehensive literature study of recent research articles and industry reports to evaluate how platform-specific features and user experiences influence engagement with social media content and integrated advertising.

Venkata Ramaiah Turlapati; T Thirunavukkarasu; G. Aiswarya; Kiran Kumar Thoti; Kotigari Reddi Swaroop; R. Mythily (2024) the authors stated that Many businesses continue to underestimate the importance of influencer marketing, star ratings, and customer reviews owing to ignorance and a lack of knowledge. Researchers are interested in the topic of The Relevance of Influencer Marketing, Ratings, and Customer Reviews on Purchasing Decisions because it demonstrates the importance of having a strategy that combines influencer marketing with positive customer interactions and a positive product reputation in order to influence consumer purchasing decisions. Pre-processing, feature extraction, and model training are all components of the proposed strategy. During the SQL data pre-processing phase, further steps were taken to ensure that the data was accurate and relevant. Word bags, TF-IDF, and chi-square are the foundations of feature extraction.

Nyeh Maurine, Shei (2023) the researcher examined that Traditional marketing techniques have been revised to align with digital innovation. Not long ago, marketing consisted mostly of newspaper ads, television, and radio commercials. As information became more accessible through Internet access and individuals began to spend more time online, businesses all over the world are gradually coming to terms with the idea that the future rests in the digital era and the numerous platforms that accompany it. The internet has become one of the most convenient and cost-effective ways to conduct business today. This has been fuelled by a variety of social media platforms, including Google search engines, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and many others.

Margareta Nadanyiova, Lubica Gajanova, Jana Majerova, Lenka Lizbetinova (2020) the authors stated that Influencer marketing is a type of marketing communication that utilizes influencers to target consumers. It enables businesses to create their brand and loyalty based on consumers' faith in someone they know and admire. Given this, the objective of this research is to establish the theoretical foundation for the impact of influencer marketing on consumer lifestyles. This contains an investigation of consumers' perceptions of influencer marketing in relation to their lifestyles using a questionnaire poll of Slovak consumers aged 15 and up. The research sample includes 410 people. Finally, the implications of influencer marketing on consumer lifestyles are discussed, and recommendations are made for its effective adoption within businesses.

III. Research Methodology

This study uses a quantitative research approach to examine the impact of influencer marketing and traditional advertising on customer behaviour. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 112 respondents from diverse age groups and social media usage behaviours. The poll asked on trust, engagement, and buy

intentions for both marketing styles. To detect significant relationships and trends, data were analysed with descriptive statistics and Chi-Square testing. This methodology allows for a systematic and scientific evaluation of the effectiveness of influencer marketing vs traditional advertising.

Analysis and Interpretation

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How often do you use social media platforms like Instagram or YouTube?	112	1.00	4.00	2.3929	.95254
How much do you trust influencer recommendations?	112	1.00	5.00	2.1161	1.18356
How often do influencers affect your opinion about a product?	112	1.00	5.00	2.1161	1.14487
How likely are you to purchase a product recommended by an influencer?	112	1.00	5.00	1.9643	1.01279
Why do you prefer influencer marketing?	112	1.00	5.00	2.2500	1.18929
How often do traditional ads influence your buying decision?	112	1.00	5.00	2.1696	1.16934
How much do you trust traditional advertisements (TV, newspaper, radio)?	112	1.00	5.00	2.2411	1.16438
Which traditional media influences you the most?	112	1.00	5.00	2.2500	1.29099
Which type creates stronger brand connection?	112	1.00	4.00	2.0000	.92998
What do you usually do after seeing an advertisement (any type)?	112	1.00	5.00	2.2768	1.26070
Valid N (listwise)	112				

Interpretation

The results show that respondents utilize social media platforms moderately, with an average score indicating occasional to regular use. Trust in influencer recommendations is relatively low, as seen by mean values on the bottom end of the scale. Influencer marketing has a limited impact on consumer perceptions and purchases, showing cautious consumer behaviour. Similarly, traditional advertising has only moderate influence and credibility, indicating that neither channel dominates. Overall, the findings suggest that influencer marketing and traditional advertising have a moderate but not particularly convincing effect on customer behaviour.

Table 2. Chi-Square Test Results — Frequency Distributions***Age Group***

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Below 18	16	22.4	-6.4
18–25	30	22.4	7.6
26–35	42	22.4	19.6
36–45	17	22.4	-5.4
46 and above	7	22.4	-15.4
Total	112		

Gender

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Male	45	37.3	7.7
Female	59	37.3	21.7
Other	8	37.3	-29.3
Total	112		

Trust in Influencer Recommendations

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Highly trust	47	22.4	24.6
Moderately trust	25	22.4	2.6
Neutral	25	22.4	2.6
Slightly trust	10	22.4	-12.4
Do not trust	5	22.4	-17.4
Total	112		

Use of Social Media Platforms (Instagram/YouTube)

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Daily	20	28.0	-8.0
Weekly	45	28.0	17.0
Occasionally	30	28.0	2.0
Rarely	17	28.0	-11.0
Total	112		

Influencers Affect on Opinion

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Always	42	22.4	19.6
Often	35	22.4	12.6
Sometimes	20	22.4	-2.4

Rarely	10	22.4	-12.4
Never	5	22.4	-17.4
Total	112		

Purchase a Product Recommended by an Influencer

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very likely	44	22.4	21.6
Likely	40	22.4	17.6
Neutral	19	22.4	-3.4
Unlikely	6	22.4	-16.4
Very unlikely	3	22.4	-19.4
Total	112		

Traditional Ads Influence on Buying Decision

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Always	42	22.4	19.6
Often	30	22.4	7.6
Sometimes	24	22.4	1.6
Rarely	11	22.4	-11.4
Never	5	22.4	-17.4
Total	112		

Preference for Influencer Marketing

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Relatable content	40	22.4	17.6
Trust in influencer	28	22.4	5.6
Product demonstration	24	22.4	1.6
Entertainment value	16	22.4	-6.4
I do not prefer it	4	22.4	-18.4
Total	112		

Trust in Traditional Advertisements (TV, Newspaper, Radio)

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Highly trust	37	22.4	14.6
Moderately trust	35	22.4	12.6
Neutral	20	22.4	-2.4
Slightly trust	16	22.4	-6.4
Do not trust	4	22.4	-18.4
Total	112		

Traditional Media Influence

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Television	42	22.4	19.6
Newspaper	30	22.4	7.6
Radio	20	22.4	-2.4
Magazines	10	22.4	-12.4
None	10	22.4	-12.4
Total	112		

Stronger Brand Connection

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Influencer marketing	42	28.0	14.0
Traditional advertising	34	28.0	6.0
Both	30	28.0	2.0
None	6	28.0	-22.0
Total	112		

Response After Seeing an Advertisement

Category	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Purchase immediately	33	22.4	10.6
Search online for more information	47	22.4	24.6
Ignore	12	22.4	-10.4
Discuss with others	8	22.4	-14.4
Save for later	12	22.4	-10.4
Total	112		

Test Statistics

					influe ncers affect your opinio n	purcha se a produ ct recom mende d by an influe ncer		traditi onal ads influe nce your buyin g decisi on	trust traditi onal advert iseme nts (TV, newsp aper, radio)			seeing an advert iseme nt (any type)
	age group	gende r	social media platfo rms	trust influe ncer recom mend ations	about a produ ct		prefer influe ncer marke ting			traditi onal media influe nces	strong er brand conne ction	
Chi-Square	33.446 ^a	37.19 6 ^b	17.07 1 ^c	48.00 0 ^a	44.875 a	63.982 a	32.286 a	39.161 a	33.804 a	33.714 a	25.71 4 ^c	50.94 6 ^a
df	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 22.4.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 37.3.

c. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 28.0.

Interpretation

The Chi-Square analysis indicates that all variables are statistically significant, with p-values less than 0.05. This suggests that there is a strong link between consumer traits and responses to influencer marketing and traditional advertising. Trust in influencers, buying intention, and advertising influence differ significantly among respondents. Both influencer marketing and traditional advertising have a substantial impact on customer behaviour, although their impacts vary by category. Because no cells had predicted frequencies less than 5, the results were credible and met the Chi-Square test assumptions.

IV. Conclusion

According to the study, both influencer marketing and traditional advertising have a considerable impact on customer behaviour, but neither technique dominates. Influencer marketing caters to younger consumers by emphasizing reliability, engagement, and social media reach. Traditional advertising retains credibility and broad audience coverage, making it still important for brand promotion. Consumers have intermediate trust and involvement with both marketing tactics, emphasizing the necessity for balanced strategy. The data indicate that an integrated marketing strategy, which combines digital influencer efforts with traditional advertising, is most effective. Brands can use influencer marketing to increase interactive interaction while depending on conventional media to maintain credibility. Overall, understanding consumer

preferences across all channels is critical for maximizing marketing effectiveness in today's competitive environment.

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