



From Feeds to Women-Led Brands: The Social Media Influencer and Consumer Preference

Navodita Shekhawat¹ & Dr. Ashish Pareek²

¹Research Scholar, Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University, Ajmer.

²Associate Professor, Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University, Ajmer.

*Corresponding author: navoditashkhawat@gmail.com

Citation: Shekhawat, N., & Pareek, A. (2025). From Feeds to Women-Led Brands: The Social Media Influencer and Consumer Preference. *Exploresearch*, 02(04), 93–97. <https://doi.org/10.62823/exre/2025/02/04.130>

Article History:

Received:02 December 2025

Accepted:25 December 2025

Published:31 December 2025

Keywords:

Social Media Influencers, Consumer Trust, Brand Preference, Repeated Engagement, Purchase Intent.

Abstract: Social media influencers have emerged as powerful intermediaries in shaping consumer preference and driving purchasing decisions in the digital marketplace. In this context, influencer marketing has become particularly relevant for women-led brands seeking to enhance visibility, credibility, and consumer engagement in highly competitive online environments. This study examines the role of social media influencers in promoting women-led brands focusing on their impact on consumer trust, brand preference, repeated engagement and purchase intentions. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 76 respondents through an online survey. Respondents were selected based on their engagement with women-led brands promoted by influencers on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and others. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation between influencer and consumer trust, brand preference, purchase intentions in women-led brands. The study also highlights the importance of preference authenticity, as influencers with relatable and genuine content were more effective in driving positive consumer preferences. Recommendations include selecting influencers whose values align with the brand and emphasizing authentic storytelling to foster deeper consumer connections. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on digital marketing and entrepreneurship, offering a nuanced understanding of the dynamics between influencers and women-led brands.

Introduction

In the era of digital connectivity, social media platforms have become a cornerstone of modern marketing, fundamentally altering how brands engage with consumers. Among the most influential players in this space are social media influencers, individuals who leverage their online presence to shape consumer perceptions and behaviors. The power of these influencers lies not only in their reach but also in their ability to create authentic, relatable content that resonates with diverse audiences. This dynamic has significant implications for women-led brands, which often face unique challenges in gaining visibility and credibility in competitive markets. Women-led businesses are increasingly recognized as pivotal drivers of economic growth and innovation, yet they often encounter systemic barriers such as underrepresentation and bias in traditional advertising channels (Kamberidou, 2020). Social media influencers have emerged as a vital tool for bridging these gaps, enabling women-led brands to amplify

their narratives and connect directly with consumers. Platforms such as Instagram and YouTube serve as ideal arenas for this engagement, where influencers can promote products, share stories, and build trust through genuine interactions with their audiences (Lou & Yuan, 2019). These influencers often foster a sense of trust and authenticity that traditional advertising struggles to achieve, thereby significantly affecting purchase decisions (Smith, 2020). Furthermore, consumers increasingly rely on influencers to discover new products and trends, especially in industries such as fashion, beauty, and technology (Jones & Park, 2021). The rise of influencer marketing has prompted brands to shift their strategies, focusing on collaborations with influencers to boost brand awareness and foster deeper consumer engagement (Brown & Hayes, 2022). As consumers' reliance on social media apps for decision-making grows (e.g., product reviews), "social media influencers" have been developed and are now being used by businesses as a new channel for promoting a product in the digital era. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for brands seeking to develop more nuanced and targeted marketing strategies in the digital era (Zhou & Wong, 2023). Social media influencers play a pivotal role in boosting brand awareness by consistently exposing their followers to branded content, thereby increasing familiarity and trust (Alam & Khan, 2023). This study aims to examine how consumers' preferences are shaped by social media influencers, focusing on factors such as consumer trust, brand preferences and purchase intent. By understanding these dynamics, brands can develop more effective strategies for leveraging influencer partnerships in e-commerce settings (Wong & Lai, 2021). The study will focus on creating engaging and interactive content, providing personalized experiences, and leveraging word-of-mouth recommendations to enhance consumer purchase intention. The study's also highlight the role of social media marketing influencers towards consumer trust , brand preference and their potential to drive consumer purchase intention.

Objectives

- To explore the impact of social media influencers on consumers purchase intention
- To analyzing the role of influencers in building consumer trust towards women-led brands
- To access information on the effect of brand preference.

Literature review

Social media influencers (SMIs) have emerged as pivotal actors in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in the context of brand preference, consumer trust, and purchase intention. This literature review explores the interplay between social media influencers and consumer preferences, with a specific focus on women-led brands. Consumers are increasingly influenced by digital content creators who promote products through social media, shaping purchasing decisions and brand perceptions. Influencers on platforms such as Instagram and YouTube often collaborate with brands to enhance product visibility and build trust with their audience (Li, 2023). Moreover, consumers may experience confusion or distrust when faced with conflicting endorsements from multiple influencers, which can dilute brand messaging and make it harder for brands to maintain a consistent identity on the platform (Yeo & Chong, 2023). Understanding how to effectively leverage influencers to shape consumer preferences without causing brand dissonance is a key issue that this study seeks to address. The role of these influencers in driving brand awareness and fostering consumer engagement is critical for e-commerce businesses, as they can significantly impact online sales (Tan et al., 2022). In this context, consumer preferences are shaped by multiple factors such as perceived product quality, price, and the influence of trusted social media personalities (Smith & Tran, 2022). This study focused on social media influencers (SMIs) in consumer preference towards women – led brands around three key themes: consumer trust, brand preference, and purchase intention, drawing on existing research to provide a comprehensive understanding of the consumer preferences towards women –led brands.

Consumer Trust and Social Media Influencers

Consumer trust is a critical factor in consumer decision-making, particularly in the digital age where authenticity and transparency are highly valued. Social media influencers, by virtue of their perceived reliability and expertise, play a significant role in building trust among their followers. According to (Djafarova and Bowes 2021), influencers who exhibit authenticity and consistency in their content are more likely to foster trust among their audience. This trust is particularly important for women-led brands, as consumers often seek brands that align with their values, such as empowerment and inclusivity (Godey et al., 2016). Women-led brands, which often emphasize storytelling and community-building, benefit significantly from influencer partnerships. Influencers who share personal experiences and

advocate for gender equality can enhance trust in these brands (Abidin, 2016). Furthermore, the Para social relationships that influencers cultivate with their followers contribute to a sense of intimacy and reliability, which translates into trust in the brands they endorse (Labrecque, 2014).

Brand Preference and the Influence of Social Media

Brand preference is heavily influenced by the perceived alignment between a brand's values and those of the consumer. Social media influencers act as intermediaries who can amplify a brand's message and values, thereby shaping consumer preferences. For women-led brands, influencers who champion female empowerment and diversity can create a strong emotional connection with their audience (Veirman et al., 2017). This connection is further strengthened when influencers share their personal stories of overcoming challenges, which resonates with consumers who value authenticity and relatability (Audrezet et al., 2020). Research by (Lou and Yua 2019) highlights that influencer endorsements can significantly enhance brand preference, particularly when the influencer's image aligns with the brand's identity. For women-led brands, this alignment is often rooted in shared values such as inclusivity, sustainability, and innovation. Additionally, the visual and interactive nature of social media platforms allows influencers to showcase the unique attributes of women-led brands, making them more appealing to consumers (Kim & Kim, 2021).

Purchase Intention and the Role of social media Influencers

Purchase intention is a direct outcome of consumer trust and brand preference, and social media influencers play a crucial role in driving this behavior. Influencers act as credible sources of information, reducing the perceived risk associated with purchasing decisions (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). For women-led brands, influencers who authentically endorse products and share their personal experiences can significantly boost purchase intention among their followers (Audrezet et al., 2020). When influencers showcase their use of women-led brands, it signals to their followers that these brands are trustworthy and desirable (Veirman et al., 2017). Moreover, the interactive nature of social media allows influencers to engage directly with their audience, addressing concerns and providing recommendations, which further enhances purchase intention (Kim & Kim, 2021). Studies have also shown that influencer-generated content is more effective in driving purchase intention compared to traditional advertising, as it is perceived as more authentic and relatable (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative approach using SPSS to analyze the relationship between the influence of social media influencers on consumer trust, brands preferences and purchase intentions towards women-led brands by various users of social media platforms in Ajmer city. The sample size of population chosen as 100 consumers to target as per convenience, out of which 76 responded and 24 were non respondents. This study employs convenience sampling; the primary data was collected from 76 respondents through an online survey by filling up of structured questionnaire via Google forms during the month of October 2025 – November 2025. Samples were collected from social media users and who follow at least a social media platform. Two filter questions were employed to make sure that the respondents qualified to be included in the research. One question asked whether the respondent was using social media platform i.e. Instagram, YouTube and any other. Another question asked whether the respondent follows social media influencers which promote women-led brands, if the answer is positive then the respondent's questionnaire is used for research. The sample consisted of 43% of male and 57% of female. The average age of the sample is in between 18 to 35 yrs. and about 78% of them use Instagram, 18% YouTube and 4% other social media platforms. The questionnaire is developed to measure the role of social media influencers via consumer trust, brand preference, repeated engagement and purchase intention towards women-brands.

Instruments for Measuring were used following 4 variables on the basis of review of literature to measure the phenomenon whether social media influencers are able to shape the consumer preference towards women-led brands were created on the basis of consumer trust, brand preferences, purchase intention and measured with the help of 5-point Likert scale i.e. Always, Sometimes, Occasionally, Rarely and Never. Ultimately score them as 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 were assigned corresponding to the degree of agreement. Reliability test was carried out and the Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be 0.93 results indicate that items are sufficiently consistent that indicate measure is reliable.

Data Analysis and Findings

The study adopted a statistical package of social Sciences to estimate that social media influencers have significant relationships in shaping consumer preference towards women-led brands. The objective of this study is to examine the inter relationship between customer trust, brand preference, repeated engagement and purchase intention as variables shown in the below Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the scale

Item Statistics			
Consumer Trust	3.2342	0.94904	76
Brand Preference	3.2730	0.90570	76
Repeated Engagement	3.0702	1.10797	76
Purchase Intentions	3.0921	1.10215	76

The above table depicts the mean values and standard deviation of all items into each specific category of the variable which shows value more than 3. It states that social media influencers have a significant effect on shaping consumer preferences towards women-led brands.

Table 2: Inter-Item correlation matrix

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix				
Variables	Consumer Trust	Brand Preference	Repeated Engagement	Purchase Preference
Consumer Trust	1.000	0.733	0.739	0.728
Brand Preference	0.733	1.000	0.833	0.772
Repeated Engagement	0.739	0.833	1.000	0.766
Purchase Intentions	0.728	0.772	0.766	1.000

The above table results reveals that influencers are effective in shaping consumer preference towards women-led brands, aligning with the studies that emphasize how influencers create substantial visibility and familiarity for brands (Chen & Yuan, 2023). The study follows the path from social media influencers to consumer trust which shows positive correlation between preference, engagement and purchase intentions as trust is the fundamental driver for purchase decision towards women-led brands. The direct relationship between consumer trust and consumer preferences and have strong correlation mentioned above in the table. This outcome further define that influencers significantly have positive correlation affects on the purchasing preferences by providing relatable and informative content. Lastly the study shows strong positive inter –item correlation between variables from consumer trust to brand preference, brand preference to repeated engagement and engagement to purchase intentions.

Conclusion

The role of social media influencers in shaping consumer preferences for women-led brands is multifaceted, encompassing consumer trust, brand preference, and purchase intention. Influencers who authentically align with the values of women-led brands can foster trust, enhance brand preference, and drive purchase intention among their followers. Their ability to authentically connect with audiences and align with brand values enhances their effectiveness in promoting women-led businesses. These findings have important implications for marketers and brand managers, suggesting that collaborations with influencers should prioritize authenticity and shared values. Future research could explore the long-term impact of influencer endorsements on brand loyalty and the potential challenges associated with performative activism. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, the strategic use of influencers will remain a critical component of marketing strategies for women-led brands.

References

1. Kamberidou, I. (2020). Women entrepreneurs: 'we cannot have change unless we have men in the room.' *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 9(1), 1-27.
2. Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 58-73.
3. Lee, J. E., & Eastin, M. S. (2020). Trust in the influencer: The role of influencer-brand fit in the effectiveness of Instagram influencers. *Journal of Business Research*, 125, 529-540.

4. Brown, D., & Hayes, N. (2022). Influencer marketing: Turning fans into consumers. Palgrave Macmillan
5. Jones, K., & Park, S. (2021). The impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(4), 587- 605.
6. Kim, D.Y.; Kim, H.-Y. (2021) Trust Me, Trust Me Not: A Nuanced View of Influencer Marketing on Social Media. *J. Bus. Res.* **2021**, 134, 223–232.
7. Abidin, C. (2016). Visibility labour: Engaging with influencers' fashion brands and #OOTD advertorial campaigns on Instagram. *Media International Australia*, 161(1), 86-100.
8. Audrezet, A., de Kerviler, G., & Guidry Moulard, J. (2020). Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 557-569.
9. Djafarova, E., & Bowes, T. (2021). 'Instagram made me buy it': Generation Z impulse purchases in fashion industry. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 59, 102345.
10. Godey, B., Manthiou, A., Pedersoli, D., Rokka, J., Aiello, G., Donvito, R., & Singh, R. (2016). Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(12), 5833-5841.
11. Labrecque, L. I. (2014). Fostering consumer–brand relationships in social media environments: The role of parasocial interaction. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 28(2), 134-148.
12. Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 58-73.
13. Veirman, M. D., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: The impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798-828.
14. Tan, M., Lee, J., & Chen, S. (2022). Exploring the role of influencers in consumer decision-making on e-commerce platforms: Evidence from Southeast Asia. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, 23(4), 345-360.
15. Smith, A., & Tran, H. (2022). Social media influence on consumer preferences in e-commerce: A Southeast Asian perspective. *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 35(3), 223-238. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.2018>
16. Zhang, H., Wang, J., & Lin, Y. (2023). Trust, authenticity, and consumer behavior: A study of social media influencers in digital commerce. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 33(1), 27-42.
17. Zhou, L., & Wong, K. W. (2023). The role of social media influencers in brand engagement: A systematic review. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 50(1), 56- 74. Yeo, C., & Chong, S. (2023). Managing brand identity in the age of influencer marketing: The case of Southeast Asian e-commerce. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 51(1), 19-32.
18. Rahman, M., & Nasir, A. (2023). Exploring the role of social media influencers in building brand loyalty through brand awareness. *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, 11(2), 123-137.
19. Patel, A., & Sharma, N. (2023). Reducing perceived risk in e-commerce through influencer marketing: The role of trust and engagement. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 70, 102295.
20. Mönkäre, S. (2022). The impact of social media marketing on brand loyalty.
21. Jamil, K., Dunnan, L., Gul, R. F., Shehzad, M. U., Gillani, S. H. M., & Awan, F. H. (2022). Role of social media marketing activities in influencing customer intentions: a perspective of a new emerging era. *Frontiers in psychology*, 12, 808525.

