

Impact Of Influencer Marketing On Consumer Purchase Intention Towards Sustainable Apparels

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Abstract

Influencer marketing is rapidly being utilized as a platform for promotional activities. Sustainability has begun to make an impact in the Indian market. The abrupt increase in consciousness is one of the primary causes of this surge. The focus of this study is on analysing the connections between consumers' attitudes, beliefs, and intentions to buy sustainable apparels promoted via influencer marketing, influencer credibility, social influence, and perceived consumer effectiveness. Survey data was gathered from 463 individuals residing in Visakhapatnam and the surrounding East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh via the use of a questionnaire. The data analysis was carried out using the Amos 22.0 software. A favourable attitude, influencer credibility, social influence, and perceived consumer effectiveness all lead to purchase intention, according to the data. This research amplifies the elements that impact consumers intention to purchase sustainable apparels with reference to influencer marketing.

Keywords Attitude, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Theory of Reasoned Action, Influencer Marketing, Perceived Consumer Effectiveness, Social Influence.

Introduction

To increase awareness, sales, or involvement in an endeavour, "influencer marketing" entails locating and enrolling influential members of a target demographic or media source. (Nurfadila & Riyanto, 2020). Brands may benefit greatly from this kind of relationship development since it helps them connect with and keep customers (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Influencer marketing is mostly used by marketers to create brand integrity and to build social conversions for their brand (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). The Digital Marketing Institute found that 22% of marketers believe influencer marketing to be the most dynamic method of acquiring new customers online (Simon et al., 2022). The diversity of accessible talent is both the greatest strength and greatest challenge of influencer marketing (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Grand View Research predicts that

between 2020 and 2027, the influencer marketing industry would develop globally at a CAGR of 35.7%. Sustainability concept has gained more prominence in this 21st century due to rapidly increasing population and declining natural resources. Concerned shoppers are starting to show their green colours in what they buy as a direct response to the recent uptick in environmental problems (Emekci, 2018). Environmentally aware consumer behaviour is the subject of much study in recent decades (Straughan and Roberts, 1999; Roberts, 1996; Roberts and Bacon, 1997; Akehurst et al., 2012; Kinnear et al., 1974). These investigations utilized clients' characters, age ranges, income brackets, and education levels to create distinct market subgroups (Emekci, 2018). Massive changes are occurring in the realm of sustainable apparels (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Sustainable Apparels can be defined as clothing which are

produced using ethical and environmental friendly production systems (Saricum & Okur,2019). Although consumers' concern and understanding may not always convert into action, they recognise the significance of sustainability in the clothing business and their own part in bringing it about. (Pereira et al.,2021). Now a days there is a changed perspectives of firms that are concentrating more on sustainability and are incorporating circular economy, lowsumerism, sharing economy in Apparel Industry like never before (Todeschini,2017). Lately, the notion of sustainability has gained an significant role in apparel industry owing to its tendency to impact consumers and their buying behaviours (Ciasullo et.al, 2017). Because of this, the research here focuses on how influencer marketing might impact customers' tastes and, by extension, their wallets, in favour of sustainable garments.

Statement of Problem

Influencer marketing is a sort of modern celebrity endorsements and marketers are hiring social media influencers to brand their products or services as consumers are more relying on the opinions and feedback of these influencers (Saima & Khan,2019). Despite the widespread interest in influencer marketing, most studies to date have focused on the traditional media channels and how different endorser traits affect consumers' decisions to buy. (Costanzo & Goodnight, 2005; Kumar, 2011; Premeaux, 2009; Ohanian, 1991; Spears et al., 2013) and there were fewer studies that have concentrated on consumer purchase intention towards sustainable apparels. Therefore, this research aims to determine how influencer marketing influences customers' preferences for sustainable clothing. The main aim of this study is thus to examine the impact of influencer marketing on consumers intention to buy eco-accommodating apparel.

Need for the Study

Due to the advancement of technology and widely accessible internet consumers are becoming more demanding like never before. Brands are utilizing social media influencers as consumers are most likely to trust and turning to influencers for their advice and recommendations before making a purchase (prnewswire.com). Given that companies have been increasingly interested in digital influencers in recent years, it is critical to broaden existing understanding regarding influencer marketing in sustainable apparels (Gomes et al.,2022). Research on influencer marketing and sustainable apparels is still in budding stage and needed further development.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

Numerous fields, including sociology, psychology, and social psychology, have used TPB to better comprehend the notoriously complex and baffling nature of human behaviour. (Emekci,2018). Environmental consumer behaviour was explained with TPB by researchers (Dean, 2016; Paul et al., 2016;Mostafa, 2007; Davies et al., 2002; Tonglet et al., 2004; Chan, 2001). TRA is extended by Theory of Planned Behaviour(TPB) ((Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Perceived Behavioural Control is the variable that distinguishes TRA from TPB ; Persons attitudes, subjective norms and intentions are positively affected and are thought to be best predictors of behaviour according to classical TRA model.

Attitude

Kotler and Armstrong (1996) One of the definitions of brand position is "the positive or horrible assessment of a brand or item on the lookout", The marketing and advertising industries rely heavily on studies of customer

attitudes to make educated predictions about their future purchases. (Oliver 1980; Shih 2004; Kobia and Liu 2017; Evans and Bang 2019). Sustainable Attitudes are congruent predictor of the purchasing behaviour due to their high explanatory power (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996). There is a dearth of literature on the topic of how one's outlook affects their propensity to buy apparel. (Trivedi & Sama,2019).

H1: Attitude has positive significant impact on consumer purchase intention towards sustainable apparels.

Influencer Credibility

By "a perceiver's appraisal of the communicator's credibility," we may say that credibility has been defined (O'Keefe, 1990). Customers' attitudes and purchasing choices are greatly impacted by the credibility of influencers. (Chakraborty & Bhat, 2018; Chin et al., 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Hayes & Carr, 2015). According to (McCracken, 1989; Ohanian, 1990) credibility includes factors such as expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness (Lee & Kim,2020). Spry et al., 2011) delineated that influencers with high credibility positively impact consumer's attitude towards advertising, E-WOM compared to celebrity endorsers hence purchase intention of consumers heavily dependent on influencer credibility.

H2: Influencer Credibility has positive significant impact on consumer purchase intention towards sustainable apparels

Social Influences

The definition of social influence is "the process by which individuals modify their attitudes and behaviours to conform to those of a dominant social group or a politically or economically oppressed subset of that group"

(psychologistworld.com). According to a number of studies, friends and family members' opinions are a major factor that impacts consumers' decisions to make a purchase. (Dean et al., 2012; Ha and Janda, 2012). Consumers purchasing behaviour is hugely impacted by the peer group in collectivist cultures like India (Dewanto & Belgiawan,2020). Consumers are prone to social influence through their friends and peers towards apparel brands and purchase choices as a result of their socialization process (Chew & Leng,2016), as a result marketers are utilizing social media influencers to create an impact on consumers. Hence,

H3: Social Influences does have a positive significant impact on consumer purchase intention towards sustainable apparels.

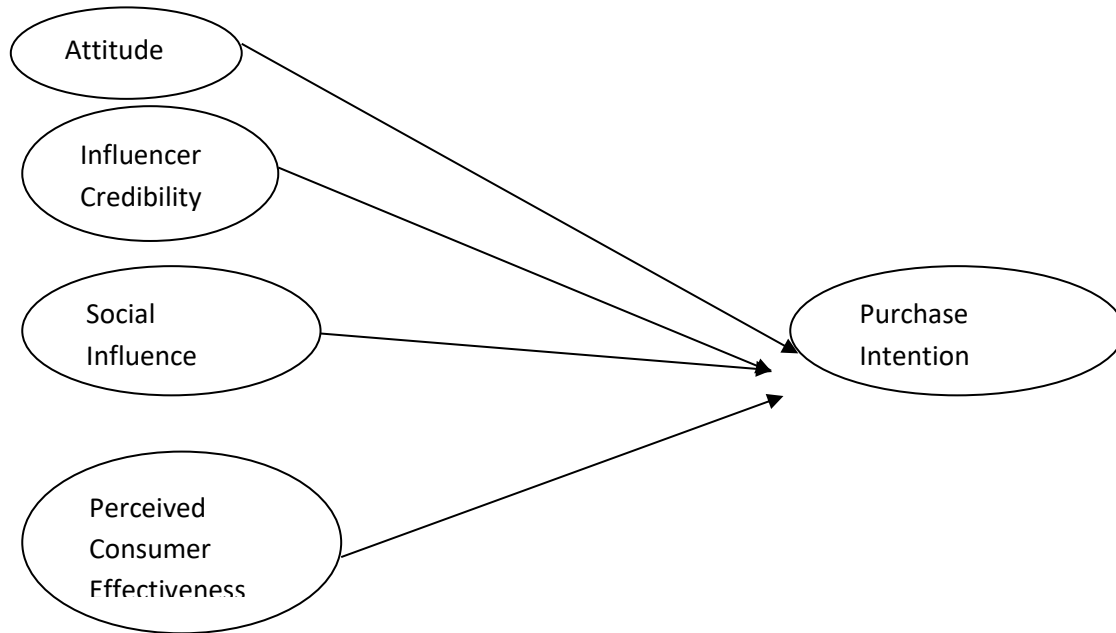
Perceived Consumer Effectiveness

"A domain-specific concept of how a person's efforts at solving a problem can make a difference" is what is meant by the phrase "perceived consumer efficacy." (González et al., 2015). Higher ecological concern was shown by individuals with greater consumer effectiveness towards environmental protection compared to individuals with lower efficacy (Kinneer et al., 1974). PCE was found to affect purchaser conduct towards all the more socially manageable buying designs. (Kim and Choi, 2005; Vermeir and Verbeke, 2008; Webb et al., 2008). As per Roberts' study(1996), PCE represents one of the key measures of environmental consciousness consumer behaviour. Thus,

H4: Perceived Consumer Effectiveness has a positive significant impact on consumer purchase intention towards sustainable apparels.

Research Model

Figure 1 Research Model



Methodology

Instrument Development

For this study, researcher used a modified version of a five-point likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" to create their survey. The scale to measure Attitude was drawn from Emekci(2018), Influencer Credibility and Perceived Consumer Effectiveness from Zheng & Chi (2014), Social Influence & Purchase Intention were drawn from Sun and Wang (2019).

Sampling and Data Collection

Consumers in East Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh responded to a structured survey distributed online (using Google Forms) and offline. Customers who follow at least two social media influencers were included and respondents had to be active on at least two social media platforms. The research was descriptive in nature and employed convenience sampling. While 550 replies were

received in total, only 463 were considered valid for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data Analysis Procedure

The proposed research model was additionally approved utilizing corroborative component examination. AMOS 20 was utilized to check the covariance network to get proof for the five-factor speculation basic the scaling model. The research contains Attitude, Influencer Credibility, Social Influences, Perceived Consumer Effectiveness and purchase intention to use. Model fit indices concluded that the hypothesised model is a fit model with $CMIN/df = 2.111$, $CFI = 0.975$, $NFI = 0.953$, $GFI = 0.932$, $RMSEA = 0.054$, $RMR = 0.024$. All the items were considerably loaded on to latent construct. Table 2 shows the factor loadings that were found. In addition, in Table 3, we can see the results of the analyzes that confirm the convergent and discriminant validity of the concepts.

Data Analysis Results

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Category	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	214	46.3
	Female	249	53.7
Age(years)	Up to 18	6	1.3
	19-24	239	51.7
	25-30	127	27.4
	30 years and above	91	19.6
Education	Under Graduate	73	15.7
	Graduate	165	35.6
	Post Graduate	206	44.5
	Doctorate	1	0.3
	Professional Degree/ Diploma Course	18	3.9
Frequency of using social media sites	Daily	459	99.1
	Weekly	3	0.6
	Once a month	1	0.3
	Rarely	0	0

Descriptive statistics were used to examine demographic profile. There were 53.7% female and 46.3% male. There were only 1.3% respondents up to 18 years old, 19 to 24 years consists of 51.7% , 25 to 30 years were 27.4% , 30 and above years comprised of 19.6%. In terms of educational qualification Under Graduates were 15.7% Graduates were 35.6%, Post Graduates were 44.5% and Doctorates were 0.3% and Diploma courses were 3.9%. 99.1 % of respondents were using social media every day,

0.6% were using weekly and only 0.3% were using once a month.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach alpha and composite reliability evaluates the construct reliability. Since the threshold value must be above 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010) in order to consider for further analysis, we can see that all the constructs have reliability above 0.7 and are considered for further analysis.

Table 2 Factor loadings, Construct reliability and Convergent validity

Factor	Code	Factor loading	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	CR
Attitude (ATT)			0.895	0.79	0.809
	ATT1	0.892			
	ATT2	0.891			

	ATT3	0.883			
Influencer Credibility (IC)			0.9	0.709	0.742
	IC1	0.881			
	IC2	0.855			
	IC3	0.831			
	IC4	0.797			
Social Influence (SI)			0.894	0.814	0.829
	SI1	0.924			
	SI2	0.913			
	SI3	0.868			
Perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE)			0.938	0.772	0.794
	PCE1	0.862			
	PCE2	0.852			
	PCE3	0.834			
Behavioural Intention (BI)			0.912	0.722	0.753
	BI1	0.87			
	BI2	0.866			
	BI3	0.841			
	BI4	0.821			

Table 3 Discriminant Validity

	ATT	IC	SI	PCE	BI
ATT	0.767				
IC	0.365	0.801			
SI	0.015	0.312	0.832		
PCE	0.092	0.339	0.317	0.819	
BI	0.056	0.445	0.506	0.312	0.845

Convergent Validity

In the words of O’Leary-Kelly and Vokurka (1998), the extent to which different measurement methods produce similar results for a given variable. It shows how reliable different approaches to the same variable may be. Convergent validity was ensured by factor

loadings of greater than 0.07 and an average value of all constructs above 0.05. (Hair et al., 2010). There was therefore convergence validity among the various conceptions.

Discriminant Validity

This graph shows the "degree to which different latent variable measures can be distinguished from each other." (O'Leary-Kelly and Vokurka, 1998). Fornell-Larcker criteria was represented by ATT (0.767), IC (0.801), SI (0.832), PCE (0.819), and BI (0.819). (0.845). It exceeded the correlation values found between any two constructs and all other constructs combined. Therefore, the notions have discriminant validity.

Model fit

Model fit for all the four constructs of the measurement model was measured using GFI, AGFI, CMIN/df, RMSEA and RMR. It is confirmed that all fit indices meet the Hair et al.(2010) cut-off requirements. Structural model fit was assessed using analysis of moment squares with maximum likelihood.

Table 4 Model Fit

Fitness Index	Accepted Value	Measurement Model	Structural Model
CMIN / DF	<3 good, <5 permissible	2.111	2.171
RMR	< 0.5	0.024	0.092
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.054	0.076
CFI	> 0.9	0.0975	0.948
NFI	> 0.9	0.953	0.926
TLI	> 0.9	0.968	0.938
GFI	> 0.8	0.932	0.901

Table 5 Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis path	Estimate	t-static	p-value	Result
H1 (ATT □ BI)	0.36	0.05	***	Supported
H2 (IC □ BI)	0.174	0.069	0.004	Supported
H3 (SI □ BI)	0.084	0.043	0.043	Supported
H4 (PCE □ BI)	0.362	0.059	***	Supported

*** p<0.001

Discussion

This research tested the effects of influencer marketing on consumers' adoption of environmentally friendly clothing by drawing on the Theory of Reasoned Action and the Theory of

Planned Behavior. Having a positive outlook has been shown to have a direct and substantial effect on the likelihood of a consumer making a purchase. This agrees with the prior studies that found attitudes to be a crucial factor (Emekci,

2018). It is based on attitude that consumers get utmost motivation to purchase or not to purchase. Hence, attitude plays a significant role. Influencer credibility has shown positive impact on purchase intention towards sustainable apparels which is supported by Chakraborty et al. (2015). This may be due to the fact that consumers have more trust on influencers and consider them to authentic, trustworthy, and realistic than celebrities in this millennial era and relates to influencers compared to celebrity endorsements (questionpro.com). Social Influence has shown positive significant impact which is in line with previous studies by (Sun & Wang, 2019). This may be due to people need acceptance and consideration from their family, friends, and peers. Furthermore, a beneficial influence of perceived consumer efficacy is supported by (Kang et al., 2013).

Implications

The discoveries of this study are applicable to scientists and professionals. This exploration adds to the developing writing on force to be reckoned with showcasing by expanding our insight into the variables that impact shoppers' penchant to buy in a socially and ethnically different nation like India. The results of this research help educate consumers and pave the way for effective communication that encourages them to make more sustainable lifestyle choices. There are various administrative consequences of this study's outcomes. Organizations can conclude whether putting resources into a force to be reckoned with will take care of as expanded deals and brand openness by understanding what elements impact the buying intention of the followers of social media influencers.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has a few restrictions. This research is confined to only two districts of geographical area in Andhra Pradesh and only active users of

social networking sites. Non-users and casual users of social networking sites may be deterred by concerns about security, danger, and privacy. This research concentrated on factors like Attitude, Influencer Credibility, Social Influence and Perceived Consumer Effectiveness to gauge the purchase intention towards sustainable apparels on influencer marketing. Future studies could concentrate on other factors like Trustworthiness, Quality of Content, Post Purchase behaviour towards influencer marketing.

Conclusion

In order to proactively alter the consumer's attitude towards brands most of the companies are relying on influencer marketing which is evolving in recent times. Sustainable apparels are gaining more prominence in this millennial era as it requires and brand are concentrating as it contains less wastage and leaves less carbon foot print. The study's objective is to provide insight on how influencer marketing affects customers' decisions to invest in eco-friendly garments. By creating a theoretical framework and putting it through empirical testing with a representative sample, the current review adds to the development of the hypothesis of arranged conduct and the hypothesis of contemplated activity, which have been all displayed to assume a significant part in impacting buy expectation on economical dress.

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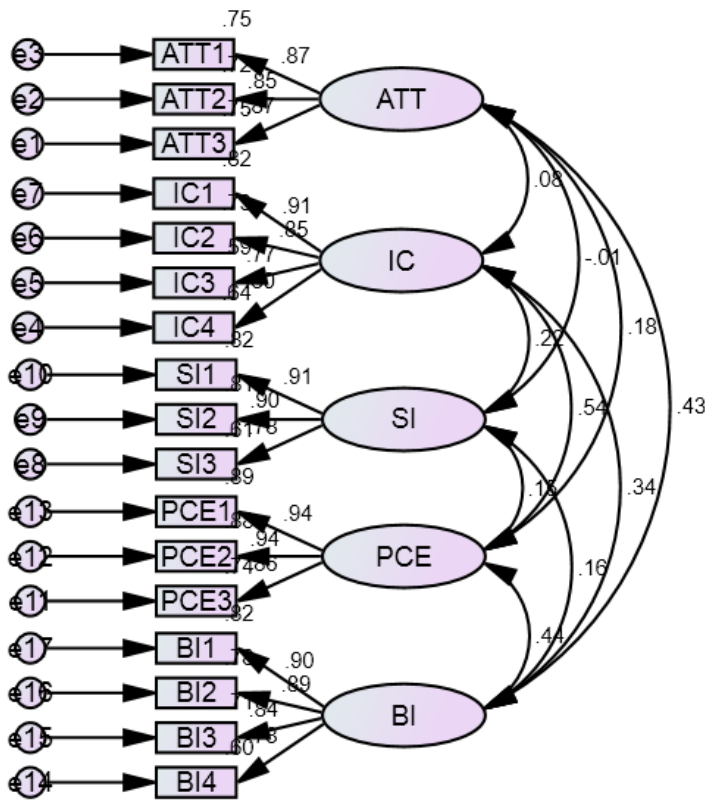
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Appendix:

Measurement Model

Figure 2 Measurement Model



Structural Model

Figure 3 Structural Model

