

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON THE BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF STUDENTS IN GUWAHATI CITY

ABSTRACT

Social media influencers are crucial in influencing students' shopping decisions in the modern digital age. With an emphasis on elements including influencer credibility, lifestyle alignment, content engagement, and perceived authenticity, this study investigates the impact of social media influencers on students' purchasing decisions in Guwahati City. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire from 91 students in a sample using a descriptive study methodology. According to the results, 91% of participants follow influencers, especially those in gaming, fashion, fitness, and beauty industries. 53% of people are likely or very likely to buy things that influencers promote, and the majority interact with influencer material on a weekly basis. The most important determinant in decision making was product category expertise, which was followed by lifestyle relatability. Social media influencers have a big impact on how students behave as consumers, despite some reservations about authenticity and trust. The study comes to the conclusion that, as long as influencers continue to be open and personable with their audience, influencer marketing may be a very effective technique, brands using digital channels to target student demographics will find these data useful.

KEYWORDS

Social media influencers, students buying behaviour, influencer marketing, purchase intention, Guwahati students, online purchase decisions, trust in influencers.

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, social media influencers exert quite an important influence on students behaviour, as they help to shape their purchasing decisions and influence attitudes in relation to brands and certain products. Influencers often create relatability and trust with followers. This consequently increases brand awareness as it drives purchase intention. To market services and products, brands use social media influencers at all levels. They do this in order to mostly make a specific target audience aware of the brand.

This study explores how social media influencers impact students' purchase decisions, since it looks at how influencers shape students' shopping habits. According to the study, influencers marketing tactics affect students' opinions also inclinations to buy as well as general consumer behaviour. For this group, examining important factors such as authenticity, credibility and the kinds of content they post will determine influencer effectiveness.

A social media influencer is simply a person who actually has amassed quite a sizable online following. Interesting material and the power to affect followers' thoughts and decisions also give them influence. Corporations may be worked with for promoting their products. Social media influencers, (Erwin 2023) argues, have become pivotal at shaping gen z consumers' behaviours and opinions. Purchase intentions, brand image, and how consumers decide are also greatly impacted across fashion and tourism industries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kadam, N. et al (2021). According to this study, a methodical questionnaire will be employed to collect primary data in order to examine the connection between the typical consumer's trust in influencers and the ensuing purchasing habits of Pune's young people, namely those between the ages of 15 and 25. A total of 157 respondents provided data, of whom 69 were men and 88 were women. Because it examines the available data, the study is descriptive in nature. Nowadays, the vast majority of companies prioritize digital and social media marketing and adopt a customer-centric strategy. Influencer marketing is an excellent illustration of how social media advertising is carried out in a very covert, nearly unconscious manner. Because it examines the available data, the study is descriptive in nature. The impact of social media influencers is the independent variable in this study, while student behavior is the dependent variable. It is very common to leverage social media influencers and their brand image to advertise products and services.

Almost all influencer types have a tendency to promote a brand in their interactions with audiences, whether it be through posts, videos, or other media.

Castro, C.A et al (2021). have outlined the effects of social media influencers on the lives of pupils. This literature review's primary goal is to increase marketing professionals' understanding of the impact social media influencers have on students and how brands use them to promote their goods and content. Across the world teenagers are using internet social media in their daily lives. The review's primary conclusions include information on social media influencers' identities, identification techniques, effects on students' lives, and collaborations between brands and social media influencers.

Devi, S & Mahapatra S.N. (2021). The use of social media influencers by businesses to market their goods has been steadily increasing over the past few decades. The purpose of this study was to determine how consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by the trustworthiness of social media influencers (SMIs). Data from 123 respondents in Delhi/NCR was gathered using a structured questionnaire. especially those between the ages of 26 and 35. Of these, 54 respondents were men and 69 were women. Every single one of the 123 respondents used social media. The study's goal was to determine how social media influencers impact customers' shopping decisions. The information and entertainment value of the social media influencers' posts significantly impacted their credibility in this study. Therefore, future research could look at the influencers' areas of expertise and the products they recommend to see if the results differ.

Chan, F. (2022). The current study's theoretical foundation is drawn from literature reviews and exploratory research. The target respondents are people in the United Kingdom who are between the ages of 18 and 65. A total of 483 responses were gathered for analysis using the MTurk platform. We also looked at how prevalent influencer marketing has become in recent years. Because of their reach and genuineness, social media influencers have a sizable following and the power to influence others. In order to reach their target audience, improve brand awareness, and boost profitability, brands are collaborating with and taking advantage of social media influencers. Influencers on social media are knowledgeable in specific topics like fashion, travel, lifestyle, food, and healthy living. The most popular platforms among influencers are Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Ferreira, MF (2023) in this research it stated that in the quickly changing digital environment of today, social media has a great impact on students. And social media influencers whose online prominence and persuasive power have redefined the dynamics of students behavior. In this research quantitative approach was adopted. This study included the participations of the students from Porto School of Accounting and Business who have interest to follow social media influencers. The data was successfully collected from 204 individuals, and of them qualified as valid respondents. It aims to look into how purchase intention mediates the link between students and social media influencers. Social media influencers quickly become a new type of content creation in the aftermath of social media. This influencers are recognized for their substantial following and active online presence. In this dissertation a deductive descriptive approach was selected due to its thorough congruence with the principles of logical thinking.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

The study is based on the following objectives:

1. To analyze the impact of social media influencer on students' buying behaviour

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is descriptive in nature and has been conducted in the Guwahati city area. The primary research approach adopted for the study is the survey technique which was used to understand the effect of social media influencers on the buying behaviour of students in Guwahati. Both primary and secondary data form the basis of the study. A well structured questionnaire with straightforward, understandable, and multiple choice questions to guarantee ease of answer was used to gather the primary data. 91 respondents make up the study's sample size, which was chosen by a straightforward non probability sampling technique. The questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table no 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Category	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	45	49%
	Female	46	51%
Age Distribution	15-20	2	2%
	21-25	52	57%
	26-30	27	30%
	30 and above	10	11%
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate	43	47%
	Postgraduate	37	41%
	Other	11	12%
Disability Status	Yes	4	4%
	No	87	96%

110 (Source: Field Survey, 2025)

111 Table no 2: Table showing do you follow any social media influencer?

Influencer follow status	No. of respondents	percentage
Yes	83	91%
No	8	9%
Total	91	100%

112 (Source: Field Survey, 2025)

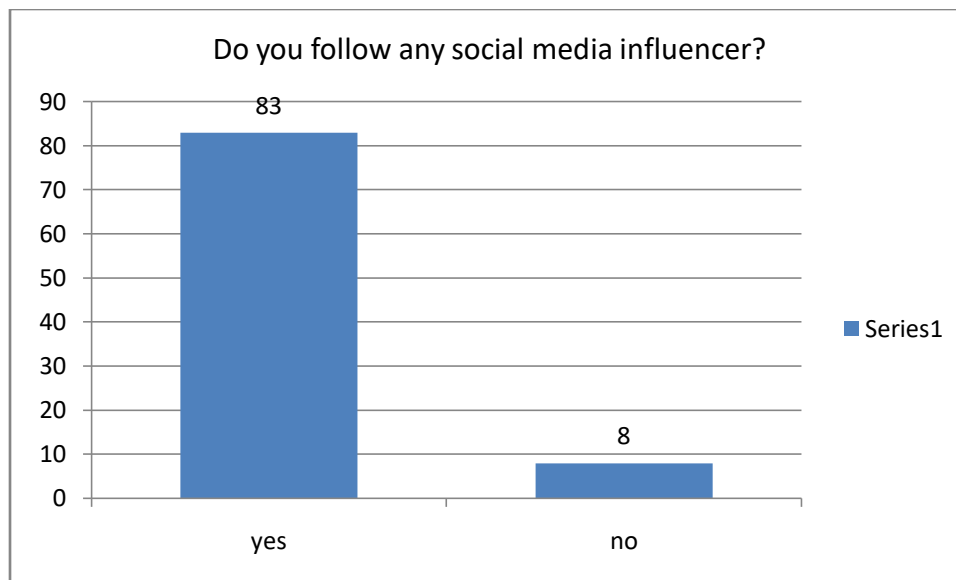


Figure 2

Interpretation: From the above figure can be seen that majority of respondents 91% said yes and 9% respondents said no.

Table No: 3: Table showing if yes, what type of influencer do you follow ?

Type of influencer followed	No. of respondents	Percentage
Beauty and fashion	27	30%
Fitness and wellness	25	27%
Gaming	18	20%
Other	21	23%
Total	91	100%

(Source: Field Survey, 2025)

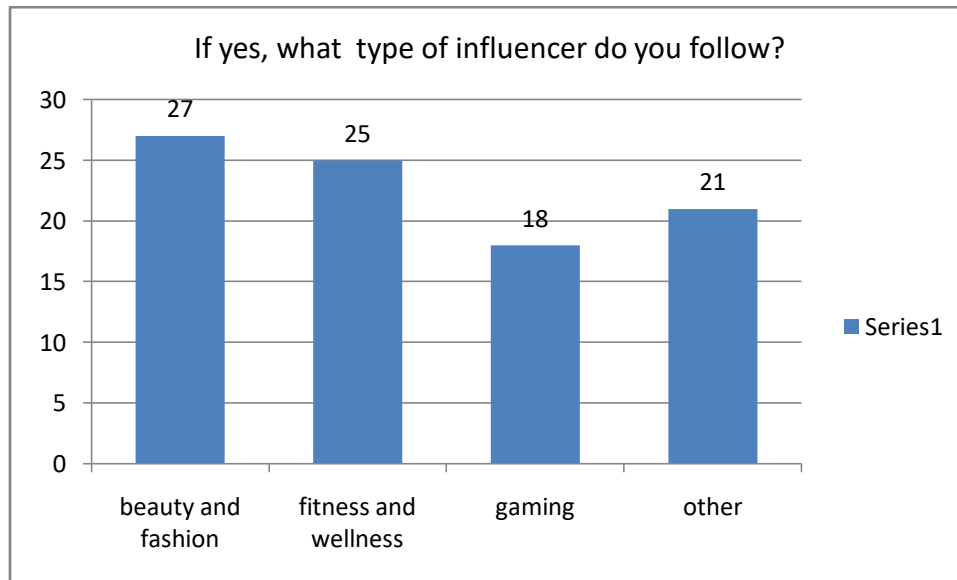


Figure 3

Interpretation: from the above figure can be seen that 30% respondents follow beauty and fashion, while 27% follow fitness and wellness, the other 20% respondents follow gaming category and 23% respondents follow the other group.

Table No 4: Table showing how often do respondents engage with social media influencers content?

Influencer engagement frequency	No. of respondents	percentage
Daily	24	26%
Weekly	46	51%
Monthly	15	16%

Rarely	6	7%
Total	91	100%

(Source: Field Survey, 2025)

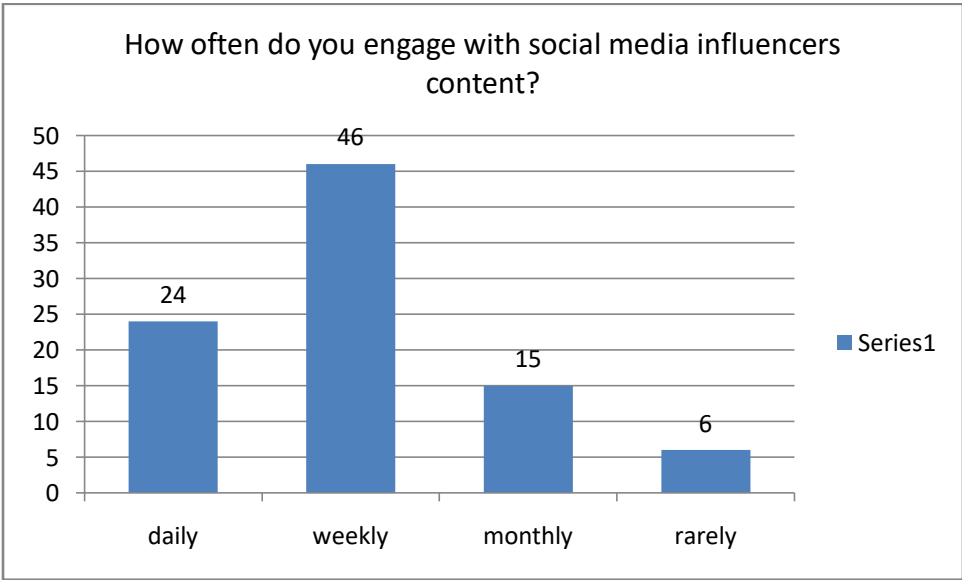


Figure 4

Interpretation: The data reveals that 26% of respondents daily engage with social media influencers content, while majority of respondents 51% engage weekly with social media influencers content, the other 16% engage monthly and a small portion 7% engage rarely with social media influencers content.

Table No 5: Table showing that how likely are you to purchase a product if it is promoted by a social media influencer you follow?

Purchase likelihood from influencer promotion	No. of respondents	Percentage

Very likely	12	13%
Likely	36	40%
Neutral	34	37%
Unlikely	4	4%
Very unlikely	5	6%
Total	91	100%

(Source: Field Survey, 2025)

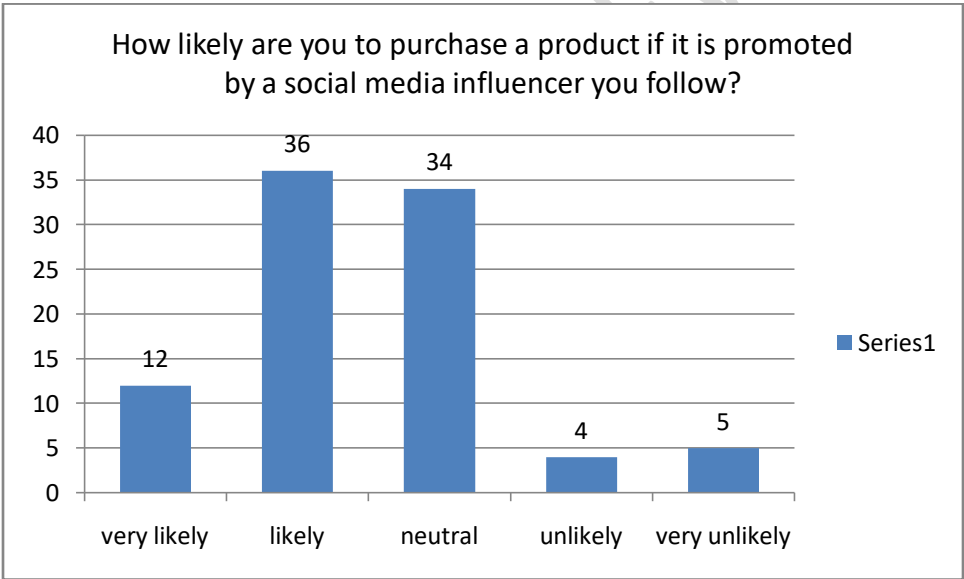


Figure: 5

Interpretation: From the above figure can be seen that 13% respondents are very likely to purchase a product if it is promoted by social media influencer, while 40% respondents are likely to purchase a product, 37% respondents are neutral. A small portion 4% of respondents are unlikely and 6% of respondents are very unlikely.

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149 Table No 6: Table showing which of the following factors most influences your decision to buy a
150 product based on an influencers recommendation?

Most influential factor	No. of respondents	Percentage
Their lifestyle	30	33%
Their expertise in the product category	39	43%
Their perceived authenticity	17	19%
The discount code they offer	5	5%
Total	91	100%

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(Source: Field Survey, 2025)

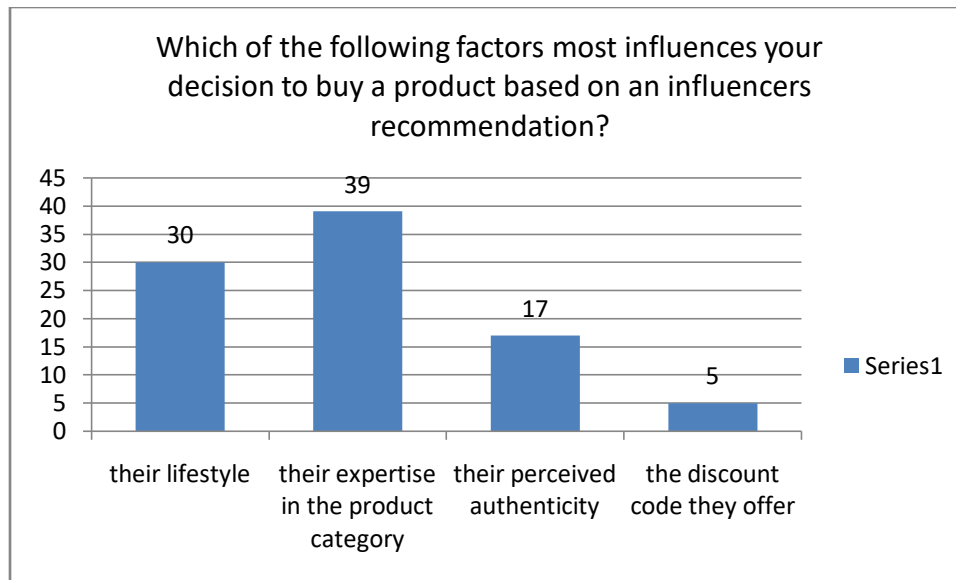


Figure 6

Interpretation: From the above figure can be seen that students are most influenced by an influencer's expertise in the product category (43%), followed by their lifestyle (33%). Perceived authenticity (19%) also plays a role but is less significant, while discount codes (5%) have the less impact.

Table No 7: Table showing how often do you make purchasing decisions based on social media recommendation?

Purchase frequency via social media recommendation	No. of respondents	percentage
Always	5	6%
Often	22	24%
Sometimes	47	52%
Rarely	15	16%

Never	2	2%
Total	91	100%

(Source: Field Survey, 2025)

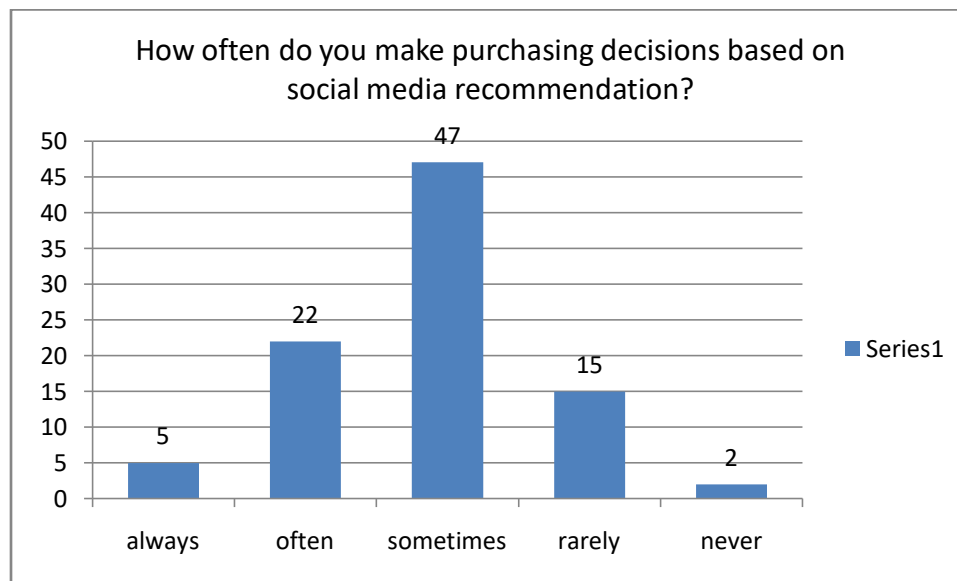


Figure 7

Interpretation: From the above figure can be seen that 6% always make purchasing decision based on social media recommendation, while 24% often. 52% sometimes being the most common response. 16% rarely and a small portion 2% never.

Summary of findings

- The findings of a study reveals that majority of respondents are of age group between 21-25, accounting for 52 out of 91 total participants. Followed by the 26-30 age group with 27 respondents, while 10 respondents are aged 30 and above and only 2 respondents belong to the 15-20 age group.

- The findings of the study reveal that out of total respondents, 49% were male and 51% were female, indicating a nearly balanced gender representation in the sample. No respondents selected prefer not to say. Suggesting all participants were comfortable disclosing their gender identity.
- From the study it is observed that majority of respondents have an undergraduate educational qualification 47% followed by post graduation and other qualification.
- The study showed that the vast majority of respondents i.e., 96% reported that they do not consider themselves to have a disability, while only a small portion 4% indicated that they do. And 0% selected prefers not to say.

Findings related to objective 1: To analyze the impact of social media influencer on students buying behaviour.

- The study showed that a significant portion of the respondents 91% follow social media influencers, indicating strong engagement with influencer driven content, while 9% do not follow any influencers.
- The study reveals that out of 91 respondents, 29% said beauty and fashion, 25% said fitness and wellness, while 18% respondents choose gaming and 21% of respondents with other group.
- According to the study its showed that out of 91 respondents, 26% daily engage with social media influencers content, while 51% weekly, 16% monthly and 7% rarely.
- As per the analysis it can be stated that 13% very likely to purchase a product if it is promoted by social media influencer. Additionally 40% likely to purchase a product. While 37% are neutral. However only 4% are unlikely and 5% are very unlikely.
- The study reveal that the primary reason respondents follow social media influencers is their expertise in the product category 43%, followed by their lifestyle 33%, perceived authenticity influenced 19% of respondents, while discount codes offered by influencers motivated 5%.
- The findings of the study reveals that 6% of respondents said always, 24% said often, 52% said sometimes, 16% said rarely and 2% said never.

200 **SUGGESTIONS**

- 201 • Collaborate with experts: Given that 43% of respondents follow influencers based on their level
202 of expertise, marketers ought to work with influencers who are regarded as subject matter
203 experts in particular product categories.
- 204 • Increase influencer credibility to boost trust: It's critical to collaborate with influencers that
205 uphold transparency because 80% of respondents said they had doubts about the influencer's
206 legitimacy and 82% indicated a lack of trust influenced their decisions to buy.
207
- 208 • Use lifestyle-based storytelling: Since lifestyle alignment affects 33% of students, marketers
209 should choose influencers whose values and way of life appeal to the target audience in order to
210 establish relatability and an emotional bond.
- 211 • Strategically use discount codes: even if they only have a 5% influence, employing them in
212 conjunction with reliable influencers might act as a last push to convert intent into action.

213 **CONCLUSION**

214 The study concludes that Students' purchasing habits in Guwahati City are greatly influenced by
215 social media influencers. The majority of students actively follows and engages with influencers,
216 especially those in the beauty, fashion, fitness, and gaming sectors. Influencer's expertise,
217 lifestyle and perceived authenticity are key factors that shape students' purchasing decisions.
218 Students particularly those between the ages of 21 to 25, are mostly active on social media
219 platforms and also engage frequently with their content, which suggest that this group is
220 especially receptive to digital marketing strategies.

221 However, trust plays critical role-many students have expressed doubts about influencer
222 credibility, which directly affects their willingness to buy recommended products. Despite this, a
223 considerable portion of students still make purchasing decisions based on influencer content,
224 indicating the growing role of social media in shaping consumer preferences among youth.
225 Overall, influencer marketing proves to be an effective tool, provided the influencer maintains
226 authenticity and trust with their audience. Social media influencers are indeed powerful agents in
227 shaping students consumer behaviour in Guwahati, but their effectiveness relies heavily on

sustained credibility, genuine engagement, and the capacity to establish an ethical and personal connection with the audience.

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