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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EXPLORING THE MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL FORCES SHAPING FASHION INFLUENCER MARKETING: INSIGHTS FROM A PESTLE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most powerful digital marketing strategies. Social media personalities in the fashion industry play a crucial role in shaping how consumers discover brands, assess products, and make purchase decisions. The rapid growth of social media platforms has enabled fashion influencers to shape consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchasing behavior through visually driven and interactive content. While influencer marketing offers significant opportunities for fashion brands, its development is strongly affected by external environmental forces. This paper provides a comprehensive PESTLE analysis of influencer marketing in the fashion industry by examining political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors shaping its evolution. The study adopts a structured analytical approach based on existing literature and current digital marketing trends. The findings suggest that regulatory changes, economic dynamics in digital advertising, evolving consumer culture, technological innovation, data privacy laws, and sustainability concerns significantly affect influencer marketing practices in the fashion sector. The analysis demonstrates that while influencer marketing provides strong market growth potential for fashion brands, it also presents challenges related to regulation, authenticity, ethical concerns, and sustainability pressures. The present study significantly contributes to existing marketing literature by offering a structured macro environmental analysis of influencer marketing in fashion and provides valuable insights for researchers, fashion marketers, and policymakers seeking to understand the broader ecosystem shaping the rapidly expanding Indian fashion industry.

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Introduction: -

The rapid advancement of digital technologies and social media platforms has significantly transformed the landscape of marketing communication (Kant et al., 2025). Social media influencers acting as third party endorsers and influencing followers attitudes and preferences by sharing product and experiences online (George et al., 2025).

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Influencer marketing refers to a form of digital marketing in which brands collaborate with social media personalities who have large and engaged audiences (Joshi et al., 2023). The influencers are regular people who use their knowledge, experience, and competence in a specific field (Tiwari et al., 2025; Deng et al., 2025). They use regular updates about a variety of subjects on multiple social media platforms to continuously inspire and persuade their audience (Belanche et al., 2021). The purchase decisions that were previously driven mainly by mass advertising and in-store experience are now strongly shaped by the social media personalities (Wang and Scheinbaum, 2018).

Fashion is one of the rapidly growing industries in today's ever-changing environment (Agnihotri et al., 2024). The fashion industry has emerged as the most represented category, emphasizing the importance of influencer marketing (Chetioui et al., 2019). The SMIs create content that promotes products or brands in a way that appears authentic and relatable to their followers (Masuda et al., 2022). Thus, consumers follow fashion creators to discover new trends, outfit inspirations, product reviews, styling tips that shape the fashion preferences of their audiences and purchase decisions (Li and Chan, 2024; Tiwari et al., 2023). Accordingly, the fashion industry is chosen for this study because it strongly depends on visual communication and personal identity expression. Its rapid trend cycles and constant need for innovation make influencer marketing a crucial strategy for sustaining consumer engagement and shaping brand attitude and perception. Therefore, the fashion industry is selected for the present study owing to its pronounced sensitivity to the external environment that critically influences the evolution of influencer marketing practices.

SMIs are giving their followers both benefits and drawbacks. These days, the adverse transmission of incorrect reviews of goods is also being evaluated (Xie et al., 2026; Chetioui et al., 2019). Due to social media's dysregulation, consumers may be exposed to false information (Hains et al. 2023). However, consumers rely heavily on the reliability and trust of influencers to make purchasing decisions (Tiwari et al., 2026; Kumar et al., 2023). The growth of influencer marketing does not occur in isolation (Bentley et al., 2025). It is strongly influenced by external environmental factors such as government regulations, technological developments, economic conditions, cultural trends, legal frameworks, and environmental concerns. Understanding these external influences is essential for analysing the opportunities and challenges associated with influencer marketing in the fashion industry.

One widely used strategic tool for analysing external business environments is the PESTLE framework. A PESTLE analysis examines six macro-environmental factors: political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental forces that influence industries and organizations. Thus, by applying this framework, researchers and marketers can gain a comprehensive understanding of how external forces shape the development of influencer marketing in the fashion industry. Therefore, the present article intends to answer the following research question:

RQ1: What are the main opportunities and barriers in the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legislative fields associated with the influencer marketing in the fashion industry?

Accordingly, the current study aims to analyze the macro-environmental factors affecting influencer marketing in the fashion industry through a PESTLE framework. Thus, the study seeks to address the following objective:

RO1- To explore the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors influencing the growth and strategic practices of influencer marketing within the fashion industry.

The present research provides a holistic understanding of the macro-environmental factors impacting influencer marketing in the fashion industry. This PESTLE analysis theoretically expands existing research by incorporating macro-environmental factors impacting influencers and brands, beyond consumer behaviour. From a managerial perspective, the study provides practical insights for fashion brands and marketers to design more effective and sustainable influencer campaigns by aligning their strategies with regulatory requirements, technological advancements, changing consumer preferences, and environmental concerns and thereby improving decision-making and long-term brand credibility among consumers.

Literature Review: -

Influencer marketing and fashion industry: -

Influencer marketing refers to brand initiated collaborations with individuals who have developed sizable and engaged followings on social media and who can shape audiences' attitudes and behaviours (Myers et al., 2024; Sokolova and Kefi, 2020). In other way, it refers to identifying opinion leaders who have strong engagement on social media which measured through indicators such as the size of their follower base, the number of likes on their posts, the comments on their content, or a mix of these elements (De Veirman et al., 2017). An influencer is "a person who has the ability to influence other people's decisions about the purchase of particular goods or services." (Costello and Yesiloglu, 2025). Influencers usually produce text, photos, audio, and video material for online platforms. Influencers can also be referred to as bloggers, YouTubers, podcasters, photographers, Instagrammers, TikTokers, etc., depending on the platform they use for sharing content (Tiwari et al., 2023; Kadekova and Holienčinova, 2018). They provide information about brands, prices and product attributes.

In recent years, the importance of traditional media in the fashion industry has declined as new forms of communications have emerged (Belanche et al., 2021). The fashion market now operates in a highly globalized environment where consumers are more knowledgeable, selective, and demanding (Tiwari et al., 2025; Cabeza-Ramirez et al., 2023). At the same time, brands face intense competition from numerous market players. Therefore, fashion companies now increasingly rely on social networking platforms as they offer cost-effective, easily accessible, and interactive channels for communication (Vrontis et al., 2021; Chetioui et al., 2019). Influencer marketing helps brands to connect more closely with their target audiences, who often depend on the opinions, recommendations, and experiences shared by other consumers when forming perceptions about fashion brands (Zameer et al., 2026; Tiwari et al., 2026). Consequently, content created by influencers seems more natural, genuine, and relatable, allowing it to influence followers more directly and effectively compared to conventional advertising approaches (Lou and Yuan, 2019).

As a component of culture and identity, fashion is always changing, requiring instantaneous and interactive communication (Lang and Armstrong, 2018). Fashion influencers are ordinary individuals who regularly post outfit inspiration, styling tutorials, hauls and brand collaborations (Tiwari et al 2025; Chetioui et al., 2019). They act as opinion leaders, signalling which looks are on-trend, appropriate for certain occasions or aligned with desired identities (Choi, 2020). Fashion influencers are building relationships with followers through frequent posting, replying their comments and self-disclosure, which supports feelings of closeness and trust among consumers (Rienda et al., 2021). Influencers promote trends and encourage products among their particular niche and influencing consumers' perceptions of brands and their choices when making purchases (Cabeza-Ramirez et al., 2023; Kumar et al., 2023). In the fashion industry, influencers possess the ability to enhance brand awareness and encourage consumers' intention to buy the clothing they endorse, wear, or display on their social media profiles. Consequently, this leads to higher sales for the brands they endorse and promote. However, from a business and marketing perspective, enhancing the user experience by minimising the negative consequences of employing new technology is a crucial component of creating virtual content (Leung et al., 2022). The impact of commercial ethics on advertising activities supports and enhances the brand image and thereby improving overall organisational performance (Hudders and Lou, 2023).

Existing research on influencer marketing in the fashion industry has mainly focused on micro-level factors such as influencer credibility, attractiveness, trust, authenticity and their impact on consumer purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2026; Kilumile et al., 2025; Al Mamun et al., 2023). There remains a notable gap of macro-level analyses that systematically integrate external environmental forces shaping the dynamics of influencer marketing. There is substantial gap in fashion industry because of its visually driven, trend-sensitive sector linked with identity, culture and ethical debates, where existing work rarely applies structured frameworks to synthesise how the macro environmental factors constrain or enable influencer strategies. Thus, the present study attempts to fill this gap by using PESTLE framework to analyse how external factors such as political regulations, economic volatility, changing social media consumption patterns, technological advancements, legal issues related to advertising disclosure, and environmental concerns impacting rapidly growing fashion influencer marketing.

Methods: -

The present study aims to investigate the influence of PESTLE factors on influencer marketing in fashion industry. The PESTLE analytical framework is used to categorize and evaluate the external factors affecting influencer marketing practices. This study adopts an analytical approach to explore the macro-environmental factors impacting influencer marketing in the fashion industry. The research relies primarily on secondary data obtained from previous research articles, industry reports, and credible online sources discussing influencer marketing trends to ensure that the analysis reflects robust and up-to-date insights into the fashion influencer marketing environment. Thus, the existing research on influencer marketing and fashion marketing strategies was reviewed to identify key environmental influences. For this study, the literature review focuses mainly on research articles from the last 10 years (2015-2025). After that, the identified factors were categorized into the six PESTLE dimensions. Each factor was analyzed in terms of its impact on influencer marketing practices in the fashion industry. This approach allows researchers to systematically examine how political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental conditions influence the development and sustainability of influencer marketing strategies.

Results and Discussion: -**Political Factors: -**

Political factors refer to government policies, regulations, and political stability that influence business operations. In the context of influencer marketing in the fashion industry, political environments affect digital advertising practices, social media regulation, market access limits, government support for digital entrepreneurship and cross-border marketing activities.

These are discussed below:

- **Advertising disclosure regulations-** The government has introduced policies requiring influencers to disclose paid advertisement and sponsored content clearly. These regulations aim to protect consumers from misleading advertising practices. Such policies influence how fashion brands collaborate with influencers and require greater transparency in promotional activities. Also, paid endorsements must disclose "material connections" in their advertisement as per the guidelines of FTC (Federal Trade Commission).
- **Data privacy and sovereignty laws-** One important political factor is governments are becoming more concerned about the influence of social media on public opinion, misinformation, and data privacy. Some countries have imposed restrictions on certain social media platforms due to concerns about national security or data governance. India also banned Tik Tok in 2020 on national security grounds and shifted the reel trend to the Instagram.
- **Promoting content creators-** Government support for digital entrepreneurship also plays a crucial role in the growth of influencer marketing. In many countries, policymakers are promoting digital economies and encouraging young entrepreneurs to build careers as content creators or influencers. Such policies contribute to the expansion of influencer marketing ecosystems. In India, through Budget 2026-27 initiatives like the \$1 billion Creator Economy Fund and AVGC Content Creator Labs in 15,000 schools and 500 colleges, builds skills in video editing and visual storytelling essential for fashion hauls and styling content and encouraging creators' economy.
- **Political stability and initiatives-** Political stability within a country also affects the growth of the fashion industry and digital marketing activities. Stable political environments encourage investments in marketing innovation and business development. India's consistent democratic governance, progressive digital policies like Digital India, and absence of major disruptions create a predictable environment for fashion brands to invest confidently in long-term influencer partnerships and maintaining relationship with them.

Economic Factors: -

Economic conditions play a crucial role in shaping influencer marketing within the fashion industry. The growth of influencer marketing is closely linked to digital advertising spending, ROI and cost structure, consumers purchasing power, and the expansion of the online retail market.

These are outlined below:

- **Market size and growth-** The global influencer marketing industry has experienced rapid economic growth over the past decade. As per, Fashion Influencer Marketing Market Global Report 2026, the fashion influencer marketing market size is expected to grow to \$33.8 billion in 2030 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 32.1%. In India, fashion is one of the fastest-growing influencer verticals. As per Qoruz Report 2024, 4.7 lakh

fashion influencers in India, comprising 11–12% of the total creator base, with the sector projected to reach USD 1.5 billion by 2027 (IMARC, 2025).

- **ROI and cost structure**-As media costs rises, brands demand measurable returns from influencer spending, increasingly treating it as a performance channel rather than pure branding. In the fashion industry, influencer marketing offers cost-effective promotional opportunities. Compared with traditional celebrity endorsements, collaborations with social media influencers can be more affordable while still reaching highly targeted audiences. Fashion brands typically achieve 5–11x ROI through micro-influencers, outperforming mega-collaborations due to superior engagement rates (3–8%) amid a projected ₹3,375 crore market by 2026 (IMARC, 2025). This cost efficiency has encouraged both large fashion brands and small emerging brands to adopt influencer marketing strategies.
- **Creator economy income structure**-The rise of the creator economy is another important economic factor. Influencers increasingly generate income through brand collaborations, affiliate marketing, sponsored content, and merchandise sales. This economic model has transformed influencer marketing into a significant component of the digital economy. Economic pressures push many brands to diversify away from expensive mega-influencers toward this middle tier, which can offer more flexible pricing and niche, loyal audiences.
- **Expansion of E-commerce:** E-commerce growth in the Indian fashion industry serves as a crucial economic factor propelling influencer marketing. Social commerce features allow consumers to purchase products directly through social media platforms. The economic success of fashion e-commerce supports sustained influencer investment because creators directly drive traffic into brand apps and marketplaces. With online fashion sales projected to reach \$25 billion by 2027 (25% CAGR), platforms like Myntra and Ajio have transformed fashion influencers into direct revenue drivers through posts and affiliate links. Thus, social media influencers function as “sales associates” in a low-cost, scalable channel, which is particularly attractive in emerging markets like India where digital fashion consumption is surging.
- **Increasing consumers spending power**- Economic factors such as consumer disposable income also influence fashion purchasing behavior. When economic conditions are strong and consumers have higher disposable income, fashion consumption increases, and influencer marketing campaigns become more effective in driving sales. In India rising middle income class and annual growth in disposable income increases the demand for ethnic fusion and fast fashion trends among consumers.

Social Factors: -

Social and cultural trends are the most influential drivers of influencer marketing in the fashion industry. Fashion consumption is closely connected to social identity and culture, values, lifestyle expression, and peer influence.

These are described below:

- **Social media growth**-Social media growth emerges as a significant factor driving influencer marketing in India's fashion industry. Consumers increasingly rely on social media platforms for information, entertainment, and shopping inspiration. With over 500 million active users in 2026 and platforms like Instagram and YouTube dominating fashion discovery, leading to high growth of influencer marketing in India. Thus, fashion influencers serve as trusted sources of recommendations because their content appears more authentic than traditional advertising.
- **Gen Z values and identities**- The younger generations, particularly Generation Z and Millennials, play a significant role in the popularity of influencer marketing. These consumers are highly active on social media and often follow influencers who share similar interests, lifestyles, or values. Thus, fashion influencers who show real content, talk openly about issues, and balance trendiness with affordability and sustainability gain stronger trust and engagement.
- **Authenticity and community over fame**-The concept of authenticity has become a critical social factor in influencer marketing. Consumers prefer influencers who appear genuine and relatable rather than overly commercialized. Audiences are fatigued with polished celebrity-style influencers; they prefer micro/nano creators who feel like friends and build niche communities. As a result, micro-influencers with smaller but highly engaged audiences are becoming increasingly important in fashion marketing.
- **Rising sustainability culture**- The rising sustainability culture represents a crucial social factor in influencer marketing. The social media now normalises thrifting, upcycling, and “slow fashion” through hashtags like #SustainableFashion, among audience. This shift, fueled by social media movements, pressures fashion creators to promote verified green practices amid fast-fashion dominance, fostering niche communities with their

followers. Thus, Eco-influencers and “green fashion” creators on Instagram to are exposing fast-fashion harms, highlight transparent brands, and teach DIY repairs, especially appealing to Gen Z in India and globally.

- **Cultural Specificity-** Another social trend impacting influencer marketing is the increasing importance of diversity and representation in fashion. Consumers expect brands and influencers to promote inclusive fashion that reflects different body types, ethnic backgrounds, and cultural identities. In India, fashion influencers like, Komal Pandey, Kritika Khurana, etc. blend global trends with local ethnic and budget-conscious styling, resonating with diverse urban and semi-urban audiences. Audiences increasingly value influencers who reflect their own language, city, body type, and cultural norms; and ethnic–western fusion.

Technological Factors: -

Technological innovation is one of the significant drivers of influencer marketing in the fashion industry. Advances in social media platforms, artificial intelligence, and mobile technology have enabled influencers to reach global audiences and create engaging content.

The following points described it:

- **Advancement in algorithms and AI-** Social media algorithms play a crucial role in determining the visibility of influencer content. The platforms use advanced algorithms to personalize content, improve targeting and recommend content to users based on their preferences and behavior. This technology allows influencer content to reach highly targeted audiences.
- **Growth of virtual & AI influencers:** Emergence of virtual influencers is a big change in influencer marketing. These virtual influencers (e.g., Lil Miquela, Imma) deliver flawless visuals 24/7 at 50% lower production costs than human creators with perfect visuals, and no scandals. These AI entities experts in AR try-ons, metaverse fashion shows, and personalized styling recommendations, driving higher conversions through seamless shoppable experiences, particularly suggesting fast-fashion scalability and global campaigns. However, they challenge authenticity perception and therefore, fashion brands use them with due care along with human influencers,
- **Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Try-Ons-** Augmented reality technologies are emerging as new tools for fashion marketing. Virtual try-on features allow consumers to visualize clothing or accessories before purchasing them online. Influencers can use these technologies to demonstrate products in innovative ways. Additionally, video-based platforms have significantly transformed influencer marketing in fashion. Short-form video content has become one of the most effective formats for showcasing fashion products, styling tips, and lifestyle inspiration.
- **Advanced analytics & performance measurement** - Artificial intelligence is significantly influencing influencer marketing strategies. Brands increasingly use AI-based analytics tools to identify suitable influencers, measure campaign performance, and analyze audience engagement. In the fashion industry, where around 60% of purchases are influenced by what people see, real-time dashboards help track how well content is performing. Additionally, fashion brands use AI to tracks ROI; platforms predict performance from engagement patterns, shifting to performance-pay models.
- **Live streaming and real-time engagement-**Live streaming have emerged as pivotal technological factors transforming influencer marketing. The platforms like Instagram Live and YouTube Live enable creators to show outfits, conduct instant styling sessions, and facilitate direct purchases through shoppable features, driving conversion rates up to 8–10 times higher than static posts. The fashion influencers are using a live session for product launches, fashion hauls, and interactive marketing which fosters authentic interactions with consumers. Consumers can also purchase fashion products directly through influencer posts or live streaming sessions.

Legal Factors: -

Legal regulations play a crucial role in shaping influencer marketing practices. As influencer marketing grows, governments and regulatory agencies are introducing laws to ensure transparency and protect consumers.

These are described below:

- **Disclosure and Endorsement Regulations-** Advertising disclosure regulations require influencers to clearly indicate when content is sponsored or paid. Accordingly, influencers must clearly label sponsored content to avoid misleading consumers. In India, the Consumer Protection Act 2019 (Section 2(28)) and IT Rules 2021 mandate upfront #Ad or #Sponsored disclosures, enforced by the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) and Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI). If they violated this law, the fines up to ₹50 lakh

are imposed on both brands and influencers. The US FTC similarly requires "material connection" disclosures, with 2025, fines exceeding \$5 million globally.

- **Data privacy and protection-** Data privacy laws significantly affect influencer marketing activities as creators and brands collect audience data through contests, polls, and analytics for targeted campaigns. With increasing digital engagement, data usage is regulated under frameworks of Information Technology Act, 2000. In India, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 (DPDP) designates influencers handling emails, locations, or purchase preferences as "data fiduciaries," mandating explicit consent, purpose limitation, and breach notifications within 72 hours, with penalties up to 4% of global turnover. Furthermore, at global level, GDPR compliance also complicates cross-border fashion collabs.
- **Intellectual property and right of publicity-** Social media influencers frequently use music, images, and other creative content in their posts. Without explicit contracts specifying ownership and usage rights, reposting or repurposing influencer content for ads can trigger infringement claims, while deepfake technology raises publicity rights violations—unauthorized use of a creator's likeness in fashion campaigns. In India, Delhi High Court precedents protect personal branding, requiring morality clauses and watermarking. Also, globally, clear licensing terms have become standard to balance creative collaboration with legal protection for all the parties. Thus, fashion influencers must keep things transparent.
- **Defamation, hate speech, and content liability-** Influencers may be held accountable for disseminating hate speech, harmful content, or provocative narratives that violate constitutional principles, criminal regulations, and platform guidelines. The legal consequences of such actions can arise concurrently through civil liability, criminal proceedings, and contractual obligations imposed by platforms or collaborating brands. The influencers risk lawsuits under IPC Section 499 (defamation) for body-shaming comments or brand disparagement, while IT Act Section 66A and 69A target hate speech that incites communal tensions through controversial styling critiques. Thus, fashion brands must include morality clauses and pre-approval workflows in contracts to mitigate legal risks.
- **Contractual and labor obligations-** Influencers, now often classified as "commercial entities" under the Consumer Protection Act (CPA), and have specific tax and regulatory obligations. The gifts received from brands attract income tax at a 30% slab, alongside mandatory (TDS) deductions. Additionally, they qualify for certain labor-like protections, such as timely payments and dispute resolution mechanisms. Fashion collaboration contracts commonly include morality clauses (prohibiting controversial behavior) and exclusivity terms (banning competitor promotions). The Influencer Integrity and Governance Council (IIGC), established in 2025, introduces industry-wide ethics codes that further standardize professional conduct and accountability. Thus, a balance between creative freedom and legal accountability is essential to safeguard consumers, uphold market integrity, and preserve influencer credibility.

Environmental Factors: -

Environmental factors have emerged as pivotal influencers in fashion marketing, driven by growing consumer awareness, regulatory pressures, and the industry's substantial ecological footprint. The fashion industry contributes around 8–10% of global carbon emissions and produces about 92 million tons of textile waste each year. As a result, influencers play a key role in promoting sustainability, but they can also sometimes spread misleading claims about being environmentally friendly (greenwashing).

These are described below:

- **Sustainability expectations and consumer demand-** The rise of sustainable fashion has created new expectations for brands and influencers. Consumers are becoming more aware of environmental issues such as textile waste, carbon emissions, and unethical labour practices in the fashion industry. Younger consumers, especially Gen Z and millennials who represent 60% of fashion buyers, now view clothing choices as statements of personal values. Surveys indicate 67% actively seek brands using organic cotton, recycled polyester, or low-water dyes, expecting influencers to reflect this. Thus, fashion influencers play an important role in educating audiences about sustainable fashion choices, including second-hand clothing, slow fashion, and ethical production practices.
- **Greenwashing scrutiny and regulatory enforcement-** Greenwashing occurs when vague terms like "eco-friendly" or "planet-positive" lack evidence, misleading followers. The EU's Digital Product Passport (mandatory 2026) requires QR codes tracing fiber origins, while India's ASCI issued 150+ greenwashing advisories in 2025 alone. ASA (UK) banned Shein ads for unproven claims; influencers reposting them share liability. Influencers promoting fast-fashion hauls risk credibility loss when vague sustainability messaging

faces backlash through #GreenwashingExposed campaigns. Thus, fashion brands must provide verifiable certifications, compelling creators to prioritize authentic eco-partnerships over promotional excess to maintain trust amid heightened environmental accountability.

- **Fast fashion's waste and pollution footprint-** Fast fashion's waste and pollution footprint significantly influences influencer marketing. The fashion industry, generating 92 million tons of textile waste annually and accounting for 10% of global carbon emission. Also, producing one cotton T-shirt requires 2,700 liters of water (enough for one person's drinking needs for 2.5 years), while synthetic dyes pollute rivers and contribute 20% of global industrial wastewater. Influencers promoting Shein/Zara hauls face growing backlash via #SheinExposed, pushing brands toward thrift flips and upcycling content that counters overconsumption narratives while aligning with Gen Z's sustainability expectations. Thus, fashion brands must recommend recycling and reuse ideas among their followers for reducing such waste and promoting sustainability.
- **Material and supply chain innovations-**Material and supply chain innovations serve as a key environmental factor impacting influencer marketing in the fashion industry. Bans on toxic chemicals like PFAS (France, 2026) and EU textile disposal regulations push brands toward sustainable alternatives such as mushroom leather and lab-grown silk. Influencers highlight these new materials through styling content, but must verify claims with certifications to avoid misleading followers. Traceability tools and transparent supply chains help consumers check authenticity, positioning creators as educators in sustainable fashion rather than just trend promoters. Thus, Fashion brands are increasingly collaborating with influencers who advocate for sustainable lifestyles to align marketing strategies with environmental values.

Conclusion: -

Influencer marketing has become a central component of marketing strategies within the fashion industry. The effectiveness and sustainability of influencer marketing practices are strongly influenced by macro-environmental factors. Thus, the present study applied the PESTLE framework to analyze political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental influences on influencer marketing in fashion. The PESTLE analysis demonstrates that influencer marketing in the fashion industry operates within a complex external environment. Political regulations influence digital advertising practices, economic trends shape marketing investments, social dynamics drive consumer engagement, technological innovation enhances marketing capabilities, legal frameworks regulate transparency, and environmental concerns reshape fashion promotion strategies. The analysis reveals that while influencer marketing offers significant opportunities for brand growth and consumer engagement, it also faces challenges related to regulation, ethical concerns, and sustainability pressures. Theoretically, it provides a comprehensive macro-perspective that complements existing micro-level studies in influencer marketing literature. Furthermore, the research provides important insights for marketers and fashion brands to develop more effective influencer marketing strategies and anticipate future industry trends. Fashion brands gain practical guidance to navigate disclosure rules through compliance training, optimize budgets with performance-based micro-influencer partnerships, leverage AI analytics for ROI tracking, ensure authentic sustainability messaging, and build long-term creator relationships. Future research may explore the long-term impacts of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour and examine how evolving technologies and sustainability initiatives will shape the future of fashion marketing. Thus, the present study equips fashion brands with a strategic roadmap to harness influencer marketing's potential while addressing external challenges, ultimately fostering consumer trust, sustainable growth, and competitive advantage in India's dynamic digital landscape.

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