



“Micro Influencer and Their Influence on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour”

DR .RAVI M.V¹

Assistant Professor in Commerce
Government First Grade College, Raibag,
Ranichenamma University

KAVITHA.G²

Assistant Professor in Commerce
Seshadripuram Degree College Bangalore-20

POORNIMA.K³

Assistant Professor in Commerce
Seshadripuram Degree College Bangalore-20

ABSTRACT:

Getting more and more customers in this competitive world is nearly impossible to the business organizations. Most of the marketing tactics require more and more efforts and months of planning before the results are seen, but the companies cannot wait that long to take business for next level, so the micro influencers act as a boon to the firms to drive the sales by providing instant promotion of product or service with amazing conversion rates. Micro influencers are the third party who uses the social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube to review the products and services and their hyper-engaged audience tends to buy it. Presently the budget on influencer marketing budgets are steadily on the raise and a booming industry. Micro influencers is a type of marketing strategy used by firms which uses influence of social media personalities and also uses human touch to the brands. The Research paper is descriptive in nature. For the purpose of study primary data has been collected through questionnaire method and secondary data from reputed journals, magazines, reports, newspapers and Internet. The collected data was processed and presented in the form of tables, figures and analysed with the help of statistical tools.

Keywords: micro influencer, e- word of mouth, influencer marketing, social media

Introduction:

World is getting more and more interconnected constantly through internet. Peoples of different country and of different ages are engaged on internet for various reasons like access to information, networking source, and most importantly it has turned into effective platform for online purchase which is alternative for our traditional purchase. In order to sustain in the market marketers and business owners should think ahead and watch the marketing trends and update its marketing strategy. Now we are in 2020 we are going to be next big frontier of digital world According to leading research reports, India currently have population of 1.36 Billion people, out of this population 230 million or 70% are active social media users. Hence large group of population are engaged on social media is simply astounding .This wide emergence of social media transformed the communication between companies and consumers, as a digital marketing strategy

Whether it is a brand or the consumers, marketers look into the future to anticipate the upcoming trend in the market. Now micro-influencers are the marketing force, this generation is very digitally oriented and according to the survey analysis, people check their phone at least 43 times a day (Rouse 2017) by this data it is clear that social media has become an essential part of millennial lives. Using this as an opportunity, companies are trying to frame marketing strategy. Today's generation looks for value in brands and they will rely on trusted sources and reviews before getting a product or service this makes micro-influencer as an effective promoting tool. Companies started to use a type of eWOM which influences the purchase, intention for the product through a third party called micro-influencers. It may range from celebrities to bloggers who use their social media networks like Facebook, YouTube and Instagram as the like to influence buying behaviour among their followers to share their perspective on the most varied subjects.

The influencers' approaches are more natural, trustworthy and personal way that directly talks to audience about their experience, preference or opinion about certain brands to their followers, they see it as a genuine advice than celebrity endorsement people trust the recommendation of the people they know, this powerful everyday consumers have ability to shape the audience attitude towards the products or services. Markets are now focusing on the interaction between influencers and their audience and that is measured by likes, comments and the ultimate trust followers. Micro-influencers can be seen in any sector they could be on health and wellness, food and cuisine, entrepreneurship or fashion and beauty to name a few prominent categories and now it's a billion dollars industry.

Micro influencer and ROI

When companies for its brand to achieve best possible ROI on a campaign, it's a good deal to hire a group of micro-influencers. Micro-influencers do not have a same reach as the macro-influencers have like a celebrity, the reach of micro-influencers is also very limited so organizations has to concentrate wants to work with group of micro-influencers to make more worth and effective and to reach of the campaign. The influencer should have good number of followers and engagement rate to be valuable to a brand. The combo of micro-influencer and the celebrity influencer may rise the ROI of a campaign and lower the overall marketing spend.

Review of Literatures

- **Amber Gulamali & Julia Persson** : In this study titled “ **What is the role of the Social Media Influencer when the consumer decides to voluntarily switch brands**” opine that the research was based on the assumption that the switching motivation was present at the point of seeing the brand endorsement of an SMI the consumer followed. The SMI could embody the role of the opinion leader, the social leader and micro-celebrity. However, it depends on the brand switching motivation which of these 3 roles is most prominent. It was found that when the consumer switches brands out of dissatisfaction or a need for variety, the SMI will foremost be perceived as an opinion leader, as the consumer primarily valued that the SMI had experience with the product, was an expert in the product category and was objective in his or her argumentation.
- **Morgan Glucksman(2017)**: Conducted his study titled “ Rise of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Lifestyle” concluded that Branding influencer marketing, the process of identifying, engaging and supporting individuals who create conversations with a brand's customers, is a growing trend used in public relations initiatives. In recent years, this strategy has become predominantly centred on social media, creating an opportunity for brands to market through social media influencers. To investigate this phenomenon, the author conducted pentadic analysis as well as qualitative content analyses of posts by

social media influencers. Findings revealed that the use of social media influencer marketing in public relations initiatives has broken the wall between the consumer and the brand, changing the way the two interact.

- **Micro-Influencers: The Marketing Force of the Future? – Forbes(2018) in the article about micro influencers opine that** influencers are group of the most highly-followed social media stars with millions of followers or is it someone more approachable and relatable, with a smaller, yet immensely dedicated following. If it's the latter, they are likely micro-influencers. On the surface, it seems as though an influencer's total following matters more than anything else. And while the overall following numbers do attract attention, engagement is the key factor in an influencer's ultimate success when it comes to commercial viability focusing on the interaction between influencers and their audiences and that is measured by likes, comments and the ultimate trust followers have in the influencers they are following. Micro-influencers often have very high engagement with their fan-bases and are often over-looked by brands in the social media campaigns they are pursuing.
- **Vaibhavi Nandagiri & Leena Philip(2018):** The study was conducted to know the impact of the influencers specifically in regards with Instagram and you tube and opine from the study conducted that the influencers of Instagram and YouTube have a positive impact on the followers while endorsing the product and services as the followers see them most credible source and thus the followers are willing to purchase and try out the products reviewed and endorsed.

Objectives of Present Study

1. To know what kind of influencers follow most often,
2. To know how micro influencers shape the attitude of the consumers in buying products;
3. To explore the attributes that an influencer possess or should possess and their impact on purchase intent of customer.

Research Methodology:

The study is conducted by using exploratory design as the purpose of how influencer influence the attitude of buyer and what are features of influencer are modifying the buying behaviour. The study is conducted in Bangalore. Survey method is used for collecting data with the help of well-structured questionnaire. The data collected and analysed using the simple percentage method.

Sources of Data collection

The study has been carried out based on primary data and secondary data. The sample of 320 responses collected with the help of well-structured questionnaire. Secondary data is collected from various sources such as published books, Articles published in different journals & newspapers, periodicals, conference paper, working paper and Websites, etc.

Sample Framework of the study

A sample size of 350 was selected using the convenience sampling procedure out of which 320 copies were retrieved in usable form. This represents a response rate of 91.4%.The sample includes the population who follow micro influencers of various product categories of different age groups. Responses of the respondents collected determine the reliability of survey.

Basis of Sampling:

- Respondents should have social media accounts.
- Respondents should be active users of social media.
- Respondents should be aware of micro influencers.

Result analysis and Discussion

Demographic profile of sample respondents

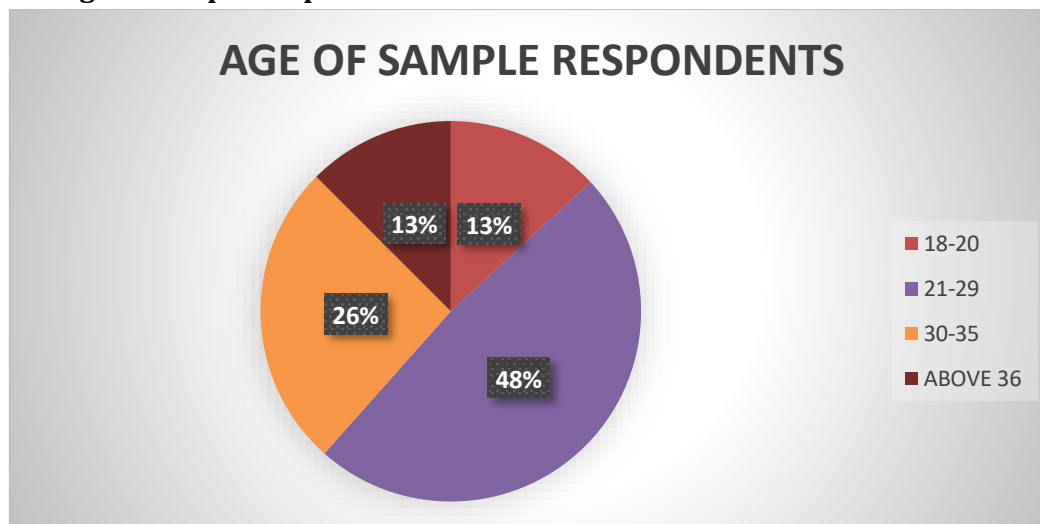
Table 1-Gender and Profession of sample respondents

Gender			Profession		
Gender	Number	Percentage	Particulars	Number	Percentage
Men	145	46	Employed	205	64
Women	175	54	Unemployed	0	0
Total	320	100	Self employed	23	8
			Students	92	28
			Total	320	100

Source: primary data

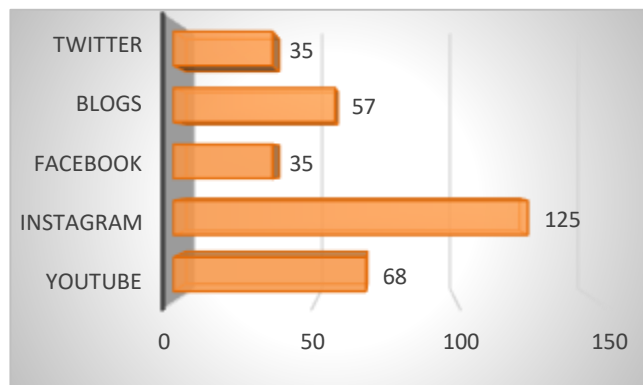
Interpretation: Table 1 represents the gender and profession classification of sample respondents. 46% of respondents belong to men category and 54% of people belong to women category and among the sample respondent’s majority comes under employed profession.

Table 1.1 Age of Sample Respondents



Interpretation: Majority of respondent’s age belongs to 21-29years i.e. it contributes 48% of the sample respondents. Even after leaving out of the unqualified questionnaire 28-38 is the dominating age group.

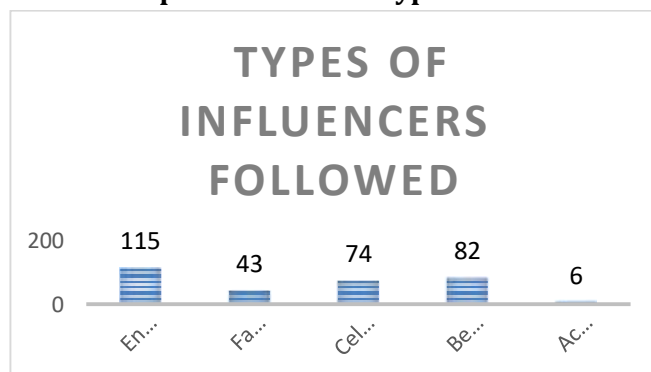
Table 2: Micro influencer reach by various social media platforms



Social media	number	Percentage
Twitter	35	11
Blogs	57	18
Facebook	35	11
Instagram	125	39
YouTube	68	21
Total	320	100

Interpretation: This statistic of the survey shows Instagram is preferred by most respondents followed by you tube. This two online platforms have highest numbers of followers. However, the result of the study also revealed that the audience of these online platforms is different. Women are more likely join to Instagram account than other social media available and men are more likely to visit you tube than women.

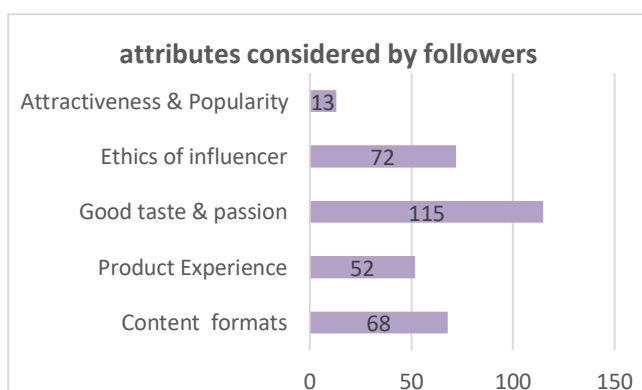
Table 3: Popular influencer types that consumer follows



Type of influencer	Number	Percentage
Entertainer	115	36
Fashion	43	13
Celebrity	74	23
Beauty	82	26
Activists	6	2
Total	320	100

Interpretation: The most popular type for consumers to follow are in entertainment. With 36% of those surveyed opined that they follow entertainer influencers, second place next to this are beauty influencers with 26% saying they follow those that can provide tips and recommendations for looking great. Celebrities were also followed by 23% close enough to beauty influencer who want to hear directly from their favorite actors, musicians, and more. Followed by fashion and activists with 13% and 2%.

Table 4 : Attributes considered by the consumers to follow influencers



Factors	Numbers	Percentage
Attractiveness&popularity	13	4
Ethics of influencer	72	23
Good taste & passion	115	36
Product experience	52	16
Content formats	68	21
Total	320	100

Interpretation: 36% of respondents says that they follow more Influencers who have good taste and passion also, 72% say that the influencer core values should also align with the respondents equally important in the eyes of the consumer is the content formats that enables them to engage the audience.16% of respondents say that product experience is an important criteria. with Least importance is given to attractiveness & popularity. It clearly says that passion & values is the heart of successful influencer.

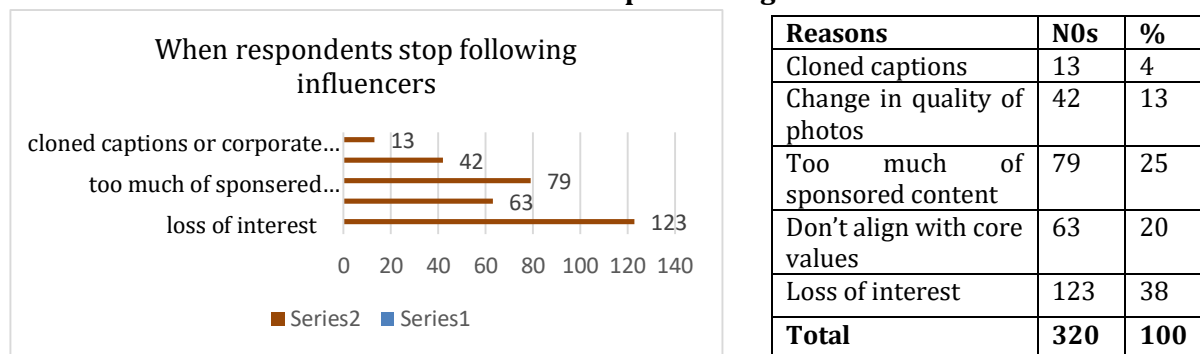
Table5: Influence on purchase behaviour

Statements		SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
I made a purchase based on influencer recommendations	N	90	109	14	73	34	2.54	1.382
	%	28.1	34.1	4.4	22.8	10.6		
I found out about new trends on social media influencer	N	59	146	37	51	27	2.50	1.203
	%	18.4	45.6	11.6	15.9	8.4		
I actively seek out online reviews before making purchase decision	N	102	64	54	58	42	2.61	1.428
	%	31.9	20	16.9	18.1	13.1		
If my few blogger/ online personality recommends brand, I am more likely to try it	N	122	64	40	63	31	2.43	1.410
	%	38.1	20	12.5	19.7	9.7		

Source: primary data

Interpretation: Table no. 5 captures the influence of micro influencers on the purchase behaviour of the consumers. 62 % strongly agree and agrees that they not only follow the micro influencer but also they purchased the product based on the recommendation. 63% of respondents strongly agree and agrees that they find a new trend on social media influencer. 51% strongly agree and agree that they prefer to take a review from influencers before making a purchase decision. 58% strongly agree and agree that they like to try the products that are recommended by social media influencer.

Table 6: When do the followers distrust or stop following the influencer



Interpretation: 38% of respondents said that they stopped following an influencer over a period of time due to loss of interest. 25% of people stopped following because of too much sponsored content by influencer and 20% people say they not follow when influencer values are not aligned with them, 13% change in quality of posts, 4% of people not follow due to cloned content. This statistics shows clearly As long as influencer stays relevant and interesting to follower, the follower will stick around, but once the follower lose their interest they will find the next influencer that can help followers with whatever they're looking at that time.

Findings of the study:

- The outcome of the analysis regarding the study shows that People still regularly rely on influencers for brand and product before making of purchases.
- Among various social media platforms available, still people prefer Instagram for following influencer.
- Entertainer are most preferred influencer among other type of influencers. Followed by beauty influencers are most preferred.
- Passion and values followed by the influencer is the heart of successful influencer.
- 62 % strongly agree and agrees that they not only follow the micro influencer but also they purchased the product based on the recommendation.
- 63% of respondents strongly agree and agrees that they find a new trends on social media influencer.
- 51% strongly agree and agree that they prefer to take a review from influencers before making a purchase decision.
- 58% strongly agree and agree that they like to try the products that are recommended by social media influencer
- Statistics reveals that majority stops following because of loss of interest over period of time. Influencer should keep posts relevant and interesting.

Conclusion:

The purpose of the study is to understand micro influencers and their impact on purchase intentions of consumers. By the statistics we can infer that the micro influencers have a positive impact on modifying the purchase intentions and can be used by the organizations as a effective tool of promotional mix. Influencers have become a modern day phenomenon as individuals can influence the public using just social networks.

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