

# The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Brand Loyalty among Gen Z Consumers: An Analytical and Comparative Study of Delhi and Mumbai

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## Abstract

The emergence of social media has completely changed the marketing landscape with social media influencers becoming increasingly potent in influencing consumer behaviour, especially among Generation Z (Gen Z). This study's main goal was to investigate how social media influencers affect Gen Z consumers' brand loyalty. Further, the research also compared the results for Delhi and Mumbai. The sample of the study consisted of 279 Gen Z consumers of Delhi and 328 Gen Z consumers of Mumbai, in total 607 respondents were included in the sample. The data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire. The results revealed that Instagram is the most popular social media among Gen Z consumers and on average they spent 2 to 4 hours on various social media platforms. Consumers regularly follow influencers and often make purchases due to social media influence. The results highlighted that there is a high impact of social media influencers on their brand loyalty. A significant difference was observed in the opinion of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai.

**Keywords:** Social media influencer, Brand loyalty, Gen Z

## Introduction:

In recent years, social media has transformed the landscape of marketing and consumer engagement, particularly among Generation Z (Gen Z), a demographic characterized by its digital nativity and distinct consumer behaviours. Social media influencers have become crucial players in influencing consumer choices and brand impressions as platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok continue to grow (Selezneva, 2024). This study examines how social media influencers affect brand loyalty, especially among Gen Z customers. —an increasingly important demographic characterized by their digital savviness and distinct consumer behaviours.

Born roughly between 1997 and 2012, Generation Z is a generation that grew up in a time when social media and technology were prevalent. One characteristic of this generation is its heavy reliance on social media for connection, entertainment, and information. Unlike previous

generations, Gen Z consumers value authenticity, transparency, and relatability in their interactions with brands. Research highlights that Gen Z is more likely to trust influencers perceived as genuine rather than traditional advertising, driving higher levels of engagement and brand loyalty (Djafarova&Rushworth, 2017).As a result, the rise of social media influencers—individuals who leverage their online presence to promote products and services—has become a pivotal element in shaping brand loyalty among these consumers. Influencers often cultivate a sense of community and trust with their followers, which can significantly impact brand perceptions and purchasing decisions (Valmohammadi et al., 2024). This phenomenon raises critical questions about the dynamics of influence, the authenticity of endorsements, and the overall effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies in fostering long-term brand loyalty.

Through this study, we aim to explore the intricate relationship between social media influencers and Gen Z consumers, examining how influencers affect brand loyalty, the factors that contribute to this influence, and the implications for brands seeking to engage effectively with this unique demographic. By comprehending these characteristics Brands can create more appealing marketing tactics that appeal to Generation Z, ultimately enhancing brand loyalty and driving consumer engagement

## Review of Literature

The emergence of social media platforms has given rise to influencers who possess the ability to reach large audiences and engage them in meaningful ways. Influencers are often seen as relatable figures who embody the values and lifestyles that resonate with their followers (Abdullahi&Otori, 2020). Their perceived authenticity and personal connections with audiences differentiate them from traditional advertising methods (Ahmed et al., 2024).

A significant body of research highlights the importance of credibility and trust in influencer marketing. Studies suggest that consumers are more likely to develop brand loyalty when they perceive influencers as trustworthy and credible sources (Ahmed, Islam & Ghaffar, 2024). Influencer credibility is often derived from expertise, attractiveness, and reliability. When influencers share

genuine experiences with a brand, they can foster emotional connections that enhance loyalty (Aisyah, 2023).

Social media influencers excel in creating engaged communities around their content. Engaged followers often feel a sense of belonging and loyalty not only to the influencer but also to the brands they endorse. Research indicates that high levels of engagement, such as likes, shares, and comments, positively correlate with consumer loyalty to the endorsed brands (Çelik, 2022). This sense of community is particularly relevant for Generation Z, who prioritize social interaction and peer validation in their purchasing decisions.

The alignment between influencer values and brand identity plays a crucial role in shaping brand loyalty. When influencers authentically embody the essence of a brand, they can reinforce brand image and resonate with consumers' self-concepts (Es-Safi, 2022). Conversely, mismatches between influencer personas and brand messages can lead to consumer scepticism and diminished loyalty.

Content quality and authenticity are paramount in influencer marketing. Studies suggest that consumers respond more positively to organic, relatable content compared to polished advertisements (Jun and Yi, 2020). Authentic storytelling and transparency about brand partnerships can enhance consumer trust and loyalty. This is especially critical for Gen Z, who are adept at discerning authenticity in digital communications.

Cultural context and social dynamics also influence the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Influencers often act as cultural intermediaries, shaping consumer perceptions across different demographics and markets. Research indicates that influencers can bridge cultural gaps and promote inclusivity, which can further solidify brand loyalty among diverse consumer groups (Mehrabi, 2014).

Despite the benefits, challenges such as influencer fraud, saturation of the influencer market, and ethical concerns regarding transparency can undermine the efficacy of influencer marketing. Studies emphasize the need for ethical practices, including clear disclosure of paid partnerships, to maintain consumer trust and brand integrity (Markethub,, 2016).

The literature underscores that as brands continue to navigate the evolving digital landscape, understanding the dynamics of influencer marketing and its impact on consumer behaviour will be crucial for developing effective strategies that foster long-term loyalty. This helps in identifying the enduring effects of influencer partnerships and exploring the implications of emerging social media trends on brand loyalty.

## Research gap

While much research has addressed influencer marketing broadly, there is a paucity of studies specifically targeting Generation Z. This demographic has unique characteristics, values, and behaviours that differentiate it from previous generations. Further research is needed to explore how these factors specifically influence their responses to social media influencers and, consequently, their brand loyalty. Research exploring how influencers impact brand loyalty among Gen Z consumers is limited..

## Objectives

1. To study the social media usage of Gen Z consumers
2. To discuss the influencer engagement of Gen Z consumers
3. To check the impact of social media usage on purchases made due to social media influence.
4. To study the impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers
5. To compare the impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai

## Hypotheses

1. There is no significant impact of social media usage on purchases made due to social media influence.
2. There is no significant difference in impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai

## Methodology

This paper is intended to check the impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers so causal research design is used.

**Sampling:** The population frame included the Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai, so by using convenience sampling 279 consumers of Delhi and 328 consumers of Mumbai were included in the present study.

**Data Collection:** Data was collected by using a close-ended questionnaire which was divided into 5 sections i.e. (a) demographic profile (b) social media usage (c) influencer engagement (d) brand interaction (e) impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty.

**Statistical Analysis:** The data has been analyzed in SPSS 21.0. For interpretation percentage analysis, a two-sample t-test and chi-square test were used.

## Results

### Demographic Profile

In the beginning of questionnaire Gen Z Consumers were asked to indicate their demographic profile as shown Table 1

- **Gender of Gen Z Consumers:** Out of the total Gen Z Consumers 57.30% (N=348) were males and rests were females (N=259, Percentage=42.70). In both the cities more males (Delhi=52.30%, Mumbai=61.60%) were included in the sample as compared to the females (Delhi=47.70%, Mumbai=38.40%)
- **Age of Gen Z Consumers:** The current age of Gen Z consumers varies from 20 to 27 years so they were subdivided into two groups i.e. consumers in the age group of 20 to 23 years (44.20%) and consumers in the age group of 24 to 27 years (55.80%).
- **Occupation status of Gen Z Consumers:** In Delhi 36.20% consumers were students, 26.50% consumers were unemployed and 37.30% consumers were employed. In Mumbai these percentages were 26.50%, 35.70% and 37.80% respectively. Overall in sample 31% consumers were students, 31.50% consumers were unemployed and 37.50 consumers were employed.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Gen Z Consumers**

Gender	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Male	146	52.3	202	61.6	348	57.3
Female	133	47.7	126	38.4	259	42.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>
Age Group	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
20 to 23 Years	121	43.4	147	44.8	268	44.2
24 to 27 Years	158	56.6	181	55.2	339	55.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>
Occupation Status	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Student	101	36.2	87	26.5	188	31.0
Unemployed	74	26.5	117	35.7	191	31.5
Employed	104	37.3	124	37.8	228	37.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>

*Social Media Usage of Gen Z Consumers*

As per the data shown in Table 2, all Gen Z consumers used Instagram. The next three popular social media platforms after Instagram were Facebook (91.10%), YouTube (89.30%) and Twitter (83.70%). If we compare the percentages of the two sample cities, then it can be concluded that Gen Z consumers of Mumbai were more active on social media platforms as compared to the Gen Z consumers of Delhi.

Further respondents were asked to indicate the average time spent by them on social media platforms and it was found that the majority of consumers are spending 2 to 4 hours on social media (37.10%) followed by more than 4 hours (31%) and 1 to 2 hours (26.50%).

**Table 2: Social Media Usage of Gen Z Consumers**

Social Media Platform	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Instagram	279	100.0	328	100.0	607	100.0
YouTube	241	86.4	301	91.8	542	89.3
Twitter	232	83.2	276	84.1	508	83.7
Facebook	248	88.9	305	93.0	553	91.1
Average Per day Use	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	11	3.9	22	6.7	33	5.4
1-2 hours	87	31.2	74	22.6	161	26.5
2-4 hours	124	44.4	101	30.8	225	37.1
More than 4 hours	57	20.4	131	39.9	188	31.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>

### Influencer Engagement of Gen Z Consumers

Gen Z consumers were asked how frequently they follow influencers and as a response majority of consumers of Delhi (47.30%) and Mumbai (49.40%) said that they follow influencers on weekly basis. A significant number of consumers (Delhi=36.20%, Mumbai=37.10%) highlighted the daily following of influencers.

When asked about the type of influences followed, the majority of respondents (71.30%) said that they follow fitness influencers followed by fashion influencers (70.20%) and travel influencers (63.10%). It could be

observed that a maximum number of Delhi consumers (72%) follow fitness influencers whereas the maximum number of Mumbai consumers (75.30%) follow fashion influencers.

The popularity of influencers keeps on changing and new influencers also emerge in market so consumers were asked that how do they usually discover new influencers. As a result it was observed that majority of Delhi (76.30%) and Mumbai consumers (90.90%) follow new influencers due to social media algorithms. Overall 64.30% consumers said that they follow new influencers based on the recommendation received from friends

**Table 3: Influencer Engagement of Gen Z Consumers**

Frequency of following influencer	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Daily	101	36.2	124	37.8	225	37.1
Weekly	132	47.3	162	49.4	294	48.4
Monthly	25	9.0	37	11.3	62	10.2
Rarely	21	7.5	5	1.5	26	4.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>
Type of Influencer	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Fashion	179	64.2	247	75.3	426	70.2
Beauty	154	55.2	201	61.3	355	58.5
Fitness	201	72.0	232	70.7	433	71.3
Gaming	101	36.2	147	44.8	248	40.9
Travel	124	44.4	259	79.0	383	63.1
Food	154	55.2	200	61.0	354	58.3
Source	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Recommendations from friends	148	53.0	242	73.8	390	64.3
Social media algorithms	213	76.3	298	90.9	511	84.2
Sponsored ads	101	36.2	154	47.0	255	42.0
Other	42	15.1	51	15.5	93	15.3

### Influencer Engagement of Gen Z Consumers

Gen Z consumers were asked how often they make purchases influenced by social media and as a response, it was found that approximately half of the consumers (49.40%) often make purchases influenced by social media. 20.3% of consumers indicated that they always make purchases influenced by social media whereas 26.20% of consumers said that they sometimes make purchases influenced by social media. Individually 50.50% of

consumers in Delhi and 48.50% of consumers in Mumbai often make purchases influenced by social media.

Consumers were asked that have they ever stopped following a brand due to a negative impression of an influencer associated with it and as a result, in Mumbai maximum number of consumers (62.50%) said that yes they did so, while in Delhi majority of consumers (62.70%) said that negative impression of an influencer doesn't affect their engagement with an influencer.



**Table 4: Influencer Engagement of Gen Z Consumers**

Frequency	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Always	52	18.6	71	21.6	123	20.3
Often	141	50.5	159	48.5	300	49.4
Sometimes	74	26.5	85	25.9	159	26.2
Rarely	12	4.3	13	4.0	25	4.1
Never	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>
Response	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Yes	104	37.3	205	62.5	309	50.9
No	175	62.7	123	37.5	298	49.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>

To check the impact of usage of social media on purchases made due to social media influence following hypothesis has been taken:-

**H01:** There is no significant impact of social media usage on purchases made due to social media influence

**Ha1:** There is a significant impact of social media usage on purchases made due to social media influence

The chi-square test was used to evaluate this hypothesis, and table 5 displays the results. The null hypothesis is rejected since the chi-statistic value is significant at the 5% level of significance, indicating that social media usage significantly influences purchases made as a result of social media influence. Here, it can be concluded that social media influence causes a rise in purchases as a result of heavy usage.

**Table 5: Impact of social media usage on purchases made due to social media influence**

Average Per day Use of social media	Purchase frequency due to social media influence					Chi - Statistic	p-value	Result
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Total			
Less than 1 hour	6	13	9	5	33	195.357	0.000	Significant
1-2 hours	20	132	2	7	161			
2-4 hours	125	89	3	8	225			
More than 4 hours	74	60	48	6	188			
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>607</b>			

Level of Significance=5%

### Impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty

To gauge how social media influencers affected their brand loyalty, respondents were given a list of statements and asked to check the ones they agreed with. Table 6 is showing the agreement level of Gen Z consumers of Delhi. The respondents were strongly agreed with three statements which indicated that the authenticity of an influencer affects my loyalty to a brand (Mean=4.39), they are more likely to remain loyal to a brand if it consistently collaborates with influencers they trust (Mean=4.29) and

an influencer's endorsement makes them more likely to try a brand (Mean=4.28). The respondents were agreed with all other statements. In the opinion of Gen Z consumers of Delhi; Influencers have a greater impact on their purchasing decisions than traditional advertising, influencers provide a more relatable perspective on products than brands themselves and their perception of a brand changes based on the influencers they partner with. Overall Delhi consumers showed positive impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty

**Table 6: Impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Delhi Consumers**

Statements	Mean	S.D.	C.V.	Level of Agreement
I often discover new brands through social media influencers.	3.49	1.05	0.30	Agree
I trust the product recommendations made by influencers I follow.	3.74	0.89	0.24	Agree
An influencer's endorsement makes me more likely to try a brand.	4.28	0.76	0.18	Strongly Agree
I feel a personal connection to brands promoted by influencers I admire.	3.67	1.04	0.28	Agree
The authenticity of an influencer affects my loyalty to a brand.	4.39	0.99	0.23	Strongly Agree
I am more likely to purchase a product if I see it endorsed by an influencer I trust.	3.49	0.87	0.25	Agree
Influencers help me make informed purchasing decisions.	3.82	1.21	0.32	Agree
I follow influencers who represent brands that align with my values.	3.69	0.65	0.18	Agree
I actively seek out influencers who promote brands I love.	3.44	0.74	0.22	Agree
My perception of a brand changes based on the influencers they partner with.	3.99	1.01	0.25	Agree
I am more likely to remain loyal to a brand if it consistently collaborates with influencers I trust.	4.29	0.85	0.20	Strongly Agree
Influencers have a greater impact on my purchasing decisions than traditional advertising.	4.04	1.02	0.25	Agree
I feel that influencers provide a more relatable perspective on products than brands themselves.	4.01	1.21	0.30	Agree

The overall effect of social media influencers on Delhi consumers' brand loyalty is displayed in Table 7. While over 90% of customers (93.90%) stated that social media

influencers have a strong impact on their brand loyalty, just 6.10% of consumers answered that social media influencers have a poor impact on brand loyalty.

**Table 7: Overall Impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Delhi Consumers**

Overall Impact	N	Percentage
Low	17	6.1
High	262	93.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 8 is showing the agreement level of Gen Z consumers of Mumbai. The respondents were strongly agreed with two statements which indicated that they feel a personal connection to brands promoted by influencers they admire (Mean=4.49) and an influencer's endorsement makes them more likely to try a brand (Mean=4.21). The respondents were agreed with all other statements. In the opinion of Gen

Z consumers of Mumbai they are more likely to remain loyal to a brand if it consistently collaborates with influencers they trust, their perception of a brand changes based on the influencers they partner with, and the authenticity of an influencer affects their loyalty to a brand. Overall Mumbai consumers showed positive impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty.

**Table 8: Impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Mumbai Consumers**

Statements	Mean	S.D.	C.V.	Level of Agreement
I often discover new brands through social media influencers.	3.69	0.79	0.21	Agree
I trust the product recommendations made by influencers I follow.	3.89	0.85	0.22	Agree
An influencer's endorsement makes me more likely to try a brand.	4.21	0.56	0.13	Strongly Agree

Statements	Mean	S.D.	C.V.	Level of Agreement
I feel a personal connection to brands promoted by influencers I admire.	4.49	0.62	0.14	Strongly Agree
The authenticity of an influencer affects my loyalty to a brand.	4.05	1.02	0.25	Agree
I am more likely to purchase a product if I see it endorsed by an influencer I trust.	3.79	0.65	0.17	Agree
Influencers help me make informed purchasing decisions.	3.64	0.79	0.22	Agree
I follow influencers who represent brands that align with my values.	3.45	0.88	0.26	Agree
I actively seek out influencers who promote brands I love.	3.86	0.91	0.24	Agree
My perception of a brand changes based on the influencers they partner with.	4.09	1.05	0.26	Agree
I am more likely to remain loyal to a brand if it consistently collaborates with influencers I trust.	4.12	0.63	0.15	Agree
Influencers have a greater impact on my purchasing decisions than traditional advertising.	3.54	0.74	0.21	Agree
I feel that influencers provide a more relatable perspective on products than brands themselves.	3.42	0.84	0.25	Agree

Table 9 is showing the overall impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Mumbai Consumers. Only 7% consumers indicated the low impact of social media

influencers on brand loyalty otherwise more than 90% of the consumers (93%) said that there is a high impact of social media influencers on their brand loyalty.

**Table 9: Overall Impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Mumbai Consumers**

Overall Impact	N	Percentage
Low	23	7.0
High	305	93.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>

To test the difference in impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai following hypothesis has been taken:-

**H02:** There is no significant difference in the impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai

**Ha2:** There is a significant difference in the impact of social

media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai

Two sample t-tests were used to evaluate this hypothesis, and the results are shown in Table 10. The hypothesis is rejected since all the t-values are significant except one, indicating that the influence of social media influencers on the brand loyalty of Mumbai and Delhi's Gen Z consumers differs significantly.

**Table 10: Difference in the impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai**

Statements	Delhi		Mumbai		t-value	P-value	Result
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
I often discover new brands through social media influencers.	3.49	1.05	3.69	0.79	2.592	0.009	Significant
I trust the product recommendations made by influencers I follow.	3.74	0.89	3.89	0.85	2.121	0.034	Significant
An influencer's endorsement makes me more likely to try a brand.	4.28	0.76	4.19	0.56	1.68	0.094	Significant



Statements	Delhi		Mumbai		t-value	P-value	Result
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
I feel a personal connection to brands promoted by influencers I admire.	3.67	1.04	4.49	0.62	11.993	0.000	Significant
The authenticity of an influencer affects my loyalty to a brand.	4.39	0.99	4.05	1.02	4.148	0.000	Significant
I am more likely to purchase a product if I see it endorsed by an influencer I trust.	3.49	0.87	3.79	0.65	4.85	0.000	Significant
Influencers help me make informed purchasing decisions.	3.82	1.21	3.64	0.79	2.199	0.028	Significant
I follow influencers who represent brands that align with my values.	3.69	0.65	3.45	0.88	3.764	0.000	Significant
I actively seek out influencers who promote brands I love.	3.44	0.74	3.86	0.91	6.17	0.000	Significant
My perception of a brand changes based on the influencers they partner with.	3.99	1.01	4.09	1.05	1.19	0.234	Not Significant
I am more likely to remain loyal to a brand if it consistently collaborates with influencers I trust.	4.29	0.85	4.12	0.63	2.823	0.004	Significant
Influencers have a greater impact on my purchasing decisions than traditional advertising.	4.04	1.02	3.54	0.74	6.98	0.000	Significant
I feel that influencers provide a more relatable perspective on products than brands themselves.	4.01	1.21	3.42	0.84	7.05	0.000	Significant

Level of Significance=5%

**Table 11** shows the overall impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z Consumers. As per results, 93.40% of consumers said that there is a high impact of social media influencers on their brand loyalty.

**Table 11: Overall Impact of social media influencers on brand loyalty of Gen Z Consumers**

Overall Impact	Delhi		Mumbai		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Low	17	6.1	23	7.0	40	6.6
High	262	93.9	305	93.0	567	93.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>100</b>

## Discussion

The results indicated that Instagram is the most popular social media platform among Gen Z consumers followed by Facebook and YouTube. On average Gen Z consumers spend 2 to 4 hours daily on social media. Around half of the Gen Z consumers said that they follow influencers weekly. Delhi consumers prefer fitness influencers whereas Mumbai consumers are more inclined towards fashion influencers. Approximately half of the Delhi (50.5%) and Mumbai (48.50%) consumers indicated that they often make purchases influenced by social media influencers and sometimes they stopped following a brand due to a negative impression of an influencer associated with it. It was found

that there is a significant impact of social media usage on purchases made which means that high use of social media leads to increased purchases due to social media influence. The results highlighted that there is a high impact of social media influencers on their brand loyalty. A significant difference was observed in the opinion of Gen Z consumers of Delhi and Mumbai. This discussion will relate the results to existing literature, highlighting consistencies and discrepancies while offering a deeper understanding of these dynamics.

### Platform Popularity and Time Spent on Social Media

The finding that Instagram is the most popular platform among Gen Z consumers, followed by Facebook and

YouTube, aligns with previous research that identifies Instagram as a favoured platform for younger audiences due to its visually engaging content and influencer culture (Saini et al., 2021). The reported average daily usage of 2 to 4 hours reflects broader trends noted in the literature, where Gen Z consumers exhibit high engagement levels on social media platforms. This extended time spent online amplifies the potential for brands to leverage influencer marketing strategies, as consumers are more exposed to promotional content.

### **Influencer Following Patterns and Niche Preferences**

The result indicating that around half of Gen Z consumers follow influencers weekly corroborates findings by Sfenrianto, Yunital & Gunawan (2018), who emphasize the importance of regular interaction with influencers in fostering brand loyalty. The preference for specific types of influencers—fitness influencers in Delhi and fashion influencers in Mumbai—suggests that cultural and regional factors play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences. This finding supports the notion that the effectiveness of influencer marketing can vary based on audience demographics and cultural contexts (Rathjens et al., 2024).

### **Influence on Purchases and Brand Perceptions**

The statistic that around half of consumers in both cities make purchases influenced by social media reflects research showing that influencer endorsements can significantly sway consumer buying decisions (Zoubi, 2019). Moreover, the finding that negative impressions of influencers can lead to the abandonment of brands aligns with Santoso & Dewi (2018). This highlights the fragile nature of brand relationships in the influencer landscape, where a single misstep by an influencer can tarnish brand loyalty.

### **Social Media Usage and Purchase Behavior**

The significant impact of social media usage on purchase decisions reinforces the connection identified in existing literature between high social media engagement and increased consumer responsiveness to influencer marketing (Santoso & Dewi, 2018). This suggests that brands aiming to enhance their market presence should

focus on platforms that engage their target demographics effectively. The results underline the importance of strategic content creation and engagement practices to convert online interactions into tangible sales.

### **Impact on Brand Loyalty across Regions**

Finally, the finding that social media influencers significantly impact brand loyalty, with notable differences between consumers in Delhi and Mumbai, emphasizes the need for localized marketing strategies. This aligns with previous research indicating that cultural nuances can significantly affect consumer behaviour and loyalty patterns (Saini et al., 2021). The differing preferences between the two cities could suggest that brands need to tailor their influencer partnerships and marketing strategies to resonate with the unique values and interests of consumers in different regions.

### **Conclusion**

The results of this study add to the expanding corpus of research on how social media influencers affect Generation Z consumers' brand loyalty. By situating these results within the context of existing research, it becomes evident that social media platforms, regional preferences, and consumer engagement significantly influence purchasing behavior and brand relationships. These dynamics should be further investigated in future studies, especially in culturally varied settings, to refine influencer marketing strategies and enhance brand loyalty.

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