

Social Media and Influencer Marketing on Purchase Intention of Sustainability-Driven Fashion Products: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Introduction

Social media platforms are slowly turning into social commerce, people are using social media not only for entertainment and interaction purpose but also for making purchase. This behavior of consumer has created a lot of buzz for marketers to understand the importance of social media. There are several platforms which aid marketers in promoting their products and services, and top of them is Instagram. Instagram is the most growing social media platform since pandemic and after Tik-Tok was banned in India. YouTube turns out to be showstopper, and earning platform for every type of individual through creating vlogs and other entertainment content. All the platforms including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have revolutionized marketing. Sustainability of products has become one of the major factors for consume who prioritize environmental friendly fundamentals in their purchasing behavior. Additionally Influencer marketing helps marketers and organizations to promote their product in more sustainable manner without green washing, with its credibility in information and through Para social interactions. Consumer uses social media to gather product related information whereas consumer often uses social media for entertainment and FOMO (Fear of missing out). Influencer marketing is gearing up day by day as it is cost effective way of promotion and it covers large audience or potential customers. Social media influencers are followed by both Generations, because of homophile attitude which creates the urge of self-belongingness. Consumers often buy products through social media because they provide personalization, instant respond, customization, credibility of social media influencer they follow and some other factors whereas there are also some factors which restricts them from purchasing through social media like, product quality, refund policy, trust issues, security issues and others. Almost every new start-up on Instagram claims they use environmental friendly resources for product which leads to green washing of consumers, it's important to make products sustainable in every aspect concluding to less harm to environment and globe. Green washing has led to de-influencing where many influencers discourage there followers from using particular product which has created lot of chaos for the credibility of influencers. Although consumer is willing to pay more for sustainable products but many brand on social media are just green washing consumers which create the question of trust. Social media platforms and Influencer marketing are somehow attracting customers using content creation and product awareness which will eventually lead to purchase decision.

Literature Review

Social media marketing

Social media platforms have become an integral part of our daily lives and are applicable pervasively; mainly it has transformed the purchasing behavior and attitude towards brands of consumers. The pervasive integration of social media platforms into daily life has profoundly

reshaped consumer behavior, particularly influencing how Generation Z interacts with brands and makes purchasing decisions (Li, 2025). Today's population, including so-called techies, is wary of believing traditional ads. Due to their status as digital natives, this group is extremely suspicious of conventional marketing and values authenticity and transparency in online communications. (Baghel, 2023) (Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025). Social media has become an essential part of promotion for influencing Gen Z as they spend a lot of time scrolling their social media apps, on the internet and easily acquires product related information. They are willing to spend more money on buying products impulsively without thinking on their current financial situations because of continuous exposure on social media platforms (Djafarova & Fouts, 2022). Social media has given consumers more leverage by making product information easily accessible, facilitating better decision-making, and changing conventional purchasing patterns. (-, 2023). Social media platforms like youtube and instagram are gaining more popularity for promoting products and services through visual content creation and influencer marketing. (Syamsudin et al., 2025). In order to effectively engage this population, marketers must strategically utilize these channels, shifting from traditional digital marketing to more sophisticated strategies like influencer marketing. (Bhuwaneshwari & Hemasuruthi, 2023). These platforms have evolved into interactive markets where peer-to-peer influence and visual content strongly affect consumer preferences and buying behaviours, going beyond conventional communication channels. (Erwin et al., 2023). Customer engagement and standard advertising has somehow replaced by social media, as the expansion is growing rapidly, and its impact is beyond mass marketed products to luxury brands. (Brambilla et al., 2022). Social media turns out to be the turning point for altering marketing paradigms. It plays a crucial role in shaping brand perception and customer engagement for luxury considering the factors it is anticipated to generate 130% of market growth over the next seven years, fashion products are impelled to reconsider their social media marketing strategies in order to attract the consumer sector (Cheng et al., 2021).

(Cheng et al., 2021). Fashion product must provide engaging digital experiences and tailored engagements to foster brand loyalty and boost sales due to this increasing purchasing power and proficiency in social media of consumer. Conversions (Yang-yu et al., 2021) (Lin, 2022) (Archana. & Shree, 2024). With online sales virtually doubling from 12% in 2019 to 23% in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic expanded luxury brands shift to social media marketing channels. By 2025, social media platforms will likely lead fashion product, especially among consumers of different generations. (Milanesi et al., 2022).

Influencer marketing

During the period of E-commerce and traditional shopping era, people use to rely more on their families, relatives colleagues and other subjective norms, but now with the introduction of social commerce (purchasing product using social media) has Influencers who have substituted these relations and are more trusted when it comes to buying a product (Bakshy et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2014; Szczurski, 2017, Alkan & Ulas, 2023). At this point, influencers are presenting the items as a part of their own life, which can be proof that the influencer is driving the communication process. Brands which are using influencer marketing as a part of promotion have more effective results and can be used to target audience of their choice (Coskun, 2018). Influencer marketing is becoming inevitable for marketers as it is the mostly developing field for influencing consumers purchase decision mainly GEN-Z. Influencer marketing means when brand managers invest in social media influencers of their choice to promote their products and services. Influencers are also classified in four types of influencers, firstly are the Nano influencer with less than 10k followers, followed by micro influencer with followers between 10,000- 1, 00,000, next are

the macro influencers with followers between 1, 00,000-5, 00,000, and mega influencer where are more than 5, 00,000 number (Statista,2023). The global influencer marketing market was worth almost \$10 billion in 2020 and is expected to grow to more than \$30 billion by 2025. As the industry evolves, influencer marketing platforms continue to grow in size and importance. This continual expansion is making brand-creator partnerships more profitable year after year (Statista, 2025). Social media influencers have a positive influence on consumers' purchase intention, as they create a sense of belongingness and credibility in the mind of their followers. Secondly, it creates e-WOM, where consumers gather information through a new source of channel, which is electronic and it has become one of the significant factors in influencing consumers' purchase behavior. Sense of belongingness, Electronic word of mouth and credibility are some of the positive components of social media influencers which influence their followers to make a purchase (Martínez-López et al. 2020; Casaló, Flavián, and Ibáñez-Sánchez 2020). This approach leverages the influencer's perceived authenticity and trustworthiness, fostering a more profound connection with potential customers than traditional advertising. Marketers can leverage this new form of promotion, influencer marketing by building a deeper connection with potential consumers by identifying perceived credibility and reliability compared to traditional advertising (Vukmirović et al., 2020). This strategic shift leverages the established trust and parasocial relationships influencers cultivate with their audiences, thereby enhancing message reception and perceived relevance. This symbiotic relationship between brands and influencers enables a more organic integration of promotional content into the consumer's digital experience, often blurring the lines between entertainment and advertisement. This strategic approach promotes outreach and perceived relevance by using the parasocial relationships and trust that influencers have built with their followers. Influencer marketing allows more originality of promotional content to brands for consumers which turns out to be both entertaining and advertising, enhancing the customer engagement with brands (Rani et al., 2022). The concept is especially prevalent in the luxury sector, where influencers, frequently defined by meticulously maintained appearances and lifestyles, represent desirable attributes related to high-end brands, eventually influencing consumer desires and perceptions (Andika et al., 2024). The combination of luxury products and influencer marketing leverages the use of the influencing power and perceived credibility of these digital personas to attract customer engagement and influence their purchase decisions (Łaskiewicz, 2023). This strategy significantly increases the brand image and outreach which helps in understanding target audience and their requirements (Ilieva et al., 2024) (Migkos et al., 2025) This strategy fosters brands to avoid the distrust associated with conventional marketing. Rather, they may rely on the influencer's implicit endorsement and aspirational lifestyle to connect with potential customers (Vukmirović et al., 2020). This type of marketing turns those who are just watching into people who are actively involved. Influencers often show intrinsic drive and creative control, which makes their endorsements more believable and real to consumers (Kapitan et al., 2021).

Purchase Intention

Influencer marketing significantly impacts consumer purchase intention by enhancing brand awareness and shaping consumer preferences (Fetais et al., 2022). This influence is primarily driven by the ability of influencers to act as trusted sources of recommendations, guiding consumers toward new or unfamiliar products (Ismail & Mohamed, 2024). This dynamic interaction fosters a unique bond where followers perceive influencers as reliable guides rather than mere advertisers, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase (-, 2023). This perceived reliability often stems from the parasocial interactions consumers develop with influencers, where a sense of intimacy and trust is cultivated through consistent content

engagement ([Kim, 2021](#)). This profound connection subsequently translates into heightened engagement and conversion rates, outperforming traditional marketing tactics that lack this personalized touch ([Migkos et al., 2025](#)). Furthermore, the authenticity and reliability often exhibited by influencers allow them to bypass the typical skepticism associated with conventional advertising, directly appealing to consumer emotions and aspirations ([Cheah et al., 2024](#)). This strategic approach capitalizes on the human tendency to trust recommendations from perceived peers or opinion leaders, accelerating the consumer journey from awareness to conversion ([Ingale, 2024](#)). The effectiveness of this model is rooted in the deep emotional connection and identification followers develop with influencers, transforming promotional messages into trusted endorsements that resonate deeply with consumer desires ([Liu, 2021](#)).

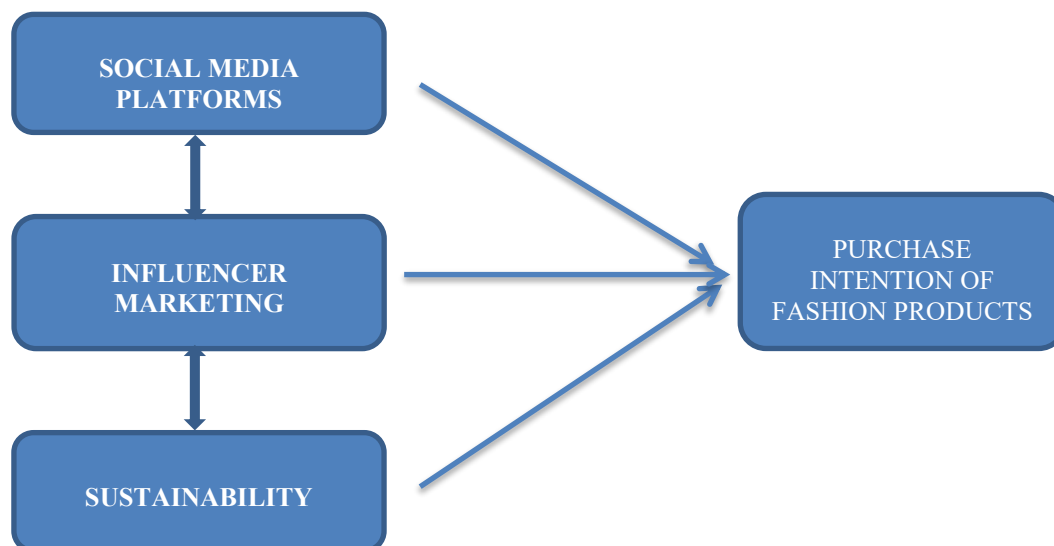
Sustainable products

The growing consumer demand for sustainable products has led to a significant shift in marketing strategies, with influencer collaborations emerging as a powerful tool to promote eco-friendly consumption ([-, 2023](#)). This trend underscores the increasing importance of leveraging credible voices to disseminate information about environmentally conscious choices, thereby empowering consumers to make informed decisions that align with sustainable values ([Hermawan, 2021](#)). Influencers can effectively bridge the knowledge gap between sustainable product innovations and consumer adoption by demonstrating practical applications and highlighting the tangible benefits of eco-friendly alternatives. This advocacy extends beyond mere product promotion, fostering a broader societal awareness and commitment to environmental stewardship ([Hardey, 2024](#)). This strategic alignment with sustainability not only enhances brand image but also cultivates a loyal consumer base dedicated to ethical consumption. This approach is particularly effective because influencers, through their relatable content, can demystify sustainable practices and integrate them into everyday lifestyles, making eco-conscious choices more accessible and appealing to their followers ([Zhang, 2023](#)). This fosters a collective movement towards more responsible consumption, driven by the authentic endorsement and lifestyle integration demonstrated by influential figures in the digital space. Moreover, the perceived relatability and accessibility of these influencers, many of whom began as everyday individuals, enhance their credibility and foster a sense of friendship with their audience, making their endorsements particularly impactful for sustainable products ([Huang, 2023](#)). This emotional connection cultivates an environment where sustainable luxury products are viewed not merely as commodities but as reflections of shared values and aspirations, thereby deepening consumer engagement and loyalty ([Zhang, 2023](#)). This shift towards sustainable luxury also addresses the evolving perception of luxury itself, where ethical considerations and environmental impact are increasingly weighted alongside traditional indicators like exclusivity and craftsmanship ([Al-Issa, 2024](#)). Consequently, consumers are demonstrating a growing preference for environmentally friendly and sustainable products and services, moving beyond traditional brand loyalty to prioritize ecological impact in their purchasing decisions ([Baviskar et al., 2024](#)) ([Chen, 2024](#)). This evolving consumer landscape compels brands to not only incorporate sustainable practices but also effectively communicate these efforts through trusted channels, like influencer marketing, to resonate with this ethically conscious demographic ([Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025](#)). This increased consumer awareness of environmental issues and preference for eco-friendly alternatives is further compounded by the growing concerns over the potential environmental and health hazards posed by traditionally manufactured products, which often contain pollutants and harmful additives ([Jang & Choi, 2025](#)).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a comprehensive Bibliometric analysis to systematically map the intellectual landscape concerning Gen Z, young consumers, and sustainable consumption, leveraging established frameworks for data acquisition and interpretation (Halibas et al., 2025). This approach had systematically identified key research trends, influential authors, and prominent theoretical underpinnings that inform the nexus of social media, influencer marketing, and sustainable fashion products purchase decisions among younger demographics. Specifically, the Bibliometric analysis had focused on peer-reviewed articles, conference proceedings, and relevant industry reports published within the last decade, ensuring an up-to-date and comprehensive review of the field (Batamirova & Thrassou, 2025). This method is particularly apt for discerning the evolving research trajectories and identifying gaps in the literature concerning how digital natives like Gen Z engage with luxury brands that espouse sustainability (Batamirova & Thrassou, 2025; Kaur et al., 2024). The initial phase of the Bibliometric analysis involved the selection of appropriate keywords and search strings to ensure comprehensive coverage of the relevant academic databases (Kohli & Gupta, 2024). These search terms will encompass concepts such as "sustainable fashion products," "influencer marketing," "social media impact," "Purchase intention," "consumer behavior," and related terminologies to capture the breadth of scholarly discourse. The subsequent phase will involve data extraction and purification, meticulously sifting through the retrieved literature to eliminate redundancies and irrelevant entries, thereby ensuring the integrity and focus of the dataset. The study will analyze approximately 546 papers published between 2015 and 2025, sourced from Scopus and Web of Science databases, to provide a robust foundation for understanding current trends and identifying future research directions in Gen Z purchasing behavior

Conceptual framework



The proposed model shows a series of three independent variables named Social media platforms, Influencer marketing and Sustainability and one dependent variable Purchase intention of fashion products. The framework will allow us to understand whether these three

variables have a significant impact on consumers purchase intention. Social media users often refer these platforms for information gathering and evaluating alternatives before purchasing a product; Influencer marketing allows consumers to understand the uses of product and they find it more reliable and trustworthy when compare with celebrities for roduct promotion; Sustainability has become significant for consumers due to their durability and environmental friendly objective. All the above variables will be used to analyze whether they have a significant effect or not.

Discussion

This bibliometric analysis revealed that research on consumer's purchasing behavior frequently addresses social media's role and sustainability consumption ([Li & Hassan, 2023](#)). This aligns with broader trends indicating a growing academic interest in responsible, sustainable, and ethical consumption among young consumers ([Halibas et al., 2025](#)). Specifically, the analysis of 546 papers from Scopus and Web of Science databases highlights significant themes and their evolutionary trajectories within the Generation Z and young consumers field, particularly concerning sustainable behavior ([Halibas et al., 2025](#)). This indicates a burgeoning area of inquiry into how digital platforms shape the purchasing decisions of this demographic, particularly regarding eco-conscious choices ([Halibas et al., 2025](#); [Li & Hassan, 2023](#)). This emphasis on digital influence further underscores the importance of social media in shaping green behavior through influencer culture and peer dynamics, which warrants deeper exploration into the motivations, barriers, and cultural contexts influencing circular economy adoption beyond fashion ([Ge, 2024](#); [Halibas et al., 2025](#)). The literature also emphasizes the significant impact of social media influencers on shaping consumer's attitudes and behaviors towards sustainable fashion, highlighting the need for further investigation into the mechanisms through which this influence operates ([Ge, 2024](#)). Moreover, corporate social responsibility, green marketing, and authentic advertising are key strategies identified in the literature for influencing sustainable purchasing decisions among Generation Z ([Halibas et al., 2025](#)).

Conclusion

The findings confirm that digital platforms are instrumental in shaping perceptions of luxury sustainability, with influencer marketing playing a pivotal role in fostering brand loyalty and purchase intentions among younger demographics by alleviating cynicism ([Gökerik, 2024](#); [Sáng, 2023](#)). The study thus provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between social media engagement, influencer credibility, and the adoption of sustainable luxury practices among consumers ([Madzunya et al., 2021](#)). This understanding is further strengthened by the validation of an explanatory model that elucidates young consumers' motivations, attitudes, and perceptions regarding sustainable fashion products, indicating a positive view toward such offerings ([Brandão & Magalhães, 2023](#)). The positive view held by consumers towards sustainable luxury is further enhanced by marketing strategies that cultivate trust and loyalty through engaging digital content and transparent communication of sustainability values ([Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025](#)).

Research implication

This research provides significant implications for academia by expanding the theoretical understanding of how social media and influencer marketing intersect with sustainability in the luxury sector, particularly concerning Gen Y and Gen Z consumer segments ([Kaur et al.,](#)

2024). Specifically, it contributes to the discourse on sustainable luxury by empirically examining the mechanisms through which digital platforms shape consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions for high-end goods, an area where research is still developing (Kaur et al., 2024). It also offers a nuanced perspective on how digital authenticity and transparency influence consumer trust, particularly in an environment often fraught with concerns about greenwashing (Pangarkar & Shukla, 2023). Furthermore, the study enriches consumer behavior theory by highlighting the evolving motivations of Gen Y and Gen Z, who often balance traditional luxury aspirations with a strong ethical consciousness. Moreover, it provides a foundation for future studies to delve deeper into the psychological underpinnings of sustainable luxury consumption and the effectiveness of various communication strategies in fostering genuine brand engagement (Bhagaskara & Sobari, 2023). Additionally, this work prompts further investigation into the dynamic interplay between digital technology, ethical consumerism, and the enduring appeal of luxury, paving the way for more comprehensive models of consumer decision-making in a digitalized and sustainability-conscious marketplace (Creevey et al., 2021). This includes analyzing user-generated content and brand-consumer interactions on social media platforms to gauge sentiment and refine messaging (Wilkes et al., 2021). This research further underscores the necessity for academic models to incorporate the rapidly changing digital landscape and generational shifts in values to accurately predict and explain luxury consumption patterns (Brandão & Magalhães, 2023; Gürsen, 2024).

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