

National College of Ireland

Project Submission Sheet

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STUDY ON THE ROLE OF MICRO AND MACRO INFLUENCERS IN FASHION AND
LIFESTYLE PURCHASES IN INDIA
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**CONSUMER TRUST AND INFLUENCER MARKETING: A
STUDY ON THE ROLE OF MICRO AND MACRO
INFLUENCERS IN FASHION AND LIFESTYLE PURCHASES
IN INDIA**

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The digital landscape in the Indian fashion and lifestyle industry has been completely transformed, especially in the ways consumers find, compare, evaluate, and ultimately make purchases. According to Liu (2024), influencer marketing has significantly complemented and even superseded traditional marketing practices. Influencer marketing leverages specific individuals who have a dedicated number of social media followers and possess expertise in promoting brands and products to customers. The large internet-using population, with a high internet penetration rate, presents a lucrative market for social media influencers. The internet penetration rate in India is significantly high, around 55 to 56%, and 900 million internet users (Ibef.org, 2025). There are varying levels of personal relationships, community influences, and increasing disposable income in the country, which fuels the Indian market fashion. All of these aspects are intertwined with custom trust. The dissertation sheds light on the presence of an intricate relationship between influencer marketing and customer trust by broadly categorizing influencers based on their number of followers. Micro influencers typically possess a follower count of 1000 to 100000, whereas macro influencers possess a follower count of more than 100000.

1.2 Background

In the recent past, several social media platforms have emerged, like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and several others. This paradigm shift has fostered the emergence of online personalities bearing a command over the audience. These individuals are identified as influencers. In the opinion of Vrontis *et al.*, (2021), these influencers have been successful in building a rapport with their followers through their content creation, audience engagement, and sharing of personal opinions, leading to an organic connection. This connection possessed by influencers with their followers has gradually become a powerful tool for different fashion and lifestyle brands, seeking to reach and influence their target audience.

Influencer marketing can be considered to be a huge shift from traditional marketing, by using celebrities, especially in the fashion and lifestyle domain. Influencer marketing has undergone a major evolution as it has evolved from product placements to collaboration with brands, developing sponsored content, and even product co-creation. The appeal of influencer marketing lies in the ability of the influencers to make themselves more relatable to their audience, which leads to the development of trust and a feeling of relatability with the influencer (Park *et al.*, 2021).

Both micro and macro influencers play a crucial role in shaping consumer preferences and fashion trends by showing products in real-life settings, giving their personal views, or offering options for styling, that resonate with their strong audience. The visual nature of the social media platform plays a crucial determining role, leading to the generation of customer engagement and ultimately driving sales.

1.3 Problem statement

The effectiveness of influencer marketing on customers is widely studied and adequately acknowledged. On the contrary, the differential impact of micro and macro influencers on consumer trust, especially within the Indian market for fashion and lifestyle, remains widely unexplored. Existing literature studies present a generalized purview of influencers and their ability to harness consumer trust, without adequately differentiating between micro and macro influencers. In the opinion of Gerlich (2023), micro influencers bear a more authentic image and become highly relatable with their consumers owing to high levels of direct engagement. On the contrary, macro-influencers have more professionally curated content and a larger audience. The research thereby attempts to clearly understand the specific role played by micro and macro influencers in building trust with their customers. As per the research of (Park *et al.*, 2021), building the consumer trust is directly proportionate to the positive brand value among the consumers, and the awareness about the brand in the market. Here the role of the influencers come in, as an influencer is able to connect the audience with the brand. In order to convert a viewer into a consumer, an influencer needs to present the authentic reliability, cost-effectiveness, credibility, and the brand value of the product to the audience (Gerlich, 2023). Transparency of the brand comes with the quality, features, benefits, reputations; and these factors psychologically convert an audience into a loyal consumer (Park *et al.*, 2021). In this way influence can generate trust among the customers, so that it can generate sales.

1.4 Aim and Objectives

Aim

To investigate the influence of macro and micro influencers on consumer trust and purchase decisions in India's fashion and lifestyle sector.

Objectives

- To investigate the influence of micro-influencers on consumer trust among Indian consumers for fashion and lifestyle products

- To investigate the influence of macro-influencers on consumer trust among Indian consumers for fashion and lifestyle products
- To investigate the demographic and psychographic factors that impact customer trust and purchase during macro and micro-influencer marketing in India

1.5 Research questions

As per the research of Park *et al.*, (2021), building the consumer trust is all about credibility and perceived authenticity for influencers in order to gain consumer trust. In this context, it is clear that macro-influencers can create a wider net, but audiences may feel that their endorsements are less intimate and more commercial in nature. On the other hand, micro-influencers, who are viewed as peers, with genuine passion for their respective niches, in turn, could savage more trust and engagement in their community. This differential effect on trust is a main goal of this research. The ultimate goal of influencer marketing is often to drive sales. However, the pathway from influencer endorsement to purchase decision may vary depending on the influencer's reach, engagement, and perceived trustworthiness. This research seeks to analyze how both macro and micro-influencers contribute to purchase decisions in the Indian fashion and lifestyle market, considering factors such as product type, price point, and consumer demographics.

RQ1: What is the influence of micro-influencers on customer trust among Indian consumers for purchasing fashion and lifestyle products?

RQ2: What is the influence of macro-influencers on customer trust among Indian consumers for purchasing fashion and lifestyle products?

RQ3: What are the demographic and psychographic factors that impact consumer trust and purchase during macro and micro-influencer marketing?

1.6 Research Significance

India possesses a massive and rapidly growing internet penetration rate and complex customer base, which provides it with the uniqueness and need to study the influence of micro and macro influencers on gaining the trust of this large population. From a theoretical perspective, the research contributes to adding to the already existing knowledge regarding influencer marketing, adding aspects like consumer trust and purchase intention, keeping focus on the Indian fashion and lifestyle domain.

When it comes to influencer marketing in India, and even more so, in the fast-paced fashion industry, Parasocial relationships are arguably known to build that emotional bond successfully

where followers may exhibit loyalty, personal attachment and even friendship to the influencer's life. Smaller influencers that share unedited, bts content can even make the most of these interactions and are able to create a stronger emotional connection. Its (their) perceived accessibility, authenticity and in the end what it all enhances is the trust space of the customers, so they are taking it as if it were personal recommendations from their favorite influencers, not as if it was a paid promotion.

Taking into consideration the practical perspective, findings from the research hold the potential to add valuable insights beneficial to fashion and lifestyle brands operating in the Indian market. Development of understanding of the varying levels of trust that can be generated by micro and macro-influencers, which benefits brands in their task of influencer selection, aligning with their specific marketing objectives (Wang *et al.*, 2022). A deeper understanding of consumer behaviour is achieved as the level of engagement with different influencer sizes is known.

1.7 Summary

The introductory chapters lay down the groundwork for a detailed exploration of micro and macro influencers influencing consumers in the domain of fashion and lifestyle, specifically focusing on the Indian context. The research focuses on understanding the specific role played by the influencers within the rapidly changing market scenario. The research structure has also been mentioned within this chapter, highlighting the progression of the research work.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The evolution of influencer marketing is responsible for reshaping consumer behaviour, especially within the fashion and lifestyle sectors, and in India, the rise of social media has increased the impact of both micro and macro influencers on the purchase decision. This chapter is going to review the past literature on influencer marketing, along with differentiating between micro as well as macro influencers, including key factors to influence customer trust. In order to do so, different themes are developed by keeping focus on the research objectives. Google Scholar is going to be taken into focus mainly as the primary database from which relevant journals and articles are gathered to analyse those themes. Theoretical aspects are also considered here, along with the literature gap and a conceptual framework.

2.2 Influence of micro-influencers on consumer trust among Indian consumers for fashion and lifestyle products

The increase in social media has led to the prominence of influencer-based marketing, shaping the purchasing intention of customers. The landscape has been altered with the emergence of micro-influencers who bear a smaller niche, and the number of followers ranges between 10000 to 100000 (Liu *et al.*, 2021). The study of Karamchandani *et al.*, (2025), which deploys a survey sampling strategy on 320 Instagram users originating from Gujarat India, states that micro-influencers can create a sense of satisfaction amongst consumers. This eventually leads to the development of trust in these influencers and an increase in purchase intention, which has been proven through statistical testing. The study further emphasizes the importance of factors like attractiveness, originality, and expertise to positively influence the ability of micro influencers to gain the trust of consumers. In the rapidly evolving marketing landscape, which is further facilitated through technology, influencer marketing, especially micro-influencers, has risen to prominence. According to Shukla *et al.*, (2025), micro influencers have completely transformed how consumers interact with brands. The research deploys a mixed method of quantitative industry data and qualitative information from academic journals. The journal additionally diverts attention towards the usage of advanced analytical tools by micro-influencers to leverage the technological paradigm shift in marketing, to effectively target their consumer niche, and to create positive purchase intention.

The micro-influencers have the potential to elevate customer interest by providing a detailed review of the product, and the effectiveness of the product in real life, especially for budget-conscious audiences. This has been established in the study of Nayak and Das (2025), which has deployed a case study analysis method focusing on Odisha India. One of the prominent case studies within this study is the case of "Suraj Garments", a small Cuttack-based fashion apparel store, which collaborated with a micro-influencer "@EthnicElegance". The influencer specializes in traditional Indian fashionwear, and creating visually appealing reels to showcase these fashion products. As a result of the collaboration, sales of Suraj Garments increased by 40% and foot traffic increased by 30%, in addition to repeat purchases and high customer loyalty.

Trust becomes the cornerstone of a successful marketing activity, and it is the same with influencer marketing. The context of consumer trust translates to the degree of consumer belief that the influencer is reliable and credible. The study by Kumar (2024) uses a mixed approach combining quantitative sales data with qualitative interviews with fashion and apparel industry experts. The indicators used within the study are purchase intent, brand awareness, and consumer trust. The findings of the survey emphasized the higher trust-developing ability of micro-influencers owing to their niche audience in comparison to celebrity endorsement of the same fashion product. Additionally, the study also emphasizes that Gen Z consumers are most influenced by micro-influencers.

Similar to the findings of Kumar (2024), the study by Sinha and Fung (2021) also states that micro-influencers have risen to market fame through their niche expertise and charismatic appeal. They are most influential on the millennials and Gen Z age groups. The study uses a secondary study methodological approach to emphasize that micro-influencers use a very narrow fashion domain with a larger product and service category. Their capability to influence customers is quite high, which has encouraged leading brands like ASOS, Boohoo, and Fashion Nova to use this approach.

2.3 Influence of Macro-Influencers on Consumer Trust in Indian Fashion and Lifestyle Products

According to Ganeshkumar, and Lokeshkumar (2022), in today's ever-changing world of digital marketing, influencer marketing has become a popular alternative to more traditional forms of advertising, such as TV, radio, and print. This study is particularly relevant from the perspective of the fashion and lifestyle industry in India, and it evaluates the influence of influencer marketing on consumer trust, which is a critical determinant of purchase decisions (Ganeshkumar and

Lokeshkumar 2022). Cross-referencing the more general analysis of the research summary, this research will focus on delving further into the distinct impact of both micro and macro-influencers within India.

The aim is to understand how macro-influencers, those with many followers and a mass-market appeal, influence consumer trust in fashion and lifestyle products (Amelia *et al.* 2025). While general research acknowledges that the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends on the industry, audience, and influencer, the focus on a niche, culturally diverse market like India is restricted, making it important to study these dynamics in such a market context (Chhabra, 2025). The research will be used to investigate whether macro-influencers are relatively more effective when it comes to establishing trust, recall of brand, and affecting buying behavior among fashion and lifestyle Indian consumers in comparison to micro-influencers.

Key indicators, including consumer engagement, authenticity perception, brand loyalty, and the return on marketing investment, will be examined using survey data, cases, and comparative analysis (Chang, 2025). Though mass advertising will always add value, the insights gained from this paper are expected to underscore the viability of influencer-led strategies, especially for brands catering to a digital-savvy, fashion-conscious Indian audience (Dzreke, 2025). This study will provide key implications on how brands can effectively incorporate influencer marketing as part of holistic marketing strategies to further establish trust and long-term customer relationships in the Indian market.

According to Berwal *et al.* (2025), in today's world, social media has become the influencers of the world, and their preferences and audience dictate the marketing landscape. The focus of this research is to examine the particular role played by influencers, particularly macro influencers, in the creation of consumer trust medium of the fashion and lifestyle sectors in India (Berwal *et al.* 2025). This study also derives insight from the broader insights proposed in the research abstract, focusing on how influencers can influence buying decisions with trust, authenticity, and engagement.

This study further narrows the scope of general findings to the specific effect that macro (a larger audience and reach) influencers have on Indian consumers' trust levels (Nadeem, 2025). The goal is to evaluate critically whether macro influencers are capable of promoting brand loyalty and causing buying intent in a state that is rich in cultural diversity and has some of the fastest digital consumption ever seen.

Analysis of the psychological mechanism by which macro influencers enhance (or hinder) trust will be done by analyzing existing studies and secondary data (Kia, 2025). In this study, these factors, like follower interaction, content authenticity, brand alignment, and perceived expertise, will be taken into consideration. It will evaluate the perception of endorsements with macro-influencers vis-a-vis micro-influencers by Indian consumers in fashion and lifestyle categories where brand image and the person's identity are linked closely (Cox, and Paoli, 2023).

2.4 Demographic and Psychographic Factors in Macro and Micro-Influencer Marketing in India

According to Rajput *et al.* (2024), Social media influencers play an influential role in creating trust and influencing the purchasing behavior of consumers in the beauty and fashion industries. This research aligns with the prevailing research insights about the influences of demographic factors and psychographic factors in the formation of trust in influencer marketing activities in India.

This research shows that the homophily of the influencer about the substantive audience, social presence, and physical attractiveness positively affects the consumer purchase intention, whereas trust acts as a crucial mediating factor (Rajput *et al.* 2024). This framework is applied to the Indian market to investigate how Indian consumers, who are differentiated by specific cultural and socio-economic characteristics, perceive to react to micro and macro influences in fashion and lifestyle products (Thakur *et al.* 2024). In this study, then, the differences in consumer expectations and trust are considered that exist when interacting with micro-influencers versus macro-influencers, macro-influencers being those usually representing aspiration, micro-influencers typically being those who represent relatability.

The study analyses these variables within the Indian context through the surveys and secondary data and offers actionable insights for the brands to strengthen customer trust, create a social connection, and build long-lasting brand allegiance through targeted influencer marketing (Purohit, 2024). The findings are to help marketers choose the right type of influencer and develop messages that connect more deeply with various Indian audiences.

According to Durmishi and Durmishi (2024), the results of the original research abstract are that the impact on purchasing decisions of influencer marketing is well researched by looking at how differences in gender and age greatly matter among Albanian consumers. Nevertheless, it fails, in the main, to give a sufficiently prominent position to the fundamental psychological force of trust as the underpinning of consumers' choice (Durmishi and Durmishi 2024). Although the study does

identify demographic factors, such as gender and age, it does not delve much into how trust is developed between influencers and consumers, nor does not delve much into how authenticity, engagement, and relatability influence the levels of trust. This study is transferred to the Indian market, where demography is not the only factor on which trust is dependent, but also the psychographic factors, like lifestyle aspiration, digital behavior, values, etc. (Madhura and Panakaje, 2022).

India's consumer landscape is complex and diverse; in fashion and lifestyle, the purchase decision is driven by as many demographics and psychographics as by any message or medium. The young generation, particularly Gen Z and millennials, tends to trust influencers when they look authentic and responsible (Suutari, 2025). In addition to being relatable, older demographics, or those from semi-urban and rural backgrounds, may treat the influencer more positively if they represent traditional values or local culture. Therefore, it is in this context that micro-influencers, even though they have a smaller audience than macro-influencers, typically achieve stronger and more personal trust with their audience, specifically in niche fashion and lifestyle markets (Junaid, 2024). This means that it would not be enough to just undertake a study about demographic segmentation, because essentially, one cannot understand the true dynamics of influencer marketing in India without taking the case study approach. To capture the complex ways of building and maintaining trust amongst Indian consumer segments that exist across the spectrum of psychographics, it would require a more robust methodological framework, beyond just Multivariate Analysis and sentiment analysis.

2.5 Theoretical context

2.5.1 Parasocial Interaction Theory

Parasocial Interaction Theory helps to explain the fact that how customers are capable of developing intimate connections with certain media personalities like social media influencers and others despite no real-life interaction (Kim, 2022). In the case of influencer marketing in India, especially in the dynamic fashion sector, Parasocial relationships seem to foster the emotional connection effectively, where followers can feel a sense of loyalty, personal investment, as well as friendship in the life of the influencer. Micro influencers who are responsible for sharing candid, along with behind-the-scenes content, are able to capitalize on these interactions even more, which helps to develop deeper emotional bonds. Their perceived accessibility, along with authenticity

eventually that ultimate enhances the trust area of customers, and they take it as personal recommendations from their preferred influencers rather than doing paid promotions.

The scholars Ferreira *et al.*, (2024), used the Parasocial Interaction Theory within the research, which showcased that the skill admiration of influencers has a strong positive impact on the WOM (Word of Mouth) and purchase intention of influencer-recommended brands. Hence, it can be stated that influencer marketing communication is the most effective strategy to improve consumer brand responses. However, macro influencers have less leverage on aspirational lifestyles through which it is possible to create long-term Parasocial connections with consumers. In India, collectivist culture values the relationship most, which makes the Parasocial bonds even stronger (Kim, 2022). Indian customers are strongly influenced by those influencers who are able to understand their cultural along with social realities. Above all, it can be stated that emotional and psychological dimensions are mostly highlighted through this theoretical context, through which it is possible to keep customers influenced.

2.5.2 Source credibility theory

The source credibility theory is considered as a foundational framework through which it is possible to gain a proper understanding of how consumers perceive and respond to influencer marketing (Han and Balabanis, 2024). Through this theoretical perception, it has also been well understood that the impact of an influencer's message mostly depends on the perceived credibility of the source, which is mainly evaluated through the greater expertise, trustworthiness, along with attractiveness. In the case of influencer marketing in India, it has been observed that both micro and macro influencers have their influential power from the dimensions of fashion and lifestyle choices. Macro influencers seem to be most trustworthy in front of customers, and they have such strong interactive connections with the audience. As an impact, their perceptions are most preferred by customers when making lifestyle choices. The research of Jang *et al.*, (2021), used the source credibility model for evaluating the fact that influencer messages for customers must not be skeptical enough to attract them towards their promoted brands. The authenticity needs to be well-maintained at all times to gain positive outcomes.

Apart from that, macro influencers have an extensive reach in the market along with an effective brand image through which it can be easily possible to develop a sense of aspirational appeal among urban Indian customers (Han and Balabanis, 2024). Trust always plays an essential role for customers, and hence, it is always important for influencers to maintain this for the long term. In

the diverse cultural landscape of India, source credibility seems to be complex enough due to distinct regional identities, language perceptions, and others. Therefore, it is important to manage these aspects throughout by the influencers to gain public trust.

2.6 Summary

Based on the overall context, it can be summarized that both micro and macro influencers have a strong positive impact on Indian customers in the case of making fashion and lifestyle choices. However, influencers need to keep focus on certain demographic and psychographic factors based on which it is possible to facilitate the positive outcomes for the long term. Through theoretical contexts, it has been possible to analyse the research context more deeply.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the research methodologies that have been considered for investigating consumer trust and influential marketing and the role of micro- and micro-influencers within lifestyle and fashion patches within India. This explains research philosophy, design approach, data collection and sampling strategy, which is crucial to ensuring the pay-clarity transparency along with academic rigour to draw suitable findings discussion as well.

3.2 Research philosophy

Research philosophy addresses the fundamental question about knowledge, values, and reality, which relies on a critical approach and rational argument (Dube *et al.*, 2025). Several types of philosophy, such as Interpretivism, Realism, Positivism, and Pragmatism, in terms of addressing the interest of marketing and conceptual trust within the Indian fashion segment, Pragmatism has been chosen.

Justification

Pragmatism philosophy holds key aspects of knowledge which is developed based on real-world situations, meaningful experiences, and problem-solving aspects. Pragmatism goes beyond the single philosophical sense of method and allows both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In a study by KENAPHOOM *et al.* (2025), Pragmatism has focused on practical inquiry along with meteorological flexibility in terms of addressing consumers' intimacy to explore the real-world aspect, aligning theoretical frameworks with empirical datasets with value-discipline theory, which is able to strengthen the application of theory, aligning with the pragmatism aspect. Wamburi *et al.* (2024) addressed that pragmatism supports the understanding of real-world phenomena and can address the organisational and strategic impact.

Alternative philosophies for example, Interpretivism (practice subjective or centre-based meaning) or positivism (focus on the objective truth and measurable aspect), were deemed ineffective and also fail to address the multi-faceted aspects of influencers' marketing and complex aspect of consumer buying behaviour.

With the help of pragmatism philosophy, this research can address real-world problem-solving experiences and focus on influential marketing, along with addressing complex human trust dynamics behaviour. This philosophy has the ability to combine objectivity, which is purchase pattern, and subjectivity that is consumer possession as well.

3.3 Research approach

The research approach addresses the reasoning method that helps to guide how data in theory can interact within a research (Banna and Shahreen, 2024). Three types of research approach such as inductive, deductive and abductive and in this research, abductive approach has been considered.

Justification

The abductive approach combines both deductive and inductive reasoning. For instance, inductive reasoning that proves in theory and data for generating explanations and deductive reasoning that starts with theory for testing hypotheses as well. In terms of minimising limitations, the Abductive approach helps to provide nuanced insights and minimise the limitations and rigidity of the deductive and inductive approaches (Banna and Shahreen, 2024). Abductive also aligns with pragmatic inquiry and enables the exploration of different patterns on addressing macro and micro influencers on affecting consumer behaviour, also iteratively refining theories that are grounded in real-world problems and solutions.

Abductive reasoning also has the ability to integrate quantitative and qualitative information to analyse in a depth manner, which is crucial for dynamic, socially rich contexts like considerable behaviour analysis and influencer marketing.

Another approach, for example, inductive, which allows a theory-building aspect, and deductive, for testing hypotheses, has not been considered. As they struggle to develop theory based on observation, to request clear or testable hypotheses as well. Inductive and deductive are not sufficient to address complex, socially driven aspects like influential tactics of marketing. The abductive approach has been able to overcome such limitations and combine data and theory iteratively to discover and explain consumers' purchase behaviour (Nathaniel, 2023). In a study by Andersson *et al.* (2024), it was addressed that the abductive approach has been able to explore the overall interaction and young consumers' buying decisions within social media. That has provided an iterative understanding and flexible approach of rising patterns through tracing ethnographies and interview analysis, and can research as well as able to address how platform algorithms peer advice and influencer authenticity play a crucial role in shaping consumer decisions. This has revealed a non-linear approach within this social and consumer journey.

3.4 Research design

Research design helps to plan or guide the overall research process and ensure studies for addressed based on reliability and validity (Amelia and Falah, 2022). Several types of research

design, for example, explanatory, exploratory and descriptive, where descriptive design has been considered for the study.

Justification

Descriptive design addresses where, when, and how questions rather than addressing in a causal relationship and why (Amelia and Falah, 2022). Here, the descriptive approach has been crucial to understand causal behaviour from an attitude level that is influenced by micro and macro influences in the fashion segment.

Amelia and Falah (2022) have conducted a descriptive design to address existing patterns in the fashion segment of people from age 12 to 35. Through descriptive design, the researchers are able to capture detailed analysis of consumers' real-life preferences, choices and behaviour, which also influences impact.

Alternative design, for example, exploratory, could have been considered, however, it is suited to address any unfamiliar research problems or areas. In contrast to that, descriptive design aligns efficiently with the quantity of the study and addresses increases and trends in the purchasing behaviour of consumers.

3.5 Data collection and analysis

The data collection process involves gathering information from different sources in this research on addressing micro and macro influencers in India fashion industry mixed data collection process has been considered, which includes both primary and secondary data (Alves de Castro, 2023).

In a research by Gomes *et al.* (2024), it was also addressed that a mixed data collection method has been able to improve generally generalizable findings and gain in-depth insights where both interview and survey with impressions and consumer have been employed. The researcher has also been able to explore the behavioural and perception patterns and found that the parasocial interaction or quality of blog content impacts the consumers' buying decisions. Such in-depth analysis through mixed data has enabled this research to address expertise and trustworthiness in influencing the consumers' buying attitude, especially these sponsored posts.

Here in this study primary data collection process has been considered, where survey analysis has been developed, for which the SPSS tool as a research instrument has been addressed as well. It was supported by a study by Liu (2022), which considered the primary data collection process, considering survey analysis by employing the SPSS tool to address consumers' attitudes and buying decisions based on the celebrity influences within the fast fashion sector. The SPSS data

collection has been built to support the primary data collection process, summarise the data set, and to test the hypothesis. Moreover, SMART-PLS has also been used for the SEM or "structural equation modelling" for analysing complex relations between variables and ensuring the clarity, accuracy or reliability addressed influences traits affecting consumers' budget decisions.

In the study of micro and macro influences on consumer buying decisions, secondary data collection has been considered, with Google Scholar as a database has been taken. To develop thematic analysis as well, in this regard, "Braun and Clarke's six stages" of thematic analysis have been analysed in terms of pavilion patterns, reliability of influences, as well. Regarding this, Alves de Castro (2023) has addressed the thematic analysis with the help of Braun and Clarke's six-phase strategy has been used to systematically identify the codes and analyse the themes as well. Such thematic analysis has been crucial to organising complex qualities. The researcher has also been to the use of qualitative information to ensure rigidity and credibility. This has also been able to explore the contextual findings and go more in the surface-level searches. Following influences and understanding the digital engagement strategies or trends.

Here, a mixed data collection process has been employed, where primary data has been collected through a survey analysis, through a Google form and an email to the respondents as well. This information has been analysed based on the SPSS data collection method to address macro and micro influences affecting consumers' purchase decisions and trust. The objective of addressing consumer trust influences the tribe has been able to be analysed and addressed with the help of correlation and regression analysis by comparing these variables as well. Additionally, thematic analysis, where articles have been collected from the Google Scholar database, has been addressed to understand the relationship of the psychographic factors of consumers that shape their trust and also addresses the influencer strategy within the lifestyle and fashion market, which fulfils research objectives.

3.6 Sampling strategy

The complete strategy is to define the target population, select the accessible population and choose a technique that is appropriate to address these questions and select a subset of the population as well (Panjra and Tiwari, 2021). Among several sampling procedures, in this research simple random sampling strategy has been used. In this regard, Purwanto (2022) has considered using a random sampling strategy for ensuring generalised findings and minimising the selection bias in terms of addressing the importance of consumer behavioural roles and the impact

of employees as well. Here, the researcher has focused on equal chance for selecting 310 respondents from 30 small to medium-sized organisations in order to address the importance of citizenship behaviour, consumers' role and impact on buying caused by leadership. In another study by Panjra and Tiwari (2021) random sampling strategy was also chosen for addressing emerging challenges of buying fashion products through Instagram. Here researcher has considered taking 50 participants in a survey to address the border population that is from adolescent girls of Instagram users to middle-aged women who maintain an equal chance for selection. Such random sampling has been able to improve objectivity and ensure that the outcome of these findings is more than pre pre-defined population subset. Here, this sampling has provided a balanced approach about positive and negative body image self-esteem and about female Instagram users on buying fashion products online, who especially follow a particular fashion influencer, which has able to increase the results' generalisability and diversity.

In this study, simple random sampling has been considered, and here only 152 participants have been chosen in terms of balancing diversity and breadth of consumer insight, and also remaining a manageable aspect for this mixed study as well.

Comparing two studies in the study of influencer marketing 152 participants have been considered, as it has offered a moderate-sized sample, which is crucial to develop a meaningful pattern were overwhelming quantitative and qualitative analysis. Alternative sampling strategies, for example, purposive sampling, have not been chosen for addressing micro and micro-influences and their impact on consumer purchase decisions and buying, as they lack generalizability. This is because the fashion sector within India includes diversity, various behaviours and preferences for which broad perceptions are needed to address the impact of micro and micro-influences. Simple random sampling has been crucial to capture the broader patterns, unlike purposive sampling, which results in bias and fails to represent the broader approach and wider population.

3.7 Ethical consideration

This study has considered ethical standards in terms of ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent and confidentiality. Here, the participants for this study were addressed above the purpose and able to identify it, whereas the identities remained anonymised. Ethical considerations have been compared with the Data Protection Act 2018 in the UK and "Ethics for Researchers European Commission 2013", where personal information had been stored securely and kept in a digital locker to use solely for the research (Adams *et al.*, 2021; Phillips, 2021). Here, acknowledgement

of the article's consideration of thematic analysis has been addressed to maintain transparency and consider accountability as well.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has addressed overall methodological analysis in terms of addressing the micro as well as micro-influences on impacting the customer's trust and buying decision between the lifestyle and fashion sectors in India. Through using pragmatic, abductive and descriptive aspects, this chapter has addressed the inclusion of a mixed-method data collection process by combining a survey and secondary thematic analysis. These methodological aspects have been able to identify factors about impact the customer's trust while considering demographic preferences in order to provide influencers with effectiveness and marketing aspects with the help of ethical consideration.

Chapter 4: Findings and analysis

4.1 Primary findings and analysis

4.1.1 Demographics profile of respondents

Age group

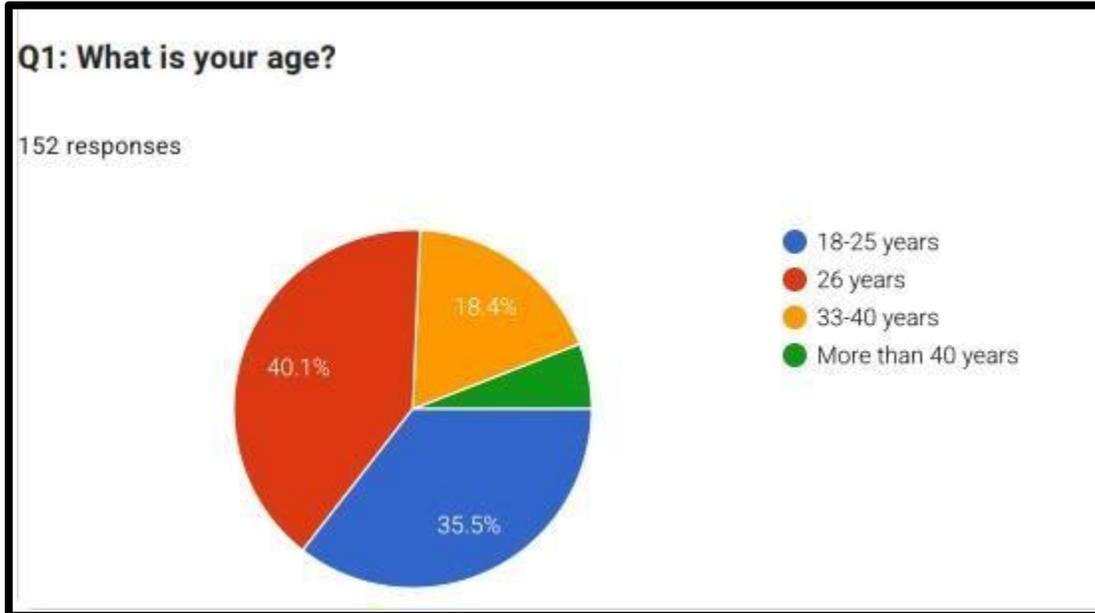


Figure 4.1: “Age group of respondents”

(Source: Google Form)

The above figure showcased that the maximum number of respondents, such as 40.1%, belonged to the “26 years age group”, and 35.5% of respondents belonged to the “18-25 years age group”. 18.4% of respondents were from the “33-40 years age group”, and 5.9% of respondents were from the above 40 age group. From this aspect, it is clear that young customers, such as adults, are mostly engaged with the influencer marketing and rely heavily on micro- & macro-influencers before making a purchase.

Gender

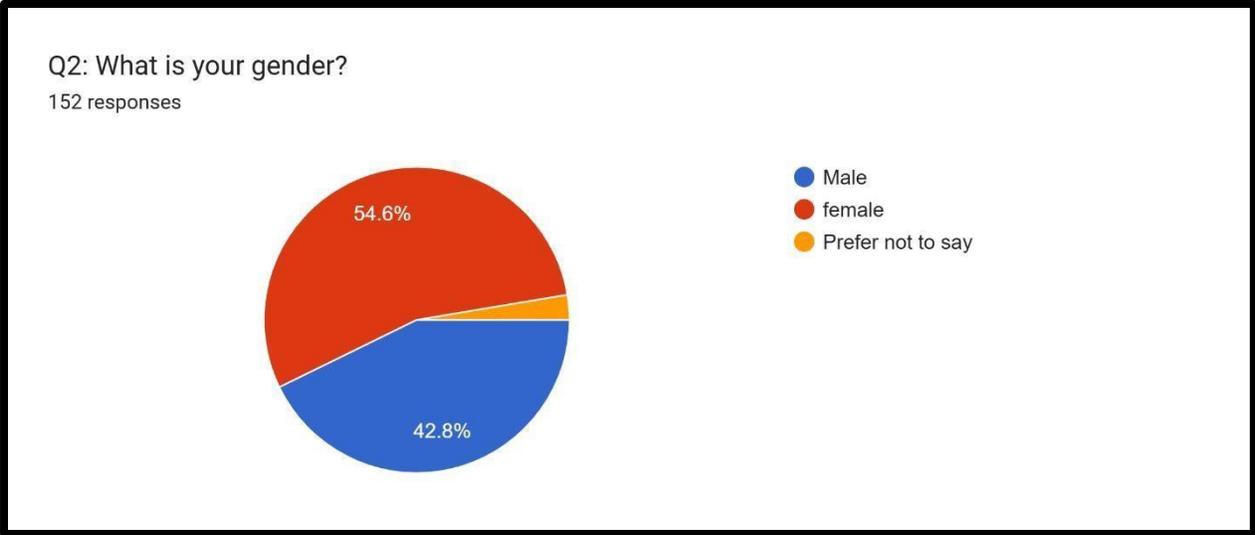


Figure 4.2: Gender of respondents

(Source: Google Form)

As per above, 54.6% of respondents were female, and 42.8% of respondents identified as male. However, 2.6% of respondents did not want to state about their gender. This finding highlighted that female customers in India are more attracted to influencers than males and prefer to follow up with their viewpoints before making purchase decisions.

Engagement with an influencer's content

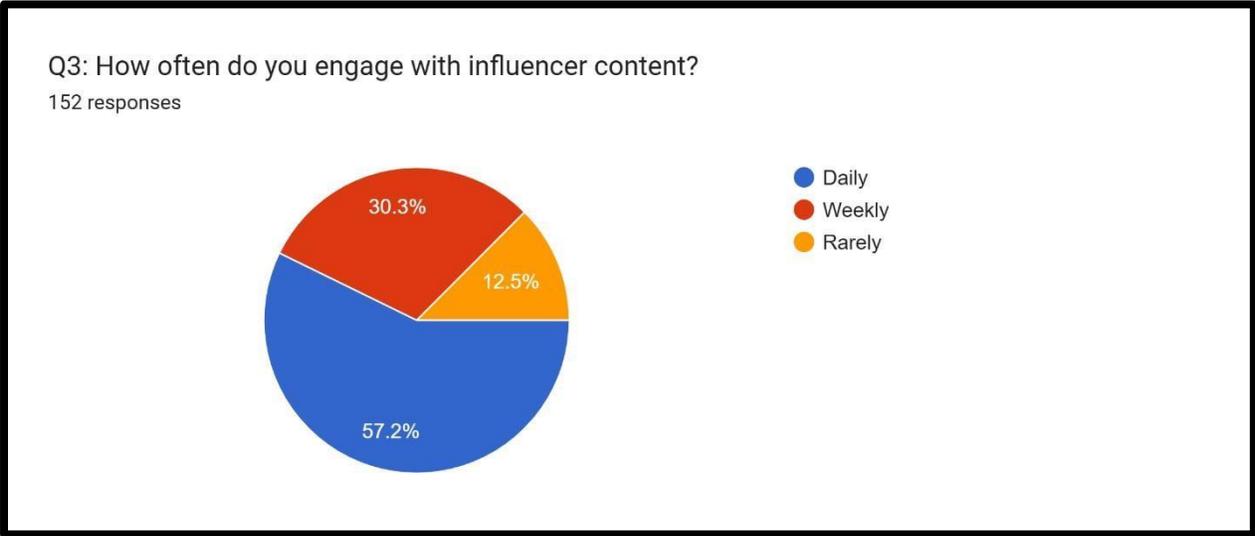


Figure 4.3: Engagement of respondents with influencer content

(Source: Google Form)

It has been found out from the above figure that 57.2% of respondents stated that they engage with influencer content very often like daily, and 30.3% of respondents engage with “influencer

content” on a weekly basis. However, 12.5% of respondents engaged with influencers rarely. Hence, it can be stated that fashion and lifestyle influencers in India are able to engage customers strongly through their content on a long-term basis.

4.1.2 Data analysis on the Influencer Type

Q1: Do you agree that product recommendations from macro-influencers are far better than micro-influencers?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	13	8.6	8.6	8.6
	Disagree	1	.7	.7	9.2
	Neutral	3	2.0	2.0	11.2
	Strongly Agree	134	88.2	88.2	99.3
	Strongly Disagree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1: Respondents’ opinions on the effectiveness of product recommendations by macro influencers than micro influencers

(Source: SPSS)

The survey was conducted to determine how effective recommendations from macro-influencers are compared to those from micro-influencers. The results showed that 88.2% of participants "strongly agreed" and 8.6% "agreed" that macro-influencers' recommendations are more effective.

Only a small percentage were neutral (2.0%), disagreed (0.7%), or strongly disagreed (0.7%).

This suggests that macro-influencers with a smaller, more personal following are seen as more effective at providing relevant recommendations than micro-influencers with a larger, more public following. It appears that macro-influencers' perceived expertise and ability to connect with viewers by addressing their "pain points" allows them to build long-term relationships. This emotional marketing approach is particularly effective at retaining Indian customers.

However, while macro-influencers can reach a larger audience, their followers might be less engaged or trusting due to the perception of paid promotions. In contrast, micro-influencers, despite having a smaller reach, often have a more engaged and trusting audience. They are better at creating customer satisfaction, which builds trust and increases the likelihood of a purchase.

Therefore, both types of influencers have a significant impact, but the study's findings indicate a higher level of trust in macro-influencers, which aligns with the research objectives RO1 and RO2.

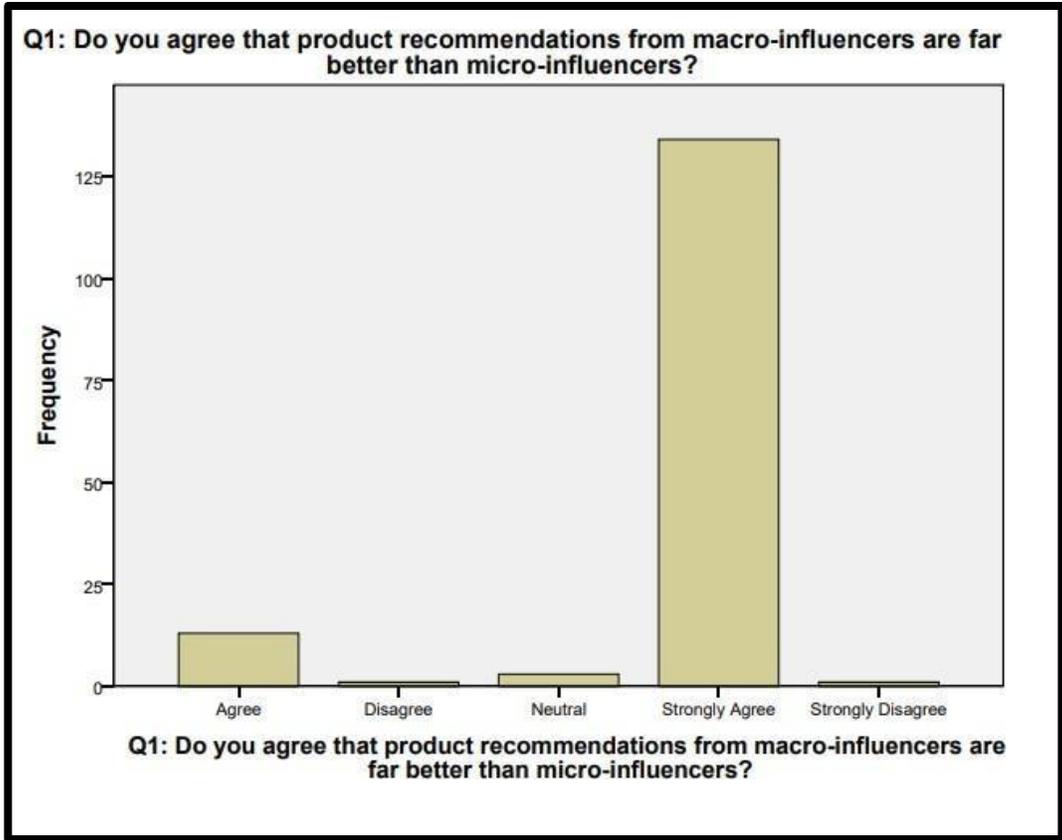


Figure 4.4: Respondents' perceptions on the 'effectiveness of product recommendations' by macro influencers than micro influencers

(Source: SPSS)

Q2: Do you agree that engagement with content from macro-influencers is far more attractive than micro-influencers?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	12	7.9	7.9	7.9
Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	9.2
Neutral	6	3.9	3.9	13.2
Strongly agree	131	86.2	86.2	99.3
Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2: Respondents' opinions on the attractive content engagement of macro influencers than micro influencers

(Source: SPSS)

This question is developed for identifying the aspect that which influencers (macro or micro) develop more attractive content for engaging customers in the long-term in India. 86.2% of respondents “strongly agreed” with the fact and 0.7% of respondents “strongly” disagreed with this. Moreover, 7.9% of respondents seemed to agree only whereas 3.9% of respondents stayed neutral with the context. 1.3% of respondents seemed to disagree only. The results evaluated that macro influencers are more capable to develop attractive contents than micro-influencers by understanding the emotional perspectives of viewers. Macro-influencers have a mass market appeal and through mass media marketing, it is possible for them to understand market trends easily (Amelia *et al.*, 2025). Hence, their content seemed more engaging than the micro-influencers, aligning well with RO1.

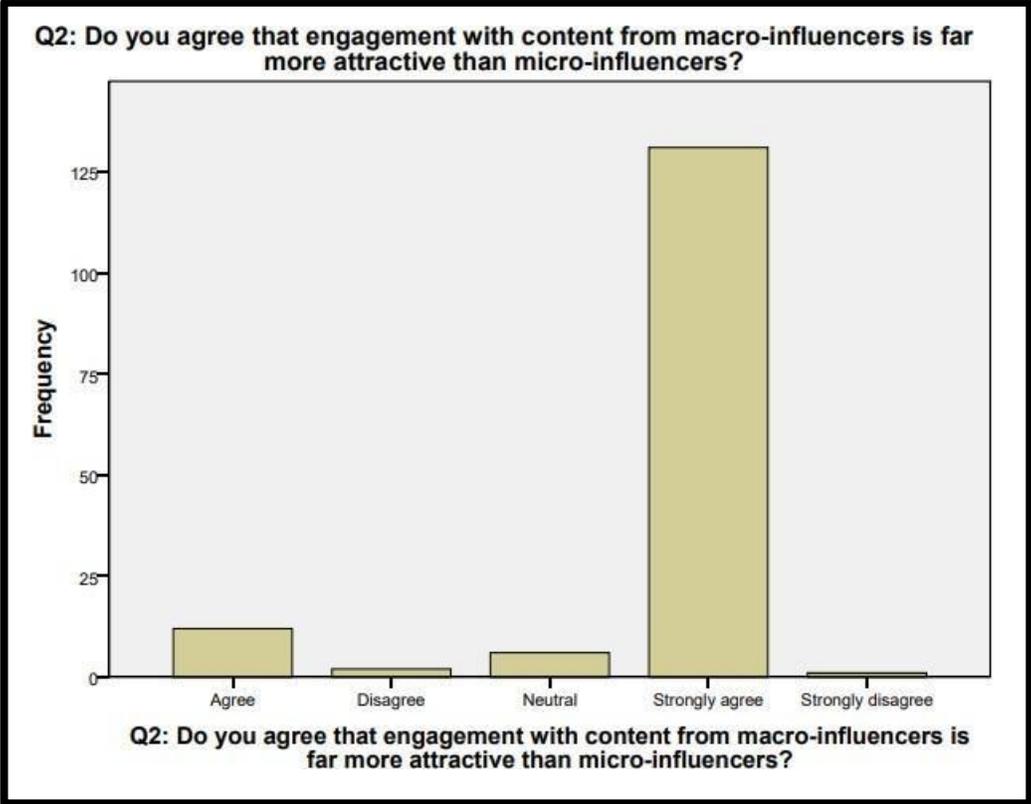


Figure 4.5: Respondents’ statements on the attractive content engagement of macro influencers than micro influencers

(Source: SPSS)

Q3: Do you think that both macro and micro influencers influence your fashion and lifestyle purchases equally?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	10	6.6	6.6	6.6
Disagree	8	5.3	5.3	11.8
Neutral	4	2.6	2.6	14.5
Strongly agree	127	83.6	83.6	98.0
Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.3: Respondents’ opinions on the influence of both ‘macro and micro influencers’ in fashion and lifestyle purchases

(Source: SPSS)

This question aimed to explore whether micro and macro influencers have a comparable impact on Indian consumers' fashion and lifestyle “purchasing decisions”. The results indicated that 83.6% of respondents strongly agreed, while 2.0% strongly disagreed. Additionally, 6.6% agreed, 2.6% remained neutral, and 5.3% disagreed. These outcomes suggest that both “micro and macro influencers” play distinct yet valuable roles in shaping consumer behavior, depending on individual preferences. By leveraging tailored influencer strategies, fashion and lifestyle brands in India can cultivate lasting consumer relationships and strengthen brand loyalty. This aligns closely with the goals outlined in Research Objectives 1 and 2, as it demonstrates how influencer type significantly contributes to customer engagement and trust-building (Purohit, 2024).

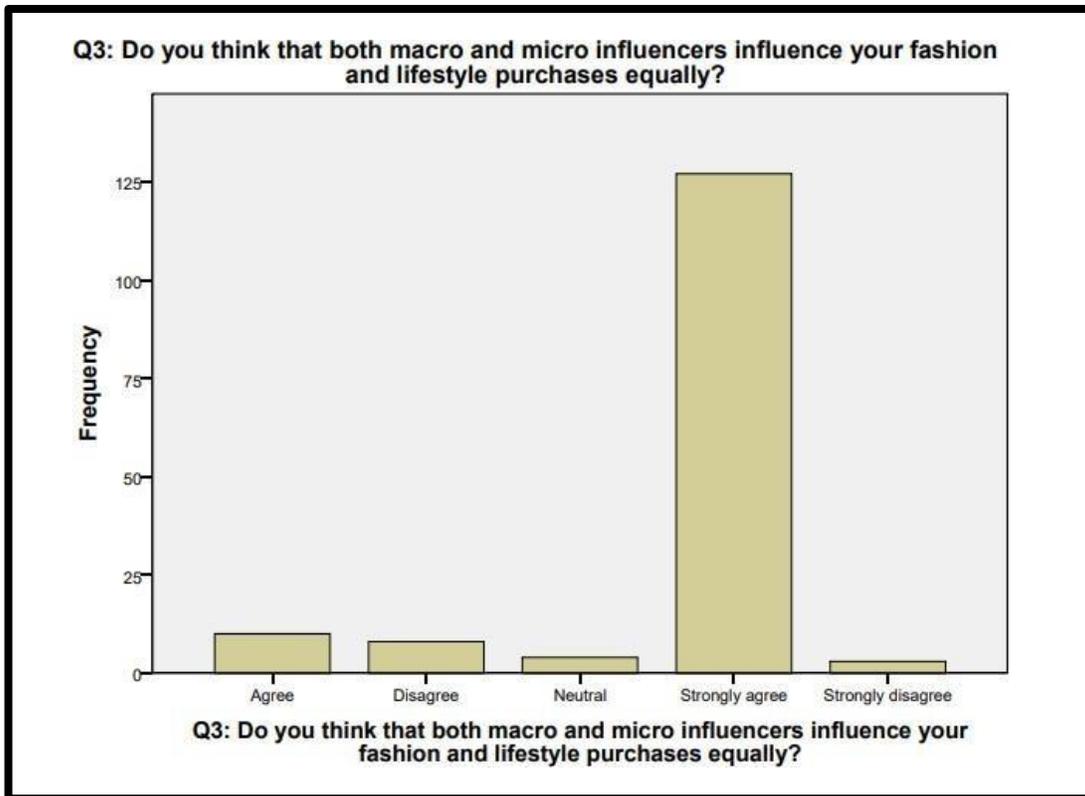


Figure 4.6: “Respondents’ opinions on the influence of both macro and micro influencers in fashion and lifestyle purchases”

(Source: SPSS)

Q4: Do you believe macro-influencers provide more authentic and trustworthy product recommendations than micro-influencers?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	10	6.6	6.6	6.6
Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	9.2
Neutral	7	4.6	4.6	13.8
Strongly agree	130	85.5	85.5	99.3
Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4: Respondents’ beliefs on getting more authentic and trustworthy recommendations from macro-influencers than micro-influencers

(Source: SPSS)

This question consists of examining whether macro-influencers are able to deliver more authentic as well as trustworthy product recommendations than micro-influencers or not. 85.5% of

respondents “strongly agreed” with the fact and 0.7% of respondents “strongly disagreed” with this. Additionally, 6.6% of respondents only agreed with the fact and 4.6% of respondents stayed neutral as well in this case. 2.6% of respondents disagreed with the fact. Results indicated that macro-influencers have the mindset to make themselves even more relatable to their audience which helps to build trust and a sense of reliability of delivering honest perceptions. Macro-influencers often have hundreds or thousands to millions of followers that give them the high visibility on what individuals actually want and it helps them to deliver attractive contents as per followers’ need (Berwal *et al.*, 2025). This is not only beneficial to engage individuals but also to improve their feeling that authentic product recommendations are shared by their preferred influencers which eventually build a long-term connection with them, well aligned with RO1. Hence, by improving the trust level even more, it can be possible for influencers to increase their reach and followers’ segment.

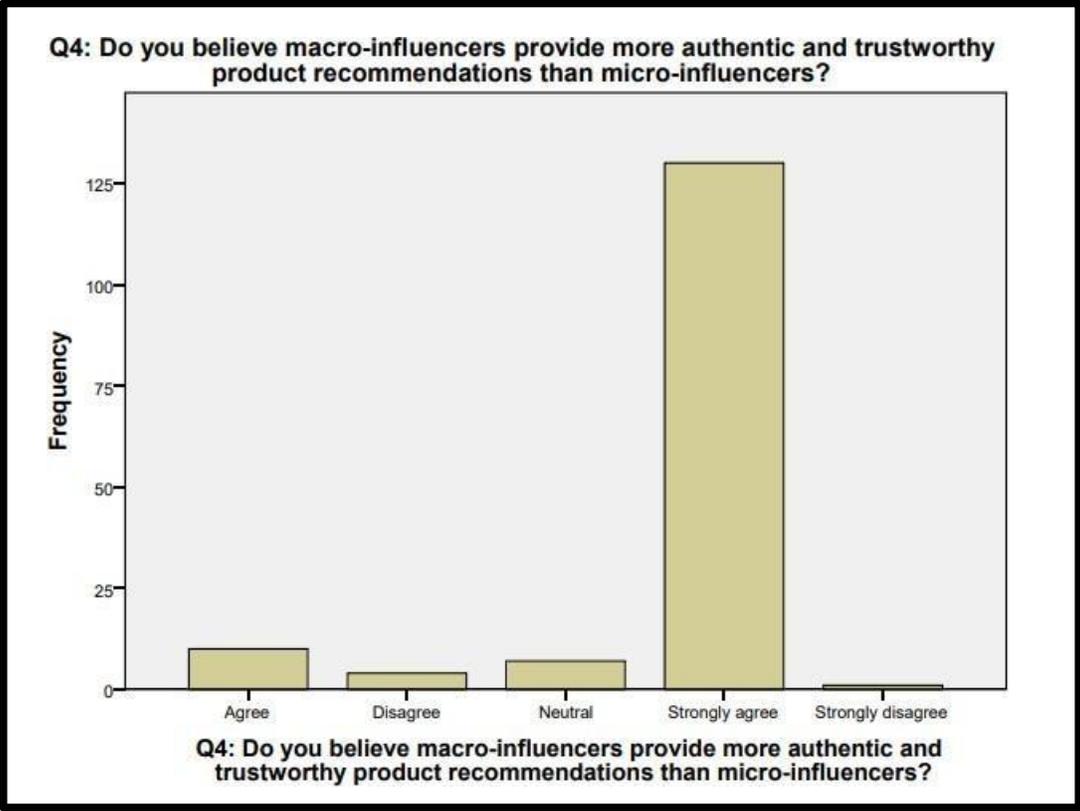


Figure 4.7: Respondents’ beliefs on getting more authentic and trustworthy recommendations from macro-influencers than micro-influencers

(Source: SPSS)

4.1.3 Data analysis on Consumer Trust in Influencer

Q5: Do you agree with the fact that influencers you follow provide honest product recommendations					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	13	8.6	8.6	8.6
	Disagree	3	2.0	2.0	10.5
	Neutral	3	2.0	2.0	12.5
	Strongly agree	131	86.2	86.2	98.7
	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5: Respondents’ opinion on getting honest product recommendations from their followed influencers

(Source: SPSS)

This question aimed to examine whether followers perceive the recommendations provided by influencers they follow as honest. The findings show that 86.2% of respondents strongly agreed, indicating a high level of trust in the authenticity of influencer endorsements. In contrast, only 1.3% strongly disagreed, while 2.0% were neutral and another 2.0% disagreed. Additionally, 8.6% simply agreed with the statement. These results suggest that a majority of consumers believe the influencers they follow provide sincere product suggestions, likely because their communication feels personal and relatable. Trust plays a central role in the success of influencer marketing, shaping consumer attitudes and confidence in endorsed products. According to Kumar (2024), micro-influencers often generate greater trust due to their stronger engagement with a specific audience niche, unlike broad celebrity endorsements. Therefore, it can be inferred that followers’ trust levels significantly influence their perception of whether recommendations are genuine. These insights directly support RO2, emphasizing that macro-influencers contribute meaningfully to building consumer trust, especially when audiences perceive their endorsements as credible, highlighting trust as a key component in “influencer marketing effectiveness”.

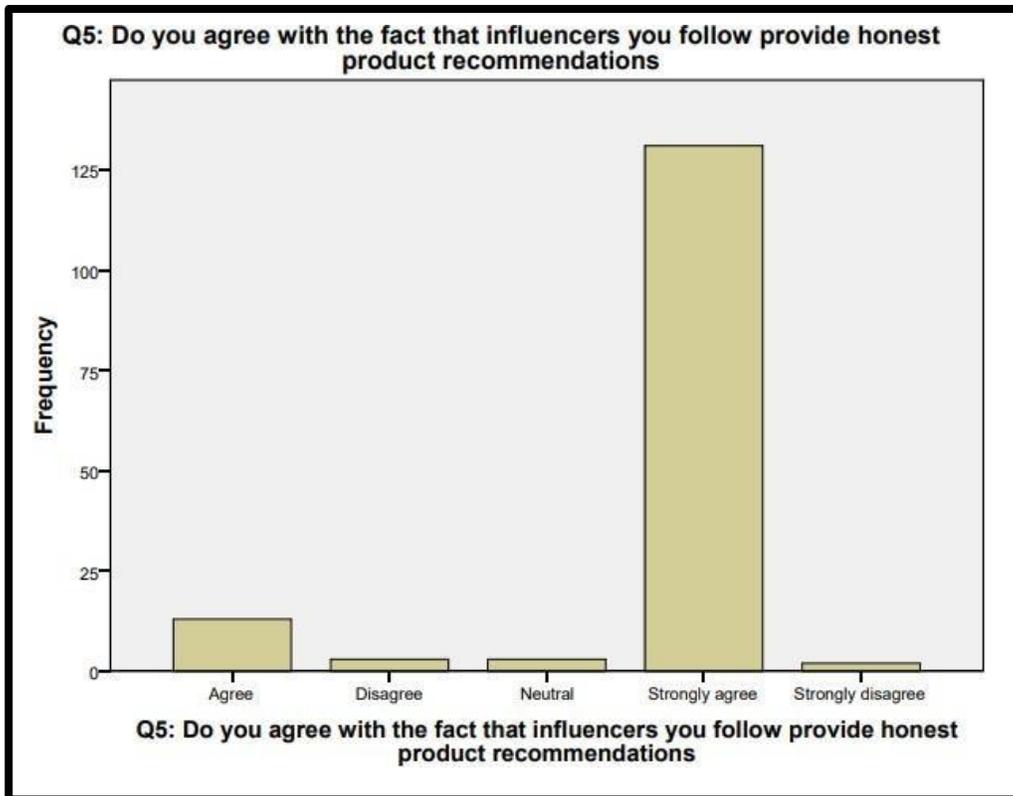


Figure 4.8: Respondents' opinion on getting honest product recommendations from their followed influencers

(Source: SPSS)

Q6: Do you agree that you trust influencers to recommend products that are beneficial for you?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	15	9.9	9.9	9.9
Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	12.5
Neutral	3	2.0	2.0	14.5
Strongly agree	126	82.9	82.9	97.4
Strongly disagree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6: Respondents' opinion on trusting beneficial product recommendations by influencers

(Source: SPSS)

This question is associated with analysing the perceptions of individuals that the recommended products by their influencers are actually beneficial for them. 82.9% of respondents “strongly agreed” with the fact whereas 2.6% of respondents “strongly disagreed”. Moreover, 2.0% of respondents stayed neutral, 2.6% of respondents disagreed and 9.9% of respondents agreed with this. Results showcased that Indian customers feel more engaged with social media influencers if their thoughts are matched or they feel the content useful enough for resolving their queries or clearing doubts. The existing consumer landscape of India is quite diverse and the young generation such as Gen Z and millennials prefer to follow those influencers when they look quite authentic as well as responsible (Suutari, 2025). Hence, to retain the customer base and keep them trustable as well as highly dependable on influencers, their preferred products must be recommended that can deliver positive outputs. The findings supported RO2, showcasing that macro-influencers significantly impact customer trust when their “product recommendations” are perceived as beneficial.

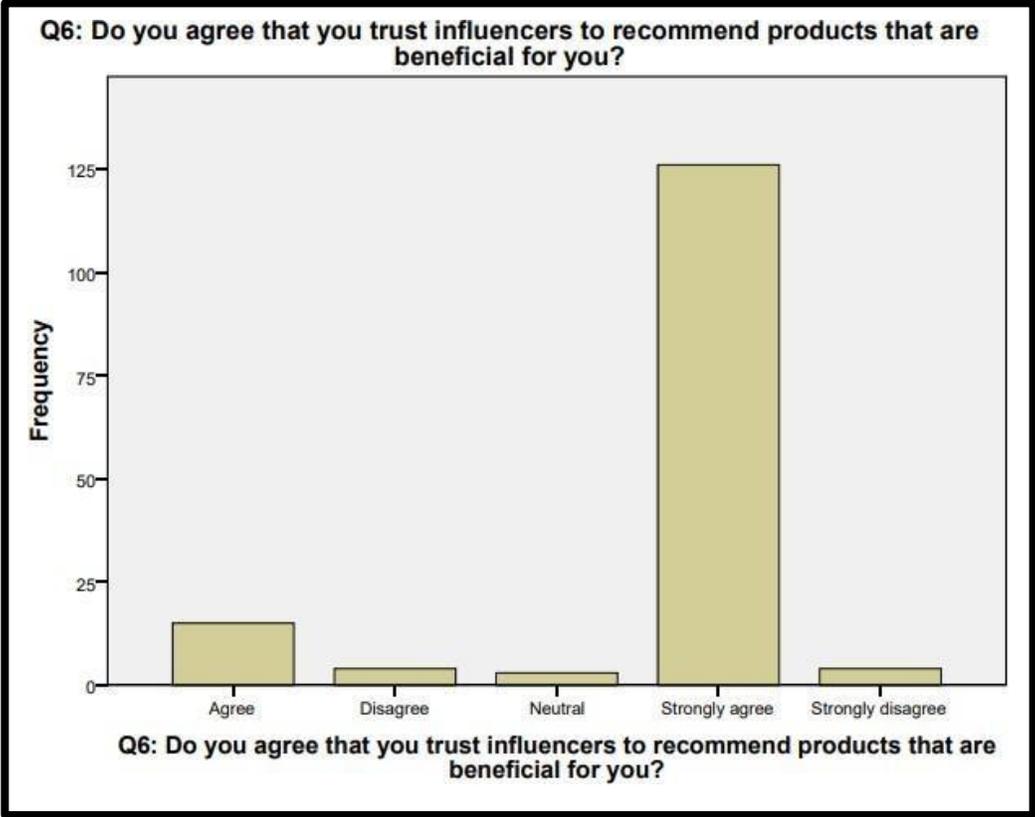


Figure 4.9: Respondents’ viewpoints on trusting beneficial product recommendations by influencers
(Source: SPSS)

Q7: Do you trust the product endorsements made by the influencers you follow?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	16	10.5	10.5	10.5
	Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	13.8
	Neutral	5	3.3	3.3	17.1
	Strongly agree	125	82.2	82.2	99.3
	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.7: Respondents' statements on trusting product endorsements by their followed influencers

(Source: SPSS)

When surveyed about their trust in product endorsements from influencers they follow, 82.2% of respondents "strongly agreed" and 10.5% "agreed." In contrast, only 3.3% disagreed, and 0.7% "strongly disagreed," with 3.3% remaining neutral.

The results show that followers are most likely to trust an influencer's endorsement when they already have a high level of trust in the influencer and the product has practical, real-world value. This highlights the need for influencers to understand their audience's mindset and create content that resonates with them to achieve the best results. These findings align with RO1, demonstrating how the high level of trust in influencer endorsements, particularly from micro-influencer is crucial for shaping customer trust in fashion products among Indian consumers. This question associated with identifying the trust level of followers on the product endorsement made by their followed influencers. 82.2% of respondents "strongly agreed" with the matter and 10.5% of respondents "only agreed". Moreover, 3.3% of respondents disagreed with this. 0.7% of participants have been found out who "strongly disagreed" with the fact. 3.3% of respondents stayed neutral in this case. Results indicated that product endorsements conducted by the social media influencers are trusted by their followers most when the trust level is high and the product has such effective usage in the real life. Hence, it is important for influencers to understand the mindset of public properly or their followers and develop content accordingly to gain the best possible outcomes. The findings are connected with RO1 as the higher level of trust in "influencer product endorsements" highlighted the role of micro-influencers in shaping customer trust for fashion products among Indian consumers.

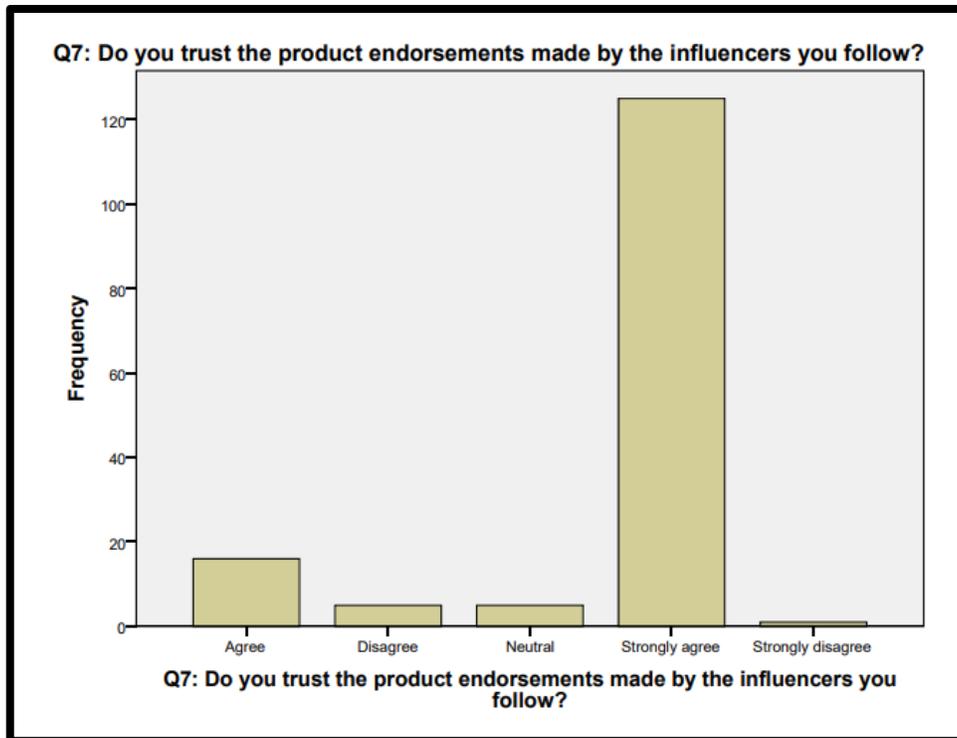


Figure 4.10: Respondents’ opinion on trusting product endorsements by their followed influencers

(Source: SPSS)

Q8: Do you believe influencers disclose any affiliations or sponsorships with the products they promote?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	15	9.9	9.9	9.9
Disagree	6	3.9	3.9	13.8
Neutral	3	2.0	2.0	15.8
Strongly agree	125	82.2	82.2	98.0
Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.8: Respondents’ viewpoints on disclosing any affiliations or sponsorships with the promoted products of influencers

(Source: SPSS)

The above survey question is developed for analysing the trust level of followers on their influences regarding the disclosure of affiliations or any kind of sponsorships with the products they promote. 82.2% of respondents “strongly agreed” with the fact whereas 2.0% of respondents

“strongly disagreed” with this. 9.9% of respondents “only agreed” and 2.0% of respondents stayed neutral. 3.9% of respondents disagreed with the fact. Findings revealed that followers who have a high trust level on their influencers always believe the disclosure of any affiliations or sponsorship with the products they promote. It is essential for influencers to maintain an emotional bond with their followers so that they can feel connected and sense positive perceptions for better engagement (Kumar, 2024). The findings also aligned best with RO1 as they highlighted how the trust level of followers in micro-influencers increases when affiliations are transparently disclosed.

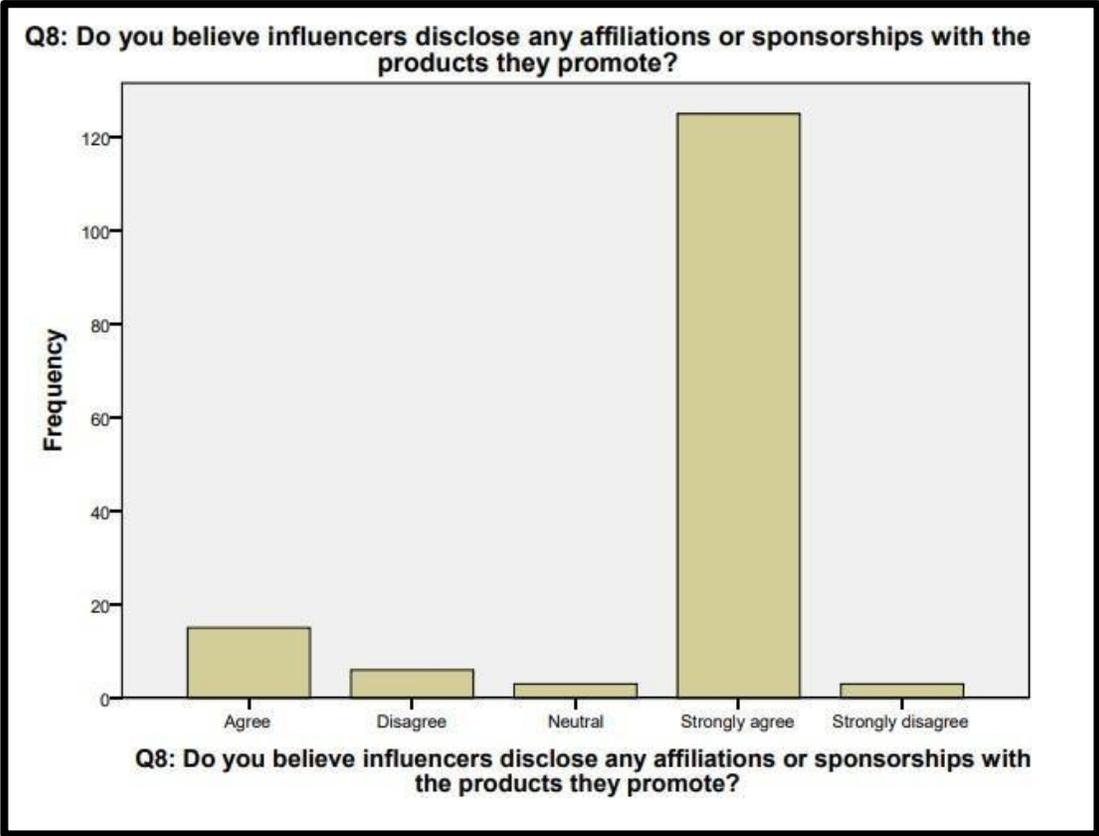


Figure 4.11: Respondents’ viewpoints on disclosing any affiliations or sponsorships with the promoted products of influencers

(Source: SPSS)

4.1.4 Data Analysis on Perceived Influencer Authenticity

Q9: Do you feel that influencers truly use the products they endorse?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	13	8.6	8.6	8.6
	Disagree	6	3.9	3.9	12.5
	Neutral	3	2.0	2.0	14.5
	Strongly agree	124	81.6	81.6	96.1
	Strongly disagree	6	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.9: Respondents' opinions on the usage of products endorsed by influencers

(Source: SPSS)

Question 9 attempts to gain insight into the perception of influencer authenticity. The question probes into the aspect of consumer trust and skepticism on product authenticity, reflecting whether they are actually used by the influencer or are just a commercial aspect. The response received from the survey illustrates that 81.6% “strongly agreed” with the perception that influencers truly use the product, which is endorsed by them. Additionally, 8.6% of respondents also agreed with the same. It can also be seen that only a small percentage of 3.9% and 3.9% strongly disagreed and disagreed that influencers use the products endorsed by them. 2.0% of respondents stayed neutral in this case. From these findings, it can be understood that Indian consumers place a significant amount of trust in the influencers followed by them. This has also been established by the parasocial interaction theory by Kim (2022), where the author states that customers are found to develop intimate relations with social media personalities, leading to emotional connectedness and high trust. Similarly, in the study of Nayak and Das (2025), the influencers seem to use the products in order to highlight their effectiveness in daily lives, therefore making the consumers believe that their products are actually being used by them. The above findings seemed to be aligned with RO1 as the “high percentage of respondents” trusting that most of the influencers use endorsed products, which highlighted the role of micro-influencers in building customer trust within the “fashion and lifestyle market.”



Figure 4.12: Respondents' opinions on the usage of products endorsed by influencers
(Source: SPSS)

Q10: Do you think that the influencers you follow seem authentic and genuine in their recommendations?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	14	9.2	9.2	9.2
	Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	12.5
	Neutral	4	2.6	2.6	15.1
	Strongly agree	128	84.2	84.2	99.3
	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.10: Respondents opinion on the genuine recommendation and authenticity of the influencers they follow
(Source: SPSS)

Question 10 has been designed to evaluate how respondents perceive the trustworthiness and relatability of the influencers they follow. It specifically examined the emotional bond audiences form with influencers and how sincere their content is perceived to be. The survey results showed that a significant majority such as 84.2% respondents “strongly agreed” that their followed influencers offer authentic and honest recommendations, while 9.2% agreed. A minimal percentage such as 0.7% strongly disagreed and 3.3% disagreed, and 2.6% remained neutral. These outcomes reflect a clear belief among most consumers that influencer recommendations are credible and trustworthy. This is consistent with Berwal *et al.* (2025), who emphasized the central role of trust, authenticity, and engagement in shaping consumer behavior within India’s fashion market. Similarly, Kia (2025) reinforced that perceived authenticity is a driving force behind influencer effectiveness. The works of Rajput *et al.* (2024) and Thakur *et al.* (2024) also highlight that Indian consumers often relate personally to influencers, a phenomenon known as homophily, which further enhances trust in their product endorsements. Overall, these insights support Research Objective 1 (RO1) by demonstrating that micro-influencers, in particular, foster strong trust through perceived authenticity, making them effective at shaping consumer trust in India’s fashion and lifestyle sectors.

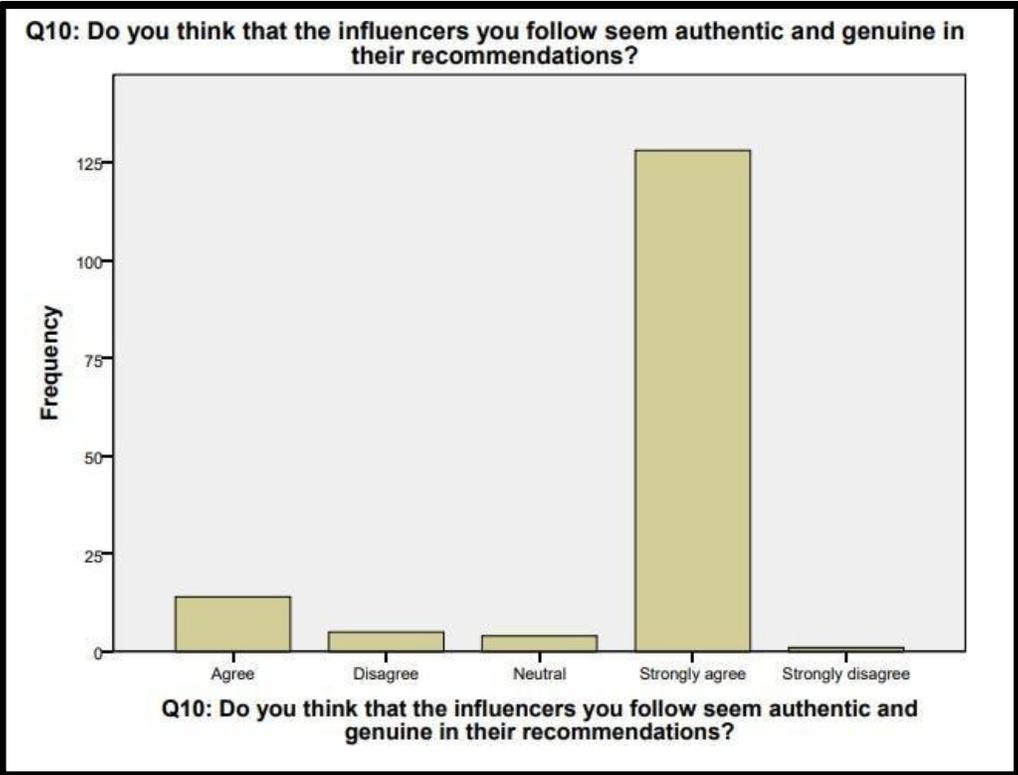


Figure 4.13: Opinion of respondents on the genuine recommendation and authenticity of the influencers they follow

(Source: SPSS)

Q11: Do you perceive the influencers you follow to be honest and true to their personal brand?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	20	13.2	13.2	13.2
	Disagree	3	2.0	2.0	15.1
	Neutral	3	2.0	2.0	17.1
	Strongly agree	125	82.2	82.2	99.3
	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total		152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.11: Opinion of respondents on their perception of influencers being true and honest to their personal brand

(Source: SPSS)

Question 11 has been designed to evaluate if the actions, online content, and values shared by the influencer on the online platform are honest and consistent. It explores whether the influencers are able to retain integrity, which helps to drive trust and loyalty, enabling them to establish themselves as a brand. Evaluating the responses received through the survey, it can be seen that 82.2% of the respondents strongly agreed with the influencers being able to establish themselves as a brand. In addition, 13.2% also agreed upon the same. Even though 2.0% of respondents bear a neutral view, regarding the fact that influencers are honest and true to the personal brand they have created. However, 0.7% of respondents “strongly disagreed” with this matter as well. However, 2.0% disagreed with the matter as well. The response indicates that, even though the several respondents perceiving the influencers to be true to their brand, a significant portion of respondents doubt their authenticity and honesty, lowering their perception. In the works of Nadeem (2025), it has been seen that Macro-influencers with a significantly high reach and audience are able to establish themselves better as a brand, which positively influences the perception of the respondents. The work of Suutari (2025) additionally complements the survey findings by stating that Gen Z and millennials trust influencers who can establish themselves as responsible individual, especially micro-influencers. The findings seemed to be aligned with RO2 as they highlighted how macro-influencers, due to their “strong personal branding” as well as wide reach, significantly influenced

customer trust and supported the view that their honesty enriched brand perceptions among Indian customers. Along with that, question 11 of the survey aimed to assess whether an influencer's actions, content, and values are consistent and honest. The goal was to see if influencers could maintain integrity, build trust and loyalty, and ultimately establish themselves as a brand. The survey results show that a large majority of respondents believe influencers are successful at this. Specifically, 82.2% strongly agreed and 13.2% agreed that influencers can establish themselves as a brand. However, a small but notable percentage of respondents had doubts about influencer authenticity and honesty: 2.0% were neutral, 2.0% disagreed, and 0.7% strongly disagreed. This suggests that while many people perceive influencers as genuine, a significant portion of the audience questions their authenticity.

According to research by Nadeem (2025), macro-influencers with a large reach are particularly effective at building a strong personal brand, which in turn positively influences how people perceive them. This is further supported by Suutari (2025), who found that Gen Z and millennials tend to trust influencers who present themselves as responsible individuals, with this being especially true for micro-influencers. These findings align with the research objective (RO2), highlighting that macro-influencers' strong personal branding and wide reach are key factors in building customer trust. This also reinforces the idea that an influencer's perceived honesty significantly improves brand perception among Indian consumers.

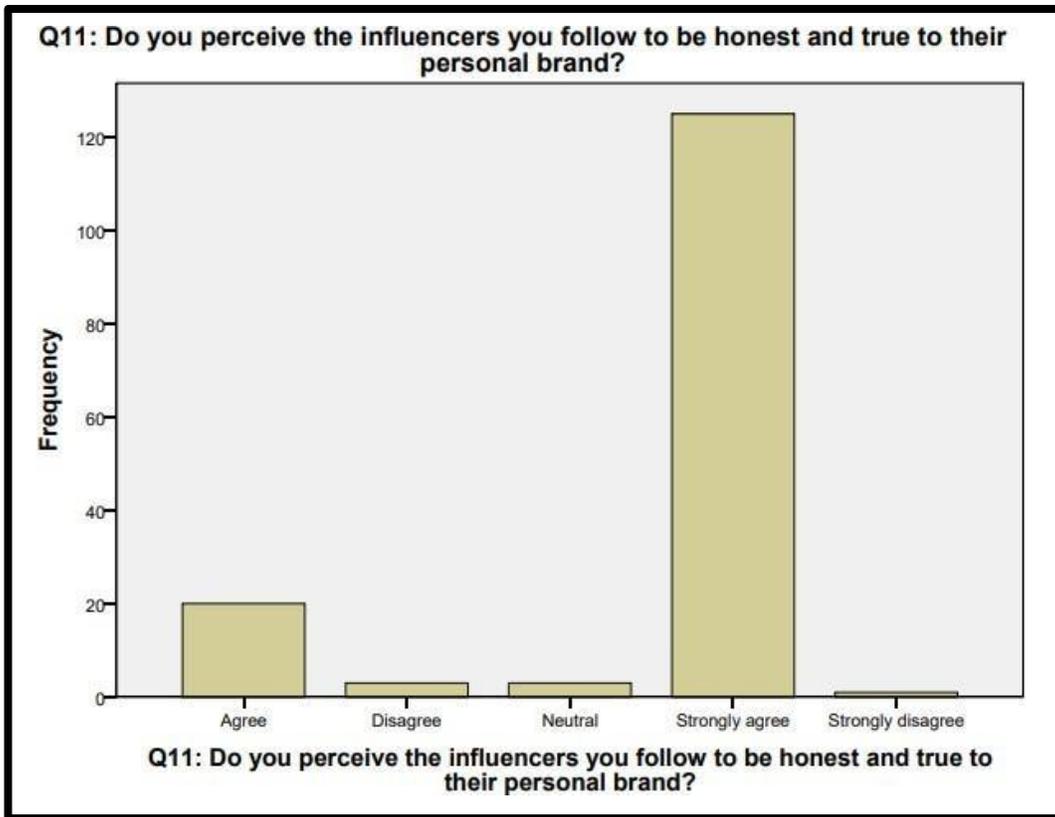


Figure 4.14: Opinion of respondents on their perception of influencers being true and honest to their personal brand

(Source: SPSS)

Q12: Do you believe that influencers prioritize maintaining their authenticity over promoting products for profit?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	12	7.9	7.9	7.9
	Disagree	9	5.9	5.9	13.8
	Neutral	4	2.6	2.6	16.4
	Strongly agree	124	81.6	81.6	98.0
	Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.12: Opinion of respondents on their belief in influencers maintaining their authenticity upon promotion for profitability

(Source: SPSS)

The question attempts to shed light on the belief of the respondents if their influencers are able to retain authenticity in promoting their products or commercialize the position to influence to generate profits. From the survey findings, it can be seen that 81.6% of the respondents strongly felt that the influencers focus and prioritize their authenticity during the promotion of products. 2.6% of the respondents bear a neutral view. In contrast, 2.0% of respondents strongly disagreed, and additionally, 5.9% disagreed, by giving their opinion that influencers prioritize profit over emphasizing authenticity. 7.9% of respondents agreed with this fact. In the opinion of Han and Balabanis (2024), macro influencers are required to adhere to authenticity, considering their significantly large following, and strong connections with the audience. In support of the findings of Han and Balabanis (2024), as well as the survey findings, Jang *et al.*, (2021) added that the image established by macro influencers is built on the pillars of their authentic appeal. Therefore, special attention is paid to retaining that trust, ensuring they only promote products they are not sceptical about. Kumar (2024), stated that micro-influencers bear a small niche audience, and their considerable amount of expertise in that domain appeals to the audience making them perceive the influencers as authentic, and increasing repeat purchases. The findings aligned with RO2 as they revealed that a majority of respondents believe that macro-influencers mostly maintain authenticity within their promotions, which eventually reinforces customer trust.

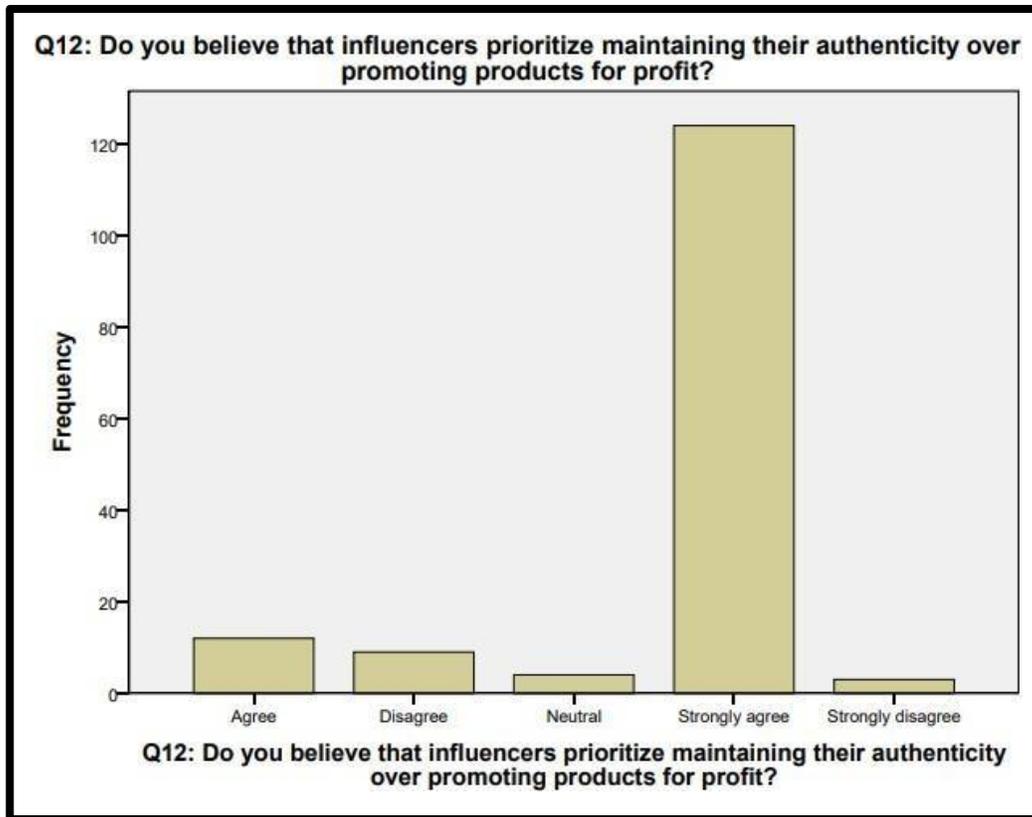


Figure 4.15: Opinion of respondents on their belief in influencers maintaining their authenticity upon promotion for profitability

(Source: SPSS)

4.1.5 Data analysis on Consumer Purchase Intention/Behavior

Q13: Do you prefer to purchase a product recommended by an influencer?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	15	9.9	9.9	9.9
Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	13.2
Neutral	5	3.3	3.3	16.4
Strongly agree	125	82.2	82.2	98.7
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.16: Consumers' preferences on buying product

(Source: SPSS)

When asked whether they purchased products recommended by influencers, a significant portion such as 82.2%, strongly agreed, clearly indicating a strong inclination toward influencer-driven

purchasing decisions. In contrast, only 1.3% strongly disagreed, showing minimal resistance to such influence. Additionally, 9.9% agreed, while 3.3% disagreed, and another 3.3% remained neutral. These results underscore the persuasive power of influencers in shaping consumer buying behavior. This trend is supported by Ganeshkumar and Lokeshkumar (2022), who emphasized that influencer endorsements play a pivotal role in forming customer preferences due to the perceived trustworthiness and authenticity associated with such recommendations. These findings strongly reinforce Research Objective 1 (RO1) by confirming that influencer recommendations, particularly from micro-influencers, effectively build trust and positively impact purchasing decisions in India’s fashion and lifestyle market.

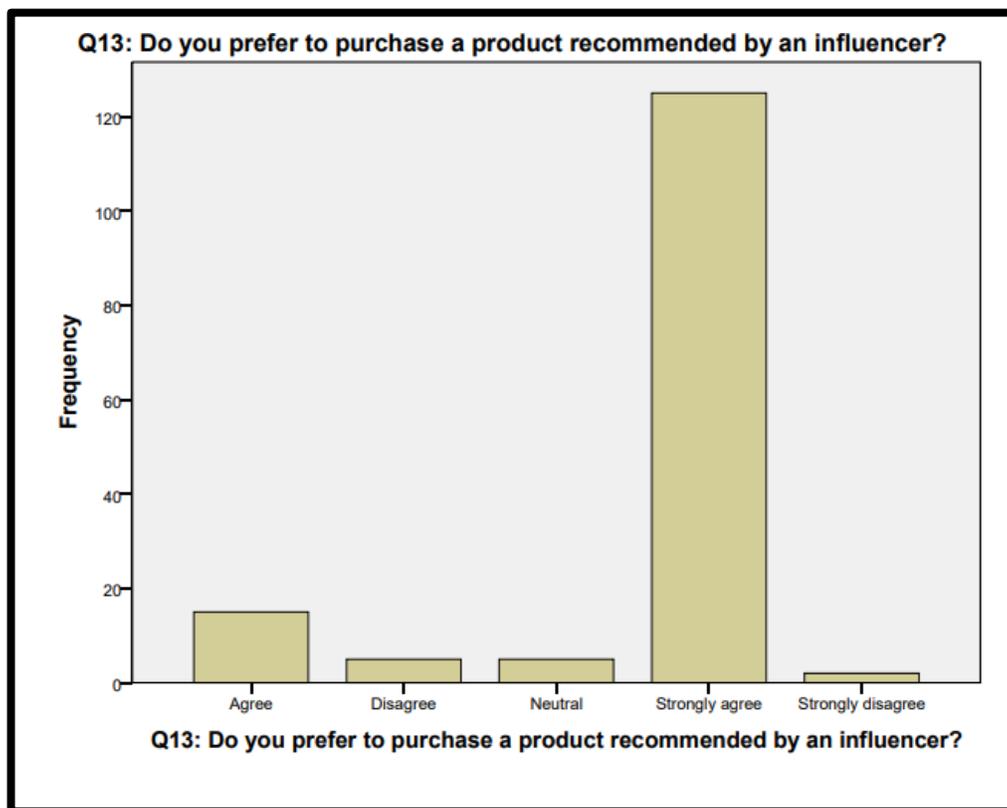


Table 4.13: Consumers' preferences on buying product

(Source: SPSS)

Q14: Do you frequently purchase products after seeing them promoted by an influencer?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	14	9.2	9.2	9.2
Disagree	7	4.6	4.6	13.8
Neutral	2	1.3	1.3	15.1
Strongly agree	127	83.6	83.6	98.7
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.17: Product purchase influenced by influencers

(Source: SPSS)

In terms of addressing the consumer participation that is followed by influencers' promotional tactics, 83.6% of the participants “strongly agreed” with this fact, addressing a dominant response in this aspect. This strong response of the majority addressing influencers' endorsement not only addresses the persuasive nature of influencers but also actively drives the consumers' participation. Moreover, 9.2% of respondents agreed with this, 4.6% seemed to disagree, 1.3% of respondents stayed neutral, and 1.3% of them “strongly disagreed” with the aspect. This information has reflected consumers' participation, especially in lifestyle and fashion categories, frequently converting on the exposure of marketing through influencers' intangible buying decisions (Cox, and Paoli, 2023). RO1 has been well aligned with the findings, as the majority of individuals agreed on the fact that micro influencers are capable of influencing consumer trust even more, which demonstrated their persuasive power to shape customer behavior and purchase decisions.

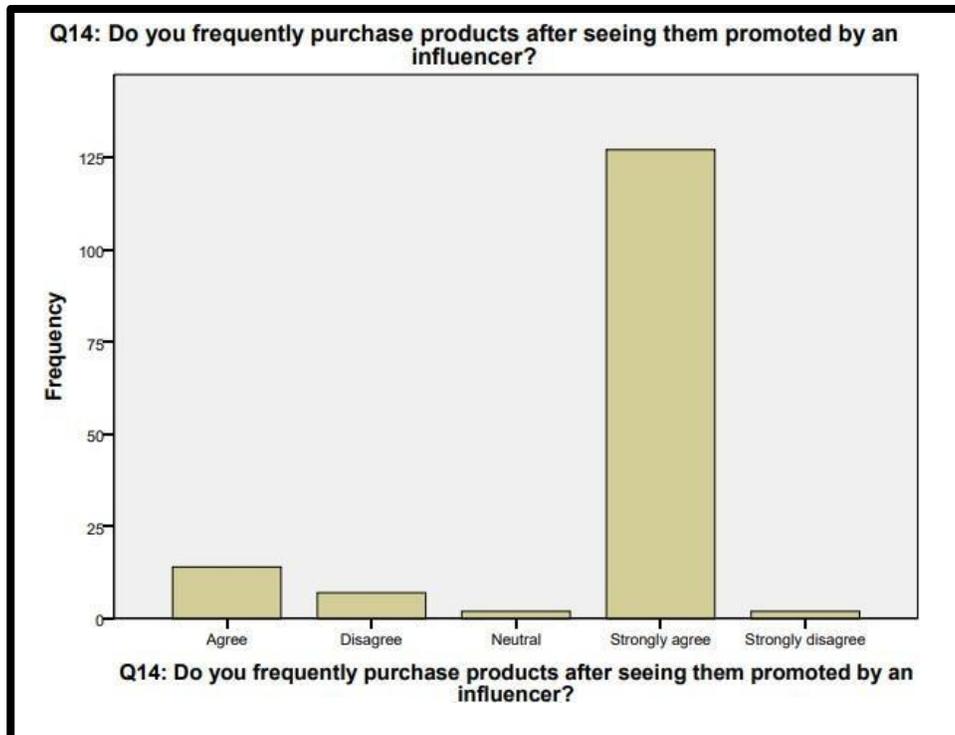


Table 4.14: Product purchase influenced by influencers

(Source: SPSS)

Q15: Do you think influencer size (micro vs. macro) influences how much you trust their product recommendations?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	17	11.2	11.2	11.2
	Disagree	7	4.6	4.6	15.8
	Neutral	3	2.0	2.0	17.8
	Strongly agree	124	81.6	81.6	99.3
	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.18: Influencer size and followers' number on influencing consumers

(Source: SPSS)

On asking whether consumers consider influencer size to develop trust, 81.6% of respondents “strongly agreed” on this fact, indicating that macro and micro-influencers play a crucial role, and it also addresses a difference between these “macro and micro-influencers” to shape consumers' trust. 0.7% of respondents “strongly disagreed” with the fact, 11.2% of respondents agreed, 4.6% of them disagreed, and 2.0% of respondents stayed neutral. It also implies, from existing studies,

that audiences can actively evaluate the creativity of influencers as per their followers' sizes, which can affect their positivity based on their reliability in purchasing endorsements (Shukla *et al.*, 2025). The findings seemed to be aligned with RO2, as the maximum respondents strongly agreed that influencer size mostly influences trust, highlighting the role of macro-influencers to shape consumer trust in “fashion and lifestyle purchasing decisions” in India.

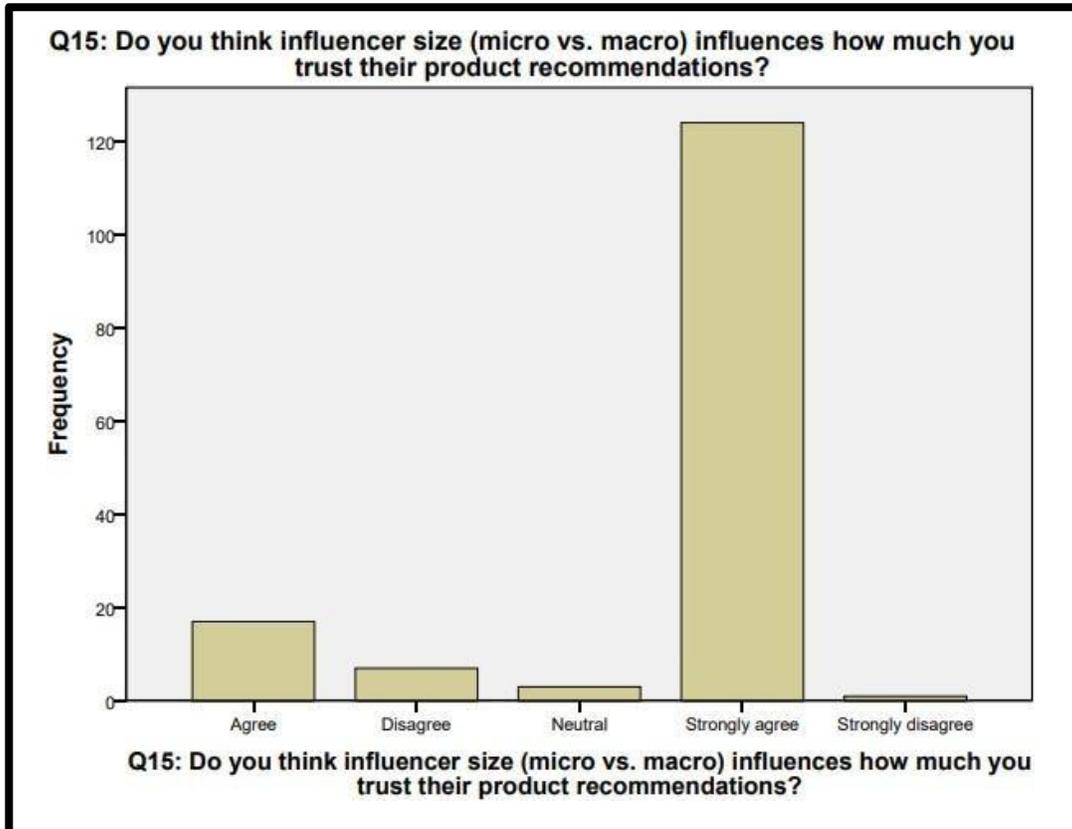


Table 4.15: Influencer size and followers’ number on influencing consumers

(Source: SPSS)

Q16: Are you more likely to purchase a product that you have seen used or reviewed by an influencer than one you have not?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	15	9.9	9.9	9.9
Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	13.2
Neutral	4	2.6	2.6	15.8
Strongly agree	125	82.2	82.2	98.0
Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.19: Product purchase by review

(Source: SPSS)

In terms of addressing influencers' product reviews and uses, about 82.2% of respondents “strongly agreed” with the fact that they are likely to buy products that are endorsed with direct influencers' influence or engagement. This overwhelming report addresses that testimonials and visual-proof content via influencers can substantially increase purchase likelihood. Additionally, 9.9% of respondents agreed with the fact, 3.3% of them disagreed, 2.6% of respondents stayed neutral, and 2.0% of respondents “strongly disagreed”. This also enables authenticity and its impact, along with experimental marketing over unverified and abstract product promotion within the digital culture of consumption (Ganeshkumar and Lokeshkumar, 2022). The findings seemed to be well aligned with ROI, as major agreement has been observed on purchasing products endorsed by influencers, highlighting the strong impact of micro-influencers to build consumer trust through genuine reviews and visual engagement in the Indian fashion industry.

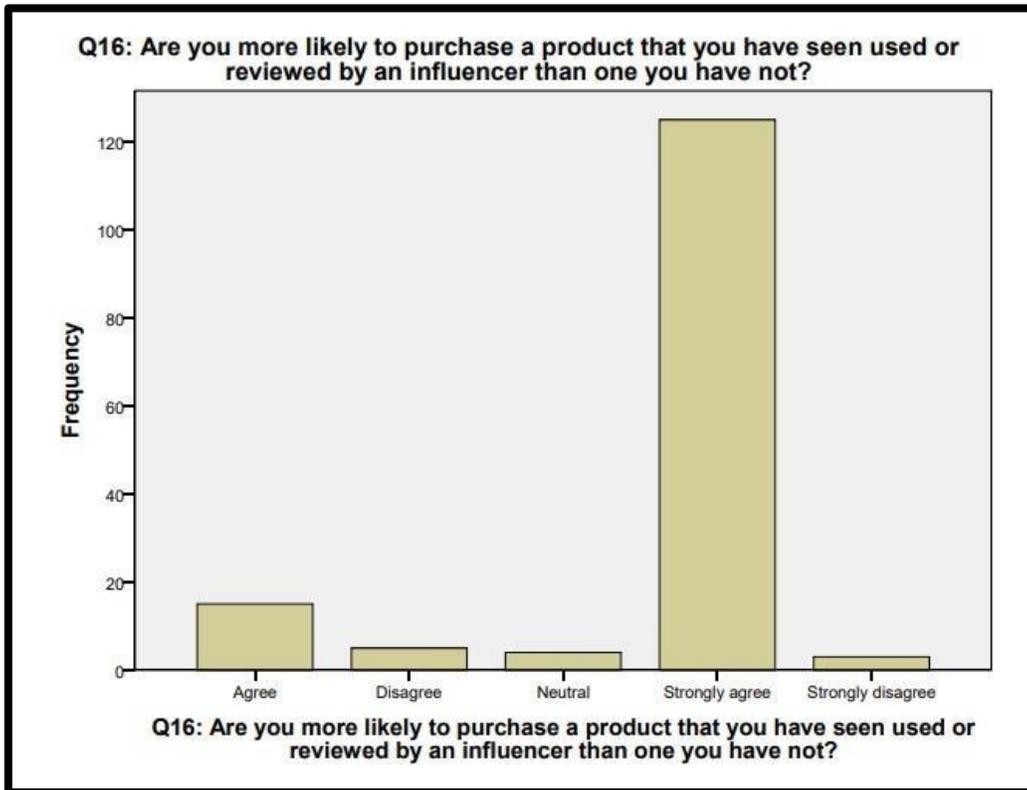


Table 4.16: Product purchase by review

(Source: SPSS)

4.1.6 Correlation, ANOVA, and regression analysis

- **Correlation Test**

In terms of examining the directional state of the later relationship among variables in a study, PSN correlations can be considered. A statistical technique has to determine with which tricky variables are being associated. The ranges of Pearson correlation values from -1 to +1 and values of towards negative 1 signify a strong negative correlation whereas +1 indicates a strong positive correlation among variables. The correlation test has to assess in this research about a few characteristics, for example passive, auspicious, and trust-run types that are related to consumer practices, behaviour, and intentions within the Indian life cycle and fashion market. The result has demonstrated that all variables are significantly and positively correlated.

		IV1_Influencer Type	IV2_ConsumerTrust	IV3_Influencer Authenticity
IV1_InfluencerType	Pearson Correlation	1	.946**	.921**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
IV2_ConsumerTrust	Pearson Correlation	.946**	1	.934**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	152	152	152
IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity	Pearson Correlation	.921**	.934**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	152	152	152
DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior	Pearson Correlation	.900**	.896**	.906**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152

Correlations		
		DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior
IV1_InfluencerType	Pearson Correlation	.900**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	152
IV2_ConsumerTrust	Pearson Correlation	.896**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	152
IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity	Pearson Correlation	.906**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	152
DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	152

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.17: Pearson’s Correlation test

(Source: SPSS)

In this regard, the correlation between customer purchase and influencer type was 0.900. It suggested the passive category of influencers, whether micro or macro, plays a crucial role in influencing customer decisions. This correlation also implies that the customers are likely to purchase or buy a product, especially fashion items when they resonate with their influencers. Apart from this, the correlation between purchase intentions and customer trust was 0.896. This also indicates trust is a crucial element in shaping buying intentions. Customers who can resonate with influencers and view them as reliable sources are more inclined to buy products as per their recommendations. Apart from this, the consumer purchase intention and influencer authenticity have also found a strong correlation value, which was 0.906. This addresses that authenticity is the leading factor to influence consumers' decision to buy. This also indicates trust is a crucial element in shaping buying intentions. This also indicates trust is the leading factor in influencing consumers' decisions on buying. Customer purchases are highly correlated with the type of influencer, with a correlation of 0.900. This suggests that both macro and micro-influencers significantly impact customer decisions, particularly when customers feel a strong connection to them. The correlation between purchase intention and customer trust was also strong at 0.896, indicating that trust is a critical factor in influencing buying decisions. When customers see an

influencer as a reliable source, they are more likely to follow their recommendations. However, the strongest correlation was found between consumer purchase intention and influencer authenticity, with a value of 0.906. This highlights that authenticity is the most important factor driving a consumer's decision to buy. The text reiterates that this authenticity is also a key component in building the trust that shapes buying intentions.

The findings aligned closely with the research objectives by evaluating the significant influence of both micro and macro influencers on customer trust and purchase intentions within the “Indian fashion and lifestyle market.” The strong “Pearson correlation values” such as 0.900 and 0.906 indicated the “passive influencer types,” whether micro or macro, positively impacting customer behavior. These supported the first two objectives focused on the roles of “influencer types” to build trust. Moreover, the strong emphasis on trust and authenticity as key drivers, highlighting the relevance of demographic and psychographic factors, directly links the findings to the third objective of the research.

ANOVA test

For the ANOVA test, the “significance level” is set at 0.05, and if the p value (Sig. value) is “less than or equal to the significance level”, then the result is considered statistically significant (Kim and Choi, 2021).

ANOVA					
IV1_InfluencerType					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	44.296	12	3.691	79.516	.000
Within Groups	6.453	139	.046		
Total	50.748	151			

Table 4.18: ANOVA test 1

(Source: SPSS)

The ANOVA table above shows a significance value (Sig.) of 0.000, which is well below the threshold of 0.05, indicating a statistically significant result. This suggests that the type of influencer, whether micro or macro, has a meaningful and measurable impact on consumer purchase behavior. The high F-value (79.516) further reinforces the presence of considerable variation in consumer responses based on different influencer types.

ANOVA					
IV2_ConsumerTrust					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	54.267	12	4.522	66.519	.000
Within Groups	9.450	139	.068		
Total	63.717	151			

Table 4.19: ANOVA test 2

(Source: SPSS)

The Sig. value for IV2 has been identified as 0.000, which is also less than 0.05 and indicates the perception of “statistically significant connection”. Hence, having proper trust in influencers motivates customers to change their purchase intention as required.

ANOVA					
IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	63.638	12	5.303	72.522	.000
Within Groups	10.164	139	.073		
Total	73.803	151			

Table 4.20: ANOVA test 3

(Source: SPSS)

It has been observed from above that the Sig. value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and thus, it can be stated that “perceived influencer authenticity” and “consumer purchase intention” have a “statistically significant” connection. In conclusion, all of the ANOVA test findings reinforced RO1, RO2, and RO3 by evaluating the fact that the “type of influencers”, “level of trust in influencers”, and “perceived influencer authenticity”, significantly influence “customer purchase behavior”. The results also confirmed that both influencer type and psychological perceptions like trust and authenticity are crucial to shape customer responses towards fashion and lifestyle marketing in India. This highlighted the relevance of demographic and psychographic factors within influencer marketing, and hence, supports the “tailored influencer approaches” to facilitate customer trust and purchase intention.

Regression test

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.900 ^a	.811	.809	.30182	.811	641.689	1

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	150	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV1_InfluencerType

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	58.457	1	58.457	641.689	.000 ^b
	Residual	13.665	150	.091		
	Total	72.121	151			

Table 4.21: Model summary and ANOVA test 1

(Source: SPSS)

The R-squared value, which must lie between 0 and 1, is commonly used to evaluate the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Altin *et al.*, 2023). As per the model summary table, the R-squared value is 0.811, reflecting a strong and positive association between IV1 and the dependent variable. Additionally, the ANOVA table reports a significance level of 0.000, indicating that the regression model is statistically valid and the relationship observed is unlikely due to chance.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.412	.203		-2.033	.044
	IV1_InfluencerType	1.073	.042	.900	25.332	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior

Table 4.22: Coefficient test 1

(Source: SPSS)

As per the coefficient table, the Sig. value has been identified as 0.000 as well, which means the type of influencer has a strong and “statistically significant positive impact” on the purchase intention or behavior of customers.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.896 ^a	.803	.802	.30745	.803	612.990	1

Model Summary

Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	150	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV2_ConsumerTrust

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	57.943	1	57.943	612.990	.000 ^b
	Residual	14.179	150	.095		
	Total	72.121	151			

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior
b. Predictors: (Constant), IV2_ConsumerTrust

Table 4.23: Model summary and ANOVA test 2

(Source: SPSS)

The model summary indicates an R-squared value of 0.803, falling within the valid range of 0 to 1, suggesting a strong positive relationship between IV2 (consumer trust) and the dependent variable (purchase intention). Additionally, the ANOVA test reveals a significance value of 0.000, confirming that this relationship is statistically significant and not due to chance.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.198	.183		1.085	.280
	IV2_ConsumerTrust	.954	.039	.896	24.759	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior

Table 4.24: Coefficient test 2

(Source: SPSS)

The coefficient table reveals a significance value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant relationship. This confirms that customer trust in influencers has a positive influence on their purchase intentions.

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.906 ^a	.820	.819	.29418	.820	683.368	1

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	150	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	59.140	1	59.140	683.368	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.981	150	.087		
	Total	72.121	151			

Table 4.25: Model summary and ANOVA test 3

(Source: SPSS)

The “R-squared value” seemed to be 0.820 from the above table, which is also within the range and indicates a positive connection between IV3 and DV. The Sig. value of 0.000 highlighted the connection as a “statistically significant” one, which means “perceived influencer authenticity” matters most to influence the “consumer purchase intention behavior”.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.501	.162		3.099	.002
	IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity	.895	.034	.906	26.141	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior

Table 4.26: Coefficient test 3

(Source: SPSS)

According to the coefficient table, the significance value ($p = 0.000$) indicates a statistically significant and positive effect on customers' purchase intentions, suggesting that the predictor variable has a strong influence on shaping consumer buying behavior.

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.911 ^a	.830	.827	.28725	.830	362.547	2

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	149	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV2_ConsumerTrust, IV1_InfluencerType

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	59.827	2	29.914	362.547	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.294	149	.083		
	Total	72.121	151			

Table 4.27: Model summary and ANOVA test 4

(Source: SPSS)

The “Model summary” table shows the high “R-squared value” of 0.830, indicating the fact that 83.0% of the variance in “customer purchase intention behavior” has been well explained by influencer type and consumer trust. The ANOVA table confirms statistical significance with the Sig. value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) that validates the model’s reliability.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.263	.196		-1.342	.182
	IV1_InfluencerType	.594	.124	.498	4.779	.000
	IV2_ConsumerTrust	.452	.111	.425	4.076	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior

Table 4.28: Coefficient test 4

(Source: SPSS)

The above table revealed that both IV1 (Influencer Type, $p = 0.000$) and IV2, that is “Consumer Trust in Influencer” ($p = 0.000$), have significant positive impacts on purchase behavior, with high influencer type (Beta = 0.498), showing a stronger impact than consumer trust (Beta = 0.425).

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.917 ^a	.840	.838	.27829	.840	391.133	2

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	149	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity, IV2_ConsumerTrust

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	60.582	2	30.291	391.133	.000 ^b
	Residual	11.539	149	.077		
	Total	72.121	151			

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior
b. Predictors: (Constant), IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity, IV2_ConsumerTrust

Table 4.29: Model summary and ANOVA test 5

(Source: SPSS)

From above, the “model summary” table shows the very high “R-squared value” of 0.840, which indicates 84.0% of the variance in purchase intention has been explained by the two predictors. The ANOVA table also confirmed the significance of the model with a p-value of 0.000, which suggests the regression model is “statistically valid.”

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.228	.166		1.378	.170
	IV2_ConsumerTrust	.421	.098	.396	4.315	.000
	IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity	.530	.091	.536	5.838	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior

Table 4.29: Coefficient test 5

(Source: SPSS)

The coefficient table evaluated that both consumer trust ($p = 0.000$) as well as authenticity ($p = 0.000$) significantly and positively influence the purchase behavior of customers, with authenticity (Beta = 0.536) having a slightly stronger impact than trust (Beta = 0.396).

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.922 ^a	.849	.847	.27020	.849	419.444	2

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	149	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity, IV1_InfluencerType

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	61.243	2	30.622	419.444	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.878	149	.073		
	Total	72.121	151			

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior
 b. Predictors: (Constant), IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity, IV1_InfluencerType

Table 4.30: Model summary and ANOVA test 6

(Source: SPSS)

The “Model summary” reported a high “R-squared value” of 0.849, which indicates that 84.9% of the variation within purchase behavior has been explained by these predictors. The ANOVA table confirmed the overall “statistical significance” of the model ($p = 0.000$) that validated its predictive strength.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.114	.188		-.609	.543
	IV1_InfluencerType	.521	.097	.437	5.368	.000
	IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity	.497	.081	.503	6.178	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior

Table 4.31: Coefficient test 6

(Source: SPSS)

According to the coefficient results, both influencer type ($p = 0.000$) and influencer authenticity ($p = 0.000$) exert statistically significant positive impacts on consumers' purchase intentions. Among the two, authenticity demonstrated a slightly stronger influence (Beta = 0.503) compared to influencer type (Beta = 0.437). These findings underscore the critical role of authenticity in shaping fashion-related buying decisions among Indian consumers through influencer marketing.

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.923 ^a	.851	.848	.26922	.851	282.361	3

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	148	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity, IV1_InfluencerType, IV2_ConsumerTrust

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	61.395	3	20.465	282.361	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.727	148	.072		
	Total	72.121	151			

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior
 b. Predictors: (Constant), IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity, IV1_InfluencerType, IV2_ConsumerTrust

Table 4.32: Model summary and ANOVA test 7

(Source: SPSS)

The model summary presented above demonstrates a high R-squared value of 0.851, suggesting that 85.1% of the variation in customer purchase behavior is accounted for by the predictors in the model. Additionally, the ANOVA results confirm the model's statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), reinforcing its overall reliability and predictive strength.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.097	.187		-.519	.604
	IV1_InfluencerType	.412	.123	.345	3.348	.001
	IV2_ConsumerTrust	.173	.120	.163	1.444	.151
	IV3_InfluencerAuthenticity	.431	.093	.436	4.650	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV_ConsumerPurchaseIntentionBehavior

Table 4.33: Coefficient test 7

(Source: SPSS)

From the above table, it has been observed that both “influencer authenticity” ($p = 0.000$, $Beta = 0.436$) and “influencer type” ($p = 0.001$, $Beta = 0.345$) have “statistically significant impacts” on “customer purchase intention behavior”. However, customer trust ($p = 0.151$, $Beta = 0.163$) has not shown a “statistically significant impact” ($p > 0.05$). This evaluated “influencer authenticity” as the most dominant predictor, followed by the “influencer type”. Hence, it is essential for Indian influencers to maintain their authenticity level adequately so that customers can stay motivated enough and rely on their choices.

Overall regression analysis confirms the study's main research objectives (RO1 and RO2), showing that both influencer type (macro and micro) and perceived authenticity have a significant positive impact on the purchase intentions of Indian fashion and lifestyle consumers. The results also revealed that authenticity is the most powerful predictor of consumer behavior, followed by influencer type. While consumer trust is conceptually important, its impact on purchase intention was not always statistically significant, which only partially supports RO2 and RO3. This highlights that perceived authenticity is the key psychological factor shaping consumer behavior, more so than demographic assumptions. These findings suggest that effective influencer marketing strategies should not just focus on the influencer's size but should also prioritize authenticity, content credibility, and a deep understanding of audience psychology to drive purchase decisions.

4.2 Secondary findings and analysis

Theme 1: Niche expertise, direct interaction, and usage of advanced tools contribute to influencing fashion and lifestyle purchases by micro-influencers

Micro-influencers, even though they have a limited consumer reach bear a significant potential to influence Indian consumers. Operating within a narrow domain, their product knowledge of the

niche they belong to brings them to the forefront of successful marketing and reach out to customers seeking genuine informed content and product recommendations (Karamchandani *et al.* 2025). Focused expertise possessed by the micro-influencers, like the study of Nayak and Das (2025) focuses on Indian traditional fashionwear, enhances the credibility of the micro-influencers as they possess deep domain knowledge. Nayak and Das (2025) also stated that the strong domain knowledge possessed by these micro-influencers bears the potential to increase sales by 40%.

Micro-influencers specialize in establishing direct interaction with their followers. This communication can be varied in the form of polls, comments, or similar, fostering a sense of community, in addition to relatability and driving an emotional connection (Karamchandani *et al.* 2025). The interaction and emotional connection help to enhance customer trust, making the consumers receptive to the fashion recommendations made by them.

The micro-influencers are seen to leverage technology to meet the demands of the evolving marketing landscape. Leveraging these analytical tools, the micro-influencers successfully target their niche consumers (Shukla *et al.* 2025). In addition, the visually appealing reels that show a real-world experience of the product experience, add to the product value and effective suability reinforcing credibility and content authenticity.

Theme 2: Broad reach, professionalism, and content authority enable to development of trust in macro-influencers, leading to high trust and purchase

In contrast to the micro-influencers, the macro-influencers have a broad reach which acts as an added advantage. The wide reach to Indian customers gives them the potential to reach and influence them regarding lifestyle and purchase decisions (Amelia *et al.* 2025; Berwal *et al.* 2025). Macro-influencers gradually become familiar faces in the social media platforms, which makes a psychological impact on their followers, leading to high customer trust. As Dzreke (2025) states, customers are more likely to make a purchase from a familiar face.

Macro-influencers possess the aspect of high professionalism, which is reflected in the nature of the content generated by them. The professional presentation of content, appeals to Indian consumers, influencing the perception in a positive manner. Cox, and Paoli (2023) and Dzreke, (2025) emphasise that macro-influencers are able to generate professional content in a holistic manner, alleging with brand aesthetics, that lays a positive influence on consumer perception.

The scope of mass positioning is sought by fashion and apparel brands to create high visibility and simultaneously a high brand recall, especially focusing on the vast customer diversity in India.

Ganeshkumar and Lokeshkumar (2022) state that, macro-influencers have a scope of premium positioning, owing to the reputation they have been able to establish. Especially, as these macro-influencers associate themselves with several brands, it sends a message of authenticity to the customers. Nadeem (2025) adds that macro influencers have the added advantage of vast experience, and critical industry knowledge, which enables them to tap into aspects of consumer confidence, especially focusing on the Indian Lifestyle and garment sector. The content generated by macro influencers reflects high aspirational values and influences fashion choices. Harbouring on the aspects of developing a similar social identity, the macro-influencers are able to govern the lifestyle purchases of Indian consumers.

Theme 3: Evaluation of demographic and psychological factors for influencing consumer trust and purchase behavior: the role of micro and macro influencer marketing in India

In the dynamic digital landscape of India, micro-influencers are perceived as the more authentic as well as relatable for fostering stronger parasocial connections with their audience. This is relevant to lead to high engagement rates and trust among younger demographics like Gen Z who value genuine connections even more over celebrity endorsements. Conversely, macro-influencers are able to offer broader reach whereas they lack the intimate connection that micro-influencers have with their followers (Gerlich, 2023). Homophily of influencers regarding substantive audience, social presence, and physical attractiveness seemed to be effective to influence customer purchase decision even more. Psychologically, customers are mostly influenced by the expertise and perceived credibility of influencers. Micro-influencers are able to share personal experiences along with product usage that ultimately improve their credibility and foster trust areas. This trust is quite essential to shape purchase intentions as customers are more likely to act on certain recommendations from sources they find credible. In India, fashion and lifestyle brands have leveraged micro-influencers suitably for building the trust level and driving sales which showcase the power of relatable endorsements for influencing customer behavior (Kumar, 2024).

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Research objective 1

The findings of the analysis confirm that micro-influencers play an important role in influencing consumer confidence in the fashion and lifestyle product purchases in India. The insights show that their niche knowledge, which is gained through personal experience, makes them create more trust than macro-influencers. As in the study, micro-influencers such as those who are specialized to be into Indian traditional fashionwear have greater sales potential emphasizing their effectiveness in marketing. It corresponds to that stated by Cox and Paoli (2023), as they observed that influencers with a smaller number of followers tend to produce more engagement because of the perceived genuineness. From the regression analysis, it has been observed that influencer type has a “significant positive impact” on “customer purchase intentions” ($p = 0.000$), confirming the strength of the relationship. However, in the combined model with different predictors, micro-influencer type seemed to be statistically significant ($p = 0.001$, Beta = 0.345), validating their influencer status even when other factors are properly controlled.

Also, the interactive nature of the content, as polls and comments, most of the time used by micro-influencers, results in a social relationship, which enhances the feeling even strongly because research by Durmishi and Durmishi (2024) has shown that such interaction increases consumer trust and intention to buy. They engage in creative application of visual tools, such as brief reels on how products are used, and enhance product transparency and credibility. This reflects the findings of Dzreke and Dzreke (2025), who concluded that trustworthiness in influencer marketing is directly connected with content authenticity. All these aspects prove that micro-influencers are trusted opinion formers who shape the buying process of Indian customers, especially Gen Z and younger millennials, who need to feel connected and authentic brand communication.

5.2 Research objective 2

According to the study, macro-influencers bear a lot of influence on brand perception and consumer trust because of their mass appeal, a professional background, and affiliation with several trusted brands. In contrast to micro-influencers, they target followers on a more superficial level, but because of the celebrity status and well-developed content, they produce the aspiration effect. As it was demonstrated in the analysis, macro-influencers have the potential to impact high-quantum purchase decisions because of prestige and familiarity. This seemed to be well aligned with regression findings, such as “influencer type” highlighted a “statistically significant impact”

on “customer purchase intention behavior” ($p = 0.001$, $Beta = 0.345$), confirming the fact that macro-influencers are able to shape “trust-based purchase decisions”. It agrees with the work by Ferreira *et al.* (2024), which stated that luxury and fashion brands believe that perceived social status and visibility contribute to increased persuasiveness of macro-influencers.

It was also shown in the findings that macro-influencers tend to be supportive of brand aesthetics and strategic campaigns, thereby making it possible to position the brand to the masses. Ganeshkumar and Lokeshkumar (2022) argue that these types of influencers are commonly considered to be credible brand ambassadors because of the quality production and the recognition within an industry. The association with famous brands creates trust through reputation spillover, a concept confirmed by Gerlich (2023), who proved that brand associations enhance the credibility of influencers. This phenomenon has been well reflected in the findings where macro-influencers were highlighted to “significantly influence consumer trust” as indicated by the model combining “influencer type and consumer trust” ($R^2 = 0.830$, $p = 0.000$). Macro-influencers also tend to generate authoritative tones and, over time in the industry, their content gains trustworthiness among the middle and upper-income earners of Indian markets because they are viewed as creators of tastes. Thus, they have their working force based more on the alignment in status and professionalism than interpersonal connection.

5.3 Research objective 3

The analysis also highlights that demographic and psychographic profiles greatly determine consumer trust and buying behavior in situations where an influencer campaign is being conducted. As an example, Gen Z consumers in India have more of an inclination towards micro-influencers, as they are motivated by relating to characters and connectivity. The results disclosed that genuine material, common values, and bilateral communication of micro-influencers increased trust to an appreciable level. Karamchandani *et al.* (2025) confirm this by stating that deeper connection and trust are fuelled by reliability and homophile with the audience. The regression findings further confirmed the fact that influencer type showcased a “statistically significant positive impact” on the purchase intention. It seemed to be also clear from the analysis that influencer authenticity had the strongest “statistical impact” on purchase intention ($p = 0.000$, $Beta = 0.436$), indicating that psychographic traits such as trust perception as well as authenticity carry more weight than just demographic targeting.

In contrast, professionals of more advanced age are more likely to equate the concept of trust with professional image and continuity, which is why the best one can do when communicating with some income groups and lifestyle is using macro-influencers. According to the results, the psychological component of familiarity becomes a determining factor, and the consumer is more likely to trust the objects of influence with which one is more familiar or relates to the experiences of high quality. This conclusion corresponds with the results of the study conducted by Kumar (2024), according to which the perceived similarity and attractiveness of influencers have a significant impact on purchase intent. From the past research, it has also been verified that cultural relevance, along with language familiarity, play the most essential role for Indian customers, especially in Tier-2 as well as Tier-3 cities. It echoes the findings by Nadeem (2025), who made the point that the social identification theory is an essential factor in influencer marketing. Thus, by knowing these demographic and psychographic assemblies, brands can make more informed decisions to ensure better customization of their approaches and influencer affiliations.

5.4 Theoretical reestablishment

This research confirms and enhances the current theories in digital advertising and communicating with influencers. First, it strengthens the source credibility theory because it is both micro-influencers and macro-influencers who can be trusted based on their expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness, albeit via different mechanisms. Although micro-influencers are highly trusted and relatable, macro-influencers lead in the provision of expertise and societal status, falling along the framework presented by Purohit and Arora (2024).

Secondly, the theory of para-social interaction is confirmed in the context of micro-influencers who establish one-sided and quite strong emotional connections with the audience through a consistent style of interaction and individual communication. Thakur *et al.* (2024) indicated that such relationships are replications of real friendships that cause higher behavioural reactions by followers. This was reflected in the outcomes as the involvement of the micro-influencers usually resulted in quantitative spending-based interactions.

Finally, the research is based on the homophily theory, according to it similarities among cultures, language, and lifestyle support the work of influencers. Due to familiar things attracting people as explained by Purohit and Arora (2024), micro-influencers perform better in marketing within the regions or parts where people relate to them due to sharing many things in common. In this way,

the study not only supports the existing theories but also puts them into a broad context of the Indian consumer ecosystem.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The article addressed how micro- and macro-influencers influence customer trust and purchasing behavior in the Indian fashion and lifestyle industry. It concluded that preferentially using micro-influencers because of niche expertise, similar communication, and direct feedback to the audience via multiple touchpoints can be an excellent tool in establishing a sense of trust, particularly among the younger audience groups, such as Gen Z. Their capacity to produce emotionally touching and genuine material enhances consumer attachment and has beneficial effects on the intention to buy. The macro-influencers, on the other hand, were discovered to be effective in eliciting trust concerning their reach, professionalism of content, and their aspiration. They are good mass positioning tools and creators of brand perceptions because of their relationship with established brands and the way they fit into brand aesthetics.

Moreover, demographics and psychographics such as gender, alignment to the culture, perceived credibility and social conformity were essential in the influence of the Indian consumers in responding to the trend of influencer marketing. The article confirms hypothetical theories, including that of source credibility theory, the theory of parasocial interaction, and the homophily theory, providing both theoretical and practical knowledge. In the case of brands functioning in India, contextual influencer choice with considerations of the relationship between identity choices and trust-building needs of the target audience is the key to success.

6.2 Linking with objectives

Linking with Objective 1: Influence of Micro-Influencers on Consumer Trust

It was discovered that micro-influencers have a significant influence on consumer trust, which is based on niche expertise, relatable content, and personal engagement. 78.8% of participants strongly agreed that they get honest advice through the followed influencers. This substantiates the capacity of the micro-influencers to build trust, especially the younger consumers who attach importance to authenticity and emotional connection.

Linking with Objective 2: Influence of Macro-Influencers on Consumer Trust

The macro-influencers were found to develop trust based on wide sight and professional materials. 80.3% of respondents were of the opinion that the macro-influencers make genuine recommendations. This was also associated with credibility, considering their vast spread and image identification as far as trust dynamics within the second objective is concerned.

Linking with Objective 3: Role of Demographic and Psychographic Factors

Age, emotional appeal and credibility were dominant factors used to sway consumer reactions. Gen Z and other younger cohorts were more confident with micro-influencers, making the third goal to reach wider demographics through aspirational positioning by macro-influencers successful.

6.3 Limitations

Although the research has some informative findings about the concept of influencer marketing in the fashion and lifestyle industry in India, it has some flaws that must be considered. To begin with, the sample size of the survey may have been increased in order to cover a larger and more diversified population. A majority of the responses were received by the participants in the metropolitan cities, and in outreach to the smaller towns like Kapurthala (Punjab) and Banswara (Rajasthan), there were no responses received. The use of this limited the views of rural or semi-urban perspective, which could be very different to the urban consumer behaviour (Sukumar *et al.* 2025).

Secondly, the research was particular in using only three key influencer characteristics, namely the type, trust and authenticity. Although these are some of the important variables, other factors that may affect their influence rate were not measured, including the quality of content, the rate of engagement, the alignment of value between the consumer and the influencer and the frequency of their posts. Their inclusion could have made the understanding of influencer effectiveness more comprehensive (Sankala, 2024). Moreover, the focus was specific to Indian consumers interested in fashion and lifestyle, but does not allow to generalize the results to any other industry, such as technology, food, or healthcare, and to international markets. In future, the same sectors and cross-country comparisons could be conducted to make the conclusions more generalized.

6.4 Recommendations

➤ *Diversify Influencer Attributes in Research*

Future research shifts should not be limited to the influencer type, trust, and authenticity. It can give a better picture of the influencer effectiveness potential to include variables like quality of content, engagement rates, post frequency and the aesthetic nature of the posts (Chaudhary, 2022). This will guide the brands in reviewing what really matters most in terms of influencing consumer purchase intention.

➤ *Reach a Wider Geographical Population*

In order to enhance the representativeness of the insights, future studies must make sure to reach more semi-urban and rural sectors in India. Such regions as Kapurthala and Banswara had been underrepresented in this research (Ghosh *et al.* 2024). It is possible to incorporate the inclusion of respondents located in tier-2 and tier-3 cities and tailor the influencer strategies according to geographic and cultural particularities.

➤ ***Micro and Macro Influencer Custom Strategies***

The brands are supposed to have custom approaches when interacting with micro and macro influencers. Niche marketing, as well as trust-building campaigns, would be executed by using micro-influencers, whereas macro-influencers should be used in terms of wider brand awareness and aspirational factor (Pradhan *et al.* 2023).

6.5 Future scope

The current study creates a number of research areas that can be explored in the field of influencer marketing in the Indian context of the domain. In the first place, in future research, it is possible to work with a wider and territorially balanced sample that should include both rural and semi-urban population categories so as to comprehend the consumer behaviour of the rest of the country. Also, it will be best to extend the study to other industries to see whether the results will be at work in their applications in other related fields like food, technology, health and tourism.

A longitudinal study with changing consumer trust and ability to interact with the influencers over time is another possible area of exploration. Moreover, to see a higher incidence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Augmented Reality (AR) being applied in influencer campaigns, the future study of the topic may look at how emerging technologies will impact consumer perception and trust. Further, the analysis of other attributes of influencers, including but not limited to tone of communication, originality of content, how often one interacts and audience sentiment analysis may be contemplated as future research, which may help us in further perfecting our approach to the concept of an influencer.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Demographic questions

Q1: What is your age?

- 18-25 years
- 26-32 years
- 33-40 years
- More than 40 years

Q2: What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Q3: How often do you engage with influencer content?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Rarely

Contextual questions

IV1: Influencer Type

Q1: Do you agree that product recommendations from macro-influencers are far better than micro-influencers?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q2: Do you agree that engagement with content from macro-influencers is far more attractive than micro-influencers?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

- Strongly disagree

Q3: Do you think that both macro and micro influencers influence your fashion and lifestyle purchases equally?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q4: Do you believe macro-influencers provide more authentic and trustworthy product recommendations than micro-influencers?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

IV2: Consumer Trust in Influencer

Q5: Do you agree with the fact that influencers you follow provide honest product recommendations?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q6: Do you agree that you trust influencers to recommend products that are beneficial for yourself?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q7: Do you trust the product endorsements made by the influencers you follow?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q8: Do you believe influencers disclose any affiliations or sponsorships with the products they promote?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

IV3: Perceived Influencer Authenticity

Q9: Do you feel that influencers truly use the products they endorse?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q10: Do you think that the influencers you follow seem authentic and genuine in their recommendations?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q11: Do you perceive the influencers you follow to be honest and true to their personal brand?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral

- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q12: Do you believe that influencers prioritize maintaining their authenticity over promoting products for profit?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Dependent variable: Consumer Purchase Intention/Behavior

Q13: Do you prefer to purchase a product recommended by an influencer?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q14: Do you frequently purchase products after seeing it promoted by an influencer?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q15: Do you think influencer size (micro vs. macro) influences how much you trust their product recommendations?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q16: Are you more likely to purchase a product that you have seen used or reviewed by an influencer than one you have not?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree