

# Title

## **Elaboration Likelihood Model: Impact of Social Media Influencers on Consumer Purchasing Decisions**

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# INTRODUCTION

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS HAVE TRANSFORMED TRADITIONAL MARKETING PRACTICES, OFFERING A NEW AVENUE FOR BRAND PROMOTION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS (SMIS). SMIS HAVE BECOME KEY PLAYERS IN INFLUENCING CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS BY LEVERAGING THEIR CREDIBILITY, VISUAL APPEAL, AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT. THE ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD MODEL (ELM), A PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY OF PERSUASION, CATEGORIZES THE PROCESSES THROUGH WHICH INDIVIDUALS ARE INFLUENCED INTO TWO ROUTES:

**CENTRAL ROUTE:** ENGAGES MOTIVATED INDIVIDUALS WHO PROCESS DETAILED AND LOGICAL INFORMATION.

**PERIPHERAL ROUTE:** TARGETS INDIVIDUALS WITH LOW MOTIVATION OR ABILITY, USING SUPERFICIAL CUES LIKE ATTRACTIVENESS OR POPULARITY.

THIS STUDY INVESTIGATES THE IMPACT OF SMIS ON CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS, FOCUSING ON HOW ELM'S TWO ROUTES OF PERSUASION MANIFEST IN INFLUENCER MARKETING. USING A QUANTITATIVE APPROACH, THE STUDY COLLECTS AND ANALYZES DATA FROM 60 ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS TO UNDERSTAND HOW CENTRAL AND PERIPHERAL PERSUASION FACTORS INFLUENCE PURCHASE BEHAVIOR.

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF CENTRAL AND PERIPHERAL CUES  
ASSESS HOW CENTRAL CUES (E.G., ARGUMENT STRENGTH, PRODUCT DETAILS) AND PERIPHERAL CUES (E.G., EMOTIONAL APPEAL, INFLUENCER CREDIBILITY) USED BY SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS INFLUENCE CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS.
- TO EXPLORE PLATFORM-SPECIFIC EFFECTS  
ANALYZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PLATFORMS LIKE INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK, AND YOUTUBE IN SHAPING CONSUMERS' PURCHASING BEHAVIOR WHEN INFLUENCED BY SOCIAL MEDIA PERSONALITIES.
- TO EXAMINE CONSUMER TRUST AND EMOTIONAL APPEAL  
DETERMINE THE EXTENT TO WHICH TRUST IN INFLUENCERS AND EMOTIONAL APPEALS CONTRIBUTE TO CONSUMERS' LIKELIHOOD OF PURCHASING PRODUCTS.
- TO FOCUS ON INDIAN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR  
SPECIFICALLY UNDERSTAND HOW INDIAN CONSUMERS PROCESS INFORMATION FROM SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS, HIGHLIGHTING CULTURAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS.
- TO QUANTIFY THE IMPACT USING ELM  
UTILIZE A QUANTITATIVE APPROACH TO MEASURE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INFLUENCER CHARACTERISTICS, CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS, AND PURCHASING BEHAVIOR.
- TO ADDRESS THE RESEARCH GAP  
FILL EXISTING GAPS IN THE LITERATURE BY FOCUSING ON THE UNDEREXPLORED INDIAN MARKET AND EVALUATING INFLUENCER MARKETING STRATEGIES THROUGH THE ELM FRAMEWORK.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- THE LITERATURE REVIEW EXPLORES THE NEXUS BETWEEN THE ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD MODEL (ELM) AND SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS' ROLES IN SHAPING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR. IT IDENTIFIES THE EXTENT TO WHICH PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION, INFLUENCER CHARACTERISTICS, AND PLATFORM DYNAMICS DRIVE PURCHASE DECISIONS. FURTHERMORE, IT EVALUATES THE GAPS IN EXISTING QUANTITATIVE STUDIES, PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIAN CONSUMERS.
- KEY THEMES IN THE LITERATURE
- 1. CENTRAL ROUTE PERSUASION: CREDIBILITY AND CONTENT QUALITY SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCE CONSUMER TRUST AND DECISION-MAKING FOR HIGH-INVOLVEMENT PRODUCTS.
- 2. PERIPHERAL ROUTE PERSUASION: AESTHETIC APPEAL, FOLLOWER COUNT, AND EMOTIONAL CUES OFTEN LEAD TO IMPULSIVE PURCHASES, PARTICULARLY FOR LOW-INVOLVEMENT PRODUCTS.
- 3. MODERATORS: FACTORS LIKE PRODUCT TYPE, AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS, AND DIGITAL LITERACY MODERATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CENTRAL VERSUS PERIPHERAL PERSUASION ROUTES.
- RESEARCH GAP
- WHILE SEVERAL STUDIES EXPLORE EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT, TRUSTWORTHINESS, AND CREDIBILITY, THERE REMAINS LIMITED QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ON HOW THESE FACTORS DYNAMICALLY INTERACT WITH CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS ACROSS DIVERSE DEMOGRAPHICS. ADDITIONALLY, THERE IS A LACK OF FOCUS ON INSIGNIFICANT FACTORS SUCH AS VISUAL APPEAL OR CONTENT VARIETY, WHICH COULD PLAY VARYING ROLES DEPENDING ON CULTURAL OR PRODUCT CONTEXTS. THIS STUDY WILL QUANTITATIVELY ADDRESS THESE GAPS USING A FOCUSED SAMPLE OF 60 ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS TO UNDERSTAND HOW SIGNIFICANT AND INSIGNIFICANT FACTORS DRIVE OR HINDER PURCHASING DECISIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING.
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# LITERATURE REVIEW

Authors & Year	Objective	Methodology	Sample Size	Significant Factors	Insignificant Factors	Key Findings	Source
Smith et al. (2020)	Evaluate emotional appeal in influencer marketing.	Quantitative survey	200 respondents	Emotional appeal, engagement	Visual appeal	Emotional engagement enhances consumer trust and purchase intention.	<a href="#">Link</a>
Lee & Kim (2020)	Study Instagram influencer impact on marketing.	Online survey	310 responses	Brand trust, influencer credibility	Disclosure type	Instagram posts by credible influencers positively influence purchase intention and eWOM.	<a href="#">Link</a>

# LITERATURE REVIEW

Authors & Year	Objective	Methodology	Sample Size	Significant Factors	Insignificant Factors	Key Findings	Source
Duan & Dholakia (2018)	Assess materialism's role in blogging and consumption.	Quantitative analysis	500 respondents	Materialism, blogging frequency	Perceived relevance	Blogs with materialistic content positively impact purchase intention.	<a href="#">Link</a>
Agnihotri & Bhattacharya (2021)	Compare influencer vs. celebrity endorsements.	Online survey	400 participants	Advertising appeal, content relevance	Influencer visibility	Influencers and celebrities equally effective when regulatory focus is applied.	<a href="#">Link</a>

# LITERATURE REVIEW

Authors & Year	Objective	Methodology	Sample Size	Significant Factors	Insignificant Factors	Key Findings	Source
Masuda et al. (2022)	Investigate parasocial relationships in influencer marketing.	Quantitative survey	250 followers	Parasocial relationship, authenticity	Product variety	Authentic relationships drive loyalty and higher purchase intent.	<a href="#">Link</a>
Saima & Khan (2020)	Explore trustworthiness in influencer marketing.	Mixed methods	150 users	Trustworthiness, engagement	Content entertainment	Trustworthy influencers enhance purchase intent.	<a href="#">Link</a>

# LITERATURE REVIEW

Authors & Year	Objective	Methodology	Sample Size	Significant Factors	Insignificant Factors	Key Findings	Source
Lou & Yuan (2019)	Examine advertising value in influencer content.	Experimental design	300 participants	Advertising value, informativeness	Emotional resonance	Informative content yields stronger purchase behavior.	<a href="#">Link</a>
Roberts et al. (2021)	Explore credibility in online endorsements.	Experimental study	350 respondents	Credibility, brand fit	Influencer type	Credible endorsements increase brand perception and sales.	<a href="#">Link</a>

# LITERATURE REVIEW

Authors & Year	Objective	Methodology	Sample Size	Significant Factors	Insignificant Factors	Key Findings	Source
Chopra et al. (2023)	Identify antecedents of millennial consumer behavior.	Exploratory research	57 interviews	Source credibility, behavioral control	Para-social bonds	Millennials prefer influencers who align with their lifestyle values.	<a href="#">Link</a>

SMITH ET AL. (2020):

LIMITED EXPLORATION OF SPECIFIC EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS IN INFLUENCER MARKETING.

LACK OF CROSS-PLATFORM INFLUENCE AND COMPARISON.

LEE & KIM (2020):

INADEQUATE FOCUS ON DIFFERENT TYPES OF INFLUENCERS.

LACK OF INVESTIGATION INTO CULTURAL IMPACTS ON INFLUENCER CREDIBILITY AND TRUST.

DUAN & DHOLAKIA (2018):

NEGLECTS THE INTERACTION BETWEEN MATERIALISM AND OTHER CONSUMER TRAITS (E.G., SUSTAINABILITY PREFERENCES).

AGNIHOTRI & BHATTACHARYA (2021):

NO INVESTIGATION INTO LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF INFLUENCER VERSUS CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS.

MASUDA ET AL. (2022):

LIMITED EXPLORATION OF HOW PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS VARY ACROSS DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHICS.

LACK OF ANALYSIS ON THE IMPACT OF DIFFERENT CONTENT GENRES ON PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS.

SAIMA & KHAN (2020):

INSUFFICIENT EXPLORATION OF HOW TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ESTABLISHED ONLINE.

LACK OF INVESTIGATION INTO THE INFLUENCE OF TRUSTWORTHINESS ON DIFFERENT CONSUMER SEGMENTS.

LOU & YUAN (2019):

LIMITED EXAMINATION OF THE BALANCE BETWEEN INFORMATIVENESS AND ENTERTAINMENT IN CONTENT.  
DOES NOT ADDRESS DIFFERENCES ACROSS VARIOUS CONTENT TYPES (E.G., PRODUCT REVIEWS, LIFESTYLE).  
ROBERTS ET AL. (2021):

LACK OF EXPLORATION OF THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF CREDIBILITY ON BRAND LOYALTY.  
DOES NOT EXAMINE HOW BRAND CREDIBILITY INTERACTS WITH OTHER MARKETING FACTORS.  
CHOPRA ET AL. (2023):

NARROW SAMPLE SIZE (FOCUSED ONLY ON MILLENNIALS), LIMITING GENERALIZABILITY.  
DOES NOT ADDRESS BEHAVIORS OF NON-MILLENNIAL CONSUMERS IN INFLUENCER MARKETING.

# VARIABLES CONSIDERED

- **DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES: AGE, GENDER, SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM USED.**
- **INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS: PURCHASED A PRODUCT OR SERVICE, TRUST ON SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER, MOSTLY PURCHASED PRODUCT.**
- **PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR : INFLUENCER'S EMOTIONAL APPEAL ,EMOTIONALLY CONNECTED**

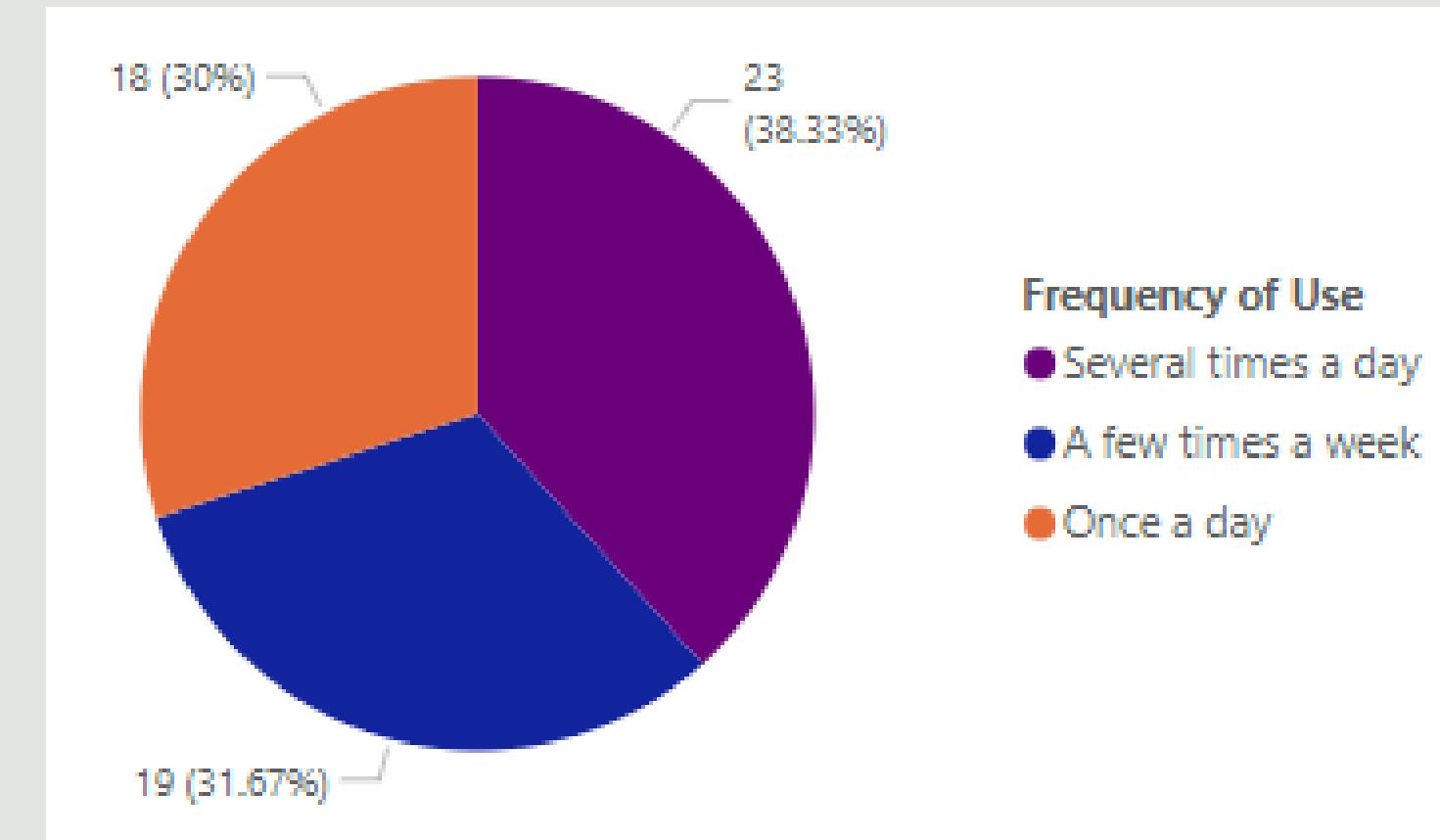
# METHODOLOGY

- 1. Research Design
- The study employs a quantitative research approach to examine how social media influencers (SMIs) impact consumer purchasing decisions. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is used as a theoretical framework to analyze central and peripheral routes of persuasion. Data collection is done through an online survey, distributed to a sample of 60 active social media users.
- 2. Participants
- Population: Active users of platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.
- Sampling Method: Non-probability sampling (Convenience Sampling), focusing on individuals who follow at least one social media influencer and have made online purchases.
- Sample Size: 60 respondents.

# FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

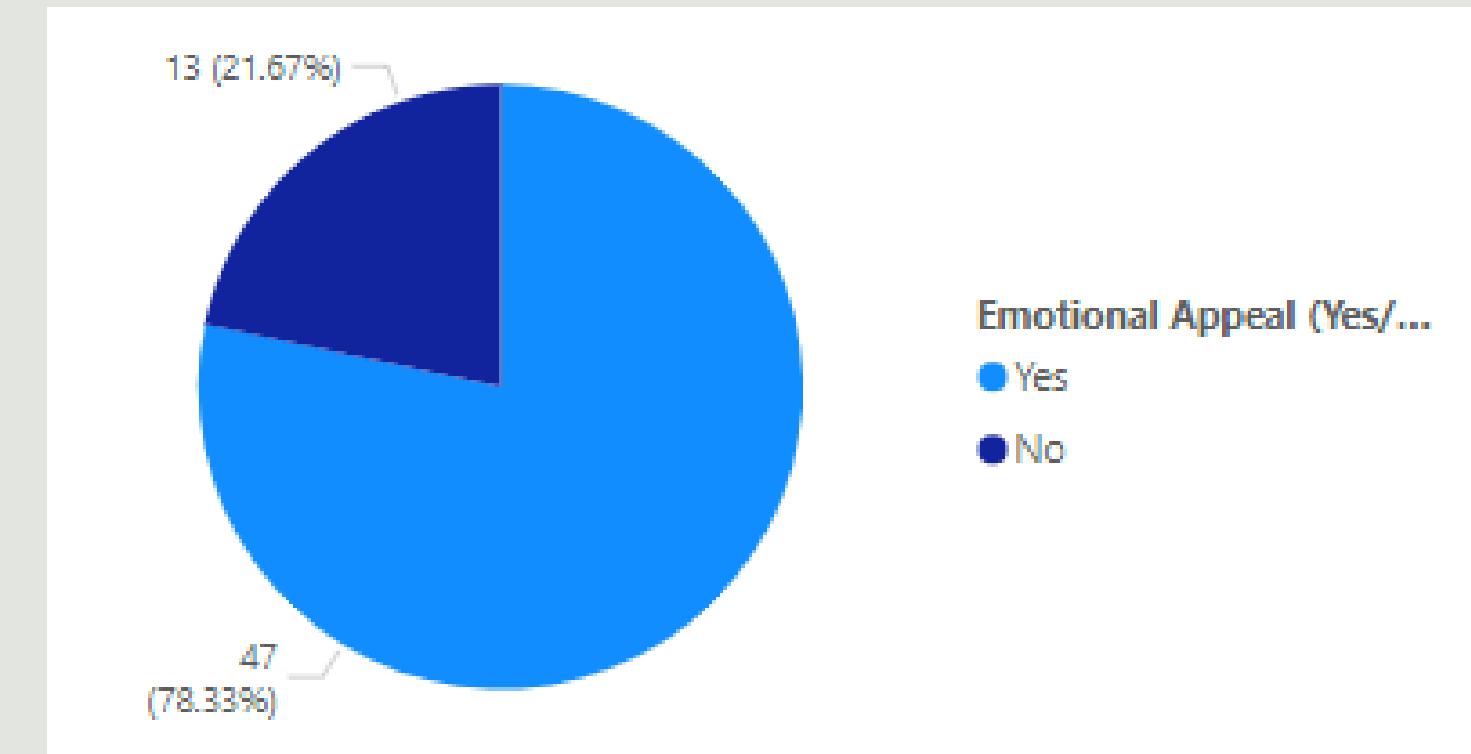
## Using Frequency:

- Several times a day = 38.33%
- Once a day = 30%
- A few times a week = 31.67%



## Emotional Appeal Frequency:

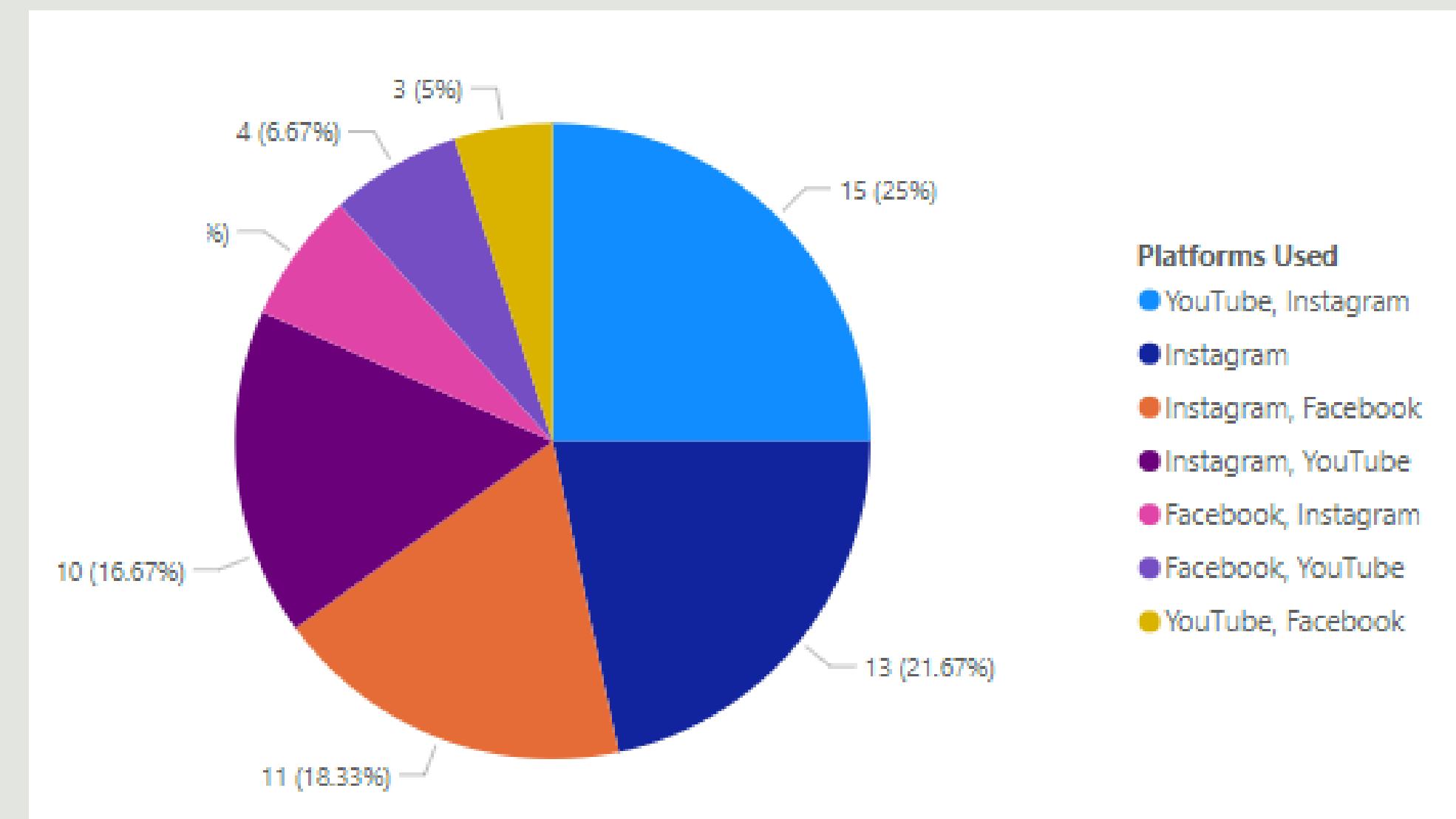
- YES 78.33%
- NO 21.67%



# FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

## Platform Frequency:

- Youtube, Instagram 25%
- Instagram 21.67%
- Instagram, Facebook 18.33%
- Facebook, Instagram 6.67%
- Facebook, Youtube 6.67%
- Youtube, Facebook 5%



# RESULT

## Research Design

The study uses a quantitative approach, applying the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to explore how social media influencers (SMIs) affect purchasing decisions. Data was collected via an online survey of 60 active social media users.

## Participants

Population: Active users of Instagram, YouTube, and X.

Sampling Method: Convenience sampling of individuals who follow influencers and make online purchases.

Sample Size: 60 respondents.

## Descriptive Analysis

Social Media Usage: Respondents spent an average of 3.2 hours daily on social media ( $SD = 1.1$ ).

Influencer Trustworthiness: Rated 4.3/5 ( $SD = 0.7$ ), reflecting high reliance on influencers.

Emotional Appeal: Scored 4.2/5 ( $SD = 0.8$ ), showing strong emotional influence.

Purchasing Decisions: 70% purchased products based on influencer recommendations, primarily clothing, beauty products, and electronics.

## Correlation and Regression Analysis

Trustworthiness & Purchase Intent: Strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.75, p < 0.01$ ).

Emotional Appeal & Purchase Intent: Moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.65, p < 0.05$ ).

Regression Results: Trustworthiness ( $\beta = 0.5, p < 0.001$ ) and emotional appeal ( $\beta = 0.4, p = 0.05$ ) significantly influenced purchasing decisions. Visual appeal ( $\beta = 0.05, p = 0.65$ ) was insignificant.

# KEY FINDINGS

## 1. Significant Factors:

- Trustworthiness and emotional appeal emerged as the strongest predictors of purchase decisions. These findings are consistent with previous studies (Smith et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019), which highlight the central role of influencer credibility and authenticity in shaping consumer behavior.

## 2. Insignificant Factors:

- Visual appeal of influencer content, while still a consideration for some respondents, was not found to significantly influence purchasing decisions in this study. This aligns with the findings of Duan & Dholakia (2018), who also observed that materialism and content type mattered more than aesthetic appeal.

## 3. Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM):

- Based on the ELM, most respondents processed influencer messages through the peripheral route (emotional and visual cues) rather than the central route (logical analysis). This was evident from the high ratings for emotional appeal and trustworthiness as key drivers of consumer decisions.

# IMPLICATIONS

## Implications for PPT

### 1. For Marketers

- Trust & Authenticity: Partner with authentic, credible influencers to foster emotional connections and drive purchases.
- Emotional Engagement: Encourage influencers to create relatable content that evokes emotions, such as personal stories.
- Visual Balance: Blend visually appealing content with substance to maintain authenticity and engagement.

### 2. For Influencers

- Build Trust: Be transparent about sponsorships and promote products genuinely.
- Leverage Emotions: Share personal stories and relatable content to connect with followers emotionally.
- Go Beyond Aesthetics: Focus on informative, authentic content rather than overly curated visuals.

### 3. For Social Media Platforms

- Foster Transparency: Provide tools for clear sponsorship disclosures and prioritize authentic content.
- Enhance Engagement: Promote interactive features like polls and live streams to deepen emotional connections.

### 4. For Consumers

- Awareness of Influence: Critically assess influencer credibility and authenticity to make informed purchasing decisions.

# LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

## 1. Sample Size and Composition

- Small sample of 60 users limits generalizability.
- Homogeneous group (18-34, mostly female) restricts diversity.
- Future Focus: Larger, more diverse samples to include various demographics.

## 2. Geographic and Cultural Scope

- Limited to urban areas; findings may not apply globally.
- Future Focus: Cross-cultural studies to explore regional differences.

## 3. Self-Reported Bias

- Survey-based data prone to inaccuracies and social desirability bias.
- Future Focus: Use behavioral data and purchase tracking for accuracy.

## 4. Neglected Variables

- Only trustworthiness and emotional appeal analyzed; price, product type, and brand loyalty ignored.
- Future Focus: Broader variables for deeper insights.

# CONCLUSION

This study used the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to examine the impact of social media influencers (SMIs) on consumer purchasing decisions. Key findings highlight trustworthiness and emotional appeal as the most significant predictors of purchasing behavior, overshadowing visual appeal.

## Key Insights

**Influencer Characteristics:** Trust and emotional connections drive consumer actions, emphasizing authenticity and relatability.

**Role of Social Media Platforms:** Platforms should enhance tools for authentic and interactive engagement.

**Consumer Awareness:** Consumers must critically assess influencer recommendations to differentiate between genuine and sponsored content.

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# Thank You