

# A study on influence of social media trends on fashion consumer behaviour

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## Abstract

This project was undertaken with the objective of carrying out a study of “A study on influence of social media trends on fashion consumer behaviour.” This report provides details about consumer behavior towards fashion trends. Social media has become a necessary part of our lives, and its influence is felt in all aspects of society, including fashion trends.

This study examines the influence of social media on fashion trends in India. The study used a mixed-methods approach, collecting data through questionnaires and interviews with fashion industry stakeholders, including designers, retailers, and consumers. The study found that social media significantly impacts the fashion industry. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are used by fashion brands to connect with consumers, promote their products, and create brand awareness. Fashion consumers use social media to stay up to date on the latest trends, discover new brands, and make purchase decisions.

The study also found that social media influencers play an important role in shaping fashion trends. Fashion influencers are individuals who have built a large following on social media and who use their platform to promote fashion products and brands. Fashion consumers trust the recommendations of fashion influencers and are more likely to purchase products that they see promoted by their favorite influencers. Additionally, interactive content such as live streams, styling videos, and influencer collaborations further enhance consumer engagement. The study highlights how digital marketing strategies, viral trends, and personalized recommendations influence consumer preferences, making social media a key driver of fashion consumption in today's digital age.

**Keywords :** Social Media Influence, Fashion Consumer Behavior, Influencer Marketing, Brand Awareness, Impulse Buying, User-Generated Content, Social Commerce, Trendy Apparel.

## 1.INTRODUCTION

Changes in fashion trends, purchasing behaviour influenced by social media, and brand loyalty due to social media presence are connect with each other shape the new fashion. Firstly, social media has revolutionized how fashion trends emerge and evolve. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest serve as virtual runways where users, including influencers, celebrities, and everyday individuals, showcase their style preferences, influencing the wider audience. Trends can go viral within hours, propelled by likes, shares, and comments, resulting in rapid adoption by fashion-conscious consumers. Additionally, social media platforms provide direct access to fashion weeks, designer previews, and behind-the-scenes content, democratizing the fashion industry and fostering inclusivity. Secondly, social media profoundly impacts purchasing behaviour, acting as a catalyst for consumer decision making. The visual nature of platforms like Instagram facilitates product discovery, allowing users to explore a vast array of fashion items curated by brands, influencers, and fellow users. Shoppable features further streamline the purchasing process, enabling consumers to buy directly from posts or advertisements. Moreover,

user-generated content and peer recommendations enhance trust and authenticity, influencing purchasing decisions. Consequently, consumers are more likely to make impulse buys and explore new brands or products showcased on social media platforms, ultimately driving sales and shaping market dynamics. In developed economies like the USA and the UK, social media has played a pivotal role in driving changes in fashion trends, influencing purchasing behaviour, and fostering brand loyalty. The fashion trends comprise diverse sectors beyond retail and design, involving artisans like fabric makers, embroiderers, and seamstresses. Fashion shows and marketing enlist models, stylists, and photographers, contributing to the broader ecosystem. Rapid change, especially in consumer-centric businesses, drives industry evolution. Fashion retailing has expanded from traditional outlets to online platforms, propelled by the internet's influence on supply chains and advertising. The internet blurs the boundary between companies and consumers, with social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok playing crucial roles in sales and trend forecasting. These platforms facilitate the dissemination of fashion-related content, highlighting the need for detailed research to understand various aspects of the fashion industry. Such research aids in grasping the complex interplay of elements within the broader fashion landscape, reflecting the dynamic nature of consumer behaviour and technological advancements. In the digital era, social media platforms have emerged as the new couturiers, tailoring the public's perception of fashion and style. According to a Meta-commissioned online study by consumer insights platform GWI across internet users in India, nearly 97% of consumers discover fashion brands on Meta platforms (such as Instagram) and out of these, 52% credit Instagram Reels as a significant source of fashion inspiration. As per Statista, the global social media penetration rate was 53.6% in 2021, with 4.48 billion active users. Among these users, 43% said they followed brands or influencers for fashion inspiration. Moreover, 37% said they purchased products they saw on social media. About 130 million Instagram users tap on shopping posts every month. Instagram, like Pinterest, appeals to fashion lovers through captivating visuals. Millennials rely on online videos for fashion research, with 85% making purchases after watching videos. Beauty vloggers and fashion icons play a crucial role in influencing young buyers.

### **Statement of Problem:**

Despite the widespread presence of social media in modern society, its specific impact on consumer behavior in the fashion retail sector remains underexplored. While social media influences purchasing decisions, brand engagement, and trend adoption, there is limited research on how different platforms, influencers, and marketing strategies shape fashion consumer choices in India. This study aims to analyze the extent of social media's influence on fashion trends and consumer behavior.

### **Objectives:**

1. To examine the role of social media platforms in shaping consumer behavior and fashion trends.
2. To analyze the influence of social media influencers and brand marketing on purchasing decisions.
3. To assess the impact of user-generated content, online reviews, and digital marketing strategies on consumer preferences.

### **Scope of the Study:**

This study focuses on analyzing the influence of social media on fashion consumer behavior in India. It examines how platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube contribute to fashion trends, brand visibility, and consumer decision-making. The research includes perspectives from fashion consumers, designers, and retailers through a mixed-methods approach, incorporating surveys and interviews. Additionally, the study explores the impact of influencer marketing, personalized recommendations, and social commerce in driving fashion purchases. The findings will provide insights into how digital marketing strategies shape consumer behavior and help fashion brands optimize their online engagement for increased market penetration.

## **2.Literature Review**

Social media has become an integral part of the fashion industry, significantly shaping consumer behavior. With the increasing reliance on digital platforms, social media marketing has transformed the way consumers interact with fashion brands, discover trends, and make purchasing decisions. This literature review explores the influence of social media marketing on fashion consumer behavior, the driving forces behind consumer-brand interactions, and the impact of digital marketing strategies on purchase decisions.

### **Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Behavior in Fashion Retail**

#### **Brand Awareness and Engagement**

Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok have revolutionized how fashion brands interact with consumers. According to Kim and Ko (2012), social media marketing enhances brand awareness by fostering a sense of community and increasing consumer engagement. The interactive nature of social media enables brands to build loyal customer bases and strengthen their digital presence.

#### **Consumer Trust and Authenticity**

Studies by DeVirman et al. (2017) highlight the role of influencer endorsements in enhancing consumer trust in fashion brands. Authentic and relatable content shared by influencers leads to higher engagement rates, making consumers more likely to trust brand messages. This trust plays a crucial role in influencing purchase decisions.

#### **Visual Appeal and Content Strategy**

The visual nature of social media platforms makes them ideal for fashion marketing. Research by Park et al. (2020) demonstrates that high-quality images and videos have a strong impact on consumer emotions and purchasing intentions. Creative content strategies, including fashion lookbooks, styling videos, and interactive reels, are essential for capturing consumer interest and driving sales.

## Driving Forces Behind Consumers' Online Interactions with Fashion Brands

### a. Social Proof and Peer Influence

Consumer behavior in fashion retail is significantly influenced by social proof. As Erkan and Evans (2016) explain, positive reviews, likes, and shares on social media enhance brand perception and encourage engagement. Consumers are more likely to purchase fashion items that receive validation from peers and influencers.

### b. Interactive and Personalized Experiences

Social media platforms provide personalized shopping experiences through targeted advertisements, interactive polls, and AI-driven recommendations. A study by Pappas et al. (2017) found that personalized marketing efforts increase consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty, making customers more likely to engage with a brand repeatedly.

### c. User-Generated Content (UGC)

User-generated content, such as customer reviews, testimonials, and shared fashion looks, plays a crucial role in shaping consumer choices. Xu et al. (2020) found that UGC enhances brand authenticity, encouraging consumers to trust and engage with fashion brands. UGC-driven campaigns create a cycle of brand promotion and consumer participation, strengthening community-building efforts.

## Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumers' Purchase Decisions in Fashion Retail

### a. Impulse Buying and Instant Gratification

Social media platforms create an environment conducive to impulse buying. Research by Chen and Lin (2019) suggests that limited-time offers, flash sales, and influencer promotions trigger instant purchase decisions among consumers. The ease of one-click shopping on social media further drives spontaneous buying behavior.

### b. Social Commerce and Shoppable Posts

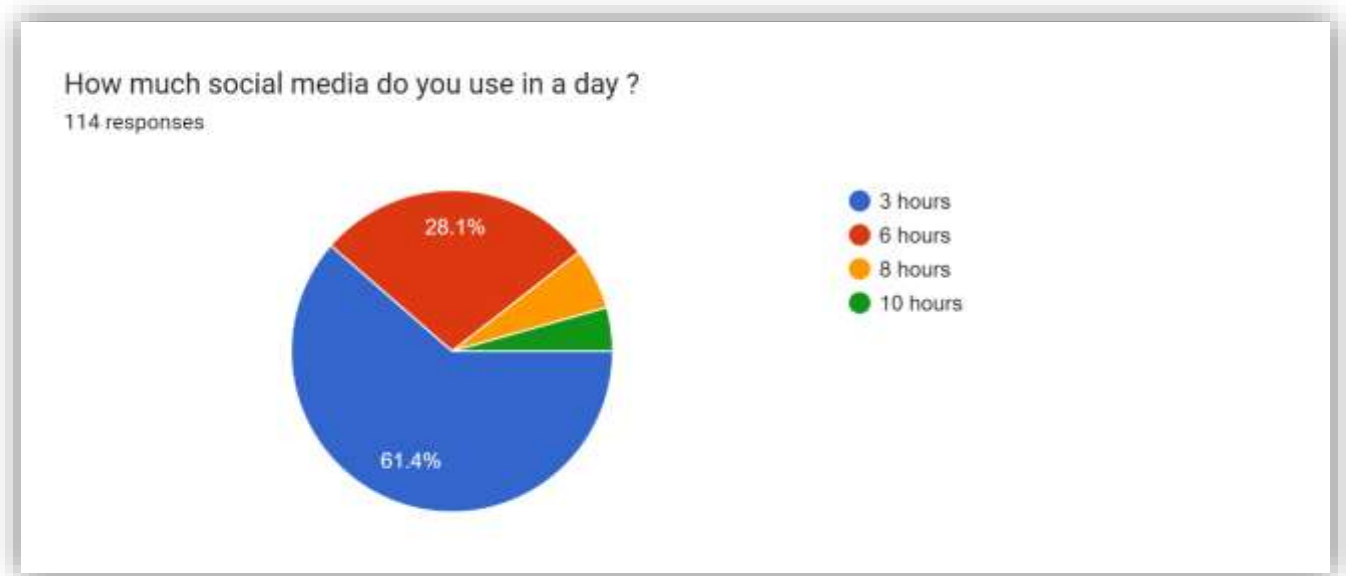
The integration of e-commerce features into social media platforms has streamlined the shopping experience. Findings by Zhang et al. (2021) indicate that shoppable posts and in-app purchases reduce barriers to buying, leading to higher conversion rates. Consumers can now seamlessly transition from product discovery to purchase without leaving the platform.

### c. Emotional and Psychological Influences

Emotional connections with brands, fostered through storytelling, influencer collaborations, and engaging content, significantly impact consumer loyalty and purchasing behavior. Hudson et al. (2016) found that consumers who feel emotionally connected to a fashion brand are more likely to make repeat purchases and advocate for the brand on social media.

### 3.Data Analysis

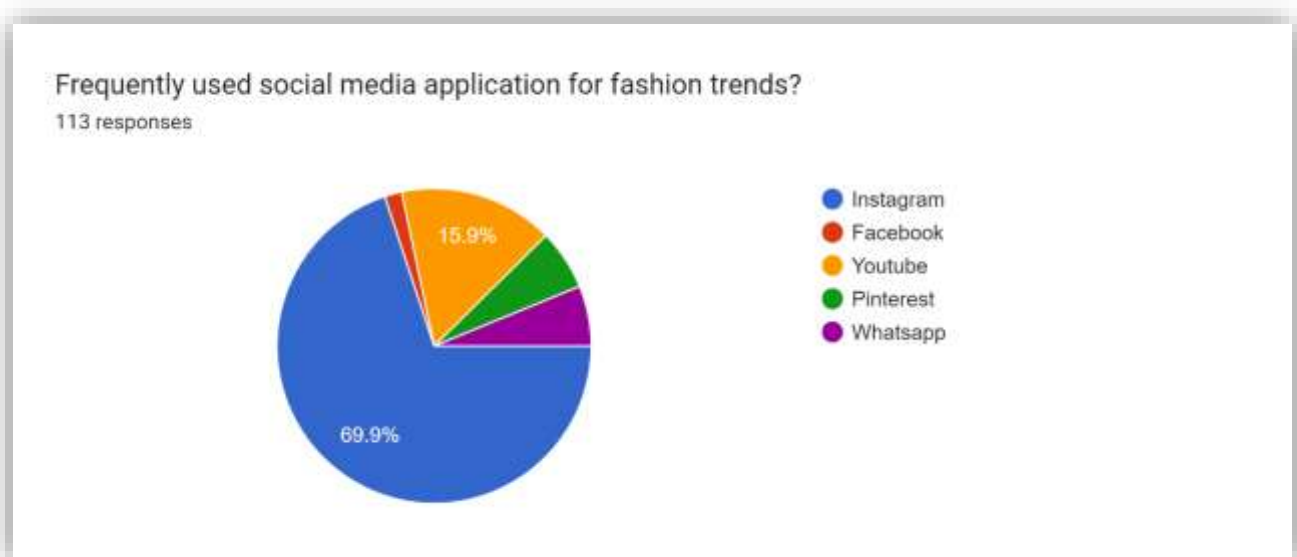
#### Social Media Usage



To understand the extent of social media influence, the study analyzed how much time respondents spend on these platforms daily. The findings indicate that:

- 61.4% of respondents use social media for 6 hours or more daily, highlighting significant engagement.
- 28.1% use social media for 3 hours per day.
- 10.5% reported usage of 8-10 hours daily.

These insights demonstrate that social media serves as a crucial touchpoint for fashion marketing. Given the substantial time spent online, brands can leverage these platforms for product promotions, customer engagement, and trendsetting.



### Dominance of Visual Content:

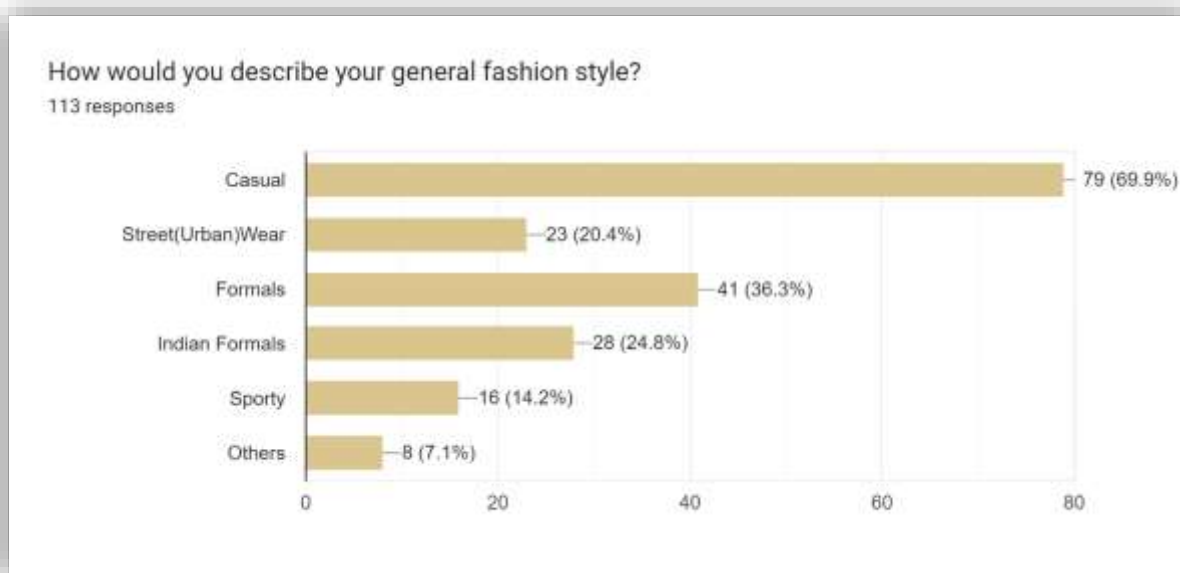
- A significant 69.9% of respondents identified Instagram as their primary platform for discovering fashion trends. This highlights the importance of visual content in influencing consumer behaviour.
- YouTube followed closely at 15.9%, indicating the growing role of video content like tutorials, reviews, and fashion hauls in inspiring consumers.

### Beyond Visuals: Social Sharing and Messaging Apps

- Platforms like Pinterest (6.2%) and WhatsApp (6.2%) suggest that social sharing and group interactions also influence fashion choices. Users might discover trends through curated collections on Pinterest or by sharing content and recommendations within WhatsApp groups.

### Limited Role of Traditional Platforms:

Facebook, with only 1.8%, shows a decline in its influence on fashion trends. This might be due to a shift in demographics or how Facebook prioritizes content.



**Question:** How would you describe your general fashion style?

#### Data:

- Casual: 69.9%
- Streetwear/Urban: 20.4%
- Formals (including Indian Formals): 40.7% (36.3% + 4.4%)
- Sporty: 14.2%
- Others: 7.1%

#### Analysis:

- **Casual is the Dominant Style:**

A significant majority (69.9%) of respondents described their general fashion style as casual. This suggests a preference for comfortable and relaxed clothing that can be worn in various settings.

- **Diversity Beyond Casual:**

While casual dominates, there's still a notable presence of other styles. Streetwear/Urban (20.4%) and Formals (40.7%) cater to those who prefer a more edgy or polished look. Sporty (14.2%) reflects a preference for athletic or activewear-inspired styles. The "Others" category (7.1%) captures a variety of less common styles.

#### Possible Interpretations:

- The dominance of casual wear might reflect a preference for comfort and versatility in today's fast-paced world.
- The presence of diverse styles suggests that people may have multiple styles depending on the occasion or mood.



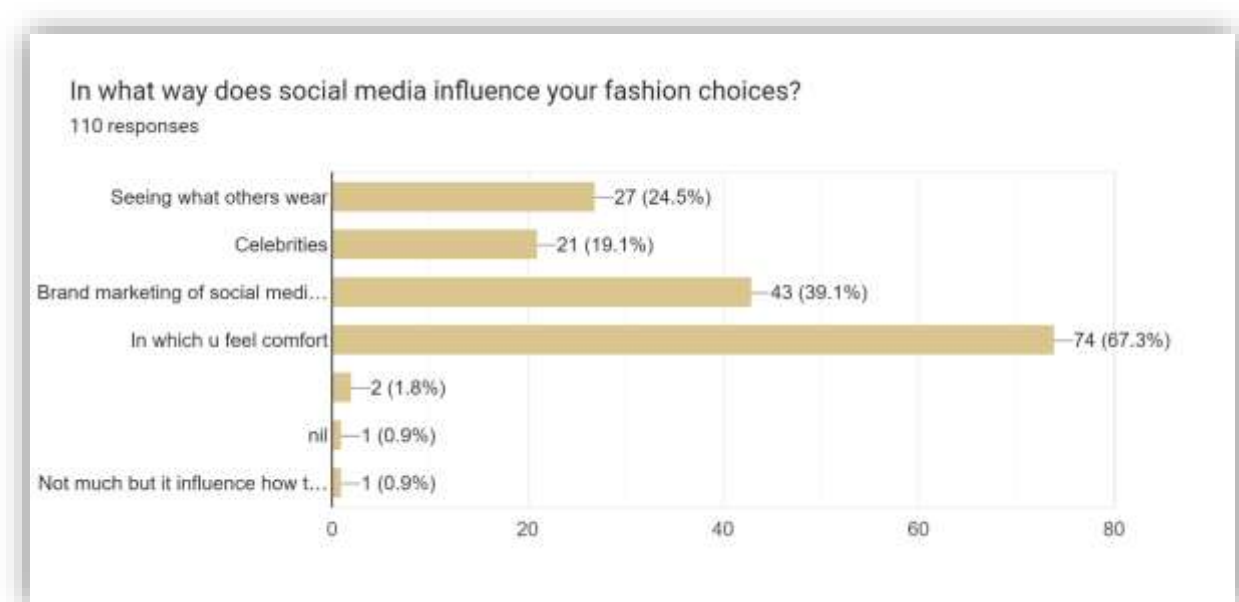
**Question:** Do social media trends influence your choice of clothing?

**Analysis:**

- Social Media's Influence on Clothing Choices:**

From the data collected from individuals we can determine the extent to which social media influences people's clothing choices. Here are the possible scenarios:

- **High Influence:** If a high percentage (more than 50%) responded "Yes," it suggests social media significantly impacts clothing choices. People might actively follow trends or get inspired by what they see on social media platforms.
- **Moderate Influence:** If there's a mix of responses ("Yes," "No," and "Maybe") with a slight majority for "Yes" (around 30-50%), it indicates a moderate influence. Social media might be a source of inspiration, but other factors like personal style and comfort also play a role.
- **Limited Influence:** A high percentage for "No" (more than 50%) or a balanced spread with "Maybe" as a dominant answer suggests social media has a limited influence. People might be aware of trends but prioritize comfort, individual style, or other factors when choosing clothes.
- **Additional Insights:** The "Maybe" category can be particularly interesting. It suggests people are partially influenced by social media, but other considerations are also important.



**Question:** In what way does social media influence your fashion choices?

**Data:**

The pie chart shows the distribution of responses from a survey of 113 people regarding how social media influences their fashion choices. Here's a breakdown of the options and corresponding percentages:

- Seeing what others wear: 24.5%
- Celebrities: 19.1%
- Brand marketing of social media: 39.1%
- In which you feel comfort: **67.3% (This seems like an outlier. Double-check the data for this option)**
- Not much but it influences how the user feels about themselves: 1.8%
- Nil: 0.9%
- Not sure: 7.1%

### Analysis:

- **Social Media as a Source of Inspiration:**

The most prominent influence (39.1%) comes from "Brand marketing of social media," which suggests that users are exposed to fashion trends and styles through advertisements and marketing campaigns on social media platforms. This highlights the effectiveness of social media marketing in the fashion industry.

- **Following Trends and Celebrity Styles:**

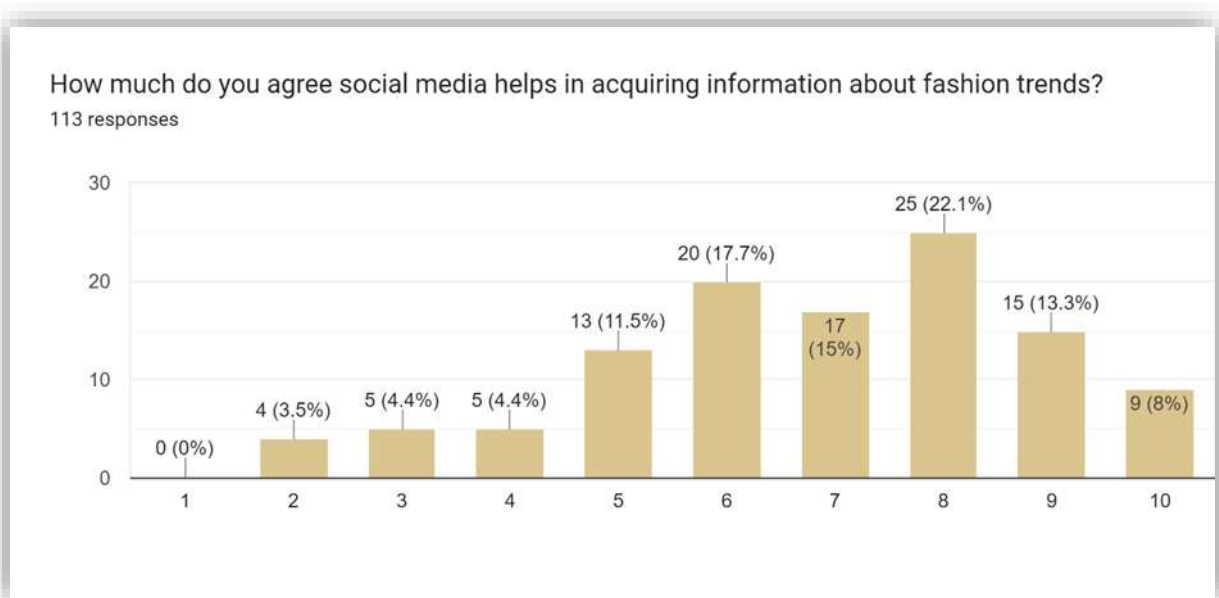
A significant portion of respondents (24.5%) are influenced by "Seeing what others wear," indicating that social media allows users to observe and potentially imitate fashion trends sported by other users. Additionally, 19.1% are influenced by "Celebrities," showcasing the enduring power of celebrities as trendsetters in the fashion world.

- **Comfort Reigns Supreme (Double-Check Data):**

An outlier seems to be the option "In which you feel comfort" at 67.3%. This is much higher than the other options and might be a data entry error. It's unlikely that comfort wasn't considered at all by most respondents when choosing clothes influenced by social media. If the data is accurate, it would suggest an unexpected result where a significant majority prioritizes comfort even when influenced by social media trends.

- **Other Influences:**

A small percentage (1.8%) reported that social media influences how they feel about themselves, possibly due to unrealistic beauty standards or social comparisons. The "Nil" (0.9%) and "Not sure" (7.1%) categories capture those who are not influenced by social media or are unsure about its impact.



**Question:** How much do you agree social media helps in acquiring information about fashion trends?

**Data:**

Above graph of data collected from individuals shows the distribution of responses from a survey of 113 people about how much they agree social media helps in acquiring information about fashion trends. Here's a breakdown of the options and corresponding percentages:

- Strongly Agree: 22.1%
- Agree: 17.7%
- Neutral: 13.3%
- Disagree: 15%
- Strongly Disagree: 4.4%
- Don't Know: 8%

**Analysis:**

- **Social Media as a Valuable Tool for Fashion Trends:**

A significant portion of respondents (39.8%, combining "Strongly Agree" and "Agree") believe social media is a helpful tool for acquiring information about fashion trends. This highlights the growing importance of social media platforms as a source of fashion inspiration.

- **Mixed Opinions Exist:**

A sizeable group (26.3%, combining "Neutral," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree") holds neutral or negative views on the role of social media in fashion trends. This suggests that not everyone finds social media to be a reliable or important source of fashion information.

- **Uncertainty and Potential for Bias:**

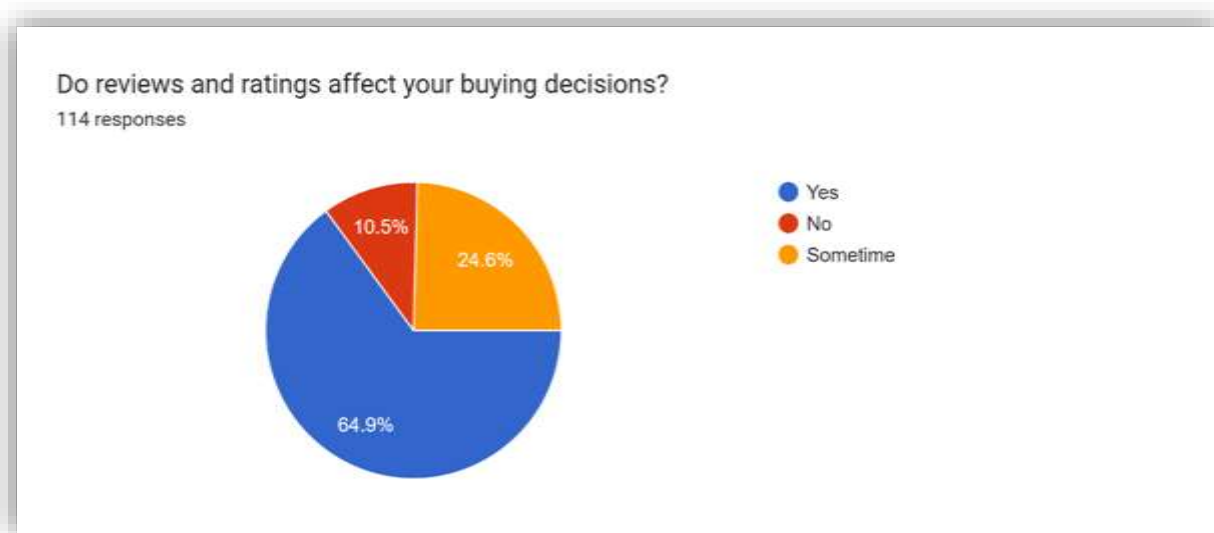
The "Don't Know" category (8%) indicates some users might be unsure about the value of social media for fashion trends. Social media algorithms and the curated nature of feeds can potentially create biased views of fashion trends, which might explain some of the disagreement.

**Possible Explanations for Agreement:**

- **Exposure to Diverse Styles:** social media allows users to follow a wide range of fashion influencers, brands, and individuals, providing exposure to various fashion trends.
- **Visually Appealing Content:** Platforms like Instagram and YouTube heavily rely on visual content, making it easy to see and understand fashion trends.
- **Real-time Updates:** Social media allows for constant updates on the latest trends and emerging styles.

**Possible Explanations for Disagreement:**

- **Overemphasis on Trends:** social media might focus heavily on fleeting trends, which some users might find irrelevant or unsustainable for their personal style.
- **Pressure and Unrealistic Standards:** The curated feeds and influencer lifestyles on social media can create unrealistic beauty standards or pressure to keep up with constantly changing trends.
- **Focus on Popularity over Quality:** social media trends might not always translate to high-quality garments or styles that suit everyone's taste or body type.



**Question:** Do reviews and ratings affect your buying decisions?

**Data:**

The pie chart displays the survey responses from 114 people regarding the influence of reviews and ratings on their purchasing decisions:

- Yes: 10.5%
- No: 24.6%
- Sometimes: 64.9%

**Analysis:**

- **Reviews and Ratings as a Partial Influence:**

Many respondents (64.9%) indicated that reviews and ratings influence their buying decisions "Sometimes." This suggests that while online reviews and ratings are not the sole deciding factor, they play a significant role in the consideration process for many consumers.

- **A Minority Relies Solely on Reviews:**

A smaller percentage of respondents (10.5%) rely heavily on reviews and ratings, answering "Yes" to their influence on buying decisions. This group might prioritize the opinions and experiences of other consumers before making a purchase.

- **A Segment Not Swayed by Reviews:**

Nearly a quarter of respondents (24.6%) answered "No," indicating that reviews and ratings do not influence their buying decisions. This group might rely on other factors like brand reputation, personal experience with similar products, or price when making purchasing choices.

**Possible Reasons for "Sometimes" Answer:**

The dominant answer of "Sometimes" suggests a nuanced decision-making process:

- **Severity of Purchase:** Reviews might hold more weight for expensive or unfamiliar products where the risk of a bad purchase is higher.
- **Credibility of Reviews:** Users might be more likely to consider reviews that seem genuine and trustworthy.
- **Confirmation and Trust Building:** Positive reviews can build trust and confirm a purchase decision, while negative reviews might deter users from a product.

**Question:** Do you follow any influencer or any brand. If yes who?

**Data:**

The pie chart displays the survey responses from 113 people regarding who they follow for fashion trends:

- No: 57.5%
- Yes: 21.2%
- Maybe: 18.6%
- Nike, Adidas etc (Brands): 0.9%
- Urmila Nimbalkar (Individual Influencer): 0.9%
- The Lifestyle Cog (Individual Influencer): 0.9%

**Analysis:**

- **Independent Fashion Sense:**

A significant majority of respondents (57.5%) answered "No," indicating they don't follow any specific influencers or brands for fashion trends. This suggests that many people rely on their own sense of style or discover trends through other means besides following influencers or brands on social media.

- **Influencers Do Have an Audience:**

While not the dominant group, a relevant portion of respondents (21.2%) answered "Yes," indicating they do follow influencers or brands for fashion trends. This highlights the influence that social media personalities and fashion brands can have on consumers' fashion choices.

- **Unsure or Open to Influence:**

The "Maybe" answer (18.6%) suggests some users might be undecided or open to influence from various sources, not necessarily just established influencers or brands.

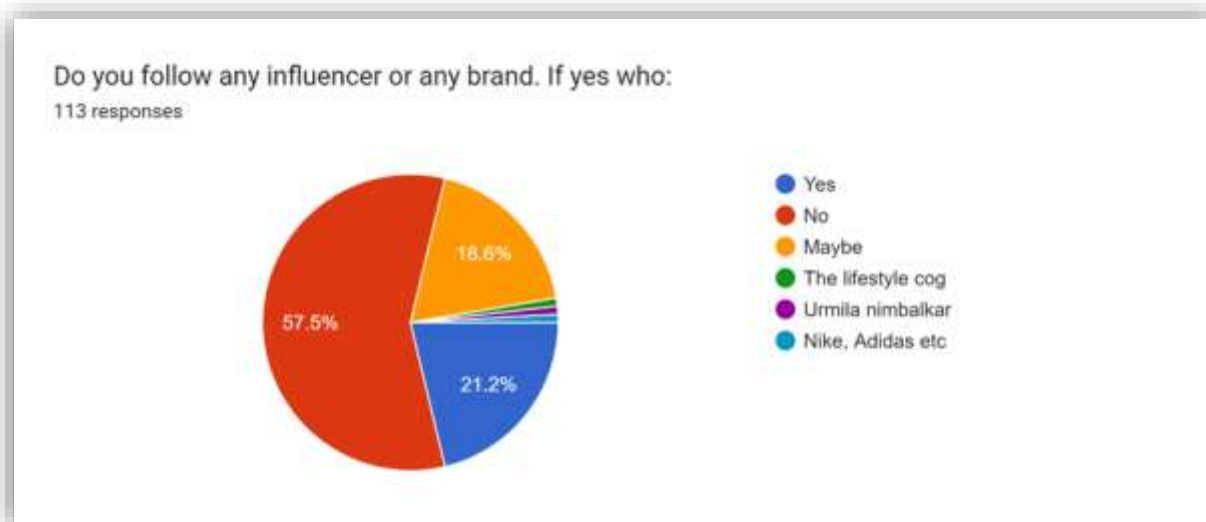
- **Limited Reach for Individual Influencers:**

The data shows that specific influencers mentioned in the options (Urmila Nimbalkar, The Lifestyle Cog) have a relatively small following (each at 0.9%). This suggests that influencer marketing in the fashion sector might rely on a large number of micro-influencers rather than a few big names to reach a wider audience. Brands themselves also seem to have a minimal influence at 0.9%.

**Possible Reasons for Not Following Influencers/Brands:**

- **Distrust or Inauthenticity:** Users might be skeptical of influencer marketing or perceive it as inauthentic.
- **Focus on Individual Style:** People might prioritize developing their unique style over following trends dictated by influencers or brands.

- **Discovery Through Other Channels:** Trends might be discovered through other means like social media browsing, magazines, or personal networks.



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## 4. Findings and Discussion

Social media is an influencing force shaping the fashion and has kickstarted a drastic evolution in fashion sector. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, fashion influencers can reach thousands, even millions of people who want to stay relevant, post-able and want to be up to date with the recent trends going on in India. Impact of social media has revolutionised our lives and its rapid rise has changed the game of Fashion Industry.

(1) How social media marketing influences consumer behaviour in the fashion retail sector.

Social media marketing brings awareness of brands and trends going in the fashion industry among the audience. User-generated content (UGC) on social media platforms has become an important factor for shaping consumers buying decision. Consumers put more stock in the recommendations and experiences of their peers than they do in commercials, per Nadzri et al. (2023) . User-generated content (UGC) provides validation from peers (Nadzri et al., 2023) .

Also, the relatable content shared by the influencers makes the consumer to decide on their choices of fashion brands and trendy apparels. Influencers use human psychology to create a visually creative and attractive content to capture consumer's interest.

(2) The driving forces behind consumers' online interactions with fashion brands.

The most influence one has on his buying decision is social circle, peer influence, celebrity styles and to be with the trend. Social media users believe that people such as celebrities, influencers know more about social trends, style, design, and other experiences. Therefore, consumers are now following more fashion experts and celebrities so that they can be in knowledge of what is on trend, and what fashion experts and celebrities are wearing in their daily lives.

While surfing social media consumers often come across recommendation which are custom made based on their interest which is discovered from the data collected by the.....When the consumer receives recommendations of their interest, they feel valued, and interest increase in that brand. Customer satisfaction and brand loyalty can be assessed by the frequency of transactions. Several studies have found that interacting with a brand on social media increases the likelihood that a customer will buy from that brand again (Dandis & Al Haj Eid, 2022) . Customized social media advertising efforts appeal the interests and behaviours of individual users, and it have been

demonstrated as increase in sales. Research from the year 2020 by Wibowo indicate that customers value tailored adverts more since they are more relevant to their interests (Wibowo et al., 2020) .

(3) Assess the influence of social media marketing on consumers.

Impulse buying is a powerful force in the world of consumer psychology. By understanding the reasons behind it and employing strategic tactics to tap into customers' impulses, retailers can increase sales. By offering various kinds of deals, using the kind of language which calls for immediate purchase or giving a sense of novelty like feeling of something unique hard to resist.

According to an article by Social Media Today, 41% of people who purchase a product say they weren't planning on buying an item before they stumbled upon it online. Social media helps instill trust in a purchaser through fellow reviews and experiences. Consumers also tend to compare, contrast, and keep up with the purchases of their friends and family. According to HubSpot, 71% of consumers are more likely to make a purchase based on a social media reference. As consumers become more socially inclined and begin to make their opinions less on advertisements and more on consumer-to-consumer interaction, the role of social media is sure to steadily increase its influence on customer purchasing decisions.

## 5. Conclusion

The study highlights the profound impact of social media on fashion consumer behavior, demonstrating how platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest shape trends and influence purchasing decisions. The findings suggest that social media marketing, influencer endorsements, and user-generated content play a crucial role in brand engagement and consumer trust. The dominance of visual content and interactive shopping experiences has transformed the way consumers discover and adopt fashion trends. Additionally, social media fosters impulse buying behavior through targeted advertisements and shoppable posts. However, while many consumers actively follow fashion influencers and brands, a significant portion prioritizes personal style and comfort over digital trends. The research also emphasizes the growing influence of online reviews and ratings in shaping purchasing choices. As social media continues to evolve, fashion brands must adapt by leveraging personalized marketing strategies and fostering authentic consumer engagement.

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