

## **A STUDY ON INFLUENCING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN PURCHASING PRODUCTS BASED ON NEEDS VERSUS TREND CREATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Consumer behaviour is a critical area of study in marketing, providing insights into why individuals make specific purchasing decisions. This research explores the dual forces that influence consumer purchases: fundamental needs versus trend-driven motivations. The study aims to examine how consumers differentiate between buying out of necessity and buying influenced by emerging trends, including social media, influencer marketing, and brand positioning. Through a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research investigates demographic variations, psychological factors, and the role of digital platforms in shaping consumer choices. The findings highlight a shift in purchasing patterns, especially among younger consumers, where trend creation often overshadows actual need. This study provides valuable implications for marketers, helping them craft strategies that balance utility with aspirational appeal to better target and engage modern consumers.*

**Keywords:** Consumer Behaviour, Purchasing Decisions, Trend Creation, Influencer Marketing, Impulse Buying, Brand Influence, Consumer Insight, Buyer Psychology, Marketing Strategies, Demographics and Buying Patterns.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The increasing dominance of digital platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok has played a major role in shaping consumer behavior. Unlike traditional advertisements, modern marketing strategies focus on personalized ads, influencer reviews, and engaging content that subtly encourage consumers to make purchases. Studies indicate that a significant PERCENTAGE of consumers admit to making unplanned purchases due to social media influence. While these marketing strategies introduce customers to new and innovative products, they also lead to impulse buying, financial strain, and even buyer's remorse when the product fails to meet expectations. Additionally, excessive purchasing contributes to overconsumption and environmental waste, raising concerns about responsible consumerism.

Understanding the factors that drive consumer purchases is crucial for both businesses and consumers. Companies can refine their marketing strategies to offer value driven products, while consumers can make more informed financial decisions by distinguishing between genuine needs

and socially influenced desires. This study aims to explore how marketing trends and influencers impact consumer choices, whether individuals buy products out of necessity or due to external influences, and the long-term effects of trend driven shopping on financial stability and purchasing behavior. On the other hand, need based purchasing follows a more rational and logical approach. In this case, consumers evaluate their requirements, compare products based on features, pricing, and quality, and make informed decisions. Essential commodities like food, healthcare products, household items, and work-related gadgets often fall under this category. However, even in need-based purchasing, marketing strategies play a role in shaping preferences, influencing brand choices, and adding a layer of emotional appeal to products. Companies invest heavily in brand storytelling, packaging, and value-driven marketing to ensure that their products stand out even when purchased out of necessity.

This dichotomy often plays out in industries such as fashion, technology, beauty, and lifestyle, where trends evolve rapidly, and consumers feel pressured to keep up. The introduction of limited-edition products, seasonal trends, and influencer-endorsed "must haves" fuels a cycle of continuous consumption, often making products obsolete faster than their actual lifespan.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Kotler & Keller (2016)** – Kotler and Keller discussed how rational purchasing behavior is driven by necessity, affordability, and product quality. Their study highlighted that consumers engaging in need-based purchases rely on logical decision making rather than emotional appeal. They suggested that businesses selling essential goods should focus on product performance and value-for-money rather than promotional tactics. Their research also found that word-of-mouth and customer reviews play a crucial role in influencing rational buyers.

**Maslow (1943)** – Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs provides a framework for understanding consumer purchasing priorities. He categorized human needs into five levels: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. His theory suggests that consumers first fulfill their basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, and security) before considering luxury or non-essential purchases. This model remains a foundational concept in consumer behavior studies, helping marketers segment their target audience effectively.

**Schiffman & Kanuk (2018)** – Their research focused on the cognitive decision making process involved in necessity-driven purchases. They found that consumers buying essential goods rely more on information, brand reputation, and past experiences rather than emotional influence. Their study emphasized that affordability and reliability are the two most critical factors affecting need-based purchasing behavior. Unlike trend-driven buyers, need-based consumers conduct in depth comparisons before making a final decision.

**Blackwell, Miniard & Engel (2006)** – These authors proposed a five-step decision making process for consumer purchases: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation. Their model explains how consumers making need-based purchases follow a systematic and structured approach. Their research found that the higher the cost of an essential product, the more effort a consumer puts into evaluating its features before purchase.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the key factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions whether based on need or external influences.
2. To examine the role of influencer marketing and social media trends in shaping consumer behaviour.
3. To assess the psychological and emotional triggers that lead to impulse buying decisions.
4. To evaluate how product necessity and social trends affect long-term consumer satisfaction.
5. To provide insights on how businesses can balance ethical marketing strategies while catering to consumer needs.

**SCOPE OF STUDY**

1. Understanding Consumer Behaviour – This study focuses on analyzing how consumers make purchasing decisions based on actual needs versus influence from social media, advertisements, and celebrity endorsements.
2. Impact of Digital Marketing & Influencers – The study examines how influencer marketing, social media trends, and digital advertisements shape consumer preferences and influence their buying choices.
3. Psychological & Financial Effects – The research explores the psychological triggers behind impulse buying and the financial consequences of purchasing trend-driven products instead of need-based ones.
4. Market & Business Strategies – The study provides insights into how businesses can develop ethical marketing strategies that balance promotional tactics while catering to genuine consumer needs.

**LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

1. Limited Sample Size – The study is based on responses from a specific group of consumers, which may not fully represent the entire population's purchasing behaviour.
2. Subjective Responses – Consumer opinions on purchases influenced by trends or needs may vary, leading to biased or inconsistent responses in survey data.
3. Rapidly Changing Market Trends – Influencer-driven trends evolve quickly, making it difficult to capture long-term purchasing patterns accurately.
4. Dependence on Self-Reported Data – The study relies on survey responses, which may not always reflect actual purchasing decisions due to memory bias or social desirability.
5. Limited Geographical Scope – The research is conducted within a specific area or demographic, limiting the generalizability of findings to a broader consumer base.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study aims to analyze consumer purchasing behavior by examining whether individuals buy products out of necessity or are influenced by trend-driven factors such as social media, influencer marketing, advertisements, and peer pressure. A descriptive research design has been adopted, as it is best suited for observing and analyzing existing behavioral patterns without altering variables. The research methodology involves the collection of both primary and secondary data. Primary data will be gathered through structured surveys and questionnaires distributed to a diverse group of respondents from various age groups, income levels, and backgrounds. These instruments will include both closed-ended questions (such as multiple-choice and Likert scale items) to quantify behavior, and open-ended questions to gain deeper qualitative insights into consumer motivations. Secondary data will be obtained from credible sources such as academic journals, industry reports, and market research publications related to consumer psychology, digital marketing, and purchasing trends. The data collected will be analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency distribution, percentages, and cross-tabulations, with the potential use of software like Microsoft Excel or SPSS for more precise analysis. Qualitative responses will be coded and thematically analyzed to interpret common attitudes and behaviors. The overall objective of this methodology is to understand the degree to which consumer purchases are influenced by actual needs versus trends, and to identify the role of external factors such as social media platforms, influencer content, advertisements, and peer influence in shaping these decisions. While the study provides meaningful insights into consumer behavior, it may be subject to limitations such as sample size constraints and response biases; however, combining both primary and secondary data enhances the reliability and depth of the findings.

**Data Collection and Sampling:****Source Of Data**

The research is based on primary data collected through surveys and questionnaires, and secondary data on consumer behaviour and marketing trends.

**Methods Of Sampling**

The study will use random sampling techniques to ensure diverse representation of consumers based on age, income, and shopping habits.

**Size Of Sampling**

A sample size of 100 RESPONSE will be selected to ensure a broad and reliable dataset for analysis.

**FINDINGS**

1. About 33% of participants admitted that they tend to buy products when urgency is created.
2. Positive reviews and testimonials were the top choice for 45% of respondents.
3. A considerable 36% of respondents indicated that they never engage in certain purchasing behaviors.
4. Social media ads and influencers play a key role in product discovery for 37% of respondents.
5. Nearly 42% of respondents reported spending less than ₹500 per month on trendbased purchases.
6. Product quality and durability were the primary concerns for 45% of respondents while shopping.
7. A majority of 39% regularly compare prices before finalizing a purchase.
8. Around 35% of respondents occasionally use credit to buy trending products.
9. Half of the respondents (50%) place a high priority on quality and durability when purchasing them.
10. Social media was identified as a contributing factor to unnecessary spending by 48% of respondents.
11. A significant 39% of participants make it a habit to research products before making a purchase.
12. Concerns over product quality cause 36% of respondents to hesitate before buying trending item.
13. Advertisements are believed to influence consumer behavior, according to 43% of respondents.

**SUGGESTIONS**

1. Conduct a survey among different age groups to determine whether their recent purchases were based on personal need or influenced by social media trends.
2. Analyze social media advertisements and influencer endorsements to compare engagement levels and their direct impact on consumer purchasing decisions.
3. Track personal spending habits or those of a peer group over a month to categorize purchases as necessity-driven or trend-driven and evaluate spending patterns.
4. Select a trending product and compare its sales data before and after being promoted by influencers, identifying changes in demand and consumer behavior.
5. Create an experiment where the same product is marketed in two ways—one highlighting its practical benefits and the other using influencer-style promotion— and compare consumer responses.
6. Develop an awareness campaign focusing on how influencer marketing affects purchasing decisions, providing strategies to help consumers make more informed choices

**CONCLUSION**

In today's consumer-driven world, purchasing behavior is heavily influenced by both necessity and social trends driven by influencers. Through the analysis of consumer decisions, it is evident that while some individuals prioritize their personal needs, a significant portion of the population is swayed by influencer marketing and trends. The balance between these two factors is constantly shifting due to the rapid growth of digital media, changing consumer perceptions, and the psychological impact of marketing strategies. One of the key findings in this study is that necessity-based purchases are often driven by factors such as personal requirement, functionality,

durability, and affordability. Consumers making such decisions rely on product reviews, recommendations from trusted sources, and their own experience. These purchases are typically planned and rational, reflecting careful consideration of long-term value rather than impulsive buying.

On the other hand, influencer-driven purchases are largely motivated by aspirational and emotional factors. Social media platforms, especially Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, play a significant role in shaping consumer choices. Influencers create a perception of exclusivity and desirability around a product, leading to impulse buying behavior. This study found that many consumers, particularly younger demographics, are more likely to purchase a product after seeing an influencer's endorsement, even if they had no prior need for it.

Another critical observation is the role of social proof and herd mentality in consumer decision-making. When a product gains popularity through influencer marketing, it often creates a sense of urgency or fear of missing out (FOMO), pushing individuals to make purchases they may not have otherwise considered. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the fashion, beauty, and technology industries, where trends change rapidly, and staying updated becomes a priority for trend-conscious consumers.

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