

## **IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN RURAL KARNATAKA**

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**Abstract**—*The aim of this study is to examine the development, acceptability, and impact of Social Media and Influencers in Karnataka, with a particular focus on Rural Buying Behaviour. Using a combination of secondary sources and primary survey data, the paper analyzes the prevalence of various Social Media platforms, customer satisfaction levels, and challenges faced by businesses in implementing Social Media strategies. The findings highlight the opportunities and obstacles for Social Media and offer recommendations for improving Social Media outreach and effectiveness.*

**Keywords:** *Social Media Marketing, Digital information, Rural Buying Behaviour, Influencers, Purchase Decision.*

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

In the olden days before the start of internet the people across the world, used to buy products by visiting the shops getting knowledge about the products through the TV, Newspaper advertisement. Most of the companies use advertise their product using celebrity figure. It was costly to the manufacturer/producers of goods and services. It took lot of time, energy and cost to bring to the notice of the final users.

Today, most of the developed and developing nations have digitally developed in all areas and are using social media platform to run their business such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram etc. Social media is helping in many ways to the people who are engaged in the field of Science & Technology to Arts and Commerce etc. Therefore, today, it is essential to know about the Social-media. Through Social-media many people are engaged in influencing the people in many ways such as health, education, yoga and so on. In the same way social-media influencers are influencing the people to buy the product and services across the world.

When it comes to buyers' point of view, a buyer can get influenced by the social media influencers and will convince the buyers to buy or get service watching social media through see the product through social media, can know about the product specification, quality, quantity and prices. He can buy his required product by the influence of the social media influencers. It will save buyers time and energy who used to go to the market to buy his required product.

In recent years, social media has significantly helped consumer behaviour, not only in developed places but even in rural regions across the world. While celebrity advertisements once dominant form to influence the people in changing their buying habits, micro-influencers—social media users with modest but highly engaged followings—have gained noticeable increase in market. In Karnataka, with rural internet users rapidly grown through the platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook and so on, influencers are emerging as the key opinion leaders to the general public. Karnataka is also improved since a decade or so and is one of the major market influencers in the world. Now, Karnataka is considered as one of the global hubs for the product in marketing as it is providing lot of business opportunities to digital marketing through the use of social media micro influencers. Now there are number of influencers and influencing the consumers and in micro level. They are spread all across the world. But in Karnataka context social media micro influencers are playing key role in spreading the good or bad reviews about the product to buy or sell the products or services. Likewise, micro influencers are saving customers time as well as producers and seller's time. It has wide range opportunities to the young people to find a job in this field.

## **Research CHALLENGES**

The urban markets/buyer's behaviour have been studied thoroughly in the context of influencer who helped in buying decisions and marketing methods to be adopted by the producers, but the rural consumer behaviour segment remains to be observed the needs to make research. This study will address the following questions:

- Does the social-media micro-influencers significantly impact purchasing decisions in rural Karnataka?
- Which are the categories of products/services are mostly influenced the purchasing decision?
- How does social media micro influencers help in changing the behaviour of the consumers?

### **review of Literature:-**

- 1) As per the **Influencer Marketing as a Tool of Digital Consumer Engagement : A Systematic Literature Review of Ms. Anshika Singh Tanwar\* Research Scholar (Corresponding Author), Department of Management Studies Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, New Delhi-110016, India and others** have made findings that it is corelation between social media micro influencers and digital marketing. It reduces the cost of advertisement and reduces the use of celebrity to endorse the products etc. Social media micro influencers helps the consumers to know the product and its usages and maintenance of the product.
- 2) **The "Digital in Rural India" aspect, as per the 2023 report by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and Kantar**, indicates that rural India accounts for a significant portion of India's internet users. The report highlights that rural areas contribute more than half of the total internet user base. Specifically, rural India has over 53% or 442 million internet users, surpassing urban areas in terms of internet consumption. This signifies the widespread adoption of digital technology in rural India.
- 3) As per the **Kumar, S. & Joshi, R. (2021). A STUDY ON THE RURAL CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN BIHAR of MRIDANISH JHA ASSISTANT PROFESSOR DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT, CAMBRIDGE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, RANCHI** has made findings that the price, product, family size, age culture and buying behaviours, advertisements etc., have made micro influencers to change the buying behaviour of the consumers.

### **Research OBJECTIVE:**

This research aims to focus on Rural Karnataka. The following are the main objectives.

- 1) How the micro influencers helping rural area people.
- 2) Do micro-influencers significantly impact purchasing decisions in rural Karnataka?
- 3) Whether rural people facing any trouble to have trade through social media and so on.
- 4) To offer suggestions on findings.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

“Impact of Social Media Micro-Influencers on Rural Consumer Buying Behaviour in Rural Karnataka” research will have to be collected in many ways such as primary data base by meeting people, by visiting rural places in Karnataka or selected districts in Karnataka and secondary data via internet publications published by many publishers, articles presented by number of authors or researcher and survey's conducted by various internet users and researches available in internet.

### **Data Analysis and Results:**

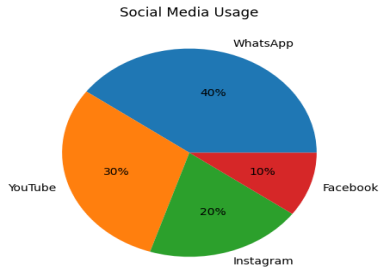
The Social Media Influencers in Karnataka special reference to rural areas is challenging one. Urban, Semi-Urban people know what is Social-Media and Influencers and how it helps them in day-to-day life. But rural parts of Karnataka has very limited access to internet facility and awareness about the Social Media and Influencers. Though, teenage and young adult people in rural areas are aware of Social-Media like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram etc. But middle and old aged people are not aware of the Social Media as most of them are not literate and are not aware of modern business methods. Therefore, it's a challenging task ahead of Social-Media business firms to reach out to the rural areas.

The Influencers in Social-Media are helping the buyers with regard to the specification of product, quality and usages. Marketing through Social-Media and Influencers can be improved by way of advertising in local language newspapers,

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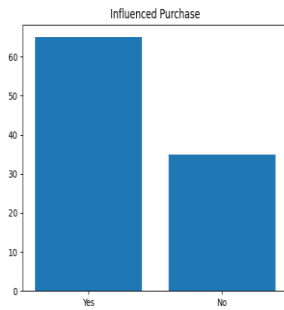
television. The business firms need to concentrate on rural people to make them aware of Social Media and Influencers and uses of internet facility so also giving information about the different digital marketing platforms available in the present day.

**1. Social Media Usage**



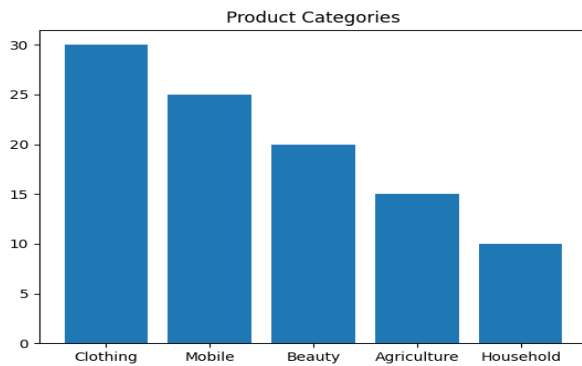
**Analysis:** WhatsApp and YouTube dominate rural usage. Video and messaging platforms are key drivers.

**2. Influenced Purchase**



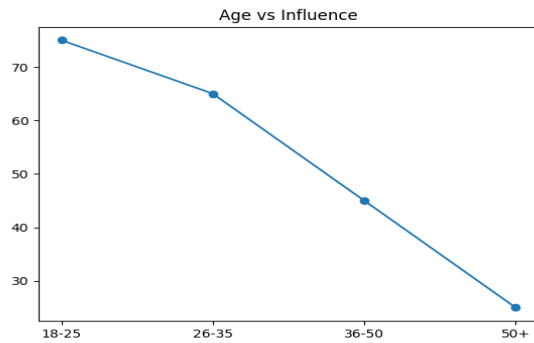
**Analysis:** Majority are influenced by social media, showing behavioral shift.

**3. Product Categories**



**Analysis:** Lifestyle products dominate influence.

#### 4. Age vs Influence



**Analysis:** Younger consumers are more influenced.

#### Recommendations

- Conduct digital literacy, Social Media and marketing workshops for SBCs and SMEs.
- Foster collaboration between local businesses and marketing Influencers.
- Promote mobile-first marketing strategies and vernacular content.
- Invest in improving digital infrastructure to reduce access disparities.

#### Conclusions

The “Impact of Social Media Micro-Influencers on Consumer Buying Behaviour in Rural Karnataka”. is a challenging task. Karnataka’s urban people know what is social media, micro-influencers and digital marketing and how it helps them in day-to-day life. But rural parts of Karnataka has very limited access to internet facility and awareness about the social media micro influencers in changing the buying behaviour of the consumers. Though, young adult people in rural areas are aware of social media, micro influencers who are engaged in YouTube, Facebook, Instagram etc. But middle and old aged people are not aware of the technology as most of them are not literate and are not aware of modern social media micro influencers. Therefore, it’s a challenging task ahead of “Impact of Social Media Micro-Influencers on Consumer Buying Behaviour in Rural Karnataka”.

#### Reference

- [1] The State of Digital Marketing in India 2024-25
- [2] Ms. Anshika Singh Tanwar\* Research Scholar (Corresponding Author), Department of Management Studies Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, New Delhi-110016, India and others
- [3] The "Digital in Rural India" aspect, as per the 2023 report by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and Kantar
- [4] Kumar, S. & Joshi, R. (2021). A Study on The Rural Consumer Buying Behaviour in Bihar of Mridanish Jha Assistant Professor Department of Management, Cambridge Institute of Technology, Ranchi.

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