

Role of Influencers in Shaping the Consumption Behaviour of Dairy Products

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ABSTRACT

Influencers are a significant factor in altering consumer purchasing patterns. They shape choices via product reviews, endorsements and daily consumption practices. Accordingly, dairy brands use influencers to build trust. In addition, it resonates more with target groups than conventional advertising. Decisions when it comes to making a purchase largely depend on what the influencer thinks. Hence, they stimulate demand for dairy products through trends and consumption preferences. Moreover, digital platforms have extended influencer reach across ages. Influencers personally connect with followers through stories about their own lives and by demonstrating products and encouraging purchase of dairy products with high frequency. In addition, engagement-driven social media algorithms reward high-engagement content so that products are more widely seen. Consumers see these messages frequently and adjust their purchasing decisions differently. However, influencers often play a role in the dairy industry, as they promote new and existing products. They highlight benefits and usage ideas that help shape day-to-day consumption behaviour. This has an effect on both short-term sales and long-term brand loyalty. Also, food and health influencers help shifted food trends. These trends significantly influence consumers' perspectives on and consumption of dairy product. Study survey was conducted among 211 influencers of different platform to know Role of Influencers in Shaping the Consumption Behaviour of Dairy Products and found that Influencers consistently stimulate recurrent use through repetition and social validity, they reframe brand messages in terms of personal stories and use their marketing skills to inform, inspire, and create content that incorporates dairy into user journeys.

Keywords: Influencer marketing, Consumer behaviour, Dairy products, social media, Purchase decision.

INTRODUCTION

Patterns of consumption within the food industry have changed as digital platforms alter how information diffuses through populations. The dairy industry, which traditionally operated on a marketing model, is confronting changing consumer attitudes impacted by influencers. These players utilize internet platforms to produce specialized information, inspiring users to adjust their eating habits. With increasing reliance on digitised channels for information on food-related matters, influencers start acting as the primary brokers of purchase decisions in the dairy field. Whether they share dairy food within typical lifestyle activities—through meals, snacks, or health practices, influencers influence how people think about dairy foods. They also bridge the gap between brands and consumers through regular engagement.

As per Qutteina et al. (2019), Consumers see such figures as relatable, authentic sources of advice, lending credence to their recommendations. While traditional marketing involves pre-set scripts, influencer-generated content comes to focus on actual use and daily lifestyle. As a result, this content tends to be more relevant and convincing for followers. Furthermore, algorithms on social media platforms reward interactivity, which brings more visibility to the content that moves people. This rewards influencers with a strong, loyal group of followers, as their posts can reach a wider audience without needing paid promotion. This creates a conversation about dairy that traditional platforms could never dream of building. In this ecosystem, dairy brands are putting investment behind partnerships with content creators that mirror the interests and consumption behavior of their target audience. Health and wellness influencers tout dairy for its protein and calcium content. Food bloggers feature recipes that include milk, cheese, yoghurt or butter. Fitness influencers, for example, connect eating dairy with muscle recovery, energy, and their daily meals. These affiliations enhance consumers' perception of the role that dairy plays in their lifestyle needs. In addition to direct promotion, influencers shape perception by framing dairy consumption within the context of identity, values, and social status. That's when influencers pull up a new yardstick like when premium dairy brands or local organic brands are introduced to the consumers' consideration set.

According to Wu et al. (2022), Consumers then start associating the selection of brands not just with taste or price but with personal alignment. This is how influencers contribute to the change in perceived value of dairy. And influencers will respond to changing consumer expectations in their messaging. As awareness of climate change

becomes widespread, consumers are increasingly questioning the sustainability of food products derived from animals. Influencers counter with information about ethical farming practices, sourcing transparency, and plant-based dairy substitutes. Even here, dairy brands harness influencers to cast themselves as responsible players in the greater sustainability: a supplement to their typical message. The second key dimension is the role of cultural relevance in influencing dairy-related behaviour. Influencers from different areas share regional dairy practices with broader audiences. By showcasing preparation techniques, traditional uses, or local preferences, they help to promote cultural diversity with regard to dairy consumption.

In line with Happer and Wellesley (2019), This cross-cultural exchange diversifies the consumer palate and broadens the potential audience for the dairy market. Importantly, influencer influence does not operate in a vacuum but intermingles with wider consumption ecosystems. Pricing, product availability, packaging and health trends all have supporting roles. But influencers can interpret these factors and explain the complex trade-offs to audiences. For example, when price hikes impact consumer buying power, influencers might promote cheap dairy alternatives without sacrificing quality. Moreover, the two-way communication between consumers and brands is accounted for by the user involvement with influencers. Comments, DMs and polls enable audiences to indicate preferences and pose questions. Influencers, in turn, use this input to help them calibrate their content, channeling common grievances back to brands. That creates a feedback loop allowing dairy producers to react adequately to changing market expectations. Based on Alves De Castro and Carthy (2021), Incentive structures also govern the content, its consistency, and what direction influencers take. Sponsored posts, brand partnerships, affiliate programs, and promotional giveaways offer either financial or material perks. These commercial arrangements dictate how influencers prioritise content, which in turn shapes the products and practices that are made visible. While skepticism about sponsored content does exist within some fandom solidified, with a skillful partnership, you can increase product visibility without compromising trust.

According to Aguirre Sánchez et al. (2021), Dietary concerns or taste uncertainty may make consumers reluctant to try unfamiliar variants. It is addressed by making their followers see how these products are prepared, showing their experience when consuming it or giving their honest review. Such practices are effective to lower psychological barriers & entice users to try the product. Then, both the frequency and the timing of influencer content can also influence consumption behaviour. Posts frequently remind followers about dairy products. Daytime posts of coffee with milk, lunchtime posts of meals grilled with cheese, and evening posts of snacks with yoghurt create habitual links. As time goes on, these routines help to lock in habitual consumption behavior from the audience. Influencer-dairy brand collaborations also go beyond the digital sphere. Some influencers hold live events, cooking classes, or health workshops in which they work branded dairy products into the equation. These initiatives combine elements of experience marketing and community marketing, greatly enhancing recall and purchase intent.

This boosts repeat purchasing and loyalty. On a structural level, the influencer model enables dairy producers to access more targeted segments than traditional mass advertising. As noted by Szmigin and Piacentini (2018), Health influencers with a community-oriented focus can advocate for the use of dietary challenge foods such as lactose-free dairy products. Likewise, family-focused influencers can get the word out about kid-friendly options, packaging convenience or nutritional benefits. Such segmentation strategy aligns consumer needs and product offerings better. And influencer-led marketing also has the potential to build micro-brands and local dairy brands.

Based on Mai et al. (2019), By partnering with local influencers. Such collaborations spotlight unique selling propositions like artisanal approaches, local sourcing or particular health benefits. Thus with influencer model, it decentralises the marketing power and promotes product diversity. While there are many opportunities, challenges also exist. The perceived honesty of the influencer determines their credibility and, therefore, the credibility of any content they create. Trust can corrode swiftly if followers sense inconsistencies, exaggerations or misinformation. To remedy this, regulators are calling for clear calls to action on paid promotions and honest claims. Dairy brands should also make sure that influencers are relaying relevant nutrition and health messaging. Furthermore, influencer marketing's long-term impact on dairy consumption habits is an ongoing consideration as well. Consumer interest can change, platforms can adjust algorithms, and influencers can decide to shift niches. Brands, therefore, need to be flexible, evaluate campaign performance regularly, and diversify promotional strategies. Real brand building over the long-term is not just about getting people to try it once with an influencer, it's about product consistency, availability, customer satisfaction, etc.

According to de Vries et al. (2018), Rural communities may have more access to other influencers than urban populations do. Such insights will empower dairy brands to customize outreach strategies that align with unique consumption drivers. The final word has been given — Influencers are one of the important characters in affecting dairy product consumption behaviour. Their content weaves dairy into everyday life, connects products with personal identities, and addresses evolving consumer values.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food marketing influences consumption decisions and patterns of media-based audiences, especially among adolescents. These platforms provide ways for marketers to connect directly with young people beyond conventional channels. Through influencers, brands insert dairy products into peer-driven spaces that augment visibility and form individual preferences. As per Monterrosa et al. (2020), , teens are constantly being served up branded dairy products through influencer posts, daily habits and conversations and group online engagement. Unlike previous advertising channels, social media facilitates a combination of owned, paid, and earned marketing strategies to target young users. Owned media covers everything brand-controlled (brand profiles, websites, etc), paid media refers to influencer content paid for, and earned media is related to follower interaction and peer sharing. Influencers work within all three, posting dairy content that combines commercial ends with personal rhythms and social junctures.

In line with McCorquodale (2019), images shared by influencers link drinking dairy to social situations, like eating with friends, at school or leisure time. This practice creates familiarity and consolidates use of dairy as normal and part of shared age experience. Furthermore, visual exposure can condition people to the role of dairy in a certain environment, and desensitize people to the normalidade of dairy in informal settings, making them more likely to mirror this behaviour. Gen Z makes this easy; they tend to be followers of influencers who display relatable habits and consumption choices. These influencers post created dairy content as either part of meals, snacks or drinks, establishing an ongoing link between products and daily activities. Even better, influencer content shares your dairy brand messaging in formats for which your audience opts in and shares on their own. Moreover, adolescents are exposed to dairy-related content not only from influencers but also their peers mimicking influencer behaviours. This repetition creates familiarity with the product and reinforces the belief that consuming dairy is normal within their social network. In this way influencers influence consumption behaviour by making dairy products visible and accessible, and connecting their consumption to normative social practices.

According to Carvalho and Spence (2018), The content they create reinforces the idea that food decisions go beyond taste and nutrition, encompassing social approval and group identity. These patterns gradually become established food norms and norms for purchasing behaviour among adolescents over time, and across extended peer networks. Influencers have influenced buying behaviours through online engagement and technology-enabled shopping through social media platforms. And influencer types now actively create demand and drive consumer purchasing behavior for dairy products. Mindful of peer-influenced retrieval of content through an influencer Feed, this creates a socially validated preference for a product channel that could lead to a final conversion. These actions move consumers from being passive to becoming active participants of the consumption cycle of dairy products. This transition represents a shifting perspective of service exchange that all actors in a system (not only suppliers) provide resources and jointly create value. These influencers use their marketing skills to inform, inspire, and create content that incorporates dairy into user journeys. These communicators bridge the gap between brands and consumers; they interpret technical product features into accessible, usage-based value. Innovators help determine the ways products are used, what they look like, and how they are understood in diverse settings of consumption.

As noted by Lazaric et al. (2020), functions are supported by social media technologies that provide affordances that enable flexible interaction, visual storytelling, and two-way engagement. The live stream, comment section, reels, polls, and other such mainstream features give influencers access to insights and allow them to pivot their content. They do this by adapting actively to reshape dairy consumption experiences (through consumer interaction in the flow of activity). By this means technological affordances enable them to reframe the value of dairy items in different contexts. In these processes, influencers operate not in isolation but rather in digital ecosystems that comprise producers, platforms, and consumers. Need these resource integrations for accessing knowledge, engaging with customer audiences, and bundling features of products to create new value propositions.

Based on Boesveldt et al. (2018) Dairy brands are not opting for clear corporate trails, they have established personalised content guided by influencer creativity — and gained visibility. It is part of an increasingly common model that sees consumers play an active role in the development of the services they use. In this system, the influencers are both communicators and innovators. As communicators they translate brand messages into real-world narratives backed by personal experience. As innovators, they adjust product positioning, outline use cases, and develop descriptive norms around consumption routines with dairy. Their capacity to sculpt these roles can rely on ongoing semantic exchanges with the public and adaptive digital devices. This challenges conventional wisdom in service development. Previously firms were considered sole actors in the exploration of new concepts, integrating resources internally. Consumers, including dairy purchasers, were considered passive players who simply reacted to finished products. Marketing driven by influencers redefines this perception by transforming average consumers into active co-creators of value. While the processes of product innovation and their market adoption are traditionally dissociated, the activity of an influencer is integrated across the two. A new dairy product's meaning comes not from packaging or advertising, but from the way influencers display and use it. From meal prep to brand comparisons to addressing health concerns, influencers guide consumers through a constantly evolving landscape of

product relevance. Dairy product consumption is thus integrated into a broader value co-creation process in this case.

In line with Marques da Rosa et al. (2019), Consumers evaluate the usefulness of a product not on its own but in relation to the experiences offered by influencers. These experiences mediated by other people affect decisions regarding product trial, rebuy, and loyalty to a brand. Hence, influencer engagement fosters continual service innovation by modifying how consumers value and how they use dairy products. These innovations are born of incremental feedback, prototype content and social validation. Platforms that continue to support such behaviours expand the opportunities for innovation even further by allowing more fluid, distributed resource integration. Dairy producers will indeed understand this further, and leverage influencers to stimulate product adoption. But they also need to realise that influence is two-way. Consumer feedback, preferences, and shared experiences are all ways in which consumers change influencer content. This results in a top-down, supply-side driven model, where the consumption pattern of dairy is continually negotiated between stakeholders. In summary, influencers shape dairy consumption behaviour through digital affordance integration, and allowing for both co-creation of product value and audience engagement in ongoing service innovation. As communicators and innovators, they can connect producers and consumers, driving a new paradigm of product experience based on resources like knowledge or data. The global dairy industry has a role in emissions, but less of one than the meat industry, and drives environmental and social conditions elsewhere on the planet.

In line with Marques da Rosa et al. (2019), Growing demand for animal-based foods, resulting from population and income increase, puts more pressure on ecosystems. Targeting coordinated messaging and behaviour strategies can support environmental goals by shifting consumer behaviour toward sustainable dairy consumption, but behaviour change is not so simple. Social media influencers, in particular, are key to how people think about dairy products.

Such content can help influencers, through social media, align dairy with their personal identity, cultural norms, and environmental concerns. “Influencers allow for a range of different people to connect to an array of audiences, impacting how people view different beliefs and practices through storytelling, personal practices, and brand collaborations,” Best says. These actors sit in a unique space between scientific messaging, government campaigns and consumer values. Their role is important in shaping narratives around the environmental and nutritional impact of dairy, as well as its ethical sourcing. Influencers speak to audiences in ways that resonate with them, making them impactful catalysts for change.

According to Al-Jawaldeh et al. (2020), Some influencers reach people in personalised media environments — unlike institutional channels. In these spaces, users trust sources that reflect their social values, practices and beliefs. As a result, influencers may contextualize dairy consumption within more general discussions about health, the protection of the environment or cultural identity. The messages that influencers share are critically dependent on offline experiences and do not operate in their own independent, online void. Instead, they work in combination with social norms, local availability, pricing and household preferences.

Dairy is bitter too, Audiences read dairy-related content in the light of lived experiences and social contexts. It is these conditions that predispose behaviour change rather than awareness alone. Influencers that promote the benefits of moderate or mindful dairy consumption are helping change the norms. By linking dairy to balanced dietary patterns, ethical sourcing, and environmental responsibility, they underwrite behaviour change outside of direct institutional intervention. They can advocate small changes that morph into large-scale buying and consumption trends. Governments and industry players may engage influencers to align consumers behaviour with public health policy and sustainability objectives. Rather than mandating rules or prohibitions, partnerships could promote products that emphasize some of the practical positives of altered dairy consumption. For instance, influencers might highlight benefits like digestive health, support for local producers, or sustainable packaging.

As noted by Archer (2019), This strategy is particularly helpful in areas with significant scepticism towards environmental messaging. Appeals that emphasize climate may not have any effect on audiences, but audience may be appealing to health-based or economic argument. In these contexts, influencers can contextualise their messaging around aspects of personal wellbeing, family health or financial savings. These approaches are more attuned to daily worries than overarching environmental campaigns. In emerging economies or places that are under environmental stress, influencers might focus on immediate local issues. If you have content about innovative thinking regarding water use, waste management, or access to clean nutrition, look to dairy to garner attention. More than anything, these regional differences highlight how influencer strategies need to be localized. Or at least not have the same uniform message be applied across populations. Influencers need to create narratives that are reinforced by experts, advocacy groups and medical professionals in order to create lasting change in consumption.

Narratives extending across diverse stakeholder groups have the potential to coalesce messaging surrounding sustainable dairy consumption. A fractured communication effort for a particular sector of agriculture, such as dairy, with competing interests and conflicting narratives can scatter progress, dilute the impact of improvements, or undermine such efforts through negative or unfair framing. With dairy consumption ingrained in cultural customs

and daily practices, behaviour change requires repeated, consistent exposure to alternative information. It's influencers who can offer that level of exposure, via constant posts, partnerships, and by optimizing the ability of their audience to engage with their filmed content.

Ho Nguyen et al. (2022), can create “new norms around consumption” that accumulate over time and gradually shape attitudes. Against the backdrop of behaviour change efforts, policy designers should consider the role of influencers on dairy behaviour. Indeed, messages that highlight co-benefits (like health improvements or economic boosts) tend to do better than those that focus only on climate or sustainability goals. These messages can be delivered in an accessible manner by influencers to groups who may otherwise be missed. Influencers pave the way for dairy products becoming part of the very fabric of everyday online content viewed across digital platforms. The posts blend food patterns with behaviour, repeating habitual activity over time and situating it in its relevance. With the shift of brand promotion from physical environment to a digital environment, influencers become the brokers and direct communicators of brands and users, steering consumption behaviors according to their role places.

For instance, breakfast rituals, meal planning or wellness tracking become the occasions for embedding cues for consumption models through visible, habitual practices. As these practices are observed by audiences frequently, audiences emulate these same consumption practices in their own lives. Over time, these actions create product familiarity and preference, shaping the product's identity without any direct action from the brand. These digital patterns also often transcend scepticism regarding commercial messaging by employing peer-to-peer communication. Influencers also act as curators of dairy products, whether those products might be based on taste, function or function. Through these culling and cherry picking, they are reducing the complexity of choices consumers have over products available to them. This makes buying decisions simpler and more adaptable to perceived needs defined by narratives from influencers. Influencers are also quick to adapt to shifting audience feedback and will refine messages in line with evolving audience priorities or concerns. If consumers start to question sourcing, for example, influencers might promote traceable, farm-based dairy options instead, for instance. If health becomes more of a focus, content may transition to low-fat or lactose-free foodstuffs. These actions stem from the dynamic relationships between influencers and their audiences.

Influencers wield the power to reach targeted, "niche" audiences that dairy brands are becoming more aware of. Targeted partnerships empower brands to reach specific age groups, geographies, or lifestyle clusters by leveraging a network they've already built-in trust. They tap into that trust to persuade consumers to try products and develop habits that lead to repeat purchases. The content generated by influencers is not fixed but extends infinitely across formats (videos, polls, recipes, live sessions, etc.), constantly pulling the audience back into contact with the product through interactivity. In global markets, influencer tactics adapt to reflect local realities.

Consumption trends for dairy products are often associated with deeply ingrained traditions, so that changing behaviours is challenging without repeated exposure. They provide that exposure by embedding dairy-themed messaging within ongoing narratives that mirror cultural practice, helping reinforce acceptance while allowing for gradual change. When consumers interact with these influencer-led dairy video content, they are starting to label the products as utility, convenience, and as a part of their routine. This pragmatic reframing minimises pushback to alter behaviour and enables incremental changes in behaviour without formal campaigns.

OBJECTIVE

To know the Role of Influencers in Shaping the Consumption Behaviour of Dairy Products

METHODOLOGY

Study survey was conducted among 211 influencers from different platform to know Role of Influencers in Shaping the Consumption Behaviour of Dairy Products. “Random sampling method” along with “T-test” were used to collect and analyse the data.

DATA ANALYSIS

In the total population of study survey males are 45.5% and females are 54.5%. 27.9% of them are below 27 years, 33.6% comes under the age group of 27-35 years and rest 38.5% are above 35 years of age. 25.1% of them are influencers on you tube, 28.9% on Instagram, 23.7% on Facebook and rest 22.3% are on other social media platforms.

“Table 1 General Details”

“Variables”	“Respondents”	“Percentage”
Gender		
Male	96	45.5
Female	115	54.5
Total	211	100
Age (years)		

Below 27	59	27.9
27-35	71	33.6
Above 35	81	38.5
Total	211	100
Social Media Platform		
You tube	53	25.1
Instagram	61	28.9
Facebook	50	23.7
Others	47	22.3
Total	211	100

Table 2 Role of Influencers in Shaping the Consumption Behaviour

“S. No.”	“Statements”	“Mean Value”	“t value”	“Sig.”
1.	Influencers maintain a position of influence around dairy consumption	3.12	1.774	0.039
2.	They reframe brand messages in terms of personal stories	3.18	2.678	0.004
3.	They create product awareness among their users	3.14	2.116	0.018
4.	Influencers try to alleviate the perceived risk of usage	3.13	1.925	0.028
5.	Influencers consistently stimulate recurrent use through repetition and social validity	3.19	2.860	0.002
6.	Influencers shape perception by framing dairy consumption within the context of identity, values	3.15	2.219	0.014
7.	Health influencers with a community-oriented focus advocate the use of dietary challenge foods	3.16	2.390	0.009
8.	Influencers use their marketing skills to inform, inspire, and create content that incorporates dairy into user journeys	3.17	2.550	0.006
9.	They interpret technical product features into accessible, usage-based value	3.12	1.779	0.038
10.	Influencers shape dairy consumption behaviour through digital affordance integration	3.14	2.111	0.018

Table 2 shows different role of influencers in shaping the consumption behaviour where the respondent says that Influencers consistently stimulate recurrent use through repetition and social validity with mean value 3.19, they reframe brand messages in terms of personal stories (3.18), Influencers use their marketing skills to inform, inspire, and create content that incorporates dairy into user journeys (3.17), Health influencers with a community-oriented focus advocate the use of dietary challenge foods (3.16). The respondent also says that influencers shape perception by framing dairy consumption within the context of identity, values with mean value 3.15, they create product awareness among their users (3.14), Influencers shape dairy consumption behaviour through digital affordance integration (3.14), Influencers try to alleviate the perceived risk of usage (3.13), Influencers maintain a position of influence around dairy consumption (3.12), They interpret technical product features into accessible, usage-based value with mean value 3.12. All statements pertaining to different role of influencers in shaping the consumption behaviour exhibit statistical significance, with p-values below 0.05 following the application of a t-test.

CONCLUSION

Influencers maintain a position of influence around dairy consumption by placing the products into relatable narratives of the everyday. They reframe brand messages in terms of personal stories, which reflect audience identities, cultural expectations and growing worries about health and sustainability. They create product awareness, alleviate the perceived risk of usage, and consistently stimulate recurrent use through repetition and social validity. This is unlike traditional marketing methods, which are generally one-sided. This allows influencers to co-construct value with consumers through the exploitation of digital affordances, utilizing materially embedded codes/contacts to promote dairy products in a manner responsive to context and audience. This participatory model enables dairy brands to reach niche markets, localise messaging and ultimately achieve lasting behaviour change. But it also requires these things to be done ethically and transparently and over the long haul. As the dairy industry evolves to meet new consumption ordinances, influencers will be a vital strategic partner,...a conduit for connecting producers with consumers and larger society.

The study aims to know the Role of Influencers in Shaping the Consumption Behaviour of Dairy Products and found that Influencers consistently stimulate recurrent use through repetition and social validity, they reframe brand

messages in terms of personal stories and use their marketing skills to inform, inspire, and create content that incorporates dairy into user journeys.

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