

INFLUENCE OF FASHION BLOGGERS ON THE PURCHASE DECISIONS OF INDIAN INTERNET USERS-AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

¹NAMESH MALAROUT, ²DASHARATHRAJ K SHETTY

¹Scholar, Manipal Institute of Technology, Manipal University, Manipal, India

²Department of Computer Science and Engineering Manipal Institute of Technology, Manipal University, Manipal, India
E-mail: namesh051195@gmail.com, raja.shetty@manipal.edu

Abstract- This paper presents the results of an exploratory study that was conducted to find out if fashion bloggers can influence their followers to purchase branded products and also to find if they can create awareness about the latest trends among these social media users. The study infers that women constitute the major part of followers of fashion bloggers. Most of the followers are unmarried and believe that bloggers have a positive influence on their buying behavior of branded products.

Key terms- Fashion, Purchase decisions, Blogging, Vlogs, and Link logs.

I. INTRODUCTION

Blogging has gained its popularity in the recent years. It can act as a medium to connect users by sharing ideas and gaining knowledge about various aspects like product reviews, entertainment, travel et cetera. A fashion blog is one such element which covers different areas of interests among youth about clothing, accessories, current fashion trends, product reviews, beauty products et cetera. Fashion bloggers with a large fan-base can create a bandwagon effect among their followers by endorsing brands and encouraging them to purchase products from the brands.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THIS PAPER

To explore whether Fashion bloggers:

- i. can influence internet users in purchase decision making.
- ii. are able to create awareness about the latest trends or brands.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study has used a sample of 140 internet users and data have been recorded using structured questionnaire which was conducted using Google forms and face-to-face interviews using schedules. The sampling technique used in this study is a non-random convenience sampling method. A program by the name of Statistical. The data was further analyzed using a program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 2.2.

Data sources –

1. Primary data – Data collected was collected using structured questionnaire and face-to-face interviews using schedules.
2. Secondary data – Data was collected from Journals, Magazines, newspapers, et cetera.

IV. LITERATURE SURVEY

i. Blog

A blog or weblog is a customizable informational log based on the World Wide Web (www) and consisting of distinct entries of media which other users can access. A blogger is the one who organizes, owns, controls and runs the blog. Areas like daily activities, travel ideas, hair and makeup ideas, challenges, et cetera intrigue the youth in this generation. Bloggers can gain readers' attention by promoting their blogs on social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest et cetera. Blogging can earn money and respect. Companies send their products to top notch bloggers and pay them for a positive review of their product. Bloggers can also collaborate with brands, marketing campaigns, et cetera to earn money and respect among their followers.

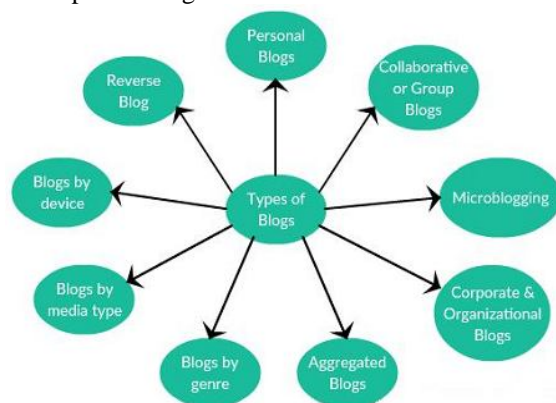


Figure 1: Types of Blogs [1]

The various types of Blogs as shown in figure 1 are:

- **Personal Blogs**
Personal Blogs are personal entries by an individual in a diary or a website which can be viewed by other bloggers or readers. Personal Blogs can be about anything the personal life of the blogger.
- **Collaborative or Group Blogs**

Collaborative or Group Blogs are maintained and published by more than one author(s). Example: Blogs based on politics or technology.

- **Microblogging**
Microblogging is posting of small pieces of media content on the internet. It is perfect for the interaction of celebrities, politicians, et cetera with other users online. Example: Twitter, Tumblr, et cetera.
- **Corporate and Organizational Blogs**
Corporate and Organizational blogs can either be used as a public blog for marketing, advertising, et cetera or as a private blog for internal applications in a company or organization.
- **Aggregated Blogs**
Individuals or organization may aggregate selected feeds on particular topic or product and provide a combined view for its readers. It allows users to concentrate on reading instead of searching for quality on-topic content and managing subscription. [1]
- **Blogs by genre**
Blogs by genre are focused on particular areas. Users can follow various blogs based on their choice of styles.
- **Blogs by media type**
Blogs by media type like vlogs or link logs are entirely based on media content. Vlogs are video-logs which are recorded and posted on the internet for other users to view while Link logs consist links.
- **Blogs by device**
Blogs can also be classified by the device used to publish posts. Moblogs are blogs which are published using mobile phones or PDA (Personal Digital Assistance).
- **Reverse Blog**
A reverse blog is like a web-forum. A composed post can have many authors, or it can be open to the public.

ii. Online sales by bloggers [2]

According to Ninja Metrics, “5-10 percent of social media users are responsible for 60 to 80 per cent of influence”. [2] Stokberger-Sauer & Hoyer reports, “Opinion leaders represent a dominant group in the marketplace because they can influence consumers via word of mouth.” [2] In beauty and fashion industries, customers tend to follow a number of bloggers to check out the latest trends.

The influencing power of a good blogger lies in the engagement with followers. Any similarity between the reader and the blogger makes a significant impact in buying behavior of the user.

iii. Online marketing by bloggers

Companies find digital influencers and bloggers more capable of influencing internet users than some

celebrities. Some of the typical ways of marketing by bloggers are [3]:

1. **Affiliate links:** Fashion bloggers provide links to the products they advertise on their blog sites which can direct users to the company’s website.
2. **Collaborations:** Bloggers often collaborate with brands with similar style tastes and market their products online.
3. **Marketing campaigns:** A blogger advertises a company’s product on its website as well as his/her blog which influences the internet users to buy products from the website.

V. RESEARCH DATA ANALYSIS

i. Age of respondents

| Age | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| <20 years | 25 | 16.67 |
| 21-25 years | 63 | 42 |
| 26-30 years | 33 | 22 |
| 31-35 years | 16 | 10.67 |
| >36 years | 13 | 8.67 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 |

Table 1: Age of respondents

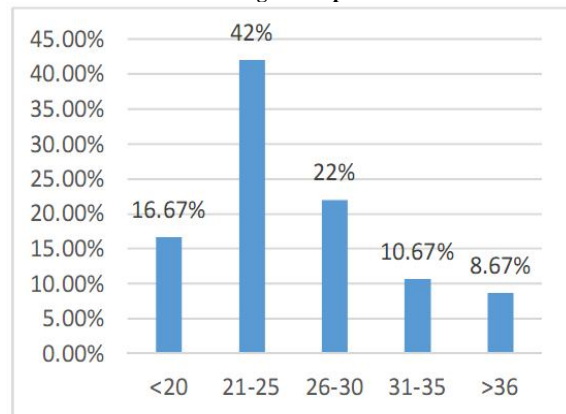


Chart 1: Age of respondents (%)

Table 1 shows that most of the interviewees in the sample are of the age 21-25 years. There is not much difference between the second, third and fourth place. About 33 people out of the 150 are of age 26-30 years and 25 of less than or equal to 20 years old. There are 16 in the 31-35 years category and 13 above or equal to 36 years old.

Chart 1 shows the percentage values of Table 1. Chart 1 helps us to understand that the maximum number of respondents are from 21-25 years and minimum from the above 36 age category.

ii. Gender of respondents

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Male | 28 | 18.67 |
| Female | 122 | 81.33 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 |

Table 2: Gender of respondents

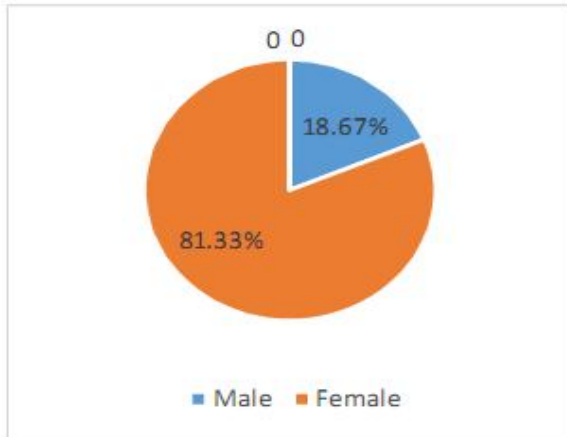


Chart 2: Gender of respondents (%)

Table 2 shows the gender-wise demography of the interviewees. It helps us understand that the number of female respondents is more than four times the male respondents.

Chart 2 gives a percentage value of the gender-wise demography of the sample.

iii. Monthly expenditure of the respondents

| Monthly Expenditure (INR) | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|------------|----------------|
| <5,000 | 13 | 8.67 |
| 5,000-15,000 | 69 | 46 |
| 15,000-25,000 | 49 | 32.67 |
| >25,000 | 19 | 12.67 |
| Total | 150 | 100 |

Table 3: Monthly expenditure of respondents

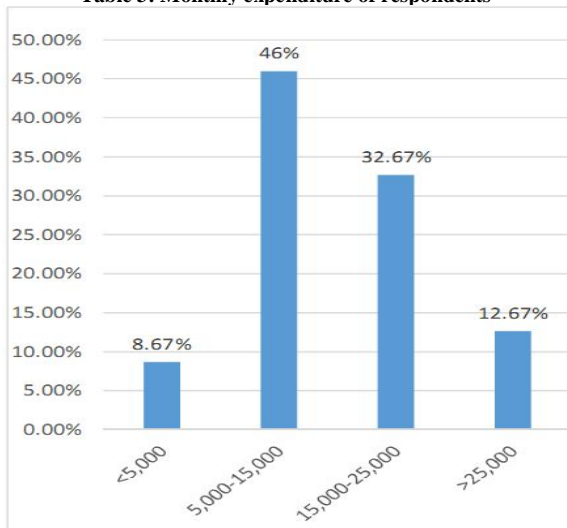


Chart 3: Monthly expenditure of the respondents (%)

Table 3 shows the monthly expenditure of the respondents. From table 3 one can understand that the maximum number of respondents have a monthly expenditure of INR 5,000-15,000, and the minimum number of respondents spend less than INR 5,000.49 people in the sample spend about INR 15,000-25,000 a month, and 19 people spend more than INR 25,000 every month.

Chart 3 gives the percentage values of monthly expenditure of the respondents.

iv. Marital status of the respondents

| Marital status | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| Single | 119 | 79.33 |
| Married | 28 | 18.67 |
| Separated | 2 | 1.33 |
| Divorce | 1 | 0.67 |
| Widow | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 |

Table 4: Marital status of respondents

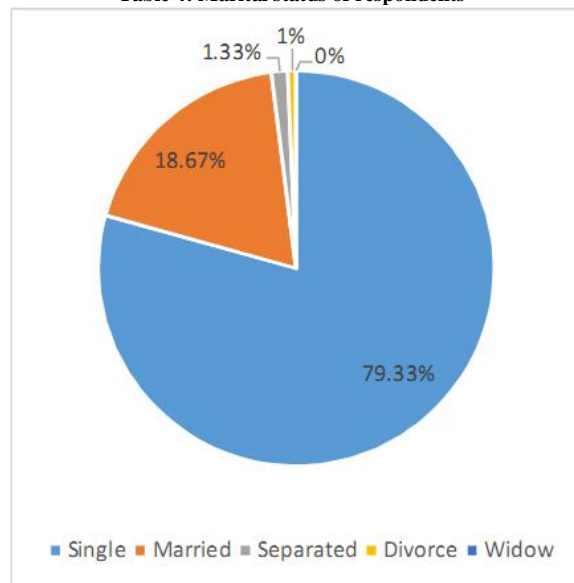


Chart 4: Marital status of respondents (%)

It can be inferred from Table 4 that the number of single respondents constitutes 79.33% of the sample, and married constitute 18.67%. The separated and divorced constitute 1.33% and 0.67% of the sample respectively.

Chart 4 gives the percentage pie-chart of table 4.

v. Followers of fashion bloggers amid respondents

| Followers | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| Yes | 131 | 87.33 |

| | | |
|--------------|-----|-------|
| No | 19 | 12.67 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 |

Table 5: Followers of Fashion Bloggers amid respondents

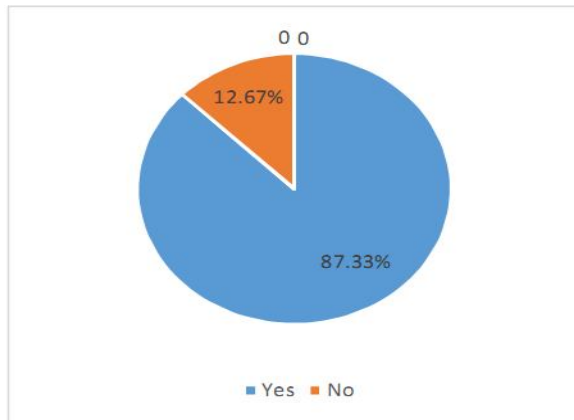


Chart 5: Followers of Fashion Bloggers amid respondents (%)

Table 5 shows that out of 150 internet users there were 131 followers of fashion bloggers and only 19 users didn't follow them.

Chart 5 shows the percentage pie-chart of table 5. It can be inferred from chart 5 that the followers of fashion bloggers among the respondents are more than six times the non-followers.

vi. Posts that interests the respondents the most

| Kinds of Blog Posts | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Clothing & Accessories | 67 | 51.14 |
| Beauty Products | 21 | 16.03 |
| Personal/Lifestyle posts | 14 | 10.69 |
| Product Review | 29 | 22.14 |
| Total | 131 | 100 |

Table 6: Blog posts that interest respondents most

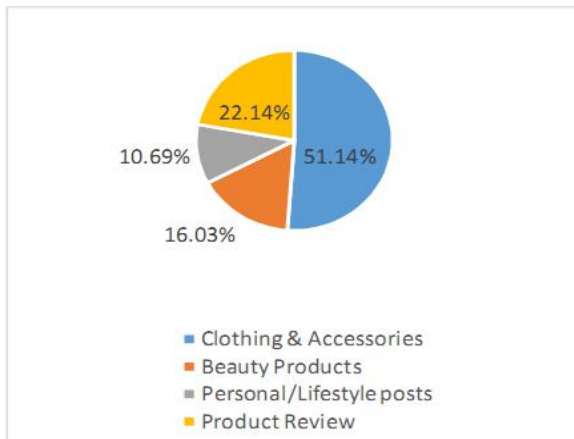


Chart 6: Blog posts that interest respondents most (%)

It can be inferred from Table 6 that clothing and accessories are the most attractive area for the respondents followed by product reviews. After product reviews, respondents prefer beauty products followed by personal/lifestyle posts.

Chart 6 gives a pie-chart representation of table 6 which shows that more than 50% of the interviewees prefer posts about clothing & accessories over other posts.

vii. Entities that inspire the respondents

| Entity | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Fashion Blogs | 92 | 70.23 |
| Fashion Magazines | 19 | 14.50 |
| Friends & Family | 6 | 4.58 |
| Designers | 12 | 9.16 |
| Others | 2 | 1.53 |
| Total | 131 | 100.0 |

Table 7: Entities that inspire respondents most

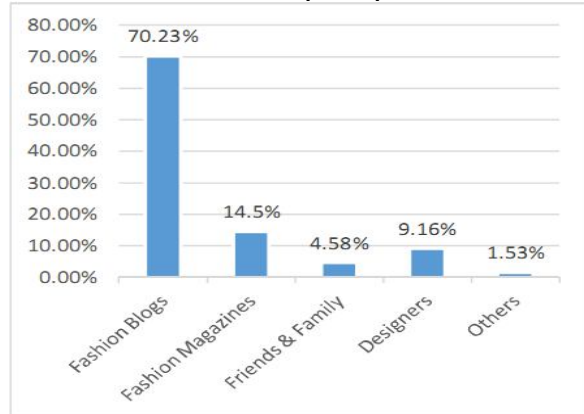


Chart 7: Entities that inspire respondents most (%)

Table 7 shows that more than 90 respondents get inspired by fashion blogs more than magazines, et cetera.

Chart 7 gives a pie-chart representation of table 7 which shows that more than 70% of the sample get inspired by fashion blogs than other entities.

viii. Respondents keep a constant check on their favorite fashion bloggers' posts

| Check constantly | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Yes | 108 | 82.44 |
| No | 23 | 17.56 |
| Total | 131 | 100.0 |

Table 8: Whether respondents keep a constant check on their favorite blog

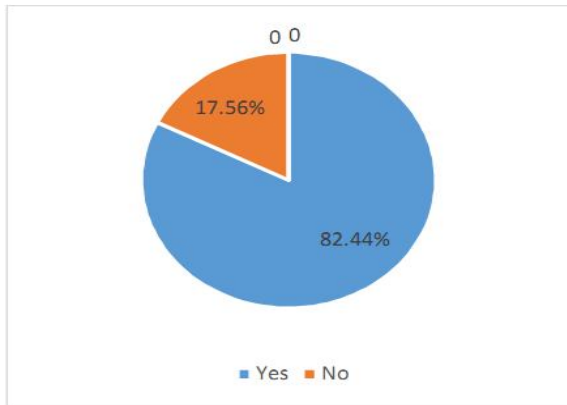


Chart 8: Whether respondents maintain a continuous check on their favorite blog

Table 8 shows that more than 100 respondents check their favorite fashion blogger’s post consistently and only about 20 respondents don’t.

Chart 8 gives the pie-chart representation of table 8 which shows that more than 80% of the population check on their favorite blog post constantly and only 17.56% of the respondents don’t.

ix. Fashion bloggers have helped respondents to get inspirations for their outfit and style through reading their blogs

| Fashion bloggers have inspired for their style and outfits | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Disagree | 6 | 4.58 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 12 | 9.16 |
| Agree | 74 | 56.49 |
| Strongly agree | 39 | 29.77 |
| Total | 131 | 100.0 |

Table 9: Whether fashion bloggers inspire respondents for their style and fashion

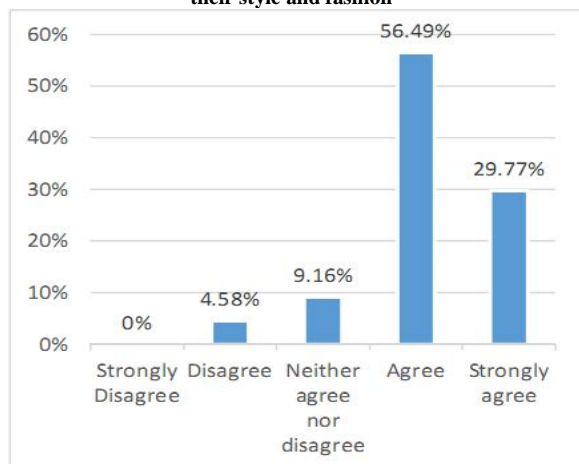


Chart 9: Whether fashion bloggers inspire respondents for their style and fashion (%)

Table 9 shows that 74 respondents feel that fashion bloggers have helped them get inspirations for their

outfit and style, and 39 respondents firmly believe the same. Only 6 out of 131 disagree.

Chart 9 gives a pie-chart representation of table 9. It shows that more than 85% of the sample feel that fashion bloggers have helped them get inspirations for their outfit and style.

x. Whether fashion bloggers are influential in making respondents buy the branded items

Table 10: Whether fashion bloggers have a positive influence on the buying behavior of the respondents

| Fashion bloggers influence the respondents’ buying behavior | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Disagree | 4 | 3.05 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 10 | 7.63 |
| Agree | 83 | 63.36 |
| Strongly agree | 34 | 25.95 |
| Total | 131 | 100.0 |

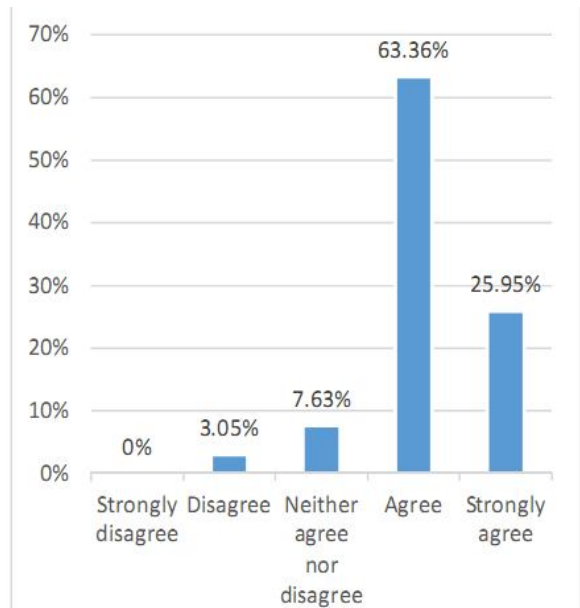


Chart 10: Whether fashion bloggers have a positive impact on the buying behavior of the respondents (%)

Table 10 shows that 83 respondents feel that fashion bloggers are influential in making them buy branded products and 34 respondents firmly believe the same. Only four respondents disagree.

Chart 10 gives a pie-chart representation of table 10. It shows that more than 88% of the respondents feel that fashion bloggers are influential in making them buy branded products but only 3.05% disagree.

RELATIONS

I. Relationship between followers of fashion bloggers and kinds of posts that interest these followers

| Kinds of Blog posts | Frequency |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Clothing & Accessories | 67 (52.14%) |
| Beauty Products | 21 (16.03%) |
| Personal/Lifestyle posts | 14 (10.69) |
| Product Review | 29 (22.14%) |

| Followers | Frequency |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Yes | 131 (87.33%) |
| No | 19 (12.67%) |

Table 11 shows that out of the 87.33 percent following fashion bloggers, 52.14 percent are attracted towards clothing & accessories, 22.14 percent towards product reviews, 16.03 percent towards beauty products and only 10.69 percent towards personal/lifestyle posts. We can infer from these data that most of the followers of fashion bloggers are attracted towards posts about clothing & accessories.

II. Relationship between followers of fashion bloggers amid respondents and entities which inspire the respondents

Table 12 shows that out of the 131 fashion fanatics, 70.23 percent internet users got inspired by fashion blogs, 14.50 percent got inspired by fashion magazines, 9.16 percent from designers and only 4.58 percent from family and friends.

III. Relationship between followers of fashion bloggers amid respondents and whether fashion bloggers are influential in making respondents buy the branded items

| Fashion bloggers influence the respondents' buying behavior | Frequency |
|---|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | 0 (0%) |
| Disagree | 4 (3.05%) |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 10 (7.63%) |
| Agree | 83 (63.36%) |
| Strongly agree | 34 (25.95%) |

| Followers | Frequency |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Yes | 131 (87.33%) |
| No | 19 (12.67%) |

From table 13 we can infer that among the 87.33 percent of the followers, 89.31 percent feel that fashion bloggers influence them to buy branded products and only 3.05 percent of the sample disagree. We can infer from these data that fashion bloggers can influence their followers to buy branded products.

IV. Relationship between marital status of the respondents, followers of fashion bloggers amid respondents, posts that interest the respondents most and whether recommendations provided by fashion bloggers have been helpful in making purchase decisions

| Marital status | Frequency |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Single | 119 (79.33%) |
| Married | 28 (18.67%) |
| Separated | 2 (1.33%) |
| Divorce | 1 (0.67%) |
| Widow | 0 (0%) |

| Followers | Frequency |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Yes | 131 (87.33%) |
| No | 19 (12.67%) |

| Kinds of Blog posts | Frequency |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Clothing & Accessories | 67 (51.14%) |
| Beauty Products | 21 (16.03%) |
| Personal/Lifestyle posts | 14 (10.69) |
| Product Review | 29 (22.14%) |

| Fashion bloggers have inspired for their style and outfits | Frequency |
|--|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 0 (0%) |
| Disagree | 6 (4.58%) |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 12 (9.16%) |
| Agree | 74 (56.49%) |
| Strongly agree | 39 (29.77%) |

Table 14 show that a maximum number of internet users who follow fashion bloggers are unmarried, interested in clothing & accessories, and they agree that fashion bloggers have inspired their style and outfits. This inference may be noted.

VI. FINDINGS

From the above study we can infer that:

- About 42 percent of the readers who keep themselves updated about fashion blogging are youngsters belonging to the age group of 21-25 years.

Hence the youngsters follow fashion bloggers more than others.

- About 81.33 percent of females are more interested in getting information about various aspects of fashion blogs. Females are greater followers of fashion bloggers compared to males.
- About 46 percent indicates that most of the respondents spend between INR 5,000-15,000 a month.
- About 79.33 percent gives a clear indication that the respondents who are single are more interested towards fashion blogging.
- About 87.33 percent indicates that highest number of people follow various fashion bloggers to keep themselves updated about fashion or lifestyle.
- About 51.14 percent shows that most of the people like blog posts which are related to clothing and accessories which is followed by reviews of the product and beauty products.
- About 70.23 percent indicates the highest number of blog readers get their fashion inspiration from fashion blogs followed by fashion magazines, luxury brands/designers, and friends & family.
- About 82.44 percent indicates that the highest number of blog readers keep a constant check on the blog posts and keep themselves updates about the latest blog which is maintained by the blogger.
- About 86.26 percent of the respondents agree that the fashion bloggers are creating awareness about latest trends/style and brands, and only 4.58 percent of the sample disagree.
- About 63.36 percent of respondents agree, and 25.95 percent strongly agree that the fashion bloggers are influential in making the respondents buy branded products and only 3.05 percent disagree. However, this is an exploratory study so a further in-depth study with proper hypothesis formulation may be conducted on this topic to arrive at a concrete conclusion.

CONCLUSION

This paper is based on an exploratory research on "Influence of Fashion bloggers on the cognitive attributes amid youth" which was conducted on a sample of Internet users. Further research may be carried out on the topic for a precise conclusion.

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Appendix:

Questionnaire:

1. **What age group do you belong to?**
 - (a) Below 20 years
 - (b) 21-25 years
 - (c) 26-30 years
 - (d) 31-35 years
 - (e) Above 35 years
2. **Gender**
 - (a) Male
 - (b) Female
 - (c) Others
3. **What is your monthly expenditure?**
 - (a) Less than INR5,000
 - (b) INR5,000-INR15,000
 - (c) INR15,000-INR25,000
 - (d) Above INR25,000
4. **What is your marital status?**
 - (a) Single
 - (b) Married
 - (c) Separated
 - (d) Divorced
 - (e) Widow
5. **Do you follow any fashion bloggers?**
 - (a) Yes
 - (b) No
6. **What kind of posts would interest you the most?**
 - (a) Clothing and accessories
 - (b) Beauty products
 - (c) Personal/Lifestyle posts
 - (d) Product Reviews
7. **From where do you get your inspirations about fashion from?**
 - (a) Fashion blogs
 - (b) Fashion Magazines
 - (c) Friends and family
 - (d) Designers
 - (e) Others
8. **Do you keep a constant check on your favorite fashion blogger's post?**
 - (a) Yes
 - (b) No
9. **Fashion bloggers have helped you to gain inspirations for your outfit and style by their blogs.**
 - (a) Strongly disagree
 - (b) Disagree
 - (c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - (d) Agree
 - (e) Strongly agree
10. **Fashion bloggers are influential in making you buy branded items.**
 - (a) Strongly disagree
 - (b) Disagree
 - (c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - (d) Agree
 - (e) Strongly agree

