

## **The Impact of Social Media Food Vloggers on Generation Z's Purchasing Intentions in Sri Lanka's Food & Beverage Industry**

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This study investigates how social media food vloggers influence the purchase intentions of Generation Z customers in Sri Lanka's food and beverage (F&B) business. The study fills a vital vacuum by investigating how influencer marketing, which is defined by credibility, attractiveness, information quality, and electronic word of mouth (EWOM), affects customer attitudes and purchasing decisions. It also investigates the mediating function of consumer attitude in this relationship. This study, which is based on the theoretical frameworks of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), adds to our knowledge of influencer-driven consumer behavior, particularly in a localized cultural context.

A quantitative research technique was used to obtain primary data from 385 Generation Z respondents in Sri Lanka using a structured online survey. Participants were selected using convenience sampling, with the study focusing on those who actively engage with food vloggers' social media material. The questionnaire included Likert-scale items to assess credibility, attractiveness, information quality, word-of-mouth, consumer attitudes, and purchase intentions. Data was analyzed using SPSS software, with descriptive, correlation, regression, and mediation analyses performed to test hypotheses and provide crucial findings.

According to the report, 87% of Generation Z respondents regularly follow food vloggers on social media sites including Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram. The data show that social media food vloggers have a major effect on consumer purchasing decisions. All influencer marketing sub-variables, including credibility, attractiveness, information quality, and EWOM, had a favorable impact on purchase intentions. Furthermore,

customer attitudes were shown to buffer the association between social media food vloggers and purchase intentions. These findings are consistent with previous research, emphasizing the significance of authenticity, relatability, and quality content in influencing customer behavior. Furthermore, food vloggers like "Stories of Lash" have been acknowledged as significant in creating customer preferences.

This study's limitations include the use of a convenience sample, which may not completely reflect Sri Lanka's Generation Z population. Furthermore, the study focusses on the food and beverage business, restricting the findings' applicability to other industries. The cross-sectional design limits the capacity to notice changes over time. Self-reported statistics may potentially contain bias caused by social desirability or respondents' misreading of questions. Theoretically, this study advances our knowledge of influencer marketing by including emotional and social components into established behavioral frameworks. Practically, it provides actionable data for F&B marketers looking to exploit the expanding popularity of social media food vloggers. Strategies like connecting with trustworthy and relatable influencers, providing interesting and high-quality material, and using platform-specific capabilities are advocated. Future study might look at the long-term impact of influencer marketing on consumer loyalty and broaden the scope to include additional demographic groups and sectors.

**Keywords:** *Customer attitude, Food & beverage industry, Generation Z, Purchasing intention, Social media food Vloggers*