



Micro-Influencers Shaping Consumer Behaviour In The Adoption Of Sustainable Sanitary Pads

Muskan Arora¹, Dr. K.K Mishra²

¹Research Scholar, University School of Business, Chandigarh University Mohali, Punjab (INDIA)

²Professor, University School of Business, Chandigarh University, Mohali, Punjab (INDIA)

Abstract

This research provides a comprehensive overview of micro-influencer marketing towards sustainability. As digital communication is rising through social media platforms, there is a more significant interaction among individuals globally. As global environmental concerns and sustainable development goals (SDGs) become increasingly critical the transition to eco-friendly menstrual products is essential. This study focuses on micro-influencers' impact on female consumer behaviour in purchasing sustainable sanitary pads. With their genuine and close-knit connections to niche audiences, micro-influencers significantly promote these products and spread awareness among consumers to foster consumer trust. We conducted a survey of 70 female respondents aged between 18 to 45 years who purchased a sustainable sanitary pad from the recommendation of the micro-influencers. The study revealed that micro-influencers positively impact female consumer behaviour; they trust the reviews and opinions given by the micro-influencers and follow them on social media. The research also examined the platforms through which the respondent first heard about sustainable sanitary pads, the factors influencing the consumer decision, such as environmental impact, comfort, and health benefits, and the challenges consumers face when adopting ecofriendly sanitary pads. This study can also serve as a significant reference for policymakers striving to accomplish the SDGs by 2030. Menstrual hygiene is directly linked to several SDGs, including promoting good health and well-being (SDG 3), advancing gender equality (SDG 5), sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12), and climate change (SDG 13). The results revealed that social media, especially Instagram, plays a dominating role in creating awareness of these pads. They highlighted the effectiveness of micro-influencer marketing in promoting sustainable pads. The insights gained offer valuable implications for marketers, sustainability advocates, and policymakers seeking to leverage micro-influencer marketing to foster sustainable menstrual hygiene practices and support global sustainability objectives.

Keywords: *Micro-influencers, consumer behaviour, health benefits, menstrual hygiene, SDG:s Sanitary pads, Eco-friendly product*

Periods: *The word is no longer an extended taboo.* *Recently, women and men have increasingly discussed menstrual health, and significant awareness has been raised through films and other social media. However, there remains a lack of understanding about the 'long-lasting,' 'stain-free,' and 'soft' sanitary pads that various brands promote and are readily available at pharmacies. Experts highlight these plastic-based sanitary napkins' detrimental environmental and human health effects, underscoring the urgent need for sustainable alternatives.*

1. Introduction

In an era when social media has revolutionised how customers interact with brands and decide to make purchases, giving rise to another phenomenon called Influencer Marketing (Satpathy et al., 2022) Influencers have strengthened collaborations with brands, ensuring sustainable marketing. Global influencer marketing investment will increase to \$14.4 billion by 2024.(Agnihotri et al., 2023)Social media users can build a large following by creating distinctive and engaging content and nurturing strong relationships with their followers. These influencers share regular updates and brand information by creating more appealing content, which is valuable to brands because influencers are seen as credible experts in their respective fields of interest (Conde & Casais, 2023) Consumers often depend on influencers for guidance and perspectives regarding their experiences. The content created by these influencers is generally seen as more appealing than advertising scripts created by marketing professionals. Consumers perceive social media influencers as more accessible and trustworthy than other celebrities. (Mishra & Ashfaq, 2023)

Most of the previous studies have concentrated on engaging influencers with consumers., particularly with celebrities or macro-influencers, with minimal attention given to micro-influencers(J. Chen et al., 2024). Recent studies have shown that micro-influencers with limited network sizes attract more attention and achieve higher engagement by communicating intimately with their smaller followers than macro-influencers (Park et al., 2021). Micro-influencers have become increasingly important in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in promoting sustainable products. Micro-influencers, individuals with a smaller but more engaged following, have been found to significantly influence their audience's choices, including adopting eco-friendly alternatives such as sustainable sanitary pads (Zhang et al., 2021). Hence, Micro-influencers tend to create more sales prospects and achieve superior conversions than macro-influencers. From the consumer's perspective, they can be perceived as friends, contributing to the brand's relationship with consumers (Vilkaite-Vaitone, 2024). Environmental sustainability has become a crucial concern for consumers around the globe, driving the demand for eco-friendly products. Sustainable sanitary pads, which offer an environmentally responsible alternative to conventional sanitary products, are gaining popularity (Tu et al., 2021). Menstrual waste poses environmental and health issues when single-use pads are disposed of. Micro-influencers can play a crucial role in raising awareness, dispelling misconceptions, and encouraging their audience to consider alternative, environmentally friendly options through social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and YouTube by leveraging their authenticity, credibility, and relatability to influence purchasing decisions (Jalali & Khalid, 2021). Micro-influencers have the potential to drive the adoption of eco-friendly products, as their perceived authenticity and relatability allow them to communicate the benefits of sustainable options effectively and inspire their followers to make more conscious consumption decisions (Sun & Wang, 2019). Social influence and habit formation are key psychological factors driving sustainable consumer behaviours. Micro-influencers, with their ability to leverage social proof and foster habit-forming behaviours, are well-positioned to capitalise on these dynamics and drive the adoption of sustainable sanitary pads among their followers.

Overview Of Environmental and Health Issues Related to Plastic-Based Sanitary Pads

The menstrual cycle marks the start of a female's reproductive life. All girls and women go through menstruation as a normal biological process from around 12-13 years of age up to 45-50 years.(Ghosh et al., 2020)Each woman's menstrual cycle has varying lengths, but the average duration is around 28 days. An estimated 12.3 billion non-biodegradable or compostable sanitary wastes are generated by 336 million menstruating women in India, leading to challenges in disposal and environmental harm. (Peberdy et al., 2019). Health experts have raised concerns regarding potential issues related to plastic-based sanitary napkins. They have pointed out the increased risk of fungal infections due to moisture accumulation as well as the possibility of pelvic infections, leading to allergies and irritation in the vaginal area(Hand et al., 2023). Despite sustainable alternatives such as reusable cloth pads, menstrual cups, and period underwear, there is

a continued preference for non-degradable products. Disposing of industrially manufactured disposable sanitary pads containing plastic is a concern as they require approximately 500 to 800 years to decompose. (Pasha et al., 2023). India produces a staggering 432 million sanitary napkins yearly, generating significant hazardous pollution that affects the soil, leading to groundwater pollution, soil infertility, and human health risks. (Khan, 2021).

Additionally, the help of micro-influencers and the usage of sustainable menstrual pads can serve as a significant point for policymakers to achieve SDGs in 2030. These SDGs assist nations in achieving a sustainable balance between environmental, economic, and social concerns with 17 goals (Allen et al., 2018). This access is crucial for gender equality and women's empowerment in developing countries. Thus, using biodegradable pads can impact goals such as SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 13 (Climate Action) (Pradhan et al., 2017). Their natural decomposition and use of renewable materials like bamboo or organic cotton minimise the environmental impact compared to traditional menstrual products made from plastics and non-biodegradable materials (Ghosh et al., 2024; Pednekar et al., 2022). This study will highlight how micro-influencers shape consumer behaviour and their perception of purchasing sustainable sanitary pads through social media platforms. Understanding influencer marketing dynamics, especially micro-influencers, and their potential to drive positive. This powerful tool accelerates the transition to a more sustainable and eco-conscious society, which will not only improve their health issues but also be beneficial for the environment and a significant step towards achieving SDGs,

1.1 Objectives

1. To evaluate the impact of Micro-influencers on consumer behaviour toward sustainable sanitary pads
2. To assess the level of awareness and adoption of sustainable sanitary pads among consumers
3. To identify the factors that drive consumer preferences towards sustainable sanitary pads.
4. To identify the challenges faced by consumers in the adoption of sustainable sanitary pads.

2. Literature review

2.1 The Concept of Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is a strategy in which brands collaborate with individuals who have a predominantly large social media following to Promote products or services online. (Farivar & Wang, 2021) Those individuals are known as influencers or content creators. These people create genuine content that connects with their followers, encouraging interaction and promoting brand recognition (Kanaveedu & Kalapurackal, 2022) With a substantial following, influencers can act as influential marketing representatives who consistently produce informative content on the social media to endorse brands and enhance marketing potential by building a large following. Influencer marketing allows marketers to effectively reach their target audience through individuals with large followings on social media and manage to comprehend marketing outcomes, unlike traditional word-of-mouth marketing (Vrontis et al., 2021). Marketers are granted visibility into influencers' view counts, likes, comments on the posts, and feedback on their products and services. Consequently, Influencer marketing has become a fundamental marketing tool for international brands (Álvarez-Monzoncillo, 2022). Given the trends and strong presence on platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Instagram, everyday individuals can become influencers on social media. Many companies have developed Influencer Marketing tactics to fortify their connection with customers by increasing consumer engagement and leveraging social media influencers to promote interaction between target buyers and the brand.

2.2 Social Media Platforms and Types of Influencers

Social media influencers consistently engage with users on various social media platforms to endorse products to their intended consumer base (Umair Manzoor et al., 2020). These influencers typically boast a large audience across different social media channels such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and personal blogs (Mehrotra et al., 2023). Their target audience varies across different demographic categories, encompassing specific age groups and viewer characteristics (Jacobson & Harrison, 2022). They are perceived as approachable, authentic, and relatable to the public. Their informal and casual communication style makes

their followers feel more connected to them than other celebrities, leading to a perception of genuineness. This also helps them engage with a broader audience, including digital natives. (K. & Panakaje, 2022). Influencers can help brands to promote their products to attract potential customers through social media. Many different brands look to partner with influencers who have large followers. (Leung et al., 2022). Influencers are classified depending on the number of followers they have in the following manners. (Ouvrein et al., 2021)

Table 2.1: Types of social media influencers

Types of social media influencers	Number of followers
Celebrity Influencers	1 million
Macro Influencers	100 000 – 1 million
Micro Influencers	10 000 – 100 000
Nano Influencers	10 000

2.2.1 Micro-influencers

For micro-influencers, the key is not the number of followers. What matters most is how engaged their followers are with their content. (Farivar & Wang, 2022) Micro-influencers engage highly and receive more attention from a smaller group of followers than Macro-influencers. They are experts in specific niches and put in more effort (Harrigan et al., 2021) Therefore, brands can reach their target audience by collaborating with micro-influencers who resonate with a particular audience (Agustina et al., 2024) They appear more authentic and seem to engage with their followers, which enhances the relationship between brand customers. Moreover, consumers find the content more appealing than traditional advertising, particularly micro-influencer content (Kay et al., 2020) Their content is typically entertaining, more informative, and aligned with their traits. Therefore, collaborating with micro-influencers can aid brands in creating genuine content and optimising budgets for consumer engagement. (Haenlein et al., 2020) Professionals working in the fashion, luxury, and beauty sectors frequently opt for the Micro-influencers due to their expertise, influence in niche markets, and effective engagement with their audience. According to a survey conducted by Activate, 80% of micro-influencers publish their organic content through Instagram. (Yıldırım, 2021) This means that Instagram would be the most effective platform for marketers to connect with their targeted audience through influencers, which shows the platform most preferred by micro-influencers.

2.3 The Rise of Sustainable Sanitary Pads

Eco-friendly sanitary pads are designed to reduce environmental impact using biodegradable or reusable materials that reduce the harm caused by regular pads. (Panjwani et al., 2023) Biodegradable hygienic pads play an essential role in concurrently fighting against women's health and environmental

problems.(Chatterjee, 2018) Instead of traditional plastic-based products, these pads are made with a proprietary mix of natural cotton/bamboo and plant-derived polymers that decompose independently.



Biodegradable pads

Source: (Green Feels: Sustainable & Plastic Free Lifestyle Online Store, n.d.)

These pads reduce skin irritation, discomfort, risk of vaginal infections, cancer as well as other diseases caused by chemical-heavy traditional pads (A et al., 2017). Biodegradable pads significantly reduce the use of plastics (which still exist in large quantities with conventional sanitary napkins), an essential source of environmental pollution. These pads must be easily recyclable, breaking down naturally and returning to the environment without harming it (Pednekar et al., 2022). This process helps reduce the ecological footprint and minimises the plastic waste problem by naturally breaking down in landfills. This endeavour is essential for promoting women's health and dignity and protecting the environment. (Hand et al., 2023) Biodegradable pads often involve resource-efficient processes and local manufacturing, making them more accessible and affordable (Deb et al., 2023) Various sanitary pads are available, like Pee Safe, Saathi (Banana Fibre), Anandi, Bliss, helium bamboo premium pads, carmesi, etc (Agbaku et al., 2020). How the product is marketed and endorsed could be a critical factor in influencing a shift in product usage. Social media influencers have emerged as powerful change agents, influencing consumer behaviours and attitudes towards sustainability. (Bhardwaj et al., 2024) They can educate their followers about sustainable practices, eco-friendly sanitary pads, and their positive environmental and health impact.

2.4 Current Market Overview of Sustainable Sanitary Pads

The **biodegradable sanitary napkin market** size was valued at **USD 1.7 billion in 2022** and is anticipated to reach **USD 10.2 billion by 2032** at a **CAGR of 19.5%**. Biodegradable sanitary napkins refer to napkins manufactured from 100% natural products, live banana fibre, cornstarch, bamboo, organic cotton and other such materials to prove higher absorption and comfortable quality and material to the User. The demand for biodegradable sanitary napkins is increasing due to infections and other health issues caused by disposable napkins and growing awareness of the environmental impact of non-biodegradable alternatives.



Source: (Data et al.: Market Research & Consulting Services, n.d.)

This graph shows that Asia's biodegradable sanitary napkin market holds a significant share. The demand for sustainable and biodegradable pads is rising, especially in Japan and India, due to raising awareness about the drawbacks and environmental impact of using non-biodegradable sanitary pads (“Biodegradable Sanitary Napkins Market To Reach USD 10.2 - GlobeNewswire”) In India, many companies are actively marketing their biodegradable products in schools and colleges and through social media. Influencers are being used to raise awareness about the benefits of using sustainable pads. NGOs in India are promoting using sustainable and biodegradable napkins for tribal populations. This is helping to create awareness about the benefits of such napkins. However, the younger generations are more concerned about environmental issues, and their active participation is creating awareness and shaping a hopeful future for sustainable products.

2.5 The Power of Micro-influencers and Their influence on sustainable sanitary pads

In recent years, social media's influence has expanded. Social media is a powerful platform for raising awareness on various subjects, including social and public health issues (Kumar et al., 2023). With the progress in communication technologies and the expansion of the internet market in India, social media can effectively support menstrual health and hygiene campaigns (M. Chen, 2024). According to a report by **Adweek**, social media campaigns have increased brand awareness by 60% for sanitary pad brands in India. Due to its widespread reach and ability to target specific audiences, Instagram is a powerful tool for promoting feminine hygiene products. (Jalali & Khalid, 2021) Social enterprises and private-label brands like PeeSafe, Sanfe, Carmesi, Sirona, Heyday, Anandi Saathi, and others actively promote sustainable menstrual choices on Instagram. (Mistry et al., 2023) These brands have created impactful campaigns in India using influencer marketing, especially micro-influencers, to raise awareness about sustainable menstrual care options (Petchimuthu et al., 2019). Micro-influencers typically have social media followings ranging from 1,000 to 100,000. Despite their smaller reach than macro-influencers, micro-influencers are known for engaging more intimately with their audience (Rahmah et al., 2019). This engagement is often driven by perceived authenticity, as followers view micro-influencers as real individuals sharing genuine experiences (Gupta et al., R, 2019). Studies have demonstrated that micro-influencers can significantly impact consumer behaviour, particularly in niche markets such as sustainable sanitary pads.



Here are some images of micro-influencers endorsing sustainable sanitary pads. Each image highlights different features of the products and emphasises their eco-friendly advantages. The influencer's smile and the presentation of the products convey a positive endorsement. The packaging emphasises the product's organic qualities, with slogans like "Periods are normal, Rashes are not," focusing on comfort and health benefits. The tagline "Ensure easy and hygienic disposal" also emphasises the product's convenience and support for sustainable practices. The influencer's post on Instagram indicates that she has switched to these organic and chemical-free pads and encourages her followers to do the same. (Li & Xiong, 2017) The background and natural setting add to the organic feel of the product, reinforcing the message of sustainability. The use of hashtags like #biodegradablepads and #menstrualhygiene highlights the focus on eco-friendly menstrual products and the influencer's role in spreading awareness (Wang et al., 2022) These influencers use a combination of personal stories, relevant content, and product benefits to influence consumer behaviour and drive the adoption of sustainable sanitary pads.

3. Research Methodology

The study uses an exploratory research design to determine how micro-influencers shape consumer behaviour towards sustainable sanitary pads. Both primary and secondary data were acquired for the research. A well-structured Questionnaire has been used to collect the primary data through Google Forms. The non-probability purposive sampling technique has been used to generate a sample from menstruating females who purchase sustainable sanitary pads. The questionnaire was circulated among the females, and a sample of 70 female respondents was collected. The study subjects were women aged between 18 to 45 years.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Demographic analysis

The data has been obtained from the 70 female participants. The majority of the 46 respondents fall within the 25-34 age range, making up 68% of the sample. This indicates that the study predominantly targets younger adults. For the educational background, Most respondents (60.9%) hold a **Postgraduate Degree**, which suggests a highly educated sample, and for the income level, Most respondents (51.4%) fall into the **30,000 - 50,000 income** range, indicating a middle-income demographic. Here is an overview of the demographic attributes of the survey respondents in the Table 1

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-24	8	11.6
	25-34	46	68
	35-44	12	17.4
	+45	2	2.9
Education level	High school	3	4.3
	Undergraduate Degree	4	29
	Postgraduate Degree	41	60.9
	Other degrees	20	5.8
Income	10000	4	5.8
	10000-30000	26	38.2
	30000-50000	35	51.4
	50000 above	3	4.4

4.2 Awareness of sustainable sanitary pads

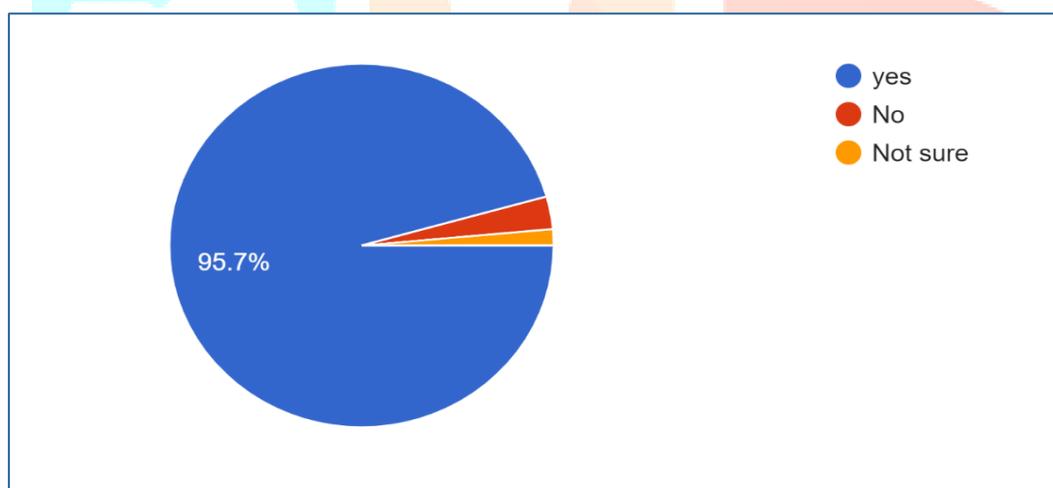


Figure 1: Respondents aware of the sustainable sanitary pads

In Fig 1: The pie chart shows that The vast majority of participants, 95.7% of the individuals, are knowledgeable about sustainable sanitary pads, indicating a high level of awareness among them. The sample population and showing that these products are well known among the target audience. This could be due to the effectiveness of marketing education or a word-of-mouth influence. A small portion of respondents indicated that they are not aware of sustainable sanitary pads. Although this may seem insignificant, but targeting an educational campaign could help increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of sustainable sanitary pads.

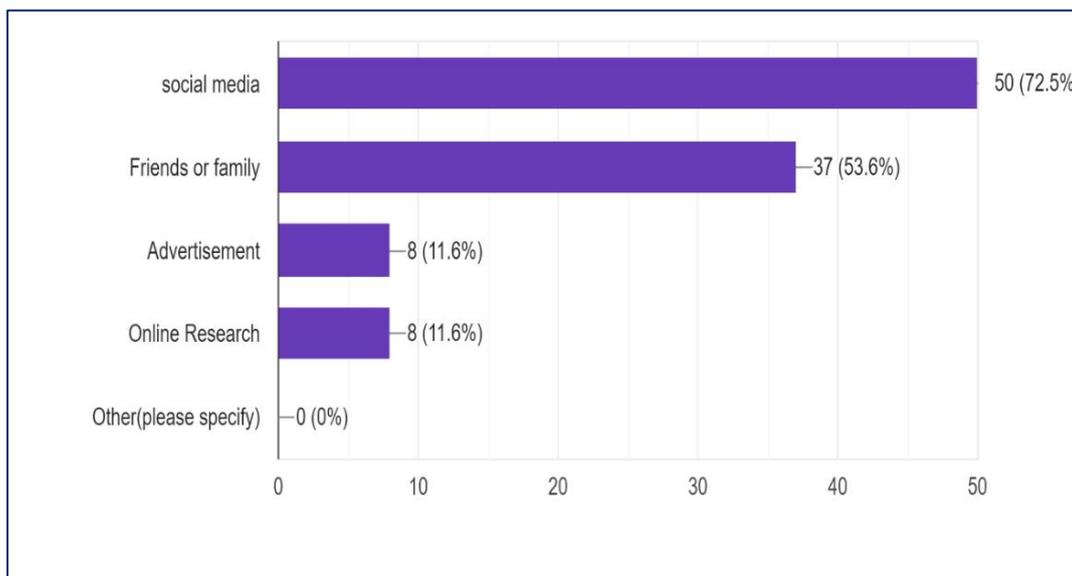


Figure2: The sources from which the respondents first heard about sustainable sanitary pads

In the Figure 2: The chart shows the distribution of responses from participants regarding where they first heard about sustainable sanitary pads. It shows that 50 respondents (72.5%) stated that they first heard about these pads through Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, and YouTube, which plays a pivotal role in introducing the consumer to sustainable alternatives in menstrual products, especially through the influence of micro-influencers, where 37 respondents 53.6% mentioned that they hear about this product from friends or family which shows as an influential source of information and also highlighting the role of word of mouth communication in spreading awareness about sustainable sanitary pads. 16 respondents (23.2%) learned about these pads from other sources like advertisements and online research like digital ads, and some respondents actively searched for information online, including reading articles, blog posts and product reviews. The result shows the effectiveness of social media and personal networks in shaping the awareness and adoption of sustainable sanitary pads.

4.3 Social media platform

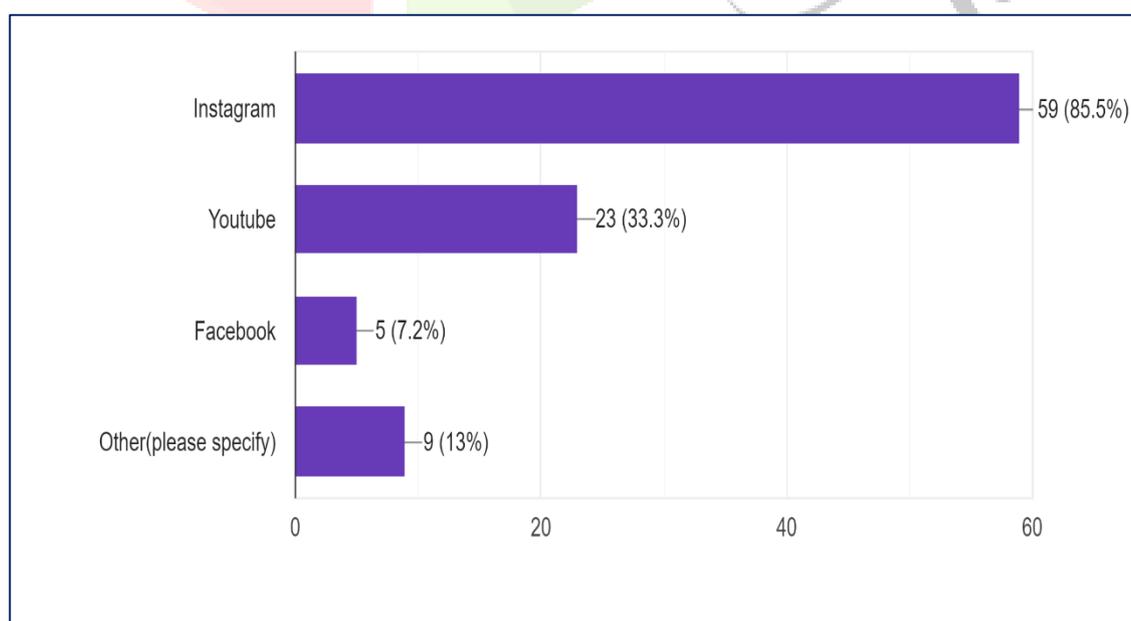


Figure3: Micro-influencers reach by various social media platforms for promoting sustainable sanitary pads

The bar chart represents the platforms where respondents have noticed micro-influencers promoting sustainable sanitary pads. A total of 70 responses were collected from which 59 respondents (85.5%) have seen micro-influencers on Instagram promoting sustainable sanitary pads, 23 respondents (33.3%) indicated that they have come across micro-influencers promoting these products on YouTube, 5 respondents (7.2%) reported seeing promotions on Facebook. They stated that they used Facebook for entertainment, with the posted comments or promotions of micro-influencers having little influence on them. 9 respondents (13%) mentioned other platforms. The survey statistics show that Instagram is the primary platform for micro-influencers to promote sustainable sanitary pads, likely due to its highly visual format and large user base.

4.4 Brand Preference and Purchasing Behaviour

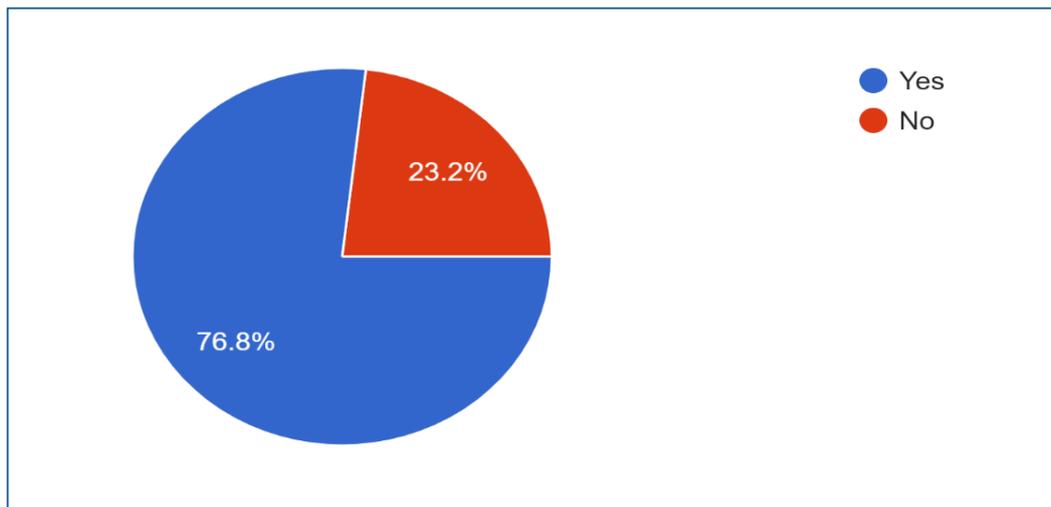


Figure4: Do Consumers purchase products after seeing a recommendation from a micro-influencer

Most of the respondents, 76.8%, have purchased sustainable sanitary pads after seeing a recommendation from an influencer. This is the highest percentage of respondents who made a purchase, and they say that Micro-influencers are frequently perceived as being more authentic and relatable than the other influencers. Their recommendations are genuine and trustworthy. The micro-influencers have not influenced 23.2 % of the respondents; they might be involved in addressing concerns or barriers they face, such as cost, availability or scepticism about the product benefits.

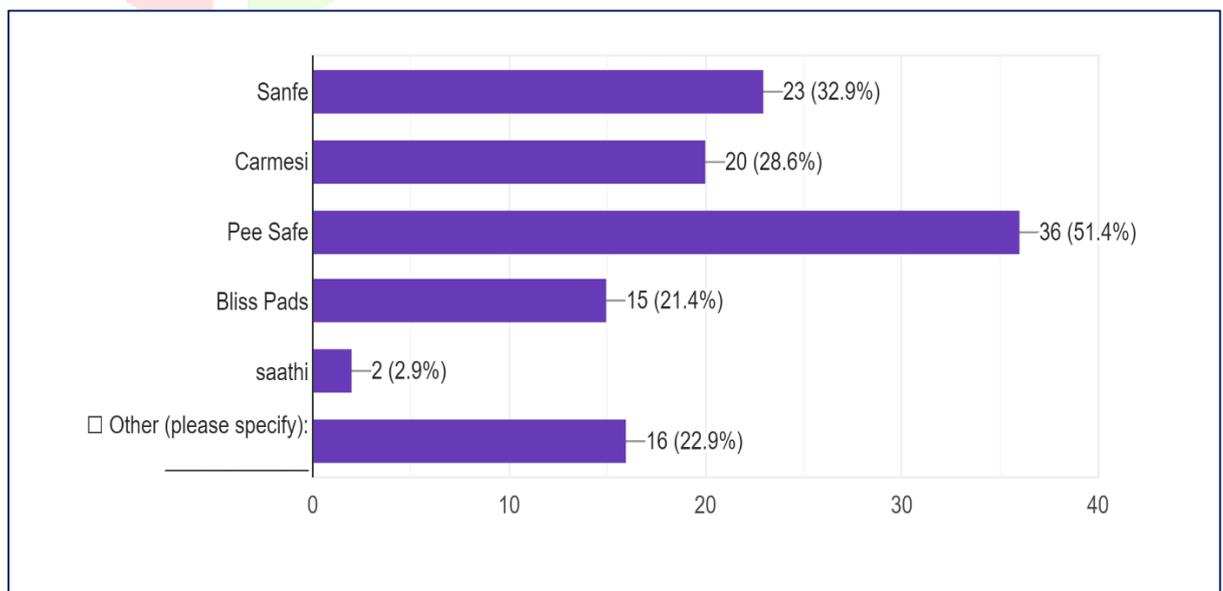


Figure 5: Brand purchase by the consumer after seeing a micro-influencer recommendation

The majority of (51.4%) respondents preferred to purchase the pee-safe brand with the recommendation of micro-influencers because pee is a well-known brand in the hygiene sector recognised for its quality and safety, and it is designed to be comfortable and safe, reducing the risk of rashes and irritation which is particularly important for consumers with sensitive skin. Only 2.9% of the respondents purchase Saathi pads; although Saathi is well-known for sustainable and biodegradable products, maybe consumers are not aware of this brand; it may have a lower brand recognition, availability, less extensive marketing and distribution network compared to the more prominent brands like pee-safe, sanfe and carmesi.

4.5 Factors Influencing Purchase Decision

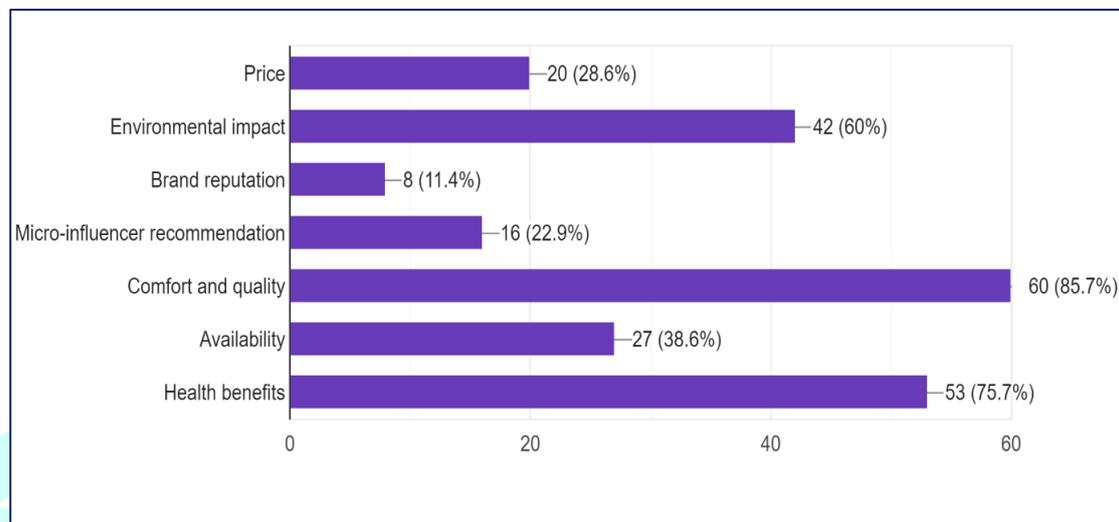


Figure 6: Factors influencing consumers' purchase decision towards sustainable sanitary pads.

The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents prioritise comfort and quality (85.7%), health benefits (75.7%), and environmental impact (60%) when choosing menstrual products. This suggests that consumers prefer high-quality products with sound absorption and comfort, especially for menstrual use. Additionally, consumers are becoming more aware of the high potential risk associated with traditional sanitary pads, such as exposure to harmful chemicals and the risk of vaginal infections. Furthermore, a growing awareness of environmental issues influences the decision to purchase sustainable sanitary pads. While the least affecting factor was the brand reputation, 11.4%, which has less influence on purchase decisions, it appears to be less influential than direct product attributes like comfort, quality, and health benefits. Consumers may prioritise tangible benefits over brand names regarding sustainable products.

4.6 Challenges in Adopting Sustainable Sanitary Pads

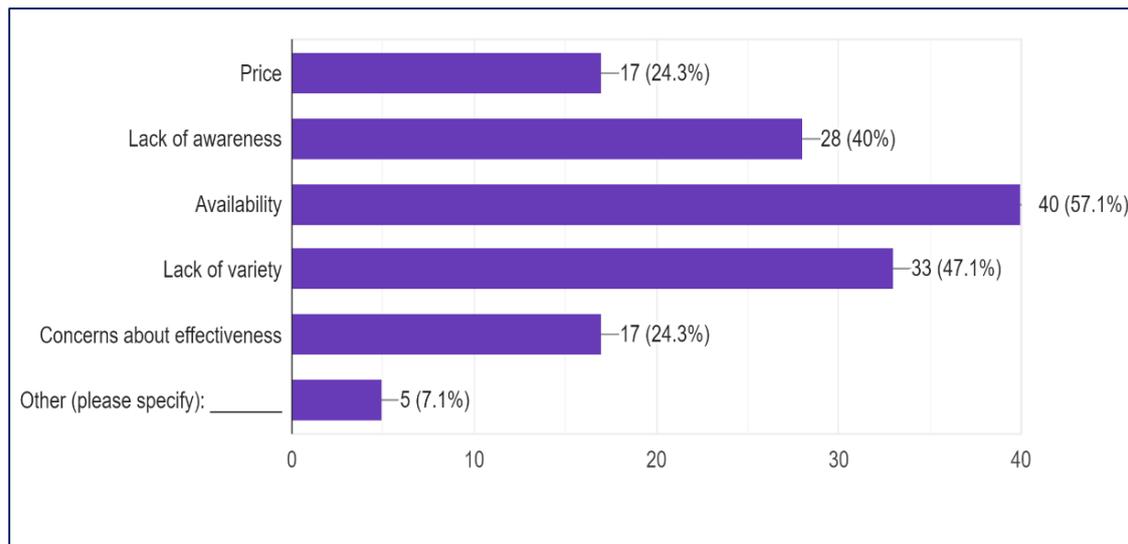


Figure7: The main challenges faced by consumers in adopting sustainable sanitary pads

The survey shows that 57.1% of respondents have faced the challenge of availability in opting for sustainable sanitary pads. Maybe these pads are not widely available because conventional sanitary pads have a more substantial market presence, making it harder for sustainable alternatives to gain shelf space. Other concerns include low awareness, pricing variety, and effectiveness. These concerns can be improved with educational campaigns that increase awareness about the benefits. Additionally, brands must improve their distribution networks and collaborate with influencers to raise awareness about the products through social media.

5. Conclusion & Findings

The impact of social media influencers has experienced substantial growth in recent times, with their role increasingly recognized as crucial for promotion on social media platforms. (Wielki, 2020), especially micro-influencers. Research findings indicate that micro-influencers, who have a smaller follower count, typically experience higher levels of engagement and conversion rates than celebrities or Mega-influencers (Hughes et al., 2019). They share their daily experiences, lifestyles, and consumption patterns with their followers. Additionally, consumers respond positively to Social media influencers endorsing brands, products, or ideas."(Berne-Manero & Marzo-Navarro, 2020). The main objective of this research was to analyse the impact of Micro-influencers on consumer purchase behaviour of sustainable sanitary pads through social media. The statistics show that micro-influencers positively impact consumer behaviour in purchasing sustainable sanitary pads. The majority of the (76.8%) of participants purchased sustainable sanitary pads after seeing a recommendation from a micro-influencer, which underscores the efficiency of influencer marketing in this niche. The participants also said they trusted the influencers' opinions, reviews, and recommendations regarding the sustainable consumption of pads. A substantial majority of respondents are aware of these pads, which shows that the influencers have increased awareness regarding sustainability through social media and ultimately increased the sales of the brands. The study has also highlighted the key factors such as comfort, quality, health benefits, and environmental impact in marketing campaigns that can align with consumer priorities and drive purchase decisions. This will also help contribute to the SDG to save the earth and reduce the risk of diseases among women. Improving the distribution networks to make sustainable sanitary pads easily available in different locations is also essential. Additionally, raising awareness about the benefits and availability of sustainable sanitary pads through specific educational campaigns can help tackle the lack of awareness. Addressing misconceptions and concerns about the effectiveness of sustainable sanitary pads is crucial for building consumer confidence and promoting

adoption. Also, It is crucial to break the stigma associated with menstruation to provide women with accurate information and promote well-informed decision-making.

Findings of the study

- The analysis's outcome shows that micro-influencers positively shape consumers' behaviour towards purchasing sustainable sanitary pads.
- 68.6% of the respondents say they follow social media micro-influencers promoting sustainability-related content (e.g., eco-friendly products, sustainable living).
- 75.5 % of respondents say they have seen the micro-influencers promoting sustainable sanitary pads on social media platform.
- Among various social media platform, Micro-Influencers use Instagram mainly to promote their product because Instagram has over 2 billion active users, providing a vast audience for influencers and brands.
- 77.1% of people say they trust the recommendation of the Micro-Influencers and purchase sustainable sanitary pads from the recommendation of influencers.
- 51.4% of the respondents chose the pee-safe brand to purchase pads. Although Carmesi, Saathi, and Bliss also manufacture biodegradable pads, certain factors, such as a strong brand reputation, innovative products, and effective influencer marketing, impact the purchase decision.
- The most influential factors in the decision to purchase sanitary pads were comfort and quality (85.7%), health benefits (75.7%), and environmental impact (60%). These factors highlight the significance of product attributes and consumer values in purchasing decisions.
- The majority of respondents faced challenges in availability, with 57.1% experiencing difficulties. Therefore, improving the distribution networks is crucial to ensure sustainable sanitary pads are easily accessible.

6. Future study

Although this study has contributed to new insights into influencer marketing contributing to sustainable consumption and acquire a more deeper understanding, But this research has some limitations that must be tackled in further research. The research has concentrated on the influence of micro-influencers on consumer behavior. Future research could consider a broader range of influencers, from micro to macro, to compare their effectiveness in promoting sustainable products across different social media platforms. The study utilised a limited sample size of 70 participants, which could restrict the generalizability of the results. However, future studies can take a large sample size and provide more robust and generalizable results. The study focuses specifically on sustainable sanitary pads. However, studies in the future may examine a wide range of sustainable products that provide a more comprehensive understanding of shaping consumer behaviour towards sustainability.

References

- A, B., PM, K., & SD, A. (2017). Natural and Sustainable Raw Materials for Sanitary Napkin. *Journal of Textile Science & Engineering*, 07(04). <https://doi.org/10.4172/2165-8064.1000308>
- Agbaku, C. A., Yahaya, A. S., Junhua, F., Chengqi, S., & Linda, W. (2020). Jute Plant- A Bio-Degradable Material for Making Sanitary Pads for Sustainable Development. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 8(06), 162–170. <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijssrm/v8i06.fe01>
- Agustina, S., Amran, A., Kesuma Dewi, S. W., Komalasari, Y., Putriyandari, R., & Drajat, D. Y. (2024). Going Green: Unleashing the Potential of Green Product Knowledge and Influencer Marketing in Eco-Friendly Sanitary Product Selection. *Journal of International Conference Proceedings*, 6(6), 356–368. <https://doi.org/10.32535/jicp.v6i6.2836>

- Allen, C., Metternicht, G., & Wiedmann, T. (2018). Initial progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): a review of evidence from countries. *Sustainability Science*, 13(5), 1453–1467. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-018-0572-3>
- Álvarez-Monzoncillo, J. M. (2022). *The Dynamics of Influencer Marketing*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003134176>
- Aw, E. C.-X., & Agnihotri, R. (2023). Influencer marketing research: review and future research agenda. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2023.2235883>
- Berne-Manero, C., & Marzo-Navarro, M. (2020). Exploring How Influencer and Relationship Marketing Serve Corporate Sustainability. *Sustainability*, 12(11), 4392. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12114392>
- Bhardwaj, S., Kumar, N., Gupta, R., Baber, H., & Venkatesh, A. (2024). How do Social Media Influencers Impact Consumer Behaviour? Systematic Literature Review. *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09722629241237394>
- Chatterjee, S. (2018). Sustainable Sanitary Pad: A Case from Tamil Nadu. *IRA International Journal of Education and Multidisciplinary Studies*, 13(3), 54. <https://doi.org/10.21013/jems.v13.n3.p4>
- Chen, J., Zhang, Y., Cai, H., Liu, L., Liao, M., & Fang, J. (2024). A Comprehensive Overview of Micro-Influencer Marketing: Decoding the Current Landscape, Impacts, and Trends. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(3), 243. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14030243>
- Chen, M. (2024). The Impact of Authenticity and Credibility Factors on Consumer Behavior in the Sustainable Fashion Industry on Weibo--Taking Micro-Influencers and Mega-Influencers as Examples. *Advances in Economics, Management and Political Sciences*, 91(1), 322–328. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2754-1169/91/20241077>
- Conde, R., & Casais, B. (2023). Micro, macro and mega-influencers on Instagram: The power of persuasion via the parasocial relationship. *Journal of Business Research*, 158, 113708. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113708>
- Deb, M. C., & Jain, M. (2023). Changing The Red to Greens-Buying Behavior of Menstrual Products. *Utkal Historical Research Journal*, 1(4), 117-126.
- Farivar, S., & Wang, F. (2021). *Influencer Marketing: Current Knowledge and Research Agenda* (pp. 201–208). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-76520-0_21
- Farivar, S., & Wang, F. (2022). Effective influencer marketing: A social identity perspective. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 67, 103026. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.103026>
- Ghosh, I., Rakholia, D., Shah, K., Bhatt, D., & Das, M. (2020). Environmental Perspective on Menstrual Hygiene Management Along with the Movement towards Biodegradability: A Mini-Review. *Journal of Biomedical Research & Environmental Sciences*, 1(5), 122–126. <https://doi.org/10.37871/jels1129>
- Ghosh, R., Swain, S. K., Khuntia, T., Mohanty, P. K., & Mohanty, D. (2024). Eco-Conscious Menstruation: An Imperative Need Towards Sustainable Sanitary Pads. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 12293–12301.
- Gupta, S., & Mahajan, R. (2019). Role of micro-influencers in affecting behavioural intentions. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 8(45), 189–192.
- Haenlein, M., Anadol, E., Farnsworth, T., Hugo, H., Hunichen, J., & Welte, D. (2020). Navigating the New Era of Influencer Marketing: How to be Successful on Instagram, TikTok, & Co. *California Management Review*, 63(1), 5–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0008125620958166>
- Hand, J., Hwang, C., Vogel, W., Lopez, C., & Hwang, S. (2023). An exploration of organic sanitary products

- for improving menstrual health and environmental impact in the market. *Journal of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Development*, 13(2), 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.2166/washdev.2023.020>
- Harrigan, P., Daly, T. M., Coussement, K., Lee, J. A., Soutar, G. N., & Evers, U. (2021). Identifying influencers on social media. *International Journal of Information Management*, 56, 102246. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102246>
- Hughes, C., Swaminathan, V., & Brooks, G. (2019). Driving Brand Engagement Through Online Social Influencers: An Empirical Investigation of Sponsored Blogging Campaigns. *Journal of Marketing*, 83(5), 78–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242919854374>
- Jacobson, J., & Harrison, B. (2022). Sustainable fashion social media influencers and content creation calibration. *International Journal of Advertising*, 41(1), 150–177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2021.2000125>
- Jalali, S. S., & Khalid, H. B. (2021). The Influence of Instagram Influencers' Activity on Green Consumption Behavior. *Business Management and Strategy*, 12(1), 78. <https://doi.org/10.5296/bms.v12i1.18265>
- K., M., & Panakaje, N. (2022). Social Media as a Promotional Tool in the Fashion Industry: A Case Study on Meta Platforms Inc. *International Journal of Case Studies in Business, IT, and Education*, 351–365. <https://doi.org/10.47992/IJCSBE.2581.6942.0168>
- Kanaveedu, A., & Kalapurackal, J. J. (2022). Influencer Marketing and Consumer Behaviour: A Systematic Literature Review. *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*, 097226292211146. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09722629221114607>
- Kay, S., Mulcahy, R., & Parkinson, J. (2020). When less is more: the impact of macro and micro social media influencers' disclosure. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 36(3–4), 248–278. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2020.1718740>
- Khan, S. (2021). Menstrual Hygiene and Impact on Ecology. *MINDSHARE: International Journal of Research and Development*, pp. 241–247. <https://doi.org/10.55031/mshare.2020.36.Gd.14>
- Kumar, C. K. A., Kumar, G. S., Subrahmanyam, P., Srinivas, B., & Parameshwar, K. (2023). A Comprehensive Review on Biodegradable Sanitary Napkins for Sustainable Menstrual Health and Environmental Hygiene. *Advance Pharmaceutical Journal*, 8(5), 119–127. <https://doi.org/10.31024/apj.2023.8.5.3>
- Leung, F. F., Gu, F. F., Li, Y., Zhang, J. Z., & Palmatier, R. W. (2022). Influencer Marketing Effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing*, 86(6), 93–115. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429221102889>
- Li, C., & Xiong, F. (2017). Social Recommendation With Multiple Influence From Direct User Interactions. *IEEE Access*, p.5,16288–16296. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2017.2739752>
- Mehrotra, S., Mirza, A. Z., Pandey, G. J., & Patel, K. (2023). Acceptance of Sustainable Menstrual Choices among Youth: An Analysis Using UTAUT Perspective.
- Mishra, M. S., & Ashfaq, D. R. (2023). Influencer Impact: Examining the Effect of Influencers on Consumer Behaviour and Purchase Decisions. *Journal of Production, Operations Management and Economics*, pp. 35, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.55529/jpome.35.1.18>
- Mistry, P. A., Konar, M. N., Latha, S., Chadha, U., Bhardwaj, P., & Eticha, T. K. (2023). Chitosan Superabsorbent Biopolymers in Sanitary and Hygiene Applications. *International Journal of Polymer Science*, 2023, pp. 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/4717905>
- Ouvrein, G., Pabian, S., Giles, D., Hudders, L., & De Backer, C. (2021). The web of influencers. A marketing-audience classification of (potential) social media influencers. *Journal of Marketing*

- Management*, 37(13–14), 1313–1342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2021.1912142>
- Panjwani, M., Rapolu, Y., Chaudhary, M., Gulati, M., Razdan, K., Dhawan, A., & Sinha, V. R. (2023). Biodegradable sanitary napkins — a sustainable approach towards menstrual and environmental hygiene. *Biomass Conversion and Biorefinery*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13399-023-04688-7>
- Park, J., Lee, J. M., Xiong, V. Y., Septianto, F., & Seo, Y. (2021). David and Goliath: When and Why Micro-Influencers Are More Persuasive Than Mega-Influencers. *Journal of Advertising*, 50(5), 584–602. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2021.1980470>
- Pasha, C., Aravind, S., Begum, A., & Pasha, S. M. (2023). Antimicrobial and Biodegradable Sanitary Pads with Nanomaterials Fused Polymers. *Asian Journal of Biological Sciences*, 16(3), 218–228. <https://doi.org/10.3923/ajbs.2023.218.228>
- Peberdy, E., Jones, A., & Green, D. (2019). A Study into Public Awareness of the Environmental Impact of Menstrual Products and Product Choice. *Sustainability*, 11(2), 473. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11020473>
- Pednekar, S., Some, S., Rivankar, K., & Thakore, R. (2022). Enabling factors for sustainable menstrual hygiene management practices: a rapid review. *Discover Sustainability*, 3(1), 28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-022-00097-4>
- Petchimuthu, P., Petchimuthu, R., Basha, S. A., Murugan, R. K., Ganapathy, H. S., & Durairaj, U. M. (2019). Production of Cost-Effective, Biodegradable, Disposable Feminine Sanitary Napkins using Banana Fibres. *International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology*, 9(1s4), 789–791. <https://doi.org/10.35940/ijeat.A1145.1291S419>
- Pradhan, P., Costa, L., Rybski, D., Lucht, W., & Kropp, J. P. (2017). A Systematic Study of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Interactions. *Earth's Future*, 5(11), 1169–1179. <https://doi.org/10.1002/2017EF000632>
- Rahmah, S., Ren, D., & Spier, P. (2019). The impact of micro-influencer marketing on millennials purchasing decisions. *Masters diss. Skema Business School*.
- Satpathy, A., Samal, A., Madhavi, K., & Agrawal, R. (2022). The Role of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Buying Decision. *ECS Transactions*, 107(1), 12373–12380. <https://doi.org/10.1149/10701.12373ecst>
- Sun, Y., & Wang, S. (2019). Understanding consumers' intentions to purchase green products in the social media marketing context. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 32(4), 860–878. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-03-2019-0178>
- Tu, J.-C., Lo, T.-Y., & Lai, Y.-T. (2021). Women's Cognition and Attitude with Eco-Friendly Menstrual Products by Consumer Lifestyle. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(11), 5534. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18115534>
- Umair Manzoor, Sajjad Ahmad Baig, Muhammad Hashim, & Abdul Sami. (2020). Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer's Purchase Intentions: The Mediating Role of Customer Trust. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Research*, 3(2), 41–48. <https://doi.org/10.31580/ijer.v3i2.1386>
- Vilkaite-Vaitone, N. (2024). From Likes to Sustainability: How Social Media Influencers Are Changing the Way We Consume. *Sustainability*, 16(4), 1393. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16041393>
- Vrontis, D., Makrides, A., Christofi, M., & Thrassou, A. (2021). Social media influencer marketing: A systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 617–644. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12647>
- Wang, S., Gan, T., Liu, Y., Zhang, L., Wu, J., & Nie, L. (2022). Discover Micro-Influencers for Brands via Better Understanding. *IEEE Transactions on Multimedia*, 24, 2595–2605.

<https://doi.org/10.1109/TMM.2021.3087038>

- Wielki, J. (2020). Analysis of the Role of Digital Influencers and Their Impact on the Functioning of the Contemporary On-Line Promotional System and Its Sustainable Development. *Sustainability*, 12(17), 7138. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12177138>
- Yıldırım, S. (2021). Do green women influencers spur sustainable consumption patterns? Descriptive evidence from social media influencers. *Ecofeminism and Climate Change*, 2(4), 198–210. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EFCC-02-2021-0003>
- Zhang, W., Chintagunta, P. K., & Kalwani, M. U. (2021). Social Media, Influencers, and Adoption of an Eco-Friendly Product: Field Experiment Evidence from Rural China. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(3), 10–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242920985784>

