



## Strategic influencer marketing for electric vehicles – Analysing growth and impact

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### Abstract

Influencer marketing has become an influential approach for shaping consumer perceptions, particularly in growing industries such as electric vehicles (EVs). This study investigates how influencer marketing impacts EV adoption in Chennai by examining the social media influencers influences the consumer awareness, trust and purchasing decisions. Using surveys and case studies of leading EV brands, the research shows that influencers play an essential role in addressing key consumer concerns, including range anxiety, charging infrastructure and overall cost benefits. The results reveal that factors such as influencer credibility, authentic content and the characteristics of the target audience greatly influence engagement levels and purchase intention. The study concludes that when influencer marketing is effectively combined with traditional promotional strategies, it can boost EV adoption in India by increasing consumer confidence and strengthening brand engagement. Overall, this research enhances understanding of the role of influencer marketing in the EV industry and provides recommendations for improving digital marketing strategies to drive EV adoption in Chennai.

**Keywords:** Electric vehicles, influencer marketing, consumer awareness, brand engagement, strategies

### Introduction

Influencers are able to showcase the practical advantages of electric vehicles by creating genuine and relatable content. Influencer marketing for EVs has the potential to become one of the most effective promotional strategies in India, as it enables brands to directly connect with their intended audiences. In today's digital era, social media significantly shapes consumer opinions, and influencer marketing utilizes digital creators who engage users on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and Twitter. This study examines whether demographic factors including age, gender, occupation, and income affect how consumers interact with influencer-generated EV content. Using statistical tools such as chi-square analysis and frequency distribution, the research aims to evaluate the extent to which influencer marketing shapes EV perceptions and whether different demographic groups respond in unique ways. The insights gained will help automobile manufacturers, marketers, and policymakers refine digital marketing strategies, improve consumer education, and support the transition toward sustainable transportation in India.

**Key words:** Electric vehicle, Social media, Influencer marketing, Digital Marketing.

**Social Media Influencers:** Autocar India, MotorBeam and CarDekho

### Review of Literature

Influencer marketing is now a key digital strategy, especially in trust-based sectors like electric vehicles (EVs). This review briefly examines studies on influencer marketing, consumer behavior and their impact on the EV industry in India. Hwang & Zhang, (2018), the research indicates that influencer marketing is effective because audiences develop para social connections with influencers. Unlike traditional celebrities, influencers maintain direct interaction with their followers, which enhances feelings of

authenticity and trust. In the electric vehicle (EV) sector where many consumers have limited personal experience influencers can help reduce doubts and build confidence in the technology. As global concern for sustainability grows, influencers promoting green technologies and eco-friendly lifestyles are becoming increasingly popular Kapoor & Sharma (2022). According to studies, environmentally conscious influencers can change consumer perceptions of electric vehicles by promoting them as sustainable and cost-effective alternatives to traditional automobiles. Several studies reveal that Indian consumers are hesitant to adopt electric vehicles due to factors like as insufficient charging infrastructure, range anxiety, and high initial expenditures Siddiqui & Sharma (2020). However, by sharing real-life experiences, useful ownership insights, and transparent cost-benefit evaluations, digital influencers have become a significant factor in allaying these worries Mehta & Agarwal(2023). According to the Studies, people's reactions to influencer marketing are influenced by their age, gender, and income (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2021). While older consumers appreciate in-depth product comparisons and professional perspectives, younger consumers (18–35) typically favour social media reviews and video content (Gupta & Verma, 2022). In the EV sector, these distinctions aid businesses in developing influencer efforts that are more precisely targeted. People frequently have a prosocial relationship a personal connection with influencers, which makes influencer marketing effective Hwang & Zhang (2018). Influencers engage directly with their followers, in contrast to traditional celebrities, giving them a more genuine and reliable appearance Lou & Yuan (2019). Influencers can assist dispel scepticism and foster confidence in the technology when it comes to EVs, as many customers lack actual experience.

### Scope of the Study

This research investigates the expanding role of digital influencer marketing in shaping consumer awareness,

perceptions and purchase decisions regarding electric vehicles (EVs) in Chennai. Although EV adoption continues to face barriers such as high upfront costs, limited charging infrastructure, range anxiety, and consumer hesitation, influencers on platforms including YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook have emerged as key opinion leaders, offering reviews, comparisons and practical usage insights. The study examines how demographic variables age, gender, occupation and income affect consumer engagement with influencer-driven content and evaluates whether such content effectively addresses specific consumer concerns. It further compares the relative effectiveness of influencer marketing with traditional advertising, emphasizing the ability of influencers to build trust and encourage adoption. The study analyzing the impact of both macro- and micro-influencers, the research identifies the types of content such as product comparisons, maintenance guidance, cost analysis and long-term ownership experiences that most effectively appeal to potential EV buyers. The findings provide strategic guidance for EV manufacturers, marketers, policymakers, and digital creators on optimizing influencer marketing to accelerate EV adoption. The scope is limited to digital influencer marketing, excluding offline advertising, dealership initiatives, and policy-driven campaigns, thereby making the insights particularly relevant to digitally active urban audiences.

**Statement of the Problem**

The adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in Chennai continues to be hindered by several critical issues, including a low level of consumer knowledge, widespread misconceptions about EV technology, and uncertainty when comparing the advantages of EVs over conventional vehicles. Within this context, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for bridging knowledge gaps and enhancing the experiential appeal of EVs. By leveraging trusted voices in the community, influencers on digital platforms provide relatable insights, practical demonstrations, and authentic narratives that help reshape consumer perceptions and foster greater confidence in EV adoption. This research study focuses on the growth and impact of influencer marketing within Chennai’s electric vehicle (EV) sector, highlighting key challenges, best practices, and strategies that can be optimized to accelerate EV adoption.

**1. Objectives**

1. To examine the growth of influencer marketing in promoting EVs in Chennai.
2. To assess the impact of influencer marketing on consumer awareness and adoption of EVs.
3. To identify effective influencer types and content strategies for EV marketing.
4. To explore the challenges associated with using influencer marketing for EVs in Chennai.

**Research Methodology**

The main goals of comprehending the function and efficacy of influencer marketing in promoting electric automobiles in Chennai can be addressed by structuring the research technique. Research Design: Descriptive and exploratory research methods are used in this study. Data Gathering: Primary Data: Google Form questionnaire Websites and articles are examples of secondary data. The 124 responders make up the sample size. Study area: Influencer marketing for electric cars in Chennai is the main topic of this investigation. Data analysis tools include the frequency Chi-square test.

**1. Hypothesis of the Study**

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between age and the type of content preferred when learning about EVs from influencers.

**H0:** Influencers significantly impact consumer perceptions and preferences toward electric vehicles (EVs).

**2. Limitations of the Study**

The study on influencer marketing for electric vehicles (EVs) in Chennai may face several limitations. These include potential sample bias, as the research might primarily focus on urban, tech-savvy demographics, excluding rural populations or older age groups. The study may also focus on short-term effects, neglecting long-term impacts on actual sales, and may not account for the technological barriers that limit access to digital platforms for some groups.

**Analysis & Interpretation**

**Table 6.1:** Frequency Table

Category	Profile	Total Number	Per cent
Gender	Male	50	40.3
	Female	74	59.7
Age	18-25	78	62.9
	25-30	12	9.7
	30-50	24	19.4
	Above 50	10	8.4
Occupation	Employee	26	21
	Self-employee	16	12.9
	Student	66	53.5
	Others	6	9.7
Income	Below ₹20,000	64	51.6
	₹20,001 to ₹40,000	24	19.4
	₹40,001 to ₹60,000	8	6.5
	₹60,001 to ₹80,000	22	17.7
	Above 80,001	6	4.8
Earning Members in Family	1	36	29
	2	76	61.3
	3	12	9.7

**Interpretation**

**H0:** Influencers significantly impact consumer perceptions and preferences toward electric vehicles (EVs).

The study reveals that young consumers (18-25years) are the primary audience for influencer-driven electric vehicle (EV) content, with students (62.9%) showing the highest engagement. Males (40.3%) are more involved than females in EV-related influencer marketing. Income analysis indicates that a significant portion (51.6%) earns up to ₹20,000, highlighting affordability concerns as a potential

barrier to EV adoption. The study also suggests that households with two earning members (61.3%) may have better financial stability for EV purchases. Influencer’s plays crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, especially among younger audiences who rely on social media for information. The findings emphasize the importance of educational, visual, and engaging content, as influencer marketing continues to drive interest in Chennai’s growing EV market.

**Table 6.2:** Chi-Square Test

		What type of content do you prefer when learning about EVs from influencers?				Total
		Comparisons	Maintenance	Price	Reviews	
Age	18-25	9	9	4	17	78
	25-30	1	1	1	1	12
	30-50	1	4	3	4	24
	Above 50	2	1	1	3	10
	Total	13	15	9	25	124

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.132 <sup>a</sup>	9	0.903
Likelihood Ratio	4.268	9	0.893
N of Valid Cases	62		

a. 12 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 58

**Table 6.3:** Chi-Square Tests

Gender	Do you believe influencer play a major role in changing consumer perceptions about EVs in Chennai?				Total
	Agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	
Female	14	5	6	0	25
Male	18	6	12	1	37
Total	32	11	18	1	62

Chi-Square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.318 <sup>a</sup>	3	0.725
Likelihood Ratio	1.68	3	0.641
N of Valid Cases	62		

3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 40

**Interpretation**

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between age and the type of content preferred when learning about EVs from influencers. The chi-square analysis reveals no significant association between age and preferred content type for learning about EVs (p=0.903), as well as between gender and belief in influencers 'impact on EV perception Chennai (p=0.725). This suggests that both content preferences and perceptions of influencer influence are independent of demographic factors in this sample, indicating that EV-related content strategies should focus on broader appeal rather than tailoring to specific age or gender groups.

**Findings**

60%–The majority of respondents fall in to this category, indicating a younger demographic. 59.7%–The majority of respondents are male. 56.5% – The majority of respondents are students. The majority (37.2%) earn up to 20,000, likely indicating a high number of students or entry-level

employees. The majority of respondents 64.5% are single, indicating a younger demographic or individuals not yet married. The majority (61.3%) of respondents belong to 4-member families, suggesting a common household structure. 61.3% of families have 2 earning members, suggesting that dual-income households are the most common. Majority of the respondents i.e., 87% own only one EV dominates the market, making up nearly 80% of total EV ownership. YouTube is the most preferred platform with 45% likely due to its video format, detailed reviews & in-depth EV content.

**1. Suggestions**

The study aims to explore the impact of influencer marketing on the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in Chennai, focusing on consumer perceptions, trust and purchasing decisions. It will analyse which types of influencers such as tech experts, automobile bloggers, eco-activists, or celebrities are most effective in promoting EVs and which social media platforms, including YouTube,

Instagram and Twitter, have the highest influence. This research will employ both primary and secondary data collection methods, including surveys with EV owners and potential buyers, interviews with influencers and marketing professionals, and analysis of past social media campaigns by major EV brands like Tata, MG and Ola Electric. By examining engagement metrics such as likes, shares and comments, the study will assess how consumers interact with influencer-driven EV content.

### Conclusion

Influencer marketing has become a significant driver in shaping consumer perceptions and encouraging the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in Chennai. The study reveals that young consumers aged 18–25, particularly students, form the primary audience for influencer-led EV content, with platforms such as YouTube and Instagram serving as their main sources of information. Male consumers show higher engagement with influencer content, while income levels highlight affordability concerns that may affect adoption rates. The findings indicate that micro-influencers and regional content creators are more effective in fostering trust and educating potential buyers compared to traditional celebrity endorsements. Strategic initiatives including educational content, localized campaigns and real-life test drive experiences are identified as crucial in influencing purchase decisions. At the same time, challenges such as misinformation and exaggerated claims underscore the importance of transparency in influencer collaborations. Overall, the study emphasizes that influencer marketing is not merely a promotional tactic but a pivotal force in shaping the future of Chennai's EV market. By adopting transparent, data-driven and consumer-focused strategies, brands can accelerate the transition to electric mobility and position EVs as a mainstream choice among Chennai's consumers.

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