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Original Article

Can Personal Branding Be More Influential Than Traditional Brand Marketing for Gen Z Consumers?

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ABSTRACT: *Thes rapid growth of the creator economy and social media has literally transformed the interaction between brands and Gen Z consumers. Especially with trusted influencers, personal branding has become a major alternative to traditional brand marketing. This study compares the influence of personal branding and traditional marketing on Gen Z consumers and their buying intention. This study adopts a descriptive and quantitative research design and collects primary data from 300 participants using a self-structured questionnaire, which relies on a 5-point Likert scale. When it comes to data analysis, SPSS v25 was used for statistical tests like Cronbach's Alpha, Multiple Linear Regression, and Pearson's Correlation tests. The Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to determine internal consistency among items in the questionnaire, with an alpha value of 0.914. This study supports H1, as it found a significant moderate relationship between purchase intention and personal branding ($p<0.01$) with Pearson's Correlation test. There is a significant and positive influence of both traditional and personal branding on purchase intention ($p<0.001$) with regression analysis, and H2 was supported. It is observed that personal branding has a significant influence on the purchase intention of Gen Z, while traditional marketing plays a vital role in purchase decisions and brand awareness. This study recommends that brands build credibility, authenticity, personalized communication, and trust to connect with Gen Z.*

KEYWORDS: *Personal Branding, Traditional Brand Marketing, Gen Z Consumers, Purchase Intention, Personalized Communication.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this age of globalization, brands are omnipresent in all walks of life. Building a personal brand has become a matter of debate both in business and academia. However, personal branding is not a new concept, as it has been prevalent for decades among general managers, businesses, politicians, and entertainers. Currently, many people from various positions or environments are relying on personal brands. In addition, personal branding has become a fundamental need for organizations (Hearn, 2008; Baltezarević & Milovanovic, 2014).

With the rise of branding, there are some common principles developed for personal branding. Hence, it is a good start to investigate the well-established literature on branding to understand the principles and concepts of branding. Considering all the debates on branding, there are different points of view among experts. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012), brands have to help consumers make informed decisions, as they reflect product quality. Meanwhile, Aaker (1997) focused on the significance of brand personality to associate human traits with a brand.

There are six levels of branding – value, culture, personality, attributes, benefits and user (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). Studies related to personal branding are based on a range of associations and symbols, giving the same benefits to individuals with strong brand equity (Wight et al., 2009). Personal branding consists of reputation management, attitude, skill set, looks, and styles in a way to run the brand by a marketing team (Wight et al., 2009). Generation Z, or Gen Z, is the term given to a group of people born between 1997 and 2012. It is the coming-of-age generation that can be attracted to brands with different approaches. This generation is defined by different years by various researchers. For example, this cohort is born between 1998 and 2008 according to Răduț (2008).

According to Pew Research Center, 1996 is considered the finishing line for the Millennial generation to be born. Hence, 1997 is the year when Gen Z started being born (Dimock, 2019). On the other hand, Lyons et al. (2017) defined 1993-1999 as the birth years for Gen Z. Overall, older Gen Zs have reached their mid-30s, and younger ones are still in their teens. This generation is also known as Homelanders, iGeneration, Next Generation, and TrueGen (Dimock, 2019; Răduț, 2008; Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

According to Criteo (2017), younger Gen Zs love modern social media platforms like Instagram and Snapchat, while older counterparts are still using Facebook and Twitter (X). Hence, there has been a decline in the dominance of Facebook among this young cohort (IPSOS MORI, 2018). It is observed that 72% of Instagram users are 13 to 17 years old, around 51% of users rely on Facebook, and 69% of Gen Zs are Snapchat users (IPSOS MORI, 2018).

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Unlike personal branding, traditional brand marketing includes traditional methods used by businesses for decades for marketing, such as print media, TV, telemarketing, and radio. These communications are usually one-way, where the brand forces its message on a wider audience without knowing their core interest. The key here is to reach the maximum audience and, depending on brand visibility and repetition, leave an impression for a longer time. It depends on the hope of reaching the right audience someday. Traditional marketing can help build credibility and brand presence. It is usually harder to measure and more expensive. In addition, there is no direct engagement and personal connection. However, it can be effective when used smartly by brands targeting local audiences or building authority and trust in their identity (Grant, 2025).

In order to provide goods or services, brands have to create the right image among Gen Z consumers and use personal branding. Brands can use engagement channels to transfer a marketing message and positively influence the success of a business. Personal branding is highly relevant to society overall. Attracting and engaging consumers is one of the core challenges for businesses to build a social image and reputation on social media for their services or products. This way, personal brand is highly valuable for building a reputation and a positive image.

The scientific community has widely covered the benefits of personal branding. There is a lack of research on the value of content and the influence of personal branding and traditional marketing on consumers on social media. It is recommended to investigate the features of originality, unique appeal, and quality of marketing to determine the influence (Casaló et al., 2020). A personal brand can be created when an individual manages impressions of others by appealing to personal experience and skills (Brems et al., 2017). The way consumers are familiar with a personal brand can be determined by attitudes towards a brand, which builds trust. Purchase engagement is supposed to be higher with higher trust and awareness (Zhang et al., 2019). A brand can have a drastic impact on consumer behavior and social attitude with trust.

Considering the above arguments, this study aims to compare the influence of personal branding versus traditional marketing on Gen Z consumers who are already tech-savvy and use modern social media platforms.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media platforms like Instagram and Snapchat are highly targeted by businesses to reach their Gen Z audience as part of the digital environment. Personal branding has been the core strategy for businesses to form opinions, appeal, reputation and image in this day and age (Salam, 2020). In this wave of digitalization, online presence is everything for the social and professional identity of a business (Raju and Fadhillah, 2024). Along with personal interests, user behavior also shapes public image, which can affect relationships. Hence, it has become important to build personal branding or self-image for the younger generation to compete in the world of work (Salsaminia and Santosa, 2025).

Personal branding shapes an individual's perception, and it is packaged like a brand. It is important to stand out in this competitive world. A consistent, unique, and positive image can build credibility, trust, and loyalty among stakeholders (Lupșa-Tătaru, 2020). When a strong personal identity is built by an organization or individual successfully, in this age, their communication will be more effective in shaping perceptions, conveying messages, and forming decisions (Suprimansyah & Yusuf, 2023). Along with defining the identity, a robust personal brand also represents their expertise, values, and uniqueness. This process is often managed systematically and consciously with social media in this day and age.

Personal branding fills the gap between creative businesses and students. It helps in expanding networks, building credibility, and enhancing collaborations or opportunities (Yusanda et al., 2021). Rising competition in the world is one of the driving factors for personal branding. Consumers are more likely to choose services or products with a trusted and strong image. Effective branding can enable businesses to stand out and attract a huge audience base. Along with being a marketing tool, personal branding is important as a communication strategy for a business (Alfaridzi, 2023).

Instagram and other social media platforms play a vital role in shaping personal image. With these platforms, anyone can express their opinions and identity by sharing different audio-visual and visual content. By making creative and engaging content, people can improve their personal messages to share with the public. However, in this approach, holding an authentic, consistent, and relevant image is the main challenge to resonate with the target audience amid a fast-paced landscape (Efrida and Diniati, 2020).

In addition, it is demonstrated on platforms that personal opinions and visual interactions are widely accepted by audiences. It opens up new avenues for everyone to become an influencer, given that they can manage their presence well. Along with self-promotion, personal branding is also a part of communication to build economic and social impact (Rizaldi, 2024). In addition, personal branding is very helpful in building credibility and trust. Consumers are very critical when choosing services or products. They have to seek more information about the brand or company before making a buying decision. Hence, strong branding can create a positive perception among consumers, which can increase the conversion rate (Sutoyo, 2020).

According to Lailatul Khurnia et al (2025), SMEs can increase their chances of growth up to 25% with personal branding to stand out in competition. Suryatmaja & Astawa (2022) argued that consistency and content in personal branding can win the digital market. According to Hutauruk et al. (2024), personal branding can improve audience retention and brand visibility with social media and online marketing. Puji Lestari et al. (2025) conducted a study on the fashion industry and found that personal branding has a positive influence on consumer loyalty.

Businesses can attract a relevant audience when personal branding is used strategically. Business growth needs networking. Along with building connections, personal branding can also open new avenues for partnerships and collaborations. Information about an individual's reputation can spread rapidly in this day and age to easily expand a corporate network (Amalia & Satvikadewi, 2020). Hence, it is important to explore how influential and effective patterns of communication can be shaped with elements of personal branding like relevance, consistency, and uniqueness in a digital environment.

2.1. RESEARCH GAP

This study adds to the existing literature by performing a comparative analysis of traditional and personal branding strategies to better understand their influence on Gen Z consumers. This study is even more interesting as it fills the most important research gap, i.e., the lack of studies on the comparison of the influence of traditional and personal branding strategies.

2.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To investigate the relationship between purchase intention of Gen Z and personal branding
- To compare the influence of traditional marketing and personal branding on the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers

2.3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- H1 – There is a significant positive relationship between personal branding and purchase intention of Gen Z consumers
- H2 – Personal branding has a significantly stronger influence than traditional brand marketing on the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is based on a descriptive, quantitative research design to determine the influence of personal branding on purchase intention compared to traditional marketing among Gen Z consumers. This research design involves the collection of primary data using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

3.2. STUDY POPULATION

This study consists of Gen Z consumers, i.e., born from 1997 to 2012, who are exposed to both personal content and influencer marketing campaigns along with traditional media marketing like print, television, billboards, etc. This study is based on a convenience sampling technique for collecting responses from participants who are eligible. This study targets a sample of 300 participants for proper representation.

3.3. DATA COLLECTION

This study will rely on primary data gathered using a self-structured questionnaire prepared with Google Forms. The questionnaire will include the following sections:

- Demographic profile of respondents – Includes questions related to age group, gender, monthly income, and frequency of using social media
- Personal Branding (Independent Variable) – To measure perceived credibility, authenticity, and influence of creators related to brands.
- Traditional Brand Marketing (Independent variable) – To measure perceptions of consumers about promotional and advertising activities of brands.
- Gen Z's purchase intention (Dependent variable) – To measure whether Gen Zs are more likely to choose, consider or buy products promoted through traditional or personal branding activities.

3.4. DATA ANALYSIS

IBM SPSS v25 software will be used to analyze collected data using statistical tests like Cronbach's Alpha, Multiple Linear Regression and Pearson Correlation. Cronbach's Alpha test would be conducted to test the reliability of the questionnaire. Pearson's Correlation would be conducted to test H1 and determine the direction of the relationship between purchase intention and personal branding. Multiple Linear Regression would be conducted to test H2 to determine the influence of the independent variables (traditional and personal branding) on the dependent variable (purchase intention). Hypothesis testing

will be conducted at a significance level of 5% (α = 0.05). To be statistically significant and to prove the hypothesis, the p-value must be below 0.05.

3.5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All participants would be informed about their voluntary participation in this study. In addition, no personal data will be collected, such as name, address, phone number, etc. Their responses will remain anonymous for research purposes only.

4. RESULTS

4.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

There are 126 (42%) participants who are 24 to 26 years old, 43 (14%) participants are 27 to 29 years old, 49 (16%) participants are 21 to 23 years old, and 82 (27%) participants are 18 to 20 years old (Table 1; Figure 1).

TABLE 1 Age Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 to 20 years	82	27.3	27.3	27.3
	21 to 23 years	49	16.3	16.3	43.7
	24 to 26 years	126	42.0	42.0	85.7
	27 to 29 years	43	14.3	14.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

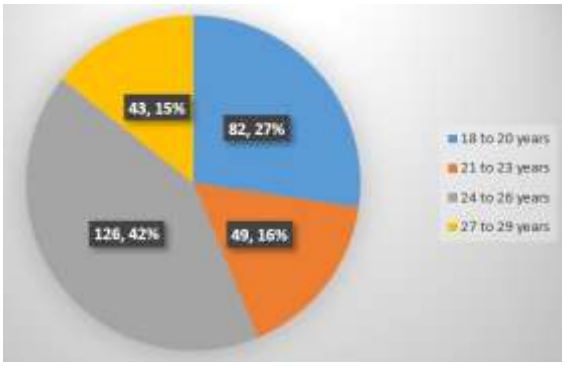


FIGURE 1 Age Group

There are 181 (60%) participants who are male and 119 (40%) participants who are female in this study (Table 2) (Figure 2).

TABLE 2 Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	119	39.7	39.7	39.7
	Male	181	60.3	60.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

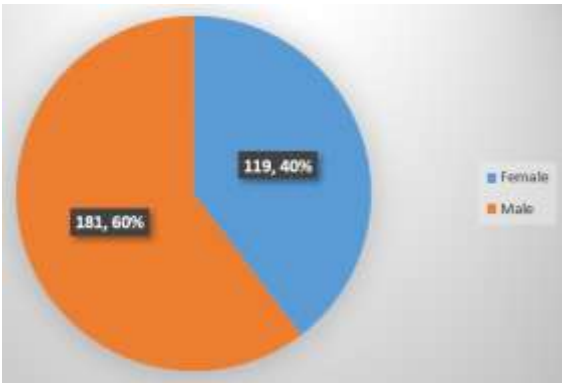


FIGURE 2 Gender of the Participants

There are 142 (47%) participants who have monthly income under Rs. 20,000, 54 (18%) participants were not earning, 16 (5%) participants were earning above Rs. 50,000, 79 (26%) participants had monthly income from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 40,000, and 9 (3%) participants were earning Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000 per month (Table 3) (Figure 3).

TABLE 3 Monthly Income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20k to 40k	79	26.3	26.3	26.3
	40k to 50k	9	3.0	3.0	29.3
	Above 50k	16	5.3	5.3	34.7
	NA	54	18.0	18.0	52.7
	Under Rs. 20,000	142	47.3	47.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

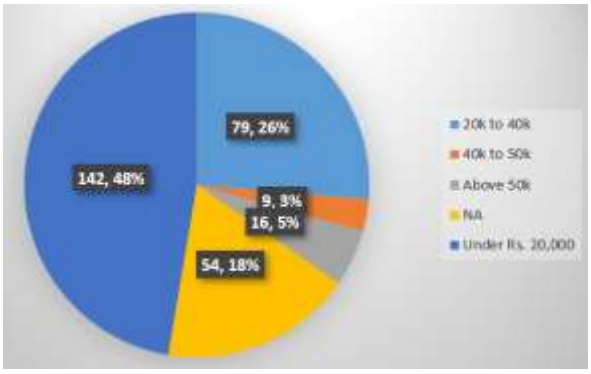


FIGURE 3 Monthly Income

When it comes to occupation, 124 (41%) participants were students, 71 (24%) participants were employed, 15 (5%) participants were entrepreneurs, 17 (6%) participants were freelancers, and 73 (24%) participants had other sources of income (Table 4) (Figure 4).

TABLE 4 Occupation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employed	71	23.7	23.7	23.7
	Entrepreneur	15	5.0	5.0	28.7
	Freelancer	17	5.7	5.7	34.3
	Other	73	24.3	24.3	58.7
	Student	124	41.3	41.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

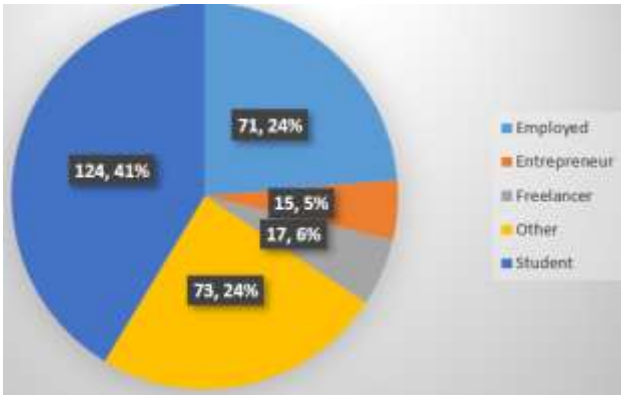


FIGURE 4 Occupation of Participants

There are 24 (8%) participants who used social media for 1 to 2 hours, 105 (35%) participants who used social media for 2 to 4 hours, 60 (20%) participants who used social media for more than 4 hours, and 111 (37%) participants who used social media for less than 1 hour in a day (Table 5) (Figure 5).

TABLE 5 Frequency of Daily Social Media Usage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 to 2 hours	24	8.0	8.0	8.0
	2 to 4 hours	105	35.0	35.0	43.0
	Above 4 hours	60	20.0	20.0	63.0
	Less than 1 hour	111	37.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

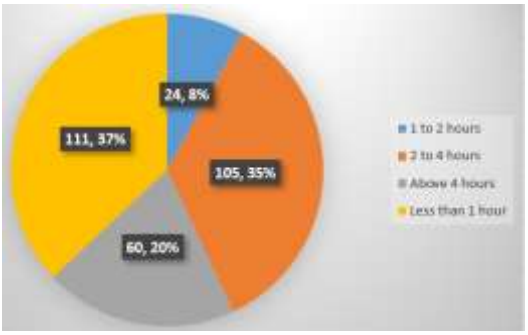


FIGURE 5 Frequency of Daily Social Media Usage

4.2. PERSONAL BRANDING

There are 35 (12%) participants who agree, and 86 (29%) participants strongly agree that they consider the strong personal brand of individuals before trusting any brand or product recommended by them, while 44 (15%) participants were neutral, 68 (23%) participants disagree, and 67 (22%) participants strongly disagree (Table 6) (Figure 6).

TABLE 6 I Consider the Strong Personal Brand of Individuals before Trusting any Brand or Product Recommended by Them

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	67	22.3	22.3	22.3
	Disagree	68	22.7	22.7	45.0
	Neutral	44	14.7	14.7	59.7
	Agree	35	11.7	11.7	71.3
	Strongly Agree	86	28.7	28.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

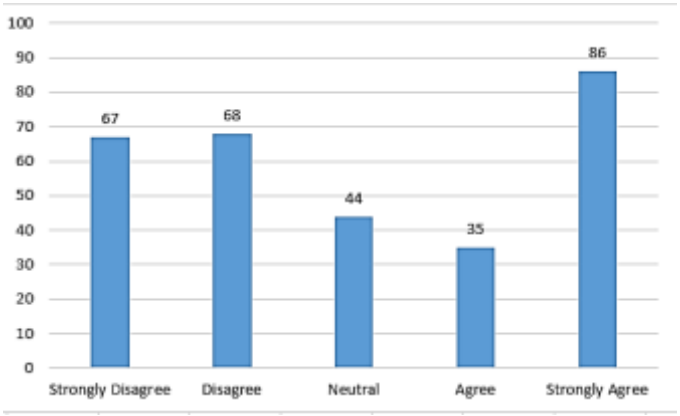


FIGURE 6 I Consider the Personal Brand of Individuals before Trusting any Brand or Product Recommended by Them

There are 80 (27%) participants who agree, and 41 (14%) participants strongly agree that brands feel more authentic when promoted by influencers or personalities, while 40 (13%) participants were neutral, 72 (24%) participants disagree, and 67 (22%) participants strongly disagree (Table 7) (Figure 7).

TABLE 7 Brand Feels More Authentic When Promoted by Influencers or Personalities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	67	22.3	22.3	22.3
	Disagree	72	24.0	24.0	46.3
	Neutral	40	13.3	13.3	59.7
	Agree	80	26.7	26.7	86.3
	Strongly Agree	41	13.7	13.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

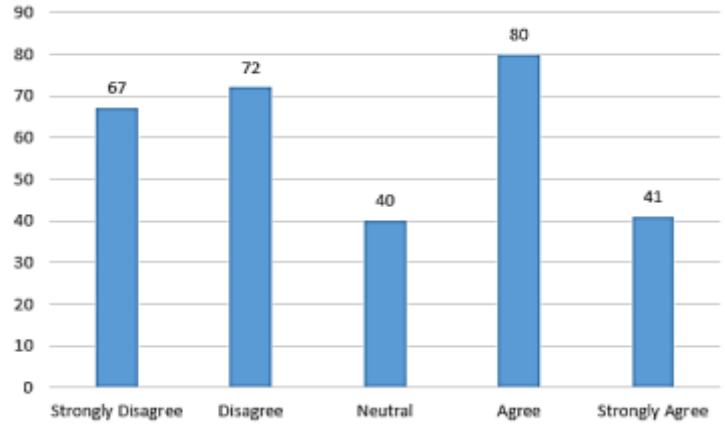


FIGURE 7 Brand Feels More Authentic when Promoted by Influencers or Personalities

There are 84 (28%) participants who agree and 49 (16%) participants strongly agree that products feel more appealing when promoted by relatable influencers, while 4 (1%) participants were neutral, 93 (31%) participants disagree, and 70 (23%) participants strongly disagree (Table 8) (Figure 8).

TABLE 8 Products Feel More Appealing when Promoted by Relatable Influencers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	70	23.3	23.3	23.3
	Disagree	93	31.0	31.0	54.3
	Neutral	4	1.3	1.3	55.7
	Agree	84	28.0	28.0	83.7
	Strongly Agree	49	16.3	16.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

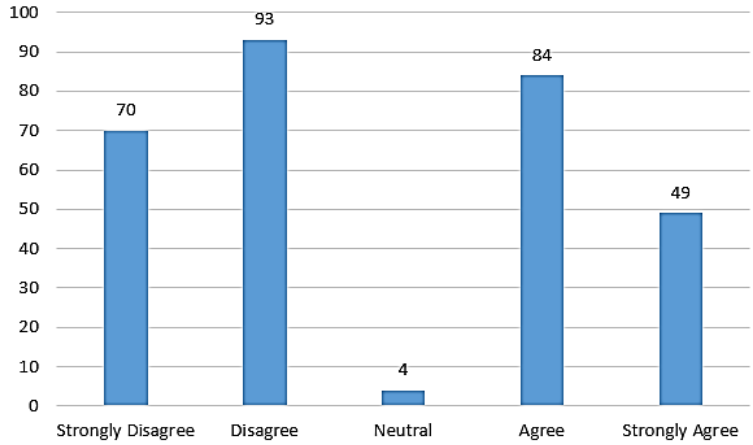


FIGURE 8 Products Feel More Appealing when Promoted by Relatable Influencers

There are 51 (17%) participants who agree, and 37 (12%) participants strongly agree that they focus more on a brand when promoted by a personality admired by them, while 38 (13%) participants were neutral, 171 (57%) participants disagree, and 3 (1%) participants strongly disagree (Table 9) (Figure 9).

TABLE 9 I Focus More on a Brand when Promoted by a Personality I Admire

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Disagree	171	57.0	57.0	58.0
	Neutral	38	12.7	12.7	70.7
	Agree	51	17.0	17.0	87.7
	Strongly Agree	37	12.3	12.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

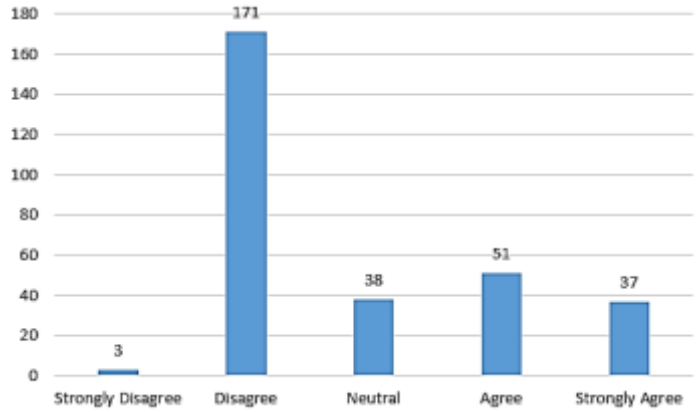


FIGURE 9 I Focus More on a Brand when Promoted by a Personality I Admire

There are 61 (20%) participants who agree and 31 (10%) participants who strongly agree that their brand or product perception is strongly influenced by personal branding, while 37 (12%) participants were neutral, 12 (4%) participants disagree, and 159 (53%) participants strongly disagree (Table 10) (Figure 10).

TABLE 10 My Brand or Product Perception is Strongly Influenced by Personal Branding

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	159	53.0	53.0	53.0
	Disagree	12	4.0	4.0	57.0
	Neutral	37	12.3	12.3	69.3
	Agree	61	20.3	20.3	89.7
	Strongly Agree	31	10.3	10.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

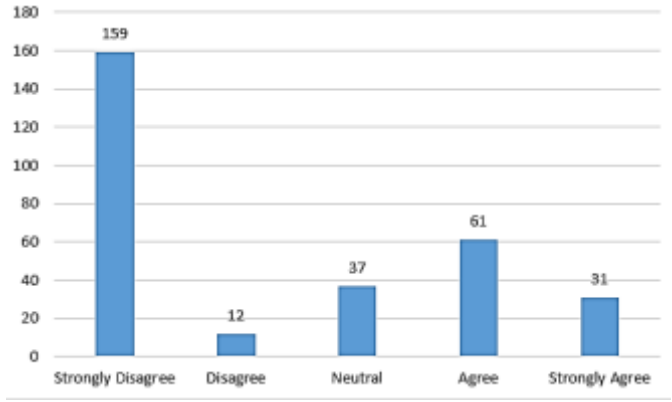


FIGURE 10 My Brand or Product Perception is Strongly Influenced by Personal Branding

4.3. TRADITIONAL BRAND MARKETING

There are 68 (23%) participants who agree, and 123 (41%) participants who strongly agree that they have become more aware of new products or brands with traditional ads, while 51 (17%) participants were neutral, 44 (15%) participants disagree, and 14 (5%) participants strongly disagree (Table 11) (Figure 11).

TABLE 11 I Have become More Aware of New Products or Brands with Traditional Ads

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	14	4.7	4.7	4.7
	Disagree	44	14.7	14.7	19.3
	Neutral	51	17.0	17.0	36.3
	Agree	68	22.7	22.7	59.0
	Strongly Agree	123	41.0	41.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

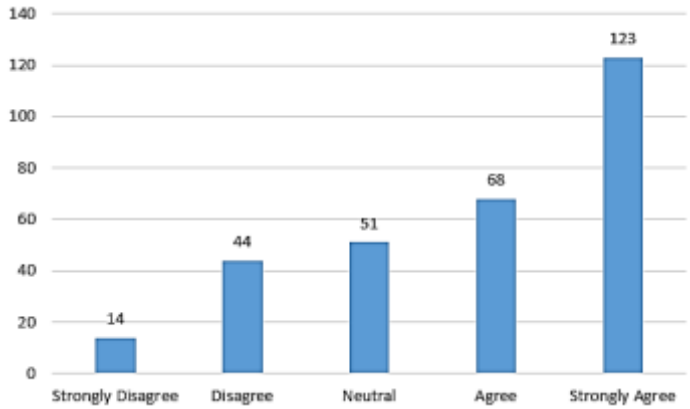


FIGURE 11 I Have Become More Aware of New Products or Brands with Traditional Ads

There are 35 (12%) participants who agree, and 47 (16%) participants who strongly agree that brands using traditional marketing have been more successful in building trust, while 53 (18%) participants were neutral, 31 (10%) participants disagree, and 134 (45%) participants strongly disagree (Table 12) (Figure 12).

TABLE 12 Brands Using Traditional Marketing Have been More Successful in Building Trust

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	134	44.7	44.7	44.7
	Disagree	31	10.3	10.3	55.0
	Neutral	53	17.7	17.7	72.7
	Agree	35	11.7	11.7	84.3
	Strongly Agree	47	15.7	15.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

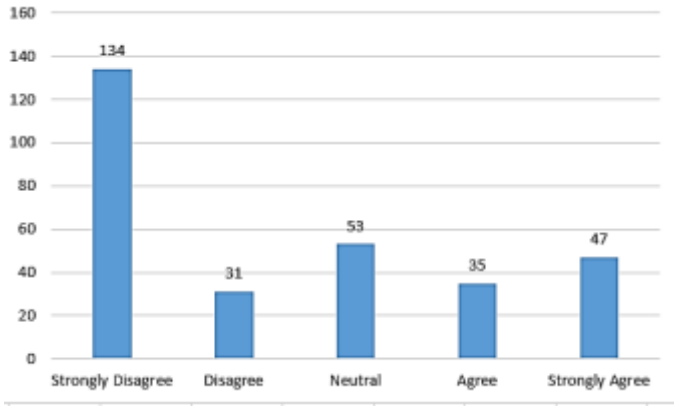


FIGURE 12 Brands Using Traditional Marketing Have been More Successful in Building Trust

There are 66 (22%) participants who agree, and 100 (33%) participants strongly agree that their brand perception is influenced by traditional ads like print, TV, and billboards, while 26 (9%) participants were neutral, 68 (23%) participants disagree, and 40 (13%) participants strongly disagree (Table 13) (Figure 13).

TABLE 13 My Brand Perception is Influenced by Traditional Ads Like Print, TV, and Billboards

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	40	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Disagree	68	22.7	22.7	36.0
	Neutral	26	8.7	8.7	44.7
	Agree	66	22.0	22.0	66.7
	Strongly Agree	100	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

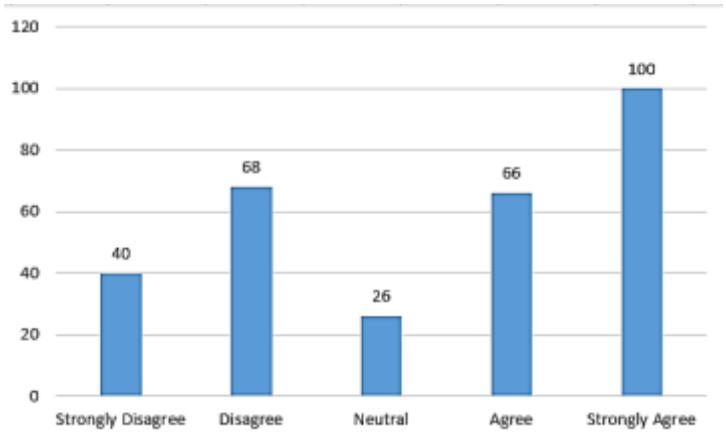


FIGURE 13 My Brand Perception is Influenced by Traditional Ads Like Print, TV, and Billboards

There are 80 (27%) participants who agree, and 26 (9%) participants who strongly agree that they get more useful insights about products and services through traditional ads, while 35 (12%) participants were neutral, and 159 (53%) participants strongly disagree (Table 14) (Figure 14).

TABLE 14 I Get More Useful Insights About Products and Services through Traditional Ads

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	159	53.0	53.0	53.0
	Neutral	35	11.7	11.7	64.7
	Agree	80	26.7	26.7	91.3
	Strongly Agree	26	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

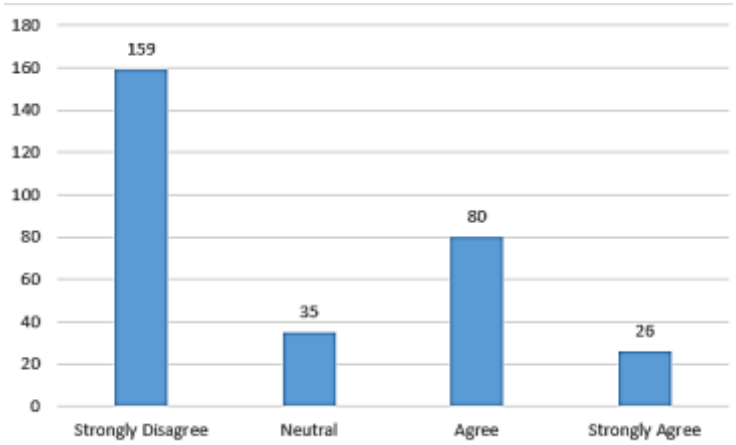


FIGURE 14 I Get More Useful Insights About Products and Services through Traditional Ads

There are 71 (24%) participants who agree, and 46 (15%) participants who strongly agree that their decision is significantly influenced by traditional marketing when choosing a brand, while 177 (59%) participants were neutral, and 6 (2%) participants strongly disagree (Table 15) (Figure 15).

TABLE 15 My Decision Is Influenced Significantly By Traditional Marketing When Choosing A Brand

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Neutral	177	59.0	59.0	61.0
	Agree	71	23.7	23.7	84.7
	Strongly Agree	46	15.3	15.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

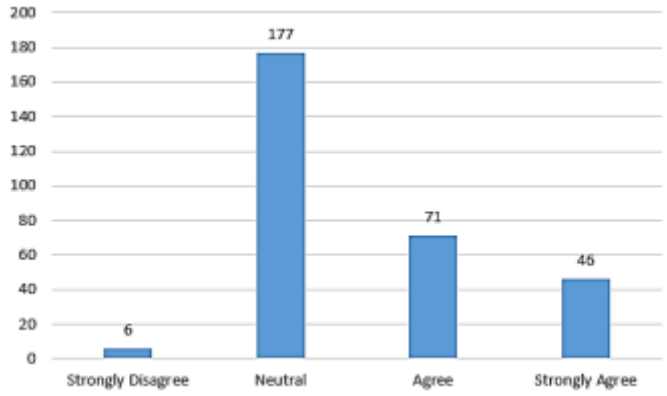


FIGURE 15 My Decision is Influenced Significantly by Traditional Marketing When Choosing a Brand

4.4. PURCHASE INTENTION

There are 78 (26%) participants who agree, and 44 (15%) participants who strongly agree that appealing promotions significantly influence their purchase intention, while 41 (14%) participants were neutral, 25 (8%) participants disagreed, and 112 (37%) participants strongly disagreed (Table 16) (Figure 16).

TABLE 16 Appealing Promotions Significantly Influence My Purchase Intention

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	112	37.3	37.3	37.3
	Disagree	25	8.3	8.3	45.7
	Neutral	41	13.7	13.7	59.3
	Agree	78	26.0	26.0	85.3
	Strongly Agree	44	14.7	14.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

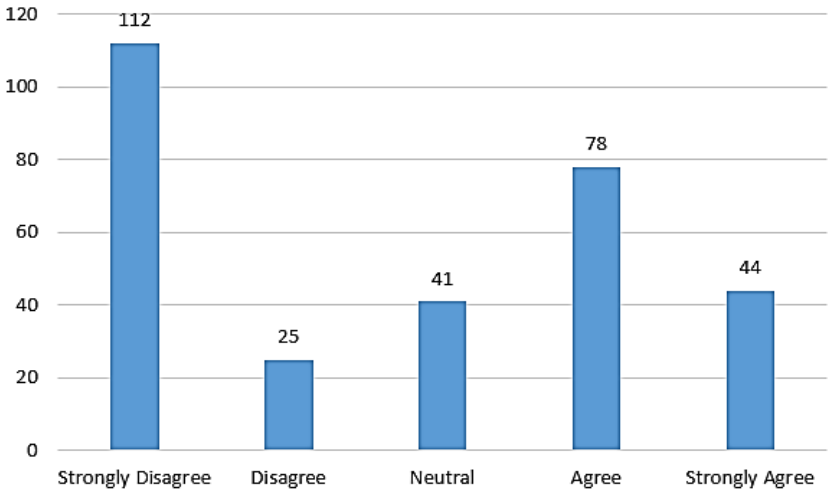


FIGURE 16 Appealing Promotions Significantly Influence My Purchase Intention

There are 107 (36%) participants who agree, and 42 (14%) participants strongly agree that their purchase intention is influenced by promotional and marketing activities of brands, while 39 (13%) participants were neutral, 52 (17%) participants disagreed, and 60 (20%) participants strongly disagreed (Table 17) (Figure 17).

TABLE 17 My Purchase Intention is Influenced by Promotional and Marketing Activities of Brands

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	60	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Disagree	52	17.3	17.3	37.3
	Neutral	39	13.0	13.0	50.3
	Agree	107	35.7	35.7	86.0
	Strongly Agree	42	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

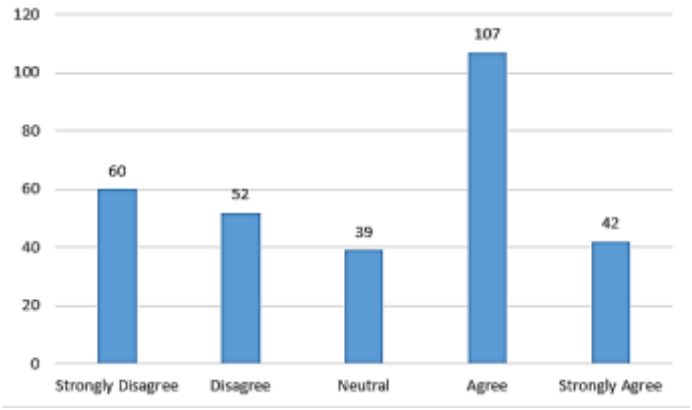


FIGURE 17 My Purchase Intention Is Influenced by Promotional and Marketing Activities of Brands

There are 94 (31%) participants who agree and 59 (20%) participants who strongly agree that they purchase a product when it is promoted by an influencer they trust, while 59 (20%) participants were neutral, 85 (28%) participants disagreed, and 3 (1%) participants strongly disagreed (Table 18) (Figure 18).

TABLE 18 I Purchase a Product When it Is Promoted by an Influencer I Trust

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Disagree	85	28.3	28.3	29.3
	Neutral	59	19.7	19.7	49.0
	Agree	94	31.3	31.3	80.3
	Strongly Agree	59	19.7	19.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

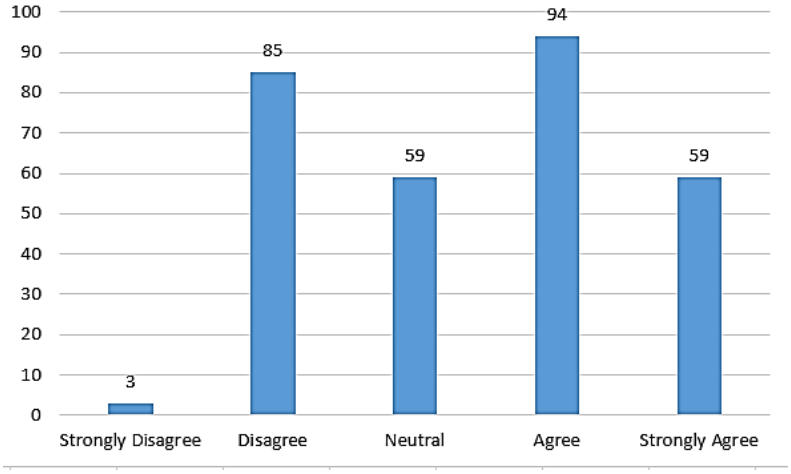


FIGURE 18 I Purchase a Product when it is Promoted by an Influencer I Trust

There are 114 (38%) participants who agree, and 49 (16%) participants who strongly agree that they are more likely to buy a product when marketing experiences are positive, while 37 (12%) participants were neutral, 12 (4%) participants disagree, and 88 (29%) participants strongly disagree (Table 19) (Figure 19).

TABLE 19 I Am More Likely to Buy a Product when Marketing Experiences are Positive

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	88	29.3	29.3	29.3
	Disagree	12	4.0	4.0	33.3
	Neutral	37	12.3	12.3	45.7
	Agree	114	38.0	38.0	83.7
	Strongly Agree	49	16.3	16.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

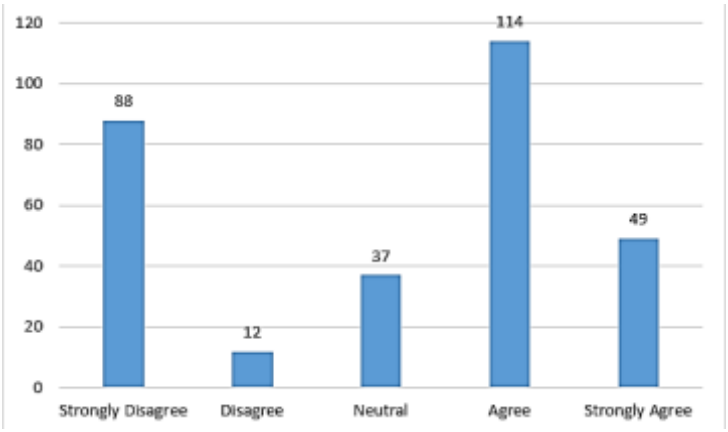


FIGURE 19 I am More Likely to Buy a Product when Marketing Experiences are Positive

There are 88 (29%) participants who agree and 119 (40%) participants who strongly agree that they choose a brand when it is promoted positively through their trusted channels, while 41 (14%) participants were neutral, 41 (14%) participants disagree, and 11 (4%) participants strongly disagree (Table 20) (Figure 20).

TABLE 20 I Choose a Brand when it is Promoted Positively through My Trusted Channels

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	3.7	3.7	3.7
	Disagree	41	13.7	13.7	17.3
	Neutral	41	13.7	13.7	31.0
	Agree	88	29.3	29.3	60.3
	Strongly Agree	119	39.7	39.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

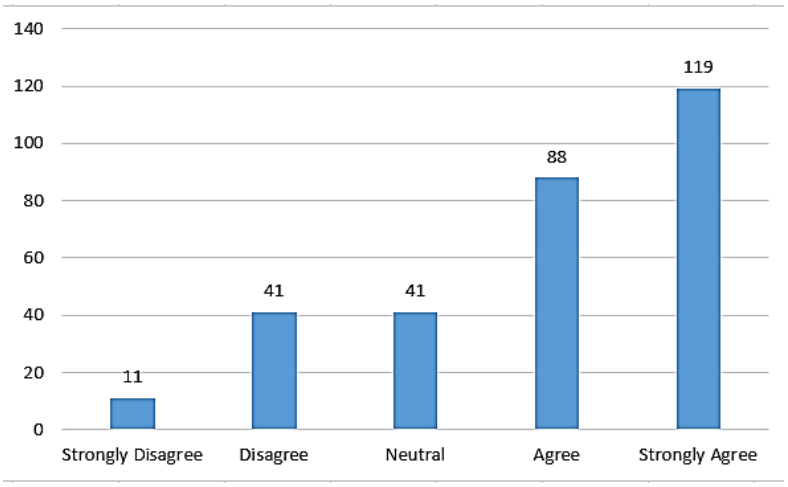


FIGURE 20 I Choose a Brand when it is Promoted Positively through My Trusted Channels

4.5. HYPOTHESES TESTING

Before hypothesis testing, Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to test the reliability of questionnaire items. The alpha value was 0.914, which was above the threshold of 0.70. Hence, all the items are considered highly reliable for hypothesis testing (Table 21).

TABLE 21 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.914	15

H1 – There is a significant positive relationship between personal branding and purchase intention of Gen Z consumers To test the relationship between personal branding and Gen Z's purchase intention, Pearson's Correlation test was conducted. The correlation coefficient indicates that the relationship was moderately positive ($r = 0.582$). This means that when Gen Z perceives personal branding to be better, they are more likely to purchase a product. This relationship is further confirmed by the significance value, $p = 0.000$ ($p<0.01$) at the 1% level. Hence, H1 is confirmed (Table 22).

TABLE 22 Correlation between Personal Branding and Purchase Intention

		PB	PI
PB	Pearson Correlation	1	.582**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	300	300
PI	Pearson Correlation	.582**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	300	300
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

H2 – Personal branding has a significantly stronger influence than traditional brand marketing on purchase intention of Gen Z consumers To compare the influence of personal branding and traditional brand marketing, Multiple Linear Regression was conducted. The R value was 0.602 in the Model Summary table, which suggests a strong overall relationship between both predictors. There is also 36.3% variance in purchase intention. In addition, there is 35.9% explanatory power (R-Square = 0.359). This shows a strong foundation to determine the influence of both variables (Table 23).

TABLE 23 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.602[a]	.363	.359	.83128
a. Predictors: (Constant), TBM, PB				

The regression model is also found to be significant in the ANOVA results. With a significance value (p = 0.000) and F-value (84.590), traditional brand marketing and personal branding predict purchase intention significantly. Hence, the regression model is ideal for determining the role played by both marketing methods (Table 24).

TABLE 24 Anova[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	116.908	2	58.454	84.590	.000[b]
	Residual	205.234	297	.691		
	Total	322.142	299			
a. Dependent Variable: PI						
b. Predictors: (Constant), TBM, PB						

In the coefficient findings, both traditional and personal branding have a significant and positive impact on purchase intention. The standardized beta value of personal branding was 0.382, and traditional brand marketing was 0.254. Hence, personal branding is found to have a stronger positive influence on purchase intention than traditional marketing (p = 0.000). Overall, H2 is strongly supported (Table 25).

TABLE 25 Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.418	.186		7.605	.000
	PB	.312	.062	.382	5.078	.000
	TBM	.305	.090	.254	3.371	.001
a. Dependent Variable: PI						

5. DISCUSSION

This study has found that personal branding has been more influential than traditional marketing in influencing the buying intention of Gen Zs. Findings of the study are especially relevant as Gen Zs are exposed mainly to social media and digital environments, where creators, personalities, and influencers are the major sources of communication and information. Hence, this study adds to the existing discussion about the response to influencers instead of only to traditional ads. Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, and it produced an alpha value of 0.914, exceeding the 0.70 threshold. It suggests high internal consistency among questionnaire items to determine traditional marketing, personal branding, and buying intention.

The findings of the study presented mixed and interesting insights. For instance, around 40% of participants considered the strength of a personal brand before they trusted a suggested product or brand; 40% of participants considered brands more authentic when famous personalities or influencers promote them. It means there is no similar influence of personal branding on every consumer. Some participants have been skeptical about marketing done by influencers. It means that an influencer or personality alone is not enough to build purchase intent or trust.

When it comes to famous personalities, a similar pattern has been found. Around 57% of participants don't focus on brands when promoted by a respected personality. This finding is significant, as it is found that influencers may rely on relevance, perceived credibility, the relationship between the promoted product and the personality, and authenticity instead of mere popularity. Gen Z may respond to influencer or celebrity promotions automatically. Irrespective of these mixed responses, this study still provides strong evidence with statistical analysis to determine the relationship between buying intention and personal branding. This study has observed a moderate and significantly positive relationship between purchase intention and personal branding ($p = 0.000$). Hence, H1 is accepted.

When it comes to traditional marketing, findings suggest that traditional marketing has been relevant to Gen Z. Around 64% of participants had become more aware of new brands or products through traditional forms of marketing. In addition, 55% of participants strongly agreed that there is a significant influence of traditional advertisements on brand perception, including billboards, media, and TV. It was found that traditional marketing can still be relevant to improve visibility and awareness. However, traditional marketing has not been very convincing for building trust and providing in-depth product details. Over 53% of participants didn't find more useful insights or products with traditional ads. In the same way, 45% of participants haven't found success in traditional marketing in building trust. Traditional marketing may generate awareness, but there may be a benefit to personal communication when relevance and credibility are built with consumers.

Findings related to purchase intention support the relevance of trusted channels of marketing. Around half of consumers buy products when promoted by trusted influencers. Additionally, around 69% of participants choose a brand with positive promotions using trusted media. It is found that marketing and trust are very important to translate promotions into buying behavior. Findings related to multiple regression are very important for comparative analysis in this study. There is 36.3% variation in buying intention with the combined influence of traditional marketing and personal branding. Overall, there is a strong influence of personal branding on buying intention, which statistically supports H2.

The study recommends that personal branding should not replace traditional marketing completely. Instead, there is a shift in the comparative value of various media of communication. Traditional marketing is highly relevant when it comes to maintaining visibility and generating awareness, while there is a strong influence of creativity and interpersonal relationships in personal branding on consumers. This finding is also aligned with literature research in this study, which classifies consistency, credibility, relevance, and authenticity as major traits of the effectiveness of branding.

When it comes to managerial implications, brands should also integrate personal branding along with traditional marketing channels when they are focusing on Gen Z consumers. Instead of depending completely on celebrities, brands should pick creators and personalities who add value, audience, communication, and expertise to the brand, which are relevant, too. Brands should also prefer authenticity over just visibility. With a highly trusting and relevant audience but smaller numbers, an influencer may have more influence than a personality with millions of followers but weak relevance to products.

Meanwhile, there are also some limitations of the study. The sample size was 300 participants, and a convenience sampling technique was used, which affects the generalizability of the findings because the population of Gen Z is huge in this country. In addition, the research is limited to a cross-sectional design and responses that have been reported by participants themselves. On the other hand, this study recommends that future studies use a more diverse group of samples and a larger sample size, with comparisons across different social media platforms and sectors, to compare the impact of personal branding and its variation in product category, consumer profile, and type of influencers.

6. CONCLUSION

This study has compared the impact of personal branding and traditional marketing on shaping the buying intention of Gen Z. It is found that both traditional marketing and personal branding are very important in influencing buying intention. However, there is a stronger impact of personal branding than its traditional counterpart on Gen Z consumers. But traditional marketing also has its benefits, as it plays a significant role in generating awareness about the brand and product, while personal branding has been found especially relevant to authenticity, trust, and buying influence.

Both awareness and reach can be built with an integrated strategy of traditional and personal branding to build interpersonal relationships and relatability to strong brands. Special attention should be given to Gen Z when it comes to relevance, authenticity, and trust when choosing personalities or influencers. Finally, this study does not generalize findings to all consumers, as the findings of the study depend on self-reported information provided by consumers and convenience sampling.

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