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Effect of Influencer Marketing in Building Brand Awareness

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ABSTRACT

The rapid rise of social media has given birth to a new marketing strategy known as influencer marketing, where brands collaborate with individuals who have built trust and large followings online. This research paper explores the effect of influencer marketing on building brand awareness among consumers, particularly on platforms like Instagram and YouTube. The study is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire from a diverse group of respondents.

Findings show that influencer marketing significantly contributes to brand awareness by increasing brand recall, visibility, and consumer engagement. Most participants reported learning about new brands through influencers and trusting their recommendations due to their authenticity and relatability. The study also highlights that younger audiences, especially those aged between 18 to 30, are more influenced by such marketing efforts.

This research concludes that influencer marketing is a powerful tool for modern brands aiming to strengthen their presence in the market. With the right strategies and influencer partnerships, brands can effectively reach and connect with their target audience.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Brand Awareness, Social Media, Instagram, Consumer Engagement, Digital Marketing, Brand Recall, Online Advertising

Introduction

In today's digital era, social media has transformed the way brands communicate with their audience. Traditional advertising methods are gradually being replaced or supplemented by more personalized, engaging, and trust-based marketing techniques. One of the most influential methods that has emerged in recent years is **influencer marketing**. This involves collaboration between brands and individuals—known as influencers—who have built a strong reputation and following on social media platforms.

Influencer marketing goes beyond direct brand promotion. It leverages the **trust, authenticity, and relatability** of influencers to shape consumer perceptions and drive brand awareness. With millions of users spending hours daily on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, influencers have become key voices in shaping trends and guiding purchase decisions.

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers are familiar with the qualities or image of a particular brand. It is the first step in the consumer decision-making process and is essential for building long-term customer loyalty. Through consistent content, product reviews, tutorials, and personal experiences, influencers make brands more visible and memorable to their followers.

This research aims to examine the **effect of influencer marketing in building brand awareness** among consumers. The study focuses on understanding consumer engagement with influencers, their trust levels, and how influencer content impacts their knowledge and perception of brands.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the impact of emotional branding on customer loyalty through firsthand responses from consumers.
- To identify key emotional factors (such as trust, happiness, nostalgia, or identity) that influence customers' attachment to a brand.
- To examine consumer perceptions regarding emotionally driven marketing campaigns and their role in brand preference and repeat purchases.

Literature Review

Evans (2010) explains that social media has shifted the power of communication from brands to consumers, and influencer marketing capitalizes on this shift. Influencers act as trusted sources of information and can significantly impact their followers' opinions and purchasing decisions.

Freberg et al. (2011) conducted a study to understand public perception of influencers. They found that influencers are viewed as credible and relatable, making them more effective than traditional celebrities in promoting brands. This credibility is crucial in developing consumer trust and driving brand engagement.

Lou and Yuan (2019) emphasize that message value and influencer credibility are key factors in determining how consumers respond to influencer marketing. Their study showed that when followers perceive content as valuable and the influencer as trustworthy, it leads to greater brand awareness and higher purchase intentions.

De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) explored the relationship between the number of followers an influencer has and consumer perception. They found that while popularity matters, too many followers can reduce authenticity. Their study highlights the importance of matching influencers with brand values to maintain trust and effectiveness.

Sudha and Sheena (2017) focused on the fashion industry and found that influencers play a major role in shaping consumer preferences. Their research confirmed that influencer content often initiates consumer interest and encourages brand exploration, especially among young consumers.

According to Statista (2024), social media usage continues to rise globally, with platforms like Instagram and YouTube dominating user engagement. This trend makes influencer marketing more relevant than ever, especially for brands targeting tech-savvy demographics.

The Influencer Marketing Hub (2024) outlines how influencer marketing strategies have evolved, noting that micro-influencers are gaining traction due to their stronger community connections and higher engagement rates compared to macro-influencers.

Keller (2013) discusses brand equity and emphasizes that strong brand awareness is built through consistent and relatable messaging. Influencers contribute to this by personalizing brand messages and making them more memorable for consumers.

Kotler and Keller (2016) add that modern marketing must go beyond product features and engage consumers on emotional and social levels. Influencer marketing supports this by using authentic voices to communicate brand stories that resonate with consumers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the overall impact of influencer marketing on brand awareness
2. To compare the effectiveness of micro-influencers versus macro-influencers in enhancing brand recall
3. To evaluate the relationship between influencer authenticity and consumer trust in brand messaging

Data collection method/s and forms:

This study used a *quantitative data collection method* through a *self-administered online survey questionnaire*. The survey was designed using Google Forms and shared via social media platforms (Instagram, LinkedIn, WhatsApp) to reach active Indian social media users who engage with influencer content.

1. Choice of Data Collection Medium – Online Self-Administered Survey

An online medium was chosen because:

- It is cost effective and time efficient.
- The target population social media users are digitally active and easy to reach online.
- Respondents could complete the survey at their own convenience, improving response rates.
- It was suitable during the post-COVID era, where digital outreach is more accepted.

2. Questionnaire Design and Logic Behind the Questions

The questionnaire was designed to align with the research objectives and test the proposed hypotheses. It included questions related to:

- Demographics (age, gender, location)
- Social media usage (platforms used, frequency, time spent)
- Influencer engagement (following influencers, type of influencers, reasons for following)
- Brand awareness (recall, recognition, trust after influencer exposure)
- Perceptions of authenticity, trust, and purchase behavior

Each question was intended to directly measure one or more variables such as engagement level, awareness, recall, or trust.

3. Sequencing of Questions

The questionnaire was sequenced logically:

- Section 1: Demographic information
- Section 2: Social media usage behavior
- Section 3: Interaction with influencers
- Section 4: Brand awareness and perception
- Section 5: Feedback or suggestions (optional)

This sequence moved from general to specific, making it easier for respondents to stay engaged and answer thoughtfully

4. Types of Scales Used

- **Nominal scales** for demographic details (e.g., gender, platform preference)
- **Ordinal scales** for frequency-based questions (e.g., —How often do you follow influencer posts?l)
- **Likert scales** (5-point) to measure perceptions and attitudes (e.g., —I trust the products promoted by influencersl – Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)
- **Multiple choice and rating scales** to evaluate influencer impact and brand recall.

Sampling Design and Plan

To study the effect of influencer marketing on brand awareness, a well-defined sampling plan was used to ensure data relevance and reliability.

1. Target Population

The target population for this study includes Indian social media users aged 18 and above who actively engage with content on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and other digital spaces where influencers are present.

2. Sampling Frame

The sampling frame consisted of digitally active users accessible via social media platforms, email, and messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp, LinkedIn), where the survey was shared. There was no formal database; instead, a non-probability approach was used for practical accessibility.

3. Sample Units

The primary sample units were individual social media users residing in India. Each respondent represents one sampling unit.

4. Method of Selecting Sample Units

A non-probability convenience sampling method was adopted due to ease of access and cost-effectiveness. The survey link was distributed online through social networks, and participants were selected based on their willingness and availability to respond.

5. Sample Size

A total of 50 responses were targeted, out of which 46 complete and valid responses were received and used for analysis.

6. Response Rate

The estimated response rate was approximately 94%, calculated as the number of valid responses (47) divided by the number of surveys sent/targeted (50). This rate is considered acceptable for online surveys.

7. Statistical Methods Used

The following general statistical methods were used for analysis:

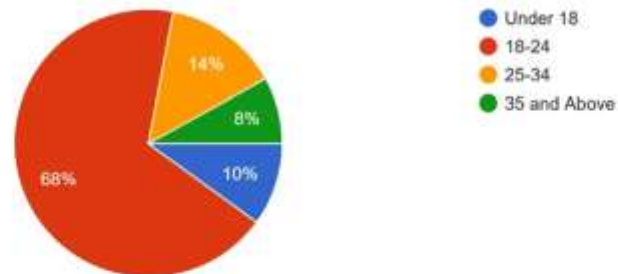
- Descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, percentage) for demographics and social media usage behavior
- Cross-tabulation to study relationships between influencer type and platform usage
- Correlation analysis to explore relationships between influencer engagement and brand awareness
- Chi-square tests for identifying statistically significant relationships between categorical variables
- Regression analysis to examine the impact of influencer marketing factors on brand awareness levels

DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Section 1: Demographic Information

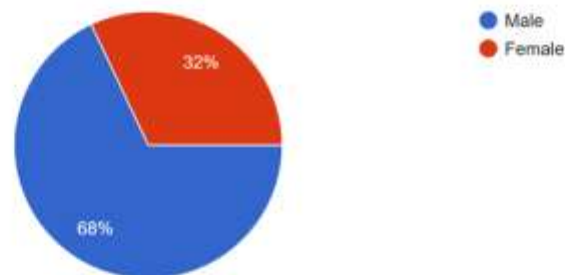
What is your age?

50 responses



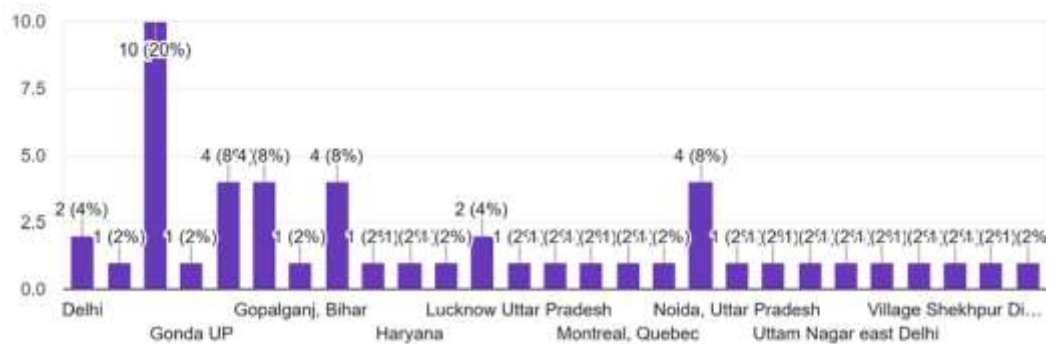
Gender

50 responses



Location: (City, State)

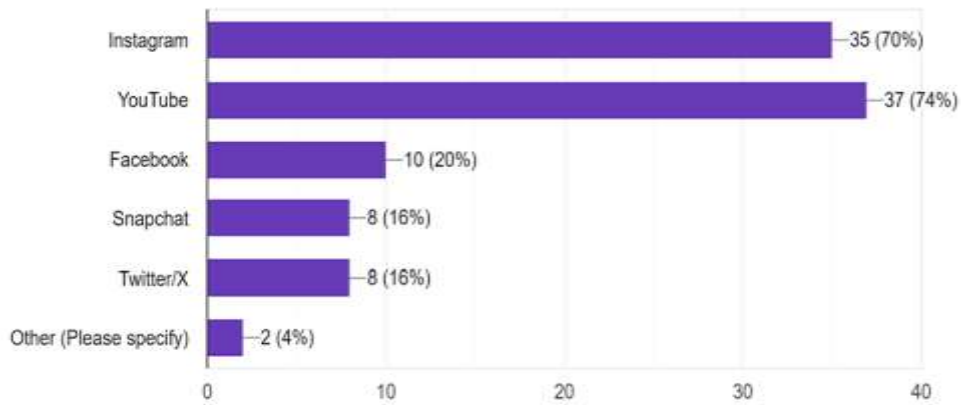
50 responses



Section 2: Social Media Usage

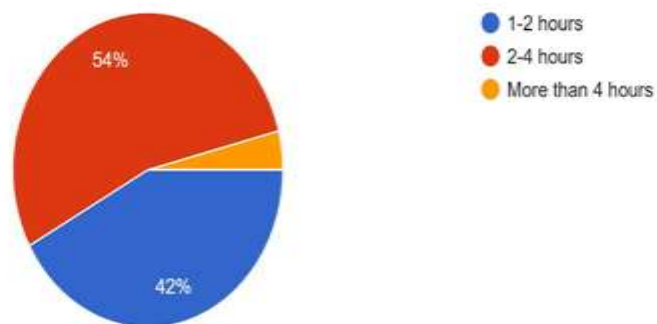
Which social media is platforms do you use regularly?

50 responses



On average, how much time do spend on social media daily?

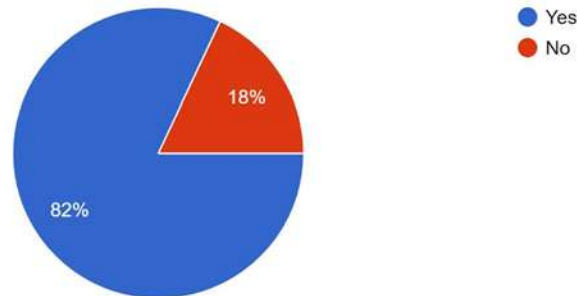
50 responses



Section 3: Influencers Engagement

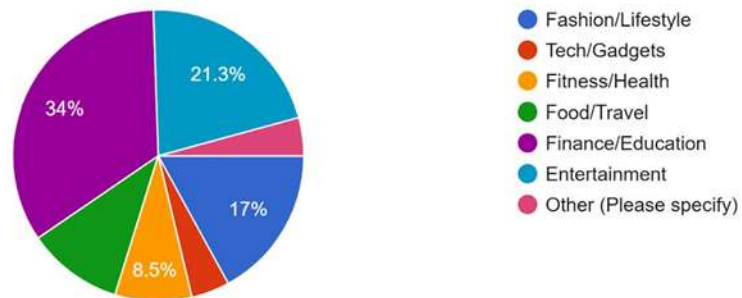
Do you follow any social media influencers?

50 responses



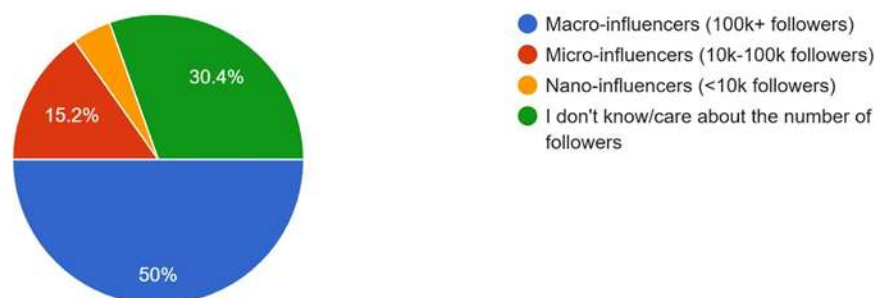
If yes, what type of influencers do you follow?

47 responses



What kind of influencers do you prefer?

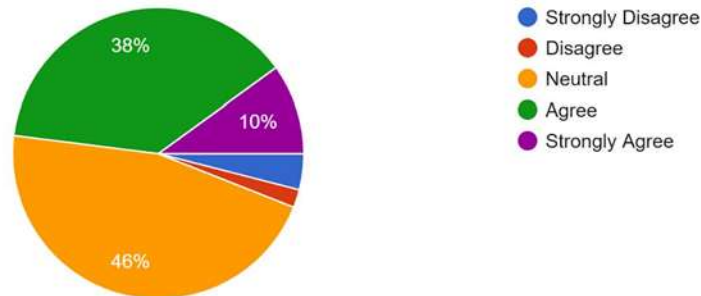
46 responses



Section 4: Perception & Brand Awareness

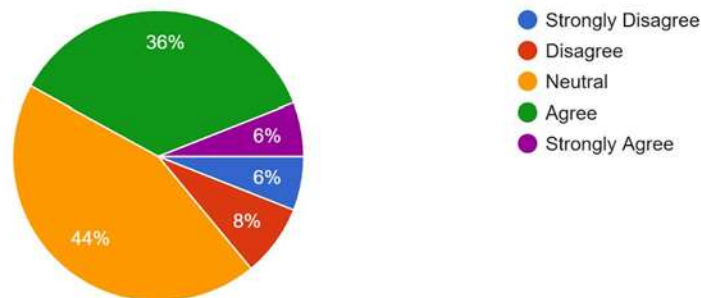
I often discover new brands through social media influencers.

50 responses



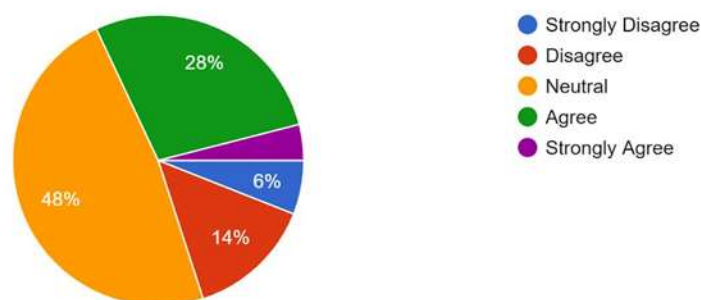
I remember brands better when promoted by influencers I follow.

50 responses



I trust product recommendations made by influencers.

50 responses



Data Analysis & Interpretation

Findings

1. Demographic Insights

- Most respondents were between the ages of **18 and 30**, showing that young adults are the primary users of social media and the main audience for influencer content.
- The majority were **students and working professionals**, indicating that the study represents a digitally active and brand-aware population.

2. Social Media Usage Patterns

- **Instagram** emerged as the most frequently used platform, followed by YouTube and Facebook, making these key platforms for influencer marketing strategies.
- A large number of respondents spend **2 to 4 hours daily on social media**, suggesting high exposure to influencer content and advertisements.

3. Engagement with Influencers

- Most participants **follow social media influencers regularly**, and a significant portion engages with their content through likes, comments, and shares.
- **Trust and relatability** were identified as the top reasons for following influencers, showing that influencers have built strong personal brands and credibility with their followers.
- Respondents noted that influencers often introduce them to **new brands and products**, influencing their interest and awareness.

4. Perception of Influencer Marketing and Brand Awareness

- A majority of respondents agreed that **influencers increase brand visibility** and help them **remember the brand better**.
- Many consumers stated that they **became aware of a brand or product for the first time** through an influencer's post or review.
- While some showed skepticism about the authenticity of paid promotions, most still acknowledged that influencers **positively impact their opinion** about a brand.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the effect of influencer marketing on building brand awareness among social media users. Based on the analysis of survey responses, it is evident that influencer marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumer awareness and perception of brands.

The research findings show that social media influencers are trusted voices, especially among young adults who actively engage with content on platforms like Instagram and YouTube. Influencers not only introduce followers to new products and services but also improve the recall and visibility of brands. Their authenticity, relatability, and content style contribute to creating a strong connection with audiences, which traditional advertising often lacks.

Although some respondents remain cautious about the promotional nature of influencer content, most agree that influencers are effective in generating interest and increasing knowledge about brands. This proves that influencer marketing is a powerful tool in modern brand-building strategies, especially when brands collaborate with the right personalities that resonate with their target audience.

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