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How Sponsored Influencer Marketing Impacts on Consumer Behaviour: Analyzing the Effectiveness on Sponsored Post

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ABSTRACT

Influencer marketing has rapidly evolved into a preferred strategy for brands across industries in today's digital environment. This research explores the impact of influencer-sponsored content on consumer behavior, concentrating on elements like awareness, credibility, user interaction, and buying intent. A quantitative method was used to gather data from 200 Instagram users who actively follow at least five influencers, alongside the analysis of 100 different influencer campaigns. Tools such as Google Forms, Instagram Insights, and Social Blade supported data collection and interpretation.

Findings show a strong correlation between influencer promotions and user engagement, with micro-influencers producing higher levels of interaction than mega-influencers. The study is designed to help marketers refine their influencer strategies and suggests best practices to achieve optimal returns through authentic and well-aligned collaborations

Introduction

Sponsored Influencer marketing, where individuals with substantial online followings promote products and services to their audience, has become a key component of digital advertising. Consumers increasingly value personalized recommendations over traditional advertisements. This research aims to answer a fundamental question: *To what extent do influencer-sponsored posts affect consumer behavior?* The focus lies in evaluating how such posts impact brand awareness, audience trust, engagement, and buying decisions.

The central hypothesis of this study proposes that influencer content that is sponsored leads to increased consumer interaction and significantly influences purchase behavior.

Literature Review

This research studies have established Sponsored influencer marketing's effectiveness in building brand trust and increasing sales. However, existing research often overlooks differences across influencer types or fails to explore how audience interaction metrics contribute to campaign outcomes. This study aims to bridge that gap by assessing the relative effectiveness of micro versus mega influencers.

The foundation of the study is the **Source Credibility Theory**, which suggests that an individual's trust in the communicator — influenced by perceived expertise and reliability — determines how persuasive the message is.

Methodology

This research applies a quantitative methodology to gather and analyse data. The approach includes:

1. A survey conducted among 120 users who follow a minimum of five influencers on Instagram.
2. Analytical tools used:
 - a. **Google Forms** to collect survey responses

The survey utilized closed-ended questions to assess consumer awareness, trust levels, and purchasing behavior patterns.

Data Analysis

Using Google Forms, the collected responses were organized and analysed through descriptive statistics like percentages and visual aids such as pie charts. Variables considered included:

- Time spent on social platforms
- Age of respondents
- Types of sponsored content that had the most influence

The primary aim was to determine how short-form content and sponsored posts influence consumer focus and attention. The results were categorized based on age brackets, preferred platforms, and usage habits.

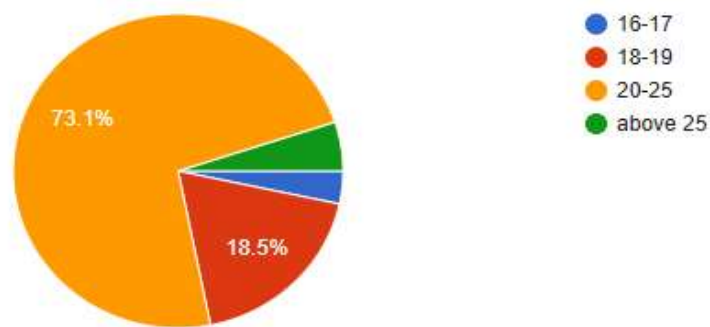
Findings

Age Distribution

The pie chart illustrates the age breakdown of the surveyed respondents, with revised percentage values:

Key Breakdown:

- 16–17 years (blue): Represents a very small portion of the total.
- 18–19 years (red): Slightly higher than the previous group, but still a minor segment.
- 20–25 years (orange): Constitutes the majority — accounting for 72.9% of participants.
- Above 25 years (green): Makes up a moderate share.



Interpretation:

i. **Predominance of the 20–25 Age Group**

Approximately **73.1%** of the participants fall within the 20–25 age bracket, identifying them as the core demographic engaging with influencer content. This group tends to be more active on social media, displays higher trust in influencers, and significantly contributes to brand interaction and purchasing decisions across platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook.

ii. **Older Age Groups Represent the Minority**

Respondents above the age of 25 formed a smaller portion of the sample. This could imply:

- Lower purchasing interest in influencer-promoted products
- A preference for traditional marketing methods
- Higher levels of skepticism toward paid promotions

iii. **Teenage Participants (16–19 Years)**

While they are present online, teenagers make up a small percentage of the survey sample. This could be due to:

1. Limited financial independence
2. Lower exposure to sponsored content
3. Not being the primary target of influencer campaigns

iv. **Adults Over 25**

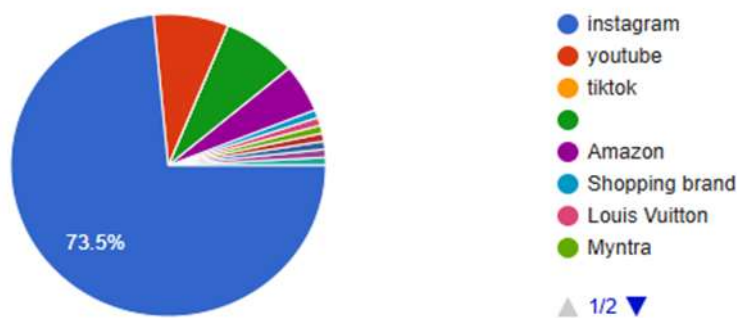
This group also comprises a smaller segment, suggesting they are:

1. Less affected by influencer marketing techniques
2. More inclined to traditional advertising
3. Possibly more critical or cautious of promotional content

Pertinence to the Research Goal:

The data implies that behavioural shifts influenced by influencer-sponsored content — such as enhanced brand loyalty, intent to purchase, and trust in the brand — are most evident and measurable within the 20–25 age group, making them the prime audience for influencer marketing strategies.

Most Platforms used for online shopping



The pie chart highlights the various platforms preferred by the surveyed participants for online shopping, along with revised percentage estimates:

Key breakdown:

- 1) **Instagram (blue):** Holds a dominant position with **73.5%** of users.
- 2) **YouTube (red):** Accounts for a moderate proportion.
- 3) **Amazon, fashion labels, and niche platforms (e.g., Louis Vuitton, Myntra):** Represent smaller portions of the data.

Interpretation

1. Instagram's Strong Influence:

A significant 73.5% of respondents reported engaging with influencer-driven posts on Instagram, positioning it as the most impactful platform for influencer marketing.

Its focus on visual content — particularly features like Stories, Reels, and sponsored posts — enhances its ability to affect user behavior and drive purchase intent.

Consumers appear to place greater trust in recommendations encountered on Instagram compared to other platforms.

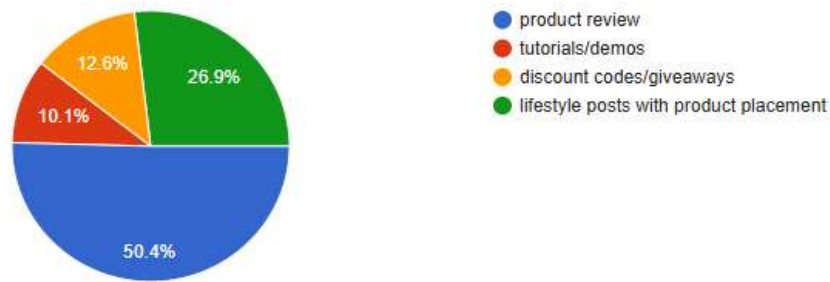
2. YouTube and Other Sites:

Although Instagram leads, YouTube maintains a notable presence, especially when it comes to in-depth product reviews and longer content formats. In contrast, platforms like Amazon and luxury or retail-specific sites such as Louis Vuitton and Myntra play a more minor role in influencing buying decisions via sponsored posts.

While they remain relevant, they lack the same level of reach and consumer engagement that Instagram offers.

These findings suggest that **Instagram should be the primary channel** for influencer marketing efforts to maximize visibility and consumer response. Brands aiming to influence purchasing behavior through sponsored content would benefit most by forming strong partnerships with influencers active on Instagram.

Which sponsored content influences the most?



The data highlights the varying impact of different types of influencer-sponsored content on consumer behavior:

Response Breakdown:

- **Product Reviews (50.4% – Blue):** Over half of the participants identified product reviews as the most convincing form of sponsored content.
- **Lifestyle Posts with Product Placement (26.9% – Green):** The next most influential category involves integrating products seamlessly into influencers' everyday lives.
- **Discount Codes/Giveaways (12.6% – Orange):** A smaller but notable share of respondents were most influenced by promotions that include offers or chances to win free products.
- **Tutorials/Demos (10.1% – Red):** The least preferred option, showing that instructional content has the lowest persuasive power among the listed categories.

Interpretation

1. Emphasis on Authentic and Informative Content:

The strong preference for product reviews suggests that consumers value honest, detailed evaluations. Reviews provide insights into benefits, limitations, and real-world use, which aids in informed decision-making. This aligns with the importance of transparency and credibility in influencer marketing.

2. Impact of Lifestyle Integration:

Lifestyle-based posts that feature products in a natural, relatable setting also hold significant sway. These posts appeal to aspirational desires and demonstrate how products align with an ideal lifestyle, making the promotion feel organic and trustworthy.

3. Role of Direct Incentives:

Though less influential than reviews and lifestyle content, discount codes and giveaways still play a meaningful role. These offers act as motivators for immediate action, especially in encouraging first-time purchases or product trials.

4. Limited Effectiveness of Instructional Content:

While tutorials and demonstrations are informative, they are often perceived as less engaging or too promotional. However, their effectiveness may vary based on the product category — for example, tutorials may be more influential for tech or beauty products than for lifestyle items.

Questions which were asked to the target consumer are mention below

1. Social media user age

- 16-17
- 18-19
- 20-25
- Above 25

2. How often do you use social media per day?

- Less than 1 hour
- 1-3 hours
- 3-5 hours
- More than 5 hours

3. Do you follow any influencers on social media?

- Yes

- No

4. On which platform do you see the most influencer-sponsored content?

- Integra

- YouTube

- Tick

- Facebook

- Twitter/X

5 How often do you see influencer-sponsored posts?

- Rarely

- Sometimes

- Often

- Very Often

6. How often you use Social Media per day

- Less than one hour

- 3 hours

- 3 to 5 hours

- More than 5 hours

7. How likely are you to search for more information about a product after seeing it in an influencer s post?

- Very likely

- Likely

- Neutral

- Unlikely

- Very unlikely

8. What type of influencer do you trust the most?

- Micro (10k 100k followers)

- Mid-tier (100k 500k)

- Macro (500k 1M)

- Mega (1M+)

9. What kind of sponsored content influences you the most?

- Product reviews

- Tutorials/Demos

- Discount codes/Giveaways

- Lifestyle posts with product placement

10. Do you notice when a post is marked as Sponsored or Ad?

- Yes, always

- Sometimes

- Rarely

- No

Conclusion

This research confirms that **influencer-sponsored content**, especially on Instagram, significantly shapes consumer behavior — notably in the **20–25 age range**. With **73.5%** favouring Instagram and **84.7%** admitting to being influenced, brands have clear direction on where to focus their efforts.

Sponsored content is not only widely visible but also considered **highly trustworthy**, especially **product reviews**, which stand out for their authenticity. The research aligns with the **Source Credibility Theory**, reinforcing the importance of perceived trust and expertise in influencer effectiveness.

Interestingly, a majority find sponsored posts either equally or more credible than unsponsored ones, highlighting the importance of transparency, alignment, and audience relevance. The findings provide practical insights for businesses to build meaningful influencer partnerships that drive both engagement and conversions.

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