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Influencer Marketing and Its Effectiveness on Brand Awareness Among Young Consumers in Vijayawada

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ABSTRACT

Thus influencer marketing is a type of digital marketing in which brands communicate with consumers via social media content producers, opinion leaders and social media personalities. With the increased popularity of social sites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and other social media sites, influencers have more opportunities to generate awareness of brands and their offerings among young consumers. This study aims to know how influencer marketing can generate better brand awareness among young consumers of Vijayawada. Influence of influencer credibility, content quality, authenticity, influencer engagement and influencer-brand fit towards branding awareness of young consumers. Quantitative Descriptive survey research. Primary data is collection through structured questionnaire from young social media users of Vijayawada by using five points Likert scale. The analyzes of data can be done through the methods such as Descriptive analysis, Reliability analysis, Correlation and regression analysis. Influence of influencers as well as contents on marketing has been varied in various studies. Influencers, content and consumer-related features of variables have been found to affect marketing effectiveness, but the effects seem to vary across the different contexts. A recent meta-analysis of 251 studies indicated that influencer-related, post-related and follower-related factors contributed to influencer-marketing effectiveness, but source credibility and social identity proved to be powerful influencers. The present study provides a more localized viewpoint by studying the attitude of young consumers of Vijayawada and can help to find out how influencer marketing can be made more effective for generating brand awareness.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Brand Awareness, Young Consumers, Social Media, Influencer Credibility, Content Quality, Vijayawada, Digital Marketing

1. Problem Statement

With the proliferation of social media, the means by which companies are able to communicate with consumers have evolved. While advertising has traditionally been the primary method of communicating with consumers, this is now supplemented by marketing via social-media influencers. This is where a person with a large following on social media engages in paid promotion of brands and products.

But working with an influencer alone does not necessarily mean that consumers will be able to recall, recognize, or realize awareness of a brand. These components of campaign effectiveness will also be determined by the influencer's credibility, their genuine passion and expertise, the quality of content and engagement, and the relevance and the fit of the influencer with the brand. Some research suggests that the influencers and content factors have varying effects.

Hence, we need to determine the extent to which influencer marketing can create awareness for brands among young buyers in Vijayawada and which factors within influencer marketing are most important in creating that awareness.

2. Introduction

Digital transformation has revolutionized the marketing landscape. The consumers now see not just traditional advertisements on TV, newspapers, and outdoor media but also branded content, especially when they log into social-media. When they log into social media platforms, they can communicate with brands, discuss products, provide reviews, and get recommendations from content-creators. Of these, influencer marketing has grown to be a significant part of the digital marketing landscape.

Who are social-media influencers? To build a following and connect with audiences, social-media creators generate and share content that can influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of followers. Influencers are often celebrities, professional content makers, bloggers, lifestyle influencers, fashion and beauty creators, food critics, teachers, and local creators. They tend to be effective when they possess attributes such as expertise, trustworthiness,

attractiveness, authenticity, and communication skills; which are dimensions of endorsers specified in Ohanian's influential source-credibility framework for endorser effectiveness.

Influencer marketing is particularly important for young consumers, for whom social media is a key medium for information, entertainment, product discovery, and interaction with friends. A systematic review of 60 studies with young consumers found that influencer marketing can affect trust, brand perception, brand attitude, and consumer behaviour.

Brett Gordon Brand awareness is when a consumer can recall or recognize a brand when it is seen in a category of product or at the time of purchase. It is valuable because the consumer is more likely to think of a brand that they recognize. You can use influencer marketing to keep your brand in front of consumers.

Follower Count Following can also have an impact. In one study, influencers with high follower numbers were considered more likeable, as they were seen as more popular and 'well-liked'. However, a follower count doesn't always result in good brand outcomes. The study also found that the individual identity of a product and how well it fits with the influencer play an important role.

Another recent study from India highlights the relevance of influencer credibility. A research from the Indian Gen Z consumer also found that credibility (trust, expertise and similarity) played an important role for Indian Gen Z consumers, but attractiveness was not a significant predictor.

In the Indian market, influencer marketing is a more and more relevant challenge for the organization, mainly for the youth market segment. However, most research work has been already done with national samples, urban areas, types of products, purchase intention or brand attitude. Looking at young consumers specifically in Vjayawada will help us to take some local perspective on this topic.

3. Review of Literature

3.1 Ohanian (1990) - Source Credibility

Ohanian created a measure for celebrity-endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. The experiment found the three factors as key facets of source credibility. This is particularly relevant to influencer marketing as consumers might be more accepting of influencers if they see them as competent, believable, and appealing.

3.2 De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017)

De Veirman et al. studied Instagram influencers and interaction effects between following size and product divergence. The results indicated that high followersize influencers were also seen as more popular and likeable. Despite the advantages of choosing high follower influencers, identifying such influencers is not always successful, as product-influencer fit also affect brands' images.

3.3 Lou and Yuan (2019)

Lou and Yuan focused on message value and the credibility of the message for branded influencer content. This line of research emphasizes the importance of information value, realness of influencer and influencer credibility for the formation of positive consumer attitudes toward influencer marketing.

3.4 Sokolova and Kefi (2020)

Sokolova and Kefi studied the role of social-media influencers on purchase intention and the importance of credibility and parasocial relationship. They wrote, "Findings indicate that consumers establish parasocial interactions with influencers and therefore influencer recommendations could be more influential."

3.5 Leung et al. (2022)

Studies on social-media influencer marketing also underscored the importance of the communicator, including the influence of influencer generated content, communication, credibility and consumer engagement. Influencers may connect between brands and consumers, providing a more interactive, customized form of communication.

3.6 Pan et al. (2025)

Pan et al. conducted a meta-analytic review with 1,531 effect sizes from 251 papers. The research revealed that various influencer, post, and follower features impact various marketing results. The study also revealed that source credibility and persuasion knowledge are significant processes. According to the results, the impact of influencer marketing is not solely determined by one influencer attribute.

3.7 Chavare and Nayak (2025)

In a study of Indian Gen Z consumers, the researchers discovered that levels of credibility among influencers was affected by whether consumers thought they were knowledgeable, alike, and trustworthy. They also found that consumer's attitudes towards the brand had an impact on the link between influencer credibility and purchase intention.

3.8 Upreti and Bisht (2026)

What is the impact of influencer marketing on young consumers? A recent review of 60 studies of influencer marketing and young consumers found that the following can impact young consumers' trust, brand perception, attitude and behaviour: influencer attributes, authenticity, credibility, parasocial relationships and content.

3.9 Recent Indian Gen Z Research (2026)

Latest studies on Indian Gen Z consumers have combined attributes of influencers and content into a single framework. It was reported that influencer knowledge can lead to increased trust and content quality can have positive effects on consumers' views of influencer content. It was also reported that, there may be decayed effects from repeated exposure to influencers.

4. Literature Summary

Author/Year	Major Focus	Key Finding
Ohanian (1990)	Source credibility	Expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness are important credibility dimensions
De Veirman et al. (2017)	Instagram influencers	Follower count affects popularity perceptions, but fit also matters
Lou & Yuan (2019)	Influencer content	Content value and credibility influence consumer responses
Sokolova & Kefi (2020)	Influencer credibility	Credibility and parasocial relationships influence consumer responses
Leung et al. (2022)	Influencer marketing	Influencers facilitate brand–consumer communication
Pan et al. (2025)	Meta-analysis	Influencer, post and follower characteristics affect marketing outcomes
Chavare & Nayak (2025)	Indian Gen Z	Trust, expertise and similarity contribute to influencer credibility
Upreti & Bisht (2026)	Young consumers	Influencer marketing influences trust, brand perception and behaviour

5. Research Gap

Academic research on influencer marketing has received much attention, but...

1. Geographical gap: Several of the studies used samples of national or major metropolitan populations, whereas very little research particularly look at young consumers in Vijayawada.
2. Outcome gap: Previous literature mainly examines purchase intention, purchase behaviour and brand attitude. However, less specifically, brand awareness is studied.
3. Local consumer perspective: Young consumers in the Vijayawada market could have different behaviors in terms of the way in which they engage in the consumer market versus those in other metropolitan cities due to different developing markets and socio-economic contexts.
4. Integrated factors: Influencer credibility, authenticity, content quality, engagement and influencer–brand fit are largely studied independently. There is an opportunity to explore these simultaneously.
5. Platforms: Young consumers use a mix of social media platforms, but the impact of influencer marketing will differ by platform and content type.
6. Changing influence landscape: With the surge in short-form videos, local creators, and creator-driven advertising, the effectiveness of influencers needs to be constantly reviewed.

Hence, this research is put forward to bridge the gaps in previous studies by investigating the impact of Influences Marketing on Brand Awareness among Young Consumers in Vijayawada.

6. Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

1. To study how far influencer marketing helps young consumers to create brand awareness.
 2. To discover the impact of influencer credibility, authenticity, quality of content, engagement and fit of the influencer to the brand on brand awareness.
 3. To explore the impact of exposure to social-media influencers on consumers' ability to recall and recognize brands.
 4. To ascertain the extent to which the influencer marketing factors significantly influence brand awareness in youth.
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6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The research design for this study can be either descriptive or quantitative in nature. While the descriptive nature will assist in understanding how young consumers are exposed to influencer marketing, the quantitative approach will assist in testing the relationship between influencer-marketing factors and brand awareness.

6.2 Study Area

The geographical area of study: Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh.

6.3 Target Population

The audience of the study is a sample of the younger generation of consumers in Vijayawada, who are digitally engaged and consume influencer content. In this research, the young consumers can be said as respondents from 18-30 years old.

6.4 Sample Size

You can take a sample of about 100-150 number of respondents for your survey. A sample of 120 number of respondents will be a good number for descriptive and inferential analysis at the student level.

6.5 Sampling Technique

The researcher could use convenience sampling or purposive sampling. Respondents should be eligible in being young social-media users and having seen the content of the influencer.

6.6 Data Collection

The main data can be obtained via a questionnaire either physically or in the form of Google form.

Secondary information can be collected from:

Research journals

Academic databases

Books

Research reports

Industry publications

Reliable websites

6.7 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire can contain:

Section A - Demographic information

Age

Gender

Educational qualification

Occupation

Monthly income/pocket money

Section B - Social-media usage

Frequently used social-media platform

Daily social-media usage

Frequency of viewing influencer content

Preferred influencer category

Section C - Influencer marketing

Credibility

Authenticity

Content quality

Engagement

Influencer-brand fit

Section D - Brand awareness

Brand recognition

Brand recall

Awareness of new brands

Product-category association

Consideration of brands seen through influencers

A five-point Likert scale can be used:

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly Agree

6.8 Data Analysis

The collected data can be analyzed using:

Frequency and percentage

Mean

Standard deviation

Cronbach's alpha

Pearson correlation

Multiple regression

Demographic comparisons and ANOVA/t-tests can be performed if appropriate data exist.

7. Conceptual Background

The research is mainly founded on: Source Credibility Theory and social-media influencer marketing theory.

Source Credibility Theory

Source Credibility Theory suggests that the power of a message to persuade depends on the credibility of the source. Ohanian identified three key factors as: Credibility - the perceived expertise of the influencer, or whether he/she seems to be 'an expert' on the product.

Authenticity - for example does the influencer seem sincere and trustworthy.

Physical attractiveness - how attractive the influencer is perceived to be.

In influencer marketing, credibility can lead to greater consumer attention to branded content as well as higher recall of the brand.

Authenticity

Authenticity: How much consumers feel that an influencer's recommendations are authentic rather than commercialised. High levels of commercialisation or influencer/influencer-product mismatch may erode young consumers' trust. Current studies focus on authenticity and transparency as prime influencer effectiveness factors.

Content Quality

Information, entertainment, proximity, and visualization can be used to attract customer attention. A meta-analysis has shown that informational value and hedonic value of posts is a driver of customers' response.

Engagement

Likes, comments, shares, views, saves, and direct interaction, as interactions can represent some level of engagement. However, engagement does not always transfer to each outcome, so we can't assume that high engagement is equivalent to high marketing performance.

8. Conceptual Framework

The model looks at how the different attributes of influencer marketing affect brand awareness.

Independent Variables

Influencer Credibility

Influencer Authenticity

Content Quality

Audience Engagement

Influencer-Brand Fit

Intermediate Consumer Response

Attention

Trust

Interest

Brand Perception

Dependent Variable

Brand Awareness

Brand Recognition

Brand Recall

Awareness of New Brands

Brand Familiarity

Conceptual Model

Influencer Credibility

Influencer Authenticity

Content Quality

Consumer Response Brand Awareness

Audience Engagement

Influencer-Brand Fit

This work is also in line with other recent literature arguing that influencers characteristics and contents characteristics influence consumers responses through mediators such as credibility, trust perception and engagement.

9. Key Findings and Analysis

Note: No original questionnaire data have been supplied for this study, (since data were collected in one location only- Vijayawada), so what you see below should be considered as 'proposed'/ expected rather than actual findings of the survey.

9.1 Influencer Credibility

Credibility is also likely to have a positive relationship with brand awareness. As younger consumers will be more likely to pay more attention to brands endorsed by credible influencers which they perceive to be expert and trustworthy. This is also backed up by research which has identified expertise and trustworthiness as important elements of source credibility.

9.2 Authenticity

Original and Organic product suggestions are likely to prompt more consumer engagement and brand awareness. Consumers may become turned off by branded influencer content.

9.3 Content Quality

Content such as educational videos, demos, reviews, tutorials, reels, storytelling, and more will likely enhance brand awareness and brand recall. According to a study, the content and post attributes, such as informational value and hedonic value, may determine consumer outcomes.

9.4 Engagement

Interactive content can enhance the consumer's involvement with the brand. What consumers comment on, share, poll, ask questions and watch during a live video can be a powerful memory trigger for brand recall. Nevertheless, the association needs to be investigated empirically because the engagement does not always lead to better consumer outcomes.

9.5 Influencer-Brand Fit

All influencer attributes listed above are assumed to positively moderate the influence of the fit factors on brand attitudes, with the exception of the influence of the influencer category. A highly relevant influencer match with the influencer personality, audience, category and product is assumed to lead to better brand evaluations.

9.6 Overall Effectiveness

Given the current literature, it can be hypothesised that influencer marketing will have a positive relationship with young consumers' awareness of a brand. However, this positive correlation may be moderated by the quality of the influencer campaign, and not the influencer's audience size. Influencer marketing is multidimensional and differs by influencer, follower, and post according to a recent meta-analysis.

10. Future Research Directions

Future research can build upon this study in the following ways:

1. Larger sample size: In the future study we can take the respondents from larger population. For future we can take the respondents from Vijayawada and nearby districts.
2. Comparison: Cities like Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai can be used for comparison with Vijayawada.
3. Platforms: Future studies can conduct separate studies on Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and nascent short-video platforms.

4. Types of influencers: Researchers can compare the performance of fashion, beauty, food, travel, education, fitness, or tech influencers.
5. Micro versus macro influencers: The next step in this research could be to assess which type of influencer - micro or macro - is more effective in generating brand awareness.
6. Generational Comparison: Future studies may investigate the differences between Gen Z and Millennials.
7. Longitudinal studies: Rather than taking a one-time snapshot, researchers might choose to observe changes in brand awareness over a period of months.
8. Purchase behaviour: Future studies can examine if brand awareness has positive effects on purchase intention and purchase behaviour.
9. AI, virtual influencer: Virtual influencers are created with the help of AI so that future studies can analyze consumer behavior towards AI influencers.
10. Local businesses: Further research could look at whether small businesses in Vijayawada are leveraging the popularity of local influencers to build brand awareness and drive customers to their stores.

11. Conclusion

Influencer marketing has become one of the new channels of digital marketing as it is particularly popular among younger consumers who spend significant amounts of time on social media platforms. Influencers offer brands potential access to consumers by means of engaging, personalized communication.

The research suggests that the effectiveness of influencer marketing will be influenced by factors such as the credibility, authenticity, the content of the messages, engagement, influencer-brand fit and consumer factors. Evidence from the research shows that it is not only the number of followers that results in effective campaigns.

The study thus aims to measure the impact of influencer marketing on brand awareness among young consumers in vijayawada. This study will aim to help local companies, marketers, and brands in leveraging social-media influencers for their marketing efforts.

In general, influencer marketing can positively influence brand awareness, brand recall and familiarity, and consumer awareness, as long as brands work with the right influencer(s) and produce trustworthy, natural, appropriate and engaging content. The Delhi/Andhra Pradesh viewpoint can add to the literature in the form of evidence regarding young consumers' reaction to influencer-centric brand communication.

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