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IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER MARKETING ON BRAND AWARENESS OF SWIGGY AMONG MIDDLE-AGED IT PROFESSIONALS IN WHITEFIELD, BENGALURU

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ABSTRACT :

Instagram is now one of the common platforms used by brands to reach consumers. Influencers are also widely used on the platform because they can present products and services in a more personal way. This study looks at the relationship between Instagram influencer marketing and Swiggy brand awareness among IT professionals in Bengaluru. The study used a quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional approach. Primary information was collected through a Google Forms questionnaire using convenience sampling. A total of 51 usable responses were received between 25 August and 2 October 2026. The responses were analysed using percentages, cross-tabulation, Spearman rank correlation, Mann–Whitney U, Kruskal–Wallis and chi-square tests. Fisher's exact test was also considered where the expected frequencies were small.

The responses show that participants were regularly exposed to influencer content. About 74.0% agreed that they often see food-related influencer content, while 66.7% noticed Swiggy promotions posted by influencers. Influencers were the most commonly selected single source of Swiggy awareness at 30.0%, followed by friends and family at 24.0%. Exposure, engagement and perceived credibility were all positively related to Swiggy brand awareness, with Spearman's ρ values of .65, .50 and .52 respectively (all $p < .001$). The four null hypotheses were therefore rejected. However, these results show relationships rather than proof that influencer marketing directly caused awareness. A major limitation is that the sample was quite young: 88% were below 31 and only six respondents were aged 40 or above. Therefore, the findings should not be treated as representative of middle-aged IT professionals in Whitefield.

Keywords: Instagram influencer marketing, Swiggy, brand awareness, IT professionals, influencer credibility, social media marketing, Bengaluru.

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has changed the way companies communicate with customers. Along with traditional advertising, businesses now use platforms such as Instagram, YouTube and Facebook to reach people. Instagram is especially useful for visual promotion because brands can use reels, stories, sponsored posts and influencer collaborations to attract attention.

Influencer marketing involves a brand working with social media creators to communicate about its products or services to their followers (Hudders, De Jans & De Veirman, 2021). One reason brands use influencers is that their content can feel more personal and easier to relate to than a normal advertisement. The effect of such content can depend on the influencer's credibility, the relevance and quality of the content, how often people see it, and how much they engage with it.

Swiggy works in a competitive food-delivery market where staying visible to customers is important. On Instagram, people may come across Swiggy through restaurant reviews, food creators, lifestyle pages, promotional reels or posts about discounts. Seeing this type of content may help consumers recognise the brand and remember it when they are planning to order food.

Whitefield is an important technology and employment area of Bengaluru and has many IT professionals. People with busy work schedules may use food-delivery services regularly, although their response to Instagram content can differ depending on their social media habits and how much they trust influencers. With this background, the study focuses on Instagram influencer exposure, engagement, credibility, brand recall and familiarity with Swiggy.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brand awareness

Brand awareness is an important part of building a strong brand. Aaker (1996) considers awareness a basic foundation for other brand associations, while Keller (1993) explains the difference between recognition and recall. Recognition means identifying a brand when it is seen, whereas recall means remembering the brand when thinking about a particular product category. In this study, both ideas are considered through questions about recognising Swiggy and remembering its promotions.

2.2 Social media interaction and brand awareness

Previous research suggests that interacting with brand content on social media can be connected with brand awareness. Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt and Füller (2013), in their study of a car brand's Facebook page, found a relationship between social media interaction and brand awareness. Instagram is also relevant to food brands because food can be promoted easily through photos, videos and other visual content.

2.3 Repeated exposure

Zajonc's (1968) mere-exposure effect suggests that seeing something repeatedly can make it more familiar. In influencer marketing, a brand that appears regularly in the content followed by consumers may become easier to recognise or remember, even when they are not specifically looking for that brand. This idea is relevant to the exposure hypothesis in the present study.

2.4 Influencer credibility

Credibility is an important factor in endorsement and influencer marketing. Ohanian (1990) describes source credibility in terms of qualities such as expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) found that Instagram influencers could be seen as credible by followers, while Lou and Yuan (2019) linked message value and influencer credibility with trust in branded content. De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017) also showed that influencer characteristics can affect brand attitudes. These studies indicate that the credibility of the person sharing the message can influence how consumers respond to influencer content.

2.5 Influencer marketing in the food-delivery context

Food-delivery companies use digital platforms to communicate offers, restaurants, and services to customers. Social media can also reach people who are not actively searching for a food-delivery service at that moment. Hudders et al. (2021) point out that influencer marketing does not work in the same way for every audience; results can vary according to the audience, influencer, content, and level of trust. This makes studies focused on particular groups useful.

3. RESEARCH GAP

Earlier studies provide useful evidence that social media and influencer marketing can support engagement, visibility and brand awareness. However, many studies concentrate on general users, younger consumers or purchase intention. Comparatively less attention has been given to brand awareness among working IT professionals. There is also limited focused work on Instagram influencer marketing and Swiggy awareness among IT professionals in Bengaluru's technology areas. The present study therefore examines this relationship in the selected setting.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

The objectives of the study are:

- To assess the level of exposure of respondents to Swiggy-related influencer marketing on Instagram.
- To examine the level of Swiggy brand awareness among respondents.
- To study the relationship between Instagram influencer marketing exposure and Swiggy brand awareness.
- To examine the relationship between influencer credibility and awareness of Swiggy.
- To study whether exposure to Swiggy influencer content is associated with brand recall.

- To identify the sources that contribute most to Swiggy awareness and the behavioural responses (searching, ordering) that follow influencer promotions.
- To offer suggestions for improving Swiggy's Instagram influencer marketing strategy.

Correspondingly, the study asks:

- (1) How often do respondents see Swiggy-related influencer content?
- (2) How aware of Swiggy are they?
- (3) Is influencer exposure related to Swiggy awareness?
- (4) Does influencer credibility relate to awareness?
- (5) Is repeated exposure related to brand recall?
- (6) Which sources contribute most to awareness, and do influencer promotions lead to searching or ordering?

5. HYPOTHESES

- **H1 – Exposure and awareness.** H0: There is no significant relationship between exposure to Swiggy-related Instagram influencer marketing and Swiggy brand awareness. H1: There is a significant relationship between the two.
- **H2 – Influencer credibility.** H0: There is no significant relationship between perceived influencer credibility and Swiggy brand awareness. H1: There is a significant relationship between the two.
- **H3 – Content engagement.** H0: Engagement with Swiggy-related influencer content has no significant relationship with Swiggy brand awareness. H1: Engagement with such content has a significant relationship with brand awareness.
- **H4 – Repeated exposure and recall.** H0: There is no significant relationship between exposure to Swiggy influencer content and Swiggy brand recall. H1: There is a significant relationship between exposure and brand recall.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research design

This study uses a quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional design. Information was collected during one period and was used to understand respondents' Instagram use, exposure to influencer marketing, views about influencers and awareness of Swiggy. The design is suitable for examining relationships between these variables, but it cannot establish a controlled cause-and-effect relationship.

6.2 Conceptual framework

For this study, Instagram influencer marketing is treated as the independent variable. It is considered through three areas: exposure, engagement and credibility. Exposure refers to how often respondents see or notice influencer content. Engagement covers how attractive, useful and attention-catching they find the content, while credibility refers to how knowledgeable, honest and trustworthy they consider influencers. Swiggy brand awareness is the dependent variable and includes recognition, recall, familiarity with services and offers, and the ability to distinguish the brand.

6.3 Sampling and data collection

The study used convenience sampling, which is a non-probability sampling method. A structured questionnaire was shared through Google Forms using personal and professional networks. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that the information was being collected for academic purposes. The form remained open from 25 August to 2 October 2026 and produced 51 responses. The intended sample was around 150, so the final number of responses was lower than planned. Published studies on influencer marketing and brand awareness were used as secondary sources.

6.4 Instrument and measurement

The questionnaire contained demographic items (age group, gender, years of experience in the IT industry), usage items (frequency of Instagram use and of online food ordering), 20 attitudinal statements, and five behavioural and summary items (frequency of Swiggy use, main source of awareness,

searching for Swiggy after an influencer promotion, ordering after an influencer recommendation, and overall perceived impact). The 20 statements (Appendix A) were rated on a four-point agreement scale (Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly Agree = 4) with no neutral midpoint. Items were grouped as: Exposure (4 items), Engagement (4 items), Credibility (3 items) and Brand Awareness (9 items). Construct scores are the mean of available items for each respondent, computed when at least 70% of the construct's items were answered. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951).

6.5 Data analysis

The collected data were first examined using percentages and cross-tabulations. Since the attitude responses were measured on an ordinal Likert-type scale, Spearman's rank correlation was used to examine relationships between the main constructs. Mann–Whitney U and Kruskal–Wallis tests were used when comparing groups. For hypothesis testing, chi-square tests of independence were used after classifying construct scores as Low or High using 2.5 as the cut-off. Fisher's exact test was additionally reported when expected cell counts were below 5. The significance level was kept at 0.05. Missing responses were excluded pairwise, which means the number of observations differs slightly across some analyses. Names collected through the form were not included in the analysis.

7. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

7.1 Profile of respondents

Table 1 gives the profile of the respondents. The sample was mostly young and female. Among the 50 people who answered the age question, 44 (88.0%) were below 31 and only 6 (12.0%) were aged 40 or above. Also, 82.2% of the respondents who answered the experience question had less than five years of IT experience. Instagram use was fairly high, with 68.0% saying they used it several times a day.

Table 1. Profile of respondents

Variable	Category	n	%
Age	Below 20 years	13	26.0
	20–30 years	31	62.0
	40–50 years	5	10.0
	Above 50 years	1	2.0
Gender	Female	35	68.6
	Male	16	31.4
Experience in IT industry	Less than 5 years	37	82.2
	5–10 years	3	6.7
	11–15 years	2	4.4
	16–20 years	1	2.2
	More than 20 years	2	4.4
Instagram use	Several times a day	34	68.0
	Once a day	9	18.0
	A few times a week	2	4.0
	Rarely	5	10.0
Orders food online	Daily / several times a week	9	17.6
	Once a week / 2–3 times a month	14	27.5
	Rarely	16	31.4
	Never	12	23.5

Percentages are of valid responses for each question (age $n = 50$; experience $n = 45$; Instagram use $n = 50$; online ordering $n = 51$; gender $n = 51$).

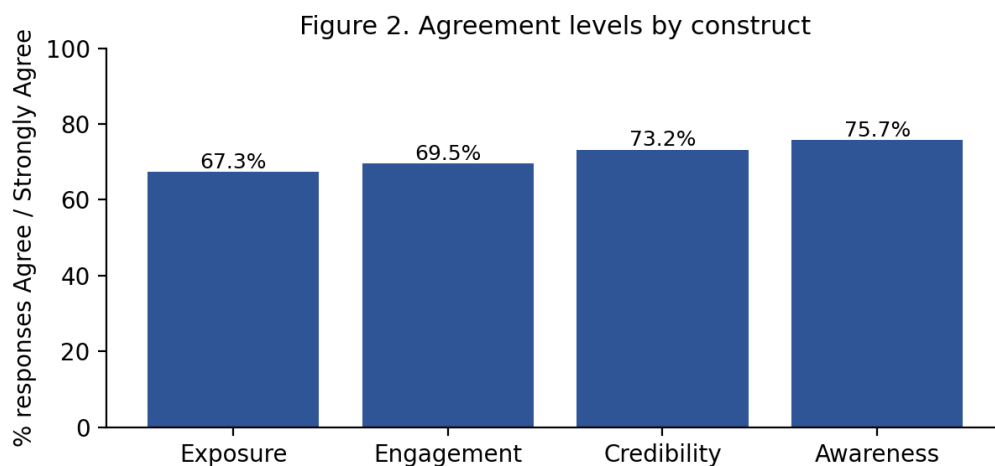
7.2 Exposure to influencer content and Swiggy awareness (Objectives 1 and 2)

Exposure levels were substantial. 74.0% of respondents agreed that they frequently see food-related influencer content, 60.8% follow food influencers, 66.7% notice Swiggy promotions shared by influencers, and 68.0% agreed that influencers make Swiggy more noticeable (Appendix B). Awareness of Swiggy was also high: 79.2% agreed that they can easily recognize the brand, 78.0% remember Swiggy promotions seen on Instagram, and 72.0% are aware of Swiggy's major services and features. Figure 2 compares agreement across the four constructs, and Table 2 gives construct-level statistics.

Table 2. Construct reliability and descriptive statistics (scale 1–4)

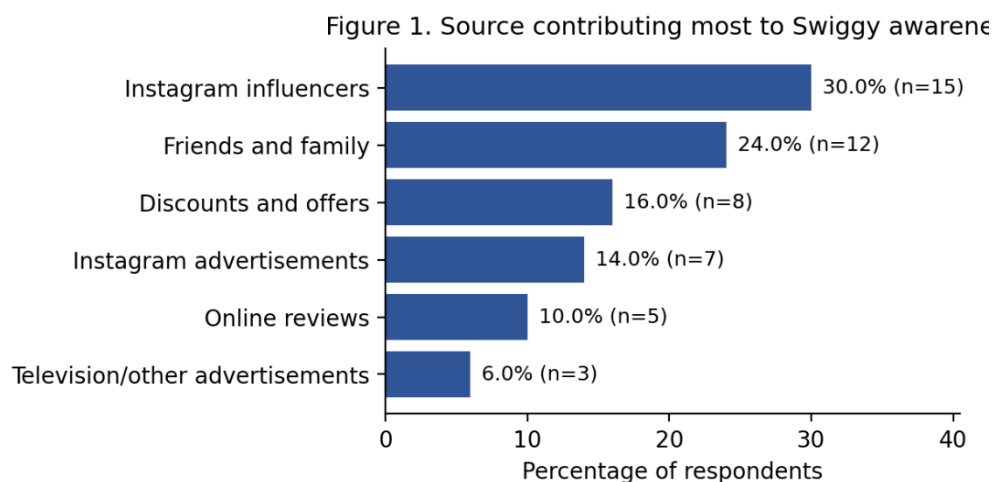
Construct	Items	Cronbach's α	Mean	SD	n
Exposure	4	.67	2.75	0.60	51
Engagement	4	.78	2.76	0.57	51
Credibility	3	.68	2.80	0.58	49
Brand Awareness	9	.87	2.79	0.51	49

Alpha for Exposure and Credibility is modest (.67–.68), which is acceptable for exploratory work with few items but warrants caution. n = respondents with a valid construct score.



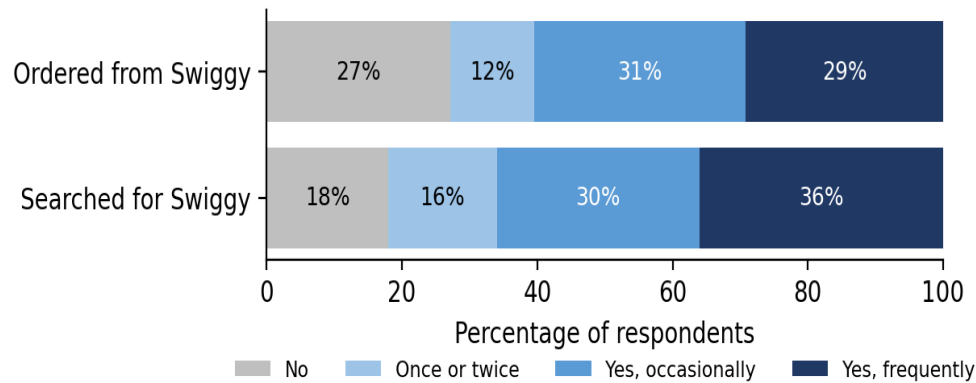
7.3 Sources of awareness and behavioural response (Objective 6)

When respondents were asked which source contributed most to their awareness of Swiggy, Instagram influencers came first at 30.0%. Friends and family followed at 24.0%, while discounts and offers accounted for 16.0%. Instagram advertisements were selected by another 14.0%. Together, influencers and Instagram advertisements made up 44.0%. Since the sample is small and the percentages are fairly close, the first-place position of influencers should be interpreted with some caution.



The responses also show some behavioural action after seeing influencer promotions. In total, 82.0% said they had searched for Swiggy after seeing an influencer promotion at least once, including 36.0% who did so frequently. Similarly, 72.9% had ordered from Swiggy after an influencer recommendation at least once, with 29.2% doing so frequently. For overall impact on awareness, 49.0% rated the impact as High or Very High, 46.9% selected Moderate and 4.1% selected Low or Very Low ($n = 49$).

Figure 3. Behavioural response after influencer promotion



7.4 Relationships among constructs (Objectives 3 and 4)

The correlation results in Table 3 show a positive relationship between brand awareness and all three influencer-related constructs. Awareness had the strongest correlation with exposure ($\rho = .65$), followed by credibility ($\rho = .52$) and engagement ($\rho = .50$). Exposure, engagement and credibility were also related to one another, with correlations ranging from .49 to .54. Therefore, the three relationships with awareness should not be interpreted as completely separate effects.

Table 3. Spearman rank correlations between construct scores

	Exposure	Engagement	Credibility	Awareness
Exposure	1.00	.52	.49	.65
Engagement	.52	1.00	.54	.50
Credibility	.49	.54	1.00	.52
Brand Awareness	.65	.50	.52	1.00

Pairwise $n = 47-49$. The correlations of Exposure, Engagement and Credibility with Brand Awareness are each significant at $p < .001$.

7.5 Hypothesis testing

Table 4 presents the hypothesis-testing results. For H1 to H3, the construct scores were divided into Low and High groups. For H4, the relevant exposure and recall questions were grouped into Disagree and Agree. Because some expected cell counts were below 5, Fisher's exact test was also considered. At the 5% significance level, all four null hypotheses were rejected.

Table 4. Chi-square and Fisher's exact tests of hypotheses

Hypothesis (pair tested)	n	χ^2 (df = 1)	p (χ^2)	p (Fisher)	ϕ
H1: Exposure $\times$ Awareness	49	14.43	< .001	.0005	.54
H2: Credibility $\times$ Awareness	48	21.78	< .001	.0001	.67
H3: Engagement $\times$ Awareness	49	12.18	< .001	.002	.50
H4a: Frequently see food influencer content $\times$ Recall of Swiggy promotions	49	5.71	.017	.047	.34
H4b: Notice Swiggy influencer promotions $\times$ Recall of Swiggy promotions	50	6.49	.011	.024	.36

ϕ = effect size; by Cohen's (1988) conventions, about .10 is small, .30 medium and .50 large. H1–H3 use construct scores (Low < 2.5 ≤ High); H4 uses single items (Disagree vs Agree).

For H1, respondents with high exposure generally also showed high awareness. This was true for 32 out of 34 respondents (94.1%), compared with 7 out of 15 (46.7%) among the low-exposure group. The effect size was large (ϕ = .54).

For H2, the relationship was even stronger. Among respondents who considered influencers credible, 36 out of 38 (94.7%) had high brand awareness. In comparison, only 3 out of 10 (30.0%) in the low-credibility group had high awareness. This was the strongest association in the study (ϕ = .67).

For H3, high engagement was also linked with higher awareness. High awareness was found among 33 of 36 respondents (91.7%) with high engagement, compared with 6 of 13 (46.2%) among those with low engagement. The effect size was ϕ = .50.

For H4, the questionnaire did not directly ask respondents about repeated exposure. Instead, two related measures were used: frequently seeing food influencer content and noticing Swiggy promotions shared by influencers. Both measures were related to remembering Swiggy promotions on Instagram. The effect sizes were moderate (ϕ = .34 and .36), while the corresponding Spearman correlations were .54 (p < .001) and .33 (p = .018). Thus, H4 is supported, but the result should be understood as evidence about exposure frequency rather than a direct measure of repeated exposure.

7.6 Differences in awareness across groups

Table 5 compares mean awareness scores across groups. Awareness did not differ significantly by gender (Mann–Whitney U = 273.5, p = .84) or across age groups (Kruskal–Wallis H = 3.11, p = .21). The six respondents aged 40 or above had the lowest mean awareness (2.35 compared with 2.83 for ages 20–30 and 2.91 for under 20), but with so few respondents this difference is only suggestive. Awareness was markedly lower among the eight respondents who never use Swiggy (mean 2.06) than among the 41 who do (mean 2.94; U = 299.5, p < .001). Respondents who had searched for Swiggy after an influencer promotion (mean 2.92, n = 40) scored higher than those who had not (2.21, n = 9; U = 312, p < .001), as did those who had ordered after an influencer's recommendation (2.96, n = 34, versus 2.50, n = 13; U = 338, p = .003).

Table 5. Mean Brand Awareness score by respondent group (scale 1–4)

Group	Mean	SD	n
Age: Below 20	2.91	0.48	12
Age: 20–30	2.83	0.46	30
Age: 40 and above	2.35	0.69	6
Gender: Female	2.82	0.53	33
Gender: Male	2.73	0.46	16
Never uses Swiggy	2.06	0.53	8
Uses Swiggy (any frequency)	2.94	0.36	41
Searched for Swiggy after influencer promotion: Yes	2.92	0.39	40
Searched: No	2.21	0.58	9
Ordered after influencer recommendation: Yes	2.96	0.38	34
Ordered: No	2.50	0.55	13

8. FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Findings

1. The study found that most respondents were regularly exposed to food-related influencer content on Instagram. About 74% agreed that they frequently saw food-related influencer content, and 66.7% noticed Swiggy promotions shared by influencers.

2. Instagram influencers were the most commonly selected single source of Swiggy brand awareness, accounting for 30% of responses. Friends and family contributed 24%, discounts and offers accounted for 16%, and Instagram advertisements accounted for 14%.

3. The study found a positive relationship between influencer marketing and Swiggy brand awareness. Exposure had the strongest correlation with brand awareness (p = 0.65), followed by credibility (p = 0.52) and engagement (p = 0.50). All three relationships were statistically significant at p <

0.001.

4. Influencer credibility was an important factor in brand awareness. Respondents who considered influencers trustworthy and credible generally reported higher awareness of Swiggy.

5. The results showed that 78% of respondents remembered Swiggy promotions seen on Instagram, while 79.2% said they could easily recognise the Swiggy brand.

6. Influencer promotions were also associated with consumer actions. About 82% of respondents had searched for Swiggy after seeing an influencer promotion at least once, and 72.9% had ordered from Swiggy after an influencer recommendation at least once.

8.2 Suggestions

- Swiggy should collaborate with influencers who are honest, trustworthy and knowledgeable about food and restaurants. Credible influencers may help build greater awareness and trust among consumers.
- Swiggy should encourage influencers to create engaging reels, stories and posts featuring food items, restaurant recommendations, special offers and delivery services.
- Influencer content should display the Swiggy name, logo and important services clearly so that viewers can easily recognise and remember the brand.
- Influencers can share relevant discounts, promotional codes and special deals to attract attention and encourage people to explore Swiggy's services.
- Swiggy should maintain a consistent presence on Instagram through suitable influencer collaborations and interactive content. However, the content should remain useful and interesting rather than repetitive.
- Influencers can use polls, food reviews, question-and-answer sessions and restaurant suggestions to encourage followers to interact with Swiggy-related content.

5.3. CONCLUSION

The study looked at how Instagram influencer marketing is related to Swiggy brand awareness among IT-sector respondents in Bengaluru. The respondents reported regular exposure to influencer content, and influencers were the most commonly selected single source of Swiggy awareness. Exposure, engagement and credibility were all positively and significantly related to awareness, with credibility showing the strongest relationship. At the same time, the study cannot claim that influencer marketing directly caused the increase in awareness because the data are cross-sectional and self-reported. The sample was also small and mainly young, so the results cannot be generalised to middle-aged IT professionals in Whitefield. Even with these limitations, the findings suggest that credible and engaging influencer content can be a useful part of Swiggy's marketing communication and can be examined further with a larger sample.

5.4. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The main limitation is the mismatch between the intended population and the actual sample. The study focuses on middle-aged IT professionals in Whitefield, but 88% of respondents were below 31, only six were aged 40 or above, and 82% had less than five years of IT experience. The questionnaire also did not collect the respondents' exact work or residence location, so their connection with Whitefield could not be confirmed. In addition, the age options did not include a 31–39 category. Because of this, the findings should be treated as exploratory results from a mainly young IT-sector group rather than as findings that represent middle-aged professionals in Whitefield.

There are some additional limitations. The final sample was 51 instead of the planned 150 and was selected through convenience sampling, which limits statistical power and generalisability. Some expected cell counts were also small. The four-point scale did not provide a neutral option, which may have encouraged some respondents to choose agreement. Reliability for Exposure and Credibility was moderate rather than strong (α around .67). The study also depended on self-reported awareness, and converting continuous construct scores into Low and High groups for chi-square testing meant that some information was lost. The questionnaire did not separately examine formats such as reels, stories, and posts, and it did not directly measure repeated exposure.

A follow-up study could use a larger sample and focus specifically on professionals aged 35–50 who work in Whitefield. It would be useful to record

location and demographic details clearly, include a neutral option in the response scale, and ask separately about reels, stories, and posts. Brand awareness could also be measured through unaided recall rather than only through questions that refer to influencer promotions. With a larger dataset, regression or structural equation modelling could be used to compare the contribution of exposure, engagement, and credibility more clearly.

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