

IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR IN INDIA

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Abstract: *Given study was intent to found the effects of promotional posts with influencer marketing through Instagram on purchasing behavior of consumers. Experimental research design was use to experiment the phenomenon for patterns of behavior, livingness and rate of buying increase with influencer marketing on Instagram. Product Moment Correlation analysis of association between two variables was followed to found relationship between influencer marketing on Instagram and purchasing behavior of consumers. Results of the study revealed that there was significant positive correlation between consumers purchasing behavior and influencer marketing on Instagram. There was also found significant differences in mean and variance between two groups on the effects of influencer marketing through Instagram professional posts.*

Introduction: According to Forbes, influencer marketing can be defined as a form of marketing in which focus is placed on specific key individuals rather than the target market as a whole. These options have also led to the evolution of social media influencer marketing. The rise of social media has opened up a new channel for brands to connect with consumers more directly and more organically. Social media brand influencers are on the rise, becoming one of the biggest marketing and public relations trends of 2017, especially those who promote lifestyle brands. By working alongside social media influencers, public relations agencies can capture the attention of brand consumers and promote relevant and relatable content to clients. While influencer marketing based on traditional media has been used in public relations for many years, the rise of social media has created the boom of social media influencer marketing. Social media influencer marketing has successfully changed the way that brands interact with consumers, especially in regard to lifestyle branding. This study examined what strategies have made influencer marketing such a successful public relations tool and how the use of social media has allowed brands and consumers to connect on a more personal level.

Limitations and Advantages:

Limitations- Inadequate sample size, Insufficient helpful responses from the survey, Limited access to data due to limited research on this topic, Lack of certain information or sources for information taken from social media, Sudden change in trend or any information used in the paper since the trend of this topic keeps changing, Narrow view of the entire topic, Variable data as consumer opinions can change over times.

Advantages- Very specifically chosen objectives, Selective and numbered survey subjects, Popular apps chosen to gather more data Target on teens, young adults, and social media users, Focus on all forms of influencer marketing, Focus on its effects during the pandemic, Easy availability of influencer's influence margin Survey responses from consumers that have been impacted.

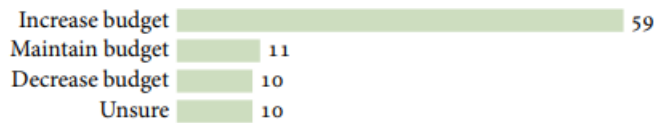


FIGURE 1 Budget for Influencer Marketing for the Next 12 Months (adapted from Tomoson 2015)

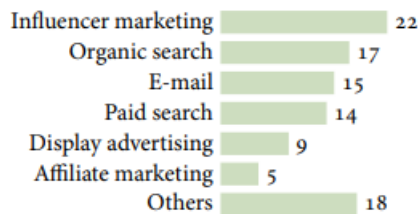


FIGURE 2 The Fastest Growing Online Customer Acquisition Method (adapted from Tomoson 2015)

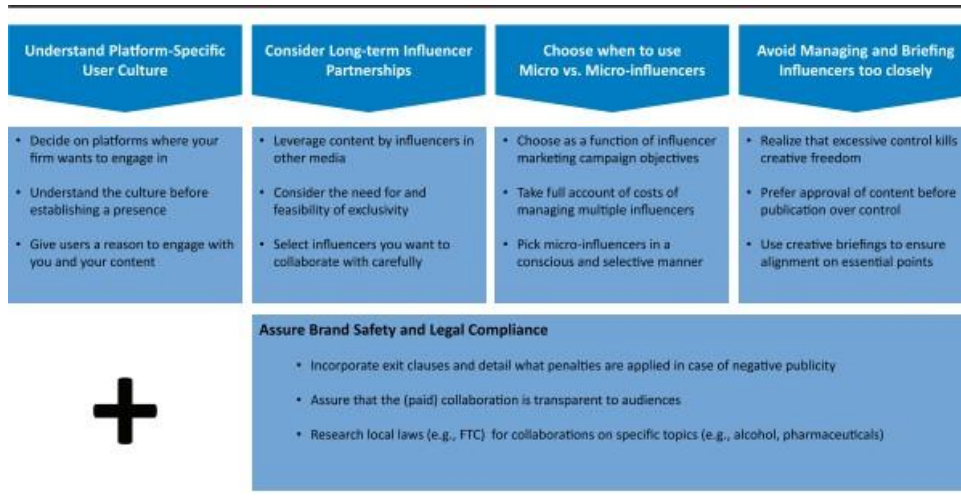
Literature Review: Influencer marketing incorporating social media is a new phenomenon within the industry. Due to the constantly evolving and changing market, this topic has been widely discussed by contemporary media, but not enough by scholarly researchers. The literature review covered the identification of social media influencers, their importance and impact on brands, and the strategic planning they employed while communicating with consumers. To include an analysis of the latest techniques used by social media influencers in their marketing, this study reviewed trade publications and news articles as well as traditional academic sources.

• **What is influencer marketing?** - Influence marketing is the development and transport of advertising messages through influential human beings, opinion leaders, and not via the logo itself. They have an impact on by way of instance, greater so than the use of phrase of mouth to provide an explanation for why someone can buy the product. (Referral Rock Learn, 2020)

Influencer Marketing is a hybrid of vintage and new advertising and marketing gear. It takes the concept of celebrity endorsement and locations it into a contemporary-day content material-pushed marketing campaign. The main difference inside the case of influencer marketing is that the results of the marketing campaign are collaborations among manufacturers and influencers. (Influencer MarketingHub, 2019).

Influencer advertising and marketing involves a brand taking part with a web influencer to marketplace one among its services or products. Some influencer marketing collaborations are less tangible than that – brands actually work with influencers to enhance brand reputation. (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2019)

In current instances influencer marketing has seen brilliant increase as a way of advertising as increasingly manufacturers have chosen influencer marketing over conventional approach of advertising. Not best have bigger brands have without problems shifted to influencer advertising, it has been a key tool for smaller groups as well. This studies paper dwells deeper into how in the current instances, as a virus struck international moved on line, influencer marketing got a primary grip and grew to large tiers on numerous social media structures. It will even dig into how brands and corporations have seen absolute income and growth in income and visibility due to influencer marketing. *Four pieces of advice for firms engaging in influencer marketing.*

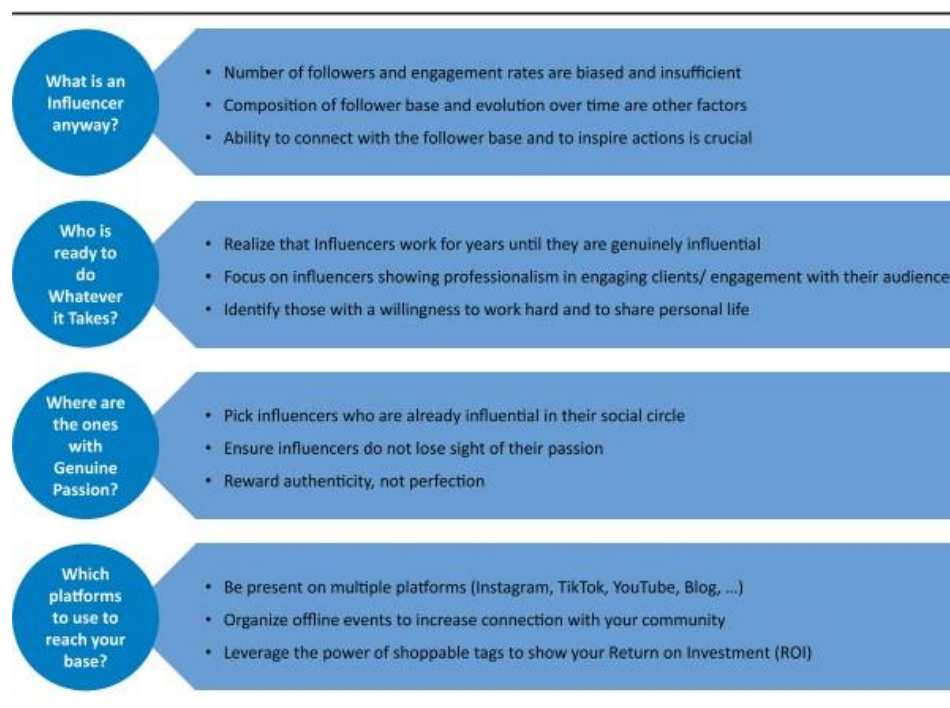


Note: FTC = Federal Trade Commission.

- Previous and newer trends of influencer marketing and its rise. - This form of marketing currently utilized with great success on Instagram and YouTube is not a short-lived fad, but a tectonic shift for the future of digital advertising. Influencer Marketing for Brands is the field guide for the digital age.(Levin,2020)

As stated by Levin, the influencer marketing phenomenon had already been a hit until a pandemic forced more brands to take this route of marketing. The idea of having separate content strategies, social strategies and influencer strategies is a thing of the past. Influencer marketing is not a "fad", but a complete and necessary part of a holistic marketing strategy. Brands have definitely taken a risk by shifting from traditional marketing to an influencer based marketing. Over time brands have recorded much more input in terms of sales, interest, visibility, feedback and profits that have created more rocksolid influencer marketing strategies in the marketing sector.

Four questions to choose the right influencers.



• Influencer marketing and its impact on consumer behaviour - Apart from this, the content change that an influencer brings is something regular marketing doesn't hence its impact on audiences and their will to purchase a product immediately increases.

Consumers are more likely to trust peer recommendations, as they're generally considered more trustworthy than claims in brand ads, and social media influencers can be very powerful in this respect. (Barker, 2020)

Over the recent years, influencer marketing has become increasingly popular, representing a specific type of social media marketing. The aim of this scientific contribution is the systematization of knowledge about the position and roles of influencers as opinion leaders in the social media environment in order to identify their typology, influence factors and the intensity of their impact on consumer decision making process, based on the comparison of knowledge from the results of global research studies and the quantitative online research study processed by authors. On the same lines as Cobain, this paper deals specifically with how influencer marketing's massive rise during the pandemic has impacted consumers and their purchase habits. With an increase in influencers, there is definitely an increase in the variety of marketing content from these influencers which has got hold of different audiences who have all been somehow influenced by them to if not buy but get aware of a brand or business and their work. We've established that consumers place a lot of weight on the recommendations of influencers — but why?

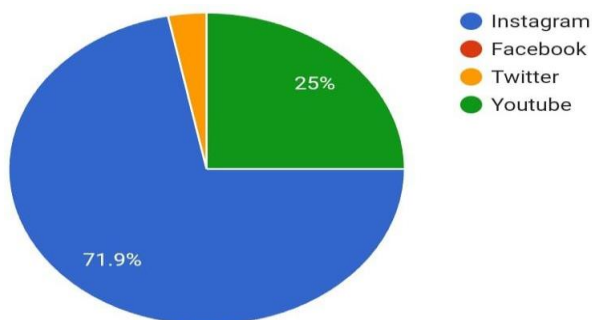
Methodology: This is an applied research using descriptive and empirical design. Simple random sampling technique is followed. A questionnaire was prepared with the objectives in mind. The questions were designed around social media accounts with respect to the top social media accounts widely used in India namely - Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn and Quora in the order of their popularity. Moreover, the questionnaire focused on trending fields of content like Food, Lifestyle, Health, Marketing, Technology, Fashion, Travel, Celebrities, and Work Related, that influencers mainly create content on, that could be used by marketers to generate brand awareness through influencers.

A total sample size of 50 consumers were surveyed to understand the influence of influencer marketing on their purchase decisions and its impact during the pandemic especially. The data is interpreted and incorporated in the graphs and diagrams below. The survey participants consisted of young people from ages 18-30 who are all avid social media users and a consumer of many social media trends. The survey had 10 questions including name, age, and various questions about their knowledge of influencer marketing, personal experience with it, and how the trend works out for them.

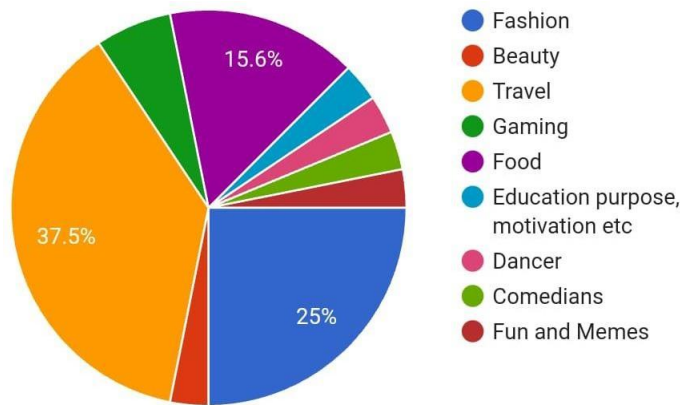
Findings and Discussion:

After collecting the demographic data from the consumers, following questions were being asked and these are the results.

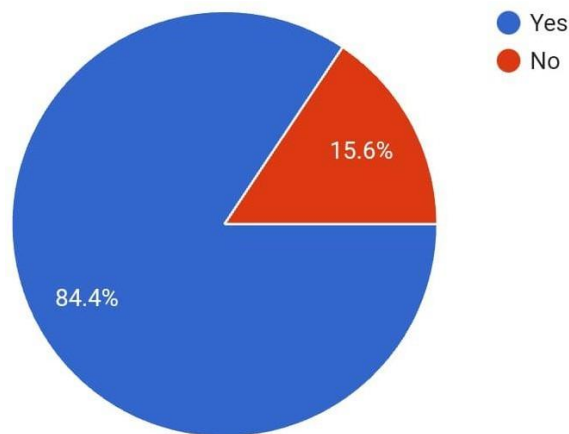
Q1- What are social media platform that you are spending more time on?



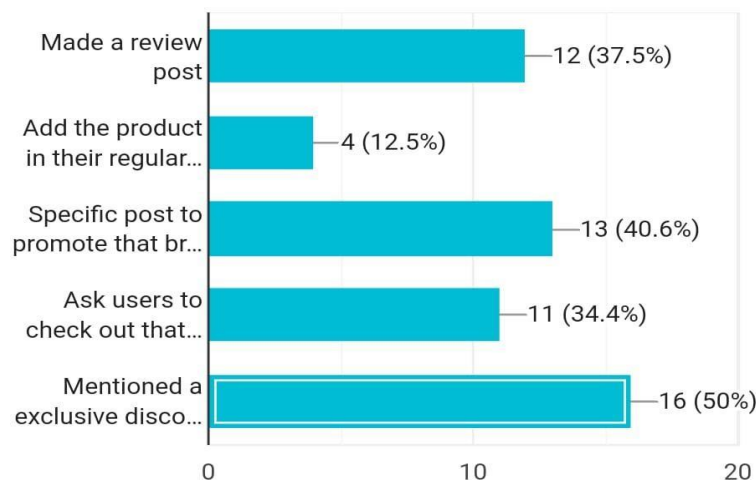
Q2- What niches of influencers you follow the most?



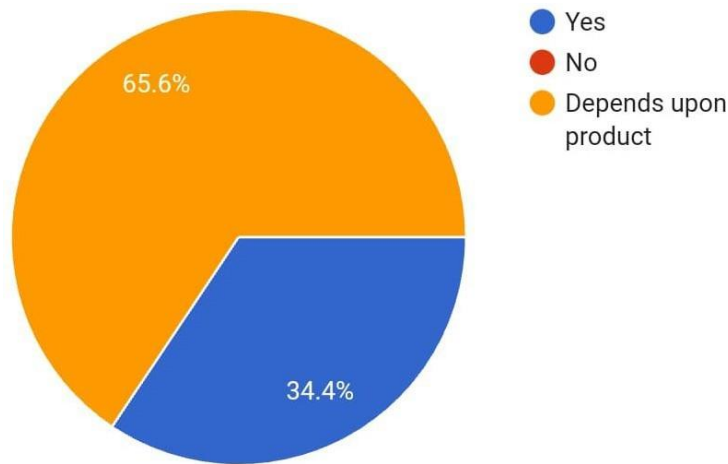
Q3- Do the influences you follow promote any brand or product? Or, do you ever come across a influencer promoted content?



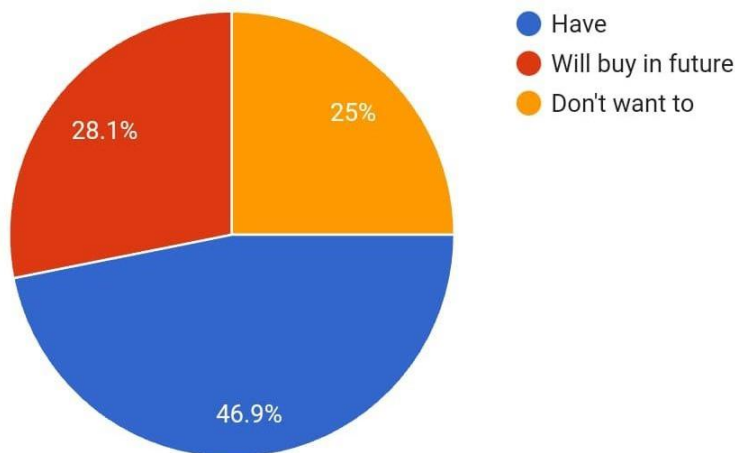
Q4- How do you see influences incorporate the brand or product in their content for marketing purposes?



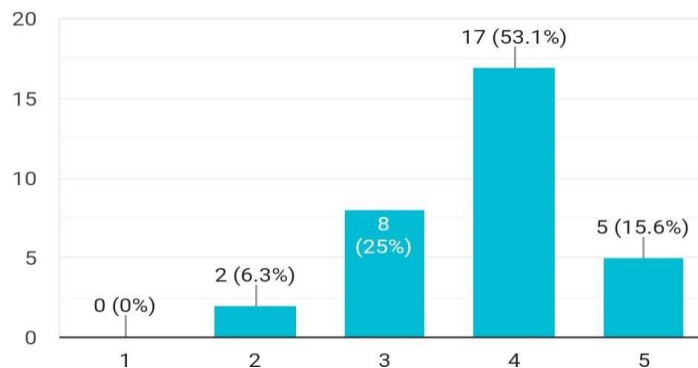
Q5- Does influencer marketing content appeal to users and make them want to check out that brand or buy a product?



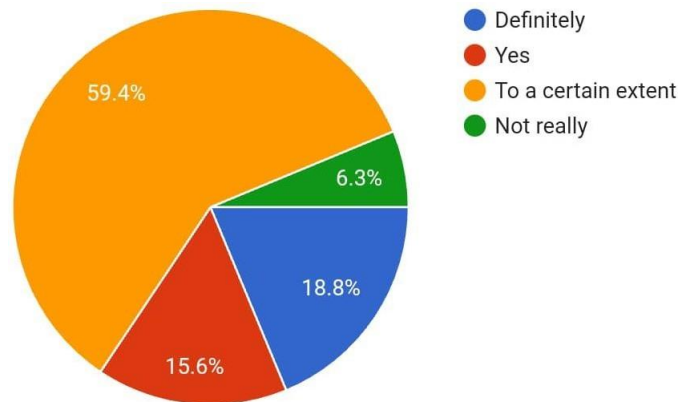
Q6- Have you ever purchase a product which is promoted by an influencer?



Q7- Do you think influencer marketing is more effective and impactful than traditional marketing?



Q8- Do you think that influencer marketing has benefited small businesses during pandemic time?



Conclusion: The use of social media influencer marketing in lifestyle public relations initiatives has broken the wall between the consumer, the brand, and followers through social media content. Before the days of social media, a consumer could only see a product through print advertisements, billboards, radio ads, and television commercials. Today, a consumer now can interact with a product through social media. Through research, it is evident that social media influencer marketing has, in fact, changed the way brands interact with consumers in a positive way.

In the age of the ubiquitous Internet, influencers are a new type of independent third party that shapes audience attitudes through blogs, tweets, and other social media. Through activities that include expressing their opinions, for example, in product reviews, through tips and tricks videos, to organizing competitions and posting images containing products or services (Bernitter, Verlegh, and Smit 2016).

Influencers thus gain enhanced competencies in creating sophisticated content, form stories, videos and visuals. Given the scalability of the Internet and the speed of dissemination, these influencers can quickly attract mass audiences and achieve 'fame' through the accumulation of cultural capital (McQuarie, Miller, and Phillips 2013).

More than half of the participants believe that influencer marketing has had a significant impact on their purchase decisions and their overall lookout on what type of marketing convinces them to buy a product or engage with a brand. This proves that even indirect influencer marketing has made consumers aware of brands and products and made them contemplate a purchase or has resulted in a real purchase. Not only have many consumers come to be regular buyers of things marketed through influencer marketing, but they also think it is the best type of marketing to get to their heart and mind and place a product in it. A good part of the regular influencer marketing enthusiasts have been regular purchasers of product that influencers heavily market and in their opinion, those are some of their best purchases and they will continue to buy things if an influencer has promoted it well and it fits their needs.

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