



SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCER MARKETING: EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS, IMPACT, AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

Shriya Sreekar Pai

Trisha College of Commerce and Management
Mangalore

Vaishnavi Shagun Amin

Trisha College of Commerce and Management
Mangalore

Khyathi Vijay Shetty

Trisha College of Commerce and Management
Mangalore

ABSTRACT

This research paper looks at how social media and influencer marketing affect the younger generation. It explores how influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube influence what the younger generation supposes, how they bear, and their connection with brands.

The study also examines how digital communication is changing and how influencers play a part in shaping the opinions and conduct of the youth. The paper uses a blend of exploration and practical analysis to explain the strategies that make influencer marketing successful and how it impacts what the younger generation likes and buys. By studying the close relationship between social media and influencers, the exploration aims to give businesses useful perceptivity on how to effectively reach and connect with the ever-changing preferences of the younger generation.

This understanding is pivotal for marketers who want to succeed in the online world and produce strategies that reverberate with influential youth followership.

Keywords

Social media marketing, Influencer, Social media platform, Consumer behaviour, Trends, Brand awareness, Targeted audience

Introduction

Social media marketing is the use of social media platforms to interact with people all across the world. Social media marketing helps brands sell their products not only to a particular part of the world but all across the globe. Social media marketing uses platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, X (formerly known as Twitter), YouTube, etc. To market the product of brands through influencers and celebrities. Social media marketing first started with brands sharing their products through content to generate traffic

on their website. But social media is becoming much more than just a platform for content distribution. Brands nowadays hire influencers and celebrities to promote their brand through social media platforms.

Influencer marketing is a form of social media marketing where brands endorse their products/ sponsor influencers to promote their products through social media. Influencers are people who have a lot of fans following them. They appear as a source of information and middlemen for brands



and fans. This research paper shows us how the younger generation that is the people from the age of 13 – 35 are affected by social media platforms and the brand endorsement happening through social media.

This research mainly focuses on how the younger generation is affected by social media marketing and it also helps brands to understand the consumer behavior of the younger generation while buying things through social media platforms.

Literature review

Abu Bashar et al. (2012) [1] This paper conducts an exploratory study to determine the utility of social media as an advertising tool, and an attempt is made to analyze the extent to which social media makes a difference to consumers. Decide on a purchase. At a time when innovation is winning, business visionaries and marketers alike believe they need to adapt to rapid change and accidental obsolescence. Social media has become a very important part of today's marketing and advertising mix, especially today. Adapting some aspects of online advertising through social media can be an important hub for any business. This is especially important in industries where trends are constantly changing, such as design and crafts.

Gill Appel et al. (2019) [2] This article has displayed nine subjects related to the future of social media because it relates to (and is maybe affected by) marketing. The subjects have suggestions for individuals/consumers, businesses and organizations, additionally public policymakers and governments. These topics, which speak to our considering and a blend of sees from extant research, industry specialists, and popular open talk, are of course not the complete story of what the long-standing time of social media will entail. They are, be that as it may, a set of imperative issues that we believe will be worth considering in both scholarly research and showcasing practices.

Paul Baines et al. (2019) [3] This research focuses on digital marketing and social media marketing as a tool with which to communicate and interact with consumers. As people change how they communicate, the marketing profession has turned

to digital and social media marketing to round, and occasionally replace, traditional marketing channels and conditioning. still, digitization isn't only altering consumers ' prospects of their commerce with associations online but also changing marketing in all forms. Similarly, this research first defines digital and social media marketing and tracks their elaboration. It also moves on to agitating crucial areas of digital marketing dispatches, Internet advertising, hunt marketing, dispatch marketing, social media marketing, content marketing, and mobile marketing

Research objectives

The following are the objectives based on the research we are conducting:

- To analyze the consumer behavior patterns specific to Social media platforms.
- To understand how social media makes the younger generation adapt themselves to recent trends.
- To analyze the content that the influencers affect the marketing strategies in the younger generation.
- A study of how social media advertising impacts teenagers' decision process for purchasing products and their brand adherence.

Limitation of social media marketing

The following are the limitations of Social Media Marketing:-

- Ethical considerations related to user privacy and data protection may limit access to certain types of Social Media data.
- Establishing causal relationships between social media marketing efforts and desired outcomes (e.g. sales, brand awareness) can be difficult due to the presence of confounding variables and external; factors.
- Many younger consumers are skeptical of traditional advertising tactics and may be resistant to overtly promotional content, making it harder to effectively convey marketing messages.

- While younger consumers may have a significant influence over purchasing decisions within their households, they often have limited personal purchasing power, which can affect the effectiveness of Social Media marketing efforts aimed directly at them.

Limitation of the study

- The study is geographically restricted to Urban & Sub-Urban areas of Mangalore, and so the result cannot be extrapolated to other places. Also, the result may differ from place to place.
- Taking time constraints as an important factor sample size of the study was taken as 125.
- The research did not utilize complex or challenging statistical tools.
- Though the Consumer preferences and Trends of Social Media change rapidly we have tried our best to make the research accurate.

Research methodology

This research paper was conducted utilizing Google Forms. The main purpose or aim of the research was to see how the younger generation of people get influenced by social media and adapt to new trends and lifestyles. This research paper helps the brands focus on certain points that the younger generation likes such as garments, accessories, etc. We surveyed 125 people aged 13 to 35. The survey we conducted tells us how the younger generation purchases through social media and influencer marketing. We have used bar graphs and pie charts to show the consumer behavior among the survey participants.

Research findings and discussions

As previously mentioned, consumer behavior across different age groups has been analyzed and summarized through graphs and pie charts for a comprehensive examination. The statistical data and graphical representations are all presented as percentages of the total.

The following figures illustrate the findings obtained from the survey conducted for this research.

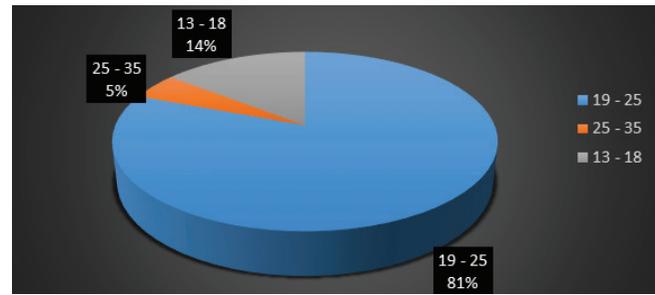


Fig.1 The age of people

Based on demographic criteria, the majority of survey participants are from urban locales. Predominantly, respondents fall within the age bracket of 19-25, comprising approximately 81% of the total, while the remaining 19% is distributed among the other two age groups, with 14% in one group and 5% in the other.

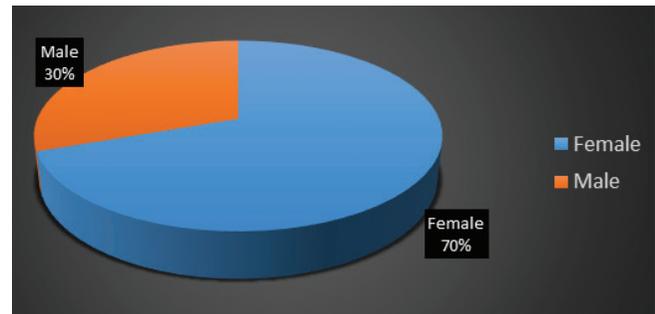


Fig.2 –Gender

Figure 2 depicts the gender distribution of survey participants, indicating that the majority of buyers are female, comprising 70% of the total. Conversely, males constitute 30% of the surveyed population, accounting for 125 individuals.

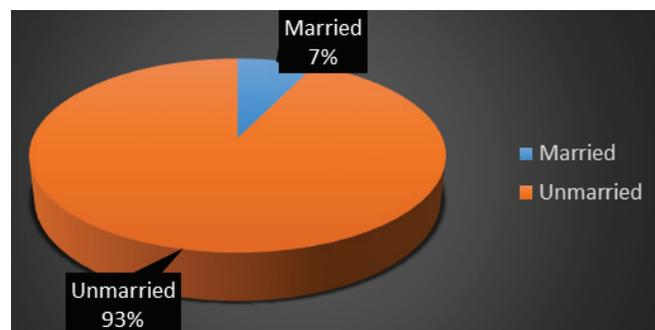


Fig.3- Martial status

According to Figure 3, it is evident that the majority of survey participants are unmarried, with a significant proportion identified as bachelors.

Only a small percentage, approximately 7%, are married, while the remainder are unmarried.

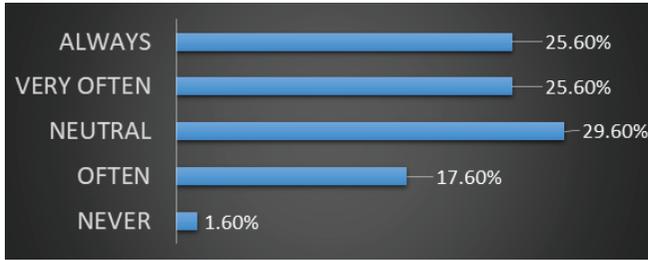


Fig.4 – Usage of Social Media

While the younger generation predominantly engages with social media platforms, it's notable that approximately 30% of individuals do not regularly use social media in their daily lives.

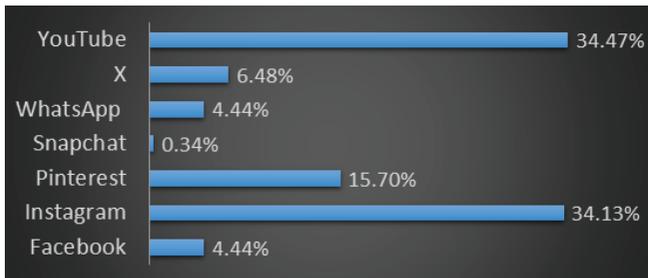


Fig.5 – Social Media Platform

As illustrated in Figure 5 above, it is evident that the most utilized social media platforms are YouTube and Instagram, each accounting for approximately 34% of usage. While other platforms are also utilized, it is noteworthy that influencers and celebrities predominantly leverage YouTube and Instagram to promote products. These platforms, along with Facebook, have significantly advanced social media marketing in India.

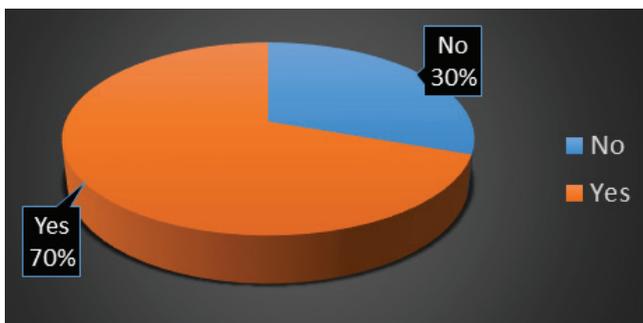


Fig.6 – Purchase Made from Social Media Advertisement

According to Figure 6, it is evident that while 70% of individuals have purchased products from brands through social media advertisements, there remains a significant 30% who exhibit apprehension or lack confidence in purchasing via advertisements on Social Media platforms.

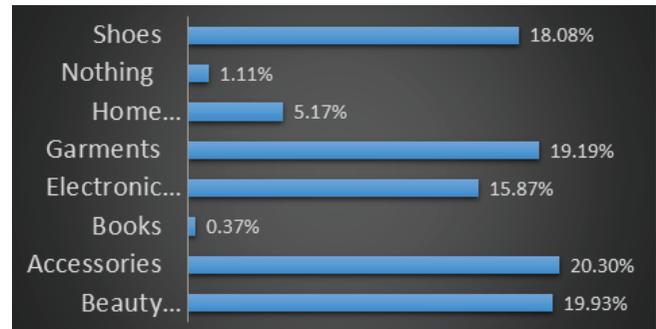


Fig.7 – Products bought after watching Social Media Advertisement

Figure 7 provides insight into the purchasing behavior of individuals following exposure to social media advertisements. The data indicates that the top three products purchased as a result of these advertisements are accessories, beauty products, and garments. However, it's worth noting, as highlighted in Figure 6, that some individuals may lack confidence when it comes to making purchases through social media platforms.

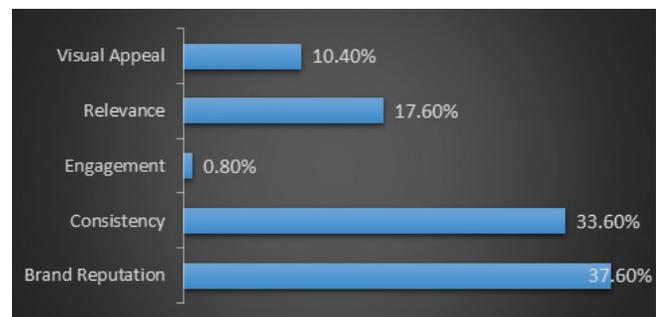


Fig.8- Factors that influence the consumers to follow/unfollow a brand

As illustrated in Figure 8, it's clear that consumers frequently base their buying choices on a brand's reputation. This is especially vital given the widespread existence of counterfeit products from various brands, companies, or individuals attempting to replicate authentic ones. Consumers value consistency not only in a brand's production or manufacturing processes but also in how influencers endorse and market that Brand

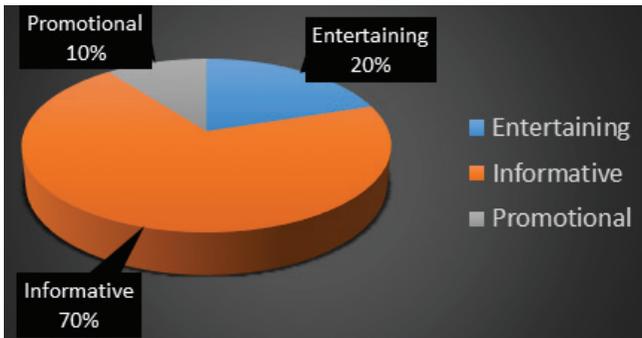


Fig.9 – Content type to Market the product

As indicated in Figure 9 above, it is apparent that the majority of people or consumers prefer influencer content to prioritize informativeness over entertainment and promotional aspects.

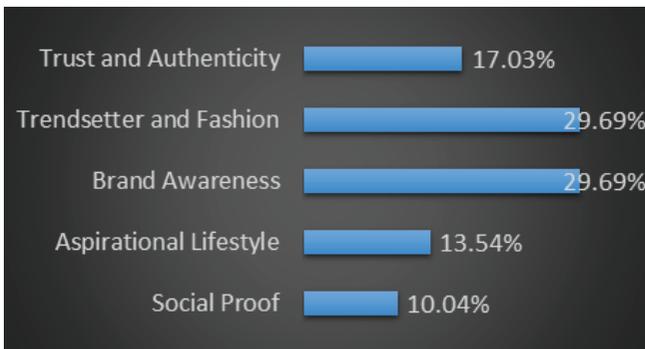


Fig.10 – Role of Influencers in Consumer Decision Making

In social media marketing, influencers play a crucial role, extending beyond merely promoting or creating content. They also influence consumers to purchase products. When given the chance to stay updated on trends or fashion, the average teenager tends to buy products endorsed by influencers, provided the brand maintains a reputable image. As depicted in the above figure, it's evident that fashion and brand awareness are significant considerations for consumers before purchasing a product recommended by influencers.

Discussions

Based on the research findings, several key points emerge to help brands better understand consumer behavior:

- A brand must constantly stay on the cutting edge of current trends and fashion.

- Brands must ensure that their influencers are well-known and influential, particularly among the youth.
- Younger individuals will utilize techniques to boost their reputation and exhibit branded merchandise, which will aid brands in expanding their business.
- To effectively promote and market their products, brands must maintain a consistent presence on all social media platforms.

Recommendations

These are a few recommendations focused on social media marketing:

- Decide which social media channels best fit the target market's demographics, preferences for certain types of content, and marketing objectives.
- Establishing and developing authentic connections with followers is your top priority by regularly engaging with them through messages, comments, and user-generated material.
- Allocate budget for paid advertising campaigns on social media platforms to increase reach, drive traffic, and generate leads.
- Actively listen to customer feedback and sentiment on social media channels

Conclusions

This research paper tells about how the younger generation gets impacted and has a dynamic effect on Social Media Platforms. It tells us how the Younger generation can be impulsive as well as smooth thinkers in buying products through a brand.

Brands are not only meant to advertise their product through one Social Media Platform or one Influencer, they should appoint many influencers to promote the product and have accounts on many other Social Media to market their products.



References

1. Bashar, A., Ahmad, I., & Wasiq, M. (2012). EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING TOOL: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY. *International Journal of Marketing, Financial Services & Management Research*, 1.
2. Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R., & Stephen, A. (2019). The future of social media in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00695-1>
3. Baines, P., Whitehouse, S., Antonetti, P., & Rosengren, S. (2023). Digital and social media marketing. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hebz/9780198829256.003.0014>

