Major Research Report

THE STUDY OF NEXUS BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS AND CONSUMER BRAND ENGAGEMENT

Submitted By

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DECLARATION

I certify that

a. The work contained in the thesis is original and has been done by myself under the general supervision of my supervisor.

b. The work has not been submitted to any other Institute for any degree or diploma.

c. I have followed the guidelines provided by the Institute in writing the thesis.

d. I have conformed to the norms and guidelines given in the Ethical Code of Conduct of the Institute.

e. Whenever I have used materials (data, theoretical analysis, and text) from other sources, I have given due credit to them by citing them in the text of the thesis and giving their details in the references.

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_____

(Name of the student with signature)

Acknowledgment

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Abstract

Academicians and marketers have shown a great deal of interest in the rise of social media influencers in the last ten years. Scholars endeavor to comprehend the impact of influencers on consumer behavior, whereas marketers employ influencers as a component of their approach to accomplish marketing goals. The field of SMIs and consumer engagement has a lot of available theoretical and practical research, but there aren't many reviews of the literature in this area because the field is still young and most of the studies have concentrated on these two ideas independently. Here, we make an effort to compile and comprehend the ways in which social media influencers impact customer engagement. This study aims to explore the methods by which consumers' perceptions and behaviors are influenced by influencer marketing. It looks at how consumers' opinions of brands are influenced by the reliability, relatability, and devotion of influencers. It also looks at how marketing tactics, content kinds, and social media platforms affect the results of consumer engagement. The influencer-follower para-social relationship on various social media platforms is also covered. In order to test and validate the effect of social media influencers' marketing efforts on consumer engagement, the study offers an integrated conceptual framework. Additionally, marketers may use this framework as a starting point to create successful influencer marketing campaigns for brand promotions. The review brings the discussion to a close by emphasizing the theories, research methods, and historical background of previous studies.

The study offers valuable perspectives for marketers and companies seeking to leverage influencers' power to boost consumer brand engagement through the dynamic influence of influencer marketing, which will be discussed. Knowing these traits in the constantly evolving digital space can help create more moral and successful influencer marketing campaigns.

Keywords: Customer Engagement, Social Media Influencers, Branding, Social Media Platforms.

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IM : Influencer Marketing

SC : Source Credibility

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Introduction

1.1 Influencer Marketing

In today's digitally linked world, influencer marketing has grown to be a potent tool for connecting brands with customers. The dynamic relationship between influencer marketing and consumer brand engagement is examined in this study. This study investigates the impact of influencer marketing on various facets of consumer engagement, including brand recognition, trust, loyalty, and purchase intention. To do this, a comprehensive analysis is conducted using both current literature and actual data. The report emphasizes how important influencers' trust, loyalty, and connection power are to creating enduring bonds between consumers and businesses. It also examines the ways in which various social media channels and advertising tactics affect the results of consumer interactions. This essay examines the difficulties and moral dilemmas raised by influencer marketing tactics.

In an era of digitization and social media domination, the corporate landscape has seen significant disruption. One of the main developments that has raised consumer brand engagement is the rise of influencer marketing. As more and more people rely on social media platforms for information, entertainment, and inspiration, influencer marketing has emerged as a potent tool for connecting brands with their target audience. The purpose of this study is to investigate the intricate and dynamic link that exists between consumer brand engagement and influencer marketing. Consumer brand engagement is a key factor in determining how well a company performs. It includes a variety of interactions, from powerful emotional bonds that encourage brand loyalty to simple brand awareness.Influencer marketing, on the other hand, makes use of the reach and genuineness of individuals who have sizable social media followings to advertise goods and services. As such, it has the potential to impact several aspects of customer brand association, including familiarity, trust, loyalty, and desire to purchase.

1.1.1 Background of Influencer Marketing

There are now new methods to share, consume, and market thanks to the Internet. In contrast to Web 1.0, which included providing users with information in a one-way manner, Web 2.0 enabled users to connect and contribute content. In the beginning, blogs provided a way for people to keep online diaries for the purposes of connecting, self-expression, or life documentation. Additionally, content advertising enabled bloggers to include advertisements in their blog posts. Social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram gained popularity quickly with the release of Web 3.0, which also made it easier for anyone to gain an online following.

Influencers are everywhere, as opposed to celebrities. Anybody might be one of them. Their

Figure 1.1: Influencer Marketing

enormous online and social media followings are what give them influence. A well-known fashion photographer on Instagram, a knowledgeable cybersecurity blogger on Twitter, or a reputable marketing executive on LinkedIn might all be considered influencers. You merely need to locate the influential individuals in any given industry. Some will have millions or perhaps hundreds of thousands of followers. However, many will appear more typical folks. They might only have 10,000 or fewer followers. Nonetheless, they will have established a reputation as the authorities in their industry. When individuals have questions, they are the ones to go to for the answers. They are the ones that post the most interesting content on social media about their specialized subjects, depending on their area of expertise. They host the most educational online forums, post the most amusing films, and share the greatest images.

Below are some influencer marketing statistics:

- Influencer marketing is expected to reach $21.1 billion in 2023, a 29% increase from $16.4 billion the year before.

- Companies that use influencer marketing are receiving a return on investment of $5.2 for every $1 invested, with the top 13% of companies experiencing a return of $20 or more.

- Since 2016, the number of Google searches for the term "influencer marketing" has increased by 465%.

- Influencer marketing is regarded as an effective marketing strategy by 90% of study participants.

- Instagram is used by 67% of brands for influencer marketing.

- In only the last five years, 1360 platforms and firms specializing in influencer marketing have entered the market.

1.1.2 Types of Influencer Marketing

Working with an influencer who has millions of followers may sound like a dream come true, but it might not be the best choice for your business.

Some social media celebrities have large and diversified fans that span a wide range of demographics. Some assert more intimate, concentrated, and dynamic communities.

Knowing what each type of influencer can give in terms of reach, range, pricing, and contact with the target consumer base will help you choose the right ones for your brand.
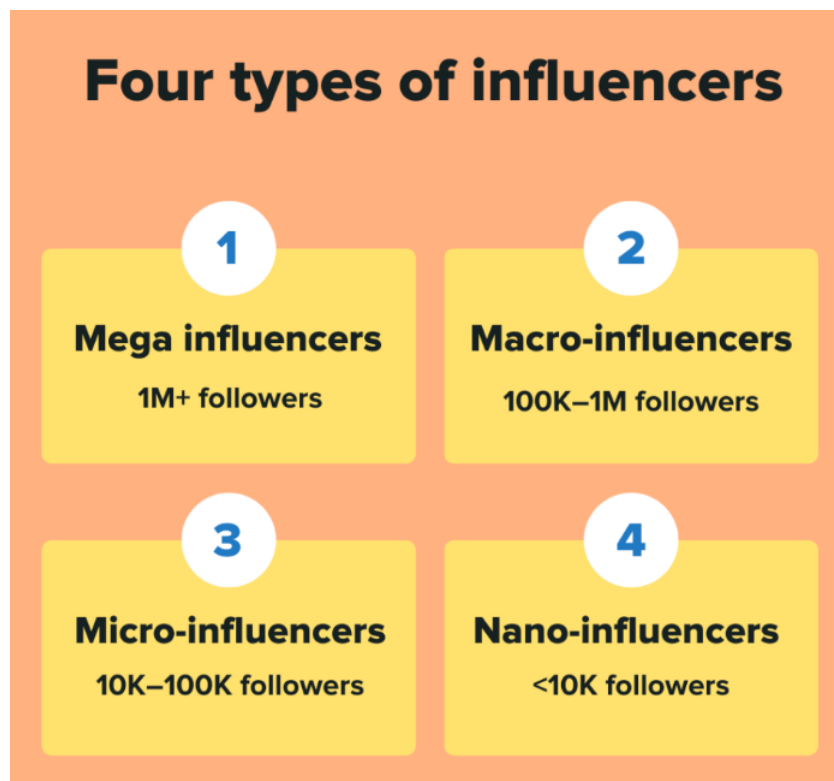

Figure 1.2: Types of Influencer Marketing

1. **Mega Influencers-** With a vast fan base of over a million, these influencers frequently include well-known actors, musicians, athletes, and other prominent celebrities. They are perfect for extensive brand awareness campaigns because of their celebrity status, which enables them to fascinate a wide range of audiences.

Mega influencers can offer your brand unmatched visibility, but working with them can be very costly. Furthermore, their engagement rates might not be as high as those of influencers with smaller, more specialized followings because of their frequently large audience.

2. **Macro-influencers-** Macro-influencers have a large following (usually between 100,000 and 1 million) and are well-known figures in their respective fields. Compared to superstars, macro-influencers provide a more focused approach because their followers typically have similar interests. Working with macro-influencers can provide your company a wide audience, but depending on your budget, it might still be somewhat expensive.

   These influencers are now recognized as thought leaders in their field because they have steadily produced and engaged with content over an extended period of time.

3. **Micro-influencers-** The up-and-coming stars of influencer marketing are micro-influencers, who have between 10,000 and 100,000 very active followers. These influencers frequently have a sizable followings on niche websites like YouTube and Instagram. Working with micro-influencers is highly favored by marketers due to their ability to attract a devoted and specialized audience through authentic interactions, relatable recommendations, and unique material.

   Additionally, they are less expensive than bigger influencers. But that doesn't imply they don't work.

4. **Nano-influencers-** There are less than 10,000 followers for nano-influencers. However, because of their genuine participation and approachable content, these influencers frequently build close relationships with their audience.

   Nano-influencers may be great partners for companies trying to reach particular communities and demographics without going over budget, even though they have the narrowest reach.

   Additionally, because nano-influencers operate on such a small scale, they have more time and energy to invest in one-on-one collaborations. This translates to more individualized content for your company and interpersonal connections within specialized communities.

1.1.3 Advantages and Disadvantages

Like every other concept has its major liking and disliking factors, influencer marketing also has it's fair share of pros and cons. Below are some major advantages as to why influencer

marketing can be a boon for positioning a business online among targeted customers.

- You can reach a relevant audience.

- Influencers build trust and credibility for the brand.

- They can reach many more such more amazing people than you can alone.

- In fact they are cheaper than traditional marketing strategies.

Whilst, influencer marketing can be functional when it comes to building trust and credibility towards the brand by the customers, it can also lead to a downgrade brand image if not utilised effectively. Therefore, some of the negative effects of influencer marketing are mentioned below which states that it can equally be a bane instead of a boon.

- Can are hard to find the best influencer for a given budget.

- Influencers can harm your brands if you're not careful selecting them.

- Can be tricky to measure results.

1.2 Consumer Brand Engagement

1.2.1 An Overview

Brand engagement refers to the creation of attachments between consumers and brands. These attachments may be emotional or rational, and ideally, they produce brand loyalty over time. This solidifies the brand and helps to improve the customer experience.

Two types of brand engagement exist:

1. **Internal brand engagement** occurs between employees or other close stakeholders and a brand.

2. **External brand engagement** occurs between public consumers and a brand, also known as brand awareness.

Brand Engagement sits one step above brand interaction, which occurs whenever a customer takes an action such as following the brand on social media, signing up for a webinar, or adding a product to their cart.
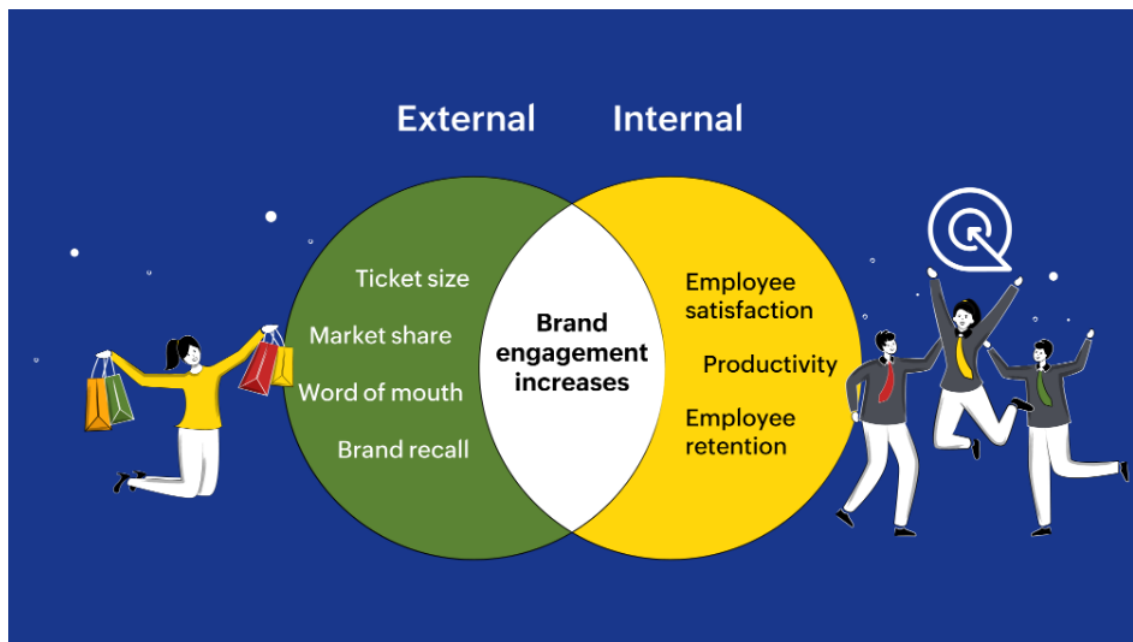
Figure 1.3: Internal and External Brand Engagement

1.2.2   Gravity of Brand Engagement

Establishing a solid rapport with all parties engaged in your organization, from investors to clients, is essential to increasing earnings over the long run. When a client or customer needs your services, you want to be the first person they contact. You also want to be the location where people desire to work. The following are some of the greatest ways that your business can benefit from brand engagement marketing and strategy:

- Increased sales

- Improved brand loyalty

- Employee acquisition and retention

- Facilitates feedback gathering and satisfaction

- Enhanced productivity of workers

- Creates a narrative for the business

- Draws attention to your ideals and ambitions

1.2.3   Measurement of Brand Engagement

Measuring the brand engagement across all touch points is how you make smarter decisions and revisions to your brand strategy.

There are some great leading indicators that your brand strategy is leading to customer loyalty. They include:

- **Growth in branded keyword searches:** Are customers stumbling across you or directly searching for you? An increase in both results signals growth, but the direct search for your brand or product signals that your overall strategy is headed in the right direction for both customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.

- **Increase in referral traffic:** Whether they arrive through a review site, content creators, a refer-a-friend scheme, an increase in this type of traffic means your brand engagement is adding to your company's bottom line. Plus, referrals are 18% more loyal, spend 13% more, and have a 16% greater lifetime value than other customer types.

- **Stable or growing employee engagement:** Employee engagement is typically managed by your HR or People Operations teams. They consistently track metrics like turnover, retention, absenteeism, promotions, and more. Back in 2019, Glassdoor found that just a one-point increase in employee experience scores can lead to a 1.3 increase in your customer satisfaction scores.

1.3   Brand Loyalty

The behaviour exhibited by customers who prefer your brand to any other, despite alternatives that might be cheaper or more convenient. A customer exhibiting brand loyalty will choose your services or products time and again, but they'll also advocate on your behalf – often recommending you to friends and family.Brand loyalty differs slightly from customer loyalty in that it's a higher-level, more reputational achievement. Customers who are truly brand loyal will foster an emotional link with your brand, rather than one just based on price or value.

The tendency of a consumer to stick with a particular brand in the face of obstacles or competition offers is known as brand loyalty. The value that a brand provides to its customers frequently leads to this loyalty. Better customer experiences, for instance, increase consumer loyalty.

Brand loyalty meaning is often built on trust, quality, positive experiences, and emotional connections with the brand. When consumers know about the brand and like it over other
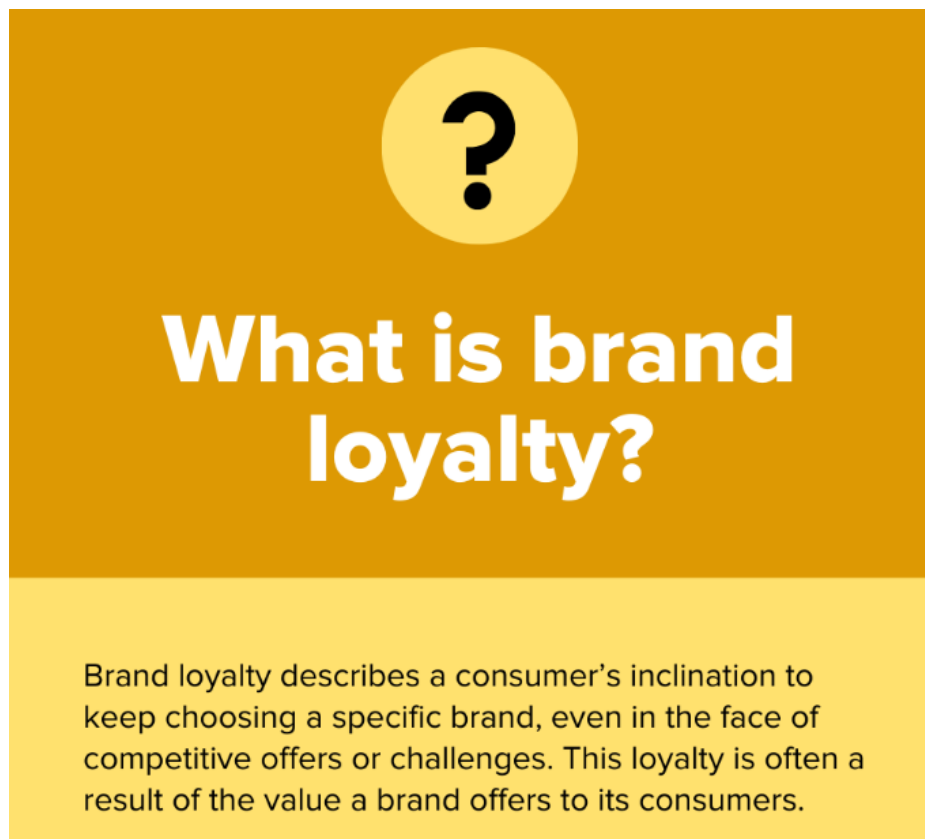
Figure 1.4: Meaning of Brand Loyalty

alternatives, they are more likely to repurchase, recommend it to others, and resist switching to alternatives even when faced with competitive offers. Building brand loyalty is crucial for businesses as it can lead to long-term customer relationships and increased profitability.

1.3.1 Characteristics of Brand Loyalty

Loyal customers are a valuable asset for any business. These individuals have a strong affinity towards a specific brand and are less likely to switch to competitors. Let's dive into the key characteristics of brand loyalty.

1. **Emotional connection**

   Have you ever made the extra effort to visit your preferred coffee shop? The emotional bond that exists between a person and their preferred beverage may seem absurd, but it's real. There's a reason it's your favorite.

   Perhaps they have very reliable service, or perhaps they master emotionally charged marketing strategies that emphasize coziness and comfort. Whatever it is, it has sparked a long-lasting relationship by forging a personal connection.

2. **Positive Word of Mouth**

   Our friends, family, and coworkers are frequently the people who have the biggest influence. Positive word-of-mouth recommendations are particularly effective because of this.

   Brand aficionados often extol the virtues of their favored company, and their devotion extends beyond casual discussions. Digital word-of-mouth recommendations are also common, and can look like social media shoutouts, user generated content, positive reviews and brand ambassadorship.

3. **Higher Engagement and Repurchase Intention**

   One of the defining traits of customers who are loyal to the brand is their high level of engagement with the brand. They actively seek out information about new products or updates, follow the brand on social media, and participate in loyalty programs. This engagement translates into increased repurchase intention, as these customers are more likely to choose the same brand repeatedly.

4. **Willingness to Pay Premium Prices**

   Brand loyalists understand the value that a particular brand offers and are willing to pay premium prices for it. They perceive the quality and consistency associated with the brand as worth the extra cost. This willingness to pay more contributes not only to higher revenue but also helps establish a positive brand image.

5. **Trust, Quality, Consistency, and Positive Experiences**

   Building trust is crucial in fostering brand loyalty. Loyal customers have confidence in the reliability and credibility of their preferred brands. They associate these brands with high-quality products or services that consistently meet their expectations. Positive experiences further reinforce this trust and strengthen their bond with the brand.

1.4 Problem Statement

To understand whether there is any relation between social media influencers and consumer brand engagement.

1.5 Objectives of Study

The study is regarding the nexus between influencers who are on social media and the brand engagement.

1. Study of the nexus between social media influencers and customer brand engagement.

2. To realise the true essence of brand engagement for better brand loyalty within customers.

3. Explore how consumer perceptions and behaviours toward brands are influenced in purchasing decisions of the customers.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1   Review of Literature

2.1.1   Influencer Marketing

In recent years, influencer marketing has revolutionized the digital marketing landscape by providing businesses with a fresh approach to connecting with their target audience. Through this modern technique of touching the lives of the targeted customer segment, brands are able to create value and overall profits for themselves. This overview of the literature discusses significant study findings and insights on how consumer brand engagement is shaped by influencer marketing.

Influencer marketing is the practice of promoting goods and services by teaming up with individuals who have a sizable online following—typically on social media platforms. These influencers may be minor influencers with a devoted following, celebrities, or subject matter experts. According to Munnucca and Carjaluoto (2018), influencer marketing increases brand exposure, engagement, and revenues by leveraging the influencer's power and the audience's trust.

Online influencers "act as a rising category of impartial autonomous advocates who influence audience opinions via tweets, blogs, as well as usage of additional forms of social media," according to Freberg et al. (Freberg et al.: 2010). As previously noted, influencer marketing is quickly replacing conventional approaches to consumer communication in developing nations (Booth and Maticc, 2011, pp. 184–191, and Chan et al., 2013, pp. 167–179).

2.1.2   Brand Awareness

Influencer marketing has several advantages, one of which is enhanced brand recognition. Because influencers have larger audiences and higher levels of audience engagement, brands can reach new markets. According to a study by Broussard and Lee (2019), influencer marketing has considerably enhanced brand recognition, especially among younger demographics.

According to Hund and Mc Guiga (2019), authenticity is crucial to how an audience interprets a company's image and messaging. It is measured by an influencer's relevance to the brand as well as how they interact and represent themselves to their followers. Influencers that live what they consider to be a "Ordinary lifestyle" are better able to convey their message to their audience. Conversely, those who don't seem to be in sync aren't taken seriously and can't successfully influence others.

According to Balaban & Mustate (2019), influencers need to have particular qualities in order to affect the decisions of their followers. They emphasized how an influencer's skill,

dependability, and attractiveness might lead to more subscriptions and audiences feeling more confident in them.

2.1.3 Credibility and Reliance

In the relationship that exists between brands and consumers, trust is crucial. Strong and genuine relationships foster trust between influencers and their followers. The name is Khamis. (2017) discovered that influencer referrals are more likely to be trusted by customers than conventional advertising. The relatability and honesty of powerful people affect this trust.

The fact that influencer marketing is a reciprocal process is an additional benefit. According to Emory et al. (2018), by giving the impression that it is personal marketing, such engagement may lead to a higher degree of trust and involvement.

Dhanesh & Duthler have highlighted a few trust aspects, including the influencers' ability to meet the expectations of their followers and their comprehension of and knowledge of those followers' issues regarding the product or brand they support.

2.1.4 Encourage Brand Loyalty

Influencer marketing promotes brand loyalty by extending beyond the first contact. Customers that interacted with brands through influencers had greater levels of brand loyalty, per Kim and Ko's (2018) research. Similar views and the emotional bond that exists between influencers and their followers account for a major portion of this dedication.

Influencer marketing being the newest form of marketing, deals with creating genuine interest in the brand by famous internet personalities. Since people in today's time take day to day inspiration form these personalities, they have a tendency to accept and take full loyalty to use the products endorsed by them over the internet. The influencers have a similar taste of followers following them hence, these followers are more likely to become potential customers for the brand the influencer is endorsing.

2.1.5 The Intention of Purchasing and Converting

The influence on purchase intent and conversion is a common metric used to evaluate influencer marketing campaigns. A 2014 study by Jin and Fua found that followers are more inclined to think about and purchase things that their favorite influencers promote. Influencers have a significant impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

Usually every influencer has a following of group of people with similar taste and preferences. When an influencer endorses a brand the followers are more compelled psychologically to try

out that brand for themselves. They usually have a thought process of "if its working for them, it will be beneficial for me as well." This is how the brand gets it's potential customers from the audience of influencers.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

To understand the relation between the two terms- influencer marketing and brand engagement, the use of a questionnaire was done to gather real customer inputs. Below are the details about the same:

1. Sampling Technique- A questionnaire was circulated and filled by consumers of products endorsed by influencers ranging from the age of 15 and above.

2. Sampling Unit- Friends and family members.

3. Analysis Tool- For the study, percentage analysis is used for descriptive analysis and Chi-square is used to determine the significance between social media influencers and consumer brand engagement.

3.2 Data Sources

The data collection methods consists of both:

1. Primary Data- A survey questionnaire was circulated to gain meaningful insights for the study.

2. Secondary Data- Use of different research papers, online sites and reviews of books were used to understand more about the study.

3.3 Questionnaire Statements

The data collection was done by circulating a survey and they were asked to fill it. Bellow are the statements of the questionnaire given to the respondents for the analysis:

Age

Gender

Education

Monthly family income

Occupation

Place of residence

S1: Are you aware of influencer brand engagement?

S2: Are you aware of any brand which uses influencers for marketing and customer engagement?

S3: Influencers play an active role in creating brand awareness.

S4: My purchase decisions is significantly influenced by an influencer

S5: I trust the information shared by an influencer about a brand.

S6: Influencers always convey actual/truthful information about a brand.

S7: Influencers are replacing conventional celebrities in promoting the brand online.

S8: Marketing by influencers is more trustworthy/valuable than conventional celebrity marketing.

S9: The content shared by different influencers are useful to me.

S10: Overall, I am very happy with the contribution influencers are making to ease my shopping experience.

Results and Interpretation

4.1   Descriptive Analysis

The various data that was collected during the survey is as follows

Age	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 15 Years	7	5.3 %
16-20 Years	11	8.3 %
21-25 Years	64	48.5 %
Above 25 Years	50	37.9 %
Total	132	100

Table 4.1: Age wise classification of respondents
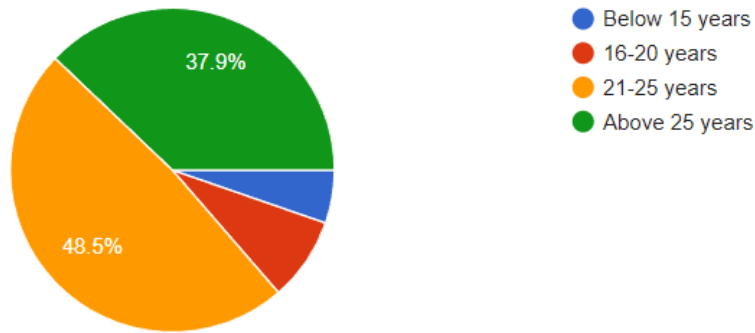
Figure 4.1: Age wise classification of respondents

From Table 4.1 we can say that 5.3% of respondents are below 15 years of age, 8.3% belongs to 16-20 years, 48.5% belongs to 21-25 years and 37.9% lies above 25 years of age group.

Gender	No.of respondents	Percentage
Female	60	45.5%
Male	72	54.5%
Total	132	100

Table 4.2: Gender wise classification of respondents

From Table 4.2 we can infer that females comprise of 45.5% and males comprise of 54.5% of the total respondents from the survey provided to the employees. This tells that male respondents are more in number than females.

From Table 4.3 we can see that maximum percentage of respondents are post graduates. This is followed by graduated respondents with a 29.5% of the total 132 people.

It can be taken into account form Figure 4.4 that, the maximum respondents have their monthly family income about 1,00,000 (56.8%). This is followed by 25% of the people with
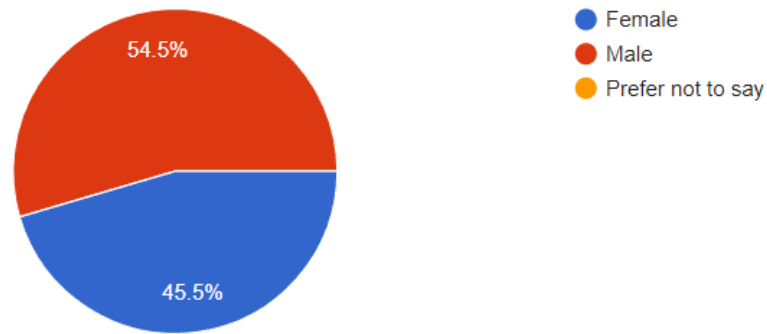
Figure 4.2: Gender wise classification of respondents

Education	No. of respondents	Percentage
Secondary (10th)	8	6.1%
Higher Senior Secondary (12th)	4	3%
Graduation	39	29.5%
Post Graduation	78	59.1%
Others	3	2.3%
Total	132	100

Table 4.3: Education wise classification of respondents
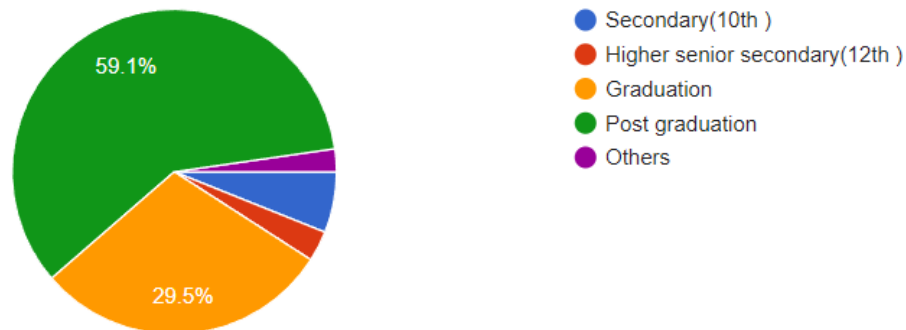
Figure 4.3: Education wise classification of respondents

Monthly family income	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 50,000	24	18.2%
50,000-1,00,000	33	25%
Above 1,00,000	75	56.8%
Total	132	100

Table 4.4: Monthly family income of respondents

income between 50,000-1,00,000. And lastly, all the remaining respondents have their monthly income below 50,000.
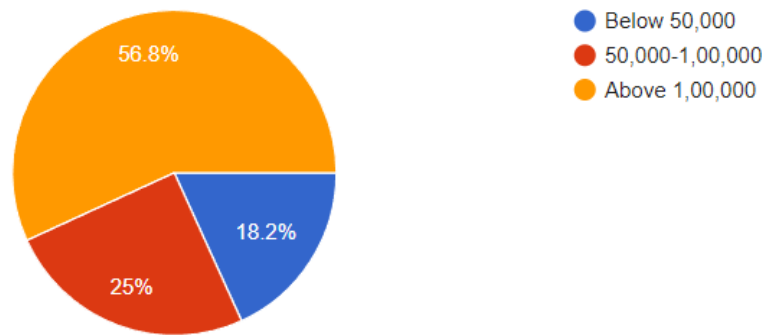
Figure 4.4: Monthly family income of respondents

Occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage
Student	70	53%
Business	13	9.8%
Service	17	12.9%
Self employed	3	2.3%
Professional	19	14.4%
Others	10	7.6%
Total	132	100

Table 4.5: Occupation of respondents
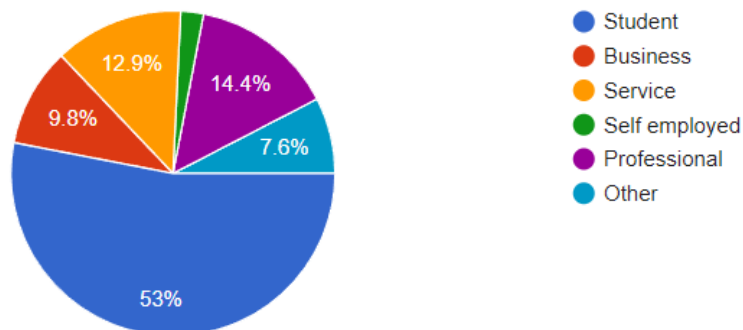
Figure 4.5: Occupation of respondents

From Table 4.5 we can see that 70 respondents out of 132 are students. 20 are from business and service backgrounds and 3 are self employed respondents.

Place of Residence	No. of respondents	Percentage
Metropolitan City	97	73.5%
Non-Metropolitan City	35	26.5%
Total	132	100

Table 4.6: Place of Residence of respondents
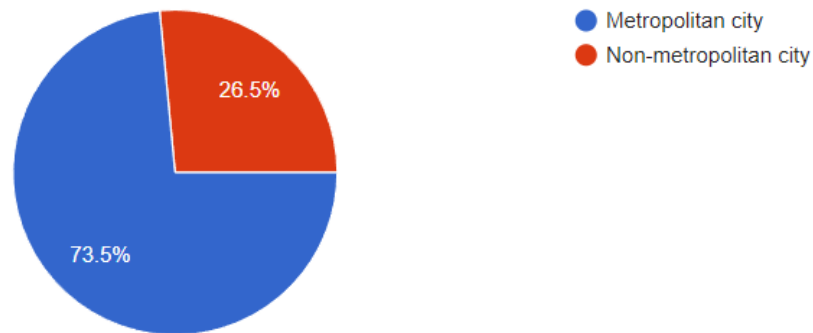
Figure 4.6: Place of Residence of respondents

Maximum percentage of respondents are from the metropolitan cities (73.5%) whereas the rest belongs to non metropolitan cities (26.5%).

Below is the bar chat which helps us know the total contentment of the consumer, by the contribution provided by influencers in smoothing the purchasing experience.
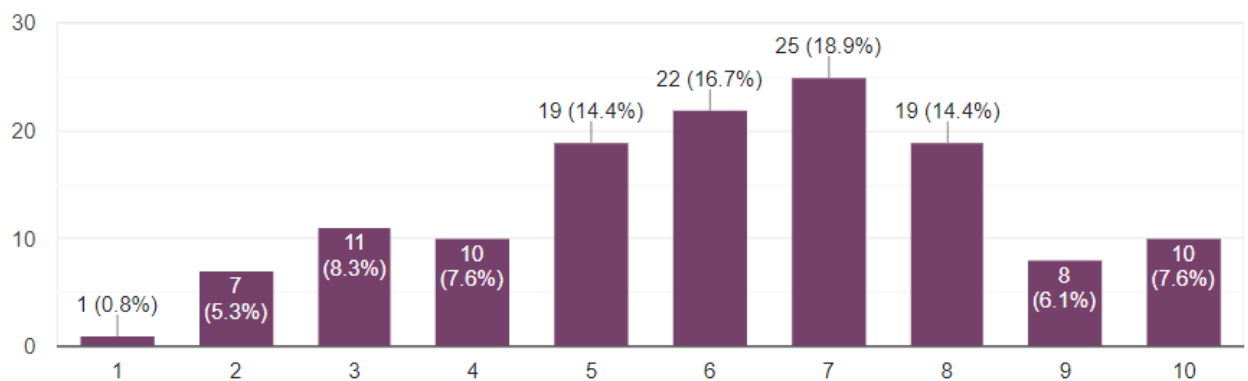
Figure 4.7: Consumer Contentment with Influencer Marketing

4.2 Chi-Square

The three different demographics i.e age, education and monthly income is used on different parameters to understand the relation between the two. The results are shown in the tables below.

Interpretation of age demographic:

The chi-square analysis delves into the intricate relationship between participants' age and their attitudes towards influencer brand engagement, revealing nuanced insights that offer valu-

AGE	Are you aware of influencer brand engagement?	.001 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
AGE	Influencers play an active role in creating brand awareness.	.001 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
AGE	Influencers are replacing conventional celebrities in promoting the brand online.	.009 Since the p-level is more than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
AGE	The content shared by different influencers are useful to me.	.066 Since the p-level is more than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is not rejected
AGE	Marketing by influencers are more trustworthy/valuable than conventional celebrity marketing.	.090 Since the p-level is more than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is not rejected

Figure 4.8: Age with Other Parameters

able guidance for marketers. The findings demonstrate a significant impact of age on partici-
pants' awareness of influencer brand engagement, with younger individuals exhibiting height-
ened receptivity to influencer-driven marketing efforts, as indicated by the notably low p-value
of 0.001. Similarly, age is strongly associated with the belief in influencers' active role in creat-
ing brand awareness, highlighting younger demographics' perception of influencers as influential
agents in shaping consumer preferences. However, the relationship becomes more nuanced when
assessing whether influencers are supplanting traditional celebrities in online brand promotion,

with a significance level of 0.009 suggesting additional contributing factors to individuals' attitudes. Moreover, while the analysis reveals potential trends in the perceived usefulness and trustworthiness of influencer marketing relative to conventional celebrity endorsements, with p-values of 0.066 and 0.090 respectively, it suggests that age may exert a lesser degree of influence on these specific aspects of brand engagement perceptions. Instead, factors such as individual preferences and content relevance may play a more prominent role across age demographics. Overall, the detailed chi-square analysis underscores the complexity of the relationship between age and perceptions of influencer brand engagement, offering nuanced insights for marketers aiming to effectively engage diverse demographic segments.

Interpretation of education demographic:

The statistical analysis conducted reveals compelling evidence of significant differences in participants' perceptions of influencer brand engagement across various educational backgrounds. Notably, participants exhibited a high level of awareness regarding influencer brand engagement, as evidenced by a low p-level of 0.008, indicating a rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding suggests that individuals with different levels of education are cognizant of the prevalence and impact of influencer marketing in today's digital landscape. Additionally, respondents overwhelmingly rejected the notion that influencers merely play a passive role in creating brand awareness, with a p-level of 0.000, indicating a strong belief in their efficacy as brand advocates. Moreover, the rejection of the null hypothesis that influencers are replacing conventional celebrities in online brand promotion further underscores participants' recognition of influencers' growing influence in the digital marketing sphere, with a p-level of 0.001. Furthermore, participants expressed a positive sentiment towards the usefulness of content shared by influencers, rejecting the null hypothesis with a p-level of 0.021. This suggests that individuals across varying educational backgrounds find value in the content disseminated by influencers, further emphasizing their role as trusted sources of information and inspiration. Lastly, participants rejected the notion that influencer marketing is less trustworthy or valuable than conventional celebrity marketing, with a p-level of 0.015, highlighting a prevailing belief in the credibility and effectiveness of influencer-driven brand endorsements. Overall, these findings suggest that education level plays a significant role in shaping individuals' perceptions of influencer brand engagement, with respondents across different educational backgrounds demonstrating awareness of influencer marketing and acknowledging its value in brand promotion and consumer engagement.

Interpretation of monthly income demographic:

The analysis of the relationship between monthly income and perceptions of influencer brand

EDUCATION	Are you aware of influencer brand engagement?	.008 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
EDUCATION	Influencers play an active role in creating brand awareness.	.000 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
EDUCATION	Influencers are replacing conventional celebrities in promoting the brand online.	.001 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
EDUCATION	The content shared by different influencer is useful to me.	.021 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
EDUCATION	Marketing by influencers are more trustworthy/valuable than conventional celebrity marketing.	0.015 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected

Figure 4.9: Education with Other Parameters

engagement reveals compelling insights into consumer attitudes across different socioeconomic strata. The findings, characterized by p-values consistently below the 0.05 significance threshold, signify significant variations in opinions based on income levels. Notably, individuals with diverse income brackets exhibit differing levels of awareness regarding influencer brand engagement, suggesting nuanced receptivity to this marketing approach. Moreover, perceptions of influencers' roles in creating brand awareness, their potential to supplant traditional celebrities,

MONTLY INCOME	Are you aware of influencer brand engagement?	.008 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
MONTLY INCOME	Influencers play an active role in creating brand awareness.	.026 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
MONTLY INCOME	Influencers are replacing conventional celebrities in promoting the brand online.	.009 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
MONTLY INCOME	The content shared by different influencer is useful to me.	.029 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected
MONTLY INCOME	Marketing by influencers are more trustworthy/valuable than conventional celebrity marketing.	.019 Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis is rejected

Figure 4.10: Monthly Income with Other Parameters

and the usefulness of their content are markedly influenced by monthly income. Interestingly, participants' assessments of the trustworthiness and value of influencer marketing compared to conventional celebrity endorsements also display significant disparities linked to income levels. These results underscore the intricate interplay between socioeconomic status and attitudes toward influencer brand engagement, emphasizing the necessity of considering income diversity in designing effective marketing strategies.

4.3   Regression

4.3.1   Criteria 1

GENDER AND EDUCATION * CONTRIBUTION OF INFLUENCERS FOR EASING SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

H0: Gender and Education has no significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

H1: Gender and Education has significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Overall, I am very happy with the contribution influencers are making to ease my shopping experience.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	37.647[a]	8	4.706	.987	.450
Intercept	1528.141	1	1528.141	320.378	.000
Gender	.447	1	.447	.094	.760
Education	17.384	4	4.346	.911	.460
Gender * Education	6.280	3	2.093	.439	.726
Error	586.686	123	4.770		
Total	5644.000	132			
Corrected Total	624.333	131			

a. R Squared = .060 (Adjusted R Squared = -.001)

Figure 4.11: Test results for criteria 1

Interpretation:

The interpretation of the statistical analysis indicates that there is no significant association between gender and education level with the contribution of influencers for easing shopping experiences, as suggested by the p-values being greater than the 0.05 significance level. This implies that individuals' gender and educational background do not strongly influence their perceptions of how influencers contribute to their shopping experiences.

The lack of significance in the association between gender and influencer contribution suggests that both men and women are similarly influenced by influencers when it comes to easing their shopping experiences. Similarly, the non-significant relationship between education level and influencer contribution indicates that individuals across different educational backgrounds perceive influencers' impact on shopping experiences similarly.

This interpretation suggests that other factors beyond gender and education level might play a more significant role in shaping individuals' perceptions of influencers' contribution to shopping experiences. Variables such as age, income level, cultural background, and personal preferences could potentially have a stronger influence on how individuals perceive and interact with influencer-driven content in the context of shopping. Consequently, marketers and brands may need to consider a broader range of demographic and psychographic factors when developing influencer marketing strategies aimed at enhancing shopping experiences.

4.3.2 Criteria 2

AGE AND FAMILY INCOME * CONTRIBUTION OF INFLUENCERS FOR EASING SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

H0: Age and Monthly income have no significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

H1: Age and Monthly income have significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Overall, I am very happy with the contribution influencers are making to ease my shopping experience.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	20.899^a	9	2.322	.469	.893
Intercept	2427.295	1	2427.295	490.741	.000
Age	9.928	3	3.309	.669	.573
Monthlyfamilyincome	2.225	2	1.112	.225	.799
Age * Monthlyfamilyincome	13.560	4	3.390	.685	.603
Error	603.435	122	4.946		
Total	5644.000	132			
Corrected Total	624.333	131			

a. R Squared = .033 (Adjusted R Squared = -.038)

Figure 4.12: Test results for criteria 2

Interpretation:

The analysis of the association between age, family income, and the contribution of influencers to easing shopping experiences yields intriguing findings. With p-values exceeding the 0.05 significance threshold, the null hypothesis stands unchallenged, indicating a lack of statistically significant correlation between these demographic factors and the perceived impact of

influencers on shopping experiences. This suggests that neither age nor family income significantly influences individuals' perceptions of influencers' contributions to their shopping ease. Such results underscore the complexity of consumer behavior and the multifaceted nature of influencer influence, which may transcend demographic boundaries. However, while statistical significance may not be evident, it's crucial to acknowledge potential nuances and contextual factors that could still influence individuals' perceptions and behaviors. Further exploration through qualitative methods or considering additional variables may provide deeper insights into the intricate dynamics between demographics and the role of influencers in shaping shopping experiences. Ultimately, these findings prompt marketers to adopt a nuanced approach, recognizing the diverse and multifaceted nature of consumer perceptions and behaviors in response to influencer marketing initiatives.

4.3.3 Criteria 3

PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND FAMILY * CONTRIBUTION OF INFLUENCERS FOR EASING SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

H0: Place of residence and monthly income has no significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

H1: Place of residence and monthly income has significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Overall, I am very happy with the contribution influencers are making to ease my shopping experience.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	10.617[a]	5	2.123	.436	.823
Intercept	2664.411	1	2664.411	547.021	.000
Monthlyfamilyincome	.599	2	.300	.062	.940
Placeofresidence	5.932	1	5.932	1.218	.272
Monthlyfamilyincome * Placeofresidence	1.605	2	.803	.165	.848
Error	613.717	126	4.871		
Total	5644.000	132			
Corrected Total	624.333	131			

a. R Squared = .017 (Adjusted R Squared = -.022)

Figure 4.13: Test results for criteria 3

Interpretation:

The analysis conducted suggests that there is no statistically significant association between place of residence, family income, and the perceived contribution of influencers to easing shopping experiences. With p-values exceeding the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is upheld, indicating that these demographic factors do not significantly influence individuals' perceptions of influencers'impact on shopping convenience. This implies that regardless of whether participants reside in urban or rural areas or come from varying income brackets, their assessments of influencers' role in facilitating shopping experiences remain consistent. While influencers may play a role in shaping consumer behavior and preferences, their influence does not appear to vary significantly based on participants' residential location or family income. These findings suggest a uniform perception of influencer contributions to shopping convenience across diverse demographic backgrounds, highlighting the pervasive influence of influencers in contemporary consumer culture, irrespective of socioeconomic factors.

4.4   Source Credibility

Transforming statements into an independent variable. Below are the following statements which has been clubbed together to form source credibility independent variable.

- I trust on the information shared by an influencer about a brand.

- Influencers always convey actual/truthful information about a brand.

- Marketing by influencers are more trustworthy/valuable than conventional celebrity marketing.

SOURCE CREDIBILITY * CONTRIBUTION OF INFLUENCERS FOR EASING MY SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

H0: SC has no significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

H1: SC has significant association with contribution of influencers for easing my shopping experience.

Interpretation:

Since the p-level is less than 0.05 significance level so the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Thus, there is significant association of SC with the contribution of influencers for easing shopping experience. In simpler terms, the test suggests a statistically significant association between SC and the role influencers play in making shopping easier.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.641[a]	.410	.406	1.683	.410	90.500	1	130	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), SC

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	256.246	1	256.246	90.500	.000[b]
	Residual	368.088	130	2.831		
	Total	624.333	131			

a. Dependent Variable: Overall, I am very happy with the contribution influencers are making to ease my shopping experience.

b. Predictors: (Constant), SC

Figure 4.14: Test Result for Source Credibility

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

5.1   Conclusions

The study revolves around the the use of social media influencer marketing by brands to increase more consumer engagement. The study chalks down the different areas related to IM such as types of influencers according to their followers, the meaning of consumer brand engagement and brand loyalty and its characteristics. Through the descriptive analysis we see that the influencers have a major affect in the buying power of consumers. Some of the key analysis drawn from the study are:

1. In today's time brands are more focused towards IM than traditional marketing techniques.

2. There are 4 major classification for influencers- Mega influencers, macro influencers, Micro influencers and Nano influencers.

3. The findings reveal that while certain demographic variables, such as age and education, exhibit significant associations with various aspects of influencer brand engagement, others, including gender, monthly family income, and place of residence, demonstrate less pronounced correlations.

4. Specifically, younger individuals and those with higher levels of education tend to exhibit greater awareness of influencer brand engagement and perceive influencers as active agents in creating brand awareness.

5. This research contributes to advancing knowledge in the field of influencer marketing and consumer behavior, offering actionable insights for marketers to optimize their influencer marketing strategies and foster meaningful connections with target audiences in an increasingly digitized marketplace.

5.2   Implications

The relationship between social media influencers and consumer brand engagement is reshaping marketing paradigms, emphasizing authenticity, trust, and meaningful connections. Marketers are navigating a landscape where traditional metrics give way to new indicators of success, such as likes, shares, and comments. Micro-influencers are challenging the dominance of macro-influencers, prompting brands to consider the merits of both. Long-term partnerships are valued for their potential to foster deeper engagement and brand loyalty, while regulatory scrutiny underscores the importance of transparency. Leveraging data and analytics, marketers

can refine strategies and measure impact across diverse global audiences. Innovation thrives as brands collaborate with influencers to create compelling content tailored to specific demographics and platforms. This evolving nexus reflects the dynamic interplay between technology, culture, and consumer behavior in the digital age.

5.3 Limitations of study

Some limitations of the research conducted are as follows:

1. Participants' responses to questionnaire items regarding their perceptions of influencer brand engagement and shopping experiences may be influenced by social desirability bias or memory recall errors. Additionally, individuals may provide responses that they perceive as socially acceptable or aligning with societal norms rather than reflecting their true attitudes and behaviors.

2. Another limitation of this study is the omission of certain variables that could potentially influence consumer perceptions of influencer brand engagement. While demographic factors such as age, gender, education, monthly family income, and place of residence were examined, other psychographic variables, cultural differences, and individual preferences were not fully explored.

3. The study's sample size and diversity may present limitations in terms of diversity and representativeness. The current research has only 132 respondents, in the future this dataset can be increased to get more accurate results.

5.4 Scope of Study

1. Since the current research deals with only understanding the relevance, at a much latter stage categorising the types of influencers such as mega, macro, micro and nano can also be involved.

2. The intrusion of technologies such as AI, metaverse and understanding its connection with influencer marketing can be scrutinized as well.

3. The research has a small data set, this could be increased to obtain better results and overall efficiency.

4. Explore various social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, etc.

5. Provide actionable insights for marketers to optimize brand engagement strategies through social media influencers.

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