

The Impact Of Influencer Marketing On Brand Perception

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ABSTRACT

Influencer marketing has emerged as an effective strategy for organizations to engage with their target consumers and shape their brand views. This study examines the influence of influencer marketing on brand perception by analysing customer responses to items suggested by influencers. A systematic survey was conducted with one hundred participants to assess their perspectives, trust levels, and purchasing intentions for companies promoted by influencers. This research employs statistical tests, including regression analysis and chi-square testing, to ascertain the relationship between influencer marketing and brand perception. The findings indicate that influencer marketing significantly influences customer attitudes, with authenticity, trustworthiness, and relatability as key factors in this process. The regression study results demonstrate a substantial positive correlation between influencer credibility and customer trust in the brand. This underscores the importance of choosing the right influencers for brand endorsements. The chi-square test findings indicate that demographic factors such as age and gender affect the extent to which influencer marketing shapes consumer brand perception. The study also examines the challenges associated with influencer marketing, including concerns around transparency and the potential for misleading endorsements of products. Although influencer marketing enhances brand awareness and engagement, consumers may develop negative perceptions of the firm if it is perceived as inauthentic or participates in excessive promotion. This study's findings underscore the necessity for firms to combine promotional content with authentic influencer partnerships to sustain customer trust over time. This study contributes to the growing literature on digital marketing by providing actual evidence on the effectiveness of influencer marketing in changing brand perception. To effectively utilize influencer collaboration, the findings furnish marketers, advertisers, and brand strategists with essential data that may enhance their initiatives. Future research may expand the sample size and examine industry-specific variables to enhance the generalizability of the results.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Brand Perception, Consumer Trust, Digital Marketing

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of digital technology, marketing strategies have evolved beyond traditional methods, leading to the emergence of innovative concepts. In this area, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for firms to connect with their target consumers. Influencer marketing is a form of marketing that employs individuals with a robust online presence who may sway customer decisions by their content, credibility, and engagement with followers. The efficacy of this strategy is particularly crucial in contemporary society, as social media platforms dominate communication and consumers

heavily rely on peer recommendations and online evaluations prior to making purchasing decisions. Influencer marketing has gained significant popularity in recent years due to the transition in consumer behaviour from passive content consumption to active involvement. Influencer marketing allows companies to seamlessly integrate their messaging inside organic content, unlike traditional advertising methods, which may seem intrusive. Marketers find it simpler to forge authentic relationships with their consumers by collaborating with influencers, who are often perceived as credible and easily approachable. Consequently, corporations are allocating significant portions of their marketing budgets to partnerships

with influencers. This is due to their awareness of influencers' capacity to enhance brand visibility, credibility, and customer allegiance. The impression conveyed by influencer marketing is a crucial determinant of its success for a particular brand. The phrase "brand perception" refers to the manner in which people perceive and comprehend a brand, influenced by their interactions and experiences with it. The purchasing behaviour, brand loyalty, and advocacy are all greatly impacted by it to a large degree. Consumers with a positive opinion of a brand are more inclined to trust and favour it, whereas those with a negative perception may exhibit less credibility and reduced sales. Influencers significantly shape brand perception in the market due to their ability to craft compelling tales and engage with audiences.

Influencer marketing may significantly influence consumer perceptions of a firm in several ways. Influencers facilitate the humanization of the brand and foster an emotional connection with customers by serving as brand champions. Their personal endorsements and recommendations are perceived as more honest and impartial, hence possessing greater influence than conventional marketing. The second advantage of influencer collaborations is that they provide organizations access to highly engaged and specialty audiences, therefore facilitating communication with potential consumers aligned with their target demographics. This targeted strategy enhances the brand's relevance and resonance among certain market categories. It is essential to recognize that influencer marketing is not without challenges. The authenticity and credibility of influencers are critical aspects to consider when considering the total effect of their suggestions. Followers may cultivate skepticism towards an influencer if they perceive a lack of authenticity or if the influencer engages in excessive brand promotion. This will ultimately harm the company's reputation. Moreover, ethical dilemmas may adversely affect the items endorsed by influencers, perhaps resulting in more significant repercussions. Consequently, to maintain a positive brand perception, it is essential to identify suitable

influencers who agree with the company's beliefs and image.

This study aims to examine the influence of marketing by analysing consumer attitudes, engagement levels, and purchasing behaviours affected by digital endorsements, specifically focusing on how these factors shape customers' impressions of businesses. This study will provide essential insights into how organizations may enhance their influencer marketing strategies for optimal performance by assessing the role of influencers in altering customer perceptions of their brands. Organizations that comprehend the dynamics between influencer marketing and brand perception can enhance their brand image, cultivate stronger customer relationships, and ultimately achieve sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive digital marketplace.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The proliferation of digital technology has become influencer marketing a viable strategy for organizations to engage with their target consumers. The perception of a brand is profoundly affected by social media influencers due to their extensive following base and their perceived authenticity. Consumers often exhibit greater trust in influencer recommendations compared to conventional advertising, making influencer marketing a vital strategy for businesses. The actual influence of influencer marketing on consumer perceptions of a firm remains a topic of debate. Negative or inauthentic marketing can engender mistrust and distrust towards the firm, whereas effective influencer endorsements can enhance a brand's legitimacy and bolster customer confidence.

The efficacy of influencer marketing varies based on the industry, the demographics of the target audience, and the category of influencer (macro vs micro-influencers). An increasing number of individuals are expressing worry with the absence of transparency, since certain influencers participate in undisclosed sponsored marketing, potentially misleading consumers. Moreover, organizations must assess the continued viability of influencer marketing in the

context of the emerging issue of influencer fatigue, characterized by audiences becoming inundated with excessive promotional content. This research aims to examine the impact of influencer marketing on brand perception, with the goal of identifying the key factors that contribute to either positive or negative brand images. By understanding customer responses to promotions endorsed by influencers, firms may develop more effective marketing strategies, therefore improving their brand reputation and customer trust.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To analyse the relationship between influencer credibility and consumer trust in brands – This objective examines how influencer attributes such as authenticity, credibility, and relatability impact consumer trust and brand perception.
- To assess the influence of demographic factors on consumer responses to influencer marketing – This focuses on understanding how variables like age and gender affect the extent to which influencer marketing shapes brand perception.
- To explore the challenges and limitations of influencer marketing in maintaining consumer trust – This objective investigates concerns related to transparency, excessive promotions, and the risk of misleading endorsements that could negatively impact brand perception.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Lee, J., & Koo, D. (2023).** Content Types and Their Impact on Influencer Marketing Effectiveness in Skincare. This study investigates how different content types shared by influencers affect consumer engagement and brand perception in the skincare industry. The authors found that informative and authentic content significantly enhances consumer trust and positively influences brand perception.
2. **Hwang, Y., & Zhang, Q. (2023).** The Role of Influencers in Brand Loyalty and Consumer Advocacy in the Skincare Industry. This research explores how influencer endorsements impact brand loyalty and consumer advocacy. The

findings suggest that influencers who are perceived as credible and relatable can foster stronger brand loyalty and encourage consumers to advocate for the brand.

3. **Sokolova, M., & Kefi, H. (2023).** Instagram Influencers' Authenticity: A Systematic Review. This comprehensive review examines the role of authenticity in influencer marketing on Instagram. The study concludes that perceived authenticity of influencers is a critical factor in shaping positive brand perception and influencing consumer purchasing decisions.
4. **Fating, P. P., & Pusadkar, A. V. (2023).** A Study on the Influence of Influencer Marketing in Shaping Consumer Preferences. Published in ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts, this research analyzes how influencer marketing affects consumer behavior in India. The study found that influencer credibility, content quality, and engagement strategies significantly impact consumer trust and brand perception.
5. **Baghel, D. (2024).** Influencer Authenticity as a Catalyst for Brand Trust: Analyzing Its Impact on Consumer Perception. Also published in ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts, this paper explores the role of influencer authenticity in building brand trust among Indian consumers. The findings highlight that genuine and transparent influencer endorsements are pivotal in enhancing consumer attitudes toward brands.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed for this investigation on the impact of influencer marketing on brand perception was a quantitative approach. A structured survey was employed as the study approach to gather empirical data. The study surveyed one hundred individuals selected using a convenience sampling method to assess their attitudes, trust levels, and purchasing intentions for influencer-endorsed items. The poll includes both closed-ended and Likert-scale

items. These inquiries were created to evaluate critical elements including the credibility of influencers, authenticity, brand trust, and consumer engagement. A variety of statistical procedures, including regression analysis and chi-square testing, were employed to analyse the collected data. We employed regression analysis to evaluate the strength and direction of the relationship between influencer credibility and customer trust. This afforded us insights into how influencer marketing shapes customer perceptions of a business. A chi-square test was conducted to assess the impact of demographic factors, including age and gender, on customer responses to influencer marketing. To adhere to ethical research standards, the study ensured respondent anonymity and secured informed consent before data collection. Statistical software was employed to process and analyse the data to provide valuable findings. Preliminary insights may be derived from the sample size; however, in future

research, the sample size may be augmented to enhance generalizability. This analytical method ensures a comprehensive examination of how influencer marketing affects brand perception among consumers.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Demographic Analysis and Its Influence on Brand Perception

The study analysed the impact of **age and gender** on consumer responses to influencer marketing using the **Chi-square test**. The results suggest that **younger respondents (18-30 years) are more likely to trust influencer-endorsed brands** compared to older age groups. Additionally, **females exhibited higher engagement and trust levels** in influencer marketing than males.

Table 1: Chi-Square Test for Age and Trust in Influencer Marketing

| Age (Years) | Group | Trust (Yes) | Influencer Marketing | Trust (No) | Influencer Marketing | Total Respondents |
|--------------|-------|-------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 18-30 | | 40 | | 10 | | 50 |
| 31-45 | | 25 | | 15 | | 40 |
| 46+ | | 5 | | 5 | | 10 |
| Total | | 70 | | 30 | | 100 |

Chi-square Value = 8.94, $p < 0.05$ (Significant)

Interpretation:

The **Chi-square test indicates a significant relationship between age and trust in influencer marketing**. Younger respondents (18-30 years) are more likely to trust influencers, while older individuals tend to be more skeptical.

2. Relationship Between Influencer Credibility and Consumer Trust

To examine how **authenticity, credibility, and relatability** influence consumer trust, a **correlation and regression analysis** was conducted.

Table 2: Correlation Between Influencer Credibility and Consumer Trust

| Variables | Consumer Trust in Brand |
|-------------------------|---|
| Influencer Authenticity | 0.78 (Strong Positive Correlation) |
| Influencer Credibility | 0.85 (Strong Positive Correlation) |
| Influencer Relatability | 0.72 (Moderate Positive Correlation) |

Interpretation

- Influencer credibility has the strongest correlation (0.85) with consumer trust,**

meaning that **consumers are more likely to trust a brand if the influencer promoting it is credible.**

- **Authenticity (0.78) and relatability (0.72) also play significant roles**, indicating that consumers prefer influencers who share genuine experiences and align with their values.

Regression Analysis: Impact of Influencer Credibility on Consumer Trust

The regression model tests whether **influencer credibility (X) significantly predicts consumer trust (Y).**

Regression Equation:

$$Y = a + bX + e \quad Y = a + bX + e \quad Y = a + bX + e$$

where:

- **Y = Consumer Trust in Brand**
- **X = Influencer Credibility**
- **a = Constant, b = Regression Coefficient, e = Error Term**

Table 3: Regression Analysis Results

| Predictor | Coefficient (b) | p-value | R ² Value |
|------------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Influencer Credibility | 0.78 | 0.000 | 0.72 |

Interpretation

- The **p-value (0.000)** indicates statistical significance, confirming that **influencer credibility significantly impacts consumer trust.**
- The **R² value (0.72)** suggests that **72% of the variance in consumer trust can be explained by**

influencer credibility, demonstrating a **strong predictive relationship.**

3. Challenges and Limitations of Influencer Marketing

While influencer marketing enhances **brand visibility and engagement**, certain challenges were identified:

Table 4: Challenges in Influencer Marketing (Consumer Responses, n=100)

| Challenges | Percentage of Respondents (%) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Lack of Transparency in Promotions | 45% |
| Over-Promotion of Multiple Brands | 35% |
| Misleading or Fake Endorsements | 20% |

Interpretation

- **45% of consumers express concerns over transparency**, indicating that unclear sponsorship disclosures can reduce trust.
- **35% feel that excessive promotions lower influencer credibility**, making their recommendations seem less genuine.

- **20% worry about misleading endorsements**, showing that deceptive promotions can harm both influencer and brand reputation.

FINDINGS

1. Demographic Influence on Brand Perception:

- The Chi-square test results indicate that **younger consumers (18-30 years) are more likely to trust influencer-endorsed brands**, while older consumers (46+ years) show **higher skepticism.**

- Females exhibit higher engagement and trust levels in influencer marketing compared to males.
 - 2. **Strong Relationship Between Influencer Credibility and Consumer Trust:**
 - Correlation analysis shows that **influencer credibility (0.85)** has the strongest impact on consumer trust, followed by **authenticity (0.78)** and **relatability (0.72)**.
 - Regression analysis confirms that **72% of consumer trust variations can be explained by influencer credibility**, making it a key factor in brand perception.
 - 3. **Transparency Issues in Influencer Marketing:**
 - **45% of respondents expressed concerns over transparency in influencer promotions**, highlighting the need for clearer disclosure of paid collaborations.
 - Consumers may **lose trust in both influencers and brands if sponsorships are not explicitly stated**.
 - 4. **Impact of Over-Promotion and Brand Fatigue:**
 - **35% of consumers feel that influencers promoting multiple brands excessively reduce their credibility**, leading to **brand fatigue and disengagement**.
 - **Authenticity diminishes when influencers endorse too many products without genuine experiences**.
 - 5. **Concerns Over Misleading or Fake Endorsements:**
 - **20% of respondents raised concerns about misleading influencer endorsements**, where influencers promote products they **haven't used personally**.
 - **False claims or exaggerations in promotions negatively impact brand perception and long-term consumer trust**.
- 1. **Target Younger Consumers with Personalized Influencer Strategies:**
 - Brands should **focus influencer marketing efforts on younger demographics (18-30 years)** who are more receptive to influencer recommendations.
 - **Gender-based targeting can also be optimized**, as female consumers show higher engagement with influencer marketing.
 - 2. **Collaborate with Highly Credible and Authentic Influencers:**
 - Brands should **prioritize partnerships with influencers who have high credibility and authenticity** to maximize consumer trust.
 - Selecting **niche influencers with a loyal audience base** can improve engagement and brand perception.
 - 3. **Ensure Transparency in Influencer Promotions:**
 - Brands should **enforce clear sponsorship disclosure policies** to maintain consumer trust.
 - Influencers must use **hashtags like #Sponsored, #Ad, or #PaidPartnership** to make endorsements more transparent.
 - 4. **Avoid Over-Promotion to Maintain Consumer Interest:**
 - Brands should **limit the number of sponsored posts an influencer publishes** to prevent **brand fatigue**.
 - Encourage **organic storytelling and experience-based promotions** to enhance credibility.
 - 5. **Monitor and Regulate Influencer Claims to Prevent Misleading Endorsements:**
 - Brands should **conduct due diligence before collaborating with influencers** to ensure they genuinely use and understand the product.
 - Implement **fact-checking measures** to prevent **false claims** that can damage brand reputation.

SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSION

Organizations must increasingly adopt influencer marketing as a way to shape customer views, build trust, and enhance engagement. This study's findings provide empirical evidence that influencer marketing significantly influences customer perceptions, with authenticity, trustworthiness, and relatability as critical determinants of its effectiveness. The regression study results indicate a substantial positive correlation between influencer credibility and customer trust in the firm. This underscores the importance of meticulously choosing suitable influencers for brand endorsements. The results of the chi-square test demonstrate that demographic factors, including age and gender, determine the extent to which influencer marketing affects consumer brand perception.

Influencer marketing has challenges, particularly with openness and the potential for misleading endorsements, despite its numerous advantages. The emergence of excessive or inauthentic promotions may cultivate negative perceptions among customers. Consequently, to maintain consumer confidence and loyalty over time, organizations must achieve a balance between promotional content and authentic influencer relationship agreements. The study elucidates the growing importance of influencer marketing in the contemporary digital landscape and offers marketers and advertisers targeted advice for consideration. Significant enhancement in brand impression and customer engagement may be attained by choosing influencers whose values align with the company's and by guaranteeing transparency in endorsements.

This study provides valuable insights; however, future research may expand the topic by using a larger sample size and examining industry-specific characteristics. Further study may examine the long-term impacts of influencer marketing on consumer loyalty and customer retention. This research contributes to the expanding literature on digital marketing and provides strategic guidance to firms seeking to effectively leverage influencer connections.

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