A STUDY ON INFLUENCER MARKETING; AS AN EMERGING MARKETING TOOL AMONG YOUTH IN OTTAPALAM TALUK

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ABSTRACT

◻ Social media influencers are winning over the internet with their outstanding presence and work. Their opinions have a powerful impact on people especially on young generation. There are several social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube where influencer marketing takes place which gains momentum among youth. This study aims to understand the awareness of influencer marketing among youth and also to understand the preference of social media platforms by youth for influencer marketing.

Key words: Marketing tools, influencer marketing, social media

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing refers to activities a company undertakes to promote the buying or selling of a product or service. Nowadays marketing techniques are changing according to the technological innovations happening in the environment. Social media have great influence on dealing with customers and on purchase decisions of customers. In the changing era majority of people are having an active membership on the internet and they all are part of the virtual world. Social Medias are those virtual platforms where customers find their space and get aware about the different products and services. Youngsters are those who create more space for them and explore on internet and actively participating on the social Medias. An influencer is someone who can influence others and influencer marketing, a form of social marketing which have more followers nowadays. Influencer marketing involves brands collaborating with online influencers to market products or services. Some influencer marketing collaborations are less tangible than that brands simply works with influencers to improve brand recognition. The important thing here is that the online collaborations are

genuinely influential. They have to influence the type of people with whom a brand wishes to establish a touch point. Influencer marketing is much more than finding someone with an audience and offering them money or exposure to say good things about you. There are micro influencers, mid-tier influencers, macro influencers and mega influencers mainly. Instagram, you tube, Facebook, tik tok are the main platforms for these marketers. In every sector they can influence the customers. It may be beauty, travel, fashions, sports, animals etc. Influencing marketing campaigns can be of many types some of them are sponsored content, reviews, competitions and giveaways, product and content collaborations, long term ambassadors and take overs on your platforms. Influencer marketing is a form of marketing that enables business to collaborate with individuals who have a following for increased brand exposure. Companies may ask a person with a large following to publish social media content that promotes their products or services. People often follow individuals they trust on social media, so if they see someone, they follow advertising your business.

Influencer marketing has been a recent strategy employed by firms in INDIA to connect with INDIAN consumers. This has undoubtedly been a successful marketing and advertising technique that has resulted in hundreds of profitable campaigns. Influencer marketing has been extremely successful in the country due to the increase of social media users in INDIA.

2.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Marketing techniques are changing now days and it is very important to know how the new techniques and tools are effective in the current era. In this period social medias are having more influence on the life style of people and influencer marketing is that kind of marketing which is having more importance in today's market. It is important to know how young customers purchase decisions have influenced with the introduction of influencer marketing.

3.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Technology has changed the way businesses market products. The medium allows for plenty of room to share product details, reviews, photos and videos that encage potential customers. Influencer marketing as a new marketing tool has importance in the purchase decisions of customers especially among youngsters who are more active in the virtual world.

4.   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The data was collected from the respondents across the age group of 18-25 of varied educational qualifications, gender, and different family backgrounds. The study involves understanding the awareness of youth regarding influencer marketing and identifying the factors differentiating influencer marketing from other marketing tools by youth in Ottappalam Taluk.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

•   To understand the awareness of influencer marketing among youth

•   To understand the preference of social media platform by youth for influencer marketing.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant difference in the awareness among different age group

H1: There is significant difference in the awareness among different age group

H0: There is no significant association between preference level and gender of youth

H1: There is significant association between preference level and gender of youth.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.   RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. What the study is, why the study for, source of information to be collected, limitations of the study and all other relevant things related with the study is involved in a research design. This study is descriptive in nature. Study mainly depends on both primary and secondary data to collect information required for the study.

2.   SOURCES OF DATA

a)   Primary data

Primary data for the study is collected by using questionnaire.

b)   Secondary data

Secondary data is collected from various websites, journals and such other publications.

3.   SAMPLE DESIGN

Sample design is the plan of sample and it is the framework which describes how the sampling is being performed in the study. It deals with the process of deciding sample size, sampling unit, sampling frame.

a)   Sampling method

Sampling method used for this study is convenience sampling method.

b)   Sample size for this study is 120.

c)   Sample unit for the study is Ottappalam taluk.

7. TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF ANALYSIS

The data analysis for this study employed is descriptive and analytical methods. Appropriate statistical procedures for descriptions such as percentages, means, ANOVA, chi-square test were used. Results were adequately presented in tables and charts.

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

a.   The study does not discuss about other emerging marketing tools

b.   The study only focuses on youth

c.   Study does not evaluate the effectiveness of influencer marketing

9. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

a.   "Instafamous and social media influencer marketing"-SV JIN, A MUQUADDAM, E RYU – (2019), Marketing intelligence and planning 37(5),567-569, The purpose of this paper is to test the effects of two types of celebrities on source trust worthiness, brand attitude, envy and social presence. The result indicate that customers exposed to Instagram celebrities brand posts perceive the source to be more trust who worthy, show more positive attitude towards endorsed brand, feel stronger social presence.

b.   "Online influencer marketing"- FINE F LEUNG, FLORA F GU, ROBERT W PALMATIER (2022), - journal of the academy of marketing science, 1-26, This article outlines key strategies for effectively managing OIM. OIM has become an integral component of brands marketing strategies however marketers lack an adequate understanding of its scope, effectiveness, and potential threats. Drawing insights from practitioner and consumer interviews, and in line with the social capital theory, the authors propose that OIM can be understood as leveraging influencer resources to enhance a firms marketing communication effectiveness.

c.   "Behind influencer marketing: key marketing decisions and their effects on followers' responses"- FRANSISCO J MARTINEZ-LOPEZ, RAFEEL ANAYA-SANCHEZ, MARISEL FERNADEZ GOIRDANO AND DAVID LOPEZ-LOPEZ-(2020)- journal of marketing management, 1376-1472, Influencer marketing actions are mostly carried out on social platforms, e.g.; Facebook, Instagram, and twitter. However, despite its increasing four essential factors related to an influencer marketing program analysed in two separate experimental studies for theoretical reasons and methodological operability; brand control over the shared message and its commercial orientation; and the celebrity level of the influencer and his/her congruence with the product or service they comment on in the post.

d.   KENDRA FOWLER, VERONICA L THOMAS (2023), "Influencer marketing: A scoping review and a look ahead", journal of marketing management,1-32, The interdisciplinary nature and rapidly expanding literature stream devoted to influencer marketing makes it difficult to stay abreast of the current research while simultaneously moving the field of knowledge forward. The goal of this article, then is to

take a look back, reviewing the disparate literature, in order to look ahead, guiding future research towards fruitful under explored avenues of discovery. Using a framework-based scoping review, a retrospective examination of 150 articles is provided with emphasis on identifying publication trends, theories, contexts, concepts, methodological approaches. These findings allow for a thorough discussion of gaps in extant knowledge, emerging themes and trends, and directions for future research.

e. SERIGO BARTA, DANIEL BELANCHE, ANA FERNANDEZ, MARTA FLAVIAN (2023), "Influencer marketing on tik tok: the effectiveness of humour and followers hedonic experience", journal of retailing and consumer services 70, 103149, This work examines the determinants of the success of influencer marketing on the youth focused Tik Tok, the fastest growing social network. It analyses the influencers account characteristics on their followers' hedonic experience and perceived opinion leadership, and how these impact on their intentions to follow influencers account and advice. A survey of followers of a popular Spanish Tik Tok influencer showed that originality and opinion leadership play important roles.

f. RON BERMAN, ANIKO OREY, XUDONG ZHENG (2023), "Influence or advertise: the role of social learning in influencer marketing", SSRN 4324888, The study compares influencer marketing to targeted advertising from information aggregation and product awareness perspectives. The study then points out different types of influencers and their influence among the target group. The type of product and appropriate influencer their influence levels are further detailed in this study. Why influencer campaigns either "go viral" or "go bust", and how for niche products, micro influencers with consistent content quality can be a valuable marketing tool are described through this study.

10. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1. One-way ANOVA on awareness among different age groups

H0: There is no significant difference in the awareness among different age group H1: There is significant difference in the awareness among different age group

Table 1

One-way ANOVA on awareness among different age groups

Age group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F value	P value
18-20	3	1.6667	.57735	2.299	.81
20-22	25	2.1200	.78102		
22-24	76	1.9868	.82451		

| 24-26 | 16 | 1.5000 | .63246 | | |
| Total | 120 | 1.9417 | .80226 | | |

Source: primary data

The above given table gives the result on one-way ANOVA conducted among age of respondents and awareness of respondents. The resulted P value at 5% level of significance proves that there is no significant difference in the awareness among different age groups of youth. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. From the result it is clear that youngsters in different age group have an equally likely awareness regarding influencer marketing.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant association between preference level and gender of youth

H1: There is significant association between preference level and gender of youth

Table 2.

Chi-square test on preference of social media platform among male and female

		Preference of social media platform for influencer marketing					Total
		YouTube	**Facebook**	**Twitter**	**Instagram**	**LinkedIn**	
Gender of respondents	Female	5	9	9	8	8	39
	Male	12	19	15	21	14	81
Total		17	28	24	29	22	120
Pearson chi -square		.818					
P value		.936					

Source: primary data

The 'p' value is greater than 0.05 hence it can be concluded that there is no significant association between preference level and gender of youth. Here the null hypothesis is getting accepted at 5% level of significance and 95% confidence level.

It can be concluded that preference of social media platform for influencer marketing among male and female are not associated together.

11. FINDINGS

a.   From the result it is clear that youngsters in different age group have an equally likely awareness regarding influencer marketing.

b.   There is no significant association between preference of social media for influencer marketing among male and female.

12. SUGGESTIONS

a.   More diversification to be introduced in influencer marketing.
b.   It is to be ensured that information is available to the customer in the best manner.
c.   More campaigns should be arranged for spreading awareness of influencer marketing.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, influencer marketing is a form of social media marketing. It includes affirmation and product/ service advertisements by influencers, individuals, and organizations that have a perceived degree of awareness or social impact in the field. Encaged audience typically follows these content creators. Advertising to them across different social media platforms enables the company to extend the scope, improve brand awareness and generate new leads for their sales funnel through buyer personas. Since influencers often create a clean shiny and fun version of their lives, it can create a sense of comparison for young followers. Whether we like it or not social media influencers are now part of life, both for adults and young people. Since these influencers can positively and negatively impact impressionable teens, it's important to understand their awareness and how they differentiate influencer marketing from other marketing tools.

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