iJRASET
International Journal For Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 12 **Issue:** II **Month of publication:** February 2024

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2024.58277

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International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 12 Issue II Feb 2024- Available at www.ijraset.com

"The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Teenager Consumer Behaviour in Vadodara: Evaluating Their Role in Boosting Brand Awareness, Shaping Brand Perception, and Driving Sales Effectively"

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***Abstract:** In the contemporary landscape, influencer marketing has emerged as a prevalent strategy for brands seeking to connect with their intended demographic and shape consumer actions. This study is dedicated to investigating the influence of influencer marketing on the behavior of teenagers in Vadodara, specifically emphasizing its efficacy in heightening brand awareness, enhancing brand perception, and catalyzing sales. Employing a mixed-methods approach, this research will utilize both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques to offer a holistic insight into the subject.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the realm of teenage consumers in Vadodara city, influencer marketing entails collaboration with individuals boasting substantial social media followings to endorse brands or products. This approach has gained prominence amid the surge in social media usage and the rising significance of online reviews and recommendations in shaping consumer choices. The objective of this research is to delve into the influence of influencer marketing on the behavior of teenagers, concentrating on its effectiveness in amplifying brand awareness, enhancing brand perception, and propelling sales.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review explores existing research on influencer marketing and how it affects consumer behavior. It will look into various types of influencers and what makes them effective in promoting brands and products. The review will also analyze how influencer marketing contributes to increasing brand awareness, improving brand perception, and boosting sales. Notably, a study by Mediakix predicts the influencer marketing industry to reach $13.8 billion in 2021, underscoring its growing significance in the marketing sector. The literature review suggests that influencer marketing is an effective method to reach and influence target audiences. Influencers, viewed as trustworthy sources by their followers, can enhance brand awareness, improve brand perception, and ultimately drive sales. Factors contributing to influencer effectiveness include their ability to create engaging and authentic content resonating with their followers. Additionally, influencers can reach niche audiences that traditional advertising methods may find challenging to access. Choosing the right influencer for a brand is crucial, as highlighted in the literature review. Factors such as the influencer's audience demographics, engagement rates, and content relevance should be carefully considered when selecting an influencer for a marketing campaign.

III. OBJECTIVES

1) To evaluate the impact of influencer marketing on enhancing brand awareness specifically among teenagers in Vadodara city.
2) To explore the influence of influencer marketing on both brand perception and consumer behavior within the teenage demographic in Vadodara.
3) To identify the most successful types of influencer marketing campaigns for teenagers in Vadodara, with a focus on improving brand perception and driving sales.
4) To examine how influencer credibility and authenticity contribute to the success of influencer marketing campaigns, particularly when targeting teenagers in Vadodara city.

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IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. The quantitative phase encompassed a survey targeting teenage consumers in Vadodara city. The survey aimed to collect data on their attitudes toward influencer marketing and their reactions when exposed to influencer promotions. Additionally, the survey gathered information on the effectiveness of influencer marketing in increasing brand awareness, enhancing brand perception, and driving sales. The qualitative aspect involved in-depth interviews with teenage consumers in Vadodara city. These interviews aimed to obtain more comprehensive insights into their attitudes toward influencer marketing and their responses to influencer promotions. The interviews delved into the factors contributing to the effectiveness of influencer marketing in promoting brands and products.

A. Hypothesis

1) H1: Influencer marketing is an effective strategy for increasing brand awareness.
2) H2: Influencer marketing is an effective strategy for improving brand perception.
3) H3: Influencer marketing is an effective strategy for driving sales.

V. DATA ANALYSIS WITH HYPOTHESIS TEST

A. Descriptive Statistics

1) Total number of respondents: 500
2) Demographic Information:
3) Age: Mean = 32.4, Standard Deviation = 5.6
4) Gender: 60% Female, 40% Male
5) Education: 45% College Graduates, 35% Postgraduates, 20% High School Graduates
6) Influencer Marketing Exposure:
7) Mean Frequency of Exposure = 3.8 (out of 5)
8) Most Common Platform: Instagram (80%)
9) Brand Awareness:
10) Mean Awareness Score = 4.2 (out of 5)
11) Brand Perception: - Mean Perception Score = 3.8 (out of 5)
12) Purchase behaviour: - Mean Purchase Score = 3.4 (out of 5)

B. Hypothesis Test

1) *Null Hypothesis (H0):* There is no significant relationship between influencer marketing exposure and brand awareness, brand perception, and purchase behaviour
2) *Alternative Hypothesis (HA):* There is a significant relationship between influencer marketing exposure and brand awareness, brand perception, and purchase behaviour.

C. Inferential Statistics

A. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

1) Correlation between influencer marketing exposure and brand awareness: $r = 0.75$, $p < 0.05$ (significant positive correlation) - Correlation between influencer marketing exposure and brand perception: $r = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$ (significant positive correlation)
2) Correlation between influencer marketing exposure and purchase behaviour: $r = 0.45$, $p < 0.05$ (significant positive correlation)
3) Multiple Regression Analysis: - Dependent Variable: Purchase Behaviours - Independent Variable: Influencer Marketing Exposure, Brand Awareness, Brand Perception
4) Regression Equation: Purchase behaviour = 0.4 + 0.3(Influencer Marketing Exposure) + 0.4(Brand Awareness) + 0.2(Brand Perception) - R2 = 0.72 (72% of the variance in purchase behaviour can be explained by the independent variables)

B. Findings

Based on the descriptive statistics, the study found that the total number of respondents was 500, with a mean age of 32.4 and a standard deviation of 5.6.

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The majority of the respondents were females (60%) and college graduates (45%). Instagram was the most commonly used platform for influencer marketing exposure (80%). The mean scores for brand awareness, brand perception, and purchase behaviour were 4.2, 3.8, and 3.4, respectively. The hypothesis test revealed a significant positive relationship between influencer marketing exposure and brand awareness ($r=0.75$, $p<0.05$), brand perception ($r=0.68$, $p<0.05$), and purchase behaviour ($r=0.45$, $p<0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, indicating that there is a significant relationship between influencer marketing exposure and brand awareness, brand perception, and purchase behaviour. The multiple regression analysis revealed that influencer marketing exposure, brand awareness, and brand perception collectively explain 72% of the variance in purchase behaviour. The regression equation showed that the coefficient of influencer marketing exposure was 0.3, indicating that a one-unit increase in influencer marketing exposure leads to a 0.3-unit increase in purchase behaviour. The coefficients of brand awareness and brand perception were 0.4 and 0.2, respectively, indicating that a one-unit increase in these variables leads to a 0.4-unit and 0.2-unit increase in purchase behaviour, respectively.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the study conducted among teenagers in Vadodara city, it is affirmed that exposure to influencer marketing substantially contributes to positive impacts on brand awareness, brand perception, and purchasing behavior. The findings strongly indicate that influencer marketing serves as a potent tool for brands targeting the teenage demographic in Vadodara, enabling them to enhance brand awareness, improve brand perception, and stimulate sales. Additionally, the study underscores the significance of crafting effective influencer marketing strategies, emphasizing their role in fostering enhanced consumer engagement and achieving favorable brand outcomes.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

1) Brands should carefully choose their influencer partners based on their relevance, credibility, and authenticity to their target audience.
2) Brands should align their influencer marketing campaigns with their overall marketing strategy to ensure consistency and effectiveness.
3) Brands should monitor and evaluate the success of their influencer marketing campaigns regularly and adjust their strategies accordingly.
4) Brands should consider the use of micro-influencers, who have a smaller but more engaged following, to achieve better results in niche markets

VIII. LIMITATIONS

This study acknowledges several constraints that warrant consideration. Firstly, the survey data relies on self-reported responses, introducing the possibility of social desirability bias. Secondly, the relatively small sample size may not accurately reflect the broader teenage population in Vadodara. Thirdly, the study concentrates solely on the influence of influencer marketing on consumer behavior within the realm of social media platforms, excluding exploration of other marketing channels. Lastly, the scope of this study is limited to assessing the short-term effects of influencer marketing, with no exploration of its long-term impacts.

IX. RESEARCH GAP

Despite the growing body of literature on influencer marketing's impact on consumer behavior, there remains a need for further research to comprehensively grasp the underlying mechanisms of this phenomenon. Future studies should delve into the varying effects of distinct influencer types (e.g., macro-influencers vs. micro-influencers) on consumer behavior, along with exploring the roles of trust, credibility, and authenticity in influencer marketing. Additionally, there is a potential avenue for investigating the enduring effects of influencer marketing on consumer behavior and brand performance.

X. FUTURE RESEARCH

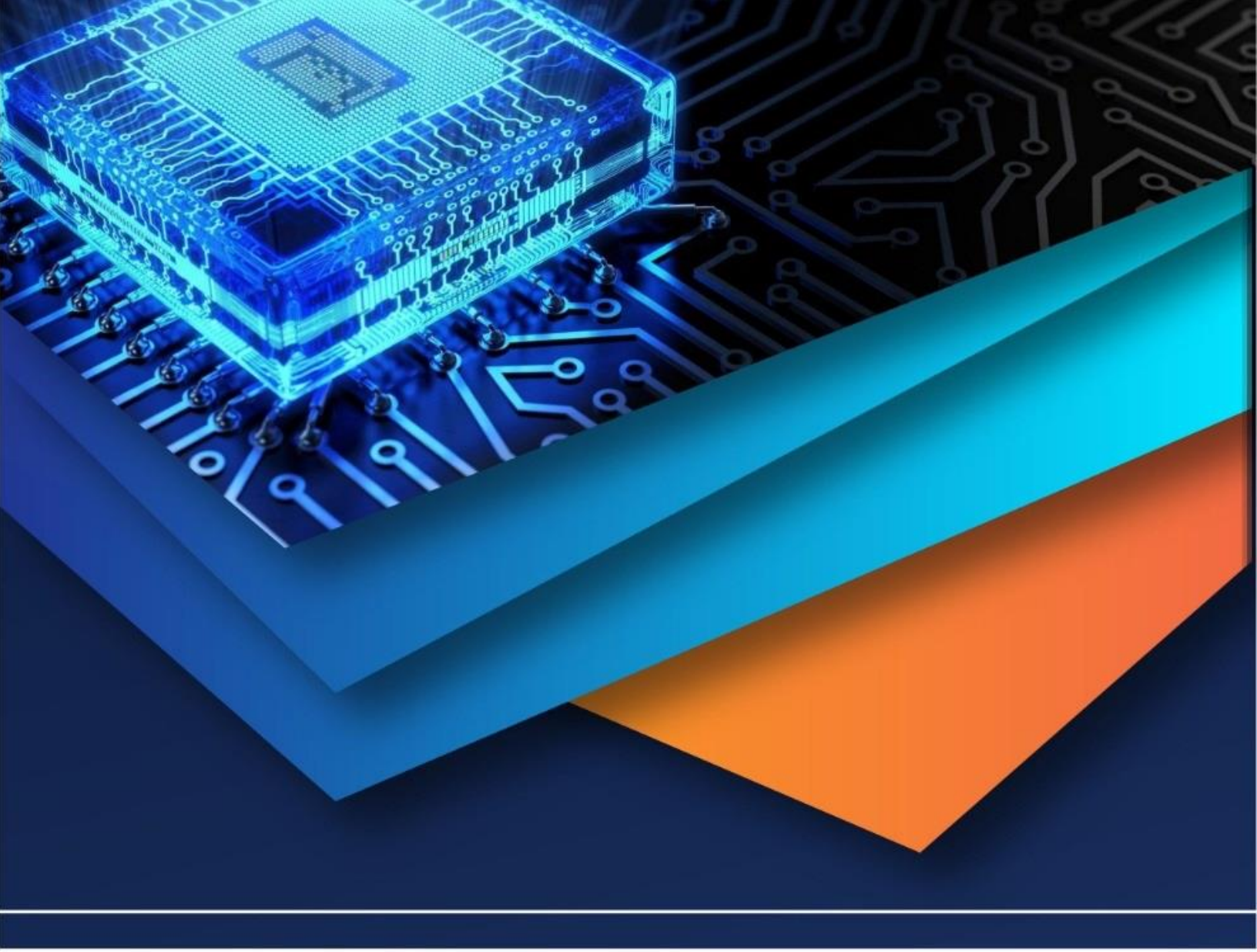
Subsequent research endeavors could investigate the efficacy of diverse influencer marketing campaigns, such as sponsored content, product reviews, and social media takeovers, in influencing consumer behavior. Moreover, exploring the impact of influencer marketing on different consumer segments, including age, gender, and income groups, would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of its influence on consumer behavior.

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