

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**

**Department of Management**



**Master's Thesis**

**The Impact of Instagram Influencers on Brand  
Reputation & Brand Loyalty**

**Bc. Gaurav Pandit**

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# CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Economics and Management

## DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Bc. Gaurav Ashok Pandit

Business Administration

Thesis title

**Impact of Instagram Influencers on Brand Reputation & Brand Loyalty**

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### **Objectives of thesis**

The aim of this thesis is to evaluate the impact of Instagram influencers on brand reputation and loyalty. Based on the evaluation the possible recommendations for the company according to positive audience outcomes will be stated.

### **Methodology**

The first part is devoted to the literature review. The review is aimed theory of marketing communication through social media, the role of influencers and brand reputation. The theoretical part of the thesis is based on a critical review of the information obtained by studying and comparing relevant resources.

The fundamental, empirical part focuses on the marketing communication of the selected company. The data for the empirical part is obtained through own questionnaire survey aimed at instagram users to evaluate possible brand reputation, brand loyalty, influencer authenticity, influencer desirability and influencer collaboration. Based on the survey results and their evaluation, recommendations will be provided.

**The proposed extent of the thesis**

60 – 80 pages

**Keywords**

Digital Marketing, Instagram Influencer, Brand Reputation, Brand Loyalty, Influencer Authenticity, Influencer Desirability, Influencer Collaboration

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**Recommended information sources**

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**The Diploma Thesis Supervisor**

Ing. Tereza Balcarová, Ph.D.

**Supervising department**

Department of Management and Marketing

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Electronic approval: 28. 11. 2023  
**doc. Ing. Ladislav Pilař, MBA, Ph.D.**  
Head of department

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Electronic approval: 30. 11. 2023  
**doc. Ing. Tomáš Šubrt, Ph.D.**  
Dean

Prague on 22. 03. 2024

## **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled “The Impact of Instagram Influencers on Brand Reputation & Brand Loyalty” by myself, and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that it does not break the copyrights of any person.

In Prague on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

## **Acknowledgment**

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# **The Impact of Instagram Influencers on Brand Reputation & Brand Loyalty.**

## **Abstract**

When it comes to Instagram Influencers, they have a significant Impact on driving customers to associate themselves with a brand because of the brand reputation built by the Influencers for It and Loyalty carries Itself along with it as a bonus. This study focuses on Instagram influencers and their impact on brand outcomes in marketing. It examines how influencers affect a brand's reputation by looking at their authenticity, appeal, and collaboration content. It also explores the connection between brand reputation and customer loyalty, and how online engagement influences these factors. The study used two theories, the stimulus organism response theory and the social learning theory where 323 people were surveyed to gather data. The results suggest that genuine influencer content is crucial for shaping brand perception and fostering brand loyalty. These theories helped analyze how Instagram influencers impact brand reputation and customer loyalty. The study highlights the importance of aligning influencer strategies with brand values and goals to make smart decisions in marketing. As social media platforms evolve, marketers need to adapt their strategies to effectively engage with audiences and utilize influencer collaborations. By understanding these dynamics, brands can strengthen customer relationships and enhance brand value.

**Keywords:** Digital Marketing, Instagram Influencer, Influencer Authenticity, Influencer Desirability, Influencer Collaboration Brand Reputation, Brand Loyalty.

# **Vliv Instagramových influencerů na pověst značky a značkovou loajalitu.**

## **Abstrakt**

Pokud jde o Instagramové influencery, mají významný vliv na to, že zákazníci se snaží spojit s určitou značkou díky pověsti, kterou pro ni influencer vytvořil, a loajalita se přináší jako bonus. Tato studie se zaměřuje na Instagramové influencery a jejich vliv na výsledky značky v marketingu. Zkoumá, jak influencerové ovlivňují pověst značky tím, že se zabývá jejich autenticitou, atraktivitou a obsahem spolupráce. Také zkoumá spojení mezi pověstí značky a loajalitou zákazníků a to, jak online angažovanost tyto faktory ovlivňuje. Ve studii byly použity dvě teorie, teorie stimulu organismu reakce a teorie sociálního učení, kde bylo dotazníkem dotazováno 323 lidí k získání dat. Výsledky naznačují, že autentický obsah influencerů je klíčový pro formování vnímání značky a podporu značkové loajality. Tyto teorie pomohly analyzovat, jak Instagramoví influenceři ovlivňují pověst značky a značkovou loajalitu. Studie zdůrazňuje důležitost zarovnání strategií influencerů s hodnotami a cíli značky pro přijímání inteligentních rozhodnutí v marketingu. S rozvojem sociálních médií musí marketéři přizpůsobit své strategie k efektivnímu zapojení s publikem a využití spolupráce s influencery. Porozumění těmto dynamikám umožní značkám posílit vztahy se zákazníky a zvýšit hodnotu značky.

**Klíčová slova:** Digitální marketing, Instagram influencer, autenticita influencerů, atraktivita influencerů, spolupráce influencerů, pověst značky, značková loajalita.

## Table of content

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>2. Objectives and Methodology</b> .....	<b>10</b>
2.1 Objectives .....	10
2.2 Methodology .....	11
<b>3. Literature Review</b> .....	<b>21</b>
3.1 Digital Marketing.....	21
3.2 Types of Influencers.....	23
3.3 Instagram Influencers .....	25
3.3.1 Influencer Authenticity .....	27
3.3.2 Influencer Desirability.....	30
3.3.3 Influencer Collaboration.....	33
3.4 Brand Marketing Management .....	36
3.4.1 Brand Reputation.....	39
3.4.2 Customer Behavior .....	40
3.4.3 Brand Loyalty.....	43
<b>4. Practical Part</b> .....	<b>48</b>
4.1 Demographic Analysis .....	48
4.2 Descriptive Analysis .....	50
4.3 Hypothesis Analysis.....	52
4.4 Mediation Analysis .....	60
4.5 Moderation Analysis.....	61
<b>5. Results and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>62</b>
<b>6. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>7. References</b> .....	<b>70</b>
<b>8. Appendix</b> .....	<b>79</b>

## List of Tables and figures

# 1. Introduction

Social media usage has become widespread, prompting businesses to shift marketing budgets towards establishing a strong presence on platforms like Facebook. This move aims to capitalize on digital opportunities and revolutionize brand-customer engagement (Ospina and Roser, 2023). With Facebook boasting a user base rivaling the populations of China and India, social media offers unparalleled reach and speed for customer engagement (Arrigo et al., 2021).

Companies recognize the importance of social media influencers, such as bloggers and Instagram personalities, as communication channels. These influencers, considered opinion leaders, can shape audience perceptions and boost aspects like brand awareness and reputation (Kurdi et al., 2022). However, caution is advised, as negative feedback on social media can harm a brand's image. Thus, careful planning and influencer selection are crucial (Ditt, 2020).

This Diploma thesis aims to explore how Instagram influencers affect brand outcomes. It looks at traits like credibility, desirability, and the content they create to see how they influence brands. While some aspects of Instagram influencers have been studied, like how many followers they have and their impact on purchases, there's still a lot we don't know. For example, we don't know much about how traits like authenticity, desirability, and content quality affect brands (Wiedmann and Mettenheim, 2020).

This thesis wants to fill in these gaps by studying personal traits of influencers, like how credible and desirable they seem, and how this affects brand reputation and loyalty. The quality of the content they make is also important for marketers, so this thesis will take a close look at that too. It will also explore how engagement with followers on Instagram affects brand outcomes.

By looking closely at these different aspects of Instagram influencers, this study hopes to understand how they impact brands. Specifically, it will examine how authenticity, desirability, and the content they create affect brand reputation, as well as how brand reputation and loyalty are connected.

## **2. Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives**

This thesis aims to deepen understanding of the relationship between Instagram influencers, brand reputation, and brand loyalty. The objectives below provide a clear roadmap for the thesis, focusing on analyzing the key dimensions of Instagram influencers and their effects on brand reputation and loyalty, while also considering the mediating and moderating factors that may influence these relationships.

- The aim is to analyze the impact of influencer authenticity, desirability, and collaboration content on the associated brand's reputation, focusing on identifying which dimension matters the most in driving positive audience outcomes on Instagram.
- To Investigate the correlation between the associated brand's reputation and brand loyalty, aiming to understand the relationship between these two variables and how they influence consumer behavior and decision-making processes.
- Explore the mediating effect of the associated brand's reputation on the relationship between the three influencer dimensions (authenticity, desirability, collaboration content) and brand loyalty, aiming to uncover the mechanisms through which brand reputation influences the strength of the association between influencer dimensions and brand loyalty.
- Examine the moderating effect of online engagement on the relationship between the three influencer dimensions and the associated brand's reputation, aiming to understand how online engagement levels influence the impact of influencer characteristics on brand perception and consumer loyalty.

## 2.2 Methodology

To conduct the research based on descriptive research design, this study adopts a quantitative research methodology. To collect the data through convenience sampling, self-administered survey questionnaire will be created and distributed online. The questionnaire will be divided into two parts, first with demographic related questions and second with Likert scale-based questions related to brand reputation, brand loyalty, influencer authenticity, influencer desirability and influencer collaboration, The questionnaire form can be seen in the Appendix 1 – Questionnaire, the purpose of the questions is as under:

**Demographic Analysis:** It is used to conduct an in-depth analysis of the demographic characteristics of the sample population comprising social media users who follow Instagram influencers, aiming to gain insights into the demographic composition (e.g., age, gender, geographic location) of the target audience and its potential influence on perceptions regarding influencer authenticity, desirability, collaboration content, brand reputation, and brand loyalty.

**Likert Scale-Based Questions:** It is used to evaluate the perceptions and attitudes of social media users towards Instagram influencers and their correlation with brand reputation and brand loyalty, aiming to gauge the levels of agreement or disagreement among respondents concerning influencer authenticity, desirability, collaboration content, brand reputation, and brand loyalty using Likert scale-based questions.

**Hypotheses Testing:** It is used to empirically examine the proposed hypotheses concerning the relationships between Instagram influencers, brand reputation, and brand loyalty, aiming to assess the statistical significance and strength of the relationships hypothesized between influencer authenticity, desirability, collaboration content, brand reputation, and brand loyalty.

**Mediation and Moderation Analysis:** It is used to explore the potential mediating role of brand reputation and the moderating role of online engagement in the relationship between Instagram influencers and brand loyalty, aiming to investigate whether brand reputation mediates the relationship between influencer characteristics (authenticity, desirability, collaboration content) and brand loyalty, and whether online engagement moderates these relationships.

The sample for the study will be social media users who follow Instagram influencers. The survey will distribute over a period of one month and total 323 responses are considered for the study. The data collected were analysed using SPSS software to conduct descriptive analysis, frequency analysis and correlation analysis. This research adds to our understanding of Instagram influencers, a newer concept in today's world. We're looking at how appealing influencers are beyond just how likely people are to buy something or what they think of a product.

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) is a comprehensive statistical analysis software package widely used by researchers and analysts to perform various data analysis tasks. It offers a user-friendly interface and a wide range of statistical procedures for analysing and interpreting data from different research fields. SPSS allows users to input data, manipulate variables, conduct descriptive statistics, perform inferential statistics (such as t-tests, ANOVA, regression analysis, and factor analysis), and create visualizations such as charts and graphs to aid in data interpretation. SPSS serves as a modelling tool employed in the analysis of mediation and moderation, as well as their integration. Mediation analysis is employed to address queries regarding the how, whereas moderation analysis is geared towards addressing questions of when. The objective of mediation analysis is to explore the degree to which a causal variable X impacts the outcome of variable Y through the intermediary of a mediator variable. In the present investigation, the author wanted to understand to what extent Instagram influencer authenticity influences brand loyalty by way of the connected brand reputation.

As to fill in the gap in research about how an influencer's appeal affects what happens with their audience after they collaborate with a brand. The author is using numbers and data to see how different aspects of influencers affect what people do. Also, exploring how online interaction might change the connection between influencers and how people see a brand.

The testing methods used consecutively are: To commence, a detailed presentation of the sample data will unfold, encompassing both the characteristics of the sample and a normality test. Subsequently, an exploration into inferential data analysis will unfold, encompassing the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), reliability assessment, Pearson's correlation, evaluations of collinearity, linear and multiple regression analysis, as well as mediation and moderation assessments.

**1)The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO):** This measure is a statistical technique used to assess the sampling adequacy for factor analysis. The formula for calculating the KMO statistic is as follows:

$$KMO = \frac{\sum_i \sum_j r_{ij}^2}{\sum_i \sum_j r_{ij}^2 + \sum_i \sum_j r_{ij}^2 - \sum_i \sum_j r_{ij}^2}$$

where:

R = [rij] is the correlation matrix,

U = [uij] is the partial covariance matrix,

Σ = summation notation (“add up”).

This test is not usually calculated by hand, because of the complexity. Kaiser, H. F. (1974).

**2)Bartlett's Test:** It determines if the correlation matrix is significantly different from the identity matrix, indicating that the variables are suitable for structure detection.

$$\chi^2 = -\log(|R|) \times (N - 1 - \frac{2p+5}{6})$$

$\chi^2$  is the test statistic

|R| is the determinant of the correlation matrix.

N is the sample size.

p is the number of variables.

Both tests are often used together to assess whether data are suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett, M. S. (1954)

In the thesis, two common statistical tests were employed to assess the normality of the data: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test and the Shapiro-Wilk (SW) test.

**3) Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test:** This test evaluates whether a sample comes from a specific distribution, typically a normal distribution. It calculates the maximum difference between the observed cumulative distribution function (CDF) of the sample and the theoretical CDF of the expected distribution. The null hypothesis of the KS test is that the sample comes from the specified distribution. A small p-value (less than the chosen significance level, often 0.05) indicates that the sample distribution significantly differs from the expected distribution, suggesting non-normality.

The examination of normality involved the application of statistical tests such as the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test, with the significance level determined by Lilliefors (LF), and the Shapiro-Wilk (SW) test. The formula for the KS test statistic is:

$$D = \max |F_n(x) - F(x)|$$

Where:

D is the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test statistic.

$F_n(x)$  is the empirical cumulative distribution function.

$F(x)$  is the theoretical cumulative distribution function.

In the case of normally distributed data, both the KS and SW tests should yield insignificant results, i.e., a P value greater than 0.05. Conversely, if the P value is less than 0.05, it indicates a failure of the normality test, implying that the data does not conform to a normal distribution.

**4) Shapiro-Wilk (SW) test:** Similar to the KS test, the Shapiro-Wilk test assesses the normality of a sample. It evaluates the null hypothesis that the data comes from a normally distributed population. The test statistic is based on the correlation between the data and the corresponding values expected under normality. Like the KS test, a p-value less than the chosen significance level indicates that the sample deviates significantly from normality. The formula stands as under: -

$$W = \frac{(\sum_{i=1}^n a_i x_{(i)})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2}$$

Where

$W$  is the Shapiro-Wilk test statistic,

$x_{(i)}$  represents the ordered sample values,

$a_i$  are constants obtained from the covariance matrix of the order statistics of a normal sample,

$\bar{x}$  is the sample mean, and

$n$  is the sample size.

Both tests are widely used in statistical analysis to determine if the assumption of normality is met, which is often a prerequisite for applying parametric statistical methods. If the data is not normally distributed, alternative non-parametric tests may be considered.

**5) The Pearson correlation test** assesses the strength and direction of the association between two or more variables. The correlation coefficient, which ranges from -1 to +1, indicates the magnitude of the relationship. A higher absolute value of the coefficient suggests a more robust connection between the variables. Additionally, the sign of the coefficient denotes the direction of the relationship; a positive coefficient indicates that both variables increase and decrease simultaneously, while a negative coefficient implies that an increase in one variable corresponds to a decrease in the other.

The formula to calculate the Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables X and Y is:

$$r = \frac{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})(Y_i - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})^2} \times \sqrt{\sum(Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

Where

$X_i$  and  $Y_i$  are individual data points for variables  $X$  and  $Y$ , respectively.

$\bar{X}$  and  $\bar{Y}$  are the means of variables  $X$  and  $Y$ , respectively.

**6) Regression testing** encompasses two distinct types: linear regression and multiple regression. In the case of linear regression, the test forecasts an outcome variable based on a single predictor variable, whereas the multiple regression test predicts an outcome by

considering multiple predictor variables simultaneously. Consequently, both linear and multiple regression tests play a crucial role in either affirming or refuting proposed hypotheses that elucidate the connections among variables.

**Linear Regression:** Linear regression is used when there is a linear relationship between a dependent variable Y and one independent variable X. The formula for simple linear regression is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \epsilon$$

Where

where  $\beta_0$  is a constant

$\beta_1$  is the regression coefficient,

x is the independent variable,

$\hat{y}$  is known as the predicted value of the dependent variable.

e = Error in difference

**Multiple regression** is used when there is a linear relationship between a dependent variable Y and two or more independent variables  $X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n$ . The formula for multiple regression is: Moreover, these tests analyse the significance of the relationship between two variables and determine whether the correlation is positive or negative.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \epsilon$$

Y= the dependent variable of the regression

$\beta_1$ = slope of the regression

$X_1$ =first independent variable of the regression

$X_2$ =second independent variable of the regression

$X_3$ =third independent variable of the regression

$\beta_0$ = constant

e = Error in difference

**7) Formulation of Hypothesis:** A hypothesis is a tentative statement or proposition that suggests a possible explanation for a phenomenon or a relationship between variables. It is

formulated based on existing knowledge, observations, or theories and serves as a starting point for scientific investigation. Hypotheses are testable and falsifiable, meaning they can be empirically tested and either supported or refuted through data analysis. As our research is concerned, we have divided the testing into two parts as per the research questions which tend to answer the research problems,

The hypotheses shall be formulated in two groups as under:

### **Group 1: Influence of Instagram Influencers on Brand Reputation**

H1: Authenticity Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between Instagram influencer authenticity and associated brand reputation.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Instagram influencer authenticity is significantly related to associated brand reputation.

H2: Desirability Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between Instagram influencer desirability and associated brand reputation.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Instagram influencer desirability is significantly related to associated brand reputation.

H3: Collaboration Content Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between Instagram influencer collaboration content and associated brand reputation.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Instagram influencer collaboration content is significantly related to associated brand reputation.

### **Group 2: Relationship Between Brand Reputation and Brand Loyalty, Mediation, and Moderation**

H4: Brand Reputation and Brand Loyalty Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between associated brand reputation and brand loyalty.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Associated brand reputation is significantly related to brand loyalty.

#### H5: Mediation Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0): Brand reputation does not mediate the relationship between Instagram influencer authenticity, desirability, collaboration content, and brand loyalty.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Brand reputation mediates the relationship between Instagram influencer authenticity, desirability, collaboration content, and brand loyalty.

#### H6: Moderation Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0): Online engagement factor does not moderate the relationship between Instagram influencer authenticity, desirability, collaboration content, and brand reputation.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Online engagement factor moderates the relationship between Instagram influencer authenticity, desirability, collaboration content, and brand reputation.

These formulated hypotheses serve as the basis for testing the relationships between Instagram influencers and brand reputation, as well as the subsequent effects on brand loyalty, mediation, and moderation.

Once the data is collected, It will be analyzed to determine whether the hypotheses are supported by the evidence. This often involves statistical tests or other analytical techniques to assess the relationship between variables and determine the probability that the result occurred by chance. Inferential statistics employs various methodologies to enable the extrapolation of findings about a population based on the collected sample. Nevertheless, it's essential to acknowledge that the sample cannot perfectly mirror the population due to an inherent sampling error, preventing it from achieving 100% accuracy. This section encompasses diverse statistical tests, such as exploratory factor analysis (EFA), Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test, reliability test, correlation test, collinearity test, linear regression, as well as multiple regression, mediation, and moderation tests.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) helps us understand hidden or latent variables that can't be measured directly. Instead, we measure them through related aspects or underlying variables that influence them. EFA is all about figuring out how variables are connected, identifying those underlying factors, and seeing how they relate to each other.

Conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) involves the following steps. First, gather data containing different variables you think might be related and then ensure the data meets the basic requirements for factor analysis, like being linear and not having too much overlap between variables. Then, extract factors from the data using methods like Principal Component Analysis (PCA). After extraction, rotate the factors to make them easier to understand. Look at which variables are strongly linked to each factor to understand what each one represents. Decide how many factors to keep based on certain criteria. Additionally, EFA helps simplify complex data by grouping together related variables and refining the number of questions we need to ask to get accurate information.

**Significance:** Several studies have focused on the relationship between Instagram Influencers and Brand reputation. Consequently, the significance of this study cannot be overstated. Similar research is performed in other countries, where technology is the driving force. It is visible that getting information from different parts of the world takes more work if the study wants to get a clearer picture. This study prominently focuses on the followers from authors Instagram, which can clarify the perspective of People towards Instagram Influencers and Brand Reputation in the current scenario.

**Limitations:** The Thesis has only focused on a qualitative data collection approach and some experiment-based qualitative studies could have worked better. The data collected only from one particular person makes it possible that other people might have some different views. The study has considered less sample size, and more People can be added here.

### **3. Literature Review**

Among social media platforms, Instagram stands out as a dominant force in influencer marketing, where content creators hold significant sway over consumer perceptions and behaviors. Consequently, understanding the influence of Instagram influencers on brand reputation and loyalty has become a crucial area of inquiry for marketers and researchers. This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of existing research on the impact of Instagram influencers on consumer behavior and brand outcomes.

By synthesizing prior findings, this review seeks to identify key factors and mechanisms through which Instagram influencers shape brand perceptions, influence purchase decisions, and foster consumer loyalty. Furthermore, it will explore the mediating role of brand reputation in the relationship between Instagram influencers and consumer behavior, as well as the moderating effects of factors like online engagement. By addressing these research gaps, this literature review aims to contribute novel insights to the field of influencer marketing and offer practical implications for brands looking to harness the potential of Instagram influencers in their marketing strategies.

#### **3.1 Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing has become an integral component of contemporary marketing strategies, offering businesses innovative ways to reach and engage with their target audiences through digital channels. In this literature review, we explore the evolution, importance, key strategies, challenges, and opportunities of digital marketing.

Digital marketing encompasses a broad range of online tactics and strategies aimed at promoting products, services, or brands through digital channels such as websites, search engines, social media, email, and mobile apps (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Digital marketing has evolved significantly over the years, adapting to changes in technology and consumer behavior. From its early beginnings with email marketing and banner ads to more sophisticated strategies like search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, and content marketing, digital marketing has transformed the way businesses connect with their audiences (Kapoor and Vij, 2017).

In today's digital age, digital marketing is essential for businesses seeking to establish a strong online presence, engage with their target audiences, and drive business growth. With the majority of consumers turning to digital channels to research products, make purchasing decisions, and interact with brands, businesses must embrace digital marketing to remain competitive in the market (Chaffey and Smith, 2017).

Several key digital marketing strategies have emerged as effective tools for businesses to reach and engage with their audiences. Search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, and content marketing are among the most prominent strategies employed by businesses to drive brand awareness, customer engagement, and loyalty (Kumar and Pansari, 2016).

While digital marketing offers numerous opportunities for businesses to connect with their audiences and drive growth, it also presents challenges. The rapidly evolving digital landscape requires businesses to stay abreast of new technologies, trends, and consumer behaviors to remain competitive (Strauss and Frost, 2016). Moreover, concerns about data privacy and security have prompted regulatory changes, impacting how businesses collect, store, and use customer data (Chaffey and Smith, 2017).

In today's digitally connected world, the landscape of marketing has experienced a significant transformation. Traditional advertising methods have given way to more dynamic and personalized approaches, with influencer marketing emerging as a prominent strategy within the realm of digital marketing. Influencer marketing leverages the power of individuals who have established credibility, expertise, and a loyal following in specific niches to promote products, services, or brands. (Mamo et al., 2022)

The proliferation of websites and online content has made search engine optimization (SEO) and content marketing essential for businesses to drive organic traffic and foster brand credibility (Pencarelli, 2020). Influencer marketing has also gained prominence, with influencers leveraging their online presence to impact consumer purchasing decisions (Aw and Agnihotri, 2023).

Factors contributing to the rise of influencer marketing include consumer fatigue with traditional advertising and the democratization of content creation on social media platforms (Milosheska, 2019). Influencer marketing campaigns encompass a variety of strategies, including product placements and sponsored posts, with brands selecting influencers based on alignment with their identity and target audience preferences (Glenister, 2021).

Despite its opportunities, influencer marketing faces challenges such as authenticity concerns and measurement issues (Zhou et al., 2021). Authenticity is crucial in influencer marketing, with genuine connections and relatable content driving trust and credibility (Fromm and Read, 2018). Reliability, expertise, and engagement also play significant roles in enhancing an influencer's credibility and influence (Cartwright et al., 2022; Hudders et al., 2021; Ngai et al., 2020).

### **3.2 Types of Influencers**

Furthermore, diversity and relevance are vital considerations in influencer selection to ensure alignment with the target audience (Li, 2022). By understanding these factors and leveraging the unique qualities of influencers, brands can create effective and authentic influencer marketing campaigns to engage with their audience and drive business growth.

In recent years, influencer marketing has become a prominent strategy in digital marketing, particularly on platforms like Instagram, known for its visually oriented content (Wolf and Archer, 2018). Instagram's emphasis on visual storytelling and its vast user base of over a billion active users have contributed to the platform's popularity among influencers and brands alike (Yeung and Ulrich, 2019). The platform's features like Stories, Reel, and shoppable posts have further facilitated the growth of influencer marketing campaigns (Yesiloglu and Costello, 2020).

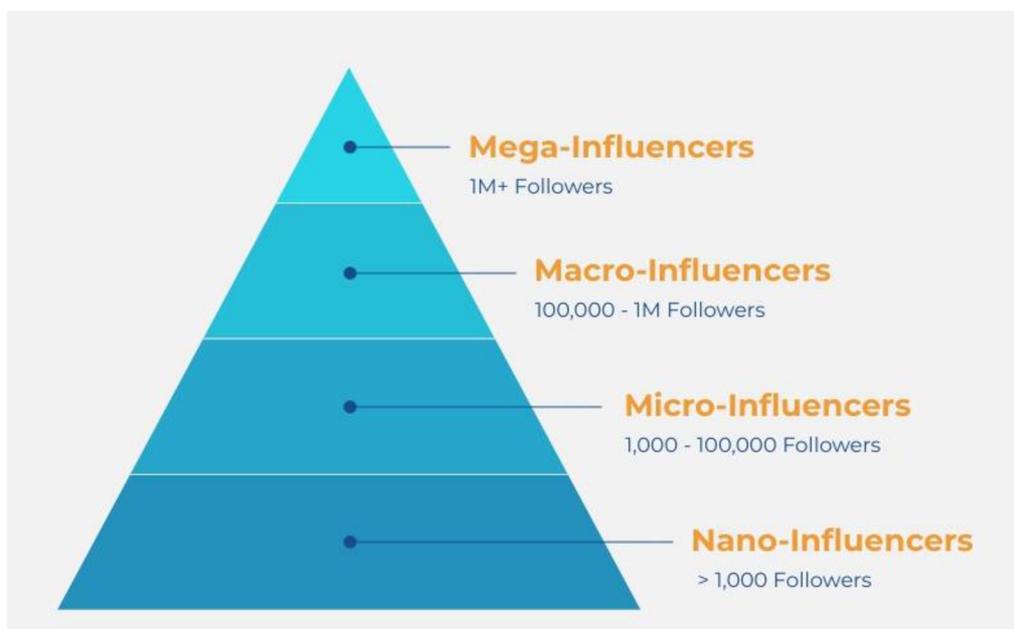
The success of influencer marketing on Instagram can be attributed to the concept of social proof, where influencers' endorsements foster trust and credibility among their followers, leading to increased brand credibility and purchase intent (Bhatia et al., 2022). However, successful campaigns require careful planning and alignment between influencers and brands, emphasizing authenticity, transparency, and relevance (Akyon and Kalfaoglu, 2019).

Influencers play a crucial role in reaching specific niche audiences and creating engaging content that resonates with their followers (Ye et al., 2021). While influencer marketing offers significant benefits, brands must also navigate challenges such as finding the right influencers, measuring ROI, ensuring authenticity, and dealing with loss of control (Goodman, 2019). Despite these challenges, successful influencer marketing campaigns can yield significant returns for brands in terms of authenticity, targeted reach, and engaging content (Wang and Chan, 2022).

Mega influencers are individuals who have attained substantial fame and influence, often surpassing traditional celebrities, across various domains like entertainment, sports, or entrepreneurship.

With extensive followings ranging from millions to tens of millions on multiple platforms, they exert significant sway over their audience and engage in collaborations with brands for endorsement deals and sponsored content (Business Insider,2021). On the other hand, macro-influencers, characterized by significant followings ranging from tens of thousands to millions, are recognized as experts or authorities in specific niches. They partner with brands to promote products or services, leveraging their expertise and reach (Influencer Marketing Hub,2022). Micro-influencers, with smaller yet highly engaged followings typically between 1,000 to 100,000 followers, are renowned for their authenticity and niche expertise. Brands often collaborate with micro-influencers for targeted and cost-effective marketing campaigns. Lastly, nano-influencers, with small yet deeply loyal followings comprised of friends, family, and local community members, play a vital role in grassroots marketing and word-of-mouth promotion. They are valued for their authenticity and relatability, often collaborating with brands on localized campaigns and product launches. The types can be seen in figure 1 below

Figure:1 (Types of Influencers)



Source: Social Native.com (2022)

### 3.3 Instagram Influencers

Instagram has become a powerhouse for influencer marketing, boasting a massive user base of over 1 billion monthly active users (Pirzado et al., 2022). Engagement metrics such as likes, comments, and follower count play a crucial role in assessing the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns (Habibi and Salim, 2021). Additionally, features like sharing posts to stories and feeds amplify the reach of content, making Instagram an ideal platform for influencer collaborations (Zulli, 2018).

Instagram Stories and direct messaging offer further avenues for engagement, providing insights into user interactions and content preferences (Chiu and Yuan, 2021). Monitoring hashtag usage and video views can also gauge the reach and popularity of campaigns, while the engagement rate offers a comprehensive measure of content resonance (Alfonzo, 2019).

In the realm of digital marketing, Instagram's visual-centric approach has revolutionized influencer marketing, offering new opportunities for engagement and connection (Villaespesa and Wowkowych, 2022). With its extensive reach and diverse engagement metrics, Instagram continues to shape the landscape of influencer marketing, driving brand awareness and fostering meaningful connections with audiences.

Instagram's visual-centric approach resonates deeply with human communication and perception, making it a potent platform for influencer marketing (Fuhler, 2023). Influencers leverage Instagram's diverse features, such as photos, videos, stories, and Reels, to create authentic and relatable content that fosters trust and connection with their followers (Leaver et al., 2020).

The impact of Instagram's visual nature on influencer marketing is far-reaching. Visual content transcends linguistic barriers, making it universally appealing and ideal for brands seeking a global audience (Bojić, 2022). Additionally, Instagram's aesthetic environment encourages influencers to maintain a consistent visual style, creating recognizable personal brands that attract followers and align with brands (Bojić, 2022).

Instagram's immersive visual formats enable influencers to tell compelling stories about products or experiences, creating emotional connections and driving desire among followers (Saknussemm, 2022). Instagram Stories offer a fleeting yet impactful channel for influencers and brands to share authentic, behind-the-scenes content that fosters direct and personal connections with audiences (Zuev and Bratchford, 2021).

Instagram posts serve as a lasting representation of influencer-brand partnerships, seamlessly integrating brand messaging into influencers' feeds (Sadavrati, 2020). Live videos provide a real-time, interactive platform for influencers and brands to engage with their audience, adding a human touch and sense of urgency to collaborations (Zhang et al., 2023).

These Instagram features form a powerful trio of channels through which influencer-brand collaborations thrive, accommodating diverse engagement needs and shaping the trajectory of influencer marketing (Hurd, 2019). As the digital landscape continues to evolve, Instagram remains at the forefront of influencer marketing, forging authentic connections with audiences worldwide.

Nike's #JustDoIt slogan resonates with influencers across various niches, inspiring audiences to pursue an active lifestyle (Fischer, 2020). Starbucks leverages influencer partnerships to promote new products, encouraging user-generated content with the #StarbucksLovers hashtag (Bhandari and Bimo, 2022). GoPro collaborates with adventure enthusiasts to showcase their action cameras' capabilities, relying on user-generated content for authenticity (Cotter, 2019).

Adidas invites influencers to take over their Instagram account, adding authenticity and engaging their audience (Lis, B., and Fischer, 2020). Amazon works with lifestyle influencers to curate product lists, driving engagement and purchases with the #AmazonFinds hashtag (Bhandari and Bimo, 2022). BMW partners with luxury lifestyle influencers to showcase their vehicles, appealing to aspirational desires (Cotter, 2019).

H&M's #HMxME campaign encourages user-generated content, fostering a sense of community and increasing engagement (Lis, B., and Fischer, 2020). Airbnb collaborates with travel influencers to showcase unique accommodations, leveraging aspirational content for bookings (Bhandari and Bimo, 2022). Coca-Cola's "Share a Coke" campaign utilizes personalized influencer marketing to drive social media visibility (Cotter, 2019).

Instagram's algorithm prioritizes engagement, recency, relationship, and usage factors to curate users' feeds (Fischer, 2020). This underscores the importance of influencers and brands in creating captivating content to maintain relevance and visibility on the platform (Bhandari and Bimo, 2022). As influencer marketing continues to evolve, understanding Instagram's algorithm becomes increasingly crucial for maximizing reach and engagement (Cotter, 2019).

### **3.3.1 Influencer Authenticity**

In today's digital realm, authenticity stands as a cornerstone in influencer marketing, significantly influencing the efficacy and trustworthiness of promotional strategies (Chopra et al., 2021). Influencer authenticity pertains to the genuine and transparent representation of influencers' identities, values, and content, crucial for forging meaningful connections with their audience (Veirman et al., 2019).

Amidst the deluge of sponsored content and advertisements online, consumers increasingly seek authenticity in the influencers they follow. Authentic influencers who candidly share their experiences and opinions are perceived as more credible and trustworthy (Veirman et al., 2019). This authenticity fosters a sense of connection with their audience, driving engagement and influencing purchasing decisions (Kim et al., 2021).

Sustaining influence hinges on maintaining authenticity over time. Authentic influencers, through consistent adherence to their values and genuine interactions, cultivate a loyal fan base (Kim et al., 2021). Transparency in disclosing paid partnerships and sponsored content is paramount for ethical influencer marketing, reinforcing trust and honesty in influencer-brand relationships (Kim et al., 2021).

In navigating the dynamic digital landscape, authentic influencers possess a competitive edge, as they can adapt to emerging trends while retaining their genuine engagement with followers (Brooks et al., 2021). Collaborating with authentic influencers positively impacts brand perception, as consumers are more likely to associate a brand with positive qualities when endorsed by influencers aligned with their values (Brooks et al., 2021).

However, integrating sponsored content poses challenges for influencers, potentially straining their authenticity (Wellman et al., 2020). Despite these hurdles, authenticity remains paramount in influencer marketing, serving as the foundation for establishing enduring relationships between influencers, brands, and consumers.

Navigating the intricacies of influencer-brand partnerships presents numerous challenges, chief among them being the alignment of values and ethos between the sponsoring brand and the influencer's personal brand. Achieving this balance requires a delicate integration of the product or service while preserving the influencer's unique voice and authenticity (Rathore, 2019). Transparency emerges as a crucial element in influencer-brand collaborations,

necessitating clear disclosure of partnerships to avoid any sense of deception among audiences (Hund, 2023).

Guidelines and creative directions provided by sponsors can sometimes impede the influencer's creative expression, potentially compromising the authenticity of their content (Adra, 2021). Maintaining the audience's trust amidst sponsored posts requires consistent communication and adherence to a coherent narrative (Adra, 2021). The frequency of sponsored content also plays a pivotal role in preserving authenticity, with an excessive number of endorsements diluting the genuineness of an influencer's content (Hund, 2023).

Audiences value genuine recommendations from influencers, emphasizing the importance of endorsements that align with the influencer's preferences and experiences (Adra, 2021). Partnering with brands that share their values and beliefs fosters a more authentic connection, mitigating any perception of transactional endorsements (Leung et al., 2022). Humanizing brand promotions through personal anecdotes and experiences adds depth and relatability to endorsements, enhancing authenticity (Macarthy, 2021).

Influencers should strive to maintain their unique voice and content style even when promoting brands, ensuring consistency in tone, language, and presentation (Macarthy, 2021). Demonstrating practical usage scenarios and providing balanced reviews help audiences see the genuine value and relevance of endorsed products or services (Driel & Dumitrica, 2021). Responding to audience feedback and avoiding overload of promotional content are essential strategies to prevent audience fatigue and scepticism (Zhou, 2020).

Sharing educational content about the brand and involving the audience in interactive activities such as challenges or giveaways enriches the promotion, making it more engaging and informative (Ahmad et al., 2018). Establishing long-term partnerships with brands allows influencers to seamlessly integrate endorsements into their content, maintaining relevance and credibility within their niche (George and Leidner, 2019).

Authenticity in influencer endorsements refers to the alignment between the influencer's personal values, beliefs, and lifestyle with the brand they are endorsing. Authentic influencers are perceived as genuine and credible, often leveraging their personal experiences and stories to connect with their followers. Consumers tend to view authentic influencers as more relatable and trustworthy, establishing a sense of rapport that transcends the transactional nature of the endorsement. (Janssen et al., 2022)

Inauthentic influencer endorsements, on the other hand, stem from a lack of congruence between the influencer's image and the endorsed brand.

This incongruence can arise from perceived monetary motivations or a disconnection between the influencer's content and the product/service being promoted. Consumers are quick to detect such inconsistencies, resulting in diminished trust and scepticism. Inauthentic endorsements are often seen as opportunistic and may lead to negative outcomes, including decreased follower engagement and tarnished brand reputation. (Miya, 2021)

Consumer perceptions of authenticity in influencer endorsements profoundly impact the effectiveness of marketing strategies. Authentic endorsements create genuine connections, enhancing brand credibility and driving positive purchase behavior. Conversely, inauthentic endorsements can breach trust, leading to disillusionment among followers and tarnishing the brand's reputation (Lee and Eastin, 2021).

In today's dynamic marketing landscape, authenticity plays a pivotal role in building and maintaining brand trust and customer loyalty, particularly in influencer marketing. Authenticity involves the genuine, honest portrayal of both the influencer and the brand's values, products, and messages (Kramer, 2021).

Authenticity is crucial for building brand trust in influencer marketing. When influencers endorse products they genuinely believe in, it resonates with their followers, enhancing the credibility of the promotional content. This sincerity fosters brand trust, as consumers perceive the endorsement as a sincere recommendation rather than a mere advertisement (Fromm and Read, 2018).

Furthermore, authenticity fosters a deeper emotional connection between influencers and their followers, leading to long-term loyalty. Consistent genuine interactions and honest conversations about products establish a sense of camaraderie and reliability, cultivating a loyal community that feels genuinely valued (Collins and Saliba, 2020).

Influencer authenticity fuels informed purchasing decisions, leading to positive experiences that deepen trust and solidify loyalty. As consumers advocate for brands they trust, authenticity becomes a powerful force in influencer marketing, fostering enduring connections and emotional resonance (Ooi et al., 2023).

In summary, authenticity in influencer marketing transcends transactional relationships, fostering trust and loyalty that endure beyond the digital realm. Brands prioritizing authenticity

in their influencer collaborations are well-positioned to build lasting connections with consumers, driving engagement and advocacy (Brooks, 2021).

### **3.3.2 Influencer Desirability**

Influencer desirability refers to the perceived attractiveness and appeal of individuals who wield influence over a specific audience within the digital realm. These individuals, commonly known as influencers, possess the ability to shape opinions, guide consumer decisions, and generate engagement through their content and online presence. The concept extends beyond mere follower counts and delves into the reliability, authenticity, expertise, and aspirational qualities that influencers bring to audience interactions. (Ki and Kim, 2019)

The desirability of an influencer is influenced by a myriad of factors that collectively contribute to their perceived value. Authenticity is a key factor, as audiences seek genuine and relatable personalities who resonate with their values. Expertise and niche knowledge are also paramount, as influencers who showcase deep understanding and mastery of specific topics or industries tend to be more desirable to audiences seeking reliable information. Aesthetic appeal, visual content quality, and storytelling capabilities further enhance an influencer's allure. (Creevey et al., 2022)

Influencers play a significant role in consumer behavior, with their recommendations and lifestyle inspiration influencing purchasing decisions and brand preferences. The emotional connection established between influencers and followers fosters a sense of identification and aspiration (Reinikainen et al., 2021).

However, challenges such as influencer fraud and authenticity concerns exist in the evolving landscape of influencer marketing. Future research could explore the psychological mechanisms behind influencer desirability and the ethical considerations surrounding influencer-brand partnerships (Campbell et al., 2021).

Reliability is key for influencers to maintain their desirability. Consistently delivering trustworthy content, demonstrating expertise in their niche, and maintaining transparency about partnerships contribute to their reliability and credibility (Zhang and Choi, 2022).

Attractiveness extends beyond physical appearance to include qualities that draw followers in, such as engaging content, a relatable personality, and aesthetically pleasing visuals (Ki et al., 2020).

Nike's collaboration with basketball superstar LeBron James for its "Equality" campaign serves as a prime example of the significant impact influencer desirability can have on brand engagement and consumer behavior. Launched in 2017, the campaign aimed to promote social justice and equality, aligning with James' outspoken advocacy for these causes. James, known not only for his prowess on the basketball court but also for his active involvement in social issues, brought authenticity and credibility to Nike's message of equality.

According to Reinikainen et al. (2021), influencer desirability plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior, with consumers often turning to influencers for recommendations, product reviews, and lifestyle inspiration due to their perceived authenticity and expertise. James' genuine commitment to social justice and equality resonated strongly with his audience, enhancing his desirability as an influencer. As a result, his endorsement of Nike's "Equality" campaign was viewed as more than just a promotional tactic but as a sincere expression of his values, which in turn positively influenced consumer perceptions of the brand.

Glossier, a cosmetic brand known for its emphasis on natural beauty and simplicity, also leveraged influencer desirability in its marketing strategy. Instead of partnering with traditional celebrities, Glossier opted to collaborate with relatable micro-influencers who were known for their genuine reviews and relatable content. By doing so, Glossier aimed to foster a sense of authenticity and approachability, which resonated strongly with its target audience.

The effectiveness of Glossier's approach in increasing brand engagement through influencer marketing is highlighted by Campbell et al. (2021), who suggest that future research could delve into understanding the psychological mechanisms behind influencer desirability and its impact on consumer behavior.

Glossier's choice to partner with influencers who were perceived as approachable and genuine led to increased trust among followers, who were more inclined to trust recommendations from influencers they perceived as relatable and authentic.

Coca-Cola's strategic partnership with various TikTok creators further illustrates the impact of influencer desirability across different demographics. By engaging both established influencers

and rising stars on the platform, Coca-Cola was able to create diverse content that resonated with their respective audiences.

According to Haenlein (2020), influencers, individuals who have established credibility and a significant following in a particular niche, possess the ability to sway consumer perceptions and behaviors, making them valuable partners for brands seeking to connect with their target audiences.

Moreover, as highlighted by Goanta and Ranchordás (2019), desirable influencers often possess a genuine rapport with their followers, fostering trust and credibility that extends to the brands they promote. Coca-Cola's partnership with a diverse range of influencers allowed the brand to tap into the emotional connection these influencers had already established with their followers, resulting in higher engagement levels and extended brand reach.

Finally, Airbnb's collaboration with local influencers in various destinations showcased the effectiveness of leveraging authentic expertise for brand engagement. By partnering with influencers who possessed in-depth knowledge of their regions and were considered desirable due to their ability to provide authentic insights, Airbnb was able to increase brand engagement. The influencers' expertise and genuine enthusiasm for their locales resonated with followers, leading to increased trust and interest in Airbnb's unique travel experiences.

In summary, influencer desirability plays a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors, as illustrated by the success of Nike, Glossier, Coca-Cola, and Airbnb in leveraging influencer partnerships to increase brand engagement. Authenticity, relatability, and alignment with brand values are key factors that contribute to influencer desirability and ultimately influence consumer trust and loyalty.

### **3.3.3 Influencer Collaboration**

Influencer collaboration is a dynamic and strategic partnership between brands and individuals who possess a substantial and engaged online following. These individuals, known as influencers, have established credibility and influence within specific niches or industries, ranging from fashion and beauty to technology and travel. The essence of influencer collaboration lies in leveraging the influencer's reach and rapport with their audience to promote a brand's products, services, or messages in an authentic and relatable manner. (Campbell and Farrell, 2020)

The influencer collaboration works involves a symbiotic relationship that benefits both parties involved. Brands identify influencers whose values, interests, and target audience align with their offerings. Once a suitable influencer is chosen, the collaboration process begins. Brands typically approach influencers with collaboration proposals, outlining the campaign's objectives, expectations, and compensation. These collaborations can take various forms, such as sponsored content, product reviews, giveaways, or even co-creating content. (Kotler et al., 2021)

For example, in a sponsored content collaboration, a brand might provide the influencer with their products or services, along with guidelines on how to showcase them. The influencer then integrates these offerings into their own content style, be it social media posts, videos, or blog articles. This approach maintains the influencer's authenticity, as they present the brand's offerings in a way that resonates with their audience. The influencer's followers, who trust their recommendations, are more likely to engage with the promoted content and consider the brand's offerings. (Audrezet et al., 2020)

Sponsored content is one of the most common influencer collaboration strategies. Brands pay influencers to create and share content that features their products or services. It can take the form of social media posts, videos, blog articles, or even live streams. The key is to seamlessly integrate the brand's offerings into the influencer's content style to ensure authenticity and resonate with the influencer's followers. (Veirman et al., 2019)

Collaborating with influencers for giveaways and contests can rapidly increase brand exposure and engagement. Brands provide products or services as prizes, and the influencer promotes the giveaway to their audience. This strategy encourages user participation, grows follower counts, and generates buzz around the brand. Brands can invite influencers to contribute guest content to their blogs, websites, or social media channels. This approach not only brings fresh perspectives but also taps into the influencer's audience, driving traffic to the brand's platforms. (Andjelic, 2020)

Influencers can provide genuine reviews of a brand's products or services. Their opinions hold weight with their followers, helping to build trust and credibility for the brand. Reviews can be in-depth articles, videos, or social media posts. A takeover involves giving an influencer control over a brand's social media account for a limited time. This allows the influencer to engage directly with the brand's audience, share their unique content, and infuse their personality into the brand's online presence. (Nurhandayani et al., 2019)

Influencers promote a brand's products using custom affiliate links. They earn a commission for each sale generated through their links. This strategy aligns the influencer's incentives with the brand's sales goals. Brands can organize events, workshops, or product launches featuring influencers as guests or hosts. This provides an opportunity for direct interaction with influencer's audience and creates memorable experiences. (Wright, 2021)

Instead of one-off collaborations, brands can establish ongoing relationships with influencers. Long-term partnerships allow for deeper integration of the influencer's personal brand with the brand's message. Brands collaborate with influencers who align with a particular social or environmental cause. Brands and influencers collaborate to co-create new products, services, or content. This not only showcases the influencer's creativity but also involves their audience in the product development process. (Do, 2022)

Sponsored posts involve influencers creating content that features a brand's product or service. The influencer's endorsement lends credibility, potentially enhancing the brand's reputation and widening its reach. Sponsored posts can lead to quick and measurable engagement metrics, such as likes, comments, and shares.

While sponsored posts offer swift exposure, the engagement might sometimes be superficial. The audience may perceive the endorsement as inauthentic, impacting the trust between the influencer and their followers. (Childers et al., 2019)

Giveaways and contests involve influencers collaborating with brands to host interactive events. This approach can rapidly boost engagement as participants are incentivized to interact with both the influencer and the brand, leading to increased visibility. The engagement generated by giveaways and contests might be temporary, as participants may be primarily motivated by the chance to win rather than a genuine interest in the brand. Additionally, there's a risk of attracting participants who aren't genuinely interested in the brand, potentially diluting the engagement with less valuable interactions. (Falco, 2020)

Takeovers involve influencers temporarily managing a brand's social media account or creating content for it. This approach allows for cross-pollination of audiences, exposing the influencer's followers to the brand and vice versa. The influencer's unique perspective can inject freshness into the brand's content, leading to increased engagement and interaction. While takeovers can create excitement and diversity in content, there's a potential risk of the influencer's style not

aligning with the brand's image, leading to confusion or a mismatched message. (N'Goala et al., 2019)

Collaborative projects involve influencers and brands jointly creating content or products. This approach can result in highly authentic and engaging content as both parties contribute their expertise. The audience is more likely to perceive the collaboration as genuine, leading to increased trust and higher engagement. Collaborative projects require careful alignment of goals and values between the influencer and the brand. If not managed effectively, differences in vision could lead to conflicts. (Rundin and Colliander, 2021)

Influencers have established themselves as authentic voices within their niche communities. Their recommendations are trusted by their followers because of the genuine connection they have built. When a brand collaborates with an influencer who aligns with its values and target audience, the partnership benefits from the influencer's inherent credibility. Influencers have a dedicated and engaged fan base that pays attention to their content. By partnering with influencers, brands gain access to a ready-made audience that is interested in the influencer's content. (Choudhry et al., 2022)

Successful brand-influencer partnerships often involve integrating the brand's products or services into the influencer's own narrative. This organic approach feels less intrusive and more relatable to the audience, fitting seamlessly into the influencer's content style (Jensen, 2018). Collaboration effectiveness hinges on open, transparent communication and mutual goal setting, minimizing misunderstandings and aligning efforts toward a common goal (Kumar, 2023). Clear communication fosters a fertile ground for creative exploration, leading to innovative content strategies that capture audience attention (Sagar et al., 2023).

Metrics such as engagement rates and conversions help assess the ROI of influencer marketing efforts (Schwarz Müller et al., 2018). When both influencers and brands share genuine alignment of goals, the collaboration feels authentic and resonates more profoundly with consumers (Langley et al., 2019). Such collaborations engender trust and foster lasting relationships, benefitting both parties over time (Segova, 2020). Prioritizing clear communication and mutual goal setting optimizes resource allocation and ensures streamlined execution (Omar et al., 2019).

Influencer collaborations guided by these principles cultivate effective partnerships, harness creativity, align purpose, and nurture trust (Daei, 2023). Brands and influencers that invest in

these essential components are better positioned to navigate the evolving digital marketing landscape and capitalize on its vast opportunities.

### **3.4 Brand Marketing Management**

Brand marketing management refers to the strategic planning, implementation, and control of activities aimed at building, maintaining, and enhancing a brand's image, reputation, and equity in the marketplace. It encompasses a comprehensive approach to shaping consumer perceptions, emotions, and attitudes towards a brand, ultimately driving brand awareness, loyalty, and preference (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

In brand marketing management, McCarthy's 7Ps of marketing mix play a vital role in developing and implementing effective strategies to promote brands and engage target audiences. Firstly, the "Product" aspect involves understanding customer needs and preferences to design and deliver products that meet or exceed expectations (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016). Secondly, "Price" considerations are crucial in positioning the brand appropriately in the market, balancing customer value with profitability (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016). "Place" decisions focus on ensuring products are available where and when customers want them, utilizing distribution channels effectively (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016). "Promotion" activities encompass various marketing communications efforts to create brand awareness, generate interest, and drive sales (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016). The "People" element emphasizes the importance of frontline staff in delivering superior customer experiences, influencing brand perceptions (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016). "Process" considerations involve streamlining operations to enhance efficiency and customer satisfaction throughout the brand journey (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016). Lastly, "Physical Evidence" serves as tangible proof of the brand's promise, reinforcing trust and credibility in the minds of consumers (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016). Together, these elements form a holistic approach to brand marketing management, guiding decisions and actions to build strong, differentiated brands in competitive markets. The 7P's of marketing mix can be seen as in Figure 2 below:

Figure: 2 (7ps of marketing)



Source: McCarthy (1960)

At its core, brand marketing management involves identifying and understanding the unique characteristics, values, and positioning of a brand within its competitive landscape. This includes conducting market research, competitor analysis, and consumer insights to gain a deep understanding of the target audience, their needs, desires, and preferences (Aaker, 2012). Based on these insights, brand managers develop strategic brand objectives, positioning strategies, and messaging frameworks that resonate with the target market and differentiate the brand from competitors (Keller, 2013).

Furthermore, brand marketing management entails developing and executing integrated marketing communication (IMC) strategies that convey the brand's message consistently across various touchpoints and channels. This involves leveraging a mix of traditional and digital marketing channels, including advertising, public relations, social media, content marketing, and experiential marketing, to create cohesive brand experiences and engage with consumers effectively (Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliott, 2016).

Moreover, brand marketing management involves monitoring and measuring key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the effectiveness of brand-building initiatives and adjust strategies

accordingly. This includes tracking brand awareness, brand perception, brand equity, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty metrics over time (Keller, 2016). By analyzing these metrics, brand managers can assess the impact of marketing efforts, identify areas for improvement, and optimize resource allocation to maximize ROI (Kapferer, 2012).

In summary, brand marketing management is a strategic discipline that encompasses the systematic planning, execution, and evaluation of activities aimed at building and strengthening a brand's position in the market. It involves understanding consumer insights, developing compelling brand propositions, implementing integrated marketing communications, and measuring performance to drive brand success (Kotler et al., 2017). Through effective brand marketing management, organizations can create enduring relationships with consumers, foster brand loyalty, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace.

### **3.4.1 Brand Reputation**

Brand reputation refers to the collective perception and image that a brand holds in the minds of consumers, stakeholders, and the general public. It encompasses the thoughts, feelings, and beliefs that people associate with a brand based on their experiences, interactions, and information they have encountered. A strong brand reputation signifies a brand's credibility, trustworthiness, and overall standing in the marketplace. (Nunes, M., and Lee, 2021)

A positive brand reputation is essential for fostering consumer trust and loyalty. When a brand consistently delivers on its promises and provides high-quality products or services, it builds credibility, leading to repeat business and recommendations to others (Montecchi et al., 2019). In a competitive market, a positive reputation sets a brand apart from its competitors and can positively impact financial performance by commanding premium prices (Ansary and Hashim, 2018).

Beyond consumers, a positive brand reputation also attracts top talent and helps companies weather crises more effectively (Zhang et al., 2023). In the digital age, online activities have become crucial for shaping brand perception and engaging with audiences (Rathore, 2018). Brands leverage online platforms to increase visibility, engage with customers in real-time, and

encourage user-generated content that influences perceptions positively (Woodcock and Johnson, 2021).

### **3.4.2 Consumer Behavior**

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory can be applied in the context of brand reputation management to understand consumer behavior and cultivate positive perceptions of a brand. According to Maslow, individuals have a hierarchy of needs, starting with basic physiological needs like food and shelter, followed by safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943).

In brand marketing, addressing these needs can influence how consumers perceive a brand's reputation. For instance, brands that prioritize product quality and safety not only fulfill consumers' physiological and safety needs but also establish trust and credibility, contributing to a positive reputation (Aaker, 1996).

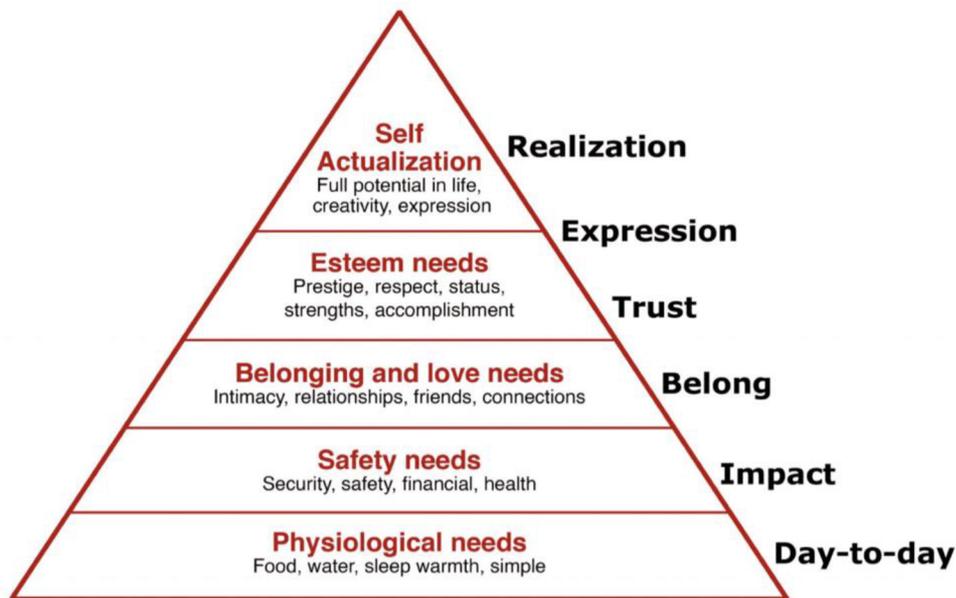
Moreover, brands that foster a sense of belongingness and connection with their target audience through inclusive marketing campaigns or community initiatives can enhance their reputation as socially responsible entities (Louro and Cunha, 2001).

Furthermore, brands that appeal to consumers' esteem needs by promoting aspirational lifestyles or recognizing customer achievements can bolster their reputation as desirable and prestigious (Rindell, 2013).

Finally, brands that facilitate self-actualization by offering products or experiences that align with consumers' values and aspirations can cultivate a loyal customer base and a strong brand reputation (Kapferer, 2012).

By understanding and aligning with consumers' needs across Maslow's hierarchy, brands can strategically manage their reputation, build emotional connections with consumers, and differentiate themselves in the market. The maslow's theory can be understood with the figure 3 as under:

Figure: 3 (Maslow's Theory)



Source: A.Maslow (1943)

In today's digital age, where social media dominates communication channels, influencer endorsements have emerged as a potent tool for brands to enhance their reputation. An influencer's ability to sway opinions and engage with a wide audience creates a platform for brands to establish themselves in the market. The outcomes of these endorsements can vary to either a positive or negative impact on a brand's reputation. (Wibawa et al., 2022)

Influencers often build close relationships with their followers based on trust and authenticity. When an influencer genuinely endorses a brand, it can transfer their credibility to the brand, making consumers more likely to trust and consider the product or service positively.

Influencers have a dedicated and engaged following, which can significantly extend a brand's reach. Collaborating with the right influencer allows brands to access a specific demographic that aligns with their target market. (Schouten et al., 2021)

If an influencer's endorsement appears forced or inauthentic, it can backfire and damage both the influencer's credibility and the brand's reputation.

Influencers are individuals with their own beliefs and actions. If an influencer becomes involved in a controversy or engages in behavior that clashes with the brand's values, the association can harm the brand's reputation by association.

This can dilute the impact of endorsements and negatively affect the brand's reputation by making it seem like just another paid promotion. (Jokilehto, 2023)

Credibility, on the other hand, is closely intertwined with trust. A brand's credibility is built through its expertise, authenticity, and transparency. Brands that can demonstrate their expertise in their industry and consistently provide accurate and relevant information to consumers gain credibility. Authenticity plays a crucial role as well. Brands that remain true to their values and are honest about their strengths and weaknesses are more likely to be seen as credible. (Brogan and Smith, 2020)

Brands must carefully choose influencers whose values and image align with their own. A well-matched influencer can create an authentic connection that enhances the brand's reputation. Both influencers and brands should practice transparency in their partnerships, clearly indicating when a post is sponsored. This honesty can foster trust among consumers and minimize potential negative perceptions. Long-term partnerships between influencers and brands can be more effective than one-off endorsements. Continuity can reinforce the association and provide more opportunities for engagement. (Driel and Dumitrica, 2021)

Here are some examples, where Dove, a personal care brand, collaborated with influencers to promote their "Real Beauty" campaign. By featuring real women with diverse body types in their advertisements, Dove aimed to challenge traditional beauty standards. This influencer-driven approach garnered praise for its positive impact on self-esteem and body image, effectively shifting Dove's brand reputation from a typical beauty company to one that champions self-acceptance and authenticity.

The watch brand Daniel Wellington successfully utilized influencer marketing to create a sense of exclusivity and sophistication around their products. By collaborating with fashion and lifestyle influencers, the brand's minimalist designs became a trend among young adults. This approach elevated Daniel Wellington's reputation from a relatively unknown brand to a symbol of elegance, largely driven by its association with influencers.

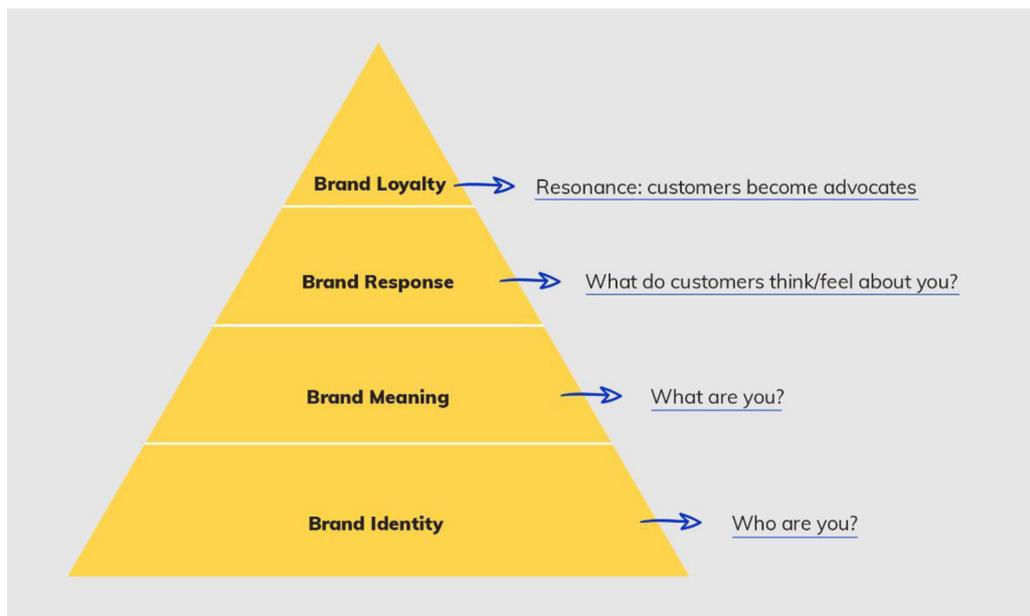
### 3.4.3 Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty refers to the deep-seated commitment and attachment that consumers develop towards a particular brand. It goes beyond simple repeat purchases; it's a psychological and emotional connection that drives customers to consistently choose a specific brand over its competitors. This loyalty can be based on factors such as perceived quality, positive experiences, consistent messaging, and alignment with personal values. In the highly competitive and dynamic business landscape, brand loyalty holds immense significance for both businesses and consumers alike. (Srivastava and Rai, 2018)

Brand loyalty serves as a powerful asset for companies. It often translates into repeat business, increased customer retention, and higher customer lifetime value. Loyal customers are not only more likely to repurchase, but they also become brand advocates, spreading positive word-of-mouth recommendations to friends, family, and peers. This organic promotion can lead to new customer acquisition and expanded market reach. Moreover, brand loyalty often allows companies to charge premium prices for their products or services, as customers are willing to pay more for that brand. (Setiawati et al., 2019)

From the consumer's viewpoint, brand loyalty offers a sense of security and familiarity. Consumers are often overwhelmed with choices, and sticking to a trusted brand helps them simplify their decision-making process. Loyal customers also tend to experience higher levels of satisfaction due to consistent positive experiences with the brand. Additionally, brand loyalty can lead to a sense of belonging, as customers identify with the values and image of the brand, aligning it with their own self-concept. (Yasser et al., 2023)

Figure: 4 (Brand Equity Model)



Source:  
Keller  
(1993)  
Keller's  
Brand  
Equity  
Model  
provides a

comprehensive framework for understanding and managing brand equity, which is defined as the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to marketing activity (Keller, 1993). In the context of brand loyalty, Keller's model suggests that strong brand equity contributes to enhanced brand loyalty among consumers. Brand loyalty refers to the extent to which consumers consistently prefer a particular brand over others in a product category and are willing to make repeat purchases (Oliver, 1999). According to Keller's model, brand loyalty is one of the key dimensions of brand equity, along with brand awareness, brand associations, and brand perceived quality (Keller, 1993). By building strong brand associations, fostering positive brand perceptions, and consistently delivering superior quality products or services, brands can cultivate customer loyalty and maintain a competitive advantage in the market. This strategic approach to brand management aligns with Keller's brand equity model, which emphasizes the importance of building and leveraging strong brand equity to drive long-term brand loyalty and profitability.

Building brand loyalty provides a sustainable competitive advantage. In markets flooded with similar products and services, having a loyal customer base can shield a brand from the impact of price wars and fleeting trends. Brand loyalty acts as a barrier to entry for competitors, making it challenging for them to convince loyal customers to switch allegiances. This advantage gives brands the freedom to focus on innovation, quality enhancement, and long-term strategies, rather than competing on price. (Rossoni, 2018)

One of the most significant aspects of brand loyalty is the emotional connection it fosters. Brands that successfully create emotional ties with their customers become integrated into their lives, becoming more than just products or services. This emotional bond not only makes customers resistant to competitive offers but also enables brands to navigate challenges with greater resilience, as loyal customers are more forgiving in times of crisis. (Ghorbanzadeh and Rahehagh, 2021)

Research has consistently demonstrated that influencer endorsements possess a remarkable ability to foster and strengthen brand loyalty among consumers. Through their relatable content, authentic narratives, and aspirational lifestyles, influencers have the capacity to establish a personal connection with their followers, thereby creating a sense of trust and rapport. This trust extends to the products and services they endorse, making their recommendations more persuasive and influential. (Hendry et al., 2022)

Several studies have highlighted the impact of influencer endorsements on purchase decisions and subsequent brand loyalty. These endorsements often lead to an increased perception of product credibility, as influencers are seen as knowledgeable and unbiased sources. Furthermore, the ongoing engagement between influencers and their followers generates a sense of community, allowing brands to tap into this community and strengthen the emotional attachment consumers have with the brand. (Lee et al., 2022)

In the social media, engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and comments on influencer posts have been correlated with consumer loyalty indicators. Studies indicate that higher levels of engagement in response to influencer content are linked to increased brand loyalty.

While the impact of influencer endorsements on brand loyalty is apparent, it's important to note that this relationship can be influenced by factors such as the authenticity of the influencer, alignment between the influencer's image and the brand's values, and the perceived relevance of the endorsed products to influencer's niche. (Balio and Casais, 2021)

Customer engagement encompasses all interactions and touchpoints between a brand and its customers. It goes beyond mere transactions to create meaningful connections and experiences. Engaged customers are more likely to feel emotionally invested in a brand, leading to a heightened sense of loyalty. Brands achieve customer engagement through personalized communication, interactive content, and responsive customer service.

Engaged customers often act as brand advocates, sharing positive experiences with others and thereby amplifying the brand's reputation. (Nadeem et al., 2021)

Customer retention refers to the ability of a brand to retain its existing customers over time. A strong retention strategy involves consistently delivering value, meeting customer needs, and exceeding expectations. When customers have positive experiences with a brand across multiple interactions, they become more committed to the brand. This commitment deepens over time, resulting in higher brand loyalty. Retained customers not only make repeated purchases but also become more forgiving of occasional shortcomings, as they perceive the overall value proposition of the brand to be superior. (Fernandes, 2018)

Building brand loyalty requires going beyond functional benefits and connecting with customers on an emotional level. Brands that can evoke emotions such as trust, joy, nostalgia, or belonging tend to establish stronger and longer-lasting relationships with their customers. Emotional connections make customers more forgiving of price fluctuations, competitive offers, and minor inconveniences. When customers feel a personal connection to a brand, they are more likely to stick with it even when presented with different alternatives. (Sharp and Thomas, 2019)

Personalization involves tailoring the brand experience to individual customer preferences and needs. By analysing customer data and behavior, brands can provide relevant recommendations, content, and offers. This not only enhances the customer experience but also demonstrates that the brand values and understands its customers.

Customized experiences lead to a sense of being valued and understood, fostering brand loyalty. (Bleier et al., 2018)

In an era where consumers have abundant choices and switching brands is increasingly easy, building and maintaining brand loyalty is essential for sustainable success. The role of customer engagement and retention in this endeavour cannot be overstated. Brands that actively engage customers through personalized experiences, exceptional service, emotional connections, and consistent value delivery are more likely to cultivate a loyal customer base. By prioritizing engagement and retention, brands can create a virtuous cycle where loyal customers become brand advocates, further strengthening the brand's position in the market. (Kotler et al., 2019)

## 4. Practical Part

In the practical part of this thesis, The author is searching into how Instagram influencers affect brand reputation. Using a survey with 323 people who follow influencers to see what they think. With the software called SPSS, crunching numbers to understand how things like influencer authenticity and collaboration impact what people think about brands.

The author got six big guesses (called hypotheses) about how influencers and brands are connected. But we're also aware that our study has some limitations, like needing more diverse opinions and maybe trying out different ways of studying. Basically, to figure out how influencers and brands shape each other's image on social media.

### 4.1 Demographic Analysis

The participants in the study consisted of 72% females and 28% males. The prevalence of females in the sample can be attributed to the utilization of a convenience sampling method. This method was chosen due to the higher level of female activity on social media channels in India, where a majority of women check their social media accounts daily compared to a lower percentage of men. Furthermore, an additional study highlights that women are more inclined to use social media for productive purposes, such as generating content, building a career, and exerting political influence, as compared to their male counterparts.

Table 1 - Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage%
Male	90	28
Female	233	72
Total	323	100

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

Furthermore, recent research by social sprout (J. Zote,2024) looked into how women in India use social media. It found that more women than men prefer platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp.

Interestingly, many Indian women use social media to shop online. Also, there's been a rise in the number of fashion bloggers on Indian social media.

Overall, there are a lot more women using social media in India now. This highlights the need to include more female participants in surveys about social media because women use it more here.

In this research, we organized participants into different age categories to better understand their demographics. These categories included individuals below 18 years old, those aged 18 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, and 45 to 54 years old. Among all the age groups, the most commonly represented was the 18 to 24-year-old bracket, indicating that a significant portion of the respondents fell within this age range. Following closely behind were participants in the 25 to 34 age group, suggesting a relatively balanced distribution across these two younger demographics.

However, as we moved into older age brackets, we observed a decline in representation. The 35 to 44 age group still had a notable presence, albeit less than the younger cohorts. Conversely, the groups with the lowest participation rates were those below 18 years old, likely due to legal restrictions or parental consent requirements, and the 45 to 54 age range, indicating a smaller proportion of respondents from this older demographic.

This breakdown of participant demographics provides valuable insights into the composition of our sample and allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the research findings across different age groups.

Table 2 - Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage%
Below 18	13	4
18 to 24	197	61
25 to 34	87	27
35 to 44	23	7
45 to 54	3	1
Total	323	100

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

This study delineated various educational levels among the participants. The apex of the educational hierarchy was occupied by those with master's degrees, while individuals with education below high school constituted the lowest tier. Approximately half of the respondents belonged to the undergraduate degree category, with a subsequent representation of bachelor's degree holders, postgraduate degree holders, high school graduates, and the smallest contingent falling into the category of participants with educational levels below high school.

Table 3 - Education Qualification

Education Qualification	Frequency	Percentage %
Below High School	3	1
High School Degree	10	3
Undergraduate Degree	165	51
Bachelor Degree	116	36
Master Degree	29	9
Total	323	100

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

## 4.2 Descriptive Analysis

The normality test is a crucial step in statistical analysis as it helps determine whether the sample data follows a normal distribution. This is essential for researchers when deciding which statistical tests to use—parametric or non-parametric. In this study, normality was assessed using two common statistical tests: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test and the Shapiro-Wilk (SW) test.

In a normal distribution, both the KS and SW tests would yield non-significant results, indicated by a p-value greater than 0.05. Conversely, a p-value less than 0.05 suggests that the data deviates from a normal distribution.

Table 4 presents the results of the normality tests for several variables including SMI Credibility, SMI Desirability, SMI Collaboration Content, Brand Reputation, and Brand Loyalty. Across all variables, the p-values are less than 0.05, indicating that the data is not normally distributed.

However, it's worth noting that the central limit theorem suggests that in large samples, data can be treated as normally distributed regardless of its actual distribution. This theorem implies that any sample, when sufficiently large, can be treated as having a normal population distribution.

Therefore, despite the departure from normal distribution observed in this study, the large sample size offers confidence in treating the data as approximately normally distributed. This assumption is particularly crucial in studies employing regression analyses.

Table 4 - Normality Test

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Test Type</b>	<b>Statistic</b>
SMI Credibility	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.090
	Shapiro-Wilk	0.999
SMI Desirability	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.149
	Shapiro-Wilk	0.954
SMI Collaboration Content	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.151
	Shapiro-Wilk	1.001
Brand Reputation	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.150
	Shapiro-Wilk	1.008
Brand Loyalty	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.142
	Shapiro-Wilk	0.990

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

Here SMI stands for Social Media Influence,

In the provided table, the results of these tests for each variable are presented, indicating whether the data is normally distributed based on the significance levels of the tests. A "Not Normally Distributed" label is provided for variables where the p-value is less than 0.05, suggesting a departure from normality.

Overall, the Normality test results inform the statistical approach used in the analysis, ensuring appropriate methods are applied to draw accurate conclusions from the data.

### 4.3 Hypothesis Analysis

First, we used regression analysis to explore the connection between independent and dependent variables in the initial four hypotheses. Afterward, we employed regression with SPSS for mediation and moderation analyses. The analyses considered various hypotheses, resulting in different findings.

Table 5 - Hypothesis Results

Hypotheses	R Value	R Square	Significance	F Value	T Value	Beta	Description
H1	0.401	0.140	0.002	14.749	3.543	0.258	Hypothesis Accepted
H2	0.000	0.000	0.191	0.000	1.595	0.095	Hypothesis Rejected
H3	0.000	0.000	0.098	0.000	1.990	0.140	Hypothesis Rejected
H4	0.334	0.097	0.000	29.399	5.814	0.276	Hypothesis Accepted
H5	0.639	0.355	0.000	71.514	10.946	0.682	Hypothesis Accepted
H6	0.385	0.129	0.855	13.386	-0.377	-0.019	Hypothesis Rejected

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

The analyses considered various hypotheses, resulting in different findings. Table 12 presents the results of the hypothesis testing conducted in the study. Each hypothesis is evaluated based on several statistical measures, including R value, R Square, significance, F value, T value, and Beta.

**R Value:** This indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between variables.

**R Square:** It represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variable(s).

**Significance:** This indicates the probability that the observed relationship occurred by chance.

F Value: It is the ratio of the variance explained by the model to the unexplained variance.

T Value: This value indicates the significance of each independent variable in the model.

Beta: It shows the standardized regression coefficient, representing the change in the dependent variable per standard deviation change in the independent variable.

Description: Indicates whether the hypothesis was accepted or rejected based on the significance level.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (KMO) assesses the sample adequacy of variables by presenting the ratio of squared correlations between them. KMO values range between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating diffusion in correlation patterns, rendering it inappropriate. A value close to 1 signifies relatively compact correlation patterns, suggesting that factor analysis would yield distinct and reliable factors. Kaiser recommends accepting values exceeding 0.5, considering 0.5 barely acceptable, values from 0.5 to 0.7 mediocre, values from 0.7 to 0.8 good, values from 0.8 to 0.9 great, and values surpassing 0.9 superb. The KMO values in the subsequent table for all constructs surpass 0.8, approaching 0.9, indicating sufficient sampling adequacy and supporting the feasibility of conducting the EFA test.

Table 6 - KMO and Bartlett's Test

<b>Construct</b>	<b>KMO</b>	<b>Barlett's Test (Chi-square)</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>SMI Credibility</b>	1.027	5278.776	Adequate Sample

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

The implementation of Exploratory Factor Analysis aimed to eliminate items exhibiting cross loadings, commonalities below 0.3, and loadings under 0.4. Furthermore, this analysis provided insights into the optimal items for measuring distinct variables.

Based on the EFA findings, six discernible constructs emerged, namely brand reputation, influencer authenticity (encompassing trustworthiness and expertise), influencer desirability, influencer collaboration content, and brand loyalty.

Table 7 - Exploratory Factor Analysis

<b>Items</b>	<b>Factors</b>	<b>Variables</b>
--------------	----------------	------------------

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
The influencers the brand collaborates with seem genuinely interested in the products/services.	0.851							<b>Influencer Authenticity</b>
The content posted by influencers aligns with their personal opinions and experiences.	0.818							
I perceive the influencers' endorsements of the brand as authentic and sincere.		0.743						
The influencers' involvement in brand promotions doesn't feel forced or insincere.		0.740						
The influencers' interactions with the brand on Instagram come across as authentic.		0.728						
The influencers that the brand chooses to collaborate with are appealing to me.			0.945					<b>Influencer Desirability</b>
Seeing influencers use the brand's products/services makes me more interested in them.			0.854					
The brand's association with desirable influencers positively affects its image.			0.748					
I am more likely to explore the brand's offerings if my favorite influencers endorse them.			0.664					
The brand's Instagram collaborations with influencers				0.716				

match my interests and preferences.								
The brand's collaboration with influencers effectively captures my attention.					0.653			<b>Influencer Collaboration</b>
Influencers play a significant role in influencing my perception of the brand.					0.620			
The brand's Instagram content featuring influencers is engaging and interesting.					0.418			
Collaborations with influencers contribute to a more appealing Instagram feed for the brand.					0.659			
The influencer-brand partnerships on Instagram add value to my overall brand experience.					0.620			
The brand's Instagram content consistently reflects its core values and identity.						0.872		
The brand's Instagram posts effectively communicate its positive attributes.						0.771		
The brand's Instagram presence influences my perception of its reputation.						0.757		
The brand maintains a favourable image through its Instagram activities.						0.740		
The brand's Instagram interactions with customers enhance its overall reputation.						0.651		

I feel emotionally connected to the brand due to its Instagram content.							0.595	<b>Brand Loyalty</b>
I tend to choose the brand over competitors because of its Instagram presence.							0.817	
I am more likely to engage with the brand's posts on Instagram because of my loyalty.							0.788	
The brand's Instagram content fosters a sense of loyalty among its customers.							0.767	
I trust the brand more due to its consistent Instagram engagement with customers.							0.620	
<i>Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.</i>								
<i>Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.a</i>								
<i>a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.</i>								

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

A set of 25 measurement items were employed to assess the five constructs. In the cases of brand reputation and brand loyalty, all measurement items loaded seamlessly onto a single factor, and none were excluded. Similarly, for the Instagram influencer authenticity construct, no items were omitted, although they were categorized into measuring variables. However, three items were excluded from two constructs—namely, influencer desirability and influencer collaboration content.

One item was removed from the influencer desirability construct due to cross-loading, while two items were eliminated from the influencer content construct for the same reason. The six constructs incorporated in the framework account for 71% of the total variance. All loadings in the pattern matrix exceed 0.4, indicating the validity of the items, and all commonalities

surpass 0.3, providing evidence of adequacy. The goodness-of-fit test results reveal a chi-square value of 420, DF= 258, and a p-value of 0.000.

The reliability test assesses the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement items in the questionnaire, particularly when dealing with multiple Likert scale statements. Cronbach's alpha, ranging from 0 to 1, is used for this purpose, with a recommended cutoff point of 0.70 indicating the minimum level of internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency reliability used to evaluate the reliability of a psychometric instrument, such as a survey or a questionnaire. It assesses the extent to which a set of items in the instrument are interrelated or measure the same underlying construct. In other words, it indicates how well the items in the instrument correlate with one another. A higher Cronbach's Alpha value typically suggests greater reliability, indicating that the items are highly correlated and effectively measure the same construct. Cronbach's Alpha ranges from 0 to 1, where values closer to 1 indicate higher internal consistency and thus greater reliability of the instrument. The closer the value is to 1, the higher the reliability across items. The reliability analysis displayed in the table indicates that all Cronbach's alpha values exceed 0.70 for all variables, affirming the high reliability, internal consistency, and consistency of results across all scales used.

Table 8 - Reliability Analysis

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>SMI Credibility</b>	0.938	5	Highly Reliable
<b>SMI Desirability</b>	0.926	5	Highly Reliable
<b>SMI Collaboration Content</b>	0.797	5	Reliable
<b>Brand Reputation</b>	0.924	5	Highly Reliable
<b>Brand Loyalty</b>	0.883	5	Highly Reliable

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

The Pearson correlation test assesses the strength and direction of the association between two or more variables. The correlation coefficient, which ranges from -1 to +1, indicates the magnitude of the relationship. A higher absolute value of the coefficient suggests a more robust connection between the variables. Additionally, the sign of the coefficient denotes the direction of the relationship; a positive coefficient indicates that both variables increase and decrease

simultaneously, while a negative coefficient implies that an increase in one variable corresponds to a decrease in the other.

Examining the table below reveals that all correlation coefficient values are positive and statistically significant, as evidenced by P values below 0.05. Notably, all relationships in the table have successfully met the significance test at the 0.01 level, and there are no correlations at the 0.05 level. This underscores the strong correlation among all variables within the framework.

Table 9 - Pearson’s Correlations Test

Variables		SMI Credibility	SMI Desirability	SMI Collabration Content	Brand Reputation	Brand Loyalty
SMI Credibility	Correlation	1	0.341	0.355	0.629	0.305
	Significance	-	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
SMI Desirability	Correlation	0.197	1	0.251	0.251	0.355
	Significance	0.002	-	0.000	0.000	0.000
SMI Collabration Content	Correlation	0.290	0.251	1	0.239	0.629
	Significance	0.000	0.000	-	0.000	0.000
Brand Reputation	Correlation	0.197	0.290	0.570	1	0.341
	Significance	0.000	0.002	0.000	-	0.000
Brand Loyalty	Correlation	0.570	0.251	0.239	0.305	1
	Significance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

Collinearity assessments involve scrutinizing the connection between two or more variables. When there is a robust relationship between two variables, it indicates a high correlation. This correlation poses a challenge as it can lead to instability in the estimation of coefficients and the presence of standard errors for these coefficients in the regression model. Variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance are utilized to gauge collinearity. Detecting an issue requires investigating a VIF exceeding 10 for a variable. Likewise, a tolerance value below 0.2 suggests

a variable is a linear combination of other independent variables, indicating a problem. Notably, all tolerance values for the variables mentioned exceed 0.2, and the VIF values are below 10. This implies that the constructs are distinct and measure different aspects. They exhibit a lack of strong correlation and are assessing disparate facets.

Table 10 - Collinearity Test

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
<b>SMI Credibility</b>	0.631	1.748
<b>SMI Desirability</b>	0.928	1.189
<b>SMI Collaboration Content</b>	0.671	1.642
<b>Brand Reputation</b>	1	1
<b>Brand Loyalty</b>	1	1

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

After executing the regression test, various output values are presented, each deserving further elaboration. Initially, attention is drawn to the R value, representing the correlation between the independent/predictor and dependent variables. The R square, a simple square of the R value, gauges the extent of variability/variance in the dependent variable attributed to the optimal combination of linear variables. Additionally, the P value signifies the significance level for each variable. A P value below 0.05 indicates significance, confirming the validity of the null hypothesis. The F value, showcasing the ratio of mean squares, delineates the estimate of population variance accounting for degrees of freedom (DF).

The regression analysis pertaining to the influence of brand reputation on Instagram influencer authenticity, desirability, and content reveals that 13% of the variance in associated brand reputation can be elucidated. Notably, only Instagram influencer authenticity emerges as a statistically significant predictor of associated brand reputation. Surprisingly, contrary to initial expectations, the findings indicate that Instagram influencer desirability lacks a direct and significant impact on brand reputation. Consequently, it is affirmed that Instagram influencer authenticity stands as the sole construct positively correlated with associated brand reputation.

Shifting focus to the regression test investigating brand loyalty in relation to associated brand reputation, the linear regression model elucidates 9% of the variation in brand loyalty.

This implies a modest explanatory power. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that associated brand reputation wields a substantial and statistically significant influence on brand loyalty. In simpler terms, both Instagram influencer authenticity and associated brand reputation play a positive role in shaping brand loyalty.

#### 4.4 Mediation Analysis

SPSS is a tool used to analyse how things like mediation and moderation work together. Mediation analysis helps us understand how one thing leads to another, while moderation analysis looks at when things happen. In this study, we're looking at how Instagram influencer authenticity affects brand loyalty through brand reputation.

On the other hand, moderation analysis checks if the influence of one thing on other changes depending on something else. In our study, we'll see if the impact of Instagram influencer authenticity on brand reputation changes based on how engaged users are online.

The examination discloses a direct and substantial influence of Instagram influencer authenticity on brand loyalty. Nevertheless, upon introducing the mediating influence of the variable linked to brand reputation into the equation connecting Instagram influencer authenticity and brand loyalty, the findings indicate a noteworthy mediating impact of associated brand reputation. This mediating effect accounts for 32% of the variability in the relationship between Instagram influencer authenticity and brand loyalty. This indirect effect is statistically significant, as the confidence interval excludes 0, thereby affirming the positive establishment of a mediating effect through associated brand reputation. In contrast, if the confidence interval encompasses 0, the p-value would be insignificant, indicating the absence of a mediating effect.

Table 11 - Mediation Test

Variable	Beta Value	P Value	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
<b>Constant Variables</b>	0.971	0.002	0.372	1.571
<b>SMI Credibility</b>	0.161	0.018	0.029	0.293
<b>Brand Reputation</b>	0.623	0.000	0.494	0.751
<b>R square</b>	0.325			

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

## 4.5 Moderation Analysis

The examination discloses a direct and substantial influence of Instagram influencer authenticity on brand loyalty. Nevertheless, upon introducing the mediating influence of the variable linked to brand reputation into the equation connecting Instagram influencer authenticity and brand loyalty, the findings indicate a noteworthy mediating impact of associated brand reputation. This mediating effect accounts for 32% of the variability in the relationship between Instagram influencer authenticity and brand loyalty. The bootstrap analysis, with a 95% confidence interval, yields an indirect effect output of 0.1607. This indirect effect is statistically significant, as the confidence interval excludes 0, thereby affirming the positive establishment of a mediating effect through associated brand reputation. In contrast, if the confidence interval encompasses 0, the p-value would be insignificant, indicating the absence of a mediating effect.

Table 12 - Moderation Test

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Beta Value</b>	<b>P Value</b>	<b>Lower Limit</b>	<b>Upper Limit</b>
<b>Constant Variables</b>	4.044	0.000	3.970	4.118
<b>SMI Credibility</b>	0.364	0.000	0.242	0.486
<b>Brand Loyalty</b>	-0.017	0.781	-0.118	0.085
<b>Interaction Level</b>	-0.109			
<b>R square</b>	0.118			

*Source - Based on the primary data collected by author*

The data shows that even though people are more engaged online, it doesn't necessarily mean the brand's reputation improves as much. Whether engagement is low, medium, or high, it doesn't seem to make a big difference in how it affects the brand's reputation. So, it seems like online engagement doesn't really boost the connection between Instagram influencer authenticity and brand reputation.

## 5. Results and Recommendations

As of 6-7 statistical methods were used to come to a conclusion, The results of the tests derive their initial purpose and help us to come to an accurate conclusion. The author will stratify the results in the following manner

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test helped the author to understand that data related to SMI credibility is highly suitable for factor analysis. The KMO value of 1.027 indicates very high sampling adequacy, exceeding the optimal threshold of 0.6 and suggesting excellent factorability. Additionally, the significant Bartlett's test result, with a chi-square value of 5278.776 and the description "Adequate Sample," confirms that the correlations between variables are sufficiently large for factor analysis. These findings collectively indicate that the dataset is well-suited for conducting exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to derive meaningful results regarding SMI credibility.

The Exploratory Factor analysis helped the author to confirm the following results:

**The Influencer Authenticity (Factor 1):** The items related to influencer authenticity, such as influencers genuinely interested in the products/services and their endorsements perceived as authentic and sincere, show high factor loadings ranging from 0.728 to 0.851. This indicates a strong association between these items and the concept of influencer authenticity.

**Influencer Desirability (Factor 2):** Items concerning influencer appeal and their positive influence on brand image exhibit high factor loadings, ranging from 0.664 to 0.945.

This suggests a significant relationship between influencer desirability and its impact on consumer interest in the brand's offerings.

**Influencer Collaboration (Factor 3):** Items related to the effectiveness of influencer-brand partnerships on Instagram, such as adding value to the overall brand experience and contributing to a more appealing Instagram feed, demonstrate moderate to high factor loadings ranging from 0.418 to 0.659.

**Brand Reputation (Factor 4):** Items associated with the brand's reputation on Instagram, including effectively communicating positive attributes and maintaining a favorable image,

exhibit high factor loadings ranging from 0.740 to 0.872. This indicates a strong correlation between these items and the concept of brand reputation.

Brand Loyalty (Factor 5): Items reflecting consumer loyalty driven by the brand's Instagram presence, such as choosing the brand over competitors and feeling emotionally connected, show high factor loadings ranging from 0.595 to 0.817. This suggests a strong association between these items and the concept of brand loyalty.

Overall, the results indicate distinct factors representing different dimensions of influencer impact on brand outcomes, including authenticity, desirability, collaboration, reputation, and loyalty. The Extraction Method used was Maximum Likelihood, and the Rotation Method was Promax with Kaiser Normalization, which converged in 6 iterations, ensuring the accuracy of the factor structure.

The Reliability test: The reliability analysis results, summarized in Table 8, indicate high internal consistency and reliability across all constructs assessed in the study. The Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the recommended cutoff of 0.70 for all constructs, confirming the robustness of the measurement items within each construct. Specifically, SMI Credibility, SMI Desirability, Brand Reputation, and Brand Loyalty demonstrate high reliability with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.938, 0.926, 0.924, and 0.883, respectively. The SMI Collaboration Content construct shows acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.797. These findings affirm the consistency of results across all scales used in the study and validate the reliability of the measurements.

The Pearson's correlation test was employed to examine the relationships between different variables in the dataset. This method was chosen because it allows for the measurement of the strength and direction of associations between pairs of variables, providing insights into how changes in one variable relate to changes in another. SMI Credibility is positively correlated with Brand Reputation (0.629) and Brand Loyalty (0.570), indicating higher credibility corresponds to better reputation and loyalty. SMI Desirability is positively correlated with Credibility (0.341), Collaboration Content (0.251), and Brand Reputation (0.251), suggesting higher desirability relates to greater credibility, appealing content, and brand reputation. Collaboration Content is positively correlated with Credibility (0.355) and Brand Reputation (0.570), showing well-received content links to higher credibility and better brand reputation. Brand Reputation is positively correlated with Credibility (0.629) and Collaboration Content (0.570), indicating a favourable reputation is associated with higher credibility and appealing

content. Brand Loyalty shows a positive correlation with Credibility (0.305), suggesting higher influencer credibility leads to increased brand loyalty. Collinearity assessments confirm the distinctiveness of constructs with tolerance values exceeding 0.2 and VIF values below 10, indicating no significant collinearity issues among variables.

The collinearity test assesses the relationship between variables in a regression model. In this analysis, all tolerance values exceed 0.2, and VIF values are below 10, suggesting distinct constructs without strong correlation. Therefore, the variables measure different aspects and facets, ensuring the reliability of the regression model.

Six hypotheses were proposed in the study. Based on the results:

H1, H4, and H5 are accepted because they have significant R values, indicating a meaningful relationship between variables.

H2, H3, and H6 are rejected as they do not show significant relationships between variables.

The reference indicates that the data used for analysis was collected by the authors themselves.

**The first hypothesis** suggests a link between how genuine Instagram influencers are and the reputation of the brand they're associated with. The results show a clear positive connection between the authenticity of Instagram influencers and the reputation of the brand they endorse, confirming our hypothesis.

This discovery lines up with previous research indicating that genuine influencers tend to improve the reputation of the brands they promote. It also supports other studies showing that when the source is seen as credible, it boosts how people perceive the brand, their attitude towards it, and its overall reputation. Many studies before this have found that when an Instagram influencer is seen as more credible, customers tend to have a more positive attitude towards the brand, which often leads to them being more likely to buy from that brand.

**The second hypothesis** suggests that how appealing Instagram influencers are, has an effect on the reputation of the brand they're associated with. However, the results don't back up this idea. It turns out that how desirable Instagram influencers are doesn't directly and significantly impact brand reputation.

These findings show that the appeal of the influencer doesn't really affect how effective advertising is on customers. Other researchers have also said that how desirable the source is does not do much to make customers respond positively to ads.

Despite this, some studies have found a positive link between how desirable the source is and how people feel and act towards the products and brand being advertised. But whether desirability really matters in ads is still up for debate and needs more research to understand better.

**The third hypothesis** suggests that the content shared by Instagram influencers affects the reputation of the brand they're promoting in a positive way. However, the results of this study don't support this idea. It turns out that the content shared by Instagram influencers doesn't have a direct and significant impact on brand reputation.

When looking at the messages shared by influencers, they come in different forms like text, images, and audio. To really understand these collaborations, each type of message needs to be looked at differently. Interestingly, this study didn't break down these collaborations, which might have caused some confusion. For example, a visually striking collaboration might not be seen as informative if there's not much text to explain it. This could have led participants in the survey to not accurately judge the quality of the collaborations, as the criteria for judging might not apply the same to all types of collaborations.

Furthermore, the results of this study match up with what's been found in other research, which shows that just because a message is very informative doesn't mean it'll have positive results or make customers more engaged. It's not enough to just look at how informative a message is; we also need to think about emotions. Messages that are only seen as informative might actually decrease engagement, but when positive emotions are brought into the mix, it makes the message more persuasive and engaging for customers. So, we need to consider emotional elements to really understand how good the content is, and people's judgments might change based on what product or service is being promoted.

Additionally, a study by Adobe found that posts with visual content get a lot more engagement from the audience compared to posts without visuals. Influencer content that includes images tends to get more likes and comments, which boosts engagement on the posts they're endorsing.

**The fourth hypothesis** suggests that there's a connection between how people see a brand's reputation and how loyal they are to that brand. And guess what? The results totally back this up! It turns out that there's indeed a positive relationship between how people perceive a brand's reputation and how loyal they are to it.

This lines up with what other studies have found, which highlight how important a brand's reputation is in making customers happy and keeping them loyal. Basically, when a brand does a good job with its marketing and builds up a solid reputation, it's more likely to have satisfied customers who stick around and keep coming back for more.

**The fifth hypothesis** dives into how the reputation of a brand affects the link between Instagram influencer stuff (like how real they seem, how much people want to be like them, and what they post) and brand loyalty. The study kind of supports this idea, showing that when people trust a brand more, it boosts how much they stick with it.

This lines up with other research that shows how important trust is for brand loyalty. When people have faith in a brand, they're more likely to keep coming back for more, which makes sense. Trusting a brand makes you feel comfortable and satisfied, so you're more inclined to stay loyal to it.

**The sixth hypothesis** looks into whether how much people engage online changes how Instagram influencers affect brand reputation. Surprisingly, the study found that online engagement doesn't really change this relationship.

Some past studies said that when people engage more online, they trust online shopping more. But in this study, that didn't seem to be the case. Maybe it's because the people in the study talked about different kinds of products, so the effect of online engagement varied.

In this study, most participants talked about luxury brands like Hermes, Pandora, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton, among others. These brands cover a wide range of luxury products. The lack of a noticeable effect of online engagement on the connection between Instagram influencer authenticity and brand reputation could be because most responses focused on these high-end products.

Different studies show that online engagement might not affect everyone the same way, especially depending on how much thought people put into buying something. For example, it might have a bigger impact on things like electronics or furniture, which people don't buy as often and usually think more about before buying.

On the other hand, for things people buy more frequently and don't think as much about, like everyday items, online engagement might not matter as much. Another interesting finding was that when a famous person endorses something, it really affects what people think about both

the product and the brand, especially if it's something they don't think about much before buying.

The majority of participants in this study are between 18 and 24 years old. This age group usually has more money to spend as they get older.

Because of this, the study suggests that the luxury brands they talked about, like Hermes and Gucci, are products they think about a lot before buying. These are what we call "high involvement" products because people really consider their options before making a purchase.

Now, because most of the people in the study were from the same age group and had similar levels of online engagement, it might explain why online engagement didn't seem to make much of a difference. It's like everyone was on the same page, so online engagement didn't stand out as a big factor in how they saw Instagram influencers and brands.

Also, when people are thinking a lot about what they're buying, they might not be as influenced by what they see online, especially if they're already pretty sure about what they want. That could be why online engagement didn't have a big impact on how they saw the brands being promoted by Instagram influencers.

**Recommendations:** Marketing managers need to understand how important influencer marketing is in building strong connections with customers. Using influencers can help increase people's awareness of a brand and make them feel good about it, which can lead to them buying products and sticking with the brand over time. But it's not just about picking any influencer. Managers need to be careful when choosing who to work with to make sure it's a good fit for the brand and that it won't hurt the brand's image.

This study shows that picking the right influencer is key. They need to match well with the brand and be seen as trustworthy and knowledgeable. It's not just about how many followers they have; it's more about the quality of those followers and how much they trust the influencer. Managers should also think about what the influencer stands for and how they promote products. Influencers who focus on being honest and really knowing about the brand they're promoting are seen as more trustworthy.

The study also suggests that managers shouldn't just jump on the bandwagon with popular influencers. Instead, they should focus on finding influencers who can really connect with the brand and its values. By doing this, they can build trust with customers and make them more loyal to the brand in the long run.

Overall, this research is useful for both marketing managers and influencers. It gives them ideas on how to work together effectively to build stronger connections with customers and improve brand loyalty.

It highlights the importance of authenticity and reputation in influencer marketing and shows how these factors can be powerful tools for building a positive brand image.

Looking into different aspects of Instagram influencers is something that needs more research in the future. One important thing to look at is how many followers an influencer has because it has a big impact on how people see their collaborations with brands and how the audience reacts. If an influencer doesn't have many followers, it can make them seem less trustworthy, credible, and authentic. But if they have lots of followers, it can make them seem more popular and likable.

So, if an influencer doesn't have a large following on social media, people might not see them as credible, which could hurt the brand they're working with. It's all about perception. The type of product being endorsed is also really important in how people react to influencer collaborations. When it comes to things like makeup and clothes, it's crucial to pick an influencer that people find attractive because desirability matters a lot. But for products that are more about technical stuff, like gadgets or tools, how likable the influencer is might not matter as much. Instead, people care more about whether they trust the influencer.

So, it's essential to understand how the type of product and the influencer working together can affect people's opinions. An influencer might have a big impact on one type of product but not on another, so it's something that needs to be studied further.

It's worth looking into how the gender of influencers affects their partnerships with brands. Research suggests that people might react differently to collaborations with male and female influencers. For example, male influencers might seem more convincing because they're seen as experts, especially in certain industries.

On the other hand, female influencers might have more influence when it comes to endorsing products that are all about being desirable.

Another thing to consider is whether influencers are upfront about being paid for their posts. Many influencers don't always make it clear when they're being paid to promote something. This lack of transparency can make people think the recommendations are genuine, even

though they're actually advertisements. This could affect how likely people are to try a product, how authentic they see the influencer, and what they think of the brand.

So, future research could dive deeper into how disclosing collaborations affects people's opinions, whether influencers are seen as authentic, and how it impacts the brand's reputation.

## **6. Conclusion**

As to conclude the thesis, unfolding about how Instagram influencers influence, brand reputation and customer loyalty in today's digital landscape.

One key finding from the research is the paramount importance of authenticity in influencer-brand partnerships. When influencers are authentic, it significantly impacts how people perceive the brands they endorse. It's akin to trusting a friend's recommendation because you know they're genuine. This underscores the need for brands to prioritize working with authentic influencers to foster trust with their audience.

The author also explored the significance of influencer, gender and disclosure practices. Transparency about paid partnerships is crucial for maintaining followers' trust. People value honesty and authenticity from influencers, and clear disclosure helps uphold that trust.

Interestingly, It was discovered that online engagement metrics, like likes and comments, don't solely determine influencer success. Factors such as credibility and relevance of influencers also play a significant role in shaping perceptions of brands. This highlights the multifaceted nature of influencer marketing beyond just social media metrics.

Moreover, the study reaffirms that a positive brand reputation is linked to customer loyalty. When consumers trust and admire a brand, they're more inclined to remain loyal. Hence, brands should concentrate on cultivating a positive image to retain customers.

Looking ahead, it's crucial for brands to forge authentic, relevant, and transparent partnerships with influencers. By aligning with influencers who resonate with their values and being open about partnerships, brands can establish stronger connections with consumers and foster loyalty. These qualities are paramount in today's digital landscape, where authenticity and trust are supreme.

The thesis contributes valuable insights into how influencer marketing operates in practice. It offers actionable advice for marketers seeking to leverage influencers effectively. While the

study had its limitations, such as focusing on specific demographics and products, there's still ample room for exploration in the realm of influencer marketing.

In the future, delving deeper into how different influencers and content types, influence consumer behavior could yield fascinating insights. Understanding how cultural and industry dynamics shape influencer-brand relationships could also prove insightful.

To conclude, the study underscores how influencer marketing shapes brand perceptions and loyalty. By embracing authenticity, relevance, and transparency, brands can forge deeper connections with consumers in the digital age. As influencer marketing continues to evolve, adapting to consumer preferences will be pivotal in driving success.

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## Appendix

### **Questionnaire**

#### **Demographic Information**

1. Gender - (A) Male (B) Female
2. Age Group - (A) 18 to 24 (B) 25 to 34 (C) 35 to 44 (D) 45 to 54 (E) Above 55
3. Instagram Usage - (A) Daily (B) Regularly (C) Frequently (D) Occasionally (E) Rarely

#### **Brand Reputation**

*(A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) Neutral (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree*

1. The brand's Instagram content consistently reflects its core values and identity.
2. The brand's Instagram posts effectively communicate its positive attributes.
3. The brand's Instagram presence influences my perception of its reputation.
4. The brand maintains a favourable image through its Instagram activities.
5. The brand's Instagram interactions with customers enhance its overall reputation.

#### **Brand Loyalty**

*(A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) Neutral (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree*

1. I feel emotionally connected to the brand due to its Instagram content.
2. I tend to choose the brand over competitors because of its Instagram presence.

3. I am more likely to engage with the brand's posts on Instagram because of my loyalty.
4. The brand's Instagram content fosters a sense of loyalty among its customers.
5. I trust the brand more due to its consistent Instagram engagement with customers.

### **Influencer Authenticity**

*(A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) Neutral (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree*

1. The influencers the brand collaborates with seem genuinely interested in the products/services.
2. The content posted by influencers aligns with their personal opinions and experiences.
3. I perceive the influencers' endorsements of the brand as authentic and sincere.
4. The influencers' involvement in brand promotions doesn't feel forced or insincere.
5. The influencers' interactions with the brand on Instagram come across as authentic.

### **Influencer Desirability**

*(A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) Neutral (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree*

1. The influencers that the brand chooses to collaborate with are appealing to me.
2. Seeing influencers use the brand's products/services makes me more interested in them.
3. The brand's association with desirable influencers positively affects its image.
4. I am more likely to explore the brand's offerings if my favourite influencers endorse them.
5. The brand's Instagram collaborations with influencers match my interests and preferences.

### **Influencer Collaboration**

*(A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) Neutral (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree*

1. The brand's collaboration with influencers effectively captures my attention.
2. Influencers play a significant role in influencing my perception of the brand.
3. The brand's Instagram content featuring influencers is engaging and interesting.

4. Collaborations with influencers contribute to a more appealing Instagram feed for the brand.
5. The influencer-brand partnerships on Instagram add value to my overall brand experience.

## List of Tables

<b>Table No</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No</b>
1	Gender	45
2	Age Group	46
3	Education Qualification	47
4	Normality Test	48
5	Hypothesis Results	49
6	KMO and Bartlett's Test	50
7	Exploratory Factor Analysis	50
8	Reliability Analysis	54
9	Pearson's Correlations Test	55
10	Collinearity Test	56
11	Mediation Test	57
12	Moderation Test	58

## List of Figures

<b>Figure No</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No</b>
1	Types of Influencers	23
2	7P's of Marketing	36

3	Maslow's Theory	39
4	Brand Equity Model	42