



## **Exploiting The Reputation Of Influencers And Their Credibility To Their Followers In The Process Of Marketing Services Through Social Media**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate whether spending on influencer marketing through social media platforms has substantially increased in recent years and how this practice affects customers. Through a proposed "social media influencer value model" accounting for advertising value and source credibility dynamics, an online survey of social media users who followed at least one influencer evaluated the impact of follower trust and perceptions of influencer credibility, attractiveness and similarity on attitudes towards branded influencer content and downstream outcomes like brand awareness and purchase intentions. The popularity of obtaining news and recommendations through influencers - defined as ordinary individuals turned online celebrities via niche content creation around areas like fashion, lifestyle and travel - has surged among young demographics in particular. Given emerging consumer informational dynamics, understanding how to leverage influencer marketing has become increasingly important for brands according to the conceptual underpinnings of this study. By testing pathways from influencer characteristics to audience trust, branded content resonance and commercial outcomes, the survey aimed to provide enhanced empirical insights into this phenomenon highlighted as transforming contemporary marketing communications.

### **Keywords**

the reputation of influencers, marketing services, social media.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Influencer marketing has emerged in recent years as a prominent new approach within social media marketing. This involves collaborations between brands and influential social media users, often described as influencers, to promote products, services and brand image to their audience (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Whereas celebrities were traditionally used to endorse mainstream brands and products for the mass market, influencer marketing leverages so-called "ordinary" individuals who have managed to cultivate sizeable followings within niche social media channels and are perceived as trusted experts or taste leaders by their particular audience (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). According to marketing researchers, the concept builds upon longstanding ideas like opinion leadership - identifying particularly influential individuals within a given community whose attitudes and behaviours shape consumer decisions (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1966). However, social media has enabled exponentially expanding the reach and impact of such influencers from mainly interpersonal realms to potential followings of millions across the globe (Freberg et al., 2011).

Various categorizations differentiate tiers of influencers based on factors like public recognition levels and number of followers. For example, mega-influencers with celebrity status and followers in the millions; macro-influencers with moderate public recognition and 100,000 to 1 million followers, typically subject experts like journalists harnessing social media presence;



micro-influencers defined as everyday persons with 1,000 to 100K followers, perceived as highly accessible and authentic; and nano-influencers at the grassroots level with less than 1,000 followers but strong bonds within a niche audience community (De Veirman et al., 2017). The perceived credibility and costs associated with collaborating with these different influencer types consequently varies substantially. But generally, micro and nano-influencers are suggested to have greater authenticity compared to remotely elite mega influencers despite their smaller audience reach potential (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021).

The rising popularity of influencer marketing as a brand strategy stems from the range of unique benefits it putatively offers compared to traditional media and communication approaches. Studies indicate substantially higher rates of message effectiveness, credibility and audience engagement with branded content delivered via influencers rather than company-sponsored channels (Schouten et al., 2020). Additional strategic advantages highlighted include financial cost-effectiveness due to the ability to leverage an influencer's established personal brand awareness; more precise audience targeting and segmentation facilitated by niche influencers with highly defined demographics; enhanced consumer trust in branded messaging and product claims due to third-party validation from perceived industry experts (Trivedi & Sama, 2020); exponential message diffusion from network effects as followers actively share influencer content (Kumar et al., 2016); and rich performance tracking through engagement metrics to refine future initiatives (Saboo et al., 2016).

However, influencer marketing also poses an array of ethical issues and negative externalities, ranging from transparency and adequate disclosure around sponsorships to broader societal impacts like promotion of overly consumerist lifestyles (Fransen et al., 2015). Critical analysis reveals the practice enables increasingly blurred lines between independent opinion leadership and paid promotional content, while regulations continue to lag behind this rapidly evolving social media driven phenomenon (Evans et al., 2017). Specific social issues centre on vulnerable groups like adolescents, where research indicates potential well-being consequences from excessive social media usage and internalization of messaging from online personas (Ferguson et al., 2014; Nurhayati et.al., 2021). Therefore, continued analysis of the appropriate roles, responsibilities and regulations remains vital as influencer marketing proliferates across consumer brand strategies. The study goes on to provide an in-depth, balanced discussion of both the opportunities and pitfalls presented by this evolving influencer ecosystem now deeply embedded within modern social media landscapes.

## **METHOD**

The researcher determined the goal of the focus groups, which is the objectives of these The study, which was previously mentioned, then the researcher prepared a guide for focused discussion, where it begins The guide contains an introductory page about the researcher and the purpose of the study, specifying the place and date discussion and general characteristics of the participants in terms of gender and academic year. The guide contains a set of open questions related to these questions. The study, and in the end, general observations on each focus group, and the researcher was keen recorded and transcribed the discussions, then transcribed the data and wrote final report of the results. Focus groups were used in this study as a qualitative research tool to gather information from the study sample, which is a collection of people. They are gathered to discuss a subject and offer their opinions in groups of five to ten. It is built on the sharing of individual experiences, viewpoints, and emotional expressions and trends.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### Statistical procedures for research

#### First: the psychometric properties of the study:

The psychometric properties of the scale were verified by calculating both the validity and reliability, as follows:

#### 1- Internal consistency validity:

The researcher used the Pearson correlation coefficient to verify the internal consistency of the scale, by calculating the correlation coefficients between the degrees of the sub-dimensions and the total score of the scale.

**Table 1. Pearson's correlation coefficients between sub-dimensions the overall score of the scale**

Dimensions	number of paragraphs	Correlation coefficient	Sig
Reasons why brands use influencer campaigns	9	0.843	**
Influence of consumers by influencers	9	0.899	**
Disadvantages of using influencers in promotion	9	0.925	**
Marketing services through social media	14	0.926	**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It is clear from the previous table that:

the values of the coefficients are high, which reflects the relationship between the different dimensions and the extent of their representation of the scale, and this is largely reflected on the degree of credibility of these dimensions, as it achieved statistically significant correlation coefficients with the total score of the scale ranged between (0.843 to 0.926) and this Confirms that the scale has a high degree of validity.

#### 2- Scale reliability:

The stability of the scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha stability coefficient, as shown in the following table:

**Table 2. The reliability coefficients of Alpha Cronbach**

Dimensions	number of paragraphs	Alpha Cronbach coefficient
Reasons why brands use influencer campaigns	9	0.816
Influence of consumers by influencers	9	0.814
Disadvantages of using influencers in promotion	9	0.782
Marketing services through social media	14	0.871
scale	41	0.945

It is clear from the previous table that:

The reliability coefficient of Alpha Cronbach for the total scale was (0.945), which indicates the high reliability of the scale, and the values of Alpha Cronbach's coefficient confirmed the reliability of these dimensions significantly, as the values of the reliability coefficient of the dimensions ranged between (0.782 to 0.871), which reflects a high degree of reliability of the tool Used to express the dimensions of the scale.

#### Second: the demographic characteristics of the study



The responses to the search terms presented to the respondents were limited and numbered (200), and the distribution of the responses was as follows

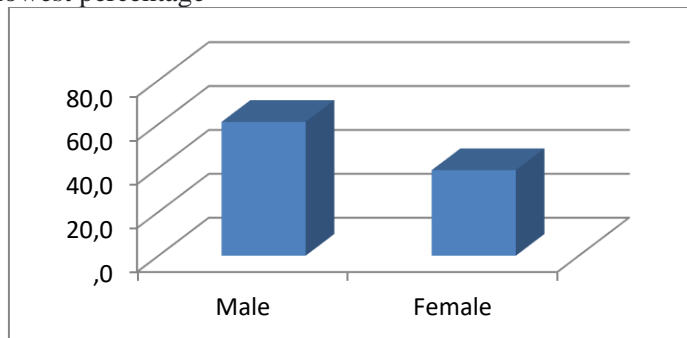
### 1-Distribution of responses according to Gender

**Table 3. Distribution of responses according to Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	122	61.0
Female	78	39.0
Total	200	100.0

**It is clear from Table (3) that:**

- (61%) of the respondents Chose (Male), which is the highest percentage, (39%) of the respondents Chose (Female) which is the lowest percentage



A graph showing the distribution by Gender

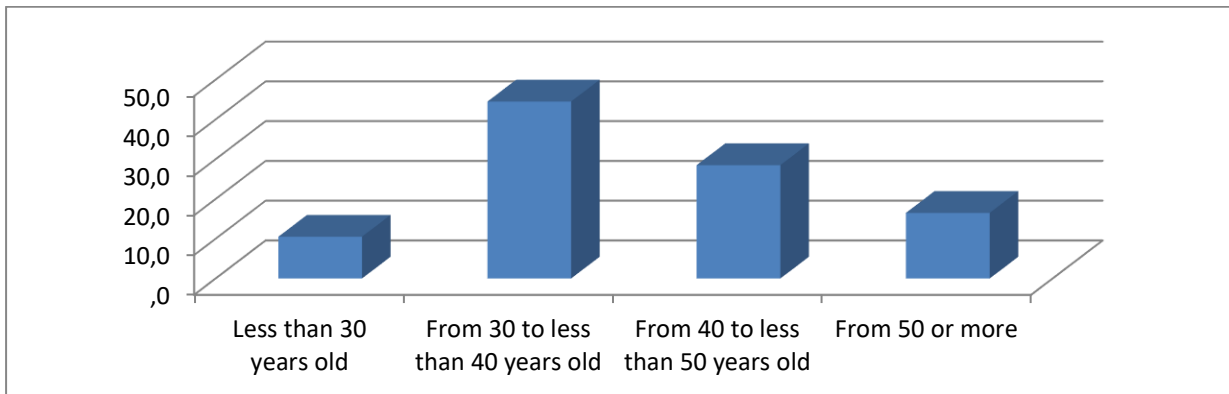
### 2-Distribution of responses according to Age

**Table 4. Distribution of responses according to Age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 30 years old	21	10.5
From 30 to less than 40 years old	89	44.5
From 40 to less than 50 years old	57	28.5
From 50 or more	33	16.5
Total	200	100.0

**It is clear from Table (4) that:**

- (44.5%) of the respondents Chose (From 30 to less than 40 years old), which is the highest percentage, (10.5%) of the respondents Chose (Less than 30 years old) which is the lowest percentage



A graph showing the distribution by Age

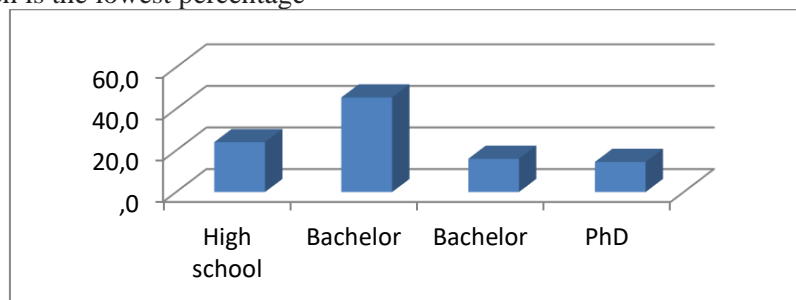
**2-Distribution of responses according to Academic qualification**

**Table 5. Distribution of responses according to Academic qualification**

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percentage
High school	48	24.0
Bachelor	91	45.5
Bachelor	32	16.0
PhD	29	14.5
Total	200	100.0

It is clear from the previous table:

- (45.5%) of the respondents Chose (Bachelor), which is the highest percentage, (14.5%) of the respondents Chose (PhD) which is the lowest percentage



A graph showing the distribution by Academic qualification

**Third: Descriptive statistics for the study:**

The researcher developed the results of the current study by analyzing the results of the scale items and arranging the items for each of the axes according to relative importance as follows:

**1- Descriptive analysis of the dimension items” Reasons why brands use influencer campaigns”**

The researcher used the statistical methods (frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean and standard deviation) for each paragraph of the dimension to arrange them according to their importance and extracted the following results:



**Table 6. Arrange the paragraphs of the the dimension” Reasons why brands use influencer campaigns” in order of their importance**

paragraphs	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight	Rank
Obtaining abundant marketing information that traditional means do not provide	200	4.705	0.519	94.10%	1
Benefit from the follow-up of influencers	200	4.410	0.643	88.20%	2
Communicate directly with clients	200	4.355	0.649	87.10%	3
Take advantage of the popularity of social media influencers	200	4.350	0.640	87.00%	4
Working to make influencers agents of the brand	200	4.310	0.605	86.20%	5
Provide supporting evidence that helps in accepting the content and increasing the added value	200	4.270	0.632	85.40%	6
Sharing personal experience that influences trust in content provided by influencers	200	4.160	0.753	83.20%	7
Enable the consumer to choose the information he wants to obtain	200	4.145	0.733	82.90%	8
Connect with people who share the same interests as clients	200	4.105	0.712	82.10%	9
<b>General Mean</b>		<b>4.312</b>			

**It is clear from Table (6) that:**

- In the first ranking (Obtaining abundant marketing information that traditional means do not provide) with an arithmetic mean (4.705) and a standard deviation (0.519), In the last ranking (Connect with people who share the same interests as clients) with an arithmetic mean (4.105) and a standard deviation (.712).  
-as it is clear that the general mean of the dimension reached its Value (4.312), the value is high on the Likert scale.

**2- Descriptive analysis of the dimension items” Influence of consumers by influencers”:**

The researcher used the statistical methods (frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean and standard deviation) for each paragraph of the dimension to arrange them according to their importance and extracted the following results:



**Table 7. Arrange the paragraphs of the the dimension "Influence of consumers by influencers" in order of their importance**

paragraphs	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight	Rank
The power of the influencer is related to the type of content it provides and its relevance to the aspirations of consumers	200	4.340	0.630	86.80%	1
The consumer feels the transparency of the influencer when he uses the product himself	200	4.300	0.576	86.00%	2
Influencers' use of the product increases consumer confidence	200	4.295	0.632	85.90%	3
Influencer marketing campaigns provide hands-on experience of using products	200	4.280	0.560	85.60%	4
The information provided by influencers can be validated	200	4.265	0.571	85.30%	5
Consumers trust influencers more than companies	200	4.255	0.540	85.10%	6
Consumers buy products that influencers promote	200	4.245	0.630	84.90%	7
Consumers treat influencers as ordinary consumers	200	4.125	0.789	82.50%	8
Influential consumers are the mediators of the brand	200	4.040	0.832	80.80%	9
<b>General Mean</b>		<b>4.238</b>			

**It is clear from Table (7) that:**

- In the first ranking (The power of the influencer is related to the type of content it provides and its relevance to the aspirations of consumers) with an arithmetic mean (4.340) and a standard deviation (.630), In the last ranking (Influential consumers are the mediators of the brand) with an arithmetic mean (4.040) and a standard deviation (.832).
- as it is clear that the general mean of the dimension reached its Value (4.238), the value is high on the Likert scale.

### **3- Descriptive analysis of the dimension items" Disadvantages of using influencers in promotion":**

The researcher used the statistical methods (frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean and standard deviation) for each paragraph of the dimension to arrange them according to their importance and extracted the following results:





**Table No. 8. Arrange the paragraphs of the dimension” Disadvantages of using influencers in promotion” in order of their importance**

Paragraphs	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight	Rank
Influencer marketing reduces consumer knowledge	200	4.460	0.656	89.20%	1
Misinformation as a result of confusing influencers as being agents of the brand or just regular consumers of it	200	4.390	0.583	87.80%	2
There are no guarantees to protect the consumer from commercial fraud	200	4.375	0.683	87.50%	3
There are no controls to regulate the content provided by influencers	200	4.325	0.609	86.50%	4
Influencers are dishonest in disclosing the source of sponsorship	200	4.305	0.532	86.10%	5
Difficulty distinguishing between the opinion of a real influencer and the opinion that has been paid for	200	4.280	0.696	85.60%	6
There are no guarantees for the authenticity of content provided by influencers	200	4.255	0.789	85.10%	7
It is not possible to be sure that the company will pay the influencer for the offer of service benefits	200	4.210	0.754	84.20%	8
There are no mechanisms to protect children from negative role models on social media	200	4.100	0.642	82.00%	9
<b>General Mean</b>		<b>4.300</b>			

**It is clear from Table (8) that:**

- In the first ranking (Influencer marketing reduces consumer knowledge) with an arithmetic mean (4.460) and a standard deviation (0.656), In the last ranking (There are no mechanisms to protect children from negative role models on social media) with an arithmetic mean (4.100) and a standard deviation (0.642). -as it is clear that the general mean of the dimension reached its Value (4.300), the value is high on the Likert scale.

**4- Descriptive analysis of the dimension items” Marketing services through social media”:**

The researcher used the statistical methods (frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean and standard deviation) for each paragraph of the dimension to arrange them according to their importance and extracted the following results:





**Table No. 9. Arrange the paragraphs of the dimension” Marketing services through social media” in order of their importance**

paragraphs	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Weight	Rank
Social media marketing services provide excellent customer support	200	4.485	0.634	89.70%	1
Marketing services through social media works to familiarize customers with all the services provided by the company, especially those who have not dealt with it before	200	4.415	0.604	88.30%	2
Companies are interested in using all modern technological means and methods in marketing services through social media to increase service quality levels	200	4.365	0.569	87.30%	3
Companies are interested in providing all payment methods to customers through social media	200	4.360	0.585	87.20%	4
The efficiency of companies in meeting customer services through the marketing of services through social media contributes to improving the mental image of them and increasing their popularity among customers	200	4.360	0.576	87.20%	5
Marketing services through social media reduces the cost of the service provided, which contributes to reducing service prices	200	4.330	0.651	86.60%	6
Marketing services through social media contributes to customers comparing the prices of services provided by the company and competitors	200	4.300	0.585	86.00%	7
Companies are interested in providing the services that customers get through social media as quickly as possible	200	4.285	0.596	85.70%	8
Marketing services through social media contributes to the welfare of customers	200	4.285	0.579	85.70%	9
Companies are interested in meeting customer expectations in the services purchased through social media shopping	200	4.265	0.719	85.30%	10
Companies are interested in responding quickly and promptly to any customer inquiry through social media	200	4.225	0.661	84.50%	11
Social media shopping provides the privacy a customer need	200	4.210	0.654	84.20%	12
Marketing of services through social media helps to increase the efficiency of the performance of companies	200	4.195	0.640	83.90%	13
The current health conditions have contributed to the increase in the spread of marketing services through social media in all companies	200	4.195	0.624	83.90%	14
<b>General Mean</b>		<b>4.305</b>			



**It is clear from Table (9) that:**

- In the first ranking (Social media marketing services provide excellent customer support) with an arithmetic mean (4.485) and a standard deviation (0.634), In the last ranking (The current health conditions have contributed to the increase in the spread of marketing services through social media in all companies) with an arithmetic mean (4.195) and a standard deviation (0.624). -as it is clear that the general mean of the dimension reached its value (4.300), the value is high on the Likert scale.

**Discussion**

In light of the research questions, the researcher discusses the most important findings of the qualitative investigation, by answering each inquiry independently, according to the focus groups:

The researcher raised an argument with the study groups to try to find an answer to this question, and the majority of young people in the survey used Twitter, YouTube, and Snapchat at the fore, followed by Facebook. And discussions about how they perceive the idea of marketing by their favourite influencers and social networks. The use of these facts revealed that social media is used to pass the time, have fun, and connect with friends and acquaintances, but the media is also used it to keep up with current events and news, and some people use it to get jobs (Giang, 2018)

When the groups were questioned about the most important marketing techniques they liked and enjoyed, the most significant responses were as follows:

Promote the product by sharing encouragement and good news: Some groups have asserted that they adhere to influencers who inspire them and “promote positive energy and change,” so the delivery of hope or news is combined with the product in order to make happy things better. It is a powerful marketing tool for followers, spreading love and happiness like a virus, Cheerful and hopeful videos have an impact on viewers as well, and the light and fun entertainment content that goes into it implies the product is not explicit.

The study groups were also questioned about how they perceived this marketing strategy and whether they thought it could help sell items more effectively.

Focus quickly on the target audience: Influencer marketing makes it easy to communicate with them, and the marketing procedure for target markets involves selecting the influencer based on relevance when promoting a clothing brand, for example, fashion is used as an influencer, through this medium, the brand’s customers and followers can Communicate quickly and efficiently with those who share their interest in fashion ( Giang, 2018).

Diversity of influencer marketing tools: In addition to any other marketing strategy, an influencer may use posts, tweets, comments, reposts, shares, YouTube videos, Instagram panels, product images, check-in work, and live video, among other alternatives and tools. other.

If brands turn to micro-influencers or startups, there are not only celebrities, but small brands can use a limited number of influencers due to the diversity of influencers and degrees of influence, resulting in well-known brands or inclusion in the marketing process for all brands (Ganguly, 2015)



When asked about the elements to consider when selecting influencers in the marketing process, a discussion emerged of a number of characteristics to consider, including:

The study sample members believe that it is important to take into account the “age, gender, economic status and educational level of the influencer” when choosing the influencer. The degree to which the characteristics of the target audience and demographic data correspond to the product being advertised.

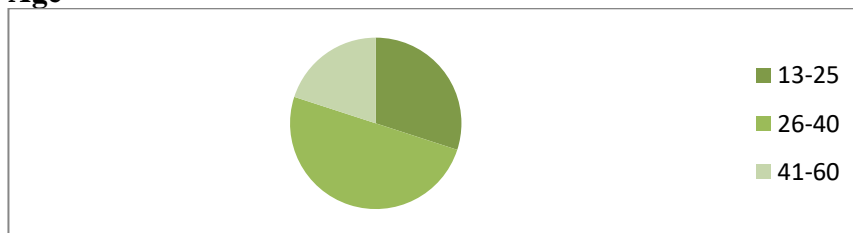
The influencer's lifestyle: the study groups indicate that the interests and priorities of the influencer are important to rely on during the marketing process, "every influencer through networks has his interests, activities, goals and lifestyle." Then, the choice is made according to its life and the compatibility of this style with the product to be marketed, and with the influence of the model also on the target audience. Influencer reputation: the study sample members saw that the influencer's reputation and the extent of the public's trust in him play an important role in his field of influence, hence the importance of verifying the influencer's credibility “and not faking the number of influential people and followers who have purchased fake accounts.”

The popularity of the influencer: This is the most important factor from the university youth's point of view, as the study sample showed “the influencer's popularity and attractiveness in the virtual public space or in real life.” An important factor in choosing “the success of the marketing process, increasing its effectiveness, and delivering the marketing message to the largest possible segment.

Marketing Methods Influencing Competitors: The study sample emphasized the importance of studying competitors and the methods of their selection of influencers, as this will contribute to identifying the effective influencer, and avoiding any other influence on which the competitor depends (Frimpong, 2020).

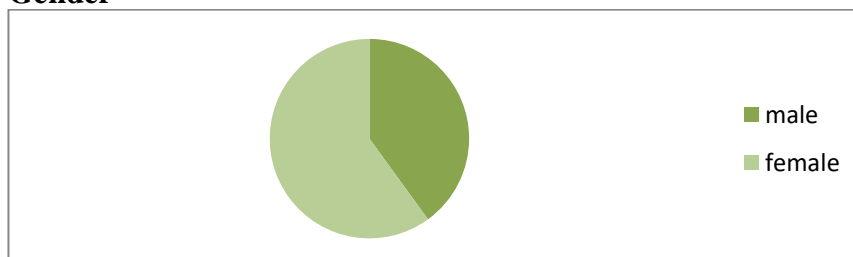
### 5.1 Questionnaire

#### Age



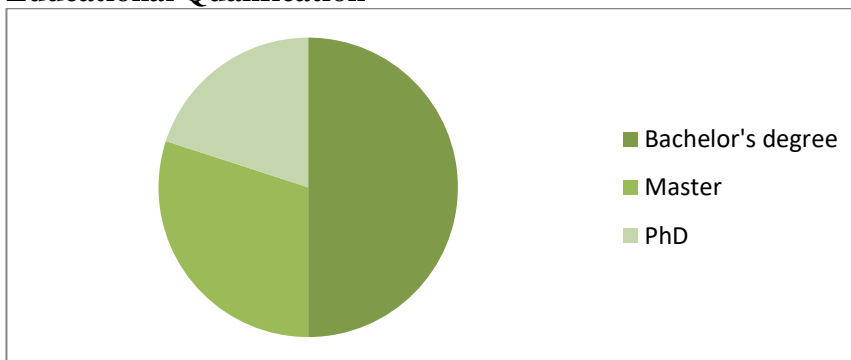
It is clear that those who participated in the survey and their ages ranged from 13-25 30%, from 26-40% 50%, and from 41-60 20%.

#### Gender



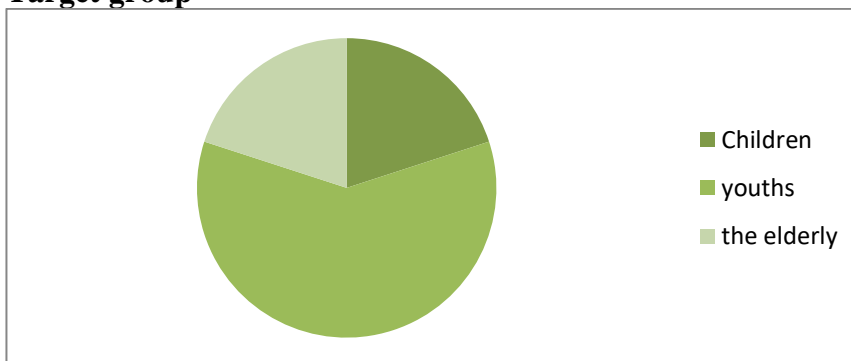
It is clear that those who participated in the questionnaire were 40% of males, and 60% of females.

### Educational Qualification



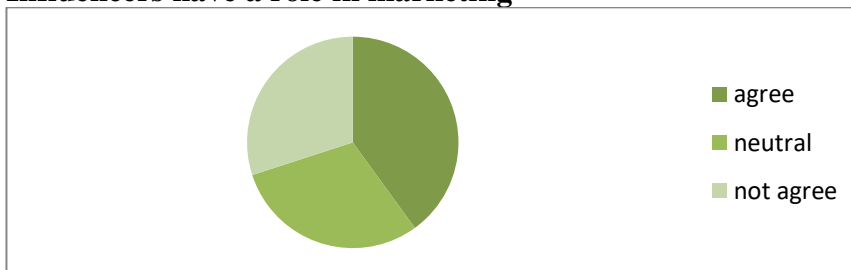
It is clear that those who participated in the questionnaire and obtained a bachelor's degree 50%, a master's degree 30%, and a doctorate 20%.

### Target group



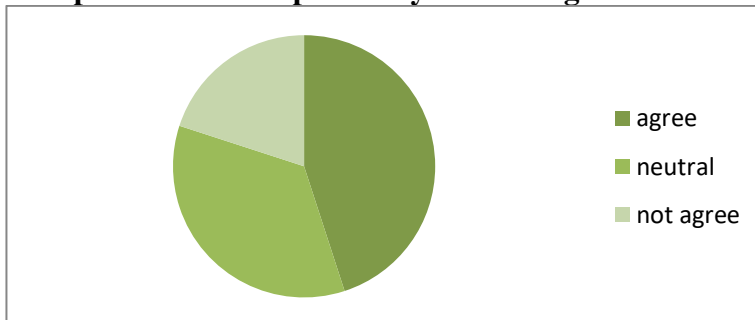
It is clear that those who participated in the questionnaire included 20% of children, 60% of youth, and 20% of the elderly.

### Influencers have a role in marketing



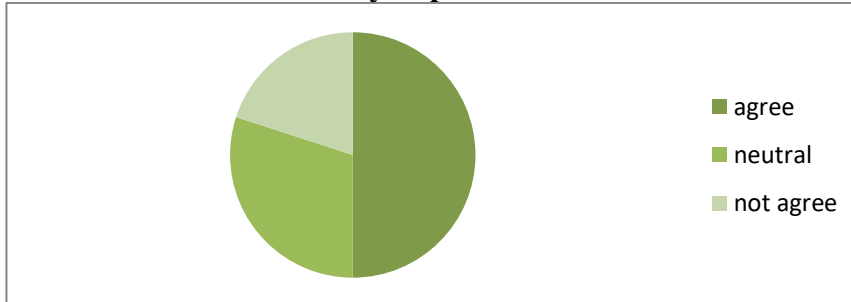
About 40% agreed that influencers have a role in marketing, the neutrals being 30%, and the disapproving 30%.

### Companies increase profits by marketing their services through influencers



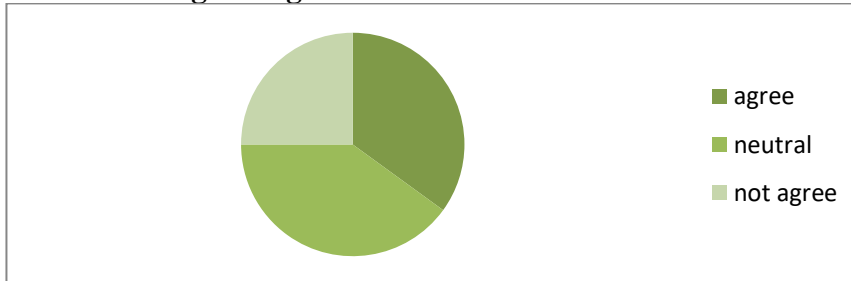
About 45% agree that companies increase their profits by marketing their services to influencers, neutral 35%, and disapproving 20%.

**Influencers have the ability to persuade the audience**



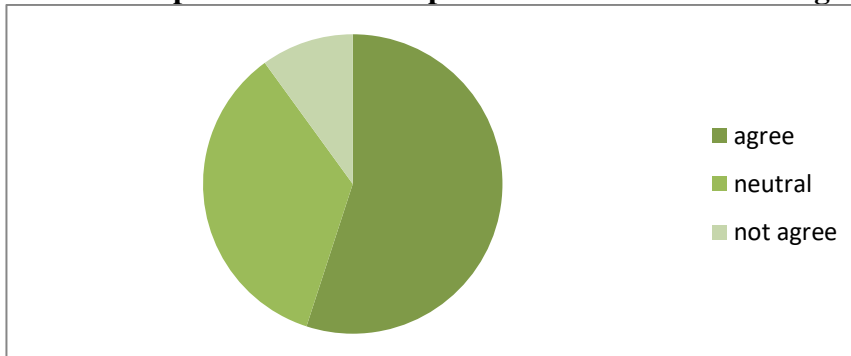
About 50% agreed that influencers have the ability to persuade the audience, neutral 30%, and disapproval 20%.

**There are large categories that follow influencers on social media**



About 35% agreed that there are large groups who follow influencers on social media, neutral 40%, and disapproval 25%.

**Influencers promote different products and services through social media**



About 55% agreed that influencers promote different products, neutrals 35%, and disapprovals 10%.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the research, we can say that technological advancements in the digital era have a significant impact, especially on the marketing sector because practically everyone has access to social media. Use internet shopping tools and other resources to find information, so people can purchase products online without physically leaving their homes. People develop the habit of purchasing online as a result of this life process. Even when shopping online, people have a propensity to look around before making a purchase, which happens frequently in all of our lives. Finding out about



products through various product reviews on the currently popular platforms Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. Indirectly, this is because people who frequently shop online (potential customers) tend to have more faith in reviews of the products they want to buy from influencers, artists, call grams, or YouTubers (content creators) who have large followings. We frequently observe, thanks to the marketing prowess of influencers and others, that a product must be purchased or tried out since it offers a number of advantages. Additionally, influencers have the power to encourage or tempt prospective customers to purchase a specific product. Making potential customers think about a buy long enough to spend money on it without feeling guilty about it. Finally, the phrase "It's better to buy now than regret it later" is frequently heard by prospective customers. This makes it so that potential customers are motivated to have a strong desire to buy a product without any reservations at all, which is to say: they are highly confident.

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