**A Case Study on the topic**

**“Leveraging Social Media Influence for Sustainable Marketing”**

*MBA (Digital Business)*

*Semester 1*

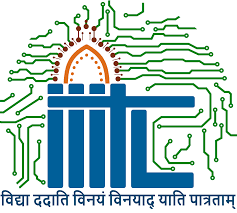
*Term: “2023 – 2024”*

***Submitted by Submitted to -***

***Author 1 – Shiwangi Singh***

***Author 2 – Dyovan Madhav***

***Author 3 – Hrishabh Shukla***



Indian Institute of Information Technology, Lucknow

C.G. City Ahmamau, Lucknow – 226002

06 **/** 12 / 2023

**Abstract:**

In an era where digital connectivity shapes our daily lives, social media has emerged as a powerful tool not only for communication but also as a dynamic force in the realm of marketing. The marketing through social media platforms presents a unique opportunity for businesses to not only enhance their online presence but also contribute positively to the planet. Social media platforms, with their vast reach and influential capabilities, serve as a crucial battleground where brands can either perpetuate unsustainable norms or champion eco-conscious values. In an era dominated by online connectivity, influencers wield significant power to influence public opinion and consumer behavior. As consumers become increasingly conscious of the environmental footprint of the products and services they choose, businesses are recognizing the imperative to align their marketing strategies with sustainable practices. Therefore, this study investigates how social media influencers leverage their reach to promote and advocate for sustainable practices, products, and lifestyles? And analyzes the impact of social media on shaping sustainability discourse, examining how influencers contribute to the dissemination of eco-friendly initiatives and advocate for environmentally conscious choices. Additionally, this study describes the role of social media platforms in fostering a sense of environmental responsibility among their users.

**Keywords:** Social media, Platforms, Influencers, Sustainable practices,

**INTRODUCTION**

The beginning of social media can be traced back to the early roots of communication through the medium of computers and to the initial phase of internet popularity. The emergence of platforms allowing people to interact & share content can be stated as the foundation for what we now know as social media.

The early 2000s that social media platforms began to take their recognizable form and gained widespread popularity. However, it was the launch of *Facebook* that penetrated the internet to become the most popular trend in social media history. Founded by *Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook* initially targeted college students but soon expanded to a broader audience. It’s a simple and unique interface, focused on real people, and features like news feed and photo sharing set a new standard for social networking.

Platforms like *Twitter* popularized micro blogging, allowing users to share thoughts and updates in short passages. *YouTube* revolutionized video-sharing, empowering users to create and share content globally. Later platforms like *Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok* each introduced unique features, catering to specific content formats and audience preferences. Social media's evolution has been marked by constant innovation. The concept of social media expanded beyond personal networking to meet various purposes, including professional networking application called *LinkedIn*, for image-centric sharing *Pinterest*, and messaging apps such as *WhatsApp, Messenger* etcetera. The integration of social features into many aspects of daily life from news consumption to entertainment, activism, and business proves the importance, the impact and versatility of social media.

Today, social media continues to evolve rapidly, shaping communication, culture, commerce, and societal interactions worldwide. Its influence extends to politics, marketing, education, and beyond, making it an indispensable part of the modern digital landscape. The origin of social media represents a transformative journey from early communication tools to a very versatile global network, constantly evolving the system for individuals to connect, share, and engage with the world around them.

**ORIGIN**

In the digital age, the rise of social media has given birth to a new breed of online personalities *The social media influencers*. These individuals wield great power in shaping trends, sharing opinions, and controlling consumer behaviors through their content and substantial online followings. The main attractions of this profession are fame, influence, and the chance of financial freedom, which has sparked a controversial debate; *Is being a social media influencer a viable profession?* Through this case study we will go in depth into this dilemma and dissect the complicated layers of the influencer industry to critically assess its sustainability, the challenges, the opportunities, and the societal impact in the digital landscape.

The concept of social media influencers emerged as a natural evolution within the creation of social media. In the early stages of platforms like blogs, forums, and early social networking sites, individuals began to cultivate niche communities centered around specific interests or expertise. This was the beginning of what would later become the influencer lifestyle.

The start influencer lifestyle can be traced back to the rise of blogging culture in the initial internet popularity. Bloggers, who had the ability to create personalized content and engage with very specific people, became influencers very early within their fields. These individuals established credibility through their knowledge, experiences, and authentic storytelling, which helped them in gathering a very loyal following.

The emergence of platforms like *YouTube* further ignited the influencer lifestyle. *YouTube* offered a space for content creators to share video content. Many personalities started their own channels thus gaining popularity for their expertise in areas such as beauty, gaming, fitness, or lifestyle. Their ability to entertain, educate, and connect with audiences on a personal level set the stage for influencers to multiply and grow. However, it was the rapid expansion of social media platforms like *Instagram, Snapchat*, and later *TikTok* that strengthened the influencer status. These platforms introduced a visually driven format, allowing users to share curated content, videos of their lives, and expertise in a very short sized, engaging formats. *Instagram* with its focus on imagery and visual storytelling, became a perfect platform for influencers. As these platforms evolved, so did the influencer lifestyle. Individuals with substantial followings began collaborating with brands, introducing a new form of marketing that can be called *Influencer marketing.* Brands recognized the potential of partnering with these influential personalities to reach their engaged audiences. The influencer industry continued to diversify, encompassing various niches, from fashion and beauty to travel, fitness, gaming, and beyond. Influencers leveraged their online presence to not only endorse products but also advocate for causes, share experiences, and build communities.

The evolution of social media influencers reflects a transformation from early content creators and bloggers to today's influential figures who have a huge power in their hands in shaping consumer behavior, brand strategies, and social trends. As social media continues to evolve, the influencer lifestyle adapts, presenting new opportunities and challenges.

**Unveiling the journey of ThatBohoGirl**

Ishq FM asked what was your inspiration? Main reason behind choosing this field?

*ThatBohoGirl* aka *Kritika Khurana said “I* was inspired to become an influencer by my passion for fashion, lifestyle, and creative expression. I started my journey by sharing my personal style, fashion tips and experiences on social media platforms. My ability to connect with my audience authentically coupled with my unique sense of style contributed to my rise as an influencer. The positive response and engagement from my followers likely reinforced my dedication to sharing my lifestyle, inspiring others, and building a community around my brand.

Ishq FM asked which platform did she choose first and why?

*Kritika* *Khurana* (*Thatbohogirl*) said “I initially gained prominence on Instagram. Instagram, being a visual-centric platform, suited my passion for fashion and lifestyle content. The platform’s emphasis on photography and visual storytelling allowed me to showcase my unique style and share snippets of my life in a visually appealing way.” Many of the fashion influencers find Instagram to be a suitable platform due to its visual nature and the ability to reach a broad audience interested in lifestyle and fashion content.

Ishq FM asked what was the starting experience?

Though a lot is not known about her early experiences, it is common for influencers to start by sharing their personal interests and style on social media. In the beginning, she often focused on creating authentic content, building a following and engaging with her audience. The challenges may include gaining visibility, experimenting with content, and learning how to navigate the evolving landscape of social media. Over time, as influencers like *Kritika* gain followers and refine their approach, they may attract brand collaborations and opportunities, further solidifying their status in the influencer community.

Ishq FM asked what sort of hurdles she faced in her initial phase and how did she overcome it.

Specific details about the hurdles *ThatBohoGirl* faced in her initial phase as an influencer is not extensively known. But the certain challenges she faced are as such: gaining visibility and standing out in a crowded digital space was challenging. But she worked on creating high-quality and distinctive content to attract attention. Meanwhile growing a dedicated follower base takes time. To overcome this, she often engaged with her audience, utilized relevant hashtags, and collaborated with others to expand her reach.

*Kritika* said “I experimented with various types of content to understand what resonated best with my audience as finding the right content style and niche is a trial-and-error process. Initially, securing brand partnerships was quite challenging. Also, social media platforms keep evolving and algorithms keep on changing so staying informed and adapting to these shifts is crucial for long-term success. I overcame these challenges through perseverance, creativity, and a genuine connection with my audience. Through learning from experiences and refining strategies I stayed adaptable in the dynamic landscape of social media.”

“To summarize, in my initial phase, I faced challenges such as gaining visibility, building a follower base, experimenting with content, securing brand collaborations, and adapting to platform changes.”

Ishq FM asked what sort of content did she prefer? What work is done to present it and the estimated time to complete it?

*ThatBohoGirl* is known for her content focusing on fashion, lifestyle and travel. *Kritika said, “*I preferred content style often involved showcasing my unique fashion sense, sharing insights into my daily life, and featuring my travel experiences. To present my content effectively, I likely invested time on emphasizing high-quality visuals authenticity, consistency and enhancing engagement by actively interacting with my audience through comments, direct messages and participating in trends or challenges.”

The time required to create and present such content varies based on factors like the type of content, production complexity, and personal preferences. *Thatbohogirl* often dedicates a significant amount of time to content creation, editing, and engagement, maintaining a consistent presence to stay relevant on social media platforms.

Ishq FM asked about the total investment made till date into this profession? What was required to purchase and where did she get her seed money?

Specific details about the total investment made by *Kritika* *Khurana* into her profession as an influencer, as well as the sources of her seed money are not publicly disclosed or widely available. She as well as other influencers typically invest in equipment such as cameras, lighting, and editing tools, as well as ongoing expenses related to travel, wardrobes and maintaining an online presence.

Seed money often comes from personal savings, part-time jobs and collaborations with brands and sponsors. Successful influencers may reinvest earnings from brand partnerships back into their content creation and lifestyle, gradually building their brand and expanding their reach. However, the exact financial details of an influencer’s journey are often private unless voluntarily shared by them and so is the case of *Thatbohogirl*.

Ishq FM asked what steps did she take to gain audience and enhance user engagement?

While specific details of *Thatbohogirl’s* strategies cannot be disclosed but the common steps which she as well as many influencers employ to gain audience and enhance user engagement are like focusing on consistent content creation, investing in high visuals, actively interacting with followers and building a genuine connection with them through relatable content. Also understanding and adapting to platform algorithms to maximize visibility and engagement, meanwhile offering a variety of content types such as fashion, lifestyle, and travel to cater to diverse audience interest. By implementing these strategies and staying dedicated to audience engagement, influencers like *ThatBohoGirl* effectively grow their following and create a vibrant online community.

Ishq FM asked about her monetization sources?

*Thatbohogirl* and many such influencers have various monetization sources including brand collaborations where they partner with brands for sponsored content.

*Kritika* said “I promote products or services to my audience. Earning commissions by promoting and sharing affiliate links for products.” She also generates income from advertisements on platforms like YouTube or through ad partnerships on other social media channels. Partnering with sponsors for events, meet-ups or collaborations has also been another source of income generation. Also, she offers paid courses or workshops related to her expertise or niche. It’s essential to note that the landscape of influencer monetization can evolve, and influencers often explore various income streams to diversify their earnings.

Ishq FM asked which platform she considers best and felt most comfortable and why.

*ThatBohoGirl said “I* have been active on Instagram and that platform is often where many fashion and lifestyle influencers feel most comfortable.” As, Instagram’s visual nature allows influencers to showcase their style, engage with followers through images and short videos, and build a distinct brand identity. The platform’s emphasis on aesthetics and storytelling aligns well with influencers in the fashion and lifestyle niche.

Ishq FM asked did covid had any impact on their profession (positive and negative)? Elaborate?

The pandemic has had varied effects on the influencer marketing industry. On one hand, increased social media usage during lockdowns may have presented opportunities for influencers to engage with a larger audience. On the other hand, economic uncertainties during the pandemic could have influenced brand budgets and collaborations.

Influencers who adapted to the changing circumstances, created relatable content, and showed sensitivity to the global situation likely navigated the challenges more effectively.

Ishq FM asked does she find technological advancement a boon to her career? What did she do to enhance her knowledge regarding it?

Technological advancements have generally been beneficial for influencers. Advancements in camera technology, editing software, and social media platforms provide influencers with more tools and opportunities to create engaging content. To stay updated on technological trends and enhance knowledge, influencers often attend workshops and conferences, enroll in online courses to learn about latest tools and techniques, connect with other influencers, creators, and actively explore new features on social media platforms meanwhile stay informed about industry trends, algorithm changes, and new features on relevant platforms.

By actively engaging with technology and staying informed about industry advancements, influencers can leverage new opportunities and stay relevant in their field.

*Kritika* *Khurana* said “I often view technological advancements as beneficial for my career. To enhance my knowledge, I attended workshops, took online courses, networked with industry professionals, experimented with new features on social media platforms, and stayed updated on industry news.”

Ishq FM asked how she finds and attracts sponsors. What is the usual deal she has with them? Elaborate the entire process.

The process of finding and attracting sponsors can vary, but influencers like *Kritika Khurana* (*Thatbohogirl*) attract sponsors by building a strong personal brand, creating consistent and quality content, maintaining high engagement metrics, and actively networking with brands. They use a media kit and rate card to showcase their value, engage in outreach and pitches, and negotiate collaboration terms, which can include sponsored posts, affiliate partnerships, or long-term ambassadorships.

Basically, the entire process involves a combination of personal branding, networking, outreach and negotiation. The specific deals vary based on factors such as the influencer’s reach, engagement, the brand’s goals and the type of collaboration desired. It’s crucial for influencers to maintain transparency and authenticity in their partnerships to preserve trust with their audience.

Ishq FM asked how many platforms she has tried and where has she had success and failure? What are the reasons behind using different platforms?

Kritika Khurana, known as *ThatBohoGirl*, said “I have been active on Instagram and YouTube, where I shared my fashion, lifestyle and travel content.”

Success and failure on different platforms can depend on various factors, including the nature of the content, audience engagement and the influencer’s adaptability.

Successes:

Instagram: Its visual-centric nature suits her fashion and lifestyle content, allowing her to showcase her unique style and connect with a large audience.

YouTube: It provides a platform for longer-form content such as vlogs and more in-depth discussions, which complements her Instagram presence.

Reasons for choosing Different platforms:

Being present on multiple platforms helps influencers reach a broader audience and diversify their content offerings. Also, different platforms attract different demographics, and meanwhile offer various monetization options such as brand collaborations, ad revenue and sponsored content, providing influencers with multiple income streams.

Regarding failures, there’s no such specific information but influencers may face challenges on certain platforms due to changes in algorithms, shift in audience behavior or the evolving nature of social media. Therefore, flexibility and adaptability are crucial for influencers to navigate the dynamic landscape and find success across various platforms.

Ishq FM asked how does she respond to hatred or ill-comments or negativity if it occurs?

*ThatBohoGirl said “I* often address negativity by either ignoring it to avoid escalation or responding calmly to promote positive conversation.” I choose to focus on my content and engage with supportive followers rather than giving attention to hate comments. I practice self-care.” Engaging with constructive criticism and ignoring or filtering out negatively are common strategies.

**To summarize**:

*Kritika Khurana*, known as *ThatBohoGirl* entered the social media influencing field driven by a passion for fashion and lifestyle. Her inspiration stemmed from a desire to share her unique style and connect with like-minded individuals. Starting as a blogger, she faced initial hurdles like building an audience and establishing credibility. Overcoming challenges involved consistent content creation and engaging with her audience authentically.

To enhance user engagement, *Khurana* focused on creating relatable content, interacting with followers, and staying updated with trends. Monetization sources for her included brand collaborations, sponsored posts, and affiliate marketing. The *COVID***-***19* impact led to shifts in content strategies, emphasizing at-home fashion and lifestyle trends.

Attracting sponsors involved maintaining a consistent and authentic brand image. Coping with hate comments included developing a resilient mindset, focusing on positive interactions, and sometimes addressing criticism constructively. Overall, her success reflects a combination of passion, perseverance and adaptability in the dynamic world of social media influencing.

From the interview we can do a complete SWOT analysis of social media influencing.

**Opportunities:**

The introduction of social media has revolutionized the way we present ourselves, speak and even think. One of the most significant reasons for this virtual revolution is the fame of social media influencers. These individuals have gathered substantial followings on diverse platforms and wield tremendous impact over their target market’s behavior. This essay explores the several possibilities that come with being a social media influencer.

**Expanding Reach and Impact:**

Influencers have the possibility to attain audiences a long way from their geographical location. This allows influencers to share their message with a worldwide target market, increasing their impact. Moreover, they often have a greater profound influence over their audience than traditional media, letting them engage their fans to a deeper degree.

**Monetizing Content**

Social media platforms have provided influencers with numerous tactics to monetize their content material. From sponsored posts, advertising, crowd funding and merchandise income, influencers have numerous sources to generate earnings from their content. This financial possibility is one of the main attractions for many aspiring influencers.

**Driving Social Change**

Many influencers use their platform for social exchange. They can attain attention very easily and resolve many problems, take part in causes they agree on, and mobilize their lovers to accomplish that. This functionality to impact alternate is one of the maximum profitable elements of being a social media influencer.

**Continuous Learning and Growth**

Being a social media influencer gives continuous possibilities for gaining knowledge and to boom. To stay relevant, influencers have to keep up with the latest trends, learn new skills, and adapt to changes within the social media scene. This regular studying can be both challenging and thrilling, contributing to personal development.

# Citations

* (n.d.). Retrieved from https://afluencer.com
* Uncut. (n.d.). *Uncut*. Retrieved from YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmMX6-xweUc>
* <https://youtu.be/dPYeZ-LgTBA?si=ULTCOtlqblvencoD>
* <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/drhemantbareth/the-impact-of-social-media-influencers-on-young-minds-navigating-the-positive-and-negative-effects-50818>
* <https://influencity.com/blog/en/what-are-social-media-influencers-and-why-you-need-them-in-your-marketing-strategy>