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Educational Branding Through Instagram Influencers: Effectiveness of Collaborative Approaches

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Abstract

In the ever-evolving digital landscape, collaborations on various social media platforms are on the rise, encompassing both advantages and disadvantages for brands. This research investigates collaborations on Instagram with educational brands and their impact on audience engagement, evaluates their influence on consumer attitudes, perceptions, and trust regarding educational content and associated brands, and identifies the role these collaborations play in shaping consumer decision-making. It addresses the core question: What are the effects of influencer collaborations on visibility, engagement, and perceived ethicality of educational brands? By situating the findings within the framework of media literacy, the study underscores how critical assessment skills empower audiences to navigate influencer content responsibly. The research employs a thorough survey of 285 active Instagram users, utilizing a mixed-method questionnaire comprising Likert and nominal scale questions to provide both quantitative evaluations and qualitative insights. The survey responses were analyzed using correlation analysis through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), ensuring methodological rigor. The results highlight the dual nature of influencer collaborations: while they enhance brand visibility, they also raise questions about ethical practices and learning outcomes, underscoring the need for improved media literacy. Additionally, these collaborations significantly affect customer perceptions and trust, providing businesses with an authentic identity and influencing consumer decision-making processes. This study also contributes to media and marketing research by offering insights for practitioners aiming to design effective and ethical influencer strategies in education, while promoting media literacy among audiences.

Keywords: educational brands, collaborations, instagram, influencers, consumers, brand benefits, social media, digital media, media literacy, branding.

1. Introduction

In this day and age of digital technology, the way in which businesses connect with their customers has been radically revolutionized by the platforms that are available on social media. Instagram is one of these platforms that stands out as a dynamic area where influencers significantly affect the behavior of customers and how they view companies. Instagram is one more platform that stands out. Within the scope of this research study, an investigation is conducted on the expanding pattern of collaborations between educational organizations and Instagram influencers. In order to explore the effectiveness and impact of these partnerships within the context of the educational setting, the goal of this research project is to investigate.

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Over the last several years, Instagram has developed into a strong competitive force in the field of marketing and the promotion of brands. It offers a platform that is visually interesting and communicates with a broad variety of customers, such as students, instructors, and those who choose to continue their education throughout their lives. It is a compelling chance to harness the reach and credibility of social media superstars to communicate with target groups in meaningful ways, and collaborations between educational enterprises and influencers provide this potential. This cooperative endeavour is being carried out within the confines of this flourishing environment. In recent years, Instagram has not only become a platform for personal expression and social connection but also a vital space for businesses to cultivate their brand presence and engage with consumers. Its visually driven interface and user-friendly features have made it a preferred choice for millions of users worldwide, including those within the educational sphere.

With students, educators, and lifelong learners actively participating in the platform, Instagram has evolved into a multifaceted space where educational content thrives alongside entertainment and lifestyle posts. Against this backdrop, collaborations between educational brands and influencers have emerged as a strategic approach to reaching and resonating with target audiences. Influencers, individuals who have garnered sizable followings and wield significant influence over their followers' preferences and behaviors, play a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions and driving engagement on Instagram. By partnering with influencers, educational brands can tap into their authenticity, creativity, and rapport with their audience to amplify their message and foster meaningful connections. These collaborations extend beyond traditional advertising methods, offering educational brands the opportunity to showcase their offerings in a more organic and relatable manner. Whether through sponsored content, product endorsements, or co-created educational material, influencers have the ability to inject personality and authenticity into brand messaging, making it more compelling and memorable for their followers. In turn, this can lead to increased awareness, trust, and loyalty towards educational brands among Instagram users.

However, amidst the allure of influencer collaborations, challenges and considerations abound. From finding the right influencers whose values align with those of the educational brand to navigating ethical considerations and disclosure requirements, there are various factors to weigh in ensuring the success and integrity of such partnerships. Additionally, measuring the effectiveness of these collaborations in terms of reach, engagement, and impact on consumer behavior requires robust analytics and evaluation methodologies.

To provide a structured lens for analyzing these dynamics, a conceptual framework (Figure 1) has been developed to evaluate the efficacy of collaborations between influencers and educational brands on Instagram. The framework outlines the relationships between influencer collaborations, content formats, consumer demographics, and brand outcomes. The primary independent variable is the *collaboration of educational brands with influencers on Instagram*, implemented through varied content formats such as pictures, stories, and reels, which serve as mediating variables.

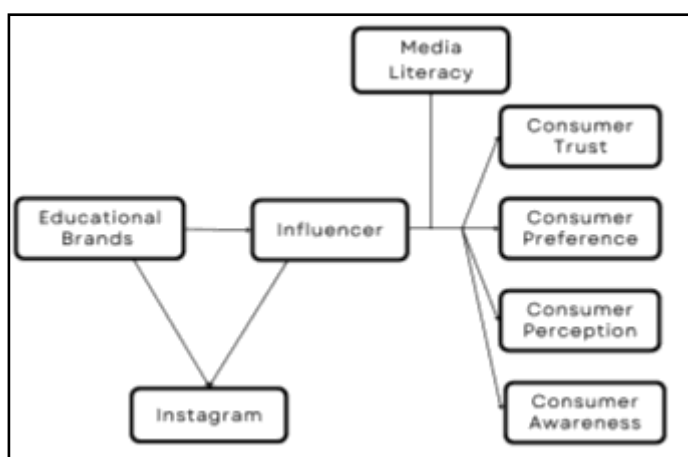


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of Influencer–Educational Brand Collaborations on Instagram
Source: authors

These formats interact with consumer demographics — including age, parental status, and social media habits — to influence perceptions, engagement, and ultimately deliver brand benefits to educational brands. Additionally, the framework incorporates *media literacy* as a moderating variable that influences how audiences critically evaluate the authenticity, ethicality, and effectiveness of influencer-driven educational content. Audiences with higher media literacy are expected to engage more critically with branded content and form more informed perceptions of educational brands.

2. Materials and methods

The study incorporates the application of quantitative statistical methods and research methodologies. The efficacy of embedded advertising for educational brands developed as a result of partnerships and collaborations with influencers on Instagram has been quantified using the survey research method. Leveraging the capabilities of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), an exhaustive statistical analysis was run over the results derived from the survey. After data cleaning and data coding, the connection of causes and their effects on various research variables was computed using correlation analysis.

Research Design

– *Research Type*. Exploratory (aimed at uncovering the nuances of influencer-brand collaborations in the education sector).

– *Research Purpose*. To examine, assess, and measure the impact of influencer-driven collaborations on key effectiveness metrics.

– *Research Approach*. Inductive in order to allow patterns and insights to emerge from the observed data.

– *Sampling Strategy*. Simple Random Sampling, to ensure each member of the target population has an equal probability of selection.

Data Collection

Survey Method

The survey questionnaire is designed basis the inverted funnel sequence. The questionnaire comprises 19 items inclusive of respondent demographics and the responses have been collected using the Likert and Nominal scales. The survey questionnaire was shared among potential respondents as parents and relatives of children as users of the social media platforms Instagram and YouTube to gather relevant data as per the instrument designed. To determine the required sample size for this survey, an N-Test was run. The study aimed to ensure that the sample size was sufficient to detect statistically significant effects given the expected effect size and needed level of statistical power. 285 samples were determined to be necessary in order to get the requisite power. The survey was conducted for a duration of 1 month amongst parents/relatives of children who are users of the social media platform Instagram from Delhi/NCR.

– Structure of Survey: Questionnaire (closed-ended questions).

– Calculated survey sample size: 285.

– Sample Frame – Instagram and YouTube Users aged 18 and above who are parents and relatives of children.

– Respondents: Parents/relatives of children who are users of the social media platform Instagram from Delhi/NCR.

– Time horizon: From August 2023 to September 2023 (One Month).

Correlation Variable Sets:

The following sets (Table 1) of variables were used in the correlation analysis:

Table 1. Correlation Variable Sets

<i>Objective-Based Models</i>	<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Dependent Variable</i>
Model 1: Impact of Instagram Influencer Partnerships on Brand Visibility and Awareness	Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness	Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands
Model 2: Effectiveness of Influencer-Driven Learning Content on Student Engagement	Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement	Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content

<i>Objective-Based Models</i>	<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Dependent Variable</i>
Model 3: Contribution of Collaboration to Learning Outcomes for Students	Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results	Learning outcomes for students
Model 4: Success Perception of Partnerships between Brands and Influencers	Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers	Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers
Model 5: Importance of Ethical Considerations in Influencer Partnerships	Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships	Perception of ethicality in partnerships
Model 6: Agreement on Necessity of Rules and Regulations	Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships	Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations
Model 7: Prioritization of Student Interests by Brands and Educational Institutions	Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities	Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions

This methodological framework, anchored in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)-driven analysis and meticulous survey design, ensures rigor, reliability, and relevance in capturing the intricate interconnections between influencer-driven collaborations and embedded advertising effectiveness in the educational domain. By maintaining methodological precision, the study facilitates an in-depth examination of the research questions under investigation.

3. Discussion

Social networks have become essential spaces for interaction, entertainment, and professional engagement (Martínez, 2016), increasingly influencing human development domains such as education. As in other sectors, Instagram hosts influencers who leverage their visibility to influence audiences (Nieto, 2018). The educational sphere, always striving to innovate and adapt to digital realities, has embraced these environments to disseminate pedagogical content and engage with diverse educational stakeholders (Aldridge, 2019). In this context, educational influencers have emerged as leaders for new audiences, creating and sharing transmedia productions that resonate within the educational field (Marcelo, Marcelo-Martínez, 2021).

On Instagram, various profiles of educational influencers are evident, distinguished by their content types. *Stud-grammers*, for instance, share notes, reflections, and academic tips (Izquierdo-Iranzo, Gallardo-Echenique, 2020), while *bookstagrammers* promote reading culture by showcasing books and literary reflections (Fernández, 2017). *Learning influencers*, often teachers, use Instagram to promote interactive and participatory learning opportunities (Quintana, De León, 2021). Other profiles share didactic resources for classroom or home use, acting as learning mediators (Torres, 2019). Additionally, some educational influencers employ humor and memes to communicate messages effectively to younger audiences (Pérez-Curiel, 2017).

Yet, alongside these innovative uses, influencer-driven educational content has also been drawn into the mercantilist tendencies of digital marketing, with influencers offering their profiles as platforms for promotional and paid partnerships (SanMiguel, 2017).

Two key qualities – credibility and perceived trustworthiness – define a successful influencer as an effective brand advocate (Chu, Kamal, 2008). Credibility remains one of the most crucial elements in persuasion, particularly in digital contexts where consumers cannot physically evaluate products or services. Studies such as Erkan and Evans (Erkan, Evans, 2016) and Katyal et al. (Katyal et al., 2024) have emphasized how perceived credibility of information, argument quality, and message usefulness influence purchase intention. Trust, as explored across disciplines (Cowles, 1997; Fisher et al., 2010), is similarly central in educational influencer collaborations, which must be built upon authentic, transparent narratives to resonate with audiences. Our findings revealed that while influencer collaborations enhance visibility, their impact on engagement and learning outcomes is more ambiguous. This aligns with previous research suggesting that while influencers enhance engagement, they may not directly translate to improved learning (Katyal et al., 2024).

Influencer marketing studies (Audrezet et al., 2020; Lee, Watkins, 2016; Wolny, Mueller, 2013) reveal its potential for boosting visibility, engagement, and brand authenticity. Researchers have documented how influencers' reputation, legitimacy, and transparency are critical in shaping

consumer response (Chu, Kim, 2011; Evans et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2014; Schivinski, Dabrowski, 2016). Other scholarship has highlighted the importance of strategic planning (Borchers, Enke, 2021), ethical collaboration (Borchers, Enke, 2022), and the alignment of influencer and brand values (Booth, Matic, 2011; Uzunoglu, Kip, 2014). Collectively, these studies underscore that successful collaborations depend on more than reach – they require authentic storytelling, ethical standards, and audience trust.

Consistent with Moorman et al. (Moorman et al., 1993), this study found that trust in influencer content strongly influences perceptions of brand authenticity and ethicality, underscoring the need for transparent and credible narratives. Research has shown that content quality, message credibility, and social similarity positively influence trust in digital contexts (Racherla et al., 2012; Lee, Chung, 2009). In the context of this study, these dynamics are critical in understanding how influencer-driven educational content impacts audience engagement and decision-making.

Crucially, this study also highlights the role of media literacy in moderating audience perceptions of influencer collaborations. Being media literate does not mean rejecting influencer-driven educational content outright; rather, it enables audiences to critically assess collaborations and engage more meaningfully with those aligned to their educational values and needs (Song, Kim, 2025). For parents and relatives – the primary audience in this research – who are continually exposed to influencer narratives, media education fosters a critical lens that helps them discern intent, credibility, and ethicality in content (Naderer, 2023). As Livingstone et al. (Livingstone et al., 2013) emphasize, media literacy has dual benefits: it shields audiences from manipulation while empowering them to engage constructively and creatively with digital narratives. Educational brands can enhance their strategies by comprehending how media-literate consumers assess the authenticity and ethicality of influencer collaborations. This approach ensures transparency, fosters trust, and establishes more robust, value-based relationships with their audiences.

In today's digital ecosystem – where audiences are inundated with a mix of influencer content, AI-generated media, and branded user-generated posts – it has become increasingly difficult to discern genuine narratives from manufactured ones. This growing ambiguity heightens the importance, yet complicates the achievement, of perceived authenticity in influencer communications (Kaufmann et al., 2016; Lou, Xie, 2021). Building trust in such an environment requires not only adherence to ethical standards but also a nuanced application of storytelling tools and techniques that resonate credibly with informed, media-literate audiences.

Overall, these findings reinforce that while influencer collaborations in education offer significant opportunities for increasing brand visibility and audience engagement, their effectiveness ultimately depends on credibility, ethics, and the media literacy of their audiences. Thus, fostering media literacy becomes not just a protective measure but a strategic necessity for cultivating trust and promoting informed, critical engagement in digital education environments.

4. Results

Correlation Analysis: All seven pairs of variables examined across the models show measurable correlations, indicating meaningful relationships between the independent and dependent variables in each case. Specifically, the analysis suggests that changes in factors such as the impact of influencer partnerships, effectiveness of influencer-driven content, perceptions of ethicality, and prioritization of student interests are associated with corresponding shifts in brand visibility, engagement, learning outcomes, and stakeholder perceptions. The results reveal significant positive correlations for visibility, but mixed or negative correlations for engagement, learning outcomes, and ethical perceptions, suggesting both opportunities and challenges in educational influencer collaborations.

The detailed correlation coefficients and significance levels for each model derived using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) are presented in separate tables below.

Model 1: Impact of Instagram Influencer Partnerships on Brand Visibility and Awareness

Table 2. Correlation Between the Impact of Instagram Influencer Partnerships and Brand Visibility and Awareness

Correlations				
			Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness	Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands
Spearman's rho	Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.567**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands	Correlation Coefficient	.567**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

– Independent Variable: Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness.

– Dependent Variable: Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: 0.567.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Model 1 investigates the effect of Instagram influencer connections on visibility and awareness in the education industry. The independent variable, which represents the effect of these collaborations, has a substantial positive correlation (Spearman's rho = 0.567, $p < 0.001$) with the visibility and awareness measures of educational brands, the dependent variable (Table 2). The correlation is highly significant, implying that as the effect of Instagram influencer collaborations grows, so will the visibility and awareness of educational companies. The sample size for this research is 285, ensuring an adequate foundation for the discovered connections. These results indicate that influencer collaborations on Instagram play an important role in increasing the visibility and awareness of educational businesses, emphasizing the significance of such partnerships in the digital marketing environment.

Model 2: Effectiveness of Influencer-Driven Learning Content on Student Engagement

– Independent Variable: Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement

– Dependent Variable: Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.007

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p = 0.898$ (not significant)

– Sample size (N): 285

Model 2 investigates the effectiveness of influencer-driven learning material in enhancing student engagement, using engagement metrics as the dependent variable. Surprisingly, no significant link was found between the efficiency of influencer-driven learning material and engagement measures (Spearman's rho = -0.007, $p = 0.898$) in a study of 285 samples (Table 3). This lack of significance implies that the efficacy of influencer-driven learning material has little impact on student engagement measures in this setting. While unexpected, these results suggest that variables other than influencer-driven material may play a larger role in promoting student engagement in educational environments.

Model 3: Contribution of Collaboration to Learning Outcomes for Students.

Table 3. Correlation Between Effectiveness of Influencer-Driven Learning Content on Student Engagement

<i>Correlations</i>				
			Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement	Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content
Spearman's rho	Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.007
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.898
		N	285	285
	Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content	Correlation Coefficient	-.007	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.898	.
		N	285	285

Table 4. Correlation Between Contribution of Collaboration to Learning Outcomes for Students

<i>Correlations</i>				
			Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results	Learning outcomes for students
Spearman's rho	Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.420**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Learning outcomes for students	Correlation Coefficient	-.420**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285

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

– Independent Variable: Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results.

– Dependent Variable: Learning outcomes for students.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.420.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Model 3 investigates the contribution of influencer-driven learning material to enhanced learning outcomes, using student learning outcomes as the dependent variable. Based on a sample size of 285, the research shows a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.420, $p < 0.001$) between the impact of influencer-driven learning material and student learning outcomes (Table 4). This highly significant link shows that as the contribution of influencer-driven learning material grows, students' learning results are likely to decline. Such results suggest that, although influencer partnerships may have certain advantages, they may not always translate into better learning outcomes for students in this specific situation.

Model 4: Success Perception of Partnerships between Brands and Influencers

– Independent Variable: Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers.

– Dependent Variable: Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.299.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Table 5. Correlation Between Success Perception of Partnerships between Brands and Influencers

Correlations			Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers	Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers
Spearman's rho	Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.299**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers	Correlation Coefficient	-.299**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285

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

Model 4 investigates the perception of the effectiveness of collaborations between educational companies and influencers, with perceived success serving as the dependent variable. Based on a sample size of 285, the study shows a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.299, $p < 0.001$) between the perceived success of partnerships and their perceived success (Table 5). This extremely significant correlation shows that when perceptions of the effectiveness of relationships between educational businesses and influencers rise, the perceived success of these partnerships falls. Such results point to a possible mismatch between stakeholders' perceptions and the actual success outcomes of brand-influencer relationships in the education sector.

Model 5: Importance of Ethical Considerations in Influencer Partnerships

Table 6. Correlation Between the Importance of Ethical Considerations in Influencer Partnerships

Correlations			Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships	Perception of ethicality in partnerships
Spearman's rho	Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.265**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Perception of ethicality in partnerships	Correlation Coefficient	-.265**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285

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

- Independent Variable: Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships.
- Dependent Variable: Perception of ethicality in partnerships.
- Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.265.
- Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).
- Sample size (N): 285.

Model 5 analyzes the significance of ethical issues in influencer collaborations and their relationship to perceived ethicality in partnerships. Based on a sample size of 285, the research shows a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.265, $p < 0.001$) between the relevance of ethical concerns in influencer collaborations and the sense of ethicality (Table 6). This very substantial correlation shows that as the relevance of ethical issues grows, the impression of

ethicality in relationships decreases. Such results emphasize the importance of ethical concerns in influencer relationships in the educational sector, as well as the necessity for stakeholders to prioritize ethical practices to improve the perceived ethicality of these collaborations.

Model 6: Agreement on Necessity of Rules and Regulations

Table 7. Correlation Between Agreement on Necessity of Rules and Regulations

Correlations			Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships	Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations
Spearman's rho	Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.418**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations	Correlation Coefficient	-.418**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285

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

– Independent Variable: Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships.

– Dependent Variable: Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.418.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Model 6 investigates the agreement on the need for clear norms and regulations regulating partnerships, as well as the correlation between this agreement and perceptions of their efficacy. The study demonstrates a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.418, $p < 0.001$) between the agreement on the importance of clear rules and regulations and the assessment of their efficacy, based on a sample size of 285 (Table 7). This extremely substantial link shows that when people agree on the need for clear rules and regulations, their perceptions of their efficacy tend to decline. These results point to possible inconsistencies between stakeholders' understanding of the need for laws and their trust in the efficiency of current regulatory frameworks regulating influencer collaborations.

Model 7: Prioritization of Student Interests by Brands and Educational Institutions

– Independent Variable: Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities.

– Dependent Variable: Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.007.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p = 0.898$ (not significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

In *Model 7*, the research looks at the agreement on prioritizing student interests above promotional efforts, as well as the relationship between brand and educational institution priority. Based on a sample size of 285, the study finds a non-significant correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.007, $p = 0.898$) between the agreement to prioritize student interests over promotional activities and the actual prioritization of student interests by businesses and educational institutions (Table 8).

Table 8. Correlation Between Prioritization of Student Interests by Brands and Educational Institutions

<i>Correlations</i>				
			Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities	Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions
Spearman's rho	Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.007
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.898
		N	285	285
	Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions	Correlation Coefficient	-.007	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.898	.
		N	285	285

These data indicate that there is no substantial correlation between stakeholders' agreement on prioritizing student interests and the degree to which brands and educational institutions prioritize these interests in practice within the educational sector.

5. Conclusion

Collaborations between educational businesses and Instagram influencers are becoming more popular in the field of digital marketing. The purpose of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of such collaborations in the educational area, specifically their impact on audience engagement, consumer perceptions, and decision-making processes. The study imparted insights into the potential and constraints of influencer partnerships in the educational setting by conducting a thorough investigation of seven models using correlation analysis. The data revealed a robust relationship between influencer collaborations and brand visibility and awareness, demonstrating influencers' capacity to increase brand exposure on Instagram. While influencer-driven material showed promise in increasing engagement metrics, its effect on actual learning outcomes was less clear, indicating a need for further research into the elements influencing educational outcomes in such partnerships. Furthermore, stakeholders' views of partnership success sometimes differed from actual results, emphasizing the significance of matching expectations with reality for successful partnerships.

The findings highlighted a substantial correlation between influencer collaborations and brand visibility and awareness, demonstrating influencers' capacity to increase brand exposure on Instagram. While influencer-driven material showed promise in increasing engagement metrics, its effect on actual learning outcomes looked less certain, indicating the need for more investigation into the elements influencing educational outcomes in such partnerships. Furthermore, stakeholders' views of partnership success sometimes differed from actual results, emphasizing the necessity of matching expectations with reality for successful partnerships. Ethical issues and legal frameworks have emerged as significant elements in influencer partnerships. The research emphasized the necessity of transparent and ethical behaviors in maintaining credibility and found a strong correlation between stakeholders' attention to ethics and perceptions of ethicality. Furthermore, although stakeholders generally agreed on the significance of prioritizing student interests, there seemed to be a disconnect between intentions and behavior in reality.

In conclusion, although influencer collaborations provide potential opportunities for educational companies to interact with audiences and increase their exposure on Instagram, they also present ethical, regulatory, and stakeholder alignment concerns. Addressing these issues requires a holistic strategy that prioritizes openness, honesty, and stakeholder participation. Educational businesses may maximize the impact and integrity of influencer collaborations by employing comprehensive assessment processes, ethical rules, and legal frameworks, resulting in increased efficacy in the digital marketing environment. This study provides useful insights for

both theory and practice, setting the way for future research and innovation in influencer marketing in the education sector.

A key implication of these findings lies in the role of media literacy as a crucial moderating factor. In an increasingly saturated digital ecosystem, where consumers are continually exposed to persuasive messaging and influencer-driven narratives, media literacy empowers audiences to critically evaluate the credibility, authenticity, and intent of brand communications. Audiences equipped with stronger media literacy skills are better positioned to identify manipulative tactics, discern authentic content, and align their trust with brands that reflect genuine values and ethical conduct. Promoting media literacy, therefore, becomes essential not only for protecting audiences from misinformation but also for fostering more informed, trust-based, and ethical relationships between educational brands and their audiences.

In conclusion, while influencer collaborations offer significant potential for educational organizations to engage audiences and elevate their presence on platforms like Instagram, these partnerships also raise critical ethical, regulatory, and stakeholder alignment concerns. A comprehensive strategy that prioritises transparency, accountability, ethical practices, and stakeholder engagement is necessary to address these challenges, while concurrently promoting media literacy among audiences. By adopting such holistic strategies, educational brands can maximize the impact and integrity of influencer collaborations, ensuring greater efficacy and trust in the evolving digital marketing environment. This study contributes valuable insights for both theory and practice, providing a foundation for future research and innovation at the intersection of influencer marketing, education, and media literacy.

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