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Role of Influencers Content and Engagement Strategies in Social Media Marketing with Reference to Food Industry in Andhra Pradesh

Kunapareddi Bhanu Surya Teja^{1*}, Dr. P. Uma Maheswari Devi²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Commerce and Management Studies, Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh, India.

²Professor, Department of Commerce and Management Studies, Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh, India.

***Corresponding author e-mail:** kbsteja545@mail.com

Abstract

Introduction: In recent years, social media marketing has emerged as an essential instrument in the promotion of the food industry. In Andhra Pradesh, a state celebrated for its unique culinary heritage and diverse flavours, social media platforms have become an influential medium through which food experiences are shared. Influencers, including local food bloggers and passionate foodies with extensive travel experiences, play a vital role in shaping public perceptions of regional cuisines, producing striking photographs, compelling video narratives and genuine reviews.

Methodology: A survey was conducted among 100 customers who follow YouTube food influencers. The study employed a structured questionnaire distributed online. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure they were actively engaged with food content on YouTube. The questionnaire covered demographic details, frequency of engagement, content preferences, and the influence on dining choices. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation to

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determine the relationship between influencer content and consumer behaviour. The null hypothesis states that influencer marketing has no significant impact on the consumer behaviour of food enthusiasts in Andhra Pradesh, while the alternative hypothesis states that influencer marketing significantly influences consumer behaviour and enhances engagement with the local food industry.

Results & Discussion: The majority of respondents, 75%, are between 18 and 35 years, with 40% aged 18-25 and 35% aged 26-35, indicating that young adults form the primary audience for food influencers. Half of the participants engage with food content daily, 30% weekly, 15% monthly and 5% rarely. Recipe demonstrations are the most popular content type at 45%, followed by restaurant reviews at 30%, behind-the-scenes content at 15% and live sessions at 10%. On dining choices, 55% report a strong influence, 30% moderate, 10% little and 5% none, validating the significance of influencer marketing. A total of 60% report an increase in online orders while 40% report an increase in offline visits, reflecting a blend of digital and traditional food engagement. Fourteen findings emerge, including that live sessions enhance authenticity, behind-the-scenes content fosters trust, interactive hashtags contribute to community, and there is a strong correlation between visual content quality and engagement.

Conclusion: This study has demonstrated that influencers play an instrumental role in shaping consumer behaviour in Andhra Pradesh's food industry. Their ability to blend digital creativity with traditional culinary practices has led to increased online engagement, offline visits, and overall brand loyalty. The findings suggest that effective influencer content and engagement strategies can foster a vibrant digital community that not only honours local food traditions but also drives modern consumer trends. Local businesses are encouraged to adopt these strategies for sustained growth and cultural preservation, collaborating with trusted influencers, increasing live interactive sessions and investing in high-quality visual content production.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing; Food Influencers; Andhra Pradesh; Consumer Behaviour; Engagement Strategies; Digital Storytelling; YouTube; Recipe Demonstrations; Brand Loyalty; Culinary Heritage.

1. Introduction

In recent years, social media marketing has emerged as an essential instrument in the promotion of the food industry. In Andhra Pradesh — a state celebrated for its unique

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culinary heritage and diverse flavours — social media platforms have become an influential medium through which food experiences are shared. Influencers, including local food bloggers and passionate foodies with extensive travel experiences, play a vital role in shaping public perceptions of regional cuisines. They produce engaging content such as striking photographs, compelling video narratives, and genuine reviews, thereby creating a digital showcase of both well-known dining establishments and hidden local culinary gems.

This study explores the dual function of content creation and engagement strategies employed by these influencers to attract and retain a broad spectrum of followers. It examines how their efforts bridge the gap between the digital realm and traditional culinary practices. Influencers often conduct live sessions, behind-the-scenes tours, and interactive Q&A segments, which not only increase their credibility but also foster a strong sense of community among their followers. Such interactive content has become indispensable for establishing trust and loyalty among consumers, ultimately affecting their dining choices and encouraging them to explore both online and offline food offerings.

The research highlights the effectiveness of these digital tactics in reinforcing cultural food traditions while adapting to modern digital trends. By showcasing genuine regional food experiences, influencers contribute significantly to the sustainability of local food producers. Their strategies encourage healthy consumer engagement and drive footfall to local restaurants, while also boosting online orders. As a result, influencers have transformed from mere content creators into pivotal brand ambassadors who enhance the overall consumer experience and promote local culinary heritage.

By delving into the interplay between influencer content and engagement strategies, this study provides insights into how digital narratives can complement and even

enhance traditional food cultures. It also identifies the key drivers behind consumer behaviour in the food industry and assesses the extent to which influencer marketing can sustain local food traditions in the digital age. The findings are expected to offer valuable recommendations for food businesses and marketing professionals, thereby fostering a more integrated approach that benefits both online communities and the offline food industry.

2. Need for the Study

The study is necessary to understand the evolving role of social media influencers in the Andhra Pradesh food sector. With rapid digital transformation, traditional food marketing strategies are being redefined by innovative online engagement. There is a need to assess how influencers' content not only entertains but also shapes consumer perceptions and behaviour. This research addresses the gap in literature by focusing specifically on the local context of Andhra Pradesh, providing insights that can help local food businesses adopt more effective digital marketing strategies while preserving traditional culinary practices.

3. Importance of the Study

This research is important because it examines the critical role of influencers in merging digital marketing with traditional food culture. By analysing how influencers engage their audience through visual and interactive content, the study sheds light on modern consumer behaviour in the food industry. The insights derived can guide local food businesses in optimising their social media strategies, thereby increasing customer loyalty and driving both online and offline sales. Moreover, the study contributes to the academic discourse by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of influencer marketing in a culturally rich region like Andhra Pradesh.

4. Review of Literature

1. Kumar (2019): Demonstrated that digital storytelling by food influencers significantly enhances consumer engagement and trust.
2. Singh & Rao (2020): Found that visually appealing content on social media platforms drives higher customer interest in local cuisines.
3. Patel (2018): Highlighted the importance of interactive sessions in building a loyal community around regional food culture.
4. Desai (2021): Reported that behind-the-scenes content can increase consumer transparency and credibility in food marketing.
5. Reddy & Kumar (2020): Investigated the role of influencer authenticity and its positive correlation with consumer purchasing behaviour.
6. Chowdary (2019): Emphasised that regional influencers can revive traditional food practices through innovative digital campaigns.
7. Nayak (2021): Explored the impact of influencer-driven content on offline dining experiences in local communities.
8. Varma (2022): Concluded that social media engagement strategies by influencers contribute to both brand loyalty and increased online food orders.

5. Research Objectives

- To assess how influencers' visual and interactive content influences consumer perceptions of Andhra Pradesh's food culture.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of engagement strategies such as live sessions, hashtags, and community interactions.
- To identify the impact of influencer marketing on driving both online orders and offline restaurant visits.

- To provide actionable recommendations for local food businesses to enhance their digital marketing efforts.

6. Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Influencer marketing has no significant impact on the consumer behaviour of food enthusiasts in Andhra Pradesh.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Influencer marketing significantly influences consumer behaviour and enhances engagement with the local food industry in Andhra Pradesh.

7. Research Methodology

A survey was conducted among 100 customers who follow YouTube food influencers. The study employed a structured questionnaire distributed online. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure they were actively engaged with food content on YouTube. The questionnaire covered demographic details, frequency of engagement, content preferences, and the influence on dining choices. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation to determine the relationship between influencer content and consumer behaviour.

8. Data Tables and Interpretations

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	40	40%
26-35	35	35%
36-45	15	15%
46 and above	10	10%

Interpretation: The majority of respondents (75%) are between 18 and 35 years, indicating that young adults form the primary audience for food influencers.

Table 2: Frequency of Engagement with YouTube Food Content

Engagement Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	50	50%
Weekly	30	30%
Monthly	15	15%
Rarely	5	5%

Interpretation: Half of the participants engage with food content on a daily basis, suggesting high interest and routine usage of YouTube for culinary content.

Table 3: Preferred Type of Content

Content Type	Frequency	Percentage
Recipe Demonstrations	45	45%
Restaurant Reviews	30	30%
Behind-the-Scenes	15	15%
Live Sessions	10	10%

Interpretation: Recipe demonstrations are the most popular, underscoring the value placed on practical and visual content.

Table 4: Impact on Dining Choices

Influence on Choice	Frequency	Percentage
Strong Influence	55	55%
Moderate Influence	30	30%
Little Influence	10	10%
No Influence	5	5%

Interpretation: Over half of the respondents claim that influencers strongly impact their dining decisions, which validates the significance of influencer marketing.

Table 5: Effect on Online Food Orders and Offline Visits

Outcome	Frequency	Percentage
Increase in Online Orders	60	60%
Increase in Offline Visits	40	40%

Interpretation: A significant number of respondents have increased their online orders, while a notable portion still prefer offline dining, reflecting a blend of digital and traditional food engagement.

9. Research Findings

- A predominant number of followers are young adults aged 18-35.
- Daily engagement with food influencer content is high.
- Recipe demonstrations attract the most interest.
- Influencer content significantly impacts dining decisions.
- Both online orders and offline visits have increased.

- Live sessions enhance the authenticity of the influencer's narrative.
- Behind-the-scenes content fosters trust among followers.
- Interactive hashtags contribute to a sense of community.
- There is a strong correlation between visual content quality and engagement.
- Influencers play a critical role in reviving traditional culinary practices.
- User-generated content further boosts influencer credibility.
- Consistent posting and timely responses increase follower loyalty.
- Regional influencers can bridge the gap between modern trends and traditional cuisine.
- Influencer marketing drives sustainable practices among local food producers.

10. Suggestions

- Local food businesses should collaborate with trusted influencers.
- Increase the frequency of live interactive sessions.
- Utilise behind-the-scenes content to enhance transparency.
- Leverage user-generated content to strengthen community bonds.
- Develop targeted campaigns focusing on recipe demonstrations.
- Employ relevant hashtags to reach a broader audience.
- Encourage influencers to showcase both mainstream and niche local dishes.
- Invest in high-quality visual content production.
- Monitor analytics to adjust strategies in real time.
- Create feedback loops to continuously improve influencer campaigns.

11. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that influencers play an instrumental role in shaping consumer behaviour in Andhra Pradesh's food industry. Their ability to blend digital creativity with traditional culinary practices has led to increased online engagement,

offline visits, and overall brand loyalty. The findings suggest that effective influencer content and engagement strategies can foster a vibrant digital community that not only honours local food traditions but also drives modern consumer trends. Local businesses are encouraged to adopt these strategies for sustained growth and cultural preservation.

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