

**A REVIEW ON VIRAL MARKETING AND ITS STRATEGIC
IMPLICATIONS ON SUSTAINABLE INDIAN BRANDS****Dr. Abhishek Subhash Deokule¹, Dr. Shalini Gulecha²**¹ Assistant Professor of Marketing, SIES College of Management Studies, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.² Associate Professor of Marketing, SIES College of Management Studies, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.**Abstract:**

Viral marketing is the most effective strategic marketing tool which can ensure market leadership, product differentiation, customer engagement and retention. This tool is an effective combination of technology with products or services as it could ensure competitive advantage and excellence. This marketing strategic tool also utilizes social media to a larger and greater extent which ensures reach and retention. This tool has been effectively used for marketing promotions across global industries. Movie & song promotions has been very successful with this tool, however it is also known and evident that academic researches have not been done on these aspects. The role and impact of viral marketing on Indian brands, performance, outcomes and profits needs to be researched and explored. The dynamic relationship between viral marketing and its strategic implications on Indian brands and branding has to be researched which has been attempted very limited. This research is exploratory and conclusive in nature. This research by nature uses secondary data for its review exploration and exposition on viral marketing and its strategic implications on sustainable Indian brands towards 2030. This study would provide new impetus, directives and marketing implications towards viral marketing orientation and its implications on sustainable Indian brands towards 2030. This study would identify the research gaps and provide the potential areas of research for future also.

Keywords: Viral Marketing, Strategic Marketing Tool, Customer Engagement, Social Media, Indian Brands.

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Introduction:**Viral marketing: origins spread and impact**

The word viral has its origins related to medicine as it is connected with some unknown element which spreads very fast and the contamination is very hard to control. The same principles and practices do apply for certain form of marketing strategies {Abbas, A. F., et.al (2020 & Hendrayati, H., & Pamungkas, P. 2020} which also spurt in a moment from a company or industry which redefines the marketing orientations, purposes and shapes the industry towards sustainability and excellence. The marketing strategy and orientation are contagious in its strong impact as it continues to shape the functional, dynamic, decision making pursuits of any organization. This has short term benefits and long term sustainability also. The concept of viral from medicine has been used in strategic marketing and its orientation to denote a sudden spurt or fast movement of a particular approach which makes the industry wake up from its normal ways of thinking

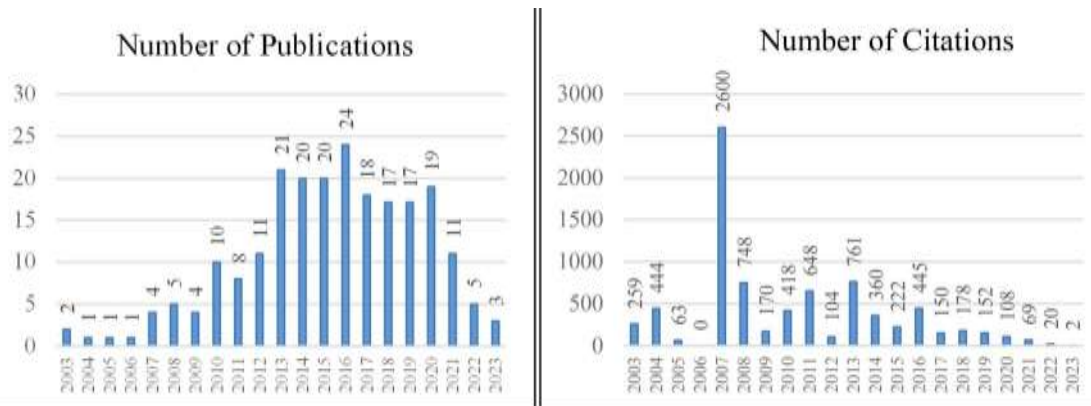
{Aggarwal, K., & Arora, A. (2023)} and approaches. This could alter the way and functioning of the entire industry as it instills new thinking as it fosters new approaches and methods. This could also ensure strategic marketing excellence as company's benchmark excellence with good products and services. This could also be called a volunteering form of marketing promotion {Lopes, J.et.al (2019 Lopes, J. M.et.al (2021)} done by the benefited customer or it could be done as a part of companies marketing strategy as well.

The word Viral could be defined as the active involvement and engagement of consumers about products and services which soon turn out to be frenzy, buzzy and turns to be addictive. The consumer's active engagement {Akpinar, E., & Berger, J. (2017 & Donthu, N et.al (2021)} through word of mouth and online engagement make this possible. The spread of the message – virally is done by the consumers to take interest and responsibility to spread positive information on products and services which becomes a heat wave soon. The message is spread across and consumers start buying the products and services very actively.

Viral marketing is the modern form of marketing where in consumers engages themselves actively with the company's products and services as they are happy and would like to spread the message. The negative experiences by nature could also be spread through this viral marketing – with the use of various online platforms, blogs, reviews and comments on website. The continuous active engagement {Al Abri, D., & Valaee, S. (2020 & Fard, M. H., & Marvi, R. (2020)} spreads the message on company's products and services, sales experiences, post sale responses which spreads virally – very fast which is termed as viral marketing. It provides strategic differentiation and effective engagement with the customers as they are provided with novelty, innovation {Bačík, R., & Fedorko, I. (2017)} and new approaches. This provides them total enjoyment, happiness as it directs towards effective engagement and retention of customers in the long run also. The world has become more dynamic functional active and progressive with techno inputs, orientations and its effective management.

This techno orientation has had a strong positive impact {Amnieh, I. G., & Kaedi, M. (2015)} and influence on marketing and its orientations also. The modern world functions more integratively and holistically with social media as their pertinent role could never be ignored.

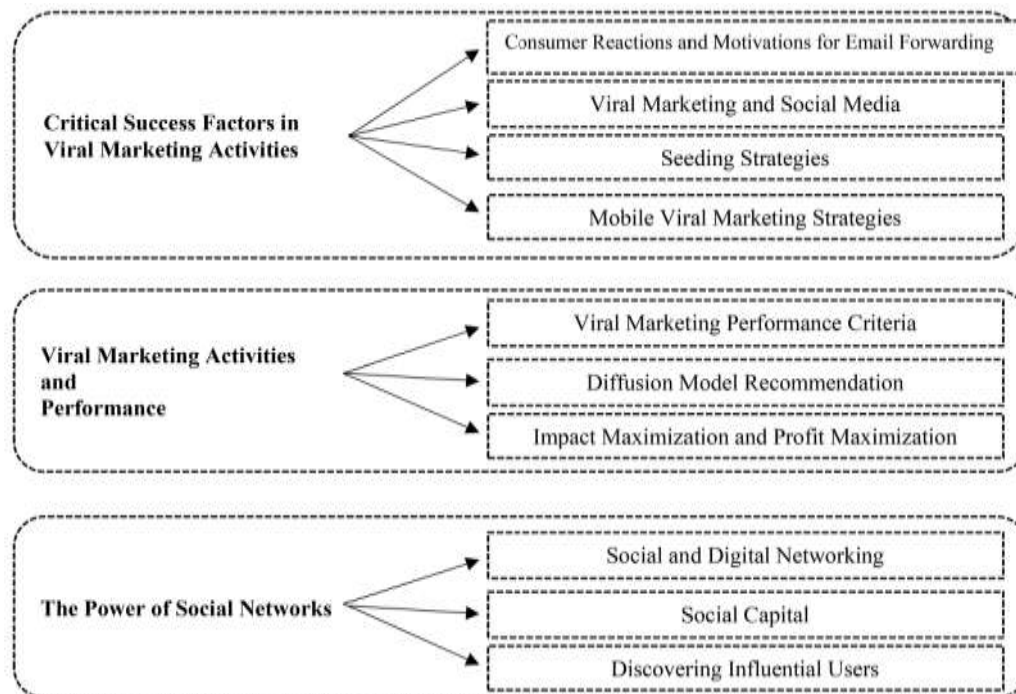
Viral marketing is effectively and purposively done with social media elements as it could also be called as ewom (electronic word of mouth). This strategy is also termed as Guerrilla marketing as the marketing strategy and its attack by the company is sudden which shakes and alters the normal functioning of the entire market mechanisms. The viral marketing can also be made more focused and engaging with a social cause which is called as social cause marketing or cause marketing {Mukhopadhyay, S.et.al (2022 Nguyen, H. T.et.al (2017)} or content marketing. As this strategy uses social media to a larger extent –this marketing strategy could also be termed as social media oriented viral marketing. Bibliometric studies on the development of research orientations and its significance has been done to denote {Çakirkaya, M. and Aytaç Afşar, Ö., 2024} Bibliometric and content analysis of viral marketing in marketing literature and understand the prominence and importance of Viral marketing across global countries. It has been evident from this study that viral marketing has been the most significant marketing tool reach masses. This could be categorized as the low cost strategy {Singh, S. S.et.al (2022)} which ensured differentiation and marketing excellence with prominent engagement with customers. This marketing strategy also ensures a very high new potential consumer conversion.



Source: {Çakirkaya, M. and Aytaç Afşar, Ö., 2024}

This study has been done with Web of science as 222 research studies between 2003 to 2023 has been evaluated and analyzed. It is evident that research publications on viral marketing has been become very less from 2017 till now – which gives scope for more academic research publications to be done on this domain. This research clearly indicates this research gap which is evident now on viral marketing and sustainability of Indian brands. As the publications have been phenomenally decreasing since 2017, it is also evident that the number of citations on viral marketing has been very less which also indicates futuristic scope of this domain.

This review clearly points out there is an immense potential on this academic research area which needs to be exploited which can be effectively utilized by academic researches and professionals in global industries.



Source: {Çakirkaya, M. and Aytaç Afşar, Ö., 2024}

Prominent Research Gaps:

It is also evident that very limited researches have been done on critical success factors of viral marketing and its implication on Indian Inc. industry specific strategies and approaches of viral marketing and its positive impact on profits and performances in Indian organizations has to be researched which also has not been done to a greater extent. The role of social media and its dominating influences on viral marketing strategies which could lead to balanced growth, regional development, inclusiveness and socio economic contributions has never been researched which also could be attempted. The next section would deal with analysis and evaluations on viral marketing and researches conducted.

Research Design:

This review paper would be exploratory and conclusive in its nature and approach. This research is exploratory as it explores in to the various researches conducted on viral marketing since 2015 till date. The analysis of this review paper has been much focused as it deals with research papers done on viral marketing in 2023 & 2024 only.

The research is conclusive as it would provide strategies for future research in this field by identifying the research gaps. Secondary data analysis would be done as inferential and evaluative analysis would be done.

Problem Statement:

Viral marketing has been an emerging field which has huge potential as it has been rightly used by global marketers. With technology impetus and social media – this marketing tool has ensured consumer engagement{ Adesokan, A.et.al(2023) Adesokan, A.et.al(2024) Yang, M.et.al(2023} retention as the spread of right information to the consumers in a faster way is ensured with Ewom(electronic word of mouth). As research studies have not been done on this vital domain – this review paper would examine and highlight various researches conducted globally in this field. This would also provide new impetus and perspective on very less researches conducted in this field. The research aims to fulfill this gap as the necessary awareness would be created on this field with this review paper.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To validate the various academic researches done on viral marketing till date
2. To examine and evaluate the researches conducted on viral marketing in 2024
3. To provide research gaps and potential for researches on viral marketing

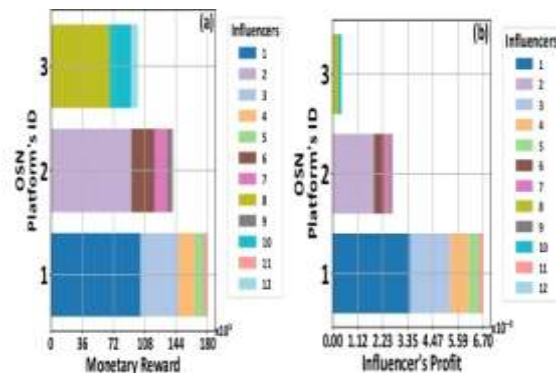
Scope and Limitations:

1. This study has been done as secondary data oriented study only
2. This study covers researches conducted on viral marketing only

Analysis and Evaluations:**Influstrust & Online Social Media (2024 Study)**

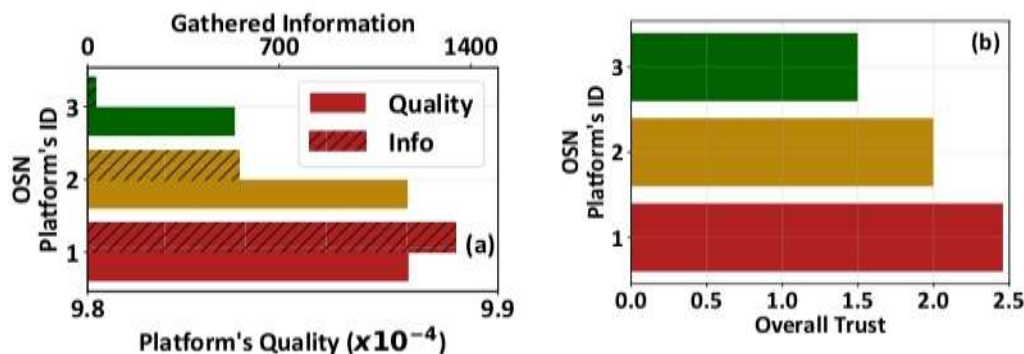
Adesokan, A., Rahman, A.B. and Tsiropoulou, E.E., 2024 had done research study on the role and impact of Influstrust on global organizations and their performances. It has been evident from this study that Influstrust really has a positive impact on marketing campaigns done which has been effective with online social media. This Influstrust framework {Adesokan, A et.al(2023 Yang, Y.; Pei, J(2021} using specific algorithm enables users to select product from online social media

platforms as it also ensure effective engagement. The formal and informal social relationships have a strong impact on trust which leads to more influences as the users are convinced as they make purchases also.



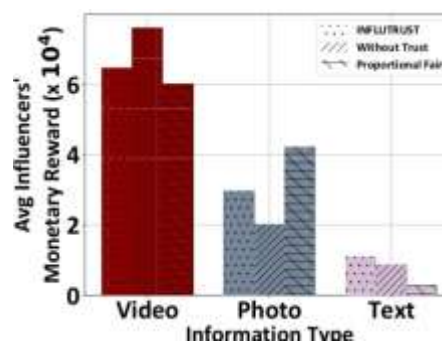
Source: Adesokan, A., Rahman, A.B. and Tsiropoulou, E.E., 2024

It is evident from the above chart that viral marketing has a huge impact on influencers as they are able to gain monetary rewards and profits. However the role and impact of viral marketing { Pham, P.N.H.et.al(2021 Wang, L.et.al(2021) and its implications on sustainable Indian brands has not been done as this research identifies this research gap which is evident now.



Source: Adesokan, A., Rahman, A.B. and Tsiropoulou, E.E., 2024

In this study it is evident that viral marketing strategy done through online social media platforms has a positive and strong impact on overall trust on the products and services. It helps in consumer engagement, retention and purchases.

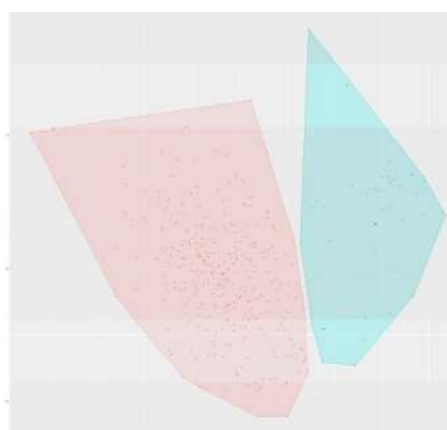


Source: Adesokan, A., Rahman, A.B. and Tsiropoulou, E.E., 2024

It is evident that videos are the most popular form of influencers in social media platforms as it role on sustainable Indian brands {Guo, J.; Zhang, Y.; Wu(2023 Barik, R et.al(2022} and branding strategies has not been researched or evaluated which needs to be done also. However it is found that the dimensions of viral marketing and its influences on sustainable Indian brands have not been studied or evaluated as this research gap is found with this review paper.

Social Media Influences and Marketing Strategies: 2024

Ilieva, G.et.al 2024. Had done research study on the role and impact of social media and its influences on marketing strategies of organizations. This study by nature evaluates the specific and purposeful impact of social media {Rahman, A.B et.al 2022. Tang, J.; Zhu, Y.; Tang, X.; Han, K(2022} and its influences on attitudes of customers and behavior during purchases. All these factors have been evaluated in this study.



Source: Ilieva, G.et.al 2024

This clustural analysis clearly indicates a positive response of influencer's opinions in social media for agreeableness and product purchase {Teng, Y.W.et.al(2021} by potential customers. However it is also found that researches have to be done on viral marketing and its implications on sustainability of Indian brands which have not been studied or evaluated which is attempted with this research and it was found that research gap is there which has to be supported with empirical studies in future.

Szkal, A.C.et.al 2024 had done an empirical research to explore and find out the relationship which prevail with influencer oriented marketing strategy and its impact on consumers. It is found in this study that influencers {Luo, J.; Rossi, R.A.; Kong, X.; Li, Y(2023 Agra, A.; Samuco, J.M(2024} do have a positive role on decision making process of consumers as they tend to buy based on their inputs only.

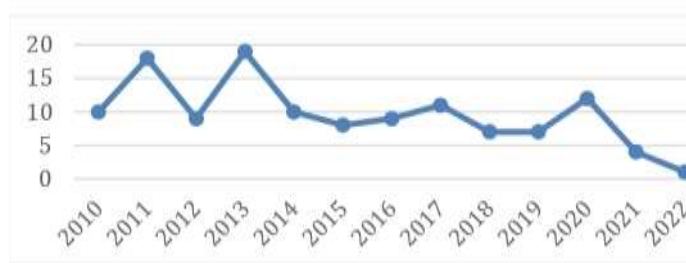
Advantages of Influencer Marketing	Disadvantages of Influencer Marketing
Sincerity	Promotion of products opposite the niche
Visibility	date
High credibility	Lack of sincerity
The speed with which the promoted products can be purchased	Negative influence on consumers through manipulation
Quick access to information	Lack of credibility
Information and detailed description of products	
Getting honest opinions	
Save time and money	

Source: Szkal, A.C.et.al 2024

This research explores in to the advantages and disadvantages of viral marketing {Dinh, T. et.al(2022 Namiranian, M.; Meybodi, M.R(2023} as a core integrative strategy which is influenced by influencers. It is also evident that the role and impact of viral marketing on Indian brands and its sustainability has never been explored empirically as this research is an attempt on it.

Rubiyanti, N., Fakhri, M. and bin Abu Sujak, A.F., 2023 had done bibliometric study on viral marketing and its dominance in academic researches. This research has been done to explore and find out the novel ways of research {Huang, Z.; Li, L(2023 Zhang, L.; Liu, Y.; Cheng, F.; Qiu, J.; Zhang, X(2021 Yu, L.; Li, G.; Yuan, L(2022 Arleo, A. et.al(2022} done in this dimension and it also evaluates its implications.

Academic Researches on Viral Marketing:



Source: Rubiyanti, N., Fakhri, M. and bin Abu Sujak, A.F., 2023

It is evident that academic researches conducted on viral marketing has consistently come down which has to improve {Zhang, Y.(2021 Zhang, J.et.al(2022 Huang, C.et.al(2019 Nie, J.et.al(2024 Wei, X. et.al(2022 Doshi, R.; Ramesh, A.; Rao, S(2023} to a greater extent in the long run. This in itself indicates that there are research gaps on this domain globally {Malhi, A.et.al(2021 Li, Yet.al(2024 Lopez-Dawn, R.; Giovanidis, A(2023} as academic researches must be done on various aspects and implications of viral marketing and its performance based outcomes. It is also evident that viral marketing is an holistic marketing approach which can be researched as it has practical utility and implications on global organizations and their outcomes.

Findings as Per Objectives:

Objective 1: To validate the various academic researches done on viral marketing till date

It has been found that academic researchers have come down on viral marketing since 2022 till date. The nature extent and type of research contributions has been negligible. This research finds out that there is an immense research gap on viral marketing which can be explored by academic researchers and professionals in the field of study.

Objective 2: To examine and evaluate the researchers conducted on viral marketing in 2024

It is evident that empirical researches have not been attempted on viral marketing in 2024. It is also evident that bibliometric and SLR studies have not been done. related studies on social media, influencer marketing has been done, although direct researches on Viral marketing has been found to be less prevalent.

Research Potential and Future Scope in Viral Marketing:

It is found that very limited researches have been done on critical success factors of viral marketing and its implication on Indian Inc. Industry specific strategies and approaches of viral marketing and its positive impact on profits and performances in Indian organizations has to be researched

which also has not been done to a greater extent. The role of social media and its dominating influences on viral marketing strategies which could lead to balanced growth, regional development, inclusiveness and socio economic contributions has never been researched which also could be attempted.

This is a potential dimension which offers immediate reach to consumers as it also ensures effective engagement & retention. This could offer practical marketing strategies for organizational development, growth and contributions. This domain has to be researched as practical solutions and strategies could be provided for sustainability of Indian brands towards 2030.

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