Information sheet and consent to Participate in Research

Greetings students

I invite you to participate in this voluntary research survey, which will take no more than 10 minutes to complete. To qualify for this study, you must be a registered student at UKZN. This survey aims to gather feedback on perceptions of social media influencer marketing among university students in rural and urban settings. My name is Portia Mbali Fraser, and I am a student at the University of Zululand. This research is solely for academic purposes, as part of my Master’s Degree in Business Management.

Social media has revolutionised traditional marketing methods by giving rise to a new trend known as social media influencer marketing. The presence of SMIs has profoundly impacted many facets of people’s lives. Despite the growing importance of social media influencers in the marketing world, no study has been conducted on the perceptions of South African university students regarding these influencers. Previous studies disregarded rural populations when studying this phenomenon, therefore, the purpose of this study is to compare the perceptions of social media influencer marketing among university students based in rural and urban areas. The data collected will be used for research purposes only and will help improve understanding of social media influencer marketing among rural and urban university students. All responses will remain confidential and will be used solely for this study. Participation in this research is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. To ensure the anonymity of your responses, you will not be asked to provide any identifiable information. Furthermore, the privacy of your responses will be protected by storing the information in a way that is accessible only to the researcher or through a request to the Head of Department.

I have attained ethical clearance for the study at the University of Zululand with ethical clearance No. UZ-REC 0691-008. If you have any queries or concerns please contact my supervisor at [HeeralalS@unizulu.ac.za](mailto:HeeralalS@unizulu.ac.za). Should you decide to withdraw, kindly email me at [201424674@stu.unizulu.ac.za](mailto:201424674@stu.unizulu.ac.za) as soon as possible so that I can source another participant to ensure sufficient data collection and analysis. Your participation will automatically cease should the study be terminated for any reason.

There is no reimbursement for your participation in the study nor are you expected to incur any costs.

Thank you in advance for your participation

Kind regards

Mbali Fraser

0632770459

[201424674@stu.unizulu.ac.za](mailto:201424674@stu.unizulu.ac.za)

**INFORMED CONSENT DECLARATION**

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(Participant)

Research title: **Comparing the perception of social media influencer marketing amongst rural and urban based university students in KwaZulu-Natal.**

I have been asked to take part in the aforementioned study project by Portia Mbali Fraser of the University of Zululand's Department of Business Management.

The nature and the purpose of the research project, and of this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language that I understand.

I am aware that:

1. The purpose of this study is to compare the perceptions of social media influencer marketing amongst rural and urban university students in KwaZulu-Natal.

2. The University of Zululand has given ethical clearance to this research project and I have seen/ may request to see the clearance certificate.

3. By participating in this research project, I will be contributing towards the knowledge about student’s perceptions of social media influencer marketing.

4. I will participate in the project by filling in a questionnaire and returning it back to the researcher.

5. My participation is entirely voluntary and should I at any stage wish to withdraw from participating further, I may do so without any negative consequence.

6. I will not be compensated for participating in the research

7. There is no risk associated with my participation in the project.

8. The researcher intends publishing the research results in the form of dissertation. However, confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained and that my name and identity will not be revealed to anyone who has not been involved in the conduct of the research.

9. I will not receive feedback/will receive feedback in the form of information from the store management regarding the results obtained during the study.

10. I have attained ethical clearance for the study at the University of Zululand with ethical clearance No. UZ-REC 0691-008. Any further questions that I might have concerning the research or my participation will be answered by the researcher at mbali.portia33@gmail.com or 0632770459. You can also contact the researcher’s supervisor at the University of Zululand via Email: HeeralalS@unizulu.ac.za. Or cellphone number- 0746032911. Alternatively, you can contact the University of Zululand’s research office via email: [MthembuNL@unizulu.ac.za](mailto:MthembuNL@unizulu.ac.za), Tel: 035 902 6374.

11. By signing this informed consent declaration, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies.

12. A copy of this informed consent declaration will be given to me, and the original will be kept on record.

I, ................................................................................................have read the above information /confirm that the above information has been explained to me in a language that I understand and I am aware of this document’s contents. I have asked all the questions that I wished to ask, and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of me during the research.

I have not been forced in any way, and I voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned project.

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Participant’s signature Date