



Social Media Influencers and Consumer Attitudes: A Review of Empirical Studies

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Abstract

"This literature review examines the impact of social media influencers on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing research, this study synthesizes findings on the effectiveness of influencer marketing in shaping consumer behavior. The review highlights key factors influencing the relationship between social media influencers and consumer attitudes, including credibility, trust, and authenticity. The findings suggest that social media influencers can significantly impact consumer purchase intentions, particularly when influencers are perceived as authentic and trustworthy. This review provides insights for marketers and brands seeking to leverage influencer marketing strategies to reach their target audiences and drive consumer engagement."

Keywords: social media, digital platform, Gen Z, attitude.

Introduction:

"The proliferation of social media has revolutionized the way individuals interact, communicate, and consume information. Generation Z, in particular, has grown up in a world where social media is an integral part of daily life. Understanding their attitudes and behaviors towards social media marketing is crucial for businesses, marketers, and researchers seeking to effectively engage with this demographic. This review of literature aims to synthesize existing research on Generation Z's attitudes and behaviors towards social media marketing, providing insights into their preferences, concerns, and interactions with online content."

**"Social media and influencer marketing.**

The emergence of social media networks has presented companies and brands with opportunities to utilize these platforms to accomplish their marketing and business objectives. Today, social media marketing is understood as an interdisciplinary and cross-functional process that leverages social media, often in conjunction with other communication channels, to achieve organizational goals by delivering value to stake holders (Felix et al., 2017). It can also be defined simply as "the practice of utilizing social media channels to promote business products or services" (American Marketing Association).

Influencer marketing is regarded as a form of social media marketing that assists companies and brands in increasing awareness and bolstering their image (Reinikainen et al., 2020; Sokolova and Kefi, 2020). It is defined as a strategy in which "a firm selects and incentivizes online influencers to engage their followers on social media, leveraging these influencers' unique resources to promote the firm's offerings, with the ultimate goal of enhancing firm performance" (Leung et al., 2022).

Influencer Marketing

The concept of "influencer marketing" has been for quite some time. Many of us know it as recalled. Before the time of social media, people relied on offline advertisements like "printed ads, radio, and television for product recommendations" (Foroudi, 2019). But the brands could not keep new consumers. They could not communicate or maintain engagement with the consumer even after brands adopted social-media platforms as their primary means to create employment. By conducting brief research, they could finally understand that influencers in social media can sway consumers in the social media platforms (Lindgreen et al., 2009).

The "influencer marketing" strategy started in the early 18th century as the famous potter Josiah Wedgwood got approval for this work by Queen Charlotte in 1765 by earning the title as "her majesty potter" has influenced a lot on his business. For example, in the period of the "great depression, Coca-Cola has used jolly Santa Claus to convey cheers in the miserable time by focusing on the audience and helping them to remember the joyful qualities of the



brand and their own". And the celebrity endorsement has gained immense popularity and at the same heavy advertisement expenditure.

The pros are mass following, influencing consumers to buy the products they endorse (Baker, 2002). Later it developed by including reality tv stars endorsing products as they perceive them as more relatable and authentic than traditional celebrities to a certain extent. These TV personalities have led their ways to "social media platforms". The social media platforms like "Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube" have taken a tremendous leap in technological development and have become essential to life by updating and posting everything on 'social media platforms'.

Meanwhile, posts updated by celebrities, reality stars and even famous bloggers gathered enormous popularity. By this phenomenon, people followed prominent people "because of their highly engaging content and close interactions with their followers". Recent studies suggested that smartphones and social media have significantly influenced consumer needs, from daily necessities to entertainment and information, which are available on social media platforms. By taking this as an opportunity, these social media platforms have created a social media marketplace.

The consumers are also referring to online presences instead of offline (Chopra et al., 2021), and poor consumer recollection of advertisement will affect the brand recollection. In contrast, in influencer marketing, the chances of happening are significantly less by the Influencer posts drive consumer cognitive behaviour on the advertisement. Pick (2020) has conducted a study on influencer impact on the consumer behaviour, which will influence consumer decision making by taking Influencer credibility perceived by influencer via his posts (source credibility) its impact on purchase intention towards the psychological ownership of consumers, as the brand communication through social media till now is one-way communication while the influencer has two communication which had become a significant component on consumer decision making and influencer are more likeable and credible in his community, and there is an apparent reach which has a positive impact on the brand performance.

This study (Coco & Eckert, 2020) to understand the consumer perception towards influencers in social media platforms and their view on influencer marketing, while mentioning



as traditional public relations outreach for the social media promotions and the influencer marketing is an emerging vehicle to build online relationships in social-media. Supotthamjaree & Srinaruewan (2021), according to the study findings, states followers follow these influencers based on self-interest, whereas women view content that has a use in their lives.

The participants have also mentioned that self-disclosure helped them relate to and trust these influencers to create a bond between them. The influencer credibility will strengthen their relationship. Belanche et al. (2020) studied how the positive behaviour of influencers will affect product promotions. Influencer marketing is treated as a natural resource to share content. Nearly nine out of ten brands prefer influencer marketing and become market leaders to promote social media platforms. The study also studies the moderating role of user involvement in the product category. The study's findings state that users' participation substantially impacts product promotions and indicated that influencer marketing is crucial in fostering brand in social media platforms.

Van Reijmersdal et al. (2020) study results suggest that content disclosure of the influencer in the video has created a better understanding of the brand, and attitude has a less positive impact on the brand. Zhong, Shapoval, & Busser, (2021) whereas the non-content disclosure has a substantial influence on the children”.

Reinikainen et al. (2020) the role of influencers is product endorsement to create interaction and build relationships in social media platforms; meanwhile, the study here examines the “moderating role of audience comments in Influencer marketing”.

Chetioui et al. (2020) study examines consumer attitude towards fashion influenced by following through a conceptual model by using the “theory of planned behaviour” (TPB), and the academic outcomes of prior studies implementing them to Influencer marketing and data of 610 Moroccan respondents take part in the survey.

The PLS model was used for the estimation, and the results show that all the mediating variables have a significant impact on the influencer.

Feng et al. (2020) stated that influenced content is the main narrative for engagement in social media platforms. To analyse further, the author has applied machine learning and deep learning techniques used to study the influence of posts by examining the content captions and



posts in Instagram through the analysis of 7745 posts of 10 social media influencers. Results show that influencer narrative impairs the effectiveness of sponsorship disclosure.

The Campbell & Farrell (2020) study discusses the significant rise of influencer marketing through academic research and market surveys. By leverage, each element with different sources through a potential offer describes influencer marketing as powerful and undervalued as a marketing tool. Woodroof et al. (2020) study examines the disclosure of

“Social media influencer influence on consumer evaluation of the influencer transparency, endorsed product performance and its influence on consumer purchase intention” and the impact of the additional disclosure on these following variables by following through a survey of respondents by applying mechanical Mturk to apply the moderated serial-mediation to the model.

The study’s findings revealed that the content disclosure impressed consumers by underlying the financial relationship disclosure and less transparency to ambiguous disclosure. However, the transparency disclosure substantially impacts “consumer purchase intention and product efficiency”.

Trivedi & Sama (2020) state that influencers have less impact on purchase intention. In contrast, brand attitude (Mainolfi et al., 2021) was a mediating variable between influencers and purchase intention. Message involvement is used as a moderator in between influencers to purchase intent.

Han et al. (2020) study examined the influencer endorsements impact on e-Wom and consumer purchase intention by taking Influencer marketing as a context by applying One-way ANOVA between the advertising disclosure on purchase intention and for moderating role PROCESS macro used. The results state that influencer advertising disclosure substantially impacts consumer purchase intention. In addition, the moderating recommendation role (e-Wom) has also significantly affected “consumer purchase intention”.

Ki et al. (2020) the study stated that influencer marketing follows through an attachment mechanism as the “social-media platforms originally designed to provide personal bonding and interactions”. By analysing the data of 325 U.S. consumers responses, the study states that influenced posts have significance over their purchase intention. These consumers follow these



influencers for content and fulfil their needs, relatedness, and competencies, which results in consumer attachment towards influencers. And the study suggested going through the social media user's usage behaviour to analyse their significant influence over products endorsed by the result.

Wiedmann & von Mettenheim (2020) study found that influencers can influence consumer purchasing decisions. The above literature review tries to relate influencer marketing with purchase intentions, previous that worked upon, and the challenges associated with influencer marketing. It will help get a better grasp of influencer marketing and social media users influence on influencers and purchase intention.

Brand Awareness The study on "brand awareness" has been speeding up since 1990. In their research, Hoyer & Brown (1990) defined "brand awareness as a rudimentary level of brand knowledge involving at the least, recognition of the brand name. By stating that awareness represents the lowest end of the continuum of the brand knowledge which largely differs from the simple recognition and by taking recognition a process encounters for the brand awareness". Later the study picked up by Percy & Rossiter (1992) created a model for the brand awareness and brand attitude for the advertising strategy through a reflective and interactive approach by underlying the consumer's purchase decision. Further in the study, Laurent et al., (1995) analyse the structure of brand awareness and try to understand the underlying difference between different brands and the same brand with varying product categories while creating a logistic transformation of each element associated with the brand awareness.

Analysing the Rasch model and the study results establishes the difficulty of attention regarding the test difficulty and understanding measured differently for each set of elements. In the later studies brand awareness has addressed as the tool to remind the consumers and as an equivalent variable for the marketers in order to construct a framework to interact with the consumer Oh, (2000) study used brand awareness as a mediating variable to understand the brand value to customer intentions where brand awareness has showed a significant role in the consumer value process, in the study.

Macdonald & Sharp, (2000) "examined the role of brand awareness in the consumer thought processing in purchase decision and in repeat purchasing", while understanding that brand awareness is dominant tactic in the field to create marketing campaign in order to create awareness to show the differential details of the brand in order to create brand preference in consumer minds



which in subject to make consumer as a repeat buyer of the product by taking the help of the previous study Hoyer and Brown's that "brand awareness" is chosen on the basis of the quality of "brand awareness in differential conditions and the study results states that brand awareness plays a significant role on consumer brand choice and in repeat purchasing".

In to the further Jalleh et al. (2002) "stated that sponsorship impacts brand awareness and brand attitude. The study results said that the support could influence both brand awareness and brand attitude through celebrity endorsers. In 1987 brand awareness was described as an essential element for communication. It precedes all other steps in the process by Rossiter and Percy as the consumer needed to be aware of the brand to perceive and stimulate a behavioural attitude towards the brand. The study tries to understand and develop a theoretical framework for brand awareness and consumer attitude.

The study provided empirical evidence showing that brand awareness creates a brand attitude, and further, without brand awareness, recognition isn't possible (E. Macdonald & Sharp, 2003). Brand awareness is further described as the essential element to increase sales and income and attract potential consumers. Therefore, brand awareness plays a significant role in creating a plan for identifying consumers, creating a positive environment and better follow-up with an interactive advertisement. Thus, the study aims to attract consumers and generate awareness with a positive vibe (Brand Awareness, 2007).

Naik et al., (2008) in their study are trying to analyse to "build and maintain awareness in the competitive markets by using the fair awareness models in the marketing literature which are existing and ignoring the role of competition, creating a model by analysing the five car brands over time and derive optimal closed-loop Nash Equilibrium for every brand and analysing the data supported strongly to the proposed model in terms of goodness-of-fit and cross-validation in the sample data, the study offers a valuable insight to the brands as well as brand competitors to estimate the effectiveness and forecast of brand performance in the markets" (Naik et al., 2008).

Chi, (2009) study analysed "the effects of brand awareness over the perceived quality, brand loyalty and customer purchase intention" by applying mediation analysis with a sample data collected from the people in China, and the study results suggested that mediation analysis is showing the vital significance and brand awareness played a significant role in the mediation



analysis by establishing an excellent mediating significance showing high relevance to the “brand loyalty and brand preference and through the brand awareness consumer evaluate the perceived quality of a product from their purchase experience”. To create brand awareness,

Homburg et al. (2010) need to create a comprehensive brand identity to attract consumers. Creating a brand identity and awareness program is essential in many B2B branding strategies. A substantial engagement is required to increase awareness which pays off in business markets as a long-term investment. The study investigates the conditions of brand awareness associated with its in B2B context and with “cross-industry reference of over 300 B2B firms showed that brand awareness significantly drive the brand performance in markets and study notes it is typically applied the organisational buyers”.

Wang & Yang (2010), brand awareness used as a moderator between brand credibility and the result of the study reveals that brand awareness has shown positive mediation effectively. It has demonstrated a positive moderating effect between brand credibility and consumers purchase intention. Furthermore, some studies suggest that brand awareness precedes brand equity by acting as a memory node which refers to the brand in the consumer mind whenever they cross particular objects. At the same time, brand awareness can also view as a learning advantage for the consumers to decide. “Brand awareness plays a significant role in consumer decision making, which is likely to increase brand performance. At the same time, brand awareness correlates with all the brand attributes; however, due to consumer responses, it could show possible errors” (Scheinoltz et al., 2012).

Many studies state that brand awareness is before the purchase intention while noting that it is before brand trust showing a possible correlation with the brand trust. The consumer mindset measures could measure the consumer’s general attitude towards a brand by including the two prior “components brand awareness and brand association. While brand association refers to prior brand knowledge representing consumer mindset and the results suggest that brand awareness is before the consumer attitude” (Scheinoltz et al., 2012).

Dew & Kwon (2010) stated that branding becomes an essential element in marketing. Consumers refer to understanding brand awareness, association, and brand category to apparel brand knowledge. However, it does not necessarily link with the favourable brand association while showing a positive mediation effect with low significance. Ardiansyah & Sarwoko



(2020) study analysed the social media marketing influence on “consumer purchase decision through the mediation analysis with brand awareness.

On the other hand, Almaqousi et al. (2021) to be rational with high involved products and for new products requires more time and effort to develop the “brand image” in the consumer mind”. Widayati (2020) study analyse the brand awareness and brand image on customer satisfaction of Saudi Arabian airlines by applying SEM with smartPLS both brand awareness, and brand image has a significant impact on customer satisfaction. Pancaningrum & Ulani (2020) “study aim to understand the advertisement impact on consumer-buying behaviour while using brand awareness” as a mediation variable while taking 100 respondents as sample and data results via SEM-PLS indicate a significant analysis of consumer purchase intention.

Consumer Attitude The study on consumer attitude was a challenging concept for the business, and the study Barksdale & Darden (1972) stated that available literature on consumer attitude was very few. They criticised the business practices as they could not understand the market demand fluctuations. While the study Wall & Heslop (1986) focuses on consumer attitude towards the product to understand the stimulus factors that help create an attitude towards the consumer and make a reliable demand track for the marketers to understand the markets.

Batra & Ahtola (1990) study identified the hedonic and utilitarian components to product categories to determine the consumer's overall attitude may be derived from hedonic and functional elements. While applying the two attitude dimensions do seem to exist on different product attributes in a theoretical and consistent way on the semantic Differential scales used in previous studies.

Leeper (1992) study has further focused consumer attitude on economic markets while analysing the role of consumer sentiment in forecasting the readily available variable trends. Further dominate the information on consumer sentiment, when the changes in consumer attitudes are significant with a surprise merely reflect on the past actions vies-verse when consumer attitudes low will reflect on the past actions.



The study Dudley (1999) identifies consumer attitude towards advertisements by undertaking 386 junior and senior marketers to analyse the Nudity impact on consumer attitude. The survey stated that consumers have received the ad well and are more favourable with the nude model than the topless model. Liao & Cheung (2002) has analysed consumer attitude towards internet-based e-shopping by laying grounded evidence with literature reference to research explored to intercept the effects of adjusting these variables on consumer preferences and tastes over the consumer usage of the internet by taking a small group of data from Singapore and employed statistical analysis.

As most of the studies suggested, understanding consumer attitudes will show the significant influence of products in desired marketplaces (Ajzen, 2008; Chou et al., 2020; Romeo-arroyo et al., 2020; L. Wang & Bae, 2020; Wilcock et al., 2004) and (Vrontis et al., 2021). This study has laid the basic foundation for the consumer attitude”. Wilcock et al. (2004) suggest that safety, demographics, social status, and consumer knowledge play a vital role in preserving consumer attitude.

Alden et al. (2006) study further examine the relationship and measurement for the consumer attitude towards alternative consumption and consumer behavioural antecedents by these three. The study has conducted a local survey. The results suggest that consumer attitude has shown significant results towards market globalisation and consumer behavioural antecedents conveying the consumer can influence global markets through desire and preferences.

Ajzen (2008) stated that consumer engagement activities related to purchase intention and to trust and loyalty, where consumer engagement plays a vital role by laying a foundation, to create engagement brands, need to deal with the psychological desires of the consumer, need to satisfy, attitude, memory, cognition. The study concluded that consumer attitude plays a vital role in understanding consumer psychology through the arguments and previous literature review. Brewer & Rojas (2008) study evaluating by analysing the “food intake of the group and analysing their habits, they hypothesised that consumer attitude and demographics and the group adheres plays a vital role in consumer perception”.

Ho, et al. (2004) consumer attitude plays a vital role in understanding the consumer preference on advertising affected on a new marketing channel. To advertise using the short



service communication through one-on-one and one-to-one marketing medium. The group study analysed the influence of mobile advertisement on consumer attitude and behaviour and its stats that mobile advertising has potential in future markets (S. Sharma et al., 2021).

Gullstrand et al. (2015) consumers are more intended to consume sustainable products, which will mean a great deal on business as the idea circles more. It will affect the production and consumption phases of the consumer. Consumer attitudes play an essential role in adopting new alternatives (Kwon et al., 2020). It helps the researchers to identify the motivations and barriers related to the market for adoption to drive good business.

Further, this study (Hwang & Lyu, 2019) analysed the green consumer attitude over the consumption intention as many industries are coping with the green concept by advertising the environment friendly to attract consumers. The attitudes sure will affect the purchase, service and AD perception of the product, and after consumption, they distinguish the consumers' feeling as a customer or consumer satisfaction. The study results state that consumer attitude and customer satisfaction have played a vital in modifying consumer behaviour.

Miranda et al. (2019) study examines the consumer perception and attitude towards the credibility of Influencers that have influenced consumer attitude as it affects the consumer attitude and perceived usefulness of the consumer and affects the consumer behaviour influencing the purchase decision.

(Hallem et al., 2019) the study tries to understand the consumer attitude in social media platforms through qualitative research to understand the collaborative consumption of data in social media platforms through the survey.

Park & Lin (2019) study understands that each individual has shown vivid, sceptical and pragmatic preference in social media. Yee et al. (2021), by exploring various methods, influencers found a way to keep the hype and match up with the consumer. At the same time. The study has identified that social media influencers influence trustworthiness and hedonic values through their engagement in social media.

GIAO & Vuong (2020) study examines consumer attitude towards smartphone advertising by analysing the age, gender, income, and academic level of the user's impact on smartphone advertisement perception. The study results showed positive signs between



consumer attitude and smartphone advertising. Furthermore, the author stated that entertainment, informativeness, credibility, and control would affect influencer content (L. Wang & Bae, 2020).

Influencer to Consumer attitude the reason for better understanding the influence of influencer marketing on consumer attitude is that celebrity endorsements make a better advertising impact on consumers. These endorsements better affect the consumer attitude by targeting the consumer persuasiveness, whereas the influencer better engages with consumers than the TV personality acts as a role model. Still, the influencer could influence consumer desire.

Liao & Cheung (2002) has analysed consumer attitude towards internet-based e-shopping theoretically and empirically by laying grounded evidence with literature reference to research explored to intercept the effects of changes in variables representing the consumer preferences. As most of the studies suggested, understanding consumer attitudes will show the significant influence on products in desired marketplaces (Ajzen, 2008; Chou et al., 2020; Romeo-arroyo et al., 2020; L. Wang & Bae, 2020; Wilcock et al., 2004) and these are basics to create purchase intention to consumers.