Influential Marketing Through Social Media Influencers On Consumer's Purchase Intention

Dr. Syed Muhammad Zia[1] , Dr. Muhammad Haris Mirza[2] , Anita Laila[3] , Dr. Eruj Wajidi Rehan[4] , Dr. Sara Sohaib[5]

Abstract

Companies have been increasingly using social media influencers to market their products in recent decades. Social media influencers are those who impact consumers' attitudes toward a company or product by their posts on different social media platforms via their images, videos, and other updates. Aim of this study is to determine, effect of social media influencers (SMIr) on customer purchase intention using a source credibility model. A systematic questionnaire was utilized to collect data from 400 individuals aged 20 to 35. The findings were analyzed using regression analysis in SPSS. The findings demonstrate that the credibility of social media influencers, i.e. trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness has a considerable effect on followers.

Keywords: *Social media influencers, source credibility, trustworthiness, attractiveness, expertise.*

Introduction

During outbreak, the most of the organization whether profitable business or non-profit, became effected by that of the C[1]ovid-19 disease. Social media influencers are different and new ones who shape customer attitudes on social networking sites in this situation. This Research concentrates on the method for determining influence of social media influencers (SMIr) on consumer intention to purchase. Not even just digital advertising entices customers to buy famous social media influencers referred products, but it also helped to raise product awareness via non-celebrities & ensure the business success.

Social media celebrity authority is now a vital ingredient in increasing brand awareness, as well as leading to far more pleasant feelings that fame authority (Guruge, 2018).Previous research examines the impact of SMIr's credibility trustworthiness, attractive, and expertise along with the moderating effect of materialism on follower intention which left the keyhole to understand the difference and impact of the communication of social media influencers (Ansar, N, 2013).

This research is conducting to analyze effect of social media influencer on customer intention to purchase via different social media platforms. Reason of choosing different social media platform is because every platform has almost billions of active users. Influencers are active on their specific platforms and most of them use more than one platform mostly like You tubers also have their pages on Instagram and on Facebook. Sometimes influencers who got fame from Instagram start their own Youtube channel (Wang, X., Yu, C., &Wei, Y. 2012). On different platforms influencers can easily impact their audience by giving their

[1]Assistant Professor Department of Business Administration Federal Urdu University Karachi, Pakistan.

Assistant Professor Department of Business Administration Federal Urdu University, Karachi, Pakistan.

[3]Assistant Professor Bahria Business School Bahria University Karachi Campus

[4]Lecturer Institute of Health and Business Management Jinnah Sindh Medical University.

[5]Assistant Professor Bahria University Karachi Campus.

views on different products to convert into brands (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011).

Amongst the most difficult problems for something like a sales person in today's era of technological advancement is pertaining the marketing and communication overload (Huang et al. 2020). Transition is as straightforward as it seems in a society of determinism, because when it concerns to shifts in consumer habits, things take a substantial amount of time which fly-off f rom the shelves (Syed M Zia et al. 2009).we place so much importance on a commodity, as far as influencers who has a stake in the organization as well (Juwaheer, et al. 2012). The functioning underlying items being presented and advertised through these influencers is governed by several or generally pro regulations (Hong & Cho, 2011).

Social media platforms seem to be a big draw for advertising (Bian&Moutinho, 2011). Social media influencers essentially answer the much more frequently asked questions that customers have about any company and its products (Chakraborty, Uttam, 2019). Influencers represent a large number of following and dedicated followers who have extremely specialized preferences. This includes an emphasis on a handful of individuals who would like to connect from a much larger demographic on a continuous basis which provides a fantastic ability to build relationships (Kim & Chung, 2011).

Literature Review

It is important to have a connection between the brand and the celebrity that includes social media influencers so that consumers can get attracted and believe in what is being said and promoted (Lim, X et al.2017).In electronic world celebrity endorsements are the credible sources of generating a positive word of mouth regarding particular products and services, electronically. The public figures are the persons who might be a politician, religious scholars and social workers at the current state (Lou, C., 2019). The findings are noteworthy in light of role in the development of social media personalities and early efforts to entice personalities to use the social platforms (Magnini, V.P. et al. 2010).The company's collaborations division also works with celebrities, singers, and prominent people to enhance their presence on social media(Chetioui, Y,. 2020).

Social Media Influencers

In this new era of digital, new type of celebrity has emerged known as "digital" celebrity such as bloggers, v-loggers and, Insta famous personalities. Thesedigitalcelebritiesareknownassocialmediainfluencer(s).Socialmediainfluenceris someone who gained popularity by creating content on different social media platforms and attract the audience. They have millions of subscribers that follow them. People are influenced by them and their content. Facebook, Twitter, Tiktok, Instagram, and You tube are some of the social media platforms. According to Wang (2012), traditional celebrities do not enjoy the power they once get on the other hand online bloggers' product reviews are now much more influential as they are perceived to be more authentic and accessible. Social media influencers are basically effecting the people decision they usually prefer to look at the peer reviews and comments before buying certain product (Guruge, 2018). Sites allow individual or users to easily narrate their lives experiences via blogs, images and videos (Dhanesh &Duthler, 2019). Because of reach and genuineness of social media influencers they equally have same influence as traditional ones (Cheng et al., 2020). Influencers are also frequently used as an idealistic sample population (Zhang et al., 2019). The catalogs of what several young people who dream of obtaining and the society they dream of working may be found in their postings (Utami, 2020). Content creators are also the mean of transferring whatever knowledge business want to give to its customers (Chettioui, et al 2020). They are now considering as most efficientmethodforcompaniestointeractwithcustomersbecausetheyareconsiderasthe center for communication on which the customers make their purchasing decisions (Zhang et al., 2019).

Those who perceived more reliability than celebrities because of their more closeness to their followers impacts high on their followers, they motivated individual or a public circle

professionally to present their opinions through social media (Ansar, 2013). There reliability impact positively in marketing strategy that apply to influence consumers and their brand awareness through different opinion leaders and influencers. Influencer reliability is considered under the view of the consumers that their influencer works reliable and as an expert owards the products or services (Dhanesh, 2019). The presentation of advertising features by the marketers will impact a positive effect on person's purchasing decision (Huang, 2020).

According to the study, the term credibility indicates the positive point or a characteristic from the presenters' side that will increase acceptance of message and gain trust. Endorsement effectiveness can be measure through the model of credibility and attractiveness (Erdogan, 1999), the expertise can be measure through attractiveness model and this model is utilized by the most of the researchers now a days.

Consumer Purchase Intention

It is defined that the decision made by the customers while deciding the brands and the products to purchase (Park, 2007). There are several different stages included in the customer buying process and this process defined into five steps that help customers to evaluate their brands (Goldsmith 2000). In the marketing, it is important for the organization to deliver complete message of their product through the traditional celebrity or other well-known person (Juwaheer, 2012). Measurements of consumers purchase intention are useful for creating marketing campaigns or offers (Follows, 2000). It may be extremely simple to precisely repeat what sort of material should be presented in an advertising based on the desire of a consumer (Hartmann, et al. 2012) The intention may provide details about the consumer's mental understanding levels and indeed the structure of marketing initiatives may be created based on this evaluation. A comprehensive road map regarding how to approach a marketing campaign may be created by analyzing the purchasing intention of a consumer. At time of determining a customer's willingness to buy a particular item or service, it's crucial to take their buying behavior into account (Copeland, 2020).

Trustworthiness

The perceived trustworthiness of the sender is another factor in determining source credibility. When the source is credible, the receiver is less likely to have doubts about the authenticity of the information (Souiden, 2009). As a result, users judge the credibility of the contributors before accepting or rejecting the information offered (Wang et al., 2012). Since trust serves as one of the essential elements that must exist for encounters result in the development of useful relationships and connections, trustworthiness plays a significant role in these interactions (Siegrist, 2006). A sizable community that frequently acts on the information and trusts consume a sizable volume of social media information (Wang et al., 2012).

H; There is a positive relationship that exists between social media influencers" trustworthiness on consumer intention to purchase.

Attractiveness

The study specifies that this model bring influencers on a successful platform in which they communicate online with their followers and the promotion presents by the influencer contains a high positive impact towards customers as compare to the advertising run by the organizations and it proved the effective attractiveness which relate directly to purchase intention(Lim X, 2017). Attraction marketing, which has aims to give audience the impressions that attraction marketing may be evident every time a blogger or brand spokesman posts a review, shares a snapshot of a dream vacation spot, or publishes a cosmetics tutorial using a company's goods (Souiden, N. 2009). Through attraction marketing, you demonstrate rather than instruct. Once everything is put up, attraction marketing might also turn out to be quite affordable on the other hand even if they aren't ready to buy just now, they will still think of your brand the next time they need to acquire

(Stubb, C. et al 2019).
H2; There is a positive relationship that exists between social media influencers" attractiveness on consumer intention to purchase.

Expertise

Expertise is related to credibility and it is taken as one of the main component when come to reduction of uncertainty of viewers. It can be taken as the extent to which the source is perceived as being capable of providing correct information (Bian X, 2011). Different methods are used by people to assess the level of competence of a message (Ryu, 2021). Follows (2000), that idea of expertise suggests that the provider possesses the necessary skills and experience. The endorser considers trusty if he or she has authority in her profession. Reliability refers to how the buyer perceives the source's integrity, personality, and credibility. Within the world of social media world, appeal, dependability, and subject-matter knowledge is very significant to be taken as credible (Dhanesh, 2019). Consumers are likely to rate companies and their commercials more favorably when they feature a celebrity who is seen as reliable, knowledgeable in their industry, and beautiful (Goldsmith et al., 2000).
H1; There is a positive relationship that exists between social media influencers" expertise on consumer intention to purchase.

Conceptual Model Equation

$$CPI= \beta_0+ \beta_1T+\beta_2A+ \beta_3E+E$$

Whereas;

CPI=Customer Purchase Intention T= Trustworthiness
A=Attractiveness E= Expertise

This research is supported by "Theory of Planned Behavior". It is a well-supported theory. Vallerand, (1992), Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of planned behavior has now been generally employed to thinking and practices. It clarifies how influential marketing is affecting a person's intention to purchase.

Methodology

In the deductive process, an initial hypothesis is used to trace the events leading to the conclusion. After a framework is developed, quantitative research may begin. Since the researcher had a hypothesis to test and numerical data, deductive analysis was applied.

Data Collection Method

This study approach is organically tied to quantitative research design. This quantitative research examined whether there is an impact of social media influencers on Consumer purchase intention.

Research requires a big volume of high-quality data to create an accurate picture of the topic and research challenge. Information may come from primary or secondary sources (Rahbar et al., 2011). Hence, for this study, primary data has used in which the survey has been conducted. The sample size of a research study is determined by the number of participants who took part in the study and provided their responses. The respondents selected for this study have the minimum age of 20 years and maximum age of 35 years in Pakistan. Due to time and budget constraints, the research used non-probability convenience sampling. This approach lets the investigator pick convenient time and location.

Data Analysis

Data analysis provides research findings and ideas. The data collection technique must be carefully selected to ensure reliability and accuracy. Both regression and correlation analysis

are used to compare independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV). Regression analysis is used to evaluate the independent variable's influence on the dependent variable.

Data coding

The information was gathered via survey questionnaires and then fed into IBM SPSS for analysis. For several queries, code was used to enter data into the software. The codes for the demographics are shown in the table below.

Data Coding

Demographic	Coding
Gender	Male:1
	Female:2
Age	20-25:1
	25-30:2
	30-35:3
Education	HigherSecondary:1 Under Graduate: 2
	Post-Graduation:3
Occupation	Student: 1
	Businessperson:2
	Working professional: 3
	House-wife:4

Demographic Analysis

In the questionnaire four different demographic questions were asked by the respondent.Asthestudyisconcernedaboutthepurchaseintentionofconsumerswho use social media between the ages of 20-35 were requested to participate. The google form was generated and link was send to respondents. The male frequency was 300 while 100 were the females which are24.7%. In the age question three ranges was available from 20-35 as it is noticed in this age period people are more into socialmedia.Theagerangeof26-30wasthehighesttoparticipateastheirfrequencywas 169, the range of 20-25 was the second highest who participated which are 134. The last one has the 97 frequency.

About the education demographic, the questionnaire gave three choices that are higher secondary, Under Graduate and Post Graduate. Participants with the higher secondary educational background were 56, 104 and 240 were under graduate and post graduates respectively. As far as the professional background of respondents concerned 87 were students, 42 were business persons, 253 were working professional and 18 were housewives. The frequency and their percentages are mentioned in following table:

Demographic Analysis

Variable	Optionsof Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	300	74.1
	Female	100	24.7
Age	20-25	134	33.1
	26-30	169	41.7
	31-35	97	24.0

Education	Higher Secondary Under Graduate	56	13.8
		104	25.7
	Post Graduate	240	59.3
Profession	Student BusinessPerson	87	21.5
	Working Professional	42	10.4
	House-wife	253	62.5
		18	4.4

Reliability Analysis

It is used to investigate the characteristics of measuring scales and the items that make up the scales.

Cronbach"s Alpha should be 0.7 or above from it. The Cronbach"s alpha value were measured for each scale and results shows that each scale used in questionnaire is reliable as value for all of them is above 0.7.

The Cronbach"s alpha value of first scale that is purchase intention is .766 which shows it is reliable. About the second scale that is social media influencer (trustworthiness), we found Cronbach"s alpha value .879 which can consider as highly reliable. Third last scale which is social media influencer (Attractiveness), we get its reliable value that is .760. The last scale which is social media influencer (Expertise), it is also meeting the threshold as its value is .898. So, all the scales are reliable.

Reliability Analysis

Study Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Noof items
Purchase Intention	.766	6
SMIr(Trustworthiness)	.879	5
SMIr(Attractiveness)	.760	5
SMIr(Expertise)	.898	5

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis measure degree of association between variables also its how the direction of relationship that exists between variables. In the table below all variables are correlated with each other through linear, weak and moderate relationship. In order to find relationship between variables, Pearson correlation method has been used. The correlation value of variables must be in between +1 and -1.

From the below table it can be seen that relationship of purchase intention with all the dimensions of source credibility have positive value that is +1 which indicates they are positively correlated to each other. Correlation analysis provides a strong base to check reliability of variables.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

	Purchase Intention	Trust worthiness	Attractiveness	Expertise
Purchase Intention	1			
Trustworthiness	.756	1		

Attractiveness	.663	.581	1
Expertise	.387	.366	.284	1

Regression Analysis

The customer purchase intention was regressed on trustworthiness, attractiveness and expertise. The independent variables significantly predict customer purchase intention F= 251.254 and P= 0.00. These values indicate that three independent variables have significant impact on customer purchase intention. Moreover the R square= .653 depicts that model has 65% of variance on customer purchase intention.

Additionally, the value of table below results for each hypothesis. Values for H1 shows that trustworthiness has positive impact on customer purchase intention as (B= .530, T= 14.126, P=0.000) whereas Beta value shows that positive and negative relationshipofIVandDV.TandPvalueshowsthesignificantrelationship.Pvalue

is significant as it is less than 0.005. Threshold of T value is also meeting as it is greater than 1.29.Positive value of Beta shows the positive relationship.

Results of H2 are also meeting the threshold which depicts that attractiveness is positively significant with customer purchase intention. Values are (B= .326, T= 8.955, P=0.000). Hypothesis 3 is to evaluate whether Expertise has positive relation with customer purchase intention. Results reveal H3 is also significant and expertise has positive relation with customer purchase intention as the values are (B= .100, T= 3.152, P=0.02).

Model Summary

Hypothesis No	Regression Weights	Beta Value	T-value	P value
1	T->PI	.530	14.126	0.000
2	A->PI	.326	8.955	0.000
3	E->PI	.100	3.152	0.02

Dependent Variable: Impact of customer purchase intention
Model Summary:F=251.254,P-value=0.000,AdjustedRsquare=0.653

Hypothesis Summary

Hypothesis No	Hypothesis Statement	Results
H1	There is a positive relationship that exists between social media influencers"trustworthinessonconsumerintentionto purchase.	Accepted
H2	There is a positive relationship that exists between social mediainfluencers"attractivenessonconsumerintentionto purchase.	Accepted
H3	There is a positive relationship that exists between social media influencers" expertise on consumer intention to purchase.	Accepted

Discussion

Study has examined the impact of influential marketing by social media influencers by taking source credibility model on consumer purchase intention. This study was done on the people with the age of 20-35 who are using social media. The skewness and the kurtosis values were

considered. For all the variables they are within the range of +3 and -3 which means that the data can be consider as normal.

Secondly the reliability analysis was done. It examined the consistency of the scales for each variable. The reliability test was run for each of the scale. The Cronbach's alpha value was taken to measure the reliability. All the values were above 0.7 which indicates that scales that were used for each variable is correctly measures the variable.

As this study consisted of three hypotheses, to examine their relationship and either they are accepted or rejected, the regression analysis was done. For each of the relationship the Beta, R-square and P-value was considered. The B-value shows that whether the relationship is positive or negative. All the hypothesis beta value was positivewhichmeansthattherelationshipshavepositivelyrelatedtoeachother.

R-square value shows the correlation, the hypothesis was correlated to each other. The p-value depicts that significance level, for all the three hypothesis the p-value was smaller than 0.05 that concluded they all are significant.

The regression values for the first hypothesis were (Beta value= .670, P value= 0.000) this indicates that social media influencer's trustworthiness is positively significant to consumer purchase intention. This result is aligned with the previous studies, this shows that when the influencers is trusted by their viewer they can affect consumer purchase intention.

For the second hypothesis the values were (Beta value= .724, P value= 0.000), here the Beta value is positive and the P-value is less than 0.05 which means that second hypothesis is also accepted. The previous studies for example Lim, 2017 also shows the same results. Attractiveness of the social media influencers can positively related to purchase intention.

The results for the third hypothesis are also aligned to studies done in the past. The regression analysis results shows the value ((Beta value= .444, P value= 0.000), Positive value of beta shows the positive relationship and P value is also significant.

Considering, that values for each hypothesis were meeting the threshold, it can be consider that the hypothesis of the study was accepted after the analysis of gathered data. Social media influencer taking source credibility can affect the consumer purchase intention.

Companies used to leverage social media influencers to sell their brands. However, improvements in social media platforms brought about arise in influencer awareness. Because most customers base their buy intentions on the basis of thoughts from online influencers, they are drawn to influencers online; it is true that the customers always accept the views of others. However, social media platforms and beyond have made it possible for regular customers to interact with their peers and share their ideas and experiences. Comparative to conventional word-of- mouth marketing, influencer marketing gives advertisers more knowledge and control over the outcomes of their campaigns.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on findings of research, conclusion can be drawn that technological advancements in digital age can have an impact on marketing sector. Reason for this is every other person has access to social media and can have information on uses online shopping applications, and other tools to make indirect purchases of goods without having to leave their homes. People develop the habit of purchasing goods based on the recommendations of influential people.

Because of social media, influencers frequently compete to promote a brand in ordertodrawcustomers'attentionandgivethemtheconfidencetoselecttheproductthey desire. Because it happens frequently that potential customers are hesitant to purchase products if they haven't been reviewed, many business owners are competing for influencer endorsements.

Thorne defines influencer marketing as the use of opinion leaders to disseminate word of mouth about a company or product to a target demographic. Social media influencers, are typically seen as opinion leaders with great significance and public familiarity. The use of social media influencer marketing may foster dialogues between businesses and internet users, influencing consumer decision- making processes.

The hypothesis of the study was accepted when data was analyzed. Social media influencers, trustworthiness, attractiveness and expertise are significant and a positive relationship with consumer purchase intention.

From the results of the study it can be concluded that influential marketing has a significant relationship with the consumer purchasing intention. The influencer by using their source credibility can help them to have a positive image and in this way they can make positive impact on consumers.

Limitation and Recommendations

When talking about research, the term "limitations or constraints" refers to the aspects of a particular study that limit the breadth of the investigation. This study also contains some of the limitation and with their respective recommendation future researcher can dig deep in this study. Due to time constrain this study chooses the cross-sectional method in future the researchers can use longitudinal method as well because with the passage of time the consumers might have changed perspective about certain influencers. Secondly because of to time and funding limitations, this study gather and analyze small sample size, in the future researchers can use large data to get more accurate results which might help data and results.

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