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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the influence of influencer marketing on consumer purchase intentions.

Materials and Methods: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The study indicate that consumers are more likely to trust and be influenced by recommendations from individuals they perceive as authentic and knowledgeable. Influencers, especially those with niche audiences, can create a sense of personal connection and trust with their followers, making their endorsements more persuasive than traditional advertising. This trust translates into higher engagement rates and a greater likelihood of consumers trying and purchasing products endorsed by these influencers. Additionally, the interactive

nature of social media platforms allows influencers to engage directly with their audience, answering questions and providing real-time feedback, further enhancing their impact on purchase decisions. Overall, influencer marketing effectively taps into the power of social proof and word-of-mouth, driving consumer interest and purchase intentions more effectively than many conventional marketing strategies.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Social influence theory, informational social influence theory and theory of planned behavior may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the influence of influencer marketing on consumer purchase intentions. Encourage brands to establish strategic collaborations with influencers based on authenticity, trustworthiness, and alignment with brand values. Advocate for transparency and ethical guidelines in influencer marketing practices to build consumer trust and credibility.

Keywords: *Influencer Marketing, Consumer, Purchase Intentions*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, influencer marketing has emerged as a pivotal strategy within the digital marketing landscape, profoundly shaping consumer behavior and purchase intentions. This marketing approach leverages the reach and persuasive power of individuals with significant social media followings—known as influencers—to endorse products and services. In developed economies like the USA, consumer purchase intentions have seen a shift towards online platforms, with an increasing intent to buy from e-commerce websites. According to a study by Lee and Koo (2018), there has been a significant rise in the intent to purchase from online platforms, with a 20% increase in the last five years. This trend is further supported by the growing use of mobile devices for online shopping, where consumers consider various brands before making a purchase. Brand consideration has become crucial in consumer decision-making, with statistics showing a 15% increase in brand awareness affecting purchase intentions.

Similarly, in Japan, consumer purchase intentions reflect a strong inclination towards brand loyalty and quality. A study by Takahashi and Inoue (2019) highlights that Japanese consumers prioritize brand reputation and product quality over price when considering a purchase. This is evident in the conversion rates, where high-quality brands with a strong reputation tend to have higher conversion rates compared to lesser-known brands. Moreover, the intent to buy is influenced by factors such as product innovation and eco-friendliness, showcasing a growing awareness among consumers towards sustainability and technological advancements in products.

In Mexico, consumer purchase intentions are influenced by a combination of traditional retail practices and digital advancements. A study by González and Reyes (2018) highlights that Mexicans exhibit a strong preference for in-store shopping experiences, particularly for items like groceries and personal care products. However, there is a growing intent to buy from online platforms for categories such as electronics and fashion, with a 20% increase in conversion rates observed over the past two years. Brand consideration in Mexico is closely tied to trust and reputation, emphasizing the importance of customer reviews and recommendations in influencing purchase decisions.

Moving to developing economies like India, consumer purchase intentions exhibit a dual trend of traditional and digital shopping preferences. While there is a significant intent to buy from traditional brick-and-mortar stores, especially for daily essentials, there is a noticeable surge in online shopping preferences among the younger demographic. A study by Sharma and Jain (2020) reveals that the intent to purchase from e-commerce platforms in India has grown by 30% in the past three years, driven by factors such as convenience and a wide range of choices. Brand consideration in India is also evolving, with consumers increasingly looking for value-driven brands that offer quality products at affordable prices, impacting conversion rates positively.

In Indonesia, consumer purchase intentions are undergoing a transformation due to increased internet penetration and smartphone usage. A study by Prasetyo and Hartanto (2021) indicates a rising trend of online shopping among Indonesian consumers, with a 35% increase in intent to buy from e-commerce platforms in the past three years. Brand consideration is also evolving, with consumers prioritizing reputable brands that offer competitive pricing and reliable delivery services. This shift towards digital channels has significantly impacted conversion rates, especially for businesses that have adapted their strategies to cater to online consumers.

In Brazil, consumer purchase intentions are heavily influenced by economic factors and social media trends. A study by Silva and Costa (2019) highlights that Brazilians are increasingly relying on online reviews and social media recommendations before making purchase decisions. This shift towards digital platforms has led to a 25% increase in conversion rates for businesses actively engaging with customers on social media. Moreover, brand consideration in Brazil is dynamic, with consumers showing a preference for locally-made products that align with their cultural values and environmental sustainability.

In Thailand, consumer purchase intentions have been shaped by the rapid growth of e-commerce platforms and digital marketing strategies. A study by Thanasak (2020) highlights a significant increase in the intent to buy from online channels, with a 25% rise in online shopping activities observed in the past three years. Brand consideration plays a crucial role, with Thai consumers placing emphasis on product quality, brand reputation, and promotional offers. This has led to higher conversion rates for businesses that effectively leverage digital marketing tools to engage with consumers and build brand loyalty.

In the Philippines, consumer purchase intentions are influenced by a combination of traditional retail practices and the adoption of digital technologies. A study by Santos and Cruz (2021) reveals that Filipinos are increasingly turning to online platforms for a wide range of products, including electronics, clothing, and groceries. The intent to buy from e-commerce websites has grown by 30% in the last four years, driven by factors such as convenience, competitive pricing, and the availability of multiple payment options. Brand consideration is vital, with consumers seeking trustworthy brands that offer value and reliability, leading to improved conversion rates for businesses that prioritize customer satisfaction and online engagement.

In Nigeria, consumer purchase intentions are shaped by a growing middle-class population and urbanization. A study by Adeyemi and Adegbite (2020) suggests that Nigerians are becoming more brand-conscious, especially in sectors like electronics and fast-moving consumer goods. The intent to buy is influenced by factors such as product quality, affordability, and after-sales services. However, challenges related to logistics and infrastructure can impact conversion rates, particularly in rural areas where access to online shopping platforms is limited.

In Egypt, consumer purchase intentions are influenced by a blend of traditional shopping practices and increasing digitalization. A study by Abdel-Kader and El-Alfy (2019) reveals a growing trend of online shopping among Egyptian consumers, particularly for electronics, clothing, and beauty products. The intent to buy from e-commerce platforms has increased by 40% over the last five years, driven by factors such as convenience, competitive pricing, and a wide range of product choices. Brand consideration is also significant in Egypt, with consumers showing a preference for trusted brands that offer value for money and reliable customer service, leading to higher conversion rates for reputable businesses.

In Kenya, consumer purchase intentions reflect a dynamic shift towards mobile commerce and digital payments. A study by Otieno and Mutua (2022) indicates that Kenyan consumers are increasingly using mobile apps and digital wallets for online shopping, contributing to a 30% rise in intent to buy from mobile platforms. Brand consideration is influenced by factors such as product quality, brand reputation, and social responsibility initiatives. Conversion rates have seen a notable increase, especially for businesses offering seamless mobile shopping experiences and secure payment options, catering to the evolving preferences of Kenyan consumers.

In sub-Saharan economies like South Africa, consumer purchase intentions are influenced by factors such as economic stability and cultural preferences. A study by Ndlovu and Chingwaru (2021) indicates a steady increase in brand consideration among South African consumers, particularly in sectors like electronics and fashion. However, conversion rates are often hindered by challenges such as limited access to digital payment methods and infrastructure in rural areas, affecting the overall intent to buy from online platforms. Despite these challenges, there is a growing interest in global brands, highlighting a shift in consumer preferences towards internationally recognized products in sub-Saharan Africa.

Influencer marketing campaigns have become a prominent strategy for brands to connect with their target audience and drive consumer purchase intentions. One type of influencer marketing campaign involves macro-influencers, who have a large following and are often celebrities or well-known personalities. These campaigns typically focus on brand awareness and reach a broad audience through sponsored content, such as product reviews or endorsements on social media platforms. For example, a cosmetics brand partnering with a popular beauty influencer to promote their new makeup line can lead to increased brand consideration among followers who trust the influencer's recommendations (Smith, 2020).

Another type of influencer marketing campaign centers around micro-influencers, who have a smaller but highly engaged audience within a specific niche. These campaigns emphasize authenticity and relatability; as micro-influencers are seen as more genuine in their recommendations. Content in micro-influencer campaigns often includes user-generated content, product demos, and personal testimonials. By collaborating with micro-influencers in relevant niches, brands can target a specific segment of consumers and achieve higher conversion rates due to the trust and credibility associated with these influencers (Jones, 2019).

Problem Statement

In recent years, the surge of influencer marketing across digital platforms has raised significant questions about its impact on consumer purchase intentions. While studies have explored the effectiveness of influencer campaigns, there remains a need for in-depth research focusing on the nuanced factors that contribute to consumer decision-making processes within the context of influencer marketing strategies. Understanding how different types of influencers, content formats, and frequency of exposure influence consumer purchase intentions is crucial for marketers to optimize their influencer marketing efforts and allocate resources effectively (Brown, 2021; Miller, 2019). Furthermore, the evolving landscape of social media platforms and changing consumer behaviors necessitates continuous analysis to stay abreast of trends and best practices in influencer marketing for driving positive consumer outcomes (Johnson, 2022)."

Theoretical Framework

Social Influence Theory

Originated by Robert Cialdini, the social influence theory posits that individuals are influenced by the actions and behaviors of others in their social environment. This theory is relevant to the topic of influencer marketing as it explains how influencers, through their content and recommendations, can impact consumer purchase intentions by leveraging social proof and authority (Smith, 2020).

Informational Social Influence Theory

Developed by Sherif and Asch, informational social influence theory suggests that individuals look to others for guidance in ambiguous or uncertain situations, especially when seeking information about products or services. In the context of influencer marketing, this theory highlights how influencers act as sources of information and expertise, influencing consumer purchase intentions by providing valuable insights and recommendations (Jones, 2019).

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Originated by Icek Ajzen, TPB posits that behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This theory is relevant to understanding how influencer marketing affects consumer purchase intentions by examining the attitudes consumers hold towards influencers, the subjective norms established through influencer endorsements, and the perceived control consumers have over their purchase decisions (Brown, 2021).

Empirical Review

Johnson (2018) delves into the realm of influencer marketing on Instagram within the beauty industry. Through a comprehensive survey-based approach involving 500 participants who actively follow beauty influencers on Instagram, the study aimed to uncover the correlation between exposure to influencer content and subsequent consumer purchase intentions in the beauty sector. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation, indicating that consumers' exposure to influencer content on Instagram notably impacts their purchase intentions for beauty products. Particularly noteworthy were the factors of authenticity and trustworthiness of influencers, which emerged as critical influencers of consumer decisions. The study highlighted the importance of strategic collaborations between beauty brands and genuine, relatable influencers to foster consumer trust and drive purchase intentions effectively. Additionally, it recommended that brands focus on creating engaging and informative influencer content that resonates with their target audience to enhance brand loyalty and purchase likelihood in the competitive beauty industry landscape.

Gonzalez (2019) focused on exploring how YouTube influencers influence consumer purchase intentions, specifically within the technology product sector. Employing a multifaceted methodology that included content analysis of influencer videos and survey responses from 300 viewers, the study sought to understand the intricate impact of influencer content on viewers' purchase intentions after engaging with such content. The findings indicated a significant influence of YouTube influencers on technology product purchase intentions, especially among younger demographics. The study underscored the importance of engaging and informative content created by influencers, which was found to lead to higher purchase likelihood among consumers. As a recommendation, the study advises technology brands to strategically collaborate with YouTube influencers to produce educational and engaging content that resonates effectively with tech-savvy consumers. By aligning influencer content with consumer needs and preferences, brands can enhance their market presence and drive purchase intentions in the competitive technology product market.

Martinez (2020) compared the effectiveness of micro-influencers and macro-influencers in driving consumer purchase intentions within the fashion retail sector. Utilizing a robust comparative analysis approach that included measuring the impact of influencer campaigns featuring micro-influencers and macro-influencers on brand consideration and conversion rates, the study provided

valuable insights into the dynamics of influencer marketing in the fashion retail landscape. The findings revealed that micro-influencers exhibited higher engagement rates and authenticity, leading to increased brand consideration and conversion rates compared to macro-influencers. As a result, the study recommended that fashion retailers prioritize collaborations with micro-influencers to enhance consumer trust and boost purchase intentions effectively. By leveraging the influence of authentic and relatable micro-influencers, fashion brands can create meaningful connections with their target audience, driving long-term brand loyalty and purchase intent in the ever-evolving fashion retail market.

Chen (2021) delved into consumer perceptions of influencer marketing in the food and beverage sector and its impact on purchase intentions. Employing a comprehensive research methodology that included focus group discussions and online surveys, the study assessed consumer attitudes towards influencer campaigns and their subsequent influence on purchase decisions. The findings highlighted positive consumer perceptions of influencer marketing in the food and beverage industry, with an observed increase in purchase intentions for products featured in influencer content. The study recommended that food and beverage brands collaborate strategically with influencers to create authentic and appealing content aligned with consumer preferences and lifestyle choices. By establishing meaningful connections with consumers through influencer partnerships and creating content that resonates with their target audience, food and beverage brands can effectively drive purchase intentions and foster brand loyalty in a competitive market environment.

Wang (2018) evaluated the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies on luxury goods purchase intentions among affluent consumers. Through a meticulous research design that included interviews with affluent consumers and analysis of influencer campaigns targeting luxury brands, the study examined the intricate impact of influencer content on brand perception and purchase intentions. The findings indicated a significant influence of influencer marketing on affluent consumers' purchase intentions for luxury goods, particularly emphasizing the role of storytelling and aspirational content. As a recommendation, the study suggested that luxury brands should collaborate strategically with influencers to create exclusive and aspirational content that resonates effectively with their affluent target audience. By leveraging the aspirational appeal of influencer content and establishing emotional connections with affluent consumers, luxury brands can drive purchase intentions and cultivate a loyal customer base in the competitive luxury goods market.

Lee (2022) delved into the influence of social media influencers on Generation Z's purchase intentions within the apparel industry. Employing a robust research approach that included surveys and focus groups with Generation Z consumers, the study analyzed their perceptions of influencer content and its subsequent impact on apparel purchase decisions. The findings showcased a strong influence of social media influencers on Generation Z's apparel purchase intentions, particularly when influencers aligned with their values and lifestyles. The study recommended that apparel brands strategically collaborate with influencers who resonate with Generation Z's values and preferences to effectively drive purchase intentions. By understanding and leveraging the influence of social media influencers on Generation Z consumers, apparel brands can create authentic connections and drive purchase intent among this influential consumer segment in the dynamic apparel industry.

Zhang (2023) compared the influence of TikTok influencers on consumer purchase intentions across different product categories. By employing a comprehensive research methodology that included analyzing TikTok influencer campaigns and surveying consumers post-exposure, the study aimed to understand the intricate impact of TikTok influencers on purchase intentions. The findings indicated a significant influence of TikTok influencers on consumer purchase intentions, with higher conversion rates observed for impulse-buy and trendy products promoted by influencers. Based on these findings, the study recommended that brands leverage TikTok influencers to create engaging and viral content that drives immediate purchase intentions among their target audience. By capitalizing on the dynamic and engaging nature of TikTok influencer content, brands can effectively capture consumer attention, drive purchase intentions, and enhance brand visibility in the competitive digital landscape.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Research Gap: Despite the substantial evidence pointing towards the positive influence of influencers on consumer purchase intentions across various industries, there is a lack of in-depth understanding regarding the psychological mechanisms underlying this influence. Studies such as Johnson's (2018) exploration of the impact of authenticity and trustworthiness of influencers touch upon these aspects but do not delve deeply into the cognitive processes involved in consumer decision-making influenced by influencers. Therefore, there is a need for research that delves deeper into the psychological constructs such as social proof, authority, and identification that drive consumer purchase intentions in response to influencer content.

Contextual Research Gap: While several studies have focused on specific industries such as beauty (Johnson, 2018), technology (Gonzalez, 2019), fashion retail (Martinez, 2020), food and beverage (Chen, 2021), luxury goods (Wang, 2018), apparel (Lee, 2022), and TikTok influencer marketing (Zhang, 2023), there is a lack of comparative analysis across multiple industries. A research gap exists in understanding how influencer marketing strategies and their impact on consumer purchase intentions vary across different industries. For instance, investigating the similarities and differences in consumer responses to influencer content in industries with varying levels of involvement with influencer marketing could provide valuable insights for marketers and researchers.

Geographical Research Gap: The study by Gonzalez, (2019) primarily focus on influencer marketing in developed economies or regions such as the United States, where influencer marketing is well-established. There is a limited exploration of influencer marketing's impact on consumer purchase intentions in developing economies or regions such as Africa, Latin America, or Southeast Asia. Understanding how cultural, economic, and technological factors in these regions influence consumer responses to influencer content and subsequent purchase intentions is crucial for developing a comprehensive understanding of influencer marketing's global

effectiveness. Research in these regions can uncover unique challenges, opportunities, and strategies for influencer marketing that may differ from those in developed economies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

In conclusion, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool that significantly impacts consumer purchase intentions across various industries. Studies conducted by Johnson (2018), Gonzalez (2019), Martinez (2020), Chen (2021), Wang (2018), Lee (2022), and Zhang (2023) collectively highlight the substantial influence of influencers on shaping consumer perceptions, preferences, and ultimately, purchase decisions. These studies emphasize key factors such as authenticity, trustworthiness, engagement, and relatability of influencers, showcasing their pivotal role in driving consumer trust and fostering brand loyalty.

Moreover, influencer marketing has proven to be effective in reaching and engaging target audiences, particularly among younger demographics and niche markets. The findings underscore the importance of creating compelling and relevant influencer content that resonates with consumer values, preferences, and lifestyles. Collaborations between brands and influencers are recommended to be strategic, aiming for long-term relationships that build consumer trust and drive sustainable purchase intentions.

However, despite the significant positive impact observed, there are research gaps that warrant further exploration. These include a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms driving influencer influence on consumer behavior, comparative analysis across diverse industries to uncover industry-specific nuances, and geographical expansion of research to include developing economies for a more comprehensive global perspective on influencer marketing's effectiveness. Overall, influencer marketing continues to evolve and thrive as a valuable marketing strategy, offering brands opportunities to connect with consumers authentically, drive purchase intentions, and cultivate lasting relationships in today's dynamic digital landscape.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

Enhance Understanding of Psychological Mechanisms - Conduct in-depth research to elucidate the psychological mechanisms underlying influencer marketing's impact on consumer behavior. Explore constructs such as social proof, authority, identification, and cognitive biases to develop a comprehensive theoretical framework that explains how influencer content influences consumer purchase intentions. This theoretical advancement will contribute significantly to academic literature and provide marketers with actionable insights into designing more effective influencer campaigns.

Practice

Encourage brands to establish strategic collaborations with influencers based on authenticity, trustworthiness, and alignment with brand values. Emphasize the importance of creating engaging, informative, and relatable content that resonates with target audiences' preferences and lifestyles. Encourage brands to leverage influencer partnerships not only for short-term sales but also for building long-term relationships and brand loyalty among consumers.

Policy

Advocate for transparency and ethical guidelines in influencer marketing practices to build consumer trust and credibility. Encourage influencers and brands to disclose sponsored content clearly, ensuring transparency about paid partnerships. Promote fair and honest representations of products/services in influencer content to maintain consumer trust and prevent deceptive practices. Collaborate with regulatory bodies to establish industry standards and guidelines that promote ethical influencer marketing practices.

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