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Social Media Influencer Marketing as a Game-Changer in Marketing Strategy: A Review

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Abstract

In recent years, the phrase "social media influencers" has emerged and has been gaining popularity in the context of marketing products, services, and ideas to consumers along their journeys toward making decisions. As a crucial component of the marketing landscape in the modern day, influencer marketing has emerged as a topic that is now on the rise. The purpose of this study was to conduct a review of the characteristics of marketing and social media influencers that may be found in the existing literature. This paper begins with operational definitions that were extracted from a review of the relevant literature. This is followed by a review of the term "influencer marketing," some characteristics' of social media influencers, and platforms of social media that are generally used by social media influencers to make people more influential with their strategies. This research is being presented in a format that is a hybrid of a narrative review that is chronological and one that is thematic.

Keywords: social media, social media marketing, social media influencers, influencer marketing, celebrity endorser, influencers' review

1. Introduction

The scalability of the internet paves the way for most of the contributors to engage with a mass audience, allowing them to create a hub of source advice for people's welfare. This also allows them to flourish as social media influencers, which allows them to make their careers in the growing use of influencer marketing. According to Brown and Hayes (2008), the findings of the study indicated that influencer marketing is a paradigm that involves the acts of the person with the purpose of influencing the behaviour patterns of customers. According to the findings of the study, the activities related to the various types of trials reflect and add value to the work done by influencers. This was found to be true both for the brands that highly influence consumers on a payment basis and for the influencers who promoted the product by giving some samples with coupons to the consumers in order to attract them towards the product (Hsu, 2010). According to research conducted by Neilson in 2015, it was found that the majority of customers (about 92 percent) put a lot of stock in the recommendations made by influencers. Even if there haven't been many research done on influencer marketing, there's still good cause for businesses to employ this tactic in the hopes of improving their results. However, the usage of social media has developed in such a way that the transition takes place from branding with the personalities or celebrities to the blogging platform, and this transmission in today's world is effecting the everyday lives of every consumer in terms of influencing elements (scott, 2015).

The term "influencer marketing" refers to a two-way communication method that is utilised by many businesses in the marketing industry to target the portion of consumers who, in general, do not pay attention to commercials and promotional activities (Conick, 2018). Even though the study found three reasons to utilise influencer marketing instead of traditional marketing, consumers still desire some sort of network that connects them with endorsers, despite the fact that traditional marketing no longer has much of an effect on them. According to Nam and Dan (2018), influencer marketing enables businesses to increase their profits by employing cost-effective marketing tactics. The genuineness of the influencer is what solidifies the relationships between customers and affects their mindset towards making purchases. In addition, there is "testimonial messaging" and other forms of marketing that make use of sponsored influencer marketing, which is typically known as "influencer marketing" (e Silva et al., 2018).

According to the statistics, more than half of social media users are interested in influencers and become followers of many social media influencers; they also generally depend on the recommendation of a specific influencer; and approximately 38 percent of consumers change their intention to buy the product after seeing the post or video created by the influencers on Instagram and other platforms like youtube (Digital Marketing Institute, 2019). The new marketing method that goes by the name "influencer marketing" is responsible for giving customers the impression that adopting a certain brand is more acceptable than it formerly was.

According to the findings of the study, a successful marketing approach with influencers is one that obtains a favourable association between the consumer's purpose and the influencer's traits. According to the findings of the study, a source's credibility is of considerably greater significance than its trustworthiness (Saima & Khan, 2020). The current study offers a review of literature regarding social media influencers and their marketing, and it might be advantageous for marketers to recruit the specific influencers according to a certain segmented niche if they take advantage of what this review has to offer.

2. Some Operational definitions

According to Keller and Berry's (2003) research, an Influencer is a person who possesses an eager mind along with some capacity to influence other people's decisions with the assistance of networks.

According to Brown and Hayes (2008), an "influencer" is defined as "a third person who significantly impacts the customer's purchase choice." It is essentially a person's voice that possesses some influential features and has the potential to be beneficial for a society in various ways.

According to Sudha and Sheena's (2017) research, the technique of influencer marketing is defined as a method that assists in the selection of individuals who are actively involved in influencing the characteristics of other people by utilising their personality and degree of participation.

3. Information concerning the practice of marketing using Influencers

(Ohanian, 1990; Gupta and Lord, 1998) concentrated on celebrity endorsement and found it beneficial after assessing source qualities. If they influence intent, they're good message endorsers. Although it's the influencing approach that has credibility, a persuasive strategy employs trustworthiness to influence customer behaviour (Chatterjee, 2001). Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) say that electronic word-of-mouth marketing recommends products based on past views and remarks about them. Brown & Hayes (2008) established the numerous characteristics of influencer marketing, which may help companies become famous and collaborate with influencers to make a valuable message to society for making influencing judgments. Influencers make good opinion leaders. Electronic word of mouth marketing is faster and better than conventional, according to research. It's a leader's advice (Han et al., 2009). Mutum and Wang (2011) found that with the use of the internet and electronic word-of-mouth marketing, which is collaborated with the blogger, comes influencer marketing. The social media influencer created itself as an endorser, which is called a third party in this omnipresent era of social media (Freberg et al., 2011).

Digital marketing and word-of-mouth marketing allow freedom for generating excellent content that impacts customers' brains and changes their perspective (Halvorsen et al., 2013). Brown and Fiorella (2013) found that influencer marketing is a challenging challenge for marketing strategy. The term influencer is not entirely defined since it is not adequately articulated. It is a complicated term that shows a person's or entity's power in connection to others. Influencer marketing targeted niches, not the overall market. Influencer

marketing allows firms to interact with customers instantaneously. With influencer marketing, social media influencers share their daily lives and brand promotions (Adweek , 2015). Ngai et al. (2015) discovered many options for communicating with consumers that technology enables, such as chat rooms, Internet forums, other types of conversation, blogs, and websites for rating services. The study found that influencer marketing is easy and may be employed now. Berger et al. (2016) found influencer marketing to be more trustworthy than celebrity endorsement. Social media influencers are very informed and trustworthy for brand promotion. The study showed that in today's environment influencer marketing plays a key role, since endorsing certain ideas and reviews helps earn goodwill and acts as a buzzword in selecting normal marketing strategy and management. According to the survey, influencer marketing is a cost-effective way for marketers to reach niches (Patel, 2016; Harrison, 2017).

Lim et al. (2017) studied how influencer marketing is effective by employing attractiveness, meaning transfer, matching personality with the product, and credibility with the mediation impact of customer attitude using PLS-sem. The study doesn't support influencers as effective as other traits. How influencer marketing grabs consumer attention and allows firms to target niche/segmented customer groups is a challenging process. Influencer marketing lets firms reach customers by paying influencers to communicate brand messaging (Smart Insights, 2017). De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders (2017) said that through sharing material on social networking platforms, people gained a fan base. Some things affect this buildup. Social media influencers distribute content and promote engagement. Influencer marketing is an affordable strategy for promoting products and services, according to Peng et al. (2018). Brands can engage influencers based on a target customer segment's needs to lure them to online platforms. Rahal (2020) reported that in 2018, 85% of marketers employ influencer marketing, which is projected in the next decade of digitalization. Appel et al. (2020) studied virtual influencers; it's new for society to accept things electronically, yet "Lil Miquela," a nonhuman, has 2.4 million Instagram followers. Martnez-López et al. (2020) focused on companies benefitted by social media influencers and how endorsement methods turned into influencer marketing for consumer interest since influencers advocate items to sustain brand images.

4. A look at the ways and characteristics of social media influencers

According to the findings of the studies, the attributes that are determined to be the most convincing among influencers and opinion leaders are trustworthiness and credibility (Berkman and Gilson, 1986; Lee and Youn, 2009). (Forbes, 2016) The study found that there is one more essential quality that one must possess in order to become an effective influencer. These may include the pace at which influencers engage with the viewers of their channels, the number of times a certain post is made, and the list of referrals that is offered. In the course of the research, a significant amount of time was spent developing an algorithm that will be of assistance to brands in selecting appropriate influencers, in ensuring that the campaign is successful and efficient, and in presenting businesses with a means by which they can develop cost-effective influencer

marketing strategies. The names Feick and Price (1987) Previous studies have conducted research on some opinion leaders, who are often customers and have a lower degree of power to influence others than other people. The sort of an influencer might change depending on the product as well as the community that the audience is marketed toward. According to Wilson and Sherrell (1993), one of the most important qualities of an influencer is the ability to communicate effectively. This is because the capability of persuading another person is extremely important in the context of influencer marketing.). In addition, the other study provided an illustration of the services provided by agencies that deal in connection with influencers who are the best match to the brands in accordance with the findings. The company came to the conclusion that there are four distinct categories of social media influencers. These categories include celebrities, bloggers, Instagrammers, and Vloggers, also known as Youtubers.

According to the findings of the survey, consumers often seek for the biographies and reels of influencers when they are purchasing a product online and report feeling connected and ready to communicate during internet browsing (godin, 2005) And performing online via videos is also a new way for people to build their businesses and receive attention from the people who follow them. This concept of being a "micro-celebrity" is somewhat recognisable to most people (Senft, 2008).

According to Greenberg (2009), the study concluded that the influencers are regular people since their credibility among their followers and the persuasiveness with which they disseminated material is comparable to that of celebrities. The views of the audience being targeted are influenced by the influencer who is acting as the social media representative. The rise in popularity of influencers is being significantly aided by the participation of networking websites. Somehow Influencers on social media have a more natural relationship with the people they are trying to reach, give off the impression that they are just regular people rather than larger celebrities, and help their followers feel more at ease and more connected to them through the content of their everyday lives (McGaughey & Graham , 2010). On the other hand, Chatterjee's study (2011, page 88) introduced the concept that the visual display of a specific social media network within various social networking sites has a significant influence on increasing the number of recipients' decisions to comply with the recommendations given by the influencers for attempting to purchase the new product. The decision-making process of consumers is significantly impacted by influencers who present an identity that is comparable to that of a reputable person. The choice of a particular influencer may be decided by a number of different criteria, such as the size of their fan base, the specific industry from which the social media influencer originates, and the degree to which their actions will have an impact on others. They are like consumers who are ordinary in characteristics, and they are interested in exchanging their "user-generated contents" with the online unknown consumers and audiences. This makes the term "citizen influencers" very different from "opinion leaders," which is because citizen influencers are consumers who are ordinary in characteristics (McQuarrie et al., 2013).

According to Fredberg et al. (2010), the researcher found that the social media influencer modifies the attitude of consumers with the assistance of networking channels, by providing material that is utilised for identifying businesses. This was done by using networking channels. However, the hirer businesses measure the relevancy of the influencer material by analysing the comments, assessing how timely the shared information is, and measuring the fan following of the influencer. This measurement lays the door for a successful social media influencer to be recruited by the brand of a product for the purpose of promoting the items. In addition, Freberg et al. (2011) revealed that those who are considered to be influential had a number of unique qualities that are highly regarded by the people who took part in the survey. The customers expected social media influencers to have strong opinions, a lot of enthusiasm, and intelligence in their job. As a result of customers trusting the social media influencer because of other recommendations, after viewing their social posts, and in some way being impacted by retrospective qualities. According to micro celebrity (2015), the influencers monetize their material through the use of advertorials, some receive payment for endorsing products and services through their opinion leaders, and others capitalize on their particular abilities. Marwick (2015) conducted study on the phenomenon that is referred to as "micro celebrities." "with the purpose of characterizing the influencers who work on social media platforms and who have the ability to obtain the strategic closeness of people and perform like personalities of audience members. The term "social media influencer" refers to a non-traditional category of celebrities who fall into the group of people who have built a reputation for themselves as well-known personalities on social media platforms.

5. Traits those are common among influencers

According to Ledbetter (2016), however, social media influencers have a more specialized capacity to focus on a specific market when compared to the mass marketing that was used in the conventional period. This is in contrast to the mass marketing that was utilized in the old era. They promote the branded product by utilizing instances from their everyday lives, and they strike a chord in the minds of customers by striking a chord in reference to the consumers' everyday lives. When it comes to performing persuasive activities, it was discovered that there is some leeway that allows for adjustments to be performed in the connection between the influencer and the customer, and that these modifications can be tried. Additionally, influencers are the individuals that offer a connection wire that may combine customers and companies in a single point of view. According to Glucksman (2017)'s findings, using social media influencers in lifestyle branding is beneficial. The interaction of the consumer with authentic content and by interactive sessions with the influencer for the promotion of lifestyle items and household products becomes a great initiative for companies that use influencer marketing. These companies include lifestyle brands and manufacturers of household goods. This engagement with the product item is not a one-sided interaction; rather, with the utilisation of social media, it transforms into a two-sided interaction. A significant gap was found by the

researcher between the conventional application of marketing and the usage of products and influencer marketing, both of which are examples of social media marketing techniques. This resulted in a shift in how the items were marketed. The research also provided an illustration of an example of an influencer marketing campaign using a cosmetics brand called Maybelline. According to the findings of the study, the qualities of social influencers include expertise, confidence, the capacity to demonstrate dependability, assistance, and the ability to articulate the material. The audience will feel more confident after seeing these traits.

Godey et al. (2016) note that the phrase "social media influencer" is a fluid one that is used in a wide variety of marketing enterprises, despite the fact that there is a paucity of study on this subject, which ought to have been dispersed across several categorization features. According to Woods (2016), there is a general consensus that customers have the ability to be swayed in their decision to make a purchase by influencers and that these individuals have the power to do so in an efficient manner. This concept gives rise to influencer marketing as an element of the promotion mix, which is becoming increasingly popular in the modern world. In most cases, marketers are not devoting to other conventional methods of advertising the product; rather, they are using the money to pay influencers in the hopes of increasing market return and market share. According to Kapitan and Silvera (2016), there is a large number of models that are commonly found in the celebrity endorsement related aspects in the previous literature. These models are also helpful in the context of social media and by measuring the impact of influencers with those theoretical frameworks and models. The research conducted by Swant (2016) indicated that people believe the suggestions of social media influencers on Twitter just as much as they trust the recommendations of their friends. Influencers on social media are those that generate specific material in a measurable area. This content is distributed to others in such a way that they get a message that has value and also increase the number of followers the influencer has (Garcia, 2017 ; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Talavera (2017) conquered Influencer marketing is a form of marketing that focuses primarily on the promotion of a brand through the utilisation of social networking sites and a variety of social media platforms to influence individuals rather than the entire target demographic. The term "influencer marketing" is synonymous with "influence marketing." Influencer marketing helps to leverage the people's group who are interested in getting influence and are affected by the communication tactics given by influencers about the brands showcasing of a particular product. This can be accomplished by leveraging the people's group who are interested in getting influence.

Another research looked at how readers react to each other in terms of how much they love hearing opinion leaders communicate, as well as how they feel when they obtain particular text or photos that impact their thoughts or the minds of customers or readers and increase their capacity to trust the influencers. Both good and negative feedback from readers contribute to the article's overall effectiveness and authenticity (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). In the present day environment, the term "Instagram influencer" is also used. This word was used by Evans et al. (2017). These are the individuals who are prominent on social media and have the

capacity to sway the opinions of Instagram users and the decisions they make about their fan following. According to De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017), the study discovered the emotional bond that is developed by the consumers and that is developed by the marketers. This is an important task because developing and emotional attachment in the consumer's mind is different from focusing only on the product aspects. Employing the most suitable influencer for the appropriate group of persons to target may be a difficult and time-consuming task for businesses.

According to Cernikovait (2018), there is a sociologically theoretical feature of the individuals who opt to modify the aim according to the thoughts of the influencer. A person can become an influencer if they have the ability to write user-generated content of a high quality and expand the social space available to users in such a way that users are more inclined to make more informed decisions when they are engaging in activities related to purchasing goods or services. Gupta and Mahajan (2019) According to the findings of the study, micro-influencers are more credible and found to be effective with their targeted segment of consumers. Micro-influencers also provide a greater reach to the audience as a result of their five number of fan followers; however, they have less interaction with the followers than traditional influencers do. There were less research on comprehending the contrast between the two distinct endorsers' efficacy, according to Schouten et al. (2019), but this study brought a new discovery to this word, "efficacy." "in academia. With the use of empirical information, Lou and Yuan's (2019) study was able to identify the characteristics that are associated with influencers. These factors were likeability, attractiveness, and likeness to influential people. Questions with open-ended responses were employed. The research investigated "intimate relationships." "context in regard to the major respondents and the social media influencers. It is true that the primary goal of influencer marketing is to make consumers aware of a prominent brand in their minds and to work on the intention of consumers to change their behavioural patterns regarding branded items that are being advocated by an influencer. The research conducted by Bodker (2020) shed some insight on the significance of micro-influencers, as it was shown that audiences saw micro-influencers as more trustworthy maestros than macro-influencers. This is due to the high amount of engagement that micro-influencers have with the members of their audience and the people who follow them. The engagement rate with the intended audience is not much greater for macro influencers, regardless of whether or not they have a large number of followers following them, in comparison to micro-influencers. A new concept known as a "social media influencer" has emerged as a result of the proliferation of internet use. This influencer is determined mostly by the number of fan following they have, and the individuals who have them pick this path as a job (makrides et al, 2020). Shareef et al (2020) the findings of the study suggest that consumers have confidence in the material that is posted on social media by a variety of influencers and groups of opinion leaders. These findings are supported by empirical pieces of data that aid to illustrate this point. According to Chopra et al.(2021) findings, using appropriate influencers with appropriate products is something that should be done. It is a laborious effort for the marketers to find the appropriate influencers for their particular product because of

how many options there are. According to the findings of the research, the presence of micro-level bloggers and influencers is favoured for the fashion and beauty business.

6. Platforms geared at influencers in social media

The researcher found that social media sites are useful for bridging the gap between businesses and their consumers. Smith (2010, p.176) discovered that blogging is the best way for influencers to express themselves as individuals. Jesus et al (2012) Electronic word of mouth thrives and spreads through user-generated content created by users using social media successfully. Social media technologies affect the way people communicate as internet, social networks, and other platforms increase and become more accessible. Internet and social media use is high, providing a forum for opinion leaders and information providers. People may sense the realism of ads and influencer marketing (Brown and Fiorella, 2013). General consumption and sharing or being popular on social media sites, such becoming an Instagram influencer, may alter their intended audience's engagement and motivate them (Yates, 2014 ; Martensen et al., 2018). According to Herring et al. (2004), blogging may be managed chronologically, users can comment on blogs, and reading blogs encourages engagement. The author establishes his or her own blog page about a certain topic, creating some autonomy. Kaye (2005) summed up that social media platforms combine online and offline content for greater audience-creator engagement. Blogs contain information like tales with important everyday life examples but are not a literary genre/ journalism. The study proposed using a blogging platform, a website where several authors may debate a topic with a high engagement rate, for research initiatives (Dwyer, 2007). Liu et al. (2010) employ social media platforms in marketing campaigns using influencer referrals. Companies get enormous returns from influencer marketing. Bodnar and cohen (2011) found that fashion bloggers describe events, make videos, and update everyday. It's popular since 2011. Fashion blogging may be about beauty and other clothes. YouTube gives video bloggers an opportunity to keep their legitimacy as an interactive platform where people may comment on videos.

Tumblr and Instagram also grabbed influencers and swiftly expanded views via influencer marketing. Markethub (2016) suggests using social media channels like youtube, Instagram, facebook, etc. to promote items with influencers. Influencers may help market products and services. The survey found millennials prefer social media over conventional media. Their preference is for videos, Instagram stories. To become an influencer, it's not required to be a superstar; an influencer may be anyone who adds value to society by using social media and increasing their following (striz, 2016). Brand influencers assist customers become more aware of a product by knowing their perceptions and intents. Byrne et al. (2017) Influencers are electronic media communicators who affect target persons by communicating messages and helping marketing departments, since influencer marketing is a sort of electronic marketing. For reaching goals, a firm or brand must use an influencer who is informed, authoritative, and skilled with influencing customer purchase decisions. Snapchat, Instagram, and Youtube are proposed for audience influence (olenski, 2017).

Sudha & Sheena (2017) found blogs to be a good messaging channel. Companies using blogs may also debate ethics and the environment.

7. Conclusions

Influencer marketing expanded to Youtubers and bloggers. It remains the question of which strategy businesses should employ for advertising items with influencers. Kádeková and Holieninová (2018) stated that influencer marketing has replaced the clichés of conventional advertising. The study showed the integrative impact of influencer marketing as a strategy for long-term promotion, while short-term campaigns are ineffective. Influencer marketing is a cost-effective instrument with influencing parameters (Margis, 2019). (Abdullah et al., 2020) According to the study, familiarity, likability, and trustworthiness of the source are significantly influential for modifying the buy intention of Instagram users in stylish items. Some research indicated the believability of influencers is a key feature that helps customers be open with them (Buyer, 2016). Campbell & Farrell (2020) studied influencer traits including beauty, knowledge, some mechanism and credibility, the emotional effect, and other variables that predict buy intention and engagement rate. The study on strategically implementing influencer marketing is limited. After examining the literature, the study reveals that research development is still needed in influencer marketing. The researchers need to broaden the study from firms' perspectives and forecast new influencer traits as part of real-life scenarios to motivate marketers to recruit social media influencers and not simply rely on one size fits all perspectives.

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