

Submission ID

163

Title

The Impact of Instagram's Fashion Influencers on Generation Z consumers purchase behaviours

Type of Submission

Competitive Short Paper for a Workshop

Abstract

Social media is a digital technology that has grown immensely and played a major role in the transformation to today's modern world. This growth has also fuelled the growth of influencer marketing (IM) on social media platforms as a consumer acquisition tool. IM involves the use of product/brand endorsements in collaboration with influencers. Social media influencers (SMIs) are individuals who have the ability to influence others through their own social media following to attract potential customers (Ki et al. 2020). The use of SMIs in marketing is a thriving phenomenon, with marketers using influencers to promote a market offering and raise awareness about their brands through select individuals on social media (Valsesia et al. 2020; Libai et al. 2013). The fashion industry has greatly evolved over the year and it's even more competitive than ever, social media platforms has helped the fashion industry grow rapidly. As it reported that Instagram IM has driven an 18% increase in sales for fashion brands between 2019-2020 (Launch Metrics 2020).

Generation Z (Gen Z) refers to the population of people who were born in the years 1997 to 2012, (Kasasa 2019). They have grown up with social media and as a result are constantly connected to various social media platforms as part of their day to day life. Consequently, social media can potentially influence the purchasing behaviour of Gen Z consumers. Existing literature has shown Instagram is the most popular social media platform used by Gen Z consumers (Alhabash and Ma 2017; Alsalem 2019; Curtis et al. 2019), but limited research determines if Instagram influencers influence Gen Z purchasing behaviours when buying fashion brands.

This study aims to fill in this research gap and adopt Media Dependency Theory (MDT) to investigate the impact of Instagram's fashion influencers on Gen Z purchase behaviour. The theory suggests that the dependency on a medium or a source will be greater when the resources provided are relevant to the individual on a personal level. The stronger the link between individuals and the source predicts the level of effect and influence on their behaviour and attitudes (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, 1976), so if a follower is constantly engaging with an Instagram influencer and their content, the more likely that their purchase decisions will be influenced by the influencer's product and brand recommendations.

This paper is in the development stage and will use quantitative approach to test proposed research hypotheses which developed based on literature review to reveal if Gen Z consumers have high dependency on influencers' contents for fashion

brands impact their purchase behaviours. The survey questionnaires results will be analysed by AMOS structural equation modelling. The findings will help digital marketers to gain a better understanding of Gen Z's purchasing behaviours, provide insights for fashion brands to understand how to use Instagram influencers effectively to attract and retain Gen Z consumers, and help brands and Instagram influencers know how to create high dependency contents on social media to excite Gen Z consumers continuously.