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Social Media Influencers and its Impacts on Consumer Behavior: Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to assess the effectiveness of social media influencers in terms of advertising. Advertising is an audio or visual sort of marketing communication that uses a straightforwardly upheld, nonpersonal message to progress or offer a thing, service, or thought that specifically focuses on a group of people bringing attention, awareness, need, and organization exposure. Advertising now has upgraded itself from traditional media to new media such as social media, not only did they found a media but also new ways to advertise. Online Social Networks, for instance, Facebook, Instagram, and others have ended up being the most standard online destinations in the current years. The organization has also started to buy their fans and they are called the social media influencers. The research methodology used in this research is quantitative through a survey questionnaire. A non-probability sampling – virtual snowball sampling method was applied in the survey with 200 respondents. Consumers see social media as an important tool in purchasing decisions, and social media influencers play an important role in that decision. This research contributes to the understanding of how advertising works, how advertising has upgraded to social media, and the influencers playing a big role in developing consumer's behavior in their purchasing decision.

Keywords: Social Media influencers, Word of Mouth Advertisement, Nonpersonal Message, Media Mix, and Vendor Polluted Messages.

Introduction

"Advertising is associated with an audio or visual form of promoting communication that simply upheld, impersonal message to provide, service, or conveying people attention on the construct, awareness, need, and organization exposure. This promotional tool normally caters toward large groups for wide exposure requiring basic evaluation of content and media used to strengthen the message" (Stanton, 1984). Sponsors of advertising are frequently organizations who wish to sell their products or services. Advertising is different than public relations in that a sponsor pays for and has control over the message they want to send. It is different from individual offering in that the message is nonpersonal, i.e., not composed to particular people (Arens, 1992).

Electronic verbal exchange wound up being extraordinarily acclaimed with the occasion of electronic social networks. Social networks are changing into the facto authoritative in the present correspondence among companions and exchanging of other communication tools, for instance, face to face conversation, telephone discussion, and through electronic mail (Khan & Pal M. A, 2014). "The standpoint is the way that people are related with different each other that they might know and can exchange information, which no doubt would be not so much intruding but instead more viable than "vendor polluted" messages. This component can build the organization to manage a "social"

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relationship with social network users (Raju, 2019). Framing the social affiliations will develop the advertising approach to manage be one that relies on upon growing associations, liking, and having the trust between the organization and the buyers and in this manner makes a fundamentally more direct association (from both the organization and potential/existing clients' perspectives)" (Gil-Or, 2010).

Online Social Networks, as an example, Facebook, Instagram, et al. have ended up being the foremost standard online destinations within the current years. Facebook is by far the greatest informal organization on the planet with more than 350 million dynamic clients and 170% advancement, Facebook is a particularly dynamic system with 175 million clients that are gaining to it at any rate once every day (Gil-Or, 2010). In like manner, social media has numerous wizards, however, just a couple emerges as impacts. These 'social media influencers' are individuals who make an offer intriguing or important substance with the specialty crowds that tail them. They may be bloggers with a substantial readership or socially clever customers with faithful devotees on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Influencers are trusted by their groups of audiences (David, 2015).

Web-based social networking influencers are honing the working of associations with the overall population who can construct connections for the organization. Regardless of whether an influencer's group of onlookers is little or vast, an influencer can achieve customers utilizing their online journals and interpersonal organizations that the organization will most likely be unable to. On a different note, some of the highest-paid organizations in Facebook pages have purchased the fans. While a great many people take a gander at social media influencers and bloggers distinctively in Malaysia, this technique is known to be a standout amongst the most intense and successful methods for getting the message over (David, 2015).

This study needs to be conducted to grasp the idea of whether consumers are aware of social media influencers since about 88% of the advertisers use social media as a bit of their promoting media mix and permitting influencers to develop in Malaysia and making Facebook the commanding lead in the digital era, allowing numerous multinational organizations to capture market share (Raju and Phung, 2020). Also, to understand whether social media influencers are playing a major role in purchasing decisions since Social media in Malaysia has become generic to the straightforwardness of Internet affiliation, especially around the urban areas in Malaysia. Consumers trust friends and family when choosing what items to purchase over branded messaging. The advantages of influencer showcasing are various. Partnering together with an influencer can be a savvy kind of radiant substance with worked in dispersion. It is profoundly quantifiable and can be engaged in specific gatherings of crowds to get fantastic leads and engagement.

H1: There is a positive relationship between Media influencers on consumer behavior and awareness

H2: There is a positive relationship between Media influencers on consumer behavior and roles

H3: There is a positive relationship between Media influencers on consumer behavior and its effects

H4: There is a positive relationship between Media influencers on consumer behavior and being influenced

Review of Literature

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"As new techniques of advertising on-line are developed, advertising practitioners ought to perceive that net business enterprise is differing. It incorporates the greater part of the traditional advertising (e.g. media buying, marketing research) and many capacities that were beforehand consigned to masters (e.g. direct marketing, retail marketing)" (McMillan, 2004). "Since the blast of the web, net organizations have endowed to take advantage of online advertising. Different types of promoting, for example, in-store advertisements, print advertisements, and TV and radio advertisements are yet critical, yet online advertising is developing altogether. Indeed, with online advertising, there are various types of promoting that are promoted on the Internet. Progressively creative sorts of advertising are appearing as the Web develops" (Matthew Duncan, 2011).

"Likewise, most well-liked returns over in alternative media abroad the vast information through that adman may beyond any doubt sustain. Electronic relationship management with the client or buyer (ECRM) and opposite aspect consumer to boot get a complete insight concerning the items and services from their specific comfort places and find the item to deliver at their doorstep that likewise helps them to decrease transportation price, hassle-free services, effectively accessibility, distinctive decisions accessible and then on to the consumer" (Khan & Pal M. A, 2014). "Today, whoever with a Facebook, Twitter account, a YouTube channel, or a blog has a voice. It's an imperative voice; customarily, your brand isn't what you say it is. Or maybe, it's what they say it is. They are the social influencers and they are assuming a steadily expanding part in deciding and driving consumer behavior" (Kempe, 2003).

"The correspondence by online media isn't equivalent standard advancing through joint effort, dynamic, tolerating client criticism, responsibility, and affirmation. By being in social media, brands can make exhibiting procedures that improve shopper devotion and keep up a positive image of the brand (Chiosa, 2014). "Through continuous analysis on shoppers call and behavior who are net users (Anand, 2006) there are four specific shoppers teams with varied goals and inspirations: Exploration of the merchandise, Entertainment, Shopping, and Information that people like to share. People like to find out interesting ideas, music, food, and products and then pass them on to their followers. At the point when online networking users share constant flows of pertinent substance, their impact develops, and devotees will probably impart to their particular systems."

The theoretical framework that this research will be examined through is a social learning theory, attribution theory, and two-step flow of communication. Social Learning Theory - "Social learning hypothesis causes why influencers can be persuading. Thinking that people can acquire new patterns of behavior by watching others, (Bandura, 1971) proposed that people's behaviors are found out either purposely or accidentally through the case. Influencers show others how it's done, prescribing, or strengthening items that they like through advertorials. Therefore, watchers viewing these cases might probably receive those practices displayed by the influencer (Raju and Phung, 2019b). Brand marketers utilize this methodology with the expectation that consumers will take after influencers' behavior as "monkeys see monkeys do."

Attribution theory - "The additional the consumer qualities the communicator's study concerning associated degree item to it that thing's real execution, the additional the consumer can see that the communicator is legitimate. The more the purchaser will have faith in the exactness of the survey, the more grounded the customer's conviction that the thing has the characteristics referred to in the review" (Seounmi, 2009). Influencers go facing a strong part in forming other customers' slants on products and services."

Two-step flow of communication - "the two-step flow of correspondence model shows that

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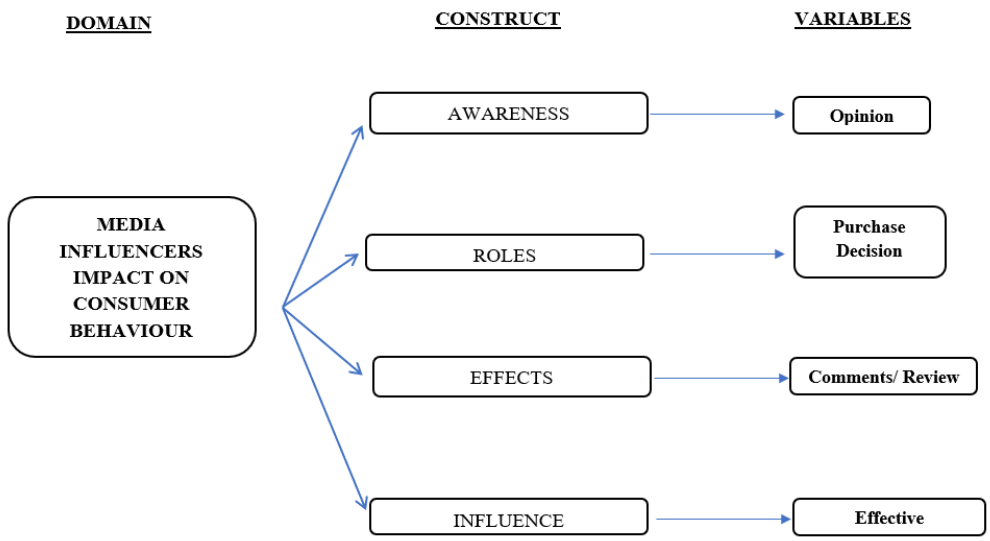
associated degree oversize range of individual structure their selections influenced by appraisal pioneers, thus are influenced by the broad communications." Instead of the one-step flow of the magic bullet theory, these people are straightforwardly affected by mass media. As indicated by the two-step flow model, thoughts stream from broad communications to assessment pioneers, and from them to a more extensive populace. In this case, the mass media is Facebook, the opinion leaders are the social media influencers, and then the consumers. The majorities of individuals receive an abundance of their information and are influenced by the media second-hand, through the personal influence of opinion leaders. The two-step model says that many people are not specifically impacted by mass media, but rather that they rather shape their opinions based on opinion leaders who translate media messages and put them into the setting." (Weimann, 2015)

This study will allow identifying the important variables in the study that will lead to meaningful hypotheses. This forms a descriptive design that will track behavior amongst individuals that fall into the sample population. Table 1. shows the research design for this study.



Research Framework

Table 1.

Research Methodology

This chapter clarifies the research methodology used to test the larger researcher in this study is the ascent of social media influencers and their effect on consumer behavior. The chapter outlines the accompanying significant data, including the discussion of the research design used to address the research question, justification for adopting a survey research method to measure consumer's behavior towards the social media influencers and their purchasing decision (Raju and Poh Phung, 2020). Related to this discussion are issues of sampling procedures and questionnaire design, which are overviewed (Raju and Phung, 2019a). The whole experiment took place online with the survey being presented within Malaysia via web-based networking media stages, for example, Facebook, Twitter, and sent using WhatsApp messages. In the URL posted on these social networks, participants experienced the survey that contained twenty – three questions via social media influencers and purchaser conduct on a buy choice. The motivation behind the study was to direct research on how

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people feel about social media influencers and how they prefer to get their information on a product.

"Facebook at this moment is that the most visited social media web site in Malaysia with the current population of Malaysia – 30,387,862. Altogether, there are 10.4 million Facebook users currently in Malaysia and about 3.5 million are adults aged between 18 and 24. More than 8.7 million (out of the 10 million) the Malaysian public are accessing Facebook through their cell phones every day, while more than 14 million (out of 15 million)" (David, 2015). The criteria of the sampling frame are taken from an applied data-driven and quantitative approach. For preparing the demographic profile of the respondents, the questionnaire was queried for the participants' age, gender, and both local and international people staying in Malaysia. The criteria were respondents were from both male and female from the age of 16 to 40 above. Those using social media exclusively such as Facebook, consumers can purchase and get information about a product through social media.

Respondents are both local and international residing in Malaysia. The sample was collected through www.Surveymonkey.com. With Malaysia's population of 30,387,862, a Non-probability sampling – Virtual Snowball sampling method (survey) – Quantitative was applied to this research. A chain sampling method and a non-probability sampling were used as a research method having the instrument questionnaire survey; a Total of 200 respondents was asked to respond to 20 questions, which were later grouped and analyzed. Respondents are as cyber-consumers; mainly young teenagers aged 16 up to 40 years and above.

Data Analysis

The researchers aim is to perceive the opinion of the public who see the advertisement in Malaysia. In this section, the paper will explain the four constructs of the research framework. The respondent's opinions and views are analyzed in each section.

In the awareness section:

- Follow social media influencers for product opinions and information.

In the roles section:

- Consumers base purchasing decision on the influencer's usage

In the effects section:

- Purchase a product that has a comment or review.

In the Influence section:

- Social media is an effective way to shape consumer when it comes to making a purchase decision.

This section will explain the findings and the results of the survey. Below are four main data of the variables that have been collected:

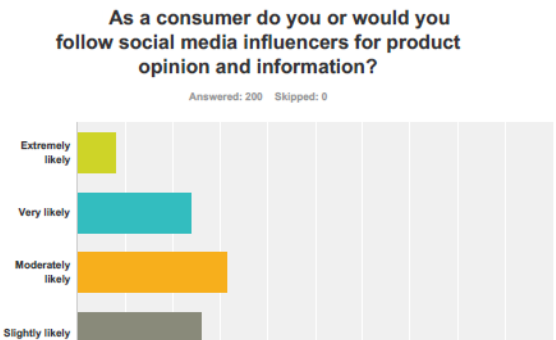

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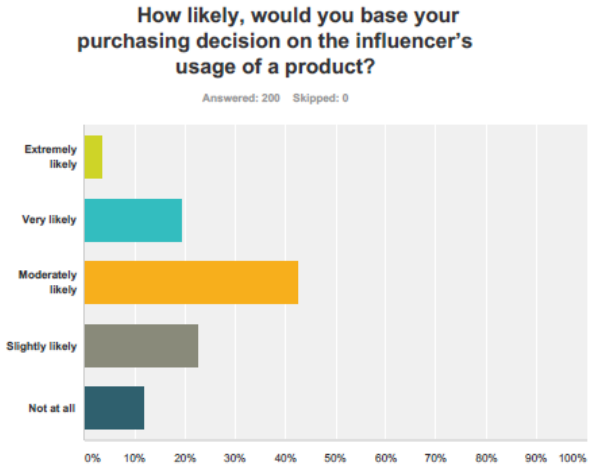
Figure 1: Following Influencers for opinion

The following figure 1. explains if consumers would follow social media influencers for product opinion and information. Respondent answered highest with 31.50% moderately, slightly likely at 26.00%, very likely at 24.00%, not at all at 10.50%, extremely likely at 8.00%.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely likely	3.50%	7
Very likely	19.50%	39
Moderately likely	42.50%	85
Slightly likely	22.50%	45
Not at all	12.00%	24
Total		200

Figure 2: Purchasing decision on the influencer's usage

The following figure 2. explains how consumers would base their purchasing decision on the influencer's usage of a product. The respondents answered that majority of 42.50% would moderately base their purchase decision on the influencer's usage, 22.50% would slightly likely, 19.50% very likely, 12% would not at all, and lastly, 3.50% would extremely likely.

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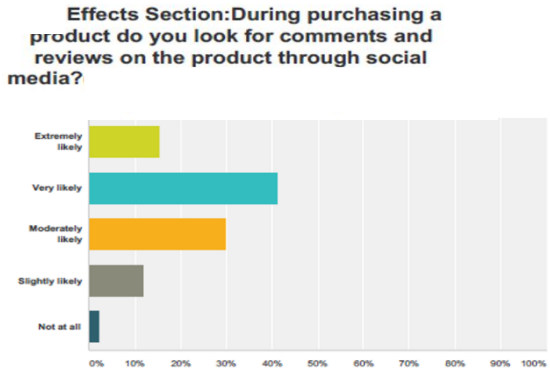
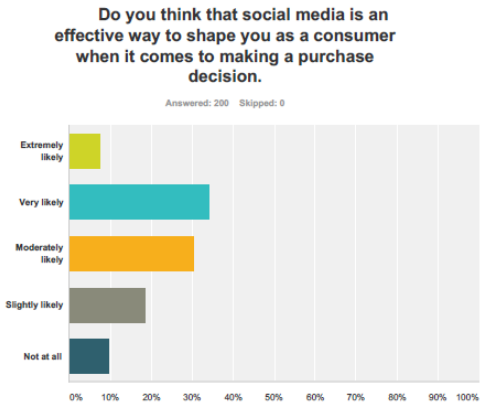


Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely likely	15.23%	23
Very likely	41.06%	62
Moderately likely	29.80%	45
Slightly likely	11.92%	18
Not at all	1.99%	3
Total		151

Figure 3: Inspect on comments and review

The following figure 3. is based on the effect section. The section includes a question of whether during purchasing a product do consumers look for comments and reviews on the product through social media. Based on the answer given 41.06% of the respondent answered very likely for a consumer to purchase a product that has a "positive" comment or review about the product. 29.80% of them answered moderately, 15.23% extremely likely, and 11.92% slightly likely and only about 1.99% answered not at all.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely likely	7.50%	15
Very likely	34.00%	68
Moderately likely	30.50%	61
Slightly likely	18.50%	37
Not at all	9.50%	19
Total		200

Figure 4: Shape consumer in making a purchase decision

Figure 4. is on if consumers think social media is an effective way to shape them as a consumer when it comes to making a purchase decision. Respondents answered 34% very likely, 30.50% moderately, and 18.50% slightly likely, 9.50% of the respondents answered not at all and lastly 7.50% answered extremely likely.

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4.4 Hypothetical Statement Testing/ Research question

H1: ACCEPTED. The result from the research showed that consumers are influenced through electronic word of mouth advertisement when purchasing a product before or after. With regards to consumer spending, online content also, social discussions significantly affect their opinion on how consumers pick what they want to purchase. Through the survey question on if you follow any social media influencers, what do you look for? About 43% of the respondent answered that they follow social media influencers because to find their opinion on a certain product or service. Hence, consumers do get influenced and will continue to be influenced through electronic word of mouth advertisement (Raju and Phung, 2020).

H2: ACCEPTED. Social media influencers do play a role are effective in the consumer's purchasing decisions. The research shows that consumers will rely on social media influencers in making every purchase in the future. Through the survey question, respondents were asked if they think social media influencers that have a lot of followers play an important role in their purchasing decision and behavior. 25% of the respondent answered very likely they think that social media influencers that have a lot of followers play an important role in their purchasing decision and behavior. When asked if the respondent thought social media is an important tool in their purchasing decision 33.50% of respondents answered moderately.

H3: ACCEPTED. The result from the research showed that positive and negative comments by social media influencers can affect the consumer’s reason for purchase as consumers may take the opinion and idea into consideration. Through the data collected from the survey question, it shows that 75.50% of the respondents prefer to look for comments and reviews of the product on social media before purchasing it. About 41% of the respondents are very likely to purchase a product that has a positive comment or review, followed by 29.80% moderately, and 15.23% extreme likely. Meanwhile, with a product that has a negative comment or review, about 39.74% of the respondent are slightly likely to purchase the product, followed by 27.81% would not at all purchase the product. As mentioned before consumers believe that those that give positive or negative comments about the product will not benefit anything by sharing their opinion instead it helps other consumers in deciding to purchase or not.

H4: ACCEPTED. The result from the research showed that Social media Influencers have an effective influence over the consumers. Consumers are likely to recommend a product or brand to their family members and friends after discovering its review from a social media influencer the data showed that 37% are more likely to do so. 34% of the respondents also believe that social media is an effective way to shape them as a consumer when it comes to making a purchase decision.

Discussion

Social media influencers speak to another sort of free outsider endorser who shapes audience demeanors through blogs, tweets, and the utilization of other online networking. Advertisers today are gone up against a surprising cluster of new communications channels. The Internet-based social media tools such as blogs, podcasts, and online video and social networks are offering a voice to the sentiments of a huge number of consumers. Through this research, the outcome of the research demonstrated that consumers are affected through the electronic verbal advertisement when purchasing an item before or after. Concerning consumer spending, online content likewise, social exchanges altogether influence how consumers pick what to buy.

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The reviewed field of study is very dynamic and has provided many opportunities for more future research. More research is needed to be conducted to find social influence metrics that correlate with the actual influence of social media users. Most of the current research focuses on Facebook networks, more types of social media should be considered. Besides, there is still discussion on influence maximization and better algorithms can be developed. Another form of research methodology can be tested which is an important approach to study it more elaborately. A larger number of respondents can be taken for the survey question, through Snowball Sampling the research can gain more than 200 respondents may be up to 500 respondents. Future research should also examine the effectiveness of the strategy on the consumer who is exposed to the message

Conclusion

This chapter concludes with a discussion detailing the researcher and the conclusion of the research finding. After analyzing the collected information from 200 subjects, it concludes the fact that most consumers are influenced through electronic word of mouth advertisement when purchasing a product before or after, and Social media influencer's does play a role in their purchasing decisions. Technology is evolving so is the advertising and the consumers. Consumers are aware of what product they want, how to get it, and where to get it. Social networks have now a role in influencing the behavior of the consumers in the environment, especially when the level of exposure of messages and the relation made between the variety of information given and the consumer who make a purchase.

Consumers now prefer to get their information from their friends, family, and social media influencers as the trust are there compared to a company's website. Consumers do desire meaningful content and relevant information to help them make purchase decisions and they want opinions from people they trust. All reviewed studies demonstrate the high impact of social influence with regards to social media. It is basic for organizations to comprehend social impact systems, select the correct measurements, gather the correct information, and endeavor the impact openings in web-based social networking. To display these components, the Online Social Influence model was made, which gives abnormal state ventures to oversee social impact through web-based social networking.

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