

Communication in the 21st Century: The Effect of Internet Celebrity as the Communication Source in Influencing Generation Z Purchase Intention

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ABSTRACT

The current corporate landscape is characterized by fierce rivalry, prompting marketers to actively seek strategies to effectively differentiate themselves amidst the abundance of information in the digital realm. One current marketing strategy involves the engagement of online influencers, also known as Internet celebrities, to effectively disseminate information and encourage the intended consumer base to purchase the items offered by their respective companies. In the modern day, it has been customary for individuals who have gained fame through online platforms to create video content with the intention of engaging and influencing their audience on various social media platforms. This practice has now become a norm. Hence, the primary objective of this research is to examine the impact of Internet celebrity on consumer purchase intention, with a specific focus on the Generation Z demographic. The study involved the recruitment of 200 participants from the Generation Z demographic. Data was collected using an online questionnaire that employed 5-point Likert rating scales. The research was conducted by gathering feedback from a sample of 200 respondents belonging to Generation Z. Data collection was conducted through the utilisation of an online questionnaire using 5-Likert rating scales. The findings of the study revealed a significant correlation between credibility and meaning transfer and their impact on purchase intention. The research findings of this study provide marketers and scholars with valuable insights into the ways in which Internet superstars might employ persuasive messaging to impact the purchasing intentions of Generation Z.

Keywords: *Internet celebrities, influencer, generation Z, purchase Intention, communication.*

INTRODUCTION

In this modern day, there are growing interconnections observed around the globe. In today's world, individuals get knowledge and data by means of the Internet. The methods of advertising are currently undergoing a transition, shifting from traditional mass communication channels to new media platforms. According to data provided by SilverMouse (2022), a total of 7.5 million individuals in Malaysia engaged with YouTube through their own devices. Furthermore, it was found that 66% of these viewers saw YouTube as a new form of television. This phenomenon underscores the transformation in the perception and consumption patterns of television as a medium of communication (Fong, Olmedo & Chang, 2023). Consumers are now not only depending on the television to get the information they want, however, social media communities and social networking sites (SNSs) are extensively utilised by individuals for social interaction and information sharing, making them the most prevalent forms of new media (Enke & Borchers, 2021).

This transformation had a significant impact on communication within the corporate sector as well. The contemporary business industry has adopted the practise of engaging with its target consumers through the utilisation of the Internet. The employed approach involved the establishment of a social media platform for disseminating comprehensive information regarding the company's products. Nevertheless, as the number of organisations engaging in similar practices increases, it becomes increasingly challenging for businesses to differentiate themselves from the competition, particularly when targeting the younger Generation Z population. To address this challenge, businesses began to identify an appealing communication source through which to convey their messages. Based on the prevailing phenomenon, internet celebrities have emerged as a significant means of communication for disseminating information to the intended consumer audience (Liu, Wang, Zhang, & Qiao, 2023). Based on the findings of Statista (2021), it was projected that the global market value of influencer platforms would reach 162 million USD in 2020. This growth may be attributed to consumers' utilisation of social networking sites (SNS) as a means to stay informed about the companies and goods that pique their interest (Kim & Park, 2023).

Internet celebrities are those who create material on social media platforms. The content created will be uploaded to their own channel, specifically on the platform YouTube, with the intention of increasing their number of subscribers. In this modern day, Internet celebrities assume a crucial function in establishing a connection between brands and customers. In the present day, the prominent entity known as the YouTuber Corporation has devised a strategy termed digital influencer marketing, wherein collaborations with various firms are established in order to endorse their respective products. A growing number of businesses are allocating their advertising budgets towards collaborations with Internet celebrities, who produce videos endorsing various companies and subsequently distribute them online. Individuals will opt to see videos or subscribe to YouTube channels that align with their personal preferences. The advertising will subtly penetrate the minds of individuals, so establishing a brand's position and exerting an impact on their intention to make a purchase (Geng et al., 2020).

Internet Celebrities Phenomena in Malaysia

Malaysia has emerged as a prominent nation in the field of communication technology, boasting a substantial percentage of its population, approximately 89%, which translates to 25.4 million individuals, actively engaging with the Internet (Baharom, Ahmad Ghazali, & Zamri Ahmad, 2023; Kovalan et al., 2021). According to Cher and Arumugam (2019), Malaysians spend 7.2 hours per hour on YouTube, which is twice the amount of time spent by individuals in other countries, who spend an average of 40 minutes every day. The poll has also indicated that Malaysian individuals tend to utilise their mobile phones while engaging in television viewing. It has been observed that individuals between the age range of 16 to 34 in Malaysia exhibit the highest frequency of YouTube viewership on a monthly basis.

The proliferation of YouTube influencers, characterised by their substantial following, well-established brand personas, and reliable affiliations with corporate sponsors, has led to a notable surge in the prevalence of YouTube within the Malaysian context (Duffy, 2020). According to Khairi (2015), there is evidence indicating that the prevalence of young individuals engaging in the uploading of videos on internet platforms is on the rise. YouTube has significantly influenced the accessibility of information and the quest of personal growth among young individuals (Fong, Olmedo, & Chang, 2023).

According to the statistics that are currently accessible, it is possible to deduce that a sizeable number of people in Malaysia have recently started using YouTube, which is indicative of an increasing level of familiarity with the site in recent times. For companies interested in shaping the landscape of the Malaysian market, making an investment in advertising on YouTube gives a big opportunity to do so.

Generation Z

The term "Generation Z" pertains to persons who were born within the time frame of 1997 to 2012. In Malaysia, this particular demographic group constitutes approximately 26% of the total population (Tjiptono et al., 2020). The defining attributes of Generation Z encompass a high level of education, a propensity for entrepreneurial endeavours, a notable capacity for influence, and a strong inclination towards independent decision-making. These distinguishing traits may set them apart from the generational cohorts of Millennials and Baby Boomers, particularly in the context of their behaviour as consumers. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the generation known as Gen Z exhibits a significant reliance on digital technology, with their daily routines and activities being closely intertwined with various social media platforms, including but not limited to TikTok, Shopee, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter. According to Chandra, Tjiptono and Setyawan (2021), a significant proportion of Generation Z, specifically 65%, have made purchases influenced by suggestions from internet influencers. Generation Z exhibits a preference for engaging with influencers on social media platforms, namely those persons who possess a substantial following and viewership. This inclination significantly influences their decision-making process when it comes to acquiring items or services. Therefore, an increasing number of organisations are seeing the significance of transitioning their emphasis from conventional digital marketing methods to influencer-based marketing.

Research Problem and Objectives

The internet has made significant developments that have facilitated more convenient and accessible means of interaction and communication among individuals. Nevertheless, the prevalence of convenient communication channels has inadvertently resulted in the challenge of capturing individuals' attention, as consumers are constantly bombarded with an overwhelming amount of information. Based on the findings of the previous study, it is revealed that a mere 23% of individuals hold the belief that the information provided by celebrities and influencers can be deemed trustworthy (Geng et al., 2020). Numerous organisations allocate substantial financial resources towards engaging Internet celebrities for the purpose of endorsing their products. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that certain Internet celebrities may encounter challenges in effectively capturing the attention of potential customers (Geng et al., 2020). Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of Internet Influence as a communication channel on consumer purchase intention.

The general objective of this study is to analyse how the internet celebrity influence consumer purchasing intention. There are some research objectives related to the study are as follow:

1. To determine the relationship between credibility of the Internet celebrities and purchase intention.
2. To determine the relationship between attractiveness Internet celebrities and purchase intention.

3. To determine the relationship between the attitude of the Internet celebrities and purchase intention.
4. To determine the relationship between communication skill of the Internet celebrities and purchase intention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internet Celebrities and its Influence

The source of communication plays a significant role in the transmission of information to the receiver within the communication process. Effective communication is a crucial factor in facilitating the transmission of information and influencing consumer buying intention. The utilisation of celebrity endorsement is a very powerful advertising strategy within the field of marketing in the market place today, since it has the potential to significantly impact customer attitudes and intentions to purchase. The practise of celebrity endorsement involves the utilisation of well-known individuals to promote products or services through advertising campaigns. Celebrities encompass individuals from diverse backgrounds, including but not limited to movie stars, notable businessmen, athletes, artists, and various other professions (Erdogan, 1999). In the 21st century, the marketers do not depend on the celebrities in helping them to communicate to the target customers, however, they started to use Internet celebrities in addition to the traditional celebrities to communicate and to send messages to their target audience.

An internet celebrity refers to an individual who has gained or cultivated their fame and recognition through the use of the internet (Márquez, Lanzeni & Masanet, 2023). The individuals of significant influence engage in the operation of several social media platforms, frequently concurrently managing multiple accounts. For instance, individuals who are commonly engaged on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and those who actively participate in professional or commercial blogging and vlogging have been referred to as Instagrammers, YouTubers, Tweeters, and bloggers/vloggers respectively (Abidin, 2015).

According to Taher and El Badawy (2022), the communication of product messages through celebrity endorsements is more likely to attract and sustain greater attention and recall in the market compared to messages provided by non-celebrities. In addition, celebrities are frequently used as brand ambassadors, endorsers, or representatives due to their significant influence, making them a potent communication tool for marketers to engage with their target audience. Celebrity endorsements have been prominently included in both print and television commercials.

Internet celebrities play a significant role in contemporary word-of-mouth marketing. According to Akritidis, Katsaros and Bozani (2011), these entities offer a wide range of information in many formats and features with the aim of gaining public acknowledgement. Various media sources, including blogs, YouTube, and other platforms, are utilised to disseminate information. The individual shared narratives and images that pertain to their way of life. Individuals articulate their perspectives on a wide range of topics, various commodities, and diverse services (Singarimbus et al., 2019).

Consumer Purchasing Intention

The concept of purchasing intention refers to the likelihood of engaging in future transactions involving a specific product or service (Wang, Cao & Zhang, 2021). Purchase intention is considered to be a cognitive behaviour exhibited by consumers when they possess a desire or inclination to acquire a particular product or brand (Hosein, 2012). Intentions are seen as a means of forecasting the likelihood that buyers would purchase specific types of products or brands in the future. Purchase intention is a construct that is influenced by factors such as brand perception, consumer interest, and the perceived feasibility of making a purchase. Purchase intention also refers to the inclination of consumers to acquire knowledge by collecting data on their past experiences, preferences, and recommendations from others. Subsequently, they engage in the process of evaluating many alternatives before making their final purchase selections (Chi, Yeh & Tsai, 2011; Meng, Jiang, Moses & Wei, 2023). Based on the findings of the study, it can be observed that the purchasing intention of consumers significantly influences their ultimate purchase choices. Marketers consistently conducted assessments of customer purchase intentions as a routine practise, utilising these findings as a crucial factor in generating sales projections and market share estimates for various products and services.

The purchasing intention of customers is greatly impacted by the suggestions provided by fellow consumers on social media platforms (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2009). According to Lili et al. (2022), the presence of a celebrity endorser endorsing a brand has been found to elicit positive opinions among customers, hence leading to an increase in their purchase intention.

Credibility

Credibility is related to the positive communication traits to influence the receivers to accept the message that is delivered by the communication source. Credibility using an internalization process to influence consumer purchase intention (Erdorgan, 1999; Lee, Chang & Zhang, 2022). Credibility of the celebrity may attract the consumer without considering too much of the product credentials. Credibility could be deemed as the source of trustworthiness and reliability. Generally, the source is considered as trustworthy, attractive and deemed as an expert. It can influence the consumer purchase intention also attitude and behaviour (Vidyanata, Sunaryo, & Hadiwidjojo, 2022). Study also found that credibility can influence what content of people choose to read or disregard on social media, which is called selective exposure (Johnson & Kaye, 2013). As compared with traditional media, the advertisements from the peer on social media are considered more credible than traditional media (Bui, 2022).

Credibility is one of the main factors in persuasion especially on the Internet. This is because the product is perceived as intangible in the Internet as the consumers unable to touch and feel the product (Abramishvili et al., 2022). The celebrity should introduce the product in real experience. Moreover, bloggers and micro-celebrities should have a high degree of credibility to improve their effectiveness and enhance their self-image and brand image (Chu & Kamal, 2008). If a celebrity is deemed as more credible, the consumer purchase intention will be high. This is because his/her looks have higher professional knowledge, trustworthiness and attractiveness. Thus, they change the marketing strategies with contemporary technology which is letting the consumers have a closer distance to the celebrities to make them more likeable.

According to Ohanian (1990), the most important variable is likability in measuring credibility. Consumers perceive credibility as the driving force for effectiveness claims (Rahmanisah & Fadli, 2022). It means that even if a company might be an expert in their areas they might not be perceived as trustworthy. Undeniably, the consumers still read the blogs and reviews from confident celebrities. Internet celebrities seem to give their opinion about the product or services honestly. Thus, their followers approve more with them and have a higher trust in the product compared with the manufacturers (Cheong & Morrison, 2008).

Integrity and honesty of a celebrity reflects his/her care for their audience. As a result, the study shows that trusted celebrities are more credible than experts. The internet celebrities are online figures with many followers and spanning on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and personal blogs (Rungruangjit, 2022). The celebrities or public figures who are well-known through traditional media contrary to the internet celebrities are “ordinary people” who have become “online celebrities” by creating and posting content on social media. They are often perceived to have some knowledge and expertise in particular fields, such as healthy, travel, food, lifestyle, beauty and fashion. Hence, consumers perceived them as more credible compared to traditional celebrities when they were introducing a product to the consumers.

Attractiveness

Ohanian (1990) mentioned that attractiveness can be divided into five physical characteristics which are attractive, classy, handsome or beautiful, elegant and sexy. Attractiveness is a component of the TEARS model which affects the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers (Ali et al., 2022). An attractive celebrity has positively influenced brand image and consumer purchase intention. Attractiveness refers to the likability of the spokesperson. Social attractiveness was measured by frequency of interaction and sociometric standing of the individual in the group (Brown, Wooldridge & VanBruggen, 1973). Attractiveness not only refers to personal appearance and also includes social status, personality or his/her similarity to the recipient. For instance, personality traits, lifestyle, intellectual skills and others. Attractiveness of celebrities is often used in advertising to get the benefit from the celebrities of social status and physical appeal (Tan, Han & Zhong, 2022). From the previous research, the study found that physical attractiveness tends to promote attitudes and changes in beliefs and consumer purchase intention. The consumers exposed to an attractive celebrity liked the product more than consumers exposed to an unattractive celebrity (Tan, Han & Zhong, 2022). The attractiveness of the celebrity determines persuasive information that passes the validity of the identification process. The process is supposed to happen when you receive information from an attractive source due to the desire to identify the celebrity (Cohen & Golden, 1972).

McGuire (1985) developed the source attractiveness model and interpreted the attractiveness that attracted consumers is likeability, familiarity and extent of similarity to bring an effect on the context of message effectiveness and communication that they saw in the celebrity. The consumers will focus on the content when they see something about him/her from the celebrity. The consumers will concentrate on celebrities who will be easily attracted by celebrities and may resonate with their life (Ertugan & Mupindu, 2019). Also, humans acquired knowledge through imitation (Ocloo & Dzisah, 2013), hence it will make the consumers copy the products and behaviour of the celebrities unintentionally. Celebrities who are physically attractive positively influence consumers’ beliefs (Min & Legino, 2022).

Attitude

Attitude can be defined as the degree an individual has an opinion or opinion of the conduct at issue positively or negatively. In general, attitude will show stability with the transfer time, but not necessarily permanent. This is because it is a lasting and universal evaluation of people and things. It will change with marketing strategy such as television advertising and celebrity endorsement (Alami, Mohd Adnan & Kotamjani, 2019; Hu et al., 2023). Internal and external factors also can help to shape and change the attitude of consumers. The marketers want that their target customers will have a positive impression toward a selected celebrity that will transfer toward the endorsed products as long as they improve the value of the product (Choi & Rifon, 2007). Attitude is defined as the degree of interpersonal communications and influence-based relationship patterns (Rettberg, 2014). This is the basis of personal will to act in a specific way. Since 1960, the philosophy of attitude has been widely used in the marketing environment (Cuomo et al., 2019). According to Murwaningtyas, Harisudin, and Irianto (2020), the attitude can influence consumer purchase intention. The highly attractiveness and credibility of celebrities can form constructive attitudes of consumers.

Attitude is often a common element in celebrity endorsements. The consumer has predetermined the attitude of celebrities who they like and dislike based on the characteristics of reputation. Celebrities have been used as persuasive tools in their advertisement by the marketers selected. The consumers will confirm that celebrities are a reliable source of information and bring a high degree of certainty and positive attitude when the celebrities are liked by consumers (Leung, Gu & Palmatier, 2022; Tseng & Wang, 2023). Internet celebrities as an effective advertisement tool which enhances brand recall and visibility. The credibility of Internet celebrities will have a great influence on the consumers with the brand processing and evaluation.

Meaning Transfer in Communication

Meaning transfer model is developed by McCracken (1989). It shows that whenever the consumers encounter any kind of product endorsement, they will associate a certain meaning with the endorser immediately and transmit it to the product ultimately. Celebrity endorsers can transfer the meanings related to them onto the product or brand they recognize. Celebrities can convey various meanings to the products or services and there are without any doubt that celebrities contain a large number of meanings such as rank, gender, age, lifestyle, and personality (Erdogan, 1999). Tian et al. (2022) defined the meaning transfer as evaluating the connection between consumers and endorser and finally transferring to the brand. McCracken emphasised that celebrities contain a wide range of meanings. The meaning transfer model consists of few stages:

The first step occurs when meanings from the celebrity such as status, age, class and others are transferred to the product or brand. Celebrities are able to have the meanings they possess because they have created them in such a public environment, unlike a model or actor who only reflects his/her meanings in an advertisement. As the celebrity's career in television, movies, the military or other fields the meaning conveyed by celebrities are also vigorous (McCracken, 1989). Their careers are basically a large-scale advertisement to show the world who they are, what meanings they hold and what meaning they can show.

The second stage in the model is the transfer meaning from celebrity to product. The merchandise achieves personality through the process of the transfer meaning of celebrities. This model occurs when meaning attributed to the celebrity becomes associated with the

brand in the minds of consumers. The company must identify the meaning of celebrity and deliver them to the product after selecting celebrity for the endorsement. The advertisement must also show the similarity between the celebrity and the product to let the consumer move on to the next step, which is the consumption process. The consumption process is when the consumer obtains the meaning of the product. According to McCracken (1989), the consumers who are ready to take control of the meanings will do the last step of meaning transfer. The consumers play a significant role in the final step of the model. This is because celebrities are self-constructed and consumers obtain meaning from consumer goods and implement them into practice.

In short, meaning transfer has a direct relationship to the purchase intention. This model suggests that the company should consider the actual meaning of celebrities that are beneficial to their products or brands. The performance of the celebrity will depend on the various meanings conveyed by him/her in the endorsement process.

METHODOLOGY

Research Hypothesis

There are four (4) hypotheses formed to answer to the research objective of the study stated below:

Credibility is widely used to analyse the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement (Lee, Chang & Zhang, 2022). A credible endorser usually has a positive impact on consumer perceptions. There are two elements discussed in credibility which are trustworthiness and expertise. Internet celebrities provide information that is reliable and may influence consumer's beliefs, opinions and behaviour.

H1: There is a significant relationship between credibility of Internet celebrities and purchase intention.

People think that celebrities have a high degree of attractiveness to promote the trend of advertising acceptance. The source attracts not only physical appearance and also focus characteristics of an endorser (Erdogan, 1999). The previous study showed a positive correlation between attractiveness and consumer purchase intention. An attractive internet celebrity is able to affect consumers with positive outcomes. Endorsers with attractive features can subsequently generate a positive attitude towards consumers' purchase intention (Till & Busler, 2000). Internet celebrity with an amazing appearance is more likely to attract the attention of the audience.

H2: There is a significant relationship between attractiveness of Internet Celebrities and purchase intention.

Attitude can be defined as the degree of an individual's positive or negative opinions and perceptions about behaviour (Ajzen, 1988). It acts as a basis towards an individual's willingness to behave in a specific way. From the past research, the attitude is positively correlated with consumer purchase intention.

H3: There is a significant relationship between the attitude of Internet Celebrities and purchase intention.

McCracken (1989) suggested that an endorsement effect is driven by the process of meaning transfer. The effectiveness of an endorser usually depends on his ability to convey the meaning of the product during the approval process. This structure regards recognition as a training movement, which is a process of transferring from the personal and professional field of the endorser to a specific product. The marketers believe that consumers tend to consume the idol approved products (Tian et al., 2022). The internet celebrities integrate with product perception. There is a positive correlation between consumers' purchase intention towards brands endorsed through meaning transfer.

H4: There is a significant relationship between meaning transfer of Internet celebrities and purchase intention.

Target Respondent

The targeted respondents of the study are consumers who are aged within 17-40 years old. The main purpose for selecting this age group is because the young people nowadays tend to depend on the internet celebrities when they are making their purchase decision. Most of them are familiar with the Internet celebrity and willing to purchase the product on social media.

Sample Size

The researchers take into consideration a number of required variables to determine the sample size required for an experiment or survey. After using the G power software. Suggested that the sample size used is 85 in the survey. However, the researcher will conduct 200 respondents to the questionnaires to get more accurate and more consistent results.

Research Instrument

Questionnaire is used to collect the data from the target respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two sessions: A and B. Session A is mainly the demography questions, and session B is focusing on the questions related to the variables. The measurement scale used in the questionnaire is five-point likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagrees" "strongly agree". All the questions used in the questionnaire were adopted from the previous study (Khalid & Siddiqui, 2018).

Data Collection

Online questionnaire is used to collect the data. Google form is set up and the questionnaires were passed around to the respondent randomly in the social media. Few filtering questions were set to identify suitable respondents. In this study, the respondent must fulfil the criteria stated below:

1. Malaysian, age between 17 to 30 years old by year of 2023 (Generation Z)
2. Have experience purchasing a product in the past 6 months after they watch the recommendation video by the internet celebrities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were 125 female respondents and 75 male respondents participated in the study. All the respondents are aged between 17 to 30 years old, which falls in the category of Generation Z. From the research, 31.6% of the respondents used the social media platform more than 6 hours per day. All the respondents followed at least 5 Internet celebrities in social media. Also, all of them have the experience of purchasing the product after they watch the recommendation video by the online celebrities.

Reliability Analysis

The reliability for attractiveness has the Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.842 with four items. Credibility has Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.870 with five items. Then, the Cronbach's alpha of attitude and meaning transfer have the same Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.855. Lastly, the Cronbach's Alpha value for purchase intention is 0.922 with four items. This showed all the variables in the study have good reliability.

Multiple Linear Regression

Table 1: Multiple linear regression analysis

Model	Standardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficients		
	Beta	Std Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.289	0.233	6.495	1.244	0.215
Credibility	0.597	0.092	1.527	6.495	0.000
Attractiveness	0.136	0.089	-1.029	1.527	0.128
Attitude	-0.905	0.092	1.244	-1.029	0.305
Meaning transfer	0.283	0.073	0.282	3.875	0.000

R square = 0.650 , Sig = 0.000 , DV= Purchase Intention

Based on Table 1, the value of the R Square is 0.650. The F- value is 90.384, and the significant value is 0.000. The result of the study indicated that credibility and meaning transfer of the internet celebrities' video have a significant relationship with purchase intention. It is because the significant value of these two programs is less than 0.05. However, attractiveness and attitude of the Internet celebrities are not going to affect the consumer purchase intention because the significant level is more than 0.5. With this, Hypothesis 1 and 4 were supported, and hypothesis 2 and 3 were rejected.

Discussion of Research Findings

The results of this study contribute to the comprehension of the correlation between the efficacy of online celebrities and customer purchase intention. Based on this comprehension of research, it is feasible to utilise internet celebrities as a means to facilitate communication between the organisation and Generation Z consumers. The study's findings indicate that the customer purchasing intention among Generation Z can be influenced by credibility and meaning transmission.

YouTube serves as a platform for the marketing and promotion of many businesses and services. This platform provides chances for small business owners, IT consultant service providers, and entrepreneurs to effectively promote their products and services through the utilisation of videos, animations, and lessons. Videos created by Internet celebrities have the

capacity to offer consumers a more comprehensive understanding of a product by providing detailed information, such as tutorials on usage, explanations of effects, and demonstrations of functionality. Most of the online celebrities were not restricted by any company like traditional celebrities. They are free to talk and discuss any topic and argument in their own video. In another word, Online celebrities were not restricted and able to really express their feelings after using that particular product and service to their viewer. Hence, the consumer always perceived the information given by the Internet celebrities as more credible compared to the normal celebrities.

IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

The marketer must identify influencers who possess a credible status, characterised by their ability to consistently provide reliable information. The acquisition of information and its persuasive power are crucial factors. Additionally, possessing appropriate expertise in a certain field can further enhance one's ability to effectively communicate ideas and arguments. For instance, if a marketer intends to sell a cosmetic product, they may seek out a female individual who possesses prior experience in using and endorsing cosmetic products. This selection is made with the aim of enhancing the persuasive impact of the promotional efforts. Furthermore, the increasing utilisation of YouTube as a platform for message dissemination holds potential benefits for communities. This is due to the fact that it will serve as a means of communication through which individuals can acquire reliable and credible information from authoritative sources.

CONCLUSION

The level of competition among organisations increases on a daily basis, prompting marketers to seek different methods of communicating with their prospective target customers. In contemporary times, an increasing number of organisations are transitioning from conventional forms of media to digital platforms in order to enhance the visibility and recognition of their products and brand. One approach employed by marketers involves incorporating Internet celebrities into their communication strategy.

This paper aims to examine the significance of Internet celebrities as communication sources in affecting the buying intention of Generation Z in Malaysia. The present investigation highlights the significance of credibility and meaning transmission as influential elements in shaping the buying intention of Generation Z.

To enhance the efficacy of communication, marketers may seek the involvement of Internet celebrities to generate videos that possess greater credibility for customer engagement. Illustrative instances include the act of shooting, the demonstration of the product, and the substance conveyed within the video. The marketer is required to identify Internet celebrities who possess a high level of credibility among Generation Z. It is imperative for individuals who have gained fame and recognition through the internet to consistently offer knowledge that is both dependable and compelling.

Marketers are compelled to continually modify their strategy in response to the dynamic nature of the market environment. The transition of consumers away from traditional media has led to the rise of Internet celebrities, which undoubtedly serves as an effective alternative for marketers to supplement and endorse items, replacing the conventional use of traditional celebrities.

BIODATA

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