



Original Article

Impact of Influencers as Interactive Marketing Influencing Impulse Purchase Behavior

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the impact of social media Influencers creating and using their follower engagement to influence Impulse Purchase Behavior. Design/methodology/approach – A survey using a questionnaire distributed in the form of a Google form to 200 adults in Jakarta over the age of 43, Millennials (27-40) and Generation Z (18-26) in 2023 and currently followers of certain social media Influencers was conducted and analyzed. The results show that Homophily, Social presence, Physical Attractiveness affect followers' attachment to Influencers. Followers' attachment to Influencers affects Impulse Purchase Behavior. This study shows the importance of emotional attachment which explains that the use of Influencers is something that can be considered for entrepreneurs in increasing sales. The attachment between followers to Influencers makes followers loyal, and believe that what is recommended is something sincere, thus influencing purchasing decisions.



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Keywords: Influencer, Attachment, Homophily, Social presence, Physical Attractiveness, dan Impulse Purchase Behavior

Introduction

Technology and the internet have become part of the lives of residents around the world, from finding information, school, work, socializing with friends to even buying and selling transactions. Based on internetworldstats data, internet users in Indonesia reached up to 212.35 million people in March 2021, and Indonesia is ranked third with the most internet users in Asia (Kusnandar, 2021). This certainly affects the behavior of people who carry out digital interaction and communication, one of which is through social media. Social media can be a good alternative for beginners and small business owners because it is very effective in reducing costs and flexible working hours. However, there are still many companies that are unsure of social media and use it just to look not outdated (Lagrosen & Josefsson, 2011). Entrepreneurs must change the pattern and marketing strategy of products or services in order to survive and compete with competitors. Technology continues to improve and certainly has an impact on the marketing process (Sisilia & Giri, 2020).

In recent years, almost every individual has a social media account. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter have created new opportunities for individuals to share content, network, and influence others. This phenomenon has given birth to Influencers on social media. An *influencer* is a person or figure in social media who has a significant number of followers, then what they offer and promote can influence the behavior of their followers (Hariyanti & Wirapraja, 2018). Content created by *Influencers* either as brands, products or services is considered to have its own appeal and personal touch for potential customers compared to conventional marketing communication methods carried out by the Company (Jin et al., 2019).

Marketing on social media is an important part of digital marketing in *online* businesses today. Social media marketing has a positive effect on consumer confidence (Cokro & Kurniawati, 2023). Many companies and brands use *Influencers* to collaborate or promote their products and services to a wider audience, considering that promotions create persuasive messages that are effective at grabbing the attention of consumers (Puspitarini & Nuraeni, 2019). This is considered appropriate by using influencers, because influencers have the power to create emotional bonds with their followers, which will have a positive influence on consumer attitudes, intentions and buying decisions (Chen et al., 2021; Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018). The existing marketing literature is still biased towards the selection of social media influencers with relevant traits namely liking and attractiveness to promote a brand, product or service (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Other research has also focused on the adverse effects of disclosure of sponsorships and commercial intent from content created by Influencers (Lee & Kim, 2020). Influencer credibility is negatively affected if a brand is considered to be behind the content created by the Influencer. However, there are studies that have examined how *influencer* marketing will generate a positive attitude towards consumer behavior (Jin et al., 2019; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Closeness or personal similarity (*Homophily*) with *Influencers* on social media can affect consumer attitudes towards attachment to *Influencers* (Kim & Kim, 2023). In the end, whether the attachment will affect the behavior of followers in impulsively consuming products or services promoted by the *Influencers* they follow. Then in addition, according to (Kim & Kim, 2023) There are factors such as *Social presence* and *Physical Attractiveness* that have a strong influence on one's attachment to *Influencers*. However, it is not yet known whether the resulting attachment can change or influence someone in the attitude of followers in making purchases so that it will be further investigated whether *Homophily*, *Social presence* and *Physical Attractiveness* to *Influencers* will affect the attachment to *Influencers* higher and whether follower attachment to *Influencers* will affect *impulsive purchase behavior*.

Methods

This research uses quantitative research methods with an online survey approach using Google form. This survey method is used to examine pre-existing relationships and emotional bonds that have grown over time and identify influences between the variables studied using SEM analysis tools. All variables are adopted from measurement items that have been studied before, namely the relationship between *Homophily*, *Social presence*, *Attractiveness*, *Attachment* (Kim & Kim, 2023) and *Impulse Purchase Behavior* (Chen et al., 2021; Lavuri, 2023). The data collected comes from 200 adults in Jakarta with an age range of 18 to more than 43 years who are Generation X, Millennial Generation or Generation Y (28–43) and Generation Z (18–27) in 2023. At the beginning of the survey, respondents were asked to choose one particular *Influencer* they had followed on social media, then answered several questions related to the variability studied. The instrument item for each variable is measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 Strongly Disagree, 5 Strongly Agree). Sampling uses *purposive sampling* techniques because information is obtained from certain groups and not all respondents provide good information.

Results

Table 1. Hypothesis Testing Results

	Hypothesis	Estimate	C.R.	P-Value	Conclusion
H ₁	Homophily an Influencer will influence on the attachment of followers to higher Influencers	0,362	4,809	0,000	Hypothesis supported
H ₂	Social presence of an Influencer will influence on the attachment of followers to higher Influencers	0,956	6,012	0,000	Hypothesis supported
H ₃	Physical Attractiveness of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer higher	-0,341	2,206	0,013	Hypothesis supported
H ₄	Follower attachment to Influencer will influence on Impulse Purchase Behavior	0,42	6,723	0,000	Hypothesis supported

Source: Data processing results

The results of processing for hypothesis testing can be seen in Table 4 above:

1. The first hypothesis was carried out with the aim of testing Homophily in Influencers to affect the attachment of followers to Influencers. The results of the processing obtained a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted so that the hypothesis that states Homophily in Influencers affects the attachment of followers to Influencers is proven.
2. The second hypothesis aims to test the social presence of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer. The results of the processing obtained a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted so that the hypothesis that states the Social presence of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer is proven.
3. The third hypothesis aims to test the Physical Attractiveness of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer. The processing results obtained a p-value value of $0.013 < 0.05$. The results of these findings show that the hypothesis that states the Physical Attractiveness of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to Influencers is more proven.
4. The fourth hypothesis aims to test the attachment of followers to influencers will affect impulse purchase behavior. The results of the processing obtained a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted so that the hypothesis that states the attachment of followers to Influencers will affect Impulse Purchase Behavior is proven.

Homophily an influential Influencer on the attachment of followers to Influencers

The results of the research that has been done obtained the results that the Homophily variable of an Influencer affects the attachment of followers to the Influencer. The results of this study support previous research which states that the homophily of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer (Kim & Kim, 2023). The Homophily factor will be prioritized by the Influencer's followers to determine their confidence in the product or service recommended by the Influencer. Homophily with female influencers will have a stronger impact on female followers, as women are more inclined towards social relationships, especially with fellow women (Gupta et al., 2023). Therefore, it is very important in determining the homophily of an influencer if marketers want to use the influencer as an advertisement of the product or service offered.

Social presence of an Influencer influences on the attachment of followers to the Influencer

The results of the research that has been done obtained the results that the variable Social presence of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer. The results of this study support previous research which states that the social presence of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer. An Influencer's social presence is very important in forming attachments in line with Influencer marketing literature that emphasizes continuous interaction (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). The more followers feel the Social presence of an Influencer, the higher the attachment.

Physical Attractiveness of an Influencer negatively influences on followers' attachment to Influencers

The results of research that have been conducted obtained the results that the variable Physical Attractiveness of an Influencer affects the attachment of followers to Influencers. This result is in line with previous research that states the Physical Attractiveness of an Influencer will affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer higher (Kim & Kim, 2023). In this study attraction and beauty affect the attachment of followers to the Influencer, so that as an Influencer it doesn't have to be beautiful and attractive.

Follower attachment to influential Influencers to Impulse Purchase Behavior

The results of the research that has been done obtained the results that the variable of follower attachment to *Influencers* will affect *Impulse Purchase Behavior*. These results are consistent with previous research that *online celebrities* or *social media influencers* strongly influence buying behavior (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Previous research by Politis & Grigoroudis (2022) states that advertising done by *Influencers* creates impulse buying impulses. Shoppers who are interested in and enjoy shopping *online* tend to be more impulsive in shopping (Lavuri, 2023). The use of *Influencers* as interactive marketing is a way that can be done in marketing products or services.

Conclusion

The results of the study confirmed that factors such as Homophily (similarity), Social Presence (social presence), and Physical Attractiveness (physical attractiveness) have a significant influence on the level of follower attachment to an Influencer. The attachment that exists between followers and influencers also has an impact on impulse buying behavior shown by followers. This research highlights the importance of emotional attachment in the relationship between Influencers and their followers. This indicates that the use of influencers can be an effective strategy for businesses to increase sales of their products or services. The attachment built between followers and an influencer tends to create strong loyalty. Followers have confidence that the recommendations given by Influencers come from sincere intentions, not just marketing or promotion. This, in turn, affects the purchasing decisions taken by consumers.

A strong attachment between followers and influencers plays an important role in shaping consumer attitudes. Followers tend to feel emotionally connected to the Influencers they follow, which in turn can influence their decisions in purchasing products or services recommended by those Influencers. This shows that the relationship established between Influencers and their followers has a significant impact in influencing consumer behavior, especially through aspects of emotional attachment and trust built between the two.

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