



Received: 27-05-2024
Accepted: 07-07-2024

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

Media and Celebrity Culture: The Influencer Phenomenon on Social Media

¹ Anisa Fauziah, ² Ade Siti Khaeriah, ³ Asti Pratiwi, ⁴ Debi Amelia, ⁵ Hafifah Yusrul Hasanah, ⁶ Heni Setiawati, ⁷ Iqbal Firmansyah, ⁸ Riesqa Marsya Salsabilla

^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8} Communication Sciences, Faculty of Social and Political Science, University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, Indonesia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62225/2583049X.2024.4.4.3034>

Corresponding Author: **Anisa Fauziah**

Abstract

The influencer phenomenon on social media has become a major issue in modern digital culture. Through platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, influencers influence consumer opinions, behaviors, and trends with their content. The purpose of this research on the influencer phenomenon on social media to find out some general objectives including understanding the impact of influencers on consumer behavior, analyzing effective marketing strategies through influencers, and exploring the changing trends in the relationship dynamics between influencers, brands, and their followers and their impact among Gen Z (Zoomer). This research utilizes a descriptive qualitative method as the main approach. This approach allowed the researcher to deeply explore the impact of social media on college students' consumptive behavior by analyzing and synthesizing findings from relevant and recent studies in the

scientific literature. This research also proves that Generation Z still considers trust factors, brand image factors, and influencer factors in their purchasing decisions despite endorsements by influencers. For that reason, it can be seen that being an influencer is a promising profession while keeping up with the times. And as technology develops, anyone with a computer, cell phone, camera or any other device can become an influencer. Therefore, it can be concluded that these influencers can change consumers' opinions and behaviors to the way they interact with the world around them and also the influence of influencers raises criticism and challenges, especially related to issues of transparency, authenticity, and psychological impact. As such, it is important to keep a close eye on the development of the influencer phenomenon and consider its social, psychological and ethical implications.

Keywords: Influencers, Social Media, Gen Z

Introduction

The utilization of social media as a forum for communication in cyberspace continues to increase and the scale is large. Social media users in Indonesia increase significantly every year. Based on the we are Social report (Mahdi, 2022), the number of active social media users in Indonesia was 191 million in January 2022. This number increased by 12.35% compared to last year's 170 million people. Looking at the trend, the number of social media users in Indonesia continues to increase every year, but the growth rate fluctuates from 2014 to 2022. Based on the Napoleon Cat report (Annur, 2021), it shows that there are 91.01 million Instagram users in Indonesia as of October 2021. It is known that the majority of Instagram users in Indonesia are 33.9 million people aged between 18 and 24 years. In details, 19.8% of application users are female and 17.5% are male, which is usually the one who plays the most role in social media and digital is Gen Z. Generation zoomers or commonly called generation z are those who were born between 1995-2015 or are currently in the age range of 5-25 years (Nurhandayani, 2019). In addition, gen z is closely related to the latest technological trends and everything the internet has to offer. Therefore, zoomers now do a lot of activities and depend on the internet.

These things are one proof that zoomers are now a large group in this technological advancement is the emergence of various influencers on social media. They can even earn more than the previous generation who had to face office work and routine work in general (Kusumapradja, 2020). These young influencers not only have a dashing appearance, but also have a large number of followers. All sourced through their respective social media. No wonder, then, that influencers seem to prove the current zoomer generation. Not only generation Z, generation Y also has a high dependence on social media since they were born and grew up in the digital era that provides access to information and gives them the opportunity to express their opinions

and share their personal lives with the outside world (Larasati, 2020). With that, in a short time, it is estimated that the number of digital media users, especially social media, will reach one-third of the world's population (Deloitte, 2020).

Generation Z or zoomers are also known as Post-Millennials, Zoomers, iGeneration, Gen Tech, Net Gen, and Neo-Digital Natives (Kusumapraja, 2020). In his article, Kusumapraja said that Generation Z was born when the internet and social media have become part of their daily lives and from childhood they are used to holding gadgets and receiving a constant flow of information from social media and the internet. Therefore, Generation Z is strongly associated with the latest technology trends and has a high dependency on the internet. They are active in various online activities and tend to keep up with technology quickly. This is reflected in the many young influencers that have emerged on social media. These influencers are not only attractive, but also have a large following, all of which are gained through social media. This phenomenon shows that Generation Z has become the main pillar in today's technological advancements and trends in social media. One of the social media that is currently booming among gen z is tiktok. In a study conducted by Firamadhina and Krisnani (2021), it was stated that the content on TikTok produces interpretations of social interactions that form a sense of self for users and viewers. Thus, since it was first released, TikTok video-sharing application users in Indonesia have continued to increase until now reaching 109.9 million (we are social, 2023). Through this research, some of the objectives of research on the influencer phenomenon in social media could include understanding how influencers are utilized through social media, how influencers influence consumer behavior and preferences, how they build and maintain follower engagement, and the impact on the marketing industry and overall consumer culture in the digital age. The impact could include changes in consumption patterns, trend formation, and transformation of traditional marketing paradigms. The results of the research show that becoming an influencer is now indeed one of the new ideals among zoomers. In the eyes of generation Z or zoomers, influencers are becoming one of the new ideals that are quite promising economically. The ease of creating content on social media and the high income from each upload on social media makes zoomers think that working as an influencer is a promising profession while keeping up with the times.

Materials and Methods

This research utilizes qualitative descriptive methods as the main approach. According to Sugiyono (in Irawan, 2020), descriptive qualitative method is a research method used to examine a state of natural objects by studying something to the fullest with the aim of describing, explaining, and answering in detail the problems studied. This approach allows researchers to explore in depth the impact of social media on student consumptive behavior by analyzing and synthesizing findings from relevant and recent studies in scientific literature. The main data sources used in this research are scientific articles, books, research reports, and related literature relevant to the research topic (Sugiono, 2022). To identify suitable literature, we used academic databases such as PubMed, Google Scholar, and ProQuest. The data selection process was conducted systematically by

identifying articles relevant to the research topic, evaluating the quality of the research methodology, and extracting relevant information according to the research focus. The results of a meta-analysis study by Garcia (2021) revealed that influencers on social media have become one of the main forces in influencing purchasing behavior and brand perception. The data obtained from the literature study were critically analyzed to identify the main findings on the impact of social media on students' consumptive behavior. Secondary data sources were obtained from literature studies such as articles, journals, and books related to social media.

Library Review

The Rise of Social Media Influencers

Technological advances and easy access to various forms of social media have greatly influenced people's communication patterns, especially social media such as Instagram. Generation Z or zoomers are also known as Post-Millennials, Zoomers, iGeneration, Gen Tech, Net Gen, and Neo-Digital Natives (Kusumapraja, 2020). In his article, Kusumapraja said that Generation Z was born when the internet and social media have become part of their daily lives and from childhood they are used to holding gadgets and receiving a constant flow of information from social media and the internet. Therefore, Generation Z is strongly associated with the latest technology trends and has a high dependency on the internet. They are active in various online activities and tend to keep up with technology quickly. This is reflected in the many young influencers that have emerged on social media. These influencers are not only attractive, but also have a large following, all of which are gained through social media. This phenomenon shows that Generation Z has become the main pillar in today's technological advancements and trends in social media. One of the social media that is currently booming among gen z is tiktok. In a study conducted by Firamadhina and Krisnani (2021), it was stated that the content on TikTok produces interpretations of social interactions that form a sense of self for users and viewers. Thus, since it was first released, TikTok video-sharing application users in Indonesia have continued to increase until now reaching 109.9 million (we are social, 2023). Through this research, some of the objectives of research on the influencer phenomenon in social media could include understanding how influencers are utilized through social media, how influencers influence consumer behavior and preferences, how they build and maintain follower engagement, and the impact on the marketing industry and overall consumer culture in the digital age. The impact could include changes in consumption patterns, trend formation, and transformation of traditional marketing paradigms. The results of the research show that becoming an influencer is now indeed one of the new ideals among zoomers. In the eyes of generation Z or zoomers, influencers are becoming one of the new ideals that are quite promising economically. The ease of creating content on social media and the high income from each upload on social media makes zoomers think that working as an influencer is a promising profession while keeping up with the times. am, Tiktok, and YouTube. Social media has become one of the popular media in society and its use is growing, not only limited to individuals, but has also been used by organizations (Hutami & Fitria, 2020). And as technology develops, anyone with a computer, cell phone, camera, or other device can become

an influencer. Influencers or key opinion leaders (KOL) are people who have a large enough following or audience on social media, and have a strong influence on their followers, such as artists, celebgrams, bloggers, youtubers, buzzers, and so on (SociaBuzz, 2020). By creating a website, blog or social media account and sharing opinions, ideas and information about life, one can become an influencer. As such, influencers have become a new profession or aspiration, especially among Gen Z. In the eyes of Gen Z, influencers have become a new ideal that is economically viable, due to the ease of social media content and the high income earned from each social media post, Gen Z believes that working as an influencer is a promising profession that also keeps up with the times. Social media and influencers are two sides of the same coin; they are interconnected and go hand in hand. Without influencers and their followers, social media could not be big and have many accounts. As it turns out, social media has had a huge impact on changing social habits, especially in Gen Z. Influencers are also seen as understanding how to communicate with their audience, including how to keep their audience engaged (McKerrell, 2019). In addition, influencers have also established their credibility and authority over a large group of fans. Through stories, influencers help companies or brands to manage and connect with their target audience.

The Power of Influencer

The power of social media influencers is seen in their ability to influence consumer behavior. A single post or video can start a trend or increase sales of a particular product. Influencers can also use their platforms to raise awareness of social and political issues and influence public opinion and government policy. But with great power comes great responsibility. Influencers have an obligation to their audience to be honest and transparent about their recommendations and use their platform for good. Unfortunately, not all influencers meet these criteria. Some engage in unethical behavior, such as promoting products they don't believe in or using their platform to spread misinformation. However, with the power of influencers promoting products on social media, many marketers are turning to digital marketing by utilizing online influencers to promote their brands and products on social media. Businesses can create more engaging, interactive and inexpensive advertisements by creating content on social media (Athaya & Irwansyah, 2021). Without the hassle of using print media. By simply posting content such as photos, images or videos on social media, promotions can reach consumers instantly. Influencer-based marketing can attract more consumers because it is able to influence consumers with the popularity and image provided by influencers. Marketing strategies using influencers can improve marketing performance because they are able to attract the interest of many consumers (Masitoh & Adjid, 2022). Influencer marketing has become a concept that dominates marketing strategies in the digital and social media era. The main characteristic of influencer marketing involves collaboration between brands and individuals or personalities who have influence and a large number of followers on social media platforms (Afifah *et al.*, 2023). The attractiveness of influencers is not only determined by the number of followers, but also by the level of active engagement from their audience.

Challenges of Being an Influencer

Being an influencer is not just about popularity and recognition. The profession has various challenges to face, such as high competition, pressure to stay active, potential cyberbullying, income uncertainty, and difficulty maintaining work-life balance. Becoming a social media influencer is a dream for many people, but behind the glamor and popularity, there are challenges that need to be faced (Sari & Irwansyah, 2020). The world of influencers is filled with intense competition. Every day, thousands of people try to establish their presence on social media, creating engaging and relevant content. Gaining attention and maintaining a follower base requires dedication, creativity and consistency. Social media is constantly changing and evolving at a rapid pace. Influencers must always adapt to new trends, platform algorithms and the preferences of their followers. Maintaining relevance and success in the long run requires the ability to constantly evolve and innovate. Life as an influencer can be exhausting and demanding. The pressure to always look perfect in front of the camera, maintain positive interactions with followers, and respond to comments or criticism can be draining and impact mental health. It is important for an influencer to maintain a balance between personal and professional life and to recognize healthy boundaries. As an influencer, building trust with followers is key. Therefore, it is important to maintain transparency and integrity in all interactions and collaborations. Challenges arise when there is a temptation to hide the relationship with a particular brand or product, or when faced with pressure to promote something that is incompatible with personal values or beliefs (Ishihara & Oktavianti, 2021) ^[6]. As well as the challenge of building trust in brands, forming trust in brands is very important because today brands are evolving from functional (making product attributes, product quality, value, convenience, and product content) to trust (trust in brands is the main consideration for buying products) (Edelman Trust Barometer, 2019).

Working with agents or managers, and executing more structured marketing strategies. Collaboration between influencers and brands has become a popular marketing strategy. The strategy that influencers must have specialized expertise in creating engaging and relevant content is also a significant plus. With their creativity, influencers are able to package brand messages according to followers' preferences, generate interest, stimulate interaction, and strengthen the bond between brands and consumers (Athaya & Irwansyah, 2021). Many brands work with influencers to promote their products or services to the influencer's followers. This creates a win-win relationship where influencers earn financial compensation or free products, while brands gain access to a wider audience. A deep understanding of this role enables companies to design effective collaborations with influencers, achieve marketing objectives in a memorable and meaningful way for consumers (Masitoh & Adjid, 2022) and focus on building long-term relationships through collaboration with influencers.

Influencer of Influencers on Consumers Opinions, Behavior and Trends

Influencer not only influence consumer opinions and behavior, but also contribute significantly to the formation of new consumer trends (Garcia, 2021). Influencers often

recommend products or services to their followers through the content they share. Whether through unboxing, product reviews or direct endorsements, followers are often influenced by the influencer's opinions and experiences in choosing and using certain products. Influencers are often role models when it comes to lifestyle, from fashion, beauty, to healthy lifestyle. By sharing content about their daily activities, travels and routines, influencers can inspire followers to adopt a similar lifestyle or purchase products related to that lifestyle (Johnson *et al.*, 2023). Influencers are often trendsetters in the world of fashion and style. Through the use of certain clothing or accessories in their content, influencers can create trends that are then followed by their followers. Influencers have the power to create awareness and mobilize their audience through social media platforms, allowing them to initiate ideas that affect social change (Smith, 2022).

Profession as an Influencer

The influencer profession has taken center stage in today's digital age. With a large and engaged follower base, influencers have significant influence in shaping trends, lifestyles and consumer preferences (Yovan, 2021). However, being an influencer is not without its challenges. Intense competition in the digital world requires great effort in building and maintaining an engaged follower base. Influencers also often face psychological and mental health stress due to high public exposure and high expectations from their followers. Nonetheless, being an influencer also offers various opportunities. Influencers have high earning potential through partnerships with brands and business collaborations. They also have the opportunity to influence and inspire many people, both through the content they share and through their involvement in social and environmental issues. In managing a career as an influencer, ethics and transparency play an important role. An influencer is expected to always maintain his or her integrity, disclose business engagements, and be accountable towards followers and other social media users. By maintaining high ethical standards, an influencer can build strong trust and credibility among their followers (Illahi, *et al.*, 2020) ^[5]. Usually, apart from relying on promoting a brand, an influencer also builds an MSME business, because it can be a new opportunity to become a food vlogger. Innovative strategies in the digital era consist of applying new technologies, developing products that focus on the needs of digital consumers, and transforming business processes to be more efficient and responsive (Putra, 2022). Business innovation is very important in increasing the competitiveness and growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital era (Ernawati *et al.*, 2022).

The Influencer Phenomenon on Gen Z and Digital Culture

The influencer phenomenon has had a significant impact on generation Z (Gen Z) and digital culture as a whole. Generation Z, who grew up in the age of technology and social media, has become one of the groups most influenced by influencers in various aspects of their lives. The influence of influencers on Gen Z can be seen in terms of consumer opinions and behavior. Influencers have the ability to influence Gen Z's preferences and purchasing decisions through the content they share. By recommending certain products or services, or reviewing them positively,

influencers can create trends and lifestyles that generation Z follows. According to Deloitte, this new generation will soon surpass the number of Millennials who are currently the most populous generation. In a short time, it is estimated that the number of digital media users, especially social media, will reach one-third of the world's population (Deloitte, 2020). To reach out to the Gen-Z crowd and successfully capture the attention of the generation, brand owners need to realize that in order to stay relevant, they need to change their approach. No generation is the same, however, Forbes states that Gen-Z is redefining who is influential and who is not in the market today (Forbes, 2019). Gen Z is an active consumer who can choose digital behavior in marketing policies, especially in the scope of Influencer marketing. That's because gen Z consumers prefer to seek the opinions of other users or influencers to make a purchase decision (Chopra *et al.*, 2021). However, the influence of influencers is also not free from criticism and challenges. Issues related to transparency, authenticity and ethics are often a concern, especially when influencers engage in dishonest or non-transparent promotional practices. In addition, concerns about the psychological impact of social comparison and overexposure to unrealistic body images are also a concern in the influence of influencers on generation Z. Overall, the influencer phenomenon has become an integral part of digital culture, and its impact on generation Z is significant. By understanding this influence, we can delve deeper into how influencers affect the views, behaviors and experiences of generation Z in an increasingly digitally connected world.

Conclusions

The social media influencer phenomenon has become an integral part of digital culture, especially for Generation Z. Its significant influence is seen in various aspects of generation Z and zoomers' lives, from consumer opinions and behavior to the way they interact with the world around them. Influencers are not only a source of inspiration and entertainment, but also agents of change in building social and environmental awareness.

Nonetheless, the influence of influencers has also led to criticism and challenges, particularly related to issues of transparency, authenticity and psychological impact. However, by understanding the role and impact of the influencer phenomenon, we can better explore how it shapes the views, behaviors and experiences of Generation Z in the digital age. Therefore, it is important to keep a close eye on the development of the influencer phenomenon and consider its social, psychological and ethical implications. By doing so, we can better understand how this phenomenon contributes to today's digital culture and how we can positively manage its impact in an increasingly digitally connected society.

References

1. Alvina. 5 Tantangan Menjadi Influencer Di Era Digital, 2024. <https://cakrawalanews.co/news/77394/5-tantangan-menjadi-influencer-di-era-digital/#:~:text=Menjadi%20influencer%20bukan%20hanya%20tentang,untuk%20menjaga%20keseimbangan%20kehidupan%20pribadi.>
2. Cahya HM. Pengaruh social media influencer terhadap minat beli konsumen di media social, 2022.
3. Husna AH, Mairita D. Gen Z dan Perilaku Konsumsi

- Konten Influencer pada TikTok. *Jurnal Riset Komunikasi*. 2024; 7(1):86-100. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.38194/jurkom.v7i1.1002>.
4. Anjani S, Irwansyah I. Peranan Influencer Dalam Mengkomunikasikan Pesan Di Media Sosial Instagram [the Role of Social Media Influencers in Communicating Messages Using Instagram]. *Polyglot: Jurnal Ilmiah*. 2020; 16(2):203. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.19166/pji.v16i2.1929>
 5. Illahi AK, Fajar DP, Saputra MI. Penggunaan Social media influencer Sebagai Usaha Membangun Budaya Masyarakat Digital Tentang Konsep Tubuh Ideal dan Kepercayaan Diri. *Jurnal Komunikasi*. 2020; 12(1):108. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.24912/jk.v12i1.7078>
 6. Ishihara YYU, Oktavianti R. Personal Branding Influencer di Media Sosial TikTok. *Koneksi*. 2021; 5(1):76-82. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.24912/kn.v5i1.10162>
 7. Mayasari F. Etnografi Virtual Fenomena Cancel Culture dan Partisipasi Pengguna Media terhadap Tokoh Publik di Media Sosial. *Journal of Communication and Society*. 2022; 1(01):27-44. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.55985/jocs.v1i01.15>
 8. Meifitri M. Fenomena “Influencer” Sebagai Salah Satu Bentuk Cita-Cita Baru Di Kalangan Generasi “Zoomer.” *Komunikasiana: Journal of Communication Studies*. 2020; 2(2):84. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.24014/kjcs.v2i2.11772>
 9. Wilopo YP. Pengaruh Kredibilitas Influencer Media Sosial Instagram Terhadap Minat Beli Konsumen DoubleTree by Hilton Surabaya. *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*. 2021; 9(2):5-24. <http://publication.petra.ac.id/index.php/manajemen-perhotelan/article/view/11513/10120>