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Factors Affecting Consumer Responses to Influencer Marketing Campaigns

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Abstract: In Malaysia, the emergence of influencers on social media has significantly influenced consumer behavior as many people connect and look up to these digital personalities. This study aims to investigate how factors such as trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect and likeness influence consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns. Specifically, the research objectives are to examine the relationships between each of these factors and consumer responses and to determine whether consumer attitudes influence these relationships. In addition, the TEARS model appears to be more appropriate for this study than Ohanian's (1990) source of credibility model because it incorporates characteristics of respect and similarity that align well with Eastern cultural norms. Respect and similarity are particularly important in Eastern societies where social harmony and collective values are emphasized**.** The TEARS model therefore provides a more comprehensive framework for understanding the impact of influencer endorsements in this cultural context. For this empirical study, data was collected from Shah Alam consumers aged 20-40 years old who own TikTok accounts and follow TikTok influencers who share and endorse products on the TikTok platform. Data was collected from 250 people, 200 of whom were classified as valid respondents. The survey was published online and the data was collected by the researcher using Google Forms. The links to the Google Forms survey were shared on social media such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. By focusing on these dimensions, the study fills research gaps by analyzing how these factors interact within influencer marketing, especially in an Eastern cultural setting.

Keywords: *Social media, Customer response, Marketing campaigns, trustworthiness, Attractiveness, Expertise*

1. Introduction and Background

The development of e-commerce in Malaysia gained momentum with the launch of the eBay website in 2004, followed by the launch of Zalora, Lazada and Shopee shortly thereafter. Shopee became the leading e-commerce platform in Malaysia. With the development of infrastructure for a wide range of online customers and a thriving economy, Malaysia has quickly established itself as a hub for online businesses. The Malaysian government has also taken some great initiatives to support the growing online market (Team, 2023) The COVID-19 pandemic was one of the main reasons why many people around the world became addicted to online shopping. TikTok quickly became the fastest-growing social media platform during the pandemic. With an impressive 1506 million downloads, TikTok has earned the prestigious title of the world's most downloaded app in 2020 and 2021, surpassing even Instagram's 1048 million downloads, (Forbes, 2021). In 2020, a remarkable 36.0% of marketers in the United States integrated TikTok into their influencer marketing strategies. This percentage increased significantly to 42% the following year, demonstrating the platform's growing importance in the marketing landscape (Forbes, 2021). Despite TikTok's rapid growth, there has been little analysis of how followers respond to influencer marketing on the platform.

A large number of Malaysians have switched to online shopping following the shutdown of physical stores during the pandemic, and despite the reopening of stores, online shopping continues to be favored for its convenience. The availability of affordable smartphones and better internet connections has been crucial in the emergence of social media influencers in Malaysia, as an increasing number of individuals are getting involved in influencer-generated content on social media platforms. In recent years, there has been a consistent increase in the number of social media users in Malaysia. Recent data shows that Malaysia had 31.76 million social media users in 2021, with a projected increase to 33.46 million by 2025 (Statista Research Department, 2023). Reports are widespread that individuals in Malaysia, particularly those aged 16 to 34, maintain an average of nine social media accounts. Social media is an amazing tool that allows users to communicate, share knowledge, and enjoy entertainment. Three main social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, are commonly seen as the top three in this industry.

Influencer marketing is gaining more popularity and rapidly expanding within the marketing sector. Paying

individuals to advertise products or services on social media platforms is part of it. Numerous marketers are integrating influencer marketing into their overall strategy. Therefore, this research adds to the current understanding of social media influencers. This study seeks to enhance its significance by incorporating a Malaysian viewpoint on the impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior. Research and market analysis indicate that this phenomenon has not been previously examined in this manner in Malaysia, so this study will offer a Malaysian viewpoint on the subject. Moreover, the results will assist businesses in creating plans to track and evaluate social media marketing efforts and patterns, all while reducing the adverse effects that social media influencers may have on people. This research study has incorporated the five elements of celebrity credibility on social media - trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect, and similarity - to assist practitioners and managers in selecting the most suitable influencer for their business. It will also help managers and marketing leaders create guidelines for connecting with consumers through effective collaborations with social media influencers. Yet, this research revealed a discrepancy in the connection between followers' buying habits and their faith in influencers. In this study, the researcher aimed to investigate consumers' reactions to influencer marketing campaigns. The study aimed to investigate if the results aligned with previous research on how consumer reactions to influencer marketing campaigns can be impacted by factors like expertise, attractiveness, respect, and similarity, aside from trustworthiness.

Social media influencers are individuals on social media platforms who have a high number of followers. (Veirman & Hudders, 2017, Harrigan, et al. 2021). Followers are becoming more linked to influencers and communities of influencers (Ki et al, 2020). This tool aids influencers in achieving success in their marketing and business endeavors, ultimately enhancing their brand and sales performance. Marketers are discovering that the technologies utilized in advertising and communication are advancing rapidly, causing shifts in markets and customer behavior (Dwivedi et al, 2020).

Consumers trust the opinions of fellow customers over companies when it comes to products and services, and social media is perfect for this as many customers are connected online (Naylor et al, 2012). In the current competitive market, people carefully look for customer feedback and reviews before making a purchase. Customers have an increasing inclination to share their experiences and opinions on well-known social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, as well as reputable online platforms such as Shopee, Lazada, and Alibaba, impacting the purchasing decisions of others. These invaluable reviews not only assist new consumers in making their decisions but also greatly influence customer responses. testimonials from customers and third parties are perceived as more reliable by new users (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

Using stars on social media to advertise is not a new concept. Before the rise of these platforms, businesses utilized actors and well-known figures in their advertisements to endorse and sell their products (Olenski, 2016). Nevertheless, social media influencers have become increasingly crucial for businesses to market their brands on online platforms due to the rise in internet usage and the significance of social media platforms (Ki et al, 2020). In earlier times, individuals who gained fame and acknowledgment were typically the ones who demonstrated outstanding performance in areas such as entertainment, sports, or leadership roles. The public widely recognized and celebrated their accomplishments and contributions. At the same time, social media influencers (SMIs) are putting in effort to build their presence on platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and more (Swant, 2016). SMIs have a greater number of fans and subscribers compared to actors or athletes, and their opinions on products and services greatly influence their followers' actions (Veirman & Hudders, 2017). This study aims to contribute to the current understanding of this specific field. This study focuses on exploring the regions or dimensions that play a role in shaping consumer response to influencer marketing efforts.

Research Objectives: The surge in popularity of social media influencers in Malaysia has led to a growing number of individuals not just admiring them but also seeking to replicate their lifestyles and form authentic relationships with them. Evaluating factors that may impact social media users and analyzing what influences consumer reactions to influencer marketing campaigns is essential. The primary goal of this research is to analyze the factors that impact how consumers react to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO1: To examine the relationship between trustworthiness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO2: To examine the relationship between expertise and consumer responses to influencer marketing

campaigns.
RO3: To examine the relationship between attractiveness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO4: To examine the relationship between respect and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO5: To examine the relationship between similarity and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO6: To examine whether the consumer attitude mediates the relationships between trustworthiness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO7: To examine whether the consumer attitude mediates the relationships between expertise and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO8: To examine whether the consumer attitude mediates the relationship between attractiveness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO9: To examine whether the consumer attitude mediates the relationships between respect and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.
RO10: To examine whether the consumer attitude mediates the relationships between similarity and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

2. Literature Review

There exists a wide variety of research questions that can be addressed. Above all, it marks the commencement of a research paper. The first stage involves formulating the research question, which is the initial significant step once you have a well-defined idea of your investigation focus.

Influencer Marketing: Influencer marketing involves compensating individuals to endorse a product or service on social media platforms (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). It is also referred to as the process of finding, involving, and endorsing individuals who interact with a brand or company's customers (Glucksman, 2017). Wei & Lu (2013) define a celebrity endorser as a famous individual who uses their public fame to promote a consumer product via advertising. This type of recommendation greatly influences how consumers view advertising and businesses, ultimately boosting their intention to make purchases and driving up sales. Research conducted by Tripp et al (1994) revealed that a celebrity endorsing a single or a couple of products is deemed more reliable compared to a celebrity endorsing numerous products. He asserts that there is always a possibility of harmful impact from numerous endorsements dealing with one celebrity. Studies have indicated that the recommendation from a spokesperson can greatly influence how consumers view advertising and products. This impact has the potential to enhance acquisition tactics and boost sales in the end.

Tears Model: The TEARS model of celebrity endorsement, created by Shimp (2007), remains applicable in current times and has been utilized by other scholars. Based on previous research, the effectiveness of a form of advertising relies on its trustworthiness and appeal, which encompass different sub-qualities. The TEARS model is made up of five dimensions: Trustworthiness, Competence, Attractiveness, Respect, and Similarity. Shimp (2003) explains that the endorser effect is defined by trustworthiness and attractiveness, critical characteristics that enhance the endorser's impact and are made up of various sub-attributes. Trustworthiness and expertise play a critical role in establishing trust, while physical attractiveness, respect, and similarity with the audience are crucial for overall attractiveness. In analyzing the impact of celebrity endorsers on advertising effectiveness, the TEARS model attributes of appeal, credibility, and knowledge were evaluated (Shimp, 2003). This specific category is essential for a comprehensive and credible evaluation of celebrity endorsements.

Through the use of the TEARS model, researchers can acquire valuable insights that can be directly beneficial for marketers, brands, and influencers. Enhanced knowledge of the elements affecting consumer reactions to influencer marketing enables the creation of more successful tactics and campaigns. The TEARS model incorporates various fields of study, such as marketing, psychology, and communication. Through the integration of insights from various fields, scholars can enhance their grasp of influencer marketing and its impact on consumer perceptions and buying decisions, facilitating a more in-depth and holistic examination. The TEARS model enables researchers to methodically examine various aspects of influencer marketing, such as the influencer's credibility and the content's relevance to the target audience. This organized method

ensures that all important factors are taken into account and assessed during the research process.

Trustworthiness: In this era of technology, a characteristic shows the perceived credibility of the source of a convincing message. Certain sources are seen as more reliable than others, such as word-of-mouth versus brand advertisements (e.g., WOM vs. brand ads, (Nielsen, 2013). The connection between individual opinions and how they affect outcomes through interpersonal relationships is influenced by how trustworthy the source is perceived to be. For example, (Smith et al, 2005) demonstrated that the credibility of the sender relies on the sender's level of expertise. The sender's ability, benevolence, and integrity also play a role in influencing it (Schoorman, et al, 2007). Consumers' reactions to influencer marketing campaigns depend on how the influencer behaves daily.

Expertise: The level of trust in a celebrity endorsement is greatly impacted by their knowledge of the subject they are promoting (Akram, et al, 2017). An authentic celebrity endorsement showcases a dedication beyond financial gain, showcasing a true admiration for the brand's quality.

Attractiveness: The attractiveness of a celebrity is based on how familiar, likable, and close they are to the consumer. The more well-known, pleasant, and understanding a celebrity is seen by the public, the more appealing they are seen to be. This implies that individuals emulate their preferred famous person (Till, 1998). Some people think that the effectiveness of an advertisement is influenced by physical attractiveness, intelligence, and charisma. Recognized widely is the fact that using familiar and visually appealing faces in ads can enhance consumers' memory and attractiveness towards the ad.

Respect: Respect, the letter R in the TEARS model, is the second important factor contributing to attractiveness among different attributes. Respect is defined as how much consumers value or admire an influencer for their accomplishments and characteristics. A celebrity's personal successes can result in a positive reputation and admiration, falling under the category of respect. Byrne et al. (2003) also discovered that liability can be synonymous with respect depending on the endorser's attributes or actions. Earlier research has also indicated that consumer purchase intention can be greatly impacted by respect (Hollensen & Schimmelpfennig, 2013).

Similarity: Similarity refers to the alignment of people in their beliefs, values, or other traits that impact how followers are influenced in their interactions with a specific influencer. The desired word-of-mouth on social media is similar to digital chatter, as consumers seek entertainment and validation from peers and influencers. This coming together of thoughts and actions is crucial for forming online connections and spreading information. According to (Kaplan, 2015), the content posted by key opinion leaders (KMI) regarding their day-to-day activities can impact their social standing and influence consumers or followers. Zhang & Zhang (2023) suggest that individuals who share common interests have a greater impact on a person's buying decision compared to those with conflicting opinions. If a customer is enthusiastic about the image or reputation of a social media influencer, they are inclined to purchase the product or brand endorsed by the influencer (Nejad et al, 2014).

Consumer Attitude: People's evaluations of objects, individuals, and themselves, known as attitudes, are developed through behavioral, cognitive, or affective experiences (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). These assessments can influence actions and thinking patterns by inclining toward either a favorable or unfavorable perception of an object. Attitudes are developed when people assess an object using their own experiences, leading to the formation of beliefs. Attitudes are created by individuals as they assess an object using their experiences, leading to the development of beliefs. They can also be developed emotionally by consistently connecting with emotions. Petty (1986) mentioned that processing persuasive arguments necessitates both motivation and ability, and these arguments can either be central or peripheral. Attitudes tend to be resistant to change but are more likely to change through central processing of information (Smith, et al, 2005).

A survey on how consumers feel about relationship marketing showed that most of them have a favorable attitude, leading to positive consumer reactions (Jones, 2015). Just as influencer marketing focuses on building and sustaining relationships, relationship marketing also emphasizes the importance of cultivating connections, indicating that a favorable mindset towards one can impact the other. In a study conducted by Duffett (2017), it was discovered that consumers have a favorable view of social media marketing, specifically

influencer marketing, as it is commonly executed on social media platforms.

Consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns: The reaction of consumers to influencer marketing campaigns is a dependent variable in this study. When revealing hidden advertising, the brand and one-sided message are linked. Influencer marketing involves social media personalities partnering with brands to endorse products or services to their large audience. Online behavior is the way individuals interact and engage with online products and services. It includes the behaviors and attitudes shown by consumers while they are buying products. Customer behavior, however, pertains specifically to the mentality and perspective of buyers when they make purchases on Internet platforms. This conduct may differ, as certain customers show favorable attitudes and actions, while others exhibit unfavorable tendencies. Scientists have found that behavior can be understood in multiple ways, as a concept with different dimensions (Li & Zhang, 2002). Various researchers and academics employ various parameters to evaluate consumer behavior. In previous studies, it has been affirmed that trust is essential in establishing strong relationships in business-to-business and business-to-customer settings (Emma, 2023).

Different criteria and measures are utilized by a variety of researchers and academics in assessing and examining consumer behavior. Trust is also essential for brands to build strong connections with customers and cultivate their loyalty (Selnes, 1988). A recent study on social media trends showed that 94 percent of marketers saw social media celebrities as effective in their marketing strategies, with influencer marketing offering 11 times more ROI than traditional advertising (Fertik, 2020).

Thanks to the latest e-commerce technologies, brands and consumers can now communicate more directly, gaining access to reliable information about products and making informed purchasing decisions quickly (ESW, 2022). In 2009, Lee's study discovered that social media information from a knowledgeable source regarding specific products has a greater impact on customers' buying decisions (Lee, 2009).

3. Hypothesis Development

Trustworthiness: Past research has indicated that the trust customers place in social media influencers, along with their content and posts, is significantly impacted by their level of trustworthiness (Lou & Yuan, 2018). Jelita & Rimiyati (2021) discovered that confidence in influencers is crucial in influencing consumer perceptions of advertising on social media. As a result, it has been determined that the credibility of social media influencers greatly influences followers' chances of making a purchase. Trustworthiness has been identified as the most significant factor affecting followers' behavior (Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2021). Consumers are more inclined to react positively to endorsers they see as reliable, as opposed to endorsers they see as unreliable (Walster et al, 1966). Whether the audience considers these celebrity endorsements to come from experts in the field or not, endorsers perceived as trustworthy are more persuasive (McGinnies & Ward, 1980). The most essential factor in influencing followers' perceptions of a recommended brand is the level of trust they have in social influencers (Nishith Bhatt, 2013). Additionally, a connection has been discovered by researchers between how followers view the reliability of social media influencers their intentions to purchase and their feelings toward the brand being promoted (Schouten, et al, 2019). In line with the aforementioned theories, this research considers the credibility of social media influencers as the key factor impacting their followers' purchase intentions. Hence, the study's results lead to the following suggestion being put forward:
H1: There is a significant positive relationship between trustworthiness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

Expertise: When consumers are deciding on a product, they frequently look to social media influencers for advice (Kozinets, et al, 2010). Proficient social media influencers can convince consumers to trust their advice and interact with their product-focused posts (Liu et al, 2015). People who provide guidance or facts in areas they are highly knowledgeable in are seen as more trustworthy than people who give their opinions on subjects they are not well-informed about. A study using interviews revealed that the level of expertise influences the awareness of Instagram users regarding product reviews by social media celebrities (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Consumers' purchase intentions are positively affected by the credibility of the source (Kim & Song, 2020). To establish lasting loyalty and trust with consumers, online influencers need to consistently enhance their expertise and abilities. Past studies have shown that advice from experts greatly influences how

consumers behave, resulting in lasting loyalty and trust in the guidance they receive. This emphasizes the significance of security in the approval of electronic payments. As a result, the hypothesis was:
H2: There is a significant positive relationship between expertise and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

Attractiveness: A different research discovered that attractiveness, combined with source recognition, greatly influenced customer intentions to purchase (Yi & Gong, 2013). Therefore, social media influencers play a significant role in influencing consumer perceptions and preferences towards certain products, affecting their decision to buy. To build trust with their viewers and keep them engaged, these online influencers must keep honing their content creation skills. Prior research has found that consumers are more likely to have positive attitudes toward brands when they receive information or recommendations from a credible, knowledgeable, and persuasive source (Williams, 2024).

Various prior research suggests a direct link between customers' buying habits and attractiveness, particularly the physical attractiveness of the individual (Khalid & Yasmeen, 2019). Influencers' appeal positively influences customer perceptions, leading to changes in buying behavior. Lim's research also identified a significant link between the willingness to buy and how well the product aligns with the influencer. This indicates that attractive social media influencers can positively influence their followers (Cheah, 2017). Furthermore, they found a significant relationship between the intention to buy and how well the product matches the source. This indicates that social media influencers who are visually attractive could have a beneficial influence on the people who follow them (Min, et al, 2019). Therefore, endorsers with attractive qualities who have positive attitudes can impact customers' purchasing intentions. Hence, individuals who have appealing qualities may be viewed positively by consumers and influence their buying decisions (Pornpitakpan, 2003). Social media influencers with attractive looks are more prone to grabbing the interest of their audience. Customers may have a more positive view of a social media star if the star is attractive and appealing in appearance (Agam, 2017). Based on the idea of identification, the appeal of the individual promoting a product or service is thought to be a key factor in impacting how receptive the target audience is to the ad.
H3: There is a significant positive relationship between attractiveness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

Respect: Respect, denoted by the letter R in the TEARS model, is the second element of the overall attractiveness feature. It involves the respect and admiration gained from the achievements of the endorser. Celebrities are admired for diverse reasons, including their talent in acting, skills in sports, charming personalities, opinions on social issues, and other attributes. Celebrity figures who are respected are typically also admired, possibly due to their actions, looks, or other qualities (Byrne, et al, 2003). When well-regarded and popular celebrities sign contracts with various brands, their respect and likability can impact the brands they are connected to, ultimately boosting the brand's value and influencing consumers' perceptions of the brand positively (Shimp, 2003). Charbonneau & Garland (2005) found that employing a respected celebrity or athlete as the spokesperson is more impactful than using a regular model. Famous individuals can enhance advertisements by adding more nuance, complexity, and impact. Although anonymous models can convey some basic demographic details such as gender, age, and status, celebrities can provide these specifics with more accuracy (McCracken, 1989). Because of their fame and frequent appearances in the media, celebrities are often linked to a high social standing and have extra characteristics and influence (La Ferle & Choi, 2005). Consumers have a more positive perception of brands when highly regarded celebrities endorse them, as influenced by their admiration for the celebrities. Utilizing a well-known celebrity to endorse a brand is more impactful than utilizing a regular model (Johnson & Platt, 2023). Influencers can add elegance and impact to ads, offering a depth of demographic understanding that anonymous models lack. Their extensive popularity and regular appearance in the media frequently associate them with a feeling of renown and high standing.
H4: There is a significant positive relationship between respect and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

Similarity: In the same way, the third aspect of appeal and the S factor in the TEARS model indicates how closely an endorser matches with the audience in terms of key characteristics like age, gender, and ethnicity (Shimp, 2003). Deshpandé & Stayman (1994) found that trustworthiness and brand attitude can be influenced by an endorser's ethnicity. The researchers believed that this happens because individuals tend to have

confidence in those who are similar to them. The results back up the assertion made by Cialdini (2007) that we are naturally attracted to individuals who share similarities with us, whether it be in opinions, personality traits, background, or lifestyle. In contrast, Shimp (2003) suggests that similarity between the endorser and the audience becomes crucial in situations where there is a plethora of products or services to choose from and the audience is varied. In such circumstances, an influencer seen as relatable to the audience can greatly influence opinions and choices. This similarity, whether it is rooted in demographics or beliefs, strengthens the effectiveness of the message by establishing a connection. Previous research shows that individuals tend to prefer people who are similar to them, as previously mentioned. The similarity is the resemblance between the sender and the receiver of a message. The similarity between a famous person endorsing a product and a consumer receiving the message is determined by their shared needs, objectives, hobbies, and way of life (Ohanian, 1990).

H5: There is a significant positive relationship between similarity and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

Consumer Attitude: Marketing researchers have expressed interest in understanding consumer attitudes, as it is essential information for creating effective marketing plans (Solomon, 2010). Research has shown a direct correlation between attitudes and buying intent in consumer behavior, as discussed by Ting (2015) and Tarkiainen (2005). In contrast, Chen (2007) proposed that having a favorable outlook on a particular product is a key factor in determining consumers' intention to buy. Likewise, having a positive view of products promoted by social media influencers increases the likelihood of wanting to purchase.

H6: There is a significant positive relationship between consumer attitude and consumer response to influencers.

Consumer Attitude as Mediator: Lim et al. (2017) discovered a clear positive correlation between consumer attitudes and intent to purchase. This implies that people with positive opinions about influencers are more inclined to purchase the products they promote. Siqi et al. (2021) also back up this discovery by demonstrating a direct link between consumer attitudes and intention to purchase. These studies emphasize the significance of choosing appropriate influencers to encourage positive attitudes and boost attitudes and purchase intent. Jelita & Rimiyati (2021) also support this concept by showing that consumer perceptions of advertisements have a positive influence on purchasing intentions, serving as mediators. This supports the finding by López Mosquera et al. (2014) that consumer attitudes impact purchase intention positively, proposing a solid theory for a direct positive link between attitudes and intentions.

H6a: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between trustworthiness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

H6b: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between expertise and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

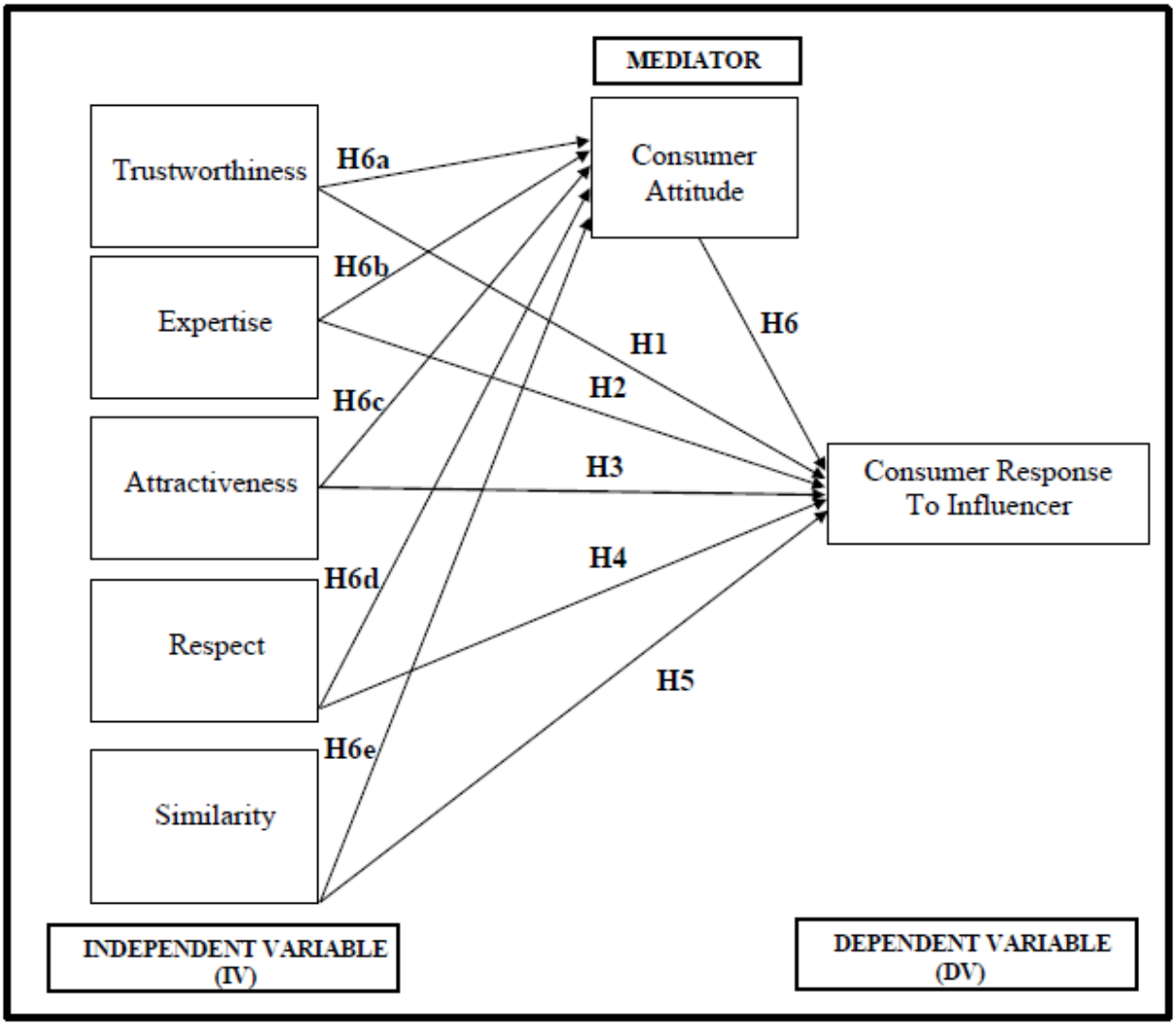
H6c: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between attractiveness and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

H6d: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between respect and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

H6e: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between similarity and consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns.

Based on the above-mentioned standpoint, a conceptual framework is proposed as depicted in Fig. 1 below:

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework



4. Methodology

In this research proposal, the researcher has opted to employ a quantitative research methodology. The process of quantitative research entails the precise gathering of numerical information, which is a valuable method for discovering intricate patterns, calculating averages, making reliable predictions, exploring cause-and-effect relationships, and ultimately reaching conclusions that apply to a larger group. In this specific research, the investigator effectively utilized non-probability sampling methods, which improved the accuracy and dependability of the results. Non-probability sampling is a fundamental method that depends greatly on the researcher's expertise. The researcher opted for convenience sampling as it simplifies sample collection. Individuals aged 20 to 40 years old were chosen from the GenY (1983-1996) and GenZ (1997-2004) cohorts. To qualify for this research, individuals must be "Following" at least one influencer on social networking platforms. Control questions were added to the survey to confirm that the intended sample was achieved. By applying the formula developed by Yamane in 1967, the study will need a sample size consisting of 400 participants. After running the F-test in G*Power 3.1.9.2 software, a sample size of 92 was calculated for this research study with an effect size of 0.15, a power of 80, and 5 predictors. Thus, the sample utilized in the statistical analysis was deemed suitable, as per (Chan, et al, 2021), which included 200 valid responses. (Sekaran, 2006) suggested that a sample size ranging from 30 to 500 is deemed suitable for research in the field of social science.

5. Conclusion and Conceptual Framework

The foundation for this study was based on the choice of the TEARS model theory. It enables the researcher to methodically examine the numerous aspects that impact how consumers react to influencer marketing campaigns. This research offers important information for brands and marketers seeking to enhance their influencer collaborations and increase campaign efficiency. Moreover, this study adds to the current pool of information in the marketing field, particularly focusing on consumer perceptions and buying intentions in influencer marketing. In addition to its expected managerial impacts, this study also offers advantages to business professionals seeking to utilize social media influencer endorsements as part of their marketing plan. Marketers can make well-informed decisions in choosing influencers to promote their products by taking into account qualities like trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect, and similarity. The TEARS model is frequently utilized in the marketing field for elucidating marketing communications. Banytė, Stonkienė & Piligrimienė (2011) applied the model to create a plan for choosing celebrities to endorse the Lithuanian national team, whereas (Kaushalya & Ranaweera, 2021) utilized the model to analyze Sri Lankan consumers' views on celebrity endorsers. This model was crucial for the study, offering priceless guidance to the researcher in pinpointing the key traits that consumers look for in a celebrity endorser.

Online businesses can enhance their decision-making process in choosing influencers and increase their marketing effectiveness in the digital era by utilizing this knowledge. The increasing significance of influencer marketing in the age of social media underscores its importance for marketers looking to impact the attitudes and actions of their desired audience. This study highlights five important characteristics that impact how consumers react to influencer marketing efforts: trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness. The research seeks to pinpoint the elements that impact how consumers react to influencer marketing efforts, giving both theoretical knowledge and practical guidance to businesses and advertisers. Industry professionals can enhance their influencer marketing initiatives by optimizing their strategies through understanding these factors. Retailers and marketers need to include important elements and factors that strategically improve a favorable consumer reaction to their business. The TEARS model is suggested as the main guide for choosing influencers.

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