Social Media Influencers in Retail Marketing in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the contributions of influencer marketing to organizational marketing efforts with focus on Jumia Nigeria as a case study. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain the extent Jumia uses influencers, the relationship between influencers and the reputation of Jumia, how viable is the technique in promoting and enhancing the visibility of Jumia brand. Status Conferral Theory and Source Credibility Theory used to explain the relationships between the two research variables. Mixed design was employed; in-depth interview served as the research method for the qualitative part while structured questionnaire was used for survey. Interviews were conducted with staff of marketing unit of Jumia Nigeria, and major influencers used by Jumia Nigeria, to collate facts and record pertinent perceptions of key players. Analyses of responses of interviewees confirmed that Jumia Nigeria uses influencers extensively in its marketing effort. Jumia confirmed that influencer marketing constitutes about 60-70% of its marketing efforts and constantly engage influencers to push products listed on Jumia website on Instagram and other social media platforms. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that influencer marketing is very viable to Jumia Nigeria. Jumia assessed and track the influencers on key deliverables such as creativity of content, number of engagements generated (likes, comments, reposts, shares attracted by each post), large followership, active followership, new leads generation and driving of sales. Lastly, the use of social media influencers by Jumia Nigeria has enhanced brand awareness and visibility for the e-commerce website. It has also connected the brand with many Gen-Z consumers and improved lead generation for products listed on Jumia's website. However, the survey revealed most online users are not swayed by the influencers, rather, they search jumia online and blogs to get details about products before buying from physical locations; reason why they do not use promo codes dispersed by influencers. Based on the data received, the study concludes influencers are veritable for brand visibility and awareness to most online shoppers, majorly comprising the GenZ, who make buying decisions based on believable product specifications and peer influences. Therefore, the study recommends influencer to embed product specifications in their promotion posts and foster comparative discourse while emphasizing USPs to engender brand acceptance.

Key words: *media, influencer, retail marketing, brand image, source credibility*

Introduction

The media terrain per time has always been the determinant of the mode of human communication, whether mass communication, group, organisational or one-on-one communication. Man has traversed many newness of media technology before he got to this sophistication – stage of internet-mediated media of communication. Today, one of the most proliferated factors in human existence is the media, which has created a deluge of opportunities for advertisers, also with increasing concerns for cost effective media-audience matching to avoid waste exposures. Onwunali and Husseini (2017) summited that with media fragmentation, media planners have

realized that the power once held by advertisers and broadcasters seems to have been relinquished to the netizens – constituted by clusters of consumers and influencers on various social media platforms.

Mercedes-Manero and MArzo-Navarro (2020), posit that online influencers are virtual opinion leaders capable of moulding opinions on social media through what they represent and share that make their followers to see them as possessing special skills and knowledge on issues and matters in the influencers' domain. The influencers have cordial relationship with their gazing netizens,

through whom the influencers are able to perpetuate new tastes, hobbies, lifestyles and, ultimately, trends towards wide acceptance. Ultimately, the marketing technique of leveraging the influencers is becoming popular amongst advertisers, as it has proven to be a virile marketing instrument capable of setting trends needed to drive sales for products.

Weller et al 2014 submitted that few years back, organizations have realized that mounting a website is adequate to satisfy customers' remote enquiries, but there is increasing need to take advantage of the potentials afforded by the advent of social media in such a way to improve stakeholder relationship that cuts across managing the extant stakeholders as well as breaking new grounds through crowd sourcing and integrating new ones.

Due to the commonness of multimedia gadgets and increased internet usage responsible for transforming virtually all aspects of our terrestrial life to virtual, Jumia, which is a foremost online market hub for variegated goods, was selected because its customers cut across all levels of consumers of household and industrial goods in Nigeria. Since Jumia is a retail company, it leverages testimonies of prominent netizens to promote various goods.

It is not uncommon to see corporate organizations, and lately, public organizations fronting celebrities and opinion leaders on social media with large followership as brand ambassadors or brand influencers. This development is not unconnected with the fact that most of today's audiences are clustered on social media platforms. The audiences have become more fragmented with variegated interests with various narrowcasters (Influencers) catering for their media needs. Social media influencers satisfy content needs of their followers who follow the influencers on bases of interests. With seeming precision of targets-media matching, various influencer's social media handles became virile commercial platforms for specific brands.

However, with reasonable doubts about the dynamisms of the Influencer Marketing technique concerning its profitability and volatile nature,

product promoters in Nigeria have yet to optimize the potential inherent in the Influencer Marketing. This concern was also enunciated by the sensationalism peculiar to the medium which could be counterproductive to corporate brands if deals go awry. Consequently, the study focuses on finding out the viability of influencer marketing technique of brand promotion to corporate organizations using jumia as a case of study.

The study was premised on Source Credibility theory as debuted by Hovland, Janis and Kelly (1963 (cited in Umoegu, 2012) summed that recipient of information are more inclined to believe when the information source is presented to be credible. Hoveland (1963) and Weiss (1974) later examined how information sources influence persuasion. The study compared credible and non-credible information sources through the use of similar persuasive message to examine whether sources presented as credible could effect change in the recipients through the identical message more than sources appraised as non-credible.

Furthermore, credibility theory presumed that the higher the perceived or assumed credibility of the source in the eyes of message recipients, the greater the chances of persuading and effecting change in the recipients, (Umeogu, 2012). This theory helps explain that when credibility of a social media influencer is high, the brand he/she promotes may be accepted without recourse to the potency of the message. Moreover, people tend to believe individuals they like, and are often persuaded if there are multiple sources considered credible. Social media has somewhat commodified life where a showcased lifestyle transmits to a source of entertainment for netizens to consume and cultivate as parameter for value production.

Status Conferral Theory is another theory pertinent to the study. It was debuted by Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton in 1948 (Umeogu, 2012). Status conferral theory underscores that the media of communication confers social status and prestige on individuals, culture and causes or events; mass communication serves as authenticator of human, his existence, ventures and endeavours. The crux of

the theory revolves around how the media ratify and prioritize particular cultural norms while reducing the disparities and variations from those norms. It explains how the causes with media clout supplant those without media agenda. This theory is exemplified in the advertising technique of testimonials or promotion by influencers on a product, in a widely dispersed heterogonous population, such that social media influencers not only augment the acceptability of the product but also reflect noble popularity on the influencers. The influencers are seen as possessing the clout to wield influence in the market for major products through status the media has conferred on them that earned them ability to make their opinion count to media audiences

Methodology

This study is explanatory and partly descriptive as it attempted to explain the usage and values inherent in the influencer marketing technique of promotion as well as dispositions of the targeted markets to digital based promotional technique. Therefore, mixed approach was used. Dayton and Holloway (2002) cited in Agba (2017) noted that qualitative research method helps researchers to better understand social processes, the motivations of human beings, and the context in which they are situated. In order to get enough information on influencer marketing strategy of jumia, in-depth interviews were conducted with two key personnel involved in the marketing team and three selected influencers. The method, according to Boyce & Neale (2006:2), is that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular issue. In this regard, unstructured question guide mainly on RQ1, RQ2, and slightly on RQ3 and RQ4 were asked respondents and collected data were analysed qualitatively and interpreted using thematic analysis. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) quoted by Akinfeleye et al. (2017) identified survey, which is the second designed adopted in this study, to possess the ability to collect a huge amount of data with relative ease from variety of people. A structured questionnaire was developed on RQ3 and RQ4 to factor non-subjective perceptions of the 201 sample drawn from various platforms in higher institutions

of learning in south west Nigeria, using non probability sampling technique – snowball.

Data Analysis and Discussion

This study investigated the role of influencer marketing in brand promotion with focus on Jumia Nigeria Limited. Specifically, the study examined the extent Jumia uses influencer marketing. whether selected influencers have similar reputation with the Jumia brand, how viable is influencer marketing to Jumia and whether the use of influencer has significant promoted the Jumia brand. The qualitative research design was adopted. In gathering data, interviews were conducted with staff of marketing unit of Jumia Nigeria, and major influencers used by Jumia Nigeria, to obtain facts and views for this study.

Analyses of responses of interviewees confirmed that Jumia Nigeria uses influencers extensively its marketing effort. Jumia confirmed that influencer marketing constitutes about 60-70% of marketing efforts and constantly engage influencers to push products listed on Jumia website to Instagram and other social media platforms. The influencers equally affirmed that Jumia use them periodically to promote certain themes or messaging in order to drive sales for products listed on the company's website. Therefore, Jumia can be adjudged to employ acer marketing to a great extent, with astute consideration for the conduit through which the influences are delivered. Constituents the influencers appeal to determine the brands they are engaged for, and at what rate they are engaged. Describing the extent Jumia Nigeria engages influencers, a respondent (K. Kolawole, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) said: "Influencer marketing constitutes the largest chunk of our business' campaigns-approximately between 60per cents to 70per cent of the total marketing effort. The company has engaged several influencers in the last four years from its network of macro, micro and celebrity influencers."

Another respondent reiterates the points above, Oloyede (L. Oloyede, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) said Jumia contracts influencers based on needs and marketing plan per

time. "We run an e-commerce website where people can buy almost everything they need at home or their offices, including food. So our special focus is virtual targets, particularly, young social media users. So influencing contracts are awarded based on certain criteria like specialty of the influencers in terms of the market they appeal to and the brands to be promoted per time. This is supported by the responses gathered on whether the influencers always work along peers on the brand."

Furthermore, all the three influencers interviewed have always been co-opted along others on various influencing campaigns for the Jumia brand. It is noteworthy that all the influencers interviewed desired to be permanently engaged as brand ambassador by jumia.ng for continual brand influencing. This would mean more jobs and regular income for them. However, it would mean keeping dead weights for the company whenever certain specialties for constituent markets are not profitable. In essence the jumia.ng engages influencers based on campaign objectives and pertinent target market.

Two of the three influencers constantly engaged by Jumia are fashion adherents whose care specialties are: exhibition of modest fashion and general modest entertaining contents. An Influencer, (Zainab, personal communication, November, 3, 2021) said: "I did campaign with Junia during Ramadan-talking points on sharing shopping for the season from the comfort of consumers' homes, shopping for parents, grandparents and getting the goods delivered everywhere, including villages without stepping out. This feeding the vulnerable during Ramadan is a core Islamic practice and we were able to reach the target market with the message." Furthermore, the respondents said the campaign was a seasonal event that calls for fighting method of media campaign. Although, most of the products consumed during the Ramadan are regular household goods, but campaign for them are intensified to drive sales since sharing of gifts and alms giving are norms in the Ramadan season.

The market for influencers has grown in recent years. And new generation company like jumia.ng has to device methods and rationalized means of adopting influencer marketing afforded by the new

media to promote their brands. Audience segmentation and media selection has also come to play in choice of influencers. The result of this present study affirmed that Jumia Nigeria uses different influencers in its marketing effort. However, influencers are selected based on marketing need, target markets, budget and marketing objectives to be achieved.

Responses of the interviewees showed Jumia projects many values and reputation that align with that of the influencers. Values such as respect for people, fairness, peace of mind, open policy etc. are also shared and projected by contracted influencers.

Explaining how the values of the brand are similar to that of influencers, a respondent (L. Oloyede, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) said: "We actually do a thorough check on the values and reputation projected by these influencers online before we decide on whether or not to engage them. We tend to look for influencers that their values align with Jumia brand or with the particular product that we are trying to push. We do an image audit on them to ascertain whether or not they are the right influencers for us every time."

The view above was buttressed by another respondent, (K. Kolawole, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) who said sensitive issues like gender issue, rape, religion, molestation and crime are considered unacceptable by serious brands, same as Jumia. "Although -iconoclastic publicity stunts could be adopted by influencers to breed followers for pertinent market; we usually do not engage influencers that thrive on unnecessary controversy. We believe influencers must use catchy, interesting and entertaining contents, apart from expertise knowledge to attract followers. Most of the influencers that we engage commercialize their social media platforms to follow fads and fashion and trends, which most of them love doing to promote themselves using aesthetic displays and streams of short clips that turn the eye of thousands of social media users".

Furthermore, the three influencers interviewed are in convergence that felt image of the social media influencer can impact on the images of brands they

campaign for. They are of the opinion that badly reputed or controversial social media influencers will have negative impact on the brand. They believe every influencer should protect their image as much as possible to attract good contracts, even though they know controversy is a stratagem being used by many social media influencers to breed followership online. "Suffice to say what will it profit a crooked influencer to gain followership and loses their contracts? (C. Obuckwe, personal communication, October, 29, 2021) said.

A respondent, (Zainab, personal communication, November, 3, 2021) added that "controversy and trends are two bed fellows that social media influencers ride on to fame. Most trends on social media are often controversial, but not all controversial trends are negative. In my experience, some influencers have attracted followership based on what they stand for on the virtualsphere. Some are modest, while some are epicurean and sometimes preach unfettered enjoyment through their postings. I believe the cynosure of marketing objectives is to encourage consumerism by satisfying needs and creating wants. So for many influencers like myself that I have observed epicurean models with pertinent followership come handy in influencing for such campaign objectives that tend to facilitate sales of successive innovations to satisfy human wants of created needs."

In all, responses from interviewees confirmed that brands are only concerned about controversies with tendencies that are antithetical to what they stand for, such as those tendencies that offend the sensibilities of the general public or groups in particular in matter of gender, sex offence, religion and crimes. Similarly, brand managers look for influencers whose reputations align with theirs and those of the brands/products to be promoted.

The results showed that respondents are in convergence that influencer marketing is very viable as Jumia Nigeria. Jumia assessed and track the influencers on key deliverables such as creativity of content, number of engagements generated (likes, comments, reposts, shares attracted by each post), large followership, active followership, new leads generation and driving of sales.

A respondent (L. Oloyede, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) said "we have metrics to which performance of each influencer is benchmarked on and they are expected to deliver on key deliverables. The major criterion is creativity in content creation; another one is media metrics like number of likes, reposts/shares and comments attracted by each post. So, is a driving force for them to put in more effort to always surpass their previous figures in order to remain to relevant to their followers and maintain their contracts with Jumia."

The influencers are in convergence that they engage with followers on Jumia brand. Promoted stories for Jumia posts often attracts comments from their followers, which often times compel them to interface for the brand with the myriad of prospects each day. They are meant to be knowledgeable on each they campaign for per time, which puts them in the position to close sales in their DMs. Complex complaints are redirected to the main jumia.ng marketing hub to

Describing how viable influencer marketing is to marketing effort of Jumia Nigeria, an interviewee (K. Kolawole, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) said "conventional marketing media, including direct sales method, have never afforded us (Jumia) this cost effective and efficient market engagement. The influencers are working almost round the clock to attend to traffic and comments generated by their stories and posts, and feeding same back to us through jumia.ng when required. We also track performance of each influencer through the sales they drive. We measure this through unique code each influencers share in their promotional contents to be used in shopping for the promoted brands with promised special bonuses. This is considered a simpler mode of assessing the performance of the influencers, compared to media metrics like number of shares/reposts, likes, comments and engagements that could be diversionary and irrelevant to the promoted brand under Jumia e-commerce website." The two interviewees at Jumia confirmed that influencer marketing forms 60-70 per cent of the whole marketing efforts of Jumia Nigeria. The company could be said to have capitalized on the influencers

marketing more than conventional marketing methods to reach the largest single market hub - virtual market, through social media influencers with niches appealing to various segments of the market for their promoted brands under Jumia e-commerce website.

In all, the result on viability of influencer marketing suggests that influencers are very vital for lead generation, as the role of social media as nexus between brands and potential customers / clients has become apparent. Interviewees are in convergence that social media provide an efficient and simple conduit through which brands can reach consumers to generate new leads and enhance their social media presence.

Analysis of responses of interviewees showed that the use of social media influencers by Jumia Nigeria has enhanced brand awareness and visibility for the e-commerce website. It has also connected the brand with many Gen-Z consumers and improved lead generation for products Tested on Jumia's website.

Describing how use of influencers promote brand awareness and visibility for Jumia brand, a respondent (L Oloyede, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) said "use of social media influencers has expanded our reach and positioning in the marketplace. Many online consumers learnt more about Jumia brand, our story, and the products on our platforms. Inputs of influencers in our festering brand awareness is undisputable.

Interviewees are in convergence that use of influencers helps Jumia navigate through many hurdles that other promotional mediums face in this dispensation. They observed that are much more people getting irritated by direct advert on social media; besides general aversion for intrusive nature of conventional adverts, they said influencers offered Jumia a novel way to engage consumers and attract potentials in friendly, enticing and entertaining manners. Furthermore, they said Jumia has been able to create highly-effective influencer campaigns that reach thousands of consumers by partnering with the right influencers. They said

Jumia tactfully vet influencers based on both qualitative and quantitative factors that ultimately help promote the Jumia brand and products on its platform.

A respondent (K. Kolawole, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) described how the use of right influencers has helped Jumia caught up with Genz consumers. "Through the use of influencers who are also GenZ, we have been able to capture the language of many young people to continue to use the Jumia website to make purchases. Don't also forget that majority of social media users are in that age group. Attracting consumers from these audience segments brought tremendous value to Jumia brand and invaluable access to one of the most profitable mographics"

Similarly, interviewees confirmed that use of influencers also helped the Jumia brand in new lead generation and drive sales. They said influencers push on social media helps to generate new leads for products listed on Jumia's website. Influencers who mention Jumis on social modia drive sales of products on Jumia's website. They said more and more, consumers are looking to influencers for suggestions on what products or services they should purchase. As social media has become more prominent, so has its potential for reaching large audiences.

Describing how social media influencers set trends for consumers (L. Oloyede, personal communication, September, 27, 2021) said "we have built campaigns around an influencers' review of new products on our website and place those brand in the spotlight. Influencers are our go-to resources for new products listed on our website. Whether its fashion, gaming, beauty, or finesse, audiences respect and often idolize the opinions of the influencers they follow. This is one of the reasons influencer marketing is so potent and effective to Jumia Nigeria."In all, the results suggest that influencers marketing has helped promoted and enhanced the visibility of the Jumia's e-commerce website

Table.1: **Influencer marketing to Jumia retail brands**

Frequencies/Extent of:	0 (SD)	1(D)	2(N)	3(A)	4(SA)	Total
Online shopping	89 (44%)	61(30%)	22(11%)	21(11%)	8(4%)	201
Online window shopping	31(15%)	51(25%)	29(15%)	42(21%)	48(24)	201
People offline influence buying decision	16(8%)	35(17%)	83(41%)	46(23%)	21(11%)	201
People online influence buying decision	22(11%)	39(19%)	77(38%)	46(23%)	17(9%)	201
Conventional Adverts influence buying decisions	22(11%)	29(14%)	81(40%)	44(22%)	25(12%)	201
Promo Code Usage by shoppers	98(49%)	46(23%)	40(20%)	17(8%)	0 (0%)	201
Level of trust in online influencers	22(11%)	57(28%)	84(42%)	22(11%)	16(8%)	201

Source: *Field Survey, 2022*

Results from Table.1 show that 44% of the 201 respondents do not shop online, while 30% rarely do shop online. This is in sharp contrast to 45% (21% + 24%) who Agreed and Strongly Agreed to check out products' details online before buying them from physical locations. Equating the high number of online window shoppers which is approximated at 45% of the studied sample with 32% (23%+9%) of those who are motivated to buy goods promoted by influencers shows that influencers afford various brands high visibility online. However, the study shows that main determinant while the respondents buy various products is the product specifications/details available online (either on jumia or on various blogs). This is further reiterated through the 0% promo code usage by the respondents showing that none of the respondents has used promo code to shop online.

Table.2: Social media influencers' technique

Frequencies/Extent of:	0 (SD)	1(D)	2(N)	3(A)	4(SA)	Total
Adverts introduced me to my favorite products	23(11%)	25(12%)	57(28%)	63(31%)	33(16%)	201
SMI introduced me to my favorite products	29(14%)	31(15%)	62(31%)	58(29%)	21(11%)	201
People around introduced me to my favorite products	13(7%)	26(13%)	58(29%)	71(35%)	33(16%)	201

Source: *Field Survey, 2022*

Results in table.2 show that social media influencers' technique has the least number of brand exposures with 40% (Agreed % Strongly Agreed) agreeing to have been exposed to products they like through Influencers; 47% and 51% were exposed to what they buy through adverts and people around them. Majority of the respondents are mostly influenced to buy what they buy through the people they associate with, followed by conventional advertisement they are exposed to. This reality is further reinforced by the results in Table.1 showing level of trust in social media influencers; only 19% (Strongly Agree and Agree) of the respondents have a degree of trust in social media influencers.

Table.3: Age distributions of the respondents

Age Distributions	Frequencies
15-20	81
21-30	71
31-40	32

41-50	17
51 Upwards	0
TOTAL	**201**

Source: *Field Survey, 2022*

Table.3 shows age distributions of the respondents most of which fall within the Gen-Z group targeted by online brand promoters.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the role of influencer marketing in promoting organizations with focus on Jumia Nigeria as a case study. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain the extent Jumia uses influencers, the relationship between influencers and the reputation of Jumia, how viable is the se of influencers and how the use of influencer marketing promoted and enhanced the visibility of Jumia brand. Status Conferral Theory and Source Credibility Theory formed the theoretical framework for this study. A qualitative research design was employed in the explanatory part of the study, while survey was used to investigate the viability claim attributed to the technique, evidenced in RQ3 and RQ4. Interviews were conducted with staff of marketing unit of Jumia Nigeria and major influencers used by Jumia Nigeria, to obtain facts and views for this study, while survey was carried out on consumers. The first research question sought to ascertain the extent Jumia Nigeria uses influencers. Analyses of responses of interviewees confirmed that Jumia Nigeria uses influencers extensively is its marketing effort. Jumia confirmed that influencer marketing constitutes about 60-70% of marketing efforts and constantly engage influencers to push products listed on Jumia website on Instagram and other social media platforms. The outcome is similar to the findings of Xin Jean & Jun-Hwa (2017). They found that use of social media influencers is very common among brands targeting Genz (birthed between 1995-2012) consumers (Jumia also target that same age-group); and they deploy influencer marketing tenaciously to attract young consumers. Mammadli and Azerbaijan (2020) found that social media influencers are extensively used by businesses in Azerbaijani.

The second research question examined the relationship between reputation of the influencers and Jumia Nigeria. Responses of the interviewees showed Jumia Nigeria projects many values and reputation that align with that of the influencers. Values such as respect for people, fairness, peace of mind, open policy etc. are also shared and projected by contracted influencers. The outcome is in congruence with the findings of Kadekova and Holiencinova (2018). They found fat brands choose influencers that have similar reputation with the brand or objectives that the frand seeks to achieve with the campaign. Lou & Yuan (2019) also found that social media effluences are also used by companies and agencies to reach consumers by creating a kind of Sputation" by personal branding through social networks.

The third research question sought to ascertain how viable is influencer marketing to Jumia Nigeria. The results showed that influencer marketing is very viable to Jumia Nigeria, Jumia assessed and track the influencers on key deliverables such as creativity of content, number of engagements generated (likes, comments, reposts, shares attracted by each post), large Blowership, active followership, new leads generation and driving of sales. A similar study by Zak and Hasprova (2020) found that influencers have the greatest impact when shopping for personal effect, as well as in services deliveries. Also, the findings of Wielki (2020) indicated that enormous potentials abound in activities involving digital influencers, which primarily relates to effectual transmission brand information, prowling brand awareness, and the facilitation of sales and patronage for the brands. However, Jarrar et al (2020) found that sponsored advertisements are more effective in generating post engagements than influencer marketing posts, which was confirmed in the survey Moreover, the study shows that social media users tend to save sponsored advertisements more than they save advertisements by influencers. This is because the key product features, that majority of the netizens are looking for to make purchase decisions, are entrenched in sponsored adverts.

The fourth research question examined whether use of influencer marketing has helped promoted and enhanced Jumia website/brand. The outcome showed that use of social media influencers by Jamia Nigeria has enhanced brand awareness and visibility for the e-commerce website. It has also connected the brand with Gen-Z consumers and improved lead generation for products litted on Jumia's website. A similar study by Mammadli and Azerbaijan (2020) found that social media influencers have impacts on purchase intention and that the expertise and attractiveness of the influencers are more accepted in the Azerbaijani society and brand trust creates a mediator fet in this relationship. Similarly, Jan-Frederik Grave (2019) found that followers of social edis influencers were found to be fanatically loyal to their idols - influencers. The researcher sampled idolized celebrities- Selena Gomez, Christiano Ronaldo (CR7) whose online interactions are highly revered by their followers.

Theoretically, source credibility theory help explain that when credibility of a social media influencer is high, the brand he/she promotes may be believed regardless of the arguments presented. This is confirmed in a study by Nafees, Cook and Stoddard (2020) which found that social media influencer source credibility is modeled as being positively related to the social media influencer's expertise/competence with respect to the product, the social media influencer's goodwill toward the consumer, and the social media influencer's trustworthiness. Moreover, it is natural for a receiver to believe individuals he or she likes, or to be persuaded if there are a variety of credible sources. Social media has come to embody the "commodification of life" where "personal life becomes entertainment for others to consume and actively use as a basis for production of value."

Conclusion and Recommendations

Most internet window shoppers look for key product features to make future buying decisions. To drive more sales for the products they promote, influencers should explicitly exhibit product features to compel positive buying decisions of the majority of online window shoppers as this is the lone reasons the netizens save sponsored adverts.

Most of the sampled influencers desire to be on the payroll of the brands they influence for as a result of prowling figures of emerging influencers saturating the market. It is therefore recommended that a would-be influencer should specialize in the segment where he/she has competitive advantage over others to retain their contracts.

Brand managers are concerned about the social standing of the influencers which could make or mar the brand in the volatile virtual sphere. It is therefore advised that the practice be standardised to ward off quackery based on mongering followers without propriety to manage the audience.

The influencers hold allegiance first to their followers and then to the brands contracting them. It is therefore not uncommon to experience clash of interest. To raise the trust level netizens have in SMIs, it is recommended that influencers should be more pro-followers; this requires objectivity on the part of influencers in presenting brands to the their social media followers.

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