

## IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS' ATTRIBUTES ON NIGERIANS' YOUTH PURCHASE INTENTION: A REVIEW PAPER

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The primary goal of this study is to examine the literature reviews on influencers on social media and consumers' purchase intentions. **Design/ methodology/ approach:** As a result, the content of the article was based on an assessment of previously published literatures' including articles and journals that are relevant to the topic which can be accessed through online database. **Findings:** The study revealed that the attractiveness and trustworthiness of the social media influencers' were both beneficial and important indicators of purchase intent, while respect and expertise showed an insignificant impact.

**Research Limitation/impication:** This research feasibly focuses on the perspectives of social media users in Nigeria aged between 18 to 34 years old. **Practical implications:** Marketers and advertisers should pay more attention to influencers' attractiveness and trustworthiness. This review will take an in-depth look at the literature on social media influencers, projecting on the domains that have already been studied along with those that have yet to be explored. **Originality/value:** The body of information on social media influencers and purchase intention has been expanded by this study. By adding the Nigerian perspective on the function and credibility of social media influencers in influencing customers' intention to acquire the products or services, the adoption of the Source Credibility Model theory would thus highlight the goal of this study. The importance of consumers' perceptions of social media influencers can also be explored in this study, adding to the body of knowledge on this topic.

**Keywords:** Social Media Influencers, Nigerian Youths, Purchase Intention, Influencers Attributes, Influencer Marketing.

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, the most effective approach to making contact with people is through the usage of social media. More individuals are increasingly using these social networking

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sites (SNS) daily, namely, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and others (Gupta, Agarwal & Singh, 2020). Instagram, in particular, has emerged as a popular SNS across all platforms (Gupta et al., 2020). Currently, there are approximately 6.7 million active Instagram users in Nigeria, making Instagram the second most popular SNS after Facebook (NapoleonCat, 2020). Active Nigerian users on Instagram account for 4% of the country's total population, with 59.1% of users being men and 40.9% being women. The most frequent users ranged in the age of 25 to 34 years old, at 3.2 million users (NapoleonCat, 2020).

Influencer marketing in Nigeria has evolved into a highly profitable technique for brands over the years. It is quickly becoming a crucial request in client briefs and a critical marketing approach in Nigeria for brand exposure and digital growth. According to Nigeria Influencer Marketing Report (2021) the majority of the respondents which are (90%) supported that the Nigerian Influencer Marketing Industry has experienced growth. Furthermore, more than 30% of marketers indicated that they now consider influencer marketing to be an integral component of their overall marketing plan (Brandlife Digital, 2021).

Thus, in the customer's decision-making process, influencers have a significant effect in helping consumers decide on what to buy or not to buy since their opinions are considered to be meaningful by consumers. The importance of SMIs as well as the demand for their services, continues to rise. However, Ezenwafor et al. (2021) stated that there is still insufficient scholarly investigation on SMIs and purchase intention in Africa, despite the continent's extremely promising development in social network usage. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to look into the impact of SMI's characteristics on young consumers' intentions to make purchases, with a particular focus on Nigeria in Africa. Particularly, it tends to ascertain how the social media influencers' characteristics such as trustworthiness, attractiveness, expertise and respect affect consumers intention to purchase among youths in Nigeria. Therefore the purpose of this paper is to explore the literature on of social media influencers, as well as to identify an influencers attributes that impact Nigerian Youths purchase intention.

## **IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS' CREDIBILITY**

An important factor to put into consideration for SMIs is credibility (Kefi and Sokolova, 2020; Stubb et al., 2019) . In contemporary society, SMIs are often seen as possessing a higher degree of credibility compared to traditional celebrities because of the knowledge they possess and their proximity to the interests of their followers. As a consequence, insights and viewpoints shared by Djafarova and Rushworth, (2017); and Stubb et al., (2019) SMIs have a significant impact on the people who follow them. Even though SMIs have the potential to influence their followers' reactions to endorsed products (Casaló et al., 2020) marketers utilize them to boost their product purchases (Jiménez-Castillo and Sánchez-Fernández, 2019).

Particularly, source credibility is used to assess buying intention among social media users (Ezenwafor et al., 2021). The Source Credibility Model was first proposed by Hovland et al. (1951) which was later enhanced by Ohanian (1990). The sources or component which are associated with the social media influencers is used by the Source credibility theory. These Source credibility comprises source attractiveness, source expertise and source

trustworthiness. Based on Fred (2015) source attractiveness and source credibility are both components of the source credibility model. In marketing today, due to the large number of people on social media, the utilisation of SMIs is quite important (De Veirman et al., 2017) as well as the reputation that they have garnered in certain subjects or other domains (Kim et al., 2017) For consumers looking for information, SMIs are a reliable source of information (Hall, 2016; Lou and Yuan, 2019).

## **INFLUENCERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA ATTRACTIVENESS AND INTENTION TO PURCHASE**

A component of SMI marketing, the attractiveness of SMIs has been investigated in a variety of aspects. The persuasiveness of the message being delivered by Social Media Influencers (SMIs) on their platforms has a great influence on their followers who follow them on their social network sites (Nunes et al., 2018). A research study which was conducted by Torres et al.;(2019) stated that Influencers who create visually appealing content appear to be more convincing than SMIs who create unappealing content. When the influencer pushes a brand or product to be regarded as more beautiful by the consumer, the brand or product is perceived as more favourable

Furthermore Lou and Yuan (2019) stated that the physical appeal may help consumers identify and recall a brand or product. Attractiveness may be seen as a trait that influences customer trust in an influencer's sponsored material. Beauty influences customers' confidence in SMIs. However, research done on a diverse group of individuals revealed that beauty was a critical factor in the process of imitating the influencer ( Ki and Kim 2019).

## **TRUTHWORTHINESS AND PURCHASE INTENTION**

Past findings showed that consumers tend to place confidence in sponsored posts created by influencers due to the significant informational value associated with such posts (Lou & Yuan, 2019). This element seemed to have a bigger value than other aspects of SMI's content, such as the degree of pleasure that they provide in their content. Additionally, the amount of trustworthiness shown by SMIs significantly impacts the degree of belief held by consumers in their information. As noted by Yuan and Lou (2019) SMIs frequently build a reliable and appealing online character, which in turn influences consumer trust in the posts that they share on their social network sites.

Futhermore, It has been determined that when a person with influence has a huge amount of followers on their channels, consumers tend to regard the influencer as being reliable, which in turn may enhance the influencer's perceived degree of expertise (Hill et al; 2020). Also, Kadekova and Holiencinova (2018) found that consumers were motivated to follow influencers due to the inspiration they felt towards the content produced by these influencers a significant element in the perceived credibility of SMIs.

## **EXPERTISE AND PURCHASE INTENTION**

The term used to describe the level at which an individual on social media is seen as capable of making accurate claims is referred to as expertise (Ismagilova et al., 2020). Expertise also refers to the skills, experience and knowledge which are created by a influencers on social media platforms to effectively market a good (Ladhari et al., 2020). A good which are used frequently by SMI, the likelihood of the SMI exhibiting extensive understanding about it, as well as being regarded as a source of expertise. According to Rahmi et al., (2017). The influencers who are on social media take advantage of this by emphasising and displaying the experience from the products directly, such as using the items in their everyday lives and in real-life situations, and also, by giving evaluations and tips for the things they promote

Futhermore, Nejad et al., (2014) noted that the influencers on social media have the capacity to provide fair and truthful information with the audience enhances their connection and how much they are seen as having competence. Besides, Kumar (2011) believed that it is not necessary for an endorser to be a genuine expert, but rather to be viewed as one by customers. Expertise has a substantial impact on consumers' perception of the product and can generate purchasing intent, whether for personal consumption or gift-giving (Nascimento, 2019).

### SOURCE RESPECT AND PURCHASE INTENTION

According to Shimp (2007) one of the components of the TEARS model is source respect. The abbreviation TEARS stands for (trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect and similarity). Based on Shimp (2010) respect is the degree to which an individual is admired or appreciated as a result of the traits and achievements possessed by the individual who is respected.

Based on Shimp (2007) consumers may have a favourable perception of an influencer due to the social media influencer's degree of skillfulness or their perspectives on lifestyle, political or environmental matters. Previous research has shown a correlation between respect and the desire to make a purchase (Pratiwi, Riniastuti, and Furkan, 2018; Hennayake, 2017) In contrast, several previous research results revealed that respect for the source did not possess a significant effect on the customers' intention to purchase (Taillon et al., 2020).

### 3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

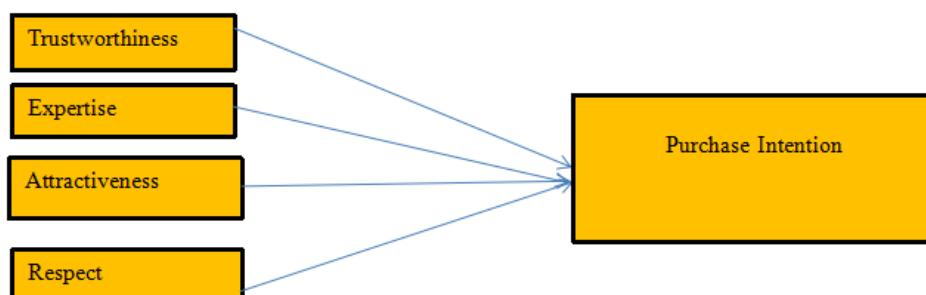


Fig 1: Effect of Celebrity Endorsements on Consumers Purchase Decision in Nigeria (Ifeanyichukwu, 2016)

This is the proposed conceptual model that visualizes the causal connection between young adults' purchase intention attractiveness and credibility of influencers on social media platform (such as respect, source attractiveness, source trustworthiness and knowledge).

As per the findings of Ohanian (1991), trustworthiness can be referred to as the level of confidence that the SMI has in the source's intention to give a precise and reliable statements . Trustworthiness is also known as the level of confidence that is sent to perceivers, which can influence the perceivers' impression of the advertised product or service and, as a result, either enhance or reduce the customers' purchase intention(s). Moreover, Ohanian (1992) defined expertise as the authority, qualification, and competency of the influencer in conveying knowledge. The term expertise is used to describe how audiences perceive an influencer rather than what that influencer is.

The term influencer may include those who are seen as knowledgeable authorities in their respective fields, as well as those who may lack professionalism and only want to sway consumer choices(Ezenwafor,2017) Customer perception of the influencer as an expert is crucial because the audience perception of an influencer's degree of competence affects audience intention.

The social media influencers' source attractiveness may be described as SMI's physical appeal. Posts and pictures that an SMI regularly shares on social media can show how good-looking they are. Also, there is a significant association between the visual appeal of SMIs and their ability to attract the attention of consumers and affect their purchase intention (Lim et al., 2017).

Zainal et al., (2017) stated that source respect is the social assessment of something more important to customers when making decisions about what to buy and how they feel about a brand. Respect from an external source that is seen as different from oneself may seem unimportant to a person's self-concept or could threaten in a sense that it can be regarded as undermining an individual's existing group identity and calls attitudes in the group.

Shah et al., (2012) Intention to purchase is a dependent variable. This is a process of decision-making that involves an examination of the underlying motive and rationale behind a buyer or consumer's selection of a certain brand. (As mentioned in Parengkuan, 2017, p. 11) Intention to purchase indicates the inclination of buyers to acquire a particular item under specific circumstances (Martinez et al., 2007) . Therefore, purchase intention is essentially the desire to buy a certain good or service.

In this current study's proposed model, youths' are inclined to purchase a product when the source (SMIs) present themselves as trustworthy, expert, respectful and attractive. Purchase intention includes the three most significant traits namely repeat purchase after being satisfied with the previous products customers' referral and customer loyalty to the products being advertised by the influencer.

### **Trustworthiness**

The trustworthiness is defined as “the honesty, integrity and believability the endorser possesses. The influencer's trustworthiness is taken into consideration when Instagram users observe them as sound, reliable, dependable, honest or trustworthy influencers (AlFarraj et al.,

2021). When followers find an SMI trustworthy, they regard that SMI as honest, reliable, and sincere in their communication and endorsements (Fowler & Thomas, 2023) Also, according to Fowler & Thomas(2023)Trustworthiness is an essential component of an influencer's credibility, which significantly impacts the followers' decision-making process and their evaluations of endorsed brands. This reliance stems from the belief that the SMI's opinions and recommendations are unbiased, accurate, and in the best interest of their audience (Pradhan, Kuanr, et al., 2023).Moreover, the positive effect on purchase decision making can be derived from a good trust of Instagram influencers (Shteyneker, Isaac & Al-Shibami 2019). According to Zaheer (2018), the element of trust in communication is "the listener's degree of confidence in, and level of acceptance of the speaker and the message". According to Sallam & Abdelfatah (2017), trustworthiness is the believability a social influencer possesses in the public's eyes.

### Expertise

The expertise that influencers demonstrate refers to the experience, knowledge, creativity and skills that can be easily linked to the supported brands (Rahmawati, 2021). An expert can perform exceptionally under a specific field or domain that cannot be attained by everyone (Wiedmann & Mettenheim, 2020). Therefore, an individual has to invest additional time and energy, requires long-term practice, and has to work hard to become an expert (Wiedmann & Mettenheim, 2020). As the perceived expertise of the source increases, so does the audience's acceptance of the message (Samarasinghe, 2018). Previous studies have concluded that individuals consider the knowledge And achievements of a source to be indicators of their perception of the source's expertise (Silvera & Austad, 2004; Wiedmann & Mettenheim, 2020). Moreover, an influencer-generated content that shows his/her expertise will enhance the followers' brand perception (Lou & Yuan, 2019)

### Attractiveness

Attractiveness means the physical attractiveness of the source. It means having striking features or qualities worthy to the public (Martiningsih & Setyawan, 2022). Attractiveness or physical attractiveness is an important factor for influencers because followers can see it all the time (Masuda et al., 2022). Also according to Masuda et al., (2022) One aspect of the influencers is that their appeal lies in their physical attractiveness, which has been recognized as a critical factor in determining their persuasive power . It is defined as "the degree to which a stimulus person's facial features are pleasing to observe" (Wiedmann & Mattenheim, 2020) The visual appeal and attractiveness of colors, layout, and design elements in pictures or videos, as perceived by customers in a social media post, is known as content aesthetic quality (Bazi et al., 2023).Influencer attractiveness refers to the self being seen as something worth looking at. Attractiveness refers to self-perceived as attractive to look at versus the concept of a particular group with physical attractiveness (Risidiana, 2020).

### Respect

Source respect is one of the dimensions in the TEARS (Shimp, 2007). Shimp (2010) explained that respect is the level of admiration or appreciation that an influencer gets based

on the influencer's qualities and accomplishments. Respect is one of the key components of the attribute of influencers, but there are other attractiveness attributes other than just physical attractiveness, such as personality, athletic abilities, and other qualities (Hennayake & Hennayake, 2017). Consumers may respect an influencer based on the influencer's level of professionalism or the influencer's standpoints on politics, environment or lifestyle (Shimp, 2007).

### **Purchase Intention**

Within the field of marketing, purchase intention represents one area that has been frequently studied and this can be largely attributed to its association with the buying behaviour of consumers (Ali et al., 2020). More so, a couple of theoretical frameworks (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) have been used to explain the purchase intention of consumers and the associated factors. These frameworks argued that the readiness to adopt certain behaviours are explained by intention. The intention to make purchase starts when the customer begins to have a glimpse on the product and ultimately results in the purchase of the product (Haque et al., 2015). When it comes to making online purchases, two categories of consumers have been identified in the literature. The first are known as goal-oriented consumers who take their time to search for information about a product before making a purchase. The second are those that purchase products without making any premonition regarding the purchase (Brata et al., 2017). Within the context of this study, online purchase intention is defined as the intention of young people to make online purchase intention.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

A research design is a framework or blueprint for conducting the research project. It specifies the details or procedures necessary to achieve the information needed to structure and solve a research problem (Malhotra, 1999). There are two types of research modes, namely qualitative and quantitative. In this research, qualitative Systematic Literature Review was used. In compiling this article, several strategies were used to conclude the results of the content analysis. The first is to identify a topic or problem that is the source of keyword searches to find data from online sites. Next is filtering or filtering the data sources that have been found by determining criteria such as year of publication. The next stage is data collection according to predetermined criteria and then extracted to analyze the application of the concept to elaborate on the research results found.

### **Data Collection**

This Database contains a wide range of articles from journals that cover a diverse variety of topics including the research study on the effect of social media influencers (SMI) and purchase decisions. To identify helpful scholarly papers on the impact of social media influencers and purchase decisions, a keyword search was used by applying the following terms: ("Media influencers or Impact of social media influencers or digital influencers in

Nigeria") AND ("Social media influencers attributes OR " influencers and Youth Purchase decision) .This may be retrieved via internet sources via Web of Science, Google Scholar and also in Scopus, which are related to the effect of social media influencers(SMI) and their attributes and intention to purchase.

## Data Analysis

Systematic literature review was used in this research study. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is “a systematic, explicit, comprehensive, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners”(Fink, 2007, p. 17).

Hence, the study used descriptive research to gain fruitful research on the relationship between social media Influencers and purchase intention and the articles and journals published in the English language were selected by the author.

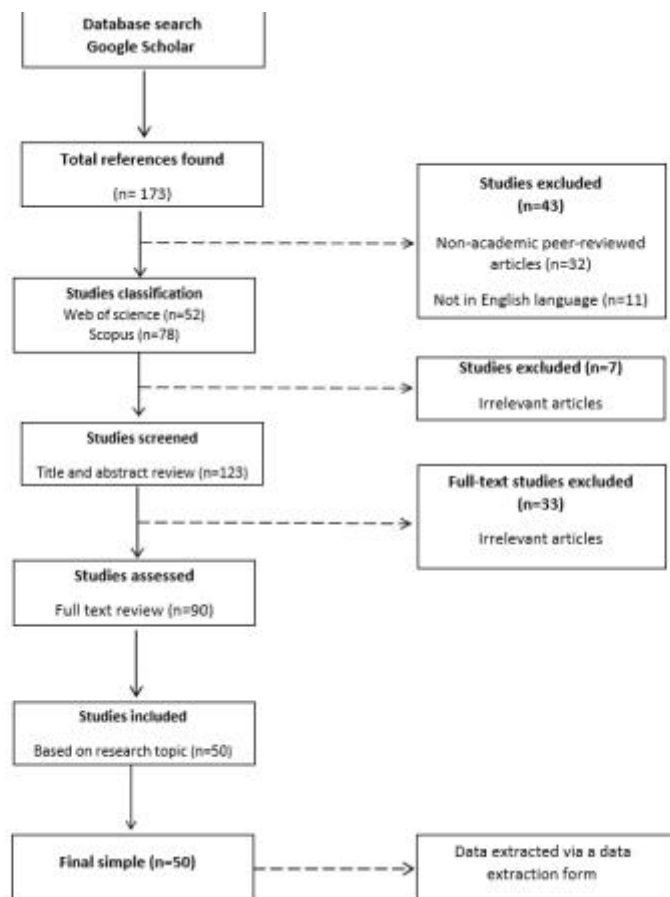


Figure 2: Research Strategy



## **DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

### **Discussion**

The number of persons who use social media platforms and the total number of SMIs are both growing at a rapid rate. Instagram has become a popular platform for small and medium enterprises (SMIs) to utilize as a promotional tool or to offer their followers reviews of their products. Due to the growing popularity of social media marketing, consumers are concerned about the legitimacy of these Instagram Influencers since more people are using social media as a forum for reviews of products. The purpose of this research is to review if the perceived attractiveness and credibility of SMIs might affect the buying intentions of Nigerian youths. What the researchers found is that youths are getting more concerned and aware of the importance of doing research before purchasing. strongly influenced their likelihood of making online purchase intention especially when they have a lower perception of risk. This suggests online marketers and service providers must prioritise building trust with their customers thereby resulting in lower perception of risk and higher chances of making online purchase intention.

The study used the Source Attractiveness Model (1985) to examine the potential influence of the perceived attractiveness of Instagram Influencers on the purchase intention of young individuals. It was anticipated that a consumer would be more inclined to buy a brand if they trusted the brand's influencer.

### **Findings**

Past studies showed that the expertise possessed by SMI, which includes the influencer's experience, ability, knowledge, and qualifications, has the potential to influence customers' purchasing intentions. However, the findings differed from those of previous investigations which were conducted by (Chekima, Chekima, & Adis, 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2018). The findings are consistent with previous research that showed a weak association between source expertise and purchase intention (Balabanis & Chatzopoulou, 2019; Schouten, Janssen, & Verspaget, 2020).

Similarly, Bhatt, et al., (2013) also revealed that the perceived expertise of social media influencers is less important than perceived trustworthiness, whereas AlFarraj, et al., (2021) found a non-significant relationship between the perceived expertise of social media influencers on the purchase intention of follower. Therefore, to further contribute to the literature the present study intends to investigate the impact of perceived expertise of social media influencers on the purchase intention and followers' attitude towards the endorsed brand.

In their study, Schouten, Janssen, and Verspaget (2020) discovered that SMIs were generally seen as trustworthy by their audience. However, the researchers did not observe any significant influence on the perceived competence of SMIs. Weidmann and Mettenheim (2019) came to a similar conclusion, stating that SMI's knowledge did not significantly influence purchase intent.

Furthermore, source attractiveness was a significant predictor of purchasing intention. The results are consistent with those from Chekima et al. (2020), AlFarraj et al. (2021) and Wiedmann and Mettenheim (2019). This suggests that buyers' intentions to purchase are influenced by the SMI's physical appeal, which includes qualities like beauty, handsomeness, sexiness, and elegance. Also, the results state that there is a positive and significant impact of social media influencers' attractiveness on the purchase intentions of the customers. This outcome is also aligned with several previous researches, for example, the study presented by Hajli and Shirazi in which it is stated that there is a strong association between social media influencers' credibility (attractiveness) and the purchase intentions of the customers (Hajli and Shirazi, 2021). Moreover, another research study which was presented by Lou and Yuan in 2019 in which the positive and significant impact of the attractiveness of social media influencers has been assessed and it is stated by the authors that influencers with attractiveness are more likely to affect the purchasing behavior of the customers (Lou and Yuan, 2019).

Aside from that, respect for SMI was not a major predictor of the consumers' propensity to make a purchase.(Wei, Singh, & Kularajasingam,2021) The findings contradicted the findings of multiple previous research, which had shown a positive and substantial association between SMI's respect and customers' intention to purchase (Hennayake, 2017; Pratiwi et al., 2018). According to Taillon et al. (2019), the respect that customers have for SMIs does not have a significant effect on consumers' purchase intention. This may be explained by the fact that female customers put a lesser emphasis on SMI's respect than male consumers do.

## **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded that (SMIs) are a new sort of independent third-party endorsers that change audience attitudes via the use of blogs, tweets, and other forms of social media (Freberg et al. (2011, p.g 90). This particular topic is still limited in the African context, especially in Nigeria. Thus, this paper aims to bridge this gap so that SMIs will have an impact on Nigerian youths' purchase intention. A more in-depth and complete assessment of the literature is required in order to obtain a better knowledge on this conceptual framework. The study's researcher expects that this review publication will add to the body of knowledge on the subject and also will provide a guideline for futher researchers and policy making in distributing information on social media influencers. In this paper, a conceptual framework is proposed through the source credibility and source attractiveness theory and also the introduction of source respect to know if SMIs impacted Nigerian youths' purchase intention. An exploratory study is necessary to figure out whether there is a connection between SMIs' attributes and purchase intention.

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