

MEDIA EXPOSURE BEHAVIOR TOWARD INFLUENCERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA OF GENERATION Z

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ABSTRACT

Abstract—The purpose of this research was to study the media exposure behavior toward influencers on social media of generation Z. The sample group was 385 people using purposive sampling and convenience sampling from people in popular social networking groups including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Line and YouTube. The statistics used in the data analysis were frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, including inferential statistics was multiple regression analysis. The results revealed that the respondents emphasized on the aspect of the Content had the most average, followed by the aspect of Context, Channels, Clarity, Capability, Continuity and Consistency, and Credibility, were at a high level in all aspects. In addition, the results revealed that personal data, including gender, age, status, educational level, and occupation have different exposure of influencers in social media of generation Z.

Keywords— Generation Z, Influencers, Media exposure behavior

INTRODUCTION

In the past 10 years, many changes have occurred due to the advancement of technology and communication. In particular, online shopping through online channels that are very popular is trading via social media which helps buyers and sellers save time. It is convenient and has a variety of products that are easy to find. The severe COVID-19 situation in 2020 has allowed everyone to spend time with themselves and technology. People, whether children, adolescents, adults of working age and retired seniors, all have smartphones that are widely used and can access the Internet and consume online media very easily. Social media is therefore important and plays another role in online shopping. At present, the online store business is growing rapidly. More and more people are turning to online shopping because it is comfortable and there are a variety of products to choose from. You can press to order and transfer money and wait for products that are ready to be delivered quickly within a few days. It also comes with advantages that provide convenience to life, helping to meet the needs of consumers, being able to find the products they want conveniently, quickly and easily.

The growth of social media has played an important role to change the behavior of consumers. Access to public relations media and after-sales service has forced most businesses to rely on new markets that can reach consumers more easily and increase the credibility of the product brand. One of the most widely used forms of marketing today is “Social Media Influencers” or marketing based on influencers in online social media. Companies will do their best to maintain a strong presence on social media platforms. Otherwise, the target audience can be easily changed (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). A 2021 PwC survey reveals that today's consumers are increasingly changing their entertainment behavior patterns through digital streaming. As consumers choose social media as their main channel of news and begin to abandon traditional media addictions. A survey of 21,000 online platform technology consumers from 27 countries around the world found that 38% of global consumers surveyed consume media and entertainment through streaming at least once a day and up to more than 50% among consumers born in the late 1990s and from 2000 onwards are the new generation of children or Gen Z (PwC Thailand, 2021).

In addition, today's marketing communications are highly competitive. The research results show that the Generation Z population can search for information conveniently and quickly. This group of consumers will not believe in traditional marketing or advertising methods. More than half of the Generation Z population prefers to buy goods and services through online channels. More than 4 in 5 of the Generation Z population use social media regularly, like to find information and compare products on the Internet, and prefer to buy products through electronic commerce. Due to the characteristics of the Generation Z population who grew up with technology, causing consumers to search for information about products and services that are required by themselves through

the Internet. Generation Z population is in an age where there are many communication channels and prefer to communicate with short messages or pictures that look beautiful and easy to understand (Krungsri Guru, 2019).

Influencer is a group of people who influence the thoughts and decisions of target customers and are famous, with knowledge and expertise. Influencers publish stories on social media to build followers and engagement. It is communication through the concept of third parties, which is word of mouth marketing. The power of third-party sound affects marketing communications both to create awareness. generate interest build confidence and attitudes lead to the purchase of products in the end. It makes influencer marketing a marketing strategy that cannot be overlooked. Because it opens up the opportunity to reach new customers immediately, which is the key to building a new customer base. In this era of intense and all-round competition, this type of marketing strategy should not be overlooked in each business. Because it will close business opportunities immediately and disadvantage competitors (Pongsawee Supanonth, 2022).

Therefore, the researcher would like to conduct a survey to prove the assumption. The purpose of this research was to study the media exposure behavior toward influencers on social media of generation Z. The results obtained from the research can be used It can be used to improve marketing and to ensure that it is appropriate to use social media influencers to create marketing advertisements for the organization in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Concepts and theories about media exposure behavior, Becker (1992) can be classified by media exposure behavior as follows. *Information Seeking* means that consumers will seek information to want to be similar to other consumers may want to be similar just one subject or general matter. *Information Receptivity* means that consumers are open to information to know information they are interested in. If the information presented is relevant to them, they will pay special attention or give special importance or involved in self. *Experience Receptivity* means that consumers are open to information in order to bring to take advantage of any method or to relax the mood.

In this regard, the audience will have different processes of choosing to receive information according to their experiences, their attitudes, their needs, their beliefs, their feelings. Becker (1992) classified media exposure behavioral processes as follows: 1) *Selective Exposure or selective attention* refers to the tendency that the audience will choose to receive information from any one source. Selection of exposure to news has related factors such as the previous attitude of the audience, society, mind, economics, level of education, age, occupation, beliefs, religion, experience, etc. 2) *Selective Perception and Selective Interpretation* refers that the audience is exposed to information from any source. Each audience may interpret the meaning differently by choosing to perceive and choose to interpret the news received based on understanding, experience, attitude, needs, beliefs and motivations of each person, etc., which may cause some messages to be cut off or distorted according to the satisfaction of the recipients as well. Therefore, the meaning of the news may not be at the hit. not only letters or pictures, but also up to the recipients to choose to recognize. 3) *Selective Retention Process* refers that the audience often chooses to remember only the news that matches their interests, needs, contains content that is useful to them and at the same time tends to forget about news that do not match their own interests. Even if the recipient receives the complete message, if the recipient is not interested in memorizing the message, the communication may not be successful (Hongchoojai, 2020).

Factors influencing the choice of a person's exposure to news, Hunt & Ruben (1993) discussed the factors influencing the choice of a person's exposure to news as follows: 1) *Needs* is an important factor in the selection process of human beings in order to get the desired information to show taste for social acceptance and for satisfaction, etc. 2) *Attitudes and Values* refers to the preference and predisposition to various subjects. Attitudes and values have a strong influence on the choice of mass media, news selection, interpretation and memorization. 3) *Goal* means that every human being has a goal in life both in career, association, leisure, goals of various activities. 4) *Capability* refers to the ability to relate to any subject, including the ability to influence language, to choose, to receive news, interpretation and keeping the content of that news. 5) *Utility* refers to paying attention and making effort to understand and remember information that we can use. 6) *Communication style* refers to the style of communication of a person. which affects the recipient, such as liking or disliking different types of media in communication. 7) *Context* refers to the place, person and time in a communication situation which directly

influences selection of media and news, choosing to interpret and choosing to remember the news. 8) *Experience and Habit* refers to the status of each receiver as a result of the experience and habits of receiving information.

An influencer is a person who specializes in a particular subject, is famous, and has a channel to follow on social networks. and influence to persuade followers which plays a huge role in online social networking today. There are many groups of influential people such as singers, actors, YouTubers, beauty bloggers, etc. Therefore, online marketing by using influential people to promote or review products. It will help consumers to recognize the product or service and increase the opportunity to sell more products or services. Influential people can easily reach their target audience because they already have followers and most of them are consumers with the same interests (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019). The use of influential people to influence the interest of followers to the product or service until participation results in the power of word of mouth or different opinions (Udomsilp, 2014). Therefore, choosing an influential person whose interests match the business will make the review of the product or service more reliable (Chatzigeorgiou, 2017). However, marketers should not impose promotional guidelines or reviews that are not the identity of influencers. Because it will not look natural, consumers will not trust. But marketers should work with influential people to create marketing materials that are in the same direction and meet the marketing objectives (Panyatranon, 2017).

The main principle about the work of Influencers is to use the art of communication together with the concepts and attitudes of word-of-mouth marketing that will be conveyed through the consumers' own Social Media. The wider the communication, the better the results will be. Some influencers have a big effect on consumer attitudes with follower imitations. The decision of consumers to use products according to the person we like, such as dressing, bags, clothes, brand-name shoes, using restaurants, coffee shops, etc. However, personal factors and liking the personality or attributes of the social media influencer in terms of Attractiveness factor, Expertise factor, and Trustworthy factor (Kahle & Homer, 1985). These characteristics affect the customer's attitude in purchasing in terms of product quality, price, method or trading channel, how convenient and fast it is and another important thing is the promotion that brings presenting customers compared to competitors. It has an attractive effect and influences the purchase decision.

METHODS

The population used in this research is Generation Z people living in Bangkok who are exposed to news through social media platforms both male and female. Determining the sample size for quantitative research by using a questionnaire and online surveys. The sample size was determined by using the formula for estimating the proportion of the population in cases where the population is unknown, the 95 percent confidence level and the 5% error level were determined. The sample group was 385 people. The sampling method uses Purposive Sampling and Convenience Sampling from people in popular social networking groups such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Line and YouTube.

The research tool was a questionnaire which the researcher prepares to study personal information, social media influencer communications and social media exposure behavior. The questionnaire was categorized on a 5-point Likert's scale: strongly agree, agree, moderately agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Data collection was done using a questionnaire that was tested for its validity and validity. Statistics used to analyze data contains descriptive statistics to describe demographic characteristics: frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation as well as inferential statistical analysis to test the research hypothesis using Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS

Descriptive results

From the study, it was found that most of the demographic factors of the respondents were female and most of them were between 21 and 25 years of age. They had the highest level of education was bachelor's degree or equivalent and most of them were still students.

The opinions of factors affecting news exposure choices on social media are divided into the factors of Needs, Attitudes and Values, Goal, Capability, Utility, Communication style, Context, and Experience and Habit. The research results show that the level of opinions on the factors affecting the exposure through social media of the

sample group overall was at a high level. They gave the highest scores in terms of Attitudes and Values, followed by Context, Experience and Habit, Utilization, Communication Styles, respectively. As well as the level of opinions on the factors of Needs, Goals, and Capability factors were at the medium level of opinions.

Hypothesis testing results

The research hypothesis was personal data, including gender, age, status, educational level, occupation, and average monthly income have different exposure of influencers in social network. The results revealed that personal data, including gender, age, status, educational level, and occupation have different exposure of influencers in social media of generation Z.

The researcher used statistical methods to test the research hypothesis by presenting the results of the analysis to find the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable with statistical significance at the 0.01 level. The results revealed that the factors of Needs, Goals, Communication Style, Context, and Experience and Habits were moderate correlation in the same direction with news exposure behavior on social media with statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). While the factors of utilization, Capability, and Attitudes and Values were correlation with news exposure behavior on social media with a higher level of statistical significance at the 0.01 level ($p > 0.01$), which may mean no correlation or have little relationship therefore does not support the research hypothesis.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Conclusion and discussion

From the results of the opinion level of factors affecting the exposure on social media, it was found that the factor most affecting the selection of news exposure on social media was attitude and value factors. This is in line with the concept of Hunt & Ruben (1993) that attitudes are preference and predisposition towards various matters. Values, on the other hand, are fundamental principles that we hold as our feelings about whether we should or should not do which has a relationship with the environment and those around you. Attitudes and values have a strong influence on selective media, selective interpretation and selective memory. In addition, it is consistent with Kelman (1967) that a person's message selection describes his or her communication behavior. Each person will have a different news selection process. News exposure tends to pick news from a particular source, often based on their opinions and interests to support existing attitudes and avoiding things that are inconsistent with pre-existing cognitions or attitudes in order not to cause a state of mind that is cognitive dissonance. Followed by the context aspect, which Hunt & Ruben (1993) defined the meaning as the place, person and time in the communication situation. These influence the choice of the audience. The presence of other people directly influenced selective media and news, selective interpretation, and selective retention. Followed by the factor of experience and habit, which Hunt & Ruben (1993) stated that Humans tend to be receptive to messages that require less effort, such as messages that are close to them, can receive easily and have useful substances for themselves. In addition, in choosing that there may be other reasons such as different experiences, the ability to assess the usefulness of news as well as the social and psychological conditions of the individual Limsakul, 2019, Sornprom, 2015).

The results revealed that personal data, including gender, age, status, educational level, occupation, and average monthly income have different exposure of influencers in social network. The results found that the respondents which were different gender, age, status, educational level, occupation, and average monthly income, had different exposure of influencers in social network. This is in the line with Sereerat (2007) stated that demographic characteristics include gender, age, family size, status, education, income and occupation, which are the criteria that marketers use to segment the market. This is because differences in demographics in each factor can result in different sub-groups' preferences for shopping and service. This may be because communication on social network require expertise or knowledge to find products. It is also a product that is sold through an application and is also a fashion product. This is not suitable for all groups of customers with different demographic factors. Moreover, this is consistent with Kotler (2016) concept of consumer behavior that know how to promote marketing in accordance with the purchase opportunity of consumers. This was consistent with the research of Thongchujai (2020) on communication of influencers on social networks and social media exposure behaviors related to buying decisions on smartphones, it was found that the personal data of consumers, namely gender, average monthly income education level, occupation, status, frequency of social media use per

day, length of use of social media each time, and types of social media using the most, make different smartphone purchase decisions. This may be because communication presented by social influencers will be able to present complete details, both content and links to various contexts according to the needs of target customers. They able to communicate information that is important clearly using words that are easily understood and convey the same understanding, and with warnings for the recipient to absorb. Including the study of Watcharachaikul (2018) found that the perception of demand arises from the fact that consumers perceive the difference between things and what you have currently, which encourages an incentive to make a purchase decision which offer different information to emotionally motivated marketing strategies. Rational motivated advertising must provide complete details about the product or service, while emotionally motivated marketing strategies emphasize consumers' perceptions of the product or service. Moreover, the study of Limsakul (2019) revealed that factors of exposure, Need, Goal, Capability, Communication style, Context, Experience and habit there is a relation affecting to behavior of choosing to entertainment news exposure on Twitter of the new generation with statistical significance of 0.00.

Recommendations and future work

Recommendations obtained for applying the research results were that the influencers in online social networks should pay attention to Generation Z who are female, single, bachelor's degree, average income from 20,001 baht or more, and is a private company employee because this group of consumers are more exposed to news from influential people in online social networks than other groups. In addition, social media influencers should verify the accuracy of their information and use information from reliable sources by verifying it from multiple sources before presenting that information to consumers to build credibility, maintain a positive image of the influencer and ensure consumers receive accurate information. As well as influencers in social networks should use language that is easy to understand, not using too many technical terms that might be offensive and not understand the meaning that influencers can communicate, and clear words should be used both in writing and speaking to prevent consumers from misunderstanding information and the content should be conveyed.

For further research should be studied in conjunction with other relevant or expected factors influencing purchasing decisions in order to gain more insights covering all dimensions. In addition, it should study in other population groups or other areas to get wider and more comprehensive information and compare the differences of each area.

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