

Determinants of Engagement Intentions and the Mediating Role of Perceived Fit with Personal Interests in Peachy Liv's Instagram Audience



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Introduction Background of Study The rapid rise of social media and the popularity of Instagram has created such conditions that users' creations, distribution, and consumption of content are virtually omnipresent (Ho & Ito, 2019), leading to new communication patterns (Melumad et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2018). The natural interaction among peers on social media has proven to result in peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. Interestingly, studies suggest that consumers tend to have blind faith in materials shared on social media, influencing their engagement intentions and decision making processes (Shareef et al., 2020). Audiences' engagement intentions refer to the strength of a person's willingness to follow the advice being given to them, recommend it to others, and maintain interaction in the future (Casaló et al., 2020). In a study commissioned by Instagram, 66% of Indonesian users agreed that they would consider purchasing a product or service seen on Instagram, 78% of them reported having purchased those products and services, and 90% of them reported having used Instagram to communicate with a business (IPSOS, 2018). Figure 1. Engagement Behaviors of Indonesian Instagram Users The global connectivity that has become possible due to the emergence of social media has critically revolutionized consumers' position in conventional power hierarchies (Evans, 2019) and entirely redefined the nature of their relationship with brands (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). In these digital and online settings, many are free to express their views and dissatisfaction with the performance of goods and services in the market and have the ability to influence the decision process of the masses. As a result, people are no longer mere receivers of promotional information. Instead, they act as both consumer and promoter for ideas and brands through social media (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Due to the scalability and speed of diffusion of the internet, some contributors manage to attract mass audiences, create their fandoms, and become a source of advice for their fans; thus gaining the term influencers. A myriad of surveys have demonstrated the powerful impact of influencers on social media in guiding purchase decisions among internet users. A recent survey found that up to 81% of consumers today have either purchased, researched or considered purchasing a product or service after seeing influencers' recommendations, with 69% of them trusting recommendations from influencers more than brands (Digital Marketing Institute, 2024; Matter Communications, 2023). Another survey found the younger generation of consumers state that influencer posts are the number one way to get them to try a new product (IZEA Insights, 2024). Figure 2. Consumer's Trust in Influencers 1 Through the lens of influencer marketing, advertisers place high attention to these influencers (Ki et al., 2020). It has evolved into what literature now calls Influencer Marketing, where advertisers reach out to influencers on social media in order to promote their ideas, organizations, or brands (De Veirman et al., 2017; Hudders et al., 2021). In recent years, this strategy has grown to become popular practice, thus analysts have predicted that the size of the influencer market will hit \$24 billion by the end of 2024 (Dencheva, 2023; Digital Marketing Institute, 2024). The study of what makes certain people more influential than others has led to the expanding body of literature on opinion leadership. The concept of "opinion leaders" was first introduced by Katz and Lazarsfeld

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Abstract

In the era of digital communications, social media influencers are a major force in determining audiences' behavior. 81% of consumers had either purchased, researched, or considered buying a product or service after seeing recommendations from influencers. As such, it is crucial to research the variables influencing audience engagement intentions. This quantitative study explores the impact of influencer opinion leadership and perceived quality of information on audience engagement intentions on Instagram, mediated by perceived fit with personal interests. Data were gathered via an online research scale with a convenience sample of 500 respondents drawn from Peachy Liv's Instagram audience. For analysis, the path analysis technique was used in SPSS Statistics. The findings reveal both opinion leadership and information quality significantly influences engagement intentions. Moreover, the impacts of opinion leadership and perceived quality of information on engagement intentions are stronger when it is mediated by the perceived fit with personal interests. This emphasizes how crucial it is to match content to audience interests in order to increase engagement. These observations add to the body of knowledge in digital communications, specifically within the realm of influencer marketing, and offer practical implications for marketers and influencers aiming to maximize audience engagement.

Keywords: opinion leadership, information quality, fit with personal interests, engagement intentions, influencer marketing, Instagram