

Chapter 4

Islam, Opinion Leaders, and Social Media Influencer

Yossie Rossanty

Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia

Pipit Buana Sari

Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia

Mohammad Harith Amlus

Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia

Thorique Akbar Maulana Nasution

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Social media plays an important role in disseminating information and news to the audience. Through its influencer, the information could be shared faster in a wider spectrum. Meanwhile, the opinion leaders greatly influence other people's decision making, attitudes, behaviors, and are perceived to be models for others. However, in Islam, the use of social media is regulated and has to comply with the principles and values stated in the hadith of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as well as the verses in the Al-Qur'an. Every Muslim has the responsibility to share valid and credible information to everyone regardless of their religion. The social media platforms can be used by Muslims to interact and understand the content more easily. Islam emphasizes the ethics and moral aspects in any interaction or communications. In fact, Islam has a da'wah system where the communication and understanding of the content or messages must be clearly identified and discussed before spreading to others.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Opinion leaders are people with a variety of individual ties that affect the views of others (Uzunolu & Kip, 2014). Katz and Lazarsfeld's (1955) two-step flow theory described them as the persons who decode mass-media knowledge and move it on to others (Uzunolu & Kip, 2014). Moreover, according to this theory, the opinion leaders had more influence on people's attitudes than mass media (Uzunolu & Kip, 2014). Opinion leaders are involved in and stay current in the area in which they have influence, and their colleagues, family, and associates regard them as specialists in their field (Huttula, 2020).

In recent years, social media have acquired considerable – especially from a marketing perspective in the past decade. With the support of online applications built on the technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allow user-generated content to share (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), social media has become an important and unseparated element in the human lives. Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and others are open to be used for posting purposes. They have been critical promotional platforms over the last decade (Pick, 2020).

Meanwhile, the social media should be used for the good things, disseminating valid information and informing credible news. Through its influencer, some advertisements could be reached faster and efficient, however, there are some rules that must be obeyed by the social media influencer to ensure that all processes are comply with the formal regulations, ethics and the religion teachings. Particularly in Islam, has anticipated and emphasized the use of social media which being highlighted in the hadith of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and verses in the Al-Qur'an. This chapter will elaborate the role of social media influence in general and according to the teaching of Islam, the opinion leaders and the Islamic da'wah system.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Media Influencer

Social media influencers are the individuals that being trusted and having strong connections with their fans through its high credibility (Jin and Ryu, 2019; Hearn and Schoenhoff, 2016; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Shan et al., 2020; Xu & Pratt, 2018) and substantially used in social media marketing campaigns (De Veirman et al., 2016; Dost et al., 2019; Abidin, 2016a; Taillon et al., 2020; Bakker, 2018). The influencers of social media are described as non-traditional celebrities renowned for their social media presence (Khamis et al., 2016). They influence certain signs and symbols (McCracken, 1986) that give an impact consumers' perception (Nash,

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