

# Chapter 1

## Social Media Influencers: A Dynamic Impact for Halal Brands? A Review and Future Research Agenda

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### ABSTRACT

*In the realm of marketing, the rise of influencer marketing and its integration with social media platforms have brought about a significant change in communication strategies. This convergence has led to a transformative shift in the marketing field. This study aims to investigate the diverse roles of social media influencers in promoting Halal brands. Specifically, it focuses on how influencers shape consumer attitudes and perceptions. The research also examines the complex interactions among influencers, opinion leaders, and endorsers in modern marketing. These insights are valuable for marketers, advertisers, and scholars. By offering a comprehensive understanding, this study enriches our knowledge of the evolving marketing landscape, the impact of social media on consumer behavior, and the intricate aspects of brand perceptions. This contributes to existing knowledge and provides a basis for future research.*

### INTRODUCTION

Research on social media influencers is a pertinent and captivating area of study for both academicians and practitioners alike. The ascendancy of influencer marketing coupled with the utilization of social

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media platforms for advertising and brand endorsement has undeniably revolutionized the marketing landscape (Veirman et al., 2017). Discerning the efficacy of influencer marketing strategies and the variables that mold consumer perceptions and attitudes towards both influencers and brands stands as an imperative for marketers and businesses.

One sphere of investigation gravitates toward the impact of follower count on influencer effectiveness. Indeed, studies have unveiled that influencers boasting a substantial following are perceived as more popular and likable, a dynamic that can exert a positive influence on brand perceptions (Abidin, 2016). Nonetheless, the relationship between follower count and influencer effectiveness isn't always linear, necessitating further exploration to unravel the scenarios in which follower count emerges as a significant factor in influencer marketing (Abidin, 2016).

Another captivating arena of inquiry pertains to the role of product divergence in influencer marketing. Collaborating with influencers commanding vast followings might not universally be the optimal choice for promoting divergent products, as it could potentially dilute the perceived uniqueness of the brand and impact brand attitudes (Veirman et al., 2017). Discerning the judicious selection of influencers tailored to specific product categories, along with gauging the resonance of influencer-product alignment, becomes indispensable for effective influencer marketing strategies (Veirman et al., 2017).

The realm of research on social media influencers also delves into the realm of engagement between influencers and their followers. These studies unveil insights into the nature of influencer-follower dynamics and the variables propelling engagement (Zhang, 2022). Gaining a nuanced understanding of engagement mechanisms and the factors that catalyze robust influencer-follower relationships can elucidate influencer marketing strategies and aid brands in fostering meaningful connections with their target audience (Zhang, 2022).

This avenue of research in influencer marketing casts its interdisciplinary net widely, intersecting realms ranging from computer science, psychology, and business to medicine (Yildiz, 2022; Rizqi & Riorini, 2022; Abidin, 2016; Zhang, 2022; Zhang & Earp, 2020; Khan et al., 2022). Investigations have encompassed diverse aspects, from the profiles of social media users to the impact of influencers on consumer behavior and the efficacy of influencer marketing strategies (Yildiz, 2022; Rizqi & Riorini, 2022). Furthermore, studies have delved into impression management tactics adopted by influencers, the correlation between social media posts and academic citations, and the influence of influencers on the realm of digital marketing (Abidin, 2016; Zhang, 2022; Zhang & Earp, 2020; Khan et al., 2022). This interdisciplinary approach converges to furnish a holistic grasp of the influence and repercussions of social media influencers across diverse contexts (Yildiz, 2022; Rizqi & Riorini, 2022).

Similarly, delving into research on the impact of social media influencers on Halal brands emerges as a compelling necessity for myriad reasons. First and foremost, social media influencers have ascended as formidable agents of influence, meticulously shaping consumer attitudes, perceptions, and purchase tendencies (Handriana et al., 2020). Navigating the intricacies of how social media influencers can adeptly champion Halal brands and mold consumer behaviors emerges as an essential contemplation for marketers and enterprises deeply entrenched in the Halal market.

Secondly, the Halal market is undergoing a rapid expansion, encompassing not only Muslim-majority countries but also non-Muslim nations with substantial Muslim populations (Ali et al., 2018). Research centered on social media influencers holds the potential to empower businesses to tap into this burgeoning market. By discerning the preferences, needs, and aspirations of Muslim consumers, and comprehending how social media influencers can serve as conduits for promoting Halal brands, enterprises can strategically position themselves for success.

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