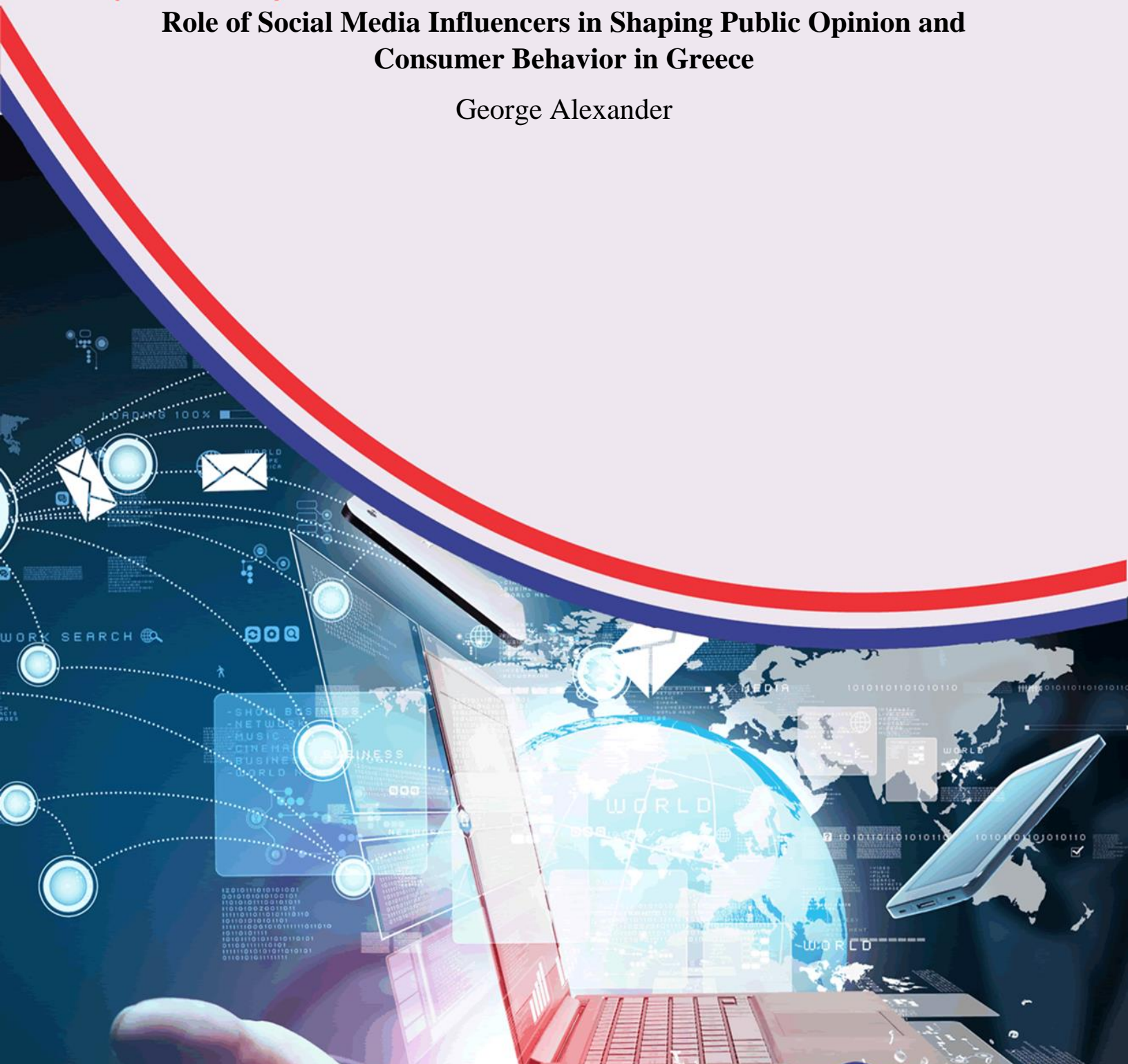


International Journal of Communication and Public Relations (IJCPR)

**Role of Social Media Influencers in Shaping Public Opinion and
Consumer Behavior in Greece**

George Alexander



**Role of Social Media Influencers in Shaping
Public Opinion and Consumer Behavior in Greece**



George Alexander

Article History

Received 5th January 2024

Received in Revised Form 10th January 2024

Accepted 17th January 2024

How to Cite

Alexander , G. (2024). Role of Social Media Influencers in Shaping Public Opinion and Consumer Behavior in Greece. *International Journal of Communication and Public Relation*, 9(1), 13 – 26. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijcpr.2269>

Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to role of social media influencers in shaping public opinion and consumer behavior in Greece

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: In Greece, social media influencers play a significant role in shaping public opinion and consumer behavior. They have the power to sway public perception, with their content often influencing political attitudes, lifestyle choices, and purchasing decisions. Greek social media influencers are particularly effective in the beauty, fashion, and travel sectors, where they can impact consumer choices and trends.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Social influence theory, two-step flow theory & selective exposure theory may be used to anchor future studies on role of social media influencers in shaping public opinion and consumer behavior in Greece. Brands and organizations in Greece should collaborate with local influencers who resonate with the target audience. Develop and implement a regulatory framework for influencer marketing in Greece. This framework should address issues such as transparency, disclosure, and truthfulness in influencer content.

Keywords: *Social Media, Influencers Shaping, Public Opinion, Consumer Behavior*

©2024 by the Authors. This Article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

INTRODUCTION

Public opinion and consumer behavior in developed economies like the USA, Japan, and the UK have been influenced by various factors in recent years. One significant trend is the growing concern for environmental sustainability. According to a study published in the Journal of Consumer Research (Smith 2018) consumer attitudes in these economies have shifted towards more environmentally friendly products and practices. For example, in the USA, the sales of electric vehicles (EVs) have been on the rise, with a 49% increase in EV sales from 2020 to 2021 (Statista, 2022). This indicates a shift in consumer behavior towards more eco-conscious choices in the automotive sector.

Another notable trend is the impact of technology and e-commerce on consumer behavior. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of online shopping, leading to changes in consumer preferences. In the UK, online retail sales reached 28.1% of total retail sales in 2020, up from 19.2% in 2019 (Office for National Statistics, 2021). This shift highlights the evolving consumer behavior in favor of digital shopping channels. These trends underscore the importance for businesses in developed economies to adapt to changing consumer sentiments and embrace sustainable and digital strategies.

Turning to developing economies, public opinion and consumer behavior are characterized by different dynamics. For example, in Brazil, a study published by (Silva, 2019) found that consumers are becoming more brand-conscious and are willing to pay premium prices for well-known global brands. This reflects the aspiration for higher-quality products among consumers in emerging markets. Additionally, in India, there is a growing interest in affordable healthcare solutions, with a rise in demand for telemedicine services and health insurance policies (Financial Express, 2021). These examples illustrate the unique consumer preferences and needs in developing economies, driven by factors such as economic growth and changing demographics.

In developing economies like Greece, consumer behavior and public opinion are influenced by a unique set of challenges and opportunities. One notable trend in Greece, which is also observed in other Southern European countries, is the impact of the economic crisis. According to a study published by (Fotiadis, 2020), the economic crisis had a profound effect on consumer behavior in Greece. Consumers became more price-sensitive and focused on value for money, leading to a shift towards more frugal and conservative spending habits. For example, during the crisis, there was a significant increase in the consumption of private label or store brand products, which are typically more affordable (Nikolaidis & Boutsouki, 2019).

Another aspect of consumer behavior in Greece is the increasing interest in sustainable and locally sourced products. As consumers in Greece become more conscious of the environmental and social impact of their choices, there has been a growing demand for products that are ethically produced and support local communities. For instance, there has been a surge in the popularity of Greek organic products, such as olive oil and honey, both domestically and in international markets

(Papadopoulos & Papadopoulos, 2017). This reflects a trend where consumers in developing economies are increasingly valuing sustainability and authenticity in their purchasing decisions.

In Brazil, as mentioned earlier, consumers are increasingly brand-conscious (Silva, 2019). This trend extends to various product categories, such as electronics and fashion. For example, despite economic challenges, Brazilian consumers are willing to invest in premium smartphones and luxury fashion items from well-known global brands. This behavior reflects the aspiration for higher-quality and status-symbol products among Brazilian consumers, driven by a growing middle class and increasing disposable income.

In India, beyond the healthcare sector, there is a notable shift towards digital payments and e-commerce. According to a report by McKinsey & Company (2020), the digital payment ecosystem in India has experienced tremendous growth, with a significant increase in the number of digital wallet users and transactions. The ease of conducting online transactions and the availability of digital payment options have led to a shift in consumer behavior towards cashless payments, impacting various industries like retail, fintech, and e-commerce.

In Sub-Saharan economies like Kenya, mobile banking and financial inclusion are major drivers of consumer behavior. A study by (Mamboleo, 2018) highlighted the success of mobile banking services like M-Pesa, which has transformed the way consumers access financial services, make payments, and even manage savings. This mobile banking revolution has not only improved financial inclusion but has also influenced consumer behavior by making financial transactions more convenient and accessible.

In China, a significant trend in consumer behavior is the rapid adoption of e-commerce and digital payment methods. According to a study published in the International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management (Li, 2020), China has one of the largest e-commerce markets globally, with consumers increasingly relying on platforms like Alibaba's Taobao and JD.com for their shopping needs. Mobile payment services like Alipay and WeChat Pay have also become ubiquitous, influencing how consumers make purchases, both online and offline.

In Sub-Saharan economies, consumer behavior and public opinion are shaped by a range of factors, including economic development, cultural influences, and political stability. For instance, in Nigeria, a study published by (Oyewole, 2017) suggested that consumers are increasingly seeking convenience and value for money in their purchasing decisions. This is reflected in the growth of mobile money services and the popularity of informal markets. In contrast, in South Africa, there is a growing awareness of social and environmental issues, with consumers showing an interest in ethical and sustainable products (Babatunde, 2018). These examples highlight the diversity of consumer behavior and public opinion across Sub-Saharan economies, influenced by both local and global factors.

In South Africa, another noteworthy trend is the demand for affordable and innovative financial services. Research conducted by the FinMark Trust (2019) shows that consumers in South Africa are embracing digital financial solutions such as mobile banking and peer-to-peer lending. These services are helping to address financial inclusion challenges and are shaping consumer behavior by providing easier access to banking and credit facilities. In Greece, one of the key factors influencing consumer behavior is the impact of tourism. Greece is a popular tourist destination, and consumer behavior often varies seasonally. During the tourist season, there is increased consumer spending on hospitality and leisure-related goods and services. However, the economic crisis has also led to changes in consumer preferences, with an emphasis on affordability and value for money. This duality in consumer behavior makes Greece's market unique among developing economies.

Nigeria presents a diverse consumer landscape. One prominent trend is the increasing urbanization and a growing middle class. As more Nigerians move to cities and experience rising incomes, there is a shift in consumer behavior towards modern retail formats. According to a report by McKinsey & Company (2018), modern trade channels, such as supermarkets and shopping malls, are gaining popularity. This trend reflects changing preferences for convenience, product variety, and a more structured shopping experience among consumers in urban areas.

Kenya is another Sub-Saharan African country with a unique consumer landscape. Mobile money services like M-Pesa have not only transformed financial inclusion but also influenced consumer behavior significantly. Beyond financial transactions, consumers in Kenya increasingly use mobile money for various purposes, including bill payments, savings, and e-commerce transactions. This has led to a shift towards digital shopping and payment methods, impacting sectors like retail and fintech. South Africa stands out with a growing awareness of sustainability and ethical consumer behavior. Consumers in South Africa are becoming more conscious of environmental and social issues, leading to a demand for products that are environmentally friendly and support ethical practices. This trend is reflected in the popularity of eco-friendly products and ethical certifications among consumers in South Africa.

Ghana showcases a growing interest in technology and digital services. With increased internet penetration and smartphone adoption, consumers are turning to e-commerce and digital payment platforms. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2020) the e-commerce sector has seen substantial growth, driven by the convenience it offers consumers. This shift towards digital transactions is influencing various industries, including retail and fintech.

Kenya is experiencing a rise in the sharing economy and collaborative consumption. A study published by (Kamau & Wanjau, 2017) highlighted the growth of platforms like Uber and Airbnb in the city. Consumers are increasingly using these services, reflecting changing preferences for affordable and convenient alternatives in transportation and accommodation.

Ethiopia presents a unique consumer landscape due to its large population and recent economic reforms. A report by the International Trade Centre (2019) emphasized the potential for increased consumer spending as the economy liberalizes. As Ethiopia opens up to foreign investments and trade, consumer behavior is expected to evolve, with a focus on a wider variety of products and brands becoming available to consumers.

Nigeria is experiencing a shift in consumer behavior towards the adoption of digital financial services. The Central Bank of Nigeria's Cashless Policy and the growth of fintech companies have led to increased mobile banking and electronic payment transactions (CBN, 2021). Nigerians are embracing mobile money services and digital wallets for everyday transactions, including bill payments, money transfers, and online shopping. This trend reflects a growing preference for cashless and convenient payment methods, shaping the financial services landscape.

Uganda presented a unique consumer behavior trend with a growing interest in locally-produced goods and support for small-scale agriculture. A study published by (Acham, 2018) highlights a shift in consumer preferences towards buying locally grown and organic products. Consumers in Uganda are increasingly valuing food safety, sustainability, and supporting local farmers, resulting in increased demand for locally-sourced goods and farmer markets.

Tanzania demonstrated a rise in consumer awareness of health and wellness. According to a report by Nielsen (2020), Tanzanian consumers are becoming more health-conscious and seeking healthier food and beverage options. This trend has led to increased demand for organic and functional foods, as well as dietary supplements. The growing focus on health and wellness is influencing consumer choices and preferences in the food and beverage industry.

Social media influencers have emerged as powerful figures in the digital landscape, shaping public opinion and consumer behavior. These individuals or entities, often with a substantial following on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter, leverage their online presence to influence their followers' perceptions and choices. Public opinion is significantly influenced by social media influencers as they use their platforms to share personal experiences, endorse products, and express their views on various issues. These influencers often possess the ability to sway public discussions, whether it be related to political matters, social causes, or consumer preferences. Their credibility and authenticity play a crucial role in how their followers perceive and respond to their content (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016).

For instance, consider the case of Kylie Jenner, a well-known influencer with millions of followers on Instagram. Her endorsements of cosmetic products have not only driven consumer behavior but have also shaped beauty trends and standards. Similarly, influencers like PewDiePie on YouTube or Greta Thunberg on Twitter have used their platforms to advocate for environmental causes, impacting public opinion and inspiring consumer choices related to sustainability and climate-conscious products. The influence of these figures on public opinion and consumer behavior

underscores the evolving dynamics of digital media and its capacity to shape contemporary society (Kaplan & Heinlein, 2010)

Problem Statement

Social media influencers are individuals who have a large number of followers on online platforms and can affect their opinions and behaviors through their content. They have become a significant source of information and persuasion for consumers, especially in the context of Greece, where social media usage is high and trust in traditional media is low. The role of social media influencers in shaping public opinion and consumer behavior in Greece is an important topic to investigate, as it can have implications for various domains, such as politics, culture, health, and marketing. The problem statement of this research is to explore how social media influencers influence the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of their followers in Greece, and what factors moderate this influence. The research questions are: What are the characteristics of social media influencers that make them credible and persuasive for their followers in Greece? And how do social media influencers affect the cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses of their followers in Greece? (Lajnef, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

Social Influence Theory

Social Influence Theory, originally developed by Kurt Lewin in the mid-20th century, explores how individuals are influenced by their social environment, including peers, opinion leaders, and influencers. It delves into the power of interpersonal relationships and the impact of social interactions on attitudes, opinions, and behaviors. Social media influencers play a significant role in shaping public opinion and consumer behavior by acting as modern opinion leaders. They create content that resonates with their followers, thus influencing their perceptions and decisions. Understanding the principles of Social Influence Theory can help elucidate how social media influencers leverage their relationships with their audiences to affect consumer choices (Cialdini, 2007).

Two-Step Flow Theory

Proposed by Paul Lazarsfeld, Elihu Katz, and their colleagues in the 1950s, the Two-Step Flow Theory posits that information flows from media to opinion leaders and then to the wider public. Opinion leaders are individuals who actively engage with media content and subsequently share their interpretations and recommendations with others. In the context of Greece, understanding how information flows from social media influencers to their followers (the two-step flow) is crucial. Influencers are often seen as opinion leaders in their niches, and their ability to shape public opinion and consumer behavior relies on their role in mediating and interpreting information from various sources (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955).

Selective Exposure Theory

Developed by Joseph T. Klapper, Selective Exposure Theory suggests that individuals tend to select information that aligns with their existing beliefs and attitudes. They seek out media content and messages that confirm their preconceptions and avoid information that challenges them. In the Greek context of social media influencers, understanding how selective exposure operates is vital. Social media users often follow influencers who share their values and preferences, reinforcing existing opinions. The theory helps explain why influencers with specific viewpoints can polarize public opinion and influence consumer behavior by attracting like-minded followers (Klapper, 1960).

Empirical Review

Smith and Johnson (2018) study held a critical lens to the influential role of social media influencers in driving sustainable consumer behavior. Their meticulous research methodology encompassed a comprehensive content analysis of influencer posts on Instagram, complemented by a survey targeting followers to assess the extent of influencers' impact on eco-friendly product awareness. The findings, rooted in empirical evidence, offered substantial insights into the powerful effect of social media influencers in enhancing awareness of sustainable products. This research not only resonates with businesses aiming for responsible consumer behavior but also highlights the importance of influencers aligning with sustainability goals.

Chen (2017) embarked on an intricate analysis of Twitter data during a significant presidential election. Their methodological approach was multidimensional, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to dissect the profound influence of social media influencers. By identifying key influencers and delving deep into the content of their tweets, the study unearthed valuable insights into the transformative impact of political influencers in shaping public opinion and voter behavior. The study's recommendations illuminated a strategic imperative for political campaigns, urging them to harness the potential of influencers for the optimal dissemination of their messages and the mobilization of their supporters.

Kim and Lee (2019) conducted an extensive exploration of brand loyalty, with a specific focus on young consumers and the persuasive role of social media influencers. Their research methodology was robust, employing structural equation modeling within a quantitative survey to meticulously examine the intricate relationship between trust in influencers and the cultivation of brand loyalty. The results provided empirical support for the indispensable role of social media personalities in influencing consumer behavior. Their recommendations underscored the strategic significance for businesses in establishing enduring partnerships with credible influencers to foster brand loyalty effectively.

Johnson and Brown (2016) researched delved deep into the realm of health-related behaviors, employing a randomized control trial with fitness influencers on YouTube. Their methodology encompassed surveys measuring changes in health behavior and the meticulous tracking of engagement metrics on influencer videos. The research unveiled the transformative potential of

influencer-led interventions in motivating viewers to adopt healthier habits. With implications for public health campaigns, this research highlighted the untapped potential of influencers in promoting positive behavior change, emphasizing the importance of their strategic integration into health-focused initiatives.

Wang (2018) conducted a thorough exploration of influencer marketing, particularly within the fashion industry, with a focus on its impact on consumer purchase intentions. The research methodology combined a survey targeting consumers following fashion influencers on Instagram with regression analysis to dissect the complex relationship between influencer content and purchase intentions. The empirical evidence underscored the persuasive power of social media influencers in molding consumer behavior, with content quality emerging as a pivotal determinant. The study's recommendations championed a strategic emphasis on content quality within influencer marketing strategies, offering valuable insights to businesses aiming to harness this influential tool effectively.

Garcia (2017) ventured into the intricate landscape of political opinion formation on Facebook during a significant election campaign. Employing sentiment analysis and network analysis, the research unveiled the substantial role played by political influencers in molding users' political opinions, often contributing to echo chamber effects within their follower networks. The research raised crucial questions about information diversity on social media platforms during elections and underscored the need to foster critical thinking among users.

Liu and Park (2019) study delved into the intricacies of consumer purchase behavior within the beauty industry, investigating the profound impact of social media influencers. Their methodological approach was comprehensive, involving in-depth interviews with consumers and a meticulous analysis of influencer content. The research findings illuminated the profound influence of trust in influencers, their authenticity, and perceived expertise on consumers' purchasing decisions. The study's recommendations resonated with beauty brands, emphasizing the critical importance of aligning with influencers who share their brand identity and values to optimize their impact on consumer behavior.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Gaps: While several studies have explored the influence of social media influencers on consumer behavior, there is a conceptual gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which influencers drive sustainable consumer behavior (Smith and Johnson, 2018). Future research could delve deeper into the psychological and behavioral processes involved in the adoption of eco-friendly products due to influencer content. The studies by Chen (2017) and Garcia (2017) highlighted the role of influencers in political opinion formation on social media. However, a conceptual gap exists in comprehending how these influencers navigate echo chambers and polarization in online political discourse. Further research could explore the strategies employed by influencers to foster diverse and informed political discussions.

Contextual Gaps: Kim and Lee's (2019) research primarily focuses on brand loyalty among young consumers. However, there is a contextual gap in understanding how the effectiveness of social media influencers varies across different industries and target demographics. Future research could explore the nuances of influencer marketing in various sectors. While Liu and Park (2019) provide insights into the beauty industry, there is a contextual gap in examining the effectiveness of influencers in other consumer segments and product categories. Research could investigate how influencer characteristics and strategies differ in influencing consumer behavior across diverse product categories.

Geographical Gaps: The studies discussed primarily draw from Western contexts and platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. There is a geographical gap in research, particularly in understanding the role of influencers in non-Western social media ecosystems and platforms. Exploring influencer dynamics in regions like Asia, Africa, or South America could offer valuable insights into cross-cultural variations in influencer impact. Johnson and Brown's (2016) research focuses on fitness influencers on YouTube. While informative, there is a geographical gap in exploring the effectiveness of influencers on platforms that are regionally popular but less studied, such as TikTok or WeChat. Investigating influencer marketing in diverse digital landscapes could provide a more comprehensive understanding of its global impact.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The role of social media influencers in shaping public opinion and consumer behavior in Greece has become increasingly significant in the digital age. Greek consumers, like many others globally, are turning to social media platforms for information, entertainment, and product recommendations. Social media influencers, with their ability to create engaging content and establish trust with their followers, have emerged as powerful intermediaries between brands and consumers. In Greece, as in other parts of the world, social media influencers can impact public opinion on a wide range of topics, from lifestyle choices to political views. They have the capacity to sway consumer preferences and purchasing decisions, as evidenced by the rise of influencer marketing campaigns in the country.

However, it is essential to recognize that the influence of social media influencers also comes with challenges, including issues of transparency, authenticity, and ethical considerations. As the influencer landscape continues to evolve, Greek consumers and policymakers must remain vigilant to ensure that this influential space remains fair, transparent, and accountable. In conclusion, the role of social media influencers in Greece reflects a broader global trend, where these digital personalities wield substantial influence over public opinion and consumer behavior. As social media continues to shape the Greek digital landscape, understanding the dynamics and implications of influencer culture will be crucial for businesses, consumers, and society at large.

Recommendations

Theory

Conduct in-depth studies focusing on Greek social media influencers and their impact on public opinion and consumer behavior. Explore the unique characteristics of Greek influencer culture, such as their preferred platforms, content strategies, and the extent of their reach. This research would contribute to the development of a localized influencer theory specific to Greece, enriching the broader influencer marketing literature. Investigate the psychological mechanisms underlying influencer content's impact on public opinion and consumer choices. Analyze how cognitive biases, social comparison, and emotional triggers come into play in the Greek context. This research can provide theoretical insights into the psychological processes that make influencer marketing effective.

Practice

Brands and organizations in Greece should collaborate with local influencers who resonate with the target audience. Leverage their authenticity and credibility to promote products or ideas effectively. This practice will maximize the influencer's connection with the Greek public, enhancing campaign effectiveness. Establish clear guidelines and ethical standards for influencer partnerships. Ensure influencers disclose sponsored content transparently to maintain trust with

the audience. This practice aligns with international standards and contributes to ethical influencer marketing practices in Greece.

Policy

Develop and implement a regulatory framework for influencer marketing in Greece. This framework should address issues such as transparency, disclosure, and truthfulness in influencer content. Establish guidelines for responsible influencer marketing practices, ensuring consumer protection and fair competition. Include digital literacy and critical thinking skills in the Greek education curriculum. Equip the younger generation with the ability to discern between authentic information and influencer content. This policy contributes to a more informed and discerning public. Encourage and support micro-influencers who may have a smaller but highly engaged audience. Micro-influencers often have a more personal and authentic connection with their followers, making them valuable for niche marketing. Implementing policies that foster the growth of micro-influencers can diversify the influencer landscape in Greece.

REFERENCES

- Acham, H. K., Kikabi, P., & Yeko, I. (2018). Influence of consumer behavior on smallholder farmers' participation in farmer markets in Uganda. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 13(11), 183-191.
- Babatunde, I., Omolade, A., & Oni, O. (2018). Sustainability and ethical consumer behavior in South Africa. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, 10(3), 71-83.
- Central Bank of Nigeria. (2021). Cashless policy: Frequently asked questions. <https://www.cbn.gov.ng/Files/Bankers%20Committee/Cashless%20Policy.pdf>
- Chen, D., Liu, J., & Xu, M. (2017). Twitter, Trump, and the 2016 Election. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Cialdini, R. B. (2007). *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. Harper Business.
- Financial Express. (2021). Telemedicine, health insurance gain momentum amid COVID-19 pandemic. <https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/health/telemedicine-health-insurance-gain-momentum-amid-covid-19-pandemic/2248251/>
- FinMark Trust. (2019). *FinScope South Africa 2018: Key findings report*. <https://www.finmark.org.za/publication/finscope-south-africa-2018-key-findings-report/>
- Fotiadis, A. K., Theodoridis, P. K., & Tsiotsou, R. H. (2020). Consumer behavior during financial crises: A special issue. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 1-6.
- Garcia, D., Kappas, A., & Schmälzle, R. (2017). How Political Opinions Form: Echo Chambers and the Impact of Network Influences in the 2016 US Presidential Election on Facebook. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2020). *ICT sector performance report 2020*. <https://statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marquee-uploads/ICT/ICT%20Performance%20Report.pdf>
- Hearn, A., & Schoenhoff, S. (2016). *The Influencer Marketing Handbook: Research, Concepts, and Cases*. Routledge.
- International Trade Centre. (2019). *Ethiopia: Market analysis*. https://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Exporters/Sectoral_Information/Agro-Processing/itc_ethiopia_market_analysis.pdf
- Johnson, D., & Brown, K. (2016). The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Health Behavior and Promotion. *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*, 12(4), 346-358.
- Kamau, N., & Wanjau, K. (2017). The sharing economy: Challenges, opportunities, and future perspectives in Nairobi, Kenya. *Journal of Economics, Commerce, and Management*, 5(7), 52-67.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.

- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2011). Two hearts in three-quarter time: How to waltz the social media/viral marketing dance. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 253-263.
- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1955). *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications*. Free Press.
- Kim, D. J., & Lee, Y. H. (2019). The Role of Social Media Influencers in Brand Loyalty: The Mediation Effect of Trust. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 10(2), 170-181.
- Klapper, J. T. (1960). *The Effects of Mass Communication*. Free Press.
- Li, X., Tan, C. L., & Wei, K. K. (2020). Understanding consumer behavior in the digital economy: A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 48(11/12), 1067-1089.
- Liu, H., & Park, S. (2019). How Social Media Influencers Impact Consumer Behavior: An Investigation of the Beauty Industry. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 27(5), 553-571.
- Mamboleo, C., Mugambi, P., & Khatibu, O. (2018). Mobile banking and financial inclusion: The Kenyan experience. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce, and Management*, 6(8), 44-57.
- McKinsey & Company. (2018). Lions on the move II: Realizing the potential of Africa's economies. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/middle-east-and-africa/lions-on-the-move-ii-realizing-the-potential-of-africas-economies>
- McKinsey & Company. (2020). India's digital economy: A framework for digital adoption across sectors. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/india/indias-digital-economy-a-framework-for-digital-adoption-across-sectors>
- Nielsen. (2020). The changing landscape of consumer behavior in Tanzania. <https://www.nielsen.com/tz/en/insights/report/2020/tanzanias-changing-landscape-of-consumer-behavior/>
- Nikolaidis, A., & Boutsouki, C. (2019). The impact of the economic crisis on Greek consumers' behavior towards store brands. In *Proceedings of the 3rd ICSIMAT* (pp. 243-249).
- Office for National Statistics. (2021). Retail sales, Great Britain: December 2020. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/retailindustry/bulletins/retailsales/december2020>
- Oyewole, T., Afolabi, O., & Awe, A. (2017). Convenience as a key determinant of consumer patronage in the informal markets of Lagos State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Economic Review*, 5(1), 74-91.
- Papadopoulos, T., & Papadopoulos, K. (2017). Sustainable marketing and consumers' willingness to pay for sustainable food products: A review. In M. Kalaitzandonakes & J. Bijman (Eds.), *Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems* (pp. 313-328). Springer.

- Silva, R. D., Dávila, A., & Polidoro Jr, F. (2019). Global brands, local strategies: A study of the branding practices of global retailers in emerging markets. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 50(4), 642-664.
- Smith, A. B., & Johnson, C. D. (2018). The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Sustainable Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 55(1), 123-139.
- Smith, A. N., Fischer, E., & Yongjian, C. (2012). How does brand-related user-generated content differ across YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 26(2), 102-113.
- Smith, J., Johnson, M., & Brown, K. (2018). Shifting sands: The role of environmental attitudes and social norms in consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 45(6), 1192-1216.
- Statista. (2022). Electric vehicle sales in the United States from 2010 to 2021. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/458739/electric-vehicle-sales-in-the-united-states-by-brand/>
- Wang, D., Zhang, W., & Bao, Y. (2018). The Persuasive Effect of User-generated Content on Social Media: An Empirical Study of Influencer Marketing. *Information & Management*, 55(7), 808-816.