

Analyzing the Influence of Endorsers on Brand Image Formation in Social Media: A Comparative Study of Celebrities, Influencers, and Emerging Trends

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the influence of endorsers on brand image formation within the realm of social media, focusing on the roles played by celebrities, influencers, experts, and everyday consumers. With the increasing integration of social media into marketing strategies, understanding how different types of endorsers impact brand perception has become crucial. This study explores the effectiveness of various endorsers, evaluates their authenticity, and examines the implications of emerging trends such as the rise of virtual influencers and the use of data analytics. Key findings reveal that authenticity and relatability are paramount in modern endorsement strategies, with micro-influencers and everyday consumers providing significant value through their genuine connections with audiences. Celebrity endorsements continue to enhance brand visibility but require careful management due to potential risks. Expert endorsements remain influential in credibility-sensitive sectors, reinforcing the importance of authoritative voices. The research also highlights the growing significance of virtual influencers and the integration of AI and data analytics in optimizing endorsement strategies. Additionally, the study underscores the rising importance of social responsibility in endorsement practices, reflecting consumers' increasing preference for brands that align with ethical values and societal causes.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a dominant platform for communication, information dissemination, and marketing (Labrecque et al., 2013). With billions of users worldwide, platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter offer brands an unprecedented opportunity to engage with consumers directly. One of the most popular and effective strategies that brands have adopted to leverage this digital space is the use of endorsers, such as celebrities, influencers, and even micro-influencers, to shape and influence public perception of their products or services. This phenomenon has given rise to the study of how endorsers impact brand image formation on social media, a topic that holds significant implications for both marketers and academics.

Endorsements, especially on social media, play a crucial role in shaping a brand's image (Chung & Cho, 2017). Traditionally, brands have relied on celebrity endorsements in television, radio, and print advertisements to communicate their values and appeal to consumers. However, with the rise of social media, the landscape of endorsements has shifted dramatically.

Unlike conventional media, social platforms allow for more direct, real-time interactions between endorsers and audiences, providing consumers with what they perceive as a more personal and authentic connection to the brands being promoted (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016). This unique feature of social media has made it a powerful tool for brand image formation, as consumers often associate the characteristics and credibility of the endorser with the brand itself.

As social media has democratized influence, a new breed of endorsers has emerged: influencers. Unlike traditional celebrities, influencers are individuals who have built a loyal following on social media based on their expertise, niche interests, or relatable content. These influencers, often perceived as more approachable and authentic than mainstream celebrities, have increasingly become the preferred choice for brands looking to create a positive image in the minds of their target audiences (Lee, 2020). Micro-influencers, with smaller but highly engaged followers, have also gained traction due to their ability to create genuine and trust-based relationships with their audiences.

Moreover, consumer behavior has evolved significantly, particularly in how people make purchasing decisions. Consumers no longer depend on corporate-driven advertisements to form opinions about products. Instead, they seek recommendations from personalities they admire or feel connected to through social media (Hermida et al., 2012). Endorsers play a crucial role in shaping perceptions, as their personal endorsements are often seen as more trustworthy and influential than traditional ads. By studying the impact of these figures, brands can better understand how to foster positive relationships with their target audiences and create stronger brand loyalty.

The credibility and trustworthiness of endorsers are major factors in their influence (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018). Traditional celebrities have long been used in advertising, but social media influencers, who often specialize in particular niches, are increasingly seen as more credible within their specific domains. For instance, a beauty influencer might be more trusted in recommending skincare products than a general celebrity. This shift toward influencers and niche endorsements raises important questions about what makes an endorser credible and how brands can leverage that credibility to boost their own reputations (Schaffer, 2020). By studying these nuances, researchers and marketers can understand how endorsements contribute to building trust in a crowded digital space.

The diversity of social media platforms further emphasizes the relevance of studying endorser influence. Each platform offers unique tools for communication and engagement. Instagram is highly visual, YouTube is centered around long-form video content, and TikTok thrives on short, engaging clips (Dave, 2020). Different types of content elicit different kinds of responses from audiences. For example, an endorser on Instagram might engage followers through aspirational lifestyle images, while a YouTuber could build trust by offering in-depth product reviews. This diversity of content and platforms creates a complex landscape where understanding the specific dynamics of how endorsers influence brand image is crucial for marketers to make informed decisions.

Furthermore, the speed and reach of social media make studying this phenomenon even more critical. Content shared by endorsers can reach millions of people instantly, amplifying the effects of both positive and negative endorsements (Burke, 2017). A single tweet or Instagram post can go viral, either boosting a brand's reputation or causing irreparable damage in a matter of hours. As a result, brands must be aware of how much power endorsers wield in shaping public opinion and brand perception. The viral nature of social media makes the study of endorsements particularly relevant in terms of managing risk and ensuring that brand image is protected.

Cultural shifts toward authenticity and transparency have also made the role of social media endorsers more important than ever. Consumers, especially younger generations, are increasingly skeptical of overt advertising and prefer brands that align with their values (Shetty et al., 2019). Influencers and endorsers who are perceived as authentic can bridge the gap between the brand and the consumer, promoting products in a way that feels organic rather than forced. The study of how consumers perceive this authenticity and its effect on brand image is critical for brands seeking to navigate this

The shift toward influencer-driven marketing raises important questions about how endorsements affect brand image. Studies show that the characteristics of endorsers such as their credibility, trustworthiness, and attractiveness can significantly influence consumer perceptions of a brand. Moreover, the platform on which the endorsement occurs, the nature of the content (e.g., photos, videos, stories), and the interaction between the endorser and their followers all play vital

roles in shaping the brand image. While positive endorsements can enhance brand awareness and foster trust, negative associations such as a controversial action by the endorser can lead to reputational damage (Ateke & Onwujiariri, 2016).

Despite the growing use of social media endorsements, there is still a need for a comprehensive understanding of how different types of endorsers influence brand image formation (Shan et al., 2020). The dynamics between the endorser, the brand, and the audience are complex, as consumers' perceptions are influenced by multiple factors such as the platform, the type of product or service, and the demographic profile of the audience. Therefore, this research aims to delve deeper into the specific ways endorsers, particularly those active on social media, shape and form the image of the brands they promote. Understanding these influences is crucial for brands seeking to enhance their online presence and reputation in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

In the realm of marketing and communication, the use of endorsers whether celebrities, influencers, or public figures has long been a vital strategy for enhancing brand image and influencing consumer behavior. Several theoretical models help explain how and why endorsers have such a powerful effect on audiences. Among these, the Source Credibility Model, the Source Attractiveness Model, and the Meaning Transfer Model are particularly influential in understanding the mechanisms through which endorsers shape consumer perceptions and brand associations (Schimmelpfennig & Hunt, 2020). Each of these models offers a unique perspective on how endorsers impact marketing effectiveness and brand image formation.

The Source Credibility Model is one of the most widely used frameworks for understanding how endorsers influence consumer attitudes toward a brand or product (Bhatt et al., 2013). According to this model, an endorser's effectiveness is largely determined by two primary factors: expertise and trustworthiness. Expertise refers to the perceived knowledge, skill, or competence of the endorser in a particular domain. When an endorser is seen as an expert in a relevant field, consumers are more likely to trust their recommendations and, by extension, develop a favorable attitude toward the brand (Wang et al., 2017). For instance, a fitness expert endorsing a line of workout gear or a professional chef promoting kitchen appliances can have a strong impact because their expertise aligns with the product. Expertise establishes credibility by assuring consumers that the endorser has a legitimate understanding of the product and its benefits. Trustworthiness refers to the perceived honesty, integrity, and reliability of the endorser. Even if an individual has expertise, they will not be an effective endorser if consumers perceive them as untrustworthy (Van der Waldt et al., 2009). Trustworthiness is built through a history of ethical behavior, transparent communication, and an authentic connection with the audience. Social media influencers, for instance, often gain trust by sharing personal stories, being transparent about sponsored content, and maintaining consistent communication with their followers. The Source Credibility Model emphasizes that when an endorser is perceived as both knowledgeable and trustworthy, they are more likely to influence consumer attitudes and behaviors. Brands that align with credible endorsers can benefit from increased consumer confidence and a more favorable brand image (Mukherjee, 2009). However, the model also suggests that if either of these components expertise or trustworthiness is lacking, the endorser's effectiveness diminishes significantly.

The Source Attractiveness Model expands the analysis of endorsers by considering not just their credibility, but also their attractiveness to consumers. This model highlights three key factors that contribute to an endorser's effectiveness: likeability, familiarity, and physical attractiveness. Likeability refers to how well an endorser is liked by the target audience. This can be based on the endorser's personality, sense of humor, or overall appeal. Likeable endorsers are more effective because they are able to create a positive emotional connection with consumers. For example, an endorser who is perceived as friendly and approachable will foster positive associations with the brand, making consumers more receptive to the message. Familiarity refers to the extent to which consumers recognize and feel connected to the endorser. Endorsers who are widely known, such as celebrities or social media influencers with large followings, often have a built-in advantage because they have already established a relationship with the audience.

Familiarity can generate a sense of comfort and trust, leading consumers to pay more attention to the brand being endorsed.

Physical Attractiveness plays a significant role in the Source Attractiveness Model, suggesting that endorsers who are physically attractive are more persuasive (Onu et al., 2019). This is based on the idea that physical beauty can generate positive feelings in consumers, which are then transferred to the brand. Moreover, physical attractiveness is often associated with other positive attributes, such as success, competence, and confidence, making the endorser more influential. The Source Attractiveness Model underscores the emotional and psychological impact that endorsers can have on consumer attitudes (Sallam & Wahid, 2012). While credibility is important, attractiveness adds another layer of influence by tapping into consumers' emotions and perceptions, making them more likely to form positive associations with the brand.

The Meaning Transfer Model, developed by McCracken in 1989, takes a more symbolic and cultural approach to understanding how endorsers influence brand perception (Jain & Roy, 2016). This model posits that endorsers carry certain cultural meanings, which are transferred to the brand they promote and, ultimately, to the consumer. Cultural meaning encompasses the values, traits, and symbols that the endorser embodies. For example, a celebrity who is known for their glamorous lifestyle or rebellious attitude carries these associations with them in any endorsement they make. These meanings are transferred to the brand, influencing how the brand is perceived by consumers. A luxury brand endorsed by a celebrity known for elegance and sophistication may come to be seen as more prestigious, while a rebellious or edgy endorser may transfer a sense of boldness or nonconformity to the brand.

2.2 Types of Endorsers in Marketing

In today's highly competitive market, brands are increasingly relying on endorsements to build trust, create brand awareness, and influence consumer behavior (Adam & Hussain, 2017). Endorsers whether celebrities, influencers, experts, or everyday consumers are crucial in shaping how a brand is perceived. They help to bridge the gap between a product and its target audience, lending credibility, relatability, or desirability to the brand. The rise of digital media, particularly social platforms, has further diversified the types of endorsers available to brands. Each type of endorser offers unique benefits and appeal, making them essential tools in modern marketing strategies.

Celebrity endorsement has long been a popular strategy for brands looking to enhance their visibility and reputation. Celebrities are individuals who have achieved fame in fields such as entertainment, sports, or politics and have a broad, mainstream appeal. Their influence is rooted in their widespread recognition, cultural impact, and aspirational status. Celebrities often possess a large and diverse fan base, which allows brands to reach a wide audience. When a famous actor, musician, or athlete endorses a product, their fans are more likely to take notice and consider purchasing the brand because of the emotional connection they have with the celebrity. For instance, a sports star endorsing a sneaker brand may encourage their followers to view the product as superior, simply because they admire the athlete's success and abilities. Celebrities often embody success, wealth, beauty, or talent, making them aspirational figures for consumers (Moraes, 2016). When they endorse a product, they transfer their qualities whether it be sophistication, athleticism, or glamour onto the brand. Consumers may be motivated to buy the product in hopes of associating themselves with the celebrity's lifestyle or success. For example, a luxury brand endorsed by a Hollywood star might be seen as more prestigious and desirable.

With the rise of social media, influencers have become one of the most powerful types of endorsers in the digital age. Influencers are individuals who have built a loyal following on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, or Twitter, often within a specific niche such as beauty, fitness, fashion, or technology (De Veirman et al., 2020). They are valued not just for their reach, but for their ability to foster genuine relationships with their followers and offer personalized recommendations. Unlike traditional celebrities, influencers often feel more accessible and relatable to their followers. They are seen as regular people who have built their influence by sharing personal experiences, advice, or reviews. Their followers often trust their opinions because influencers are perceived as authentic and less detached from everyday life than celebrities. This trust makes their endorsements particularly powerful, as consumers believe influencers genuinely use and endorse the products they promote (Berisha, 2019). Influencers often cater to highly specific audiences. For example, a beauty influencer might specialize in cruelty-free cosmetics, or a tech influencer might focus on reviewing gadgets. This allows brands to target niche markets with precision. Working with influencers enables brands to reach consumers who are genuinely

interested in their products and more likely to engage with the endorsement. Influencers range from macro-influencers with hundreds of thousands or even millions of followers to micro-influencers, who have smaller, more engaged communities. While macro-influencers offer wide reach, micro-influencers tend to have higher engagement rates and a more personal connection with their audience. Brands often choose micro-influencers to create more authentic and trustworthy endorsements.

Another highly effective type of endorser is the expert. Experts are individuals who possess specialized knowledge or authority in a particular field. Their endorsements are valuable because they are seen as credible and reliable sources of information. Experts lend credibility to a brand by providing informed, educated opinions about a product's quality, efficacy, or benefits. Their endorsement is rooted in facts and knowledge, which appeals to consumers who are looking for trustworthy advice before making a purchase. For example, a dentist endorsing a toothpaste or a dermatologist promoting skincare products adds a layer of legitimacy that can reassure consumers about the product's effectiveness. Because experts are perceived as neutral and objective, their endorsements are often viewed as more trustworthy than those of celebrities or influencers. Consumers may believe that experts are less likely to promote products simply for financial gain, making their recommendations more reliable (Smith et al., 2005). Expert endorsement is particularly common in industries such as healthcare, technology, and finance, where consumer decisions are influenced by factual information and the perceived competence of the endorser.

In the digital age, the concept of the everyday consumer as an endorser has gained prominence. This type of endorsement is rooted in the idea that regular people, without fame or large followings, can also influence consumer behavior. Everyday consumers can promote brands through word-of-mouth, testimonials, or user-generated content, often sharing their personal experiences with products on social media or review platforms. Many consumers trust the opinions of their peers more than those of celebrities or influencers. This is because everyday consumers are seen as unbiased and having no vested interest in promoting a product. Their endorsements come across as genuine, as they are based on personal experiences rather than financial incentives. For example, a friend or colleague recommending a product on social media may have more influence over a consumer's purchasing decision than a paid celebrity endorsement. Brands increasingly encourage everyday consumers to create and share content featuring their products. This strategy not only provides authentic endorsements but also helps foster a sense of community and engagement around the brand. For instance, a fashion brand might encourage customers to post photos of themselves wearing the brand's clothing, creating organic promotion through everyday users. Everyday consumer endorsements are particularly effective in driving word-of-mouth marketing, as they are often perceived as more honest and trustworthy than other forms of advertising.

2.3 Research Method

This study utilizes a mixed-method research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach provides statistical evidence of relationships between types of endorsers and brand image, while the qualitative approach offers deeper insights into consumer attitudes and experiences. This combination allows for a robust analysis of the impact of endorsers on brand image formation across different social media platforms.

The target population for this research comprises active social media users aged 18 to 45. This demographic is chosen due to its high engagement with social media platforms where endorsements are prevalent. Participants are selected through a combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Convenience sampling involves selecting participants who are readily accessible through online platforms and social media channels. Snowball sampling encourages initial participants to refer others, expanding the sample size and diversity.

The study aims to include 300 participants in the quantitative phase and 15-20 participants in the qualitative phase. This sample size is designed to ensure statistical reliability in the survey results and rich, detailed data in the interviews.

The quantitative phase involves administering an online survey to collect data on participants' perceptions of different types of endorsers and their impact on brand image. The survey is distributed through social media platforms, email invitations, and online communities to reach a diverse audience. The survey consists of structured questions designed to measure:

- Perception of Endorsers: Includes variables such as expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness.

- Types of Endorsers: Categories include celebrities, influencers, micro-influencers, and experts.
- Brand Image: Assessed through participants' perceptions of brand associations, trust, and appeal.
- Purchase Intentions: Measures the likelihood of purchasing a brand based on the endorsement.

Participants respond to Likert scale items, allowing for the quantification of attitudes and perceptions. Data collected from the survey is analyzed to identify trends and correlations between the type of endorser and brand image.

- The qualitative phase involves conducting semi-structured interviews with a subset of survey respondents. These interviews explore participants' personal experiences and perceptions related to social media endorsements. The semi-structured format allows for flexibility in questioning and encourages participants to share their detailed thoughts and feelings. Interview topics include:
 - Personal Experiences: How participants have interacted with endorsed brands on social media.
 - Emotional Responses: Participants' feelings toward different types of endorsers and their impact on brand perception.
 - Perceived Authenticity: Views on the authenticity of influencers versus celebrities.
 - Impact on Brand Loyalty: How endorsements influence long-term brand loyalty and purchase behavior.

Interviews are conducted via video calls or face-to-face meetings and are audio-recorded with participant consent. Transcriptions of the interviews are used for analysis.

Data from the survey is analyzed using statistical methods to identify patterns and relationships. Key analysis techniques include:

- Descriptive Statistics: To summarize and describe the characteristics of the data.
- Correlation Analysis: To examine the strength and direction of relationships between types of endorsers and brand image.
- Regression Analysis: To assess how different endorser characteristics (e.g., expertise, trustworthiness) predict variations in brand image and purchase intentions.

Statistical software such as SPSS or Excel is utilized to perform these analyses. Results are presented through tables, graphs, and statistical measures to highlight significant findings.

Thematic analysis is employed to analyze the qualitative data from interviews. This process involves:

- Coding: Identifying and categorizing key themes and patterns in the interview transcripts.
- Theme Development: Grouping codes into broader themes that reflect common experiences and perceptions related to endorsements.
- Analysis and Interpretation: Interpreting the themes in the context of the research questions and comparing them with the quantitative findings.

Qualitative data is analyzed manually or using qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo. The analysis provides nuanced insights into how different types of endorsers impact consumer perceptions and brand image.

Ethical approval for the study is obtained to ensure adherence to ethical standards. Participants are informed about the study's purpose, their role, and their rights. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, who are assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. They are also given the option to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Data is stored securely, and all identifying information is removed to maintain participant privacy. The research complies with data protection regulations, ensuring that all data is used solely for the purposes of the study.

The study acknowledges several limitations. Non-probability sampling methods may affect the generalizability of the findings, as the sample may not fully represent the broader population. Additionally, the self-reported nature of the survey and interviews may introduce response biases. The rapidly evolving nature of social media trends means that findings may become outdated as new trends and endorsers emerge.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Result

The research on the influence of endorsers on brand image formation on social media reveals significant insights into how different types of endorsers affect consumer perceptions and behavior. By employing a mixed-method approach that combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the role of celebrities, influencers, experts, and everyday consumers in shaping brand image.

The research demonstrates that celebrities have a substantial impact on brand image through their widespread recognition and aspirational appeal. Survey results show that celebrity endorsements are associated with higher levels of brand visibility and positive brand associations. Celebrities' established fame and cultural influence contribute to a perceived higher status and desirability of the brands they endorse. However, while celebrity endorsements can drive significant attention and brand awareness, they also carry risks. Negative publicity surrounding a celebrity can adversely affect the brand's image, indicating the need for careful selection and risk management in celebrity partnerships.

Influencers, particularly those with a strong presence on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, have a distinct and often more personalized impact on brand image. The study finds that influencers are perceived as more relatable and authentic compared to celebrities. Their ability to create genuine connections with their followers leads to higher levels of trust and engagement with endorsed brands. Influencers' endorsements are often viewed as more credible due to their perceived authenticity and the personal nature of their content. This authenticity translates into increased consumer loyalty and a more positive brand perception. Micro-influencers, in particular, are noted for their high engagement rates and targeted reach, making them effective in driving niche market engagement.

Experts in fields related to the product or service being endorsed lend significant credibility and authority to brand endorsements. The research shows that endorsements by experts are highly valued for their factual basis and objective opinions. Consumers regard expert endorsements as reliable and trustworthy, which positively influences their perceptions of the brand. The credibility associated with expert endorsements enhances the brand's reputation and trustworthiness, particularly in industries where factual information is crucial, such as healthcare or technology.

The findings highlight the growing importance of everyday consumers as endorsers. User-generated content and peer recommendations have a powerful effect on brand image. The study reveals that endorsements from everyday consumers are perceived as more genuine and unbiased compared to those from celebrities or influencers. Word-of-mouth recommendations and personal testimonials are influential in shaping brand perceptions and driving purchase decisions. The authenticity of everyday consumer endorsements fosters a sense of community and relatability, which can enhance brand loyalty and encourage more organic engagement.

3.2 Current Trends in Social Media Endorsements

One of the most significant trends in social media marketing is the growing prominence of micro-influencers. Unlike macro-influencers or celebrities with millions of followers, micro-influencers typically have smaller, but highly engaged, audiences. Their follower counts generally range from 1,000 to 100,000, and they often focus on niche areas such as beauty, fitness, or technology. Micro-influencers are valued for their high engagement rates and authenticity. Their smaller, more specialized audiences often result in more meaningful interactions and a greater sense of trust. Brands are increasingly partnering with micro-influencers to reach specific target audiences and foster more personal and credible connections. This trend reflects a shift from broad reach to more focused and engaging marketing efforts.

Authenticity continues to be a major trend in social media endorsements. Consumers are becoming more discerning and are seeking genuine interactions with brands. This has led to a preference for endorsers who appear authentic and relatable rather than those who seem overly commercial or disconnected from their audience. Brands are prioritizing collaborations with endorsers who can deliver authentic content that resonates with their audience. This trend is driving the use of real-life testimonials, user-generated content, and behind-the-scenes insights to enhance credibility and build trust. Authentic endorsements help brands create more genuine connections with their audience and improve their overall brand perception.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics is transforming how brands approach social media endorsements. AI tools are being used to analyze consumer behavior, predict trends, and identify the most effective endorsers for specific campaigns. Data analytics helps brands understand the performance of endorsements and optimize their strategies in real-

time. AI and data analytics enable brands to make more informed decisions about which endorsers to collaborate with and how to tailor their campaigns. This leads to more effective targeting, better alignment of endorsements with consumer preferences, and improved campaign outcomes. The use of these technologies enhances the precision and effectiveness of endorsement strategies, contributing to a more positive brand image.

The concept of virtual influencers computer-generated characters with their own personalities and followings is gaining traction. Virtual influencers can be programmed to align perfectly with brand values and messaging, offering a controlled and consistent representation. Virtual influencers provide brands with a unique opportunity to create highly customized and engaging content. They can embody specific brand attributes and interact with audiences in innovative ways. However, the use of virtual influencers also raises questions about authenticity and the potential disconnect between consumers and digitally created personas. Brands must navigate these challenges to ensure that virtual influencers effectively enhance their brand image without seeming inauthentic.

Consumers are increasingly concerned with social responsibility and ethical practices. Brands are responding by partnering with endorsers who align with their values and support causes such as environmental sustainability, social justice, and ethical consumption. Endorsements that reflect a brand's commitment to social responsibility and ethical values resonate strongly with consumers. Brands that engage in cause-related marketing and collaborate with endorsers who advocate for similar causes can enhance their reputation and appeal to socially conscious consumers. This trend underscores the importance of aligning endorsements with broader societal values to build a positive and responsible brand image.

Video content and live streaming have become dominant formats for social media endorsements. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok prioritize video content, and live streaming offers real-time interaction with audiences. Video and live streaming allow brands to showcase products and endorsements in dynamic and engaging ways. These formats enable real-time engagement, foster authenticity, and provide opportunities for interactive experiences. Brands leveraging video and live streaming can create more immersive and impactful endorsements, enhancing their visibility and connection with audiences.

3.3 Platform-Specific Influence

The impact of social media endorsements is profoundly influenced by the platform on which they occur. Each social media platform has its unique characteristics, user demographics, and engagement patterns, which affect how endorsements are received and their overall effectiveness.

Instagram is renowned for its visual-centric approach, making it an ideal platform for endorsements that leverage eye-catching imagery and engaging visuals. With features such as posts, stories, and reels, Instagram offers diverse opportunities for showcasing products and endorsers in dynamic ways. Instagram's emphasis on high-quality visuals means that endorsements featuring aesthetically pleasing content are likely to perform well. Brands benefit from creating visually compelling posts and stories that highlight their products or services in an attractive manner. Instagram is home to a large number of influencers, ranging from micro-influencers to celebrities, making it a prime platform for influencer collaborations. Influencers' posts, stories, and reels can drive significant engagement and brand awareness. The use of hashtags enhances discoverability, allowing brands to reach new audiences and increase the visibility of their endorsements. Well-chosen hashtags can connect endorsements with relevant topics and trends. Brands should focus on creating visually engaging content and leverage Instagram's influencer ecosystem to enhance their endorsement strategies. Using hashtags strategically can also improve the reach and effectiveness of endorsements.

TikTok has revolutionized social media with its short-form video content and viral trends. The platform's algorithm promotes content based on engagement and relevance, leading to high visibility for popular or trending videos. TikTok's format emphasizes brief, entertaining videos. Endorsements that incorporate creative and humorous elements are likely to resonate with users and achieve viral success. TikTok users are highly engaged with trends and challenges. Brands that participate in or create their own trends can leverage the platform's viral potential to gain widespread attention. TikTok users favor authentic and relatable content. Endorsements that align with the platform's informal and genuine style tend to perform better than overly polished or scripted content. Brands should embrace TikTok's short-form video format and participate in trends

to connect with a younger, trend-focused audience. Authentic and creative content is key to achieving high engagement and viral reach.

YouTube is a platform known for its long-form video content and extensive search capabilities. It offers opportunities for in-depth product reviews, tutorials, and comprehensive endorsements that provide substantial information to viewers. YouTube's format supports longer, more detailed content. Endorsements that include product reviews, how-to videos, and detailed explanations can provide valuable information and influence purchase decisions. YouTube's search functionality and algorithm promote content based on user interests and search queries. Brands can benefit from optimizing their video titles, descriptions, and tags to improve discoverability. YouTube's comment section and community tab allow for direct interaction between brands, endorsers, and viewers. Engaging with the audience through comments and community posts can enhance brand loyalty and credibility. Brands should leverage YouTube's long-form content capabilities to provide in-depth endorsements and product information. Optimizing video content for search and actively engaging with viewers can enhance visibility and build stronger connections with the audience.

Facebook offers a diverse range of content formats, including posts, stories, and live videos. It has a broad user base with varying age demographics, making it a versatile platform for endorsements. Facebook's variety of content formats allows for flexible endorsement strategies. Brands can use posts for announcements, stories for temporary promotions, and live videos for interactive engagements. Facebook's robust advertising tools enable precise targeting based on user interests, demographics, and behaviors. Brands can tailor their endorsements to specific audience segments for more effective reach. Facebook Groups and Pages offer opportunities for building communities around brands and fostering loyal customer bases. Endorsements that leverage community engagement can enhance brand affinity and customer retention. Brands should utilize Facebook's diverse content formats and targeted advertising options to reach and engage with various audience segments. Building and nurturing communities on Facebook can also contribute to long-term brand loyalty.

Twitter is known for its real-time updates and concise content. The platform's character limit and fast-paced nature make it suitable for quick updates, announcements, and engaging in trending conversations. Twitter's focus on real-time content allows brands to participate in trending topics and current events. Endorsements that align with ongoing conversations can gain visibility and relevance. The character limit necessitates clear and impactful messaging. Brands need to craft concise and compelling endorsements that capture attention quickly. Twitter's use of hashtags helps amplify the reach of endorsements and connect them with relevant trends and topics. Brands should focus on timely and concise endorsements that align with trending topics and current events on Twitter. Using hashtags effectively can enhance the visibility and engagement of endorsements.

3.4 Comparison of Research Results with Previous Research

Previous research has consistently highlighted the significance of authenticity in endorsements. Studies have shown that consumers value genuine and relatable endorsements, which enhances trust and credibility. Our research corroborates these findings, particularly regarding the role of micro-influencers and everyday consumers. These endorsers are perceived as more authentic compared to celebrities, supporting earlier conclusions that authenticity is a critical factor in effective endorsements.

The positive impact of celebrity endorsements on brand visibility and appeal has been a well-documented finding in prior research. Celebrities are often associated with increased brand recognition and desirability. Our research confirms this trend, demonstrating that celebrities continue to play a significant role in driving brand awareness and shaping brand image. However, it also highlights the ongoing need for risk management due to potential negative impacts associated with celebrity endorsements.

The role of expert endorsements in enhancing brand credibility, especially in credibility-sensitive industries, is supported by previous studies. Our research reaffirms that endorsements from experts are highly valued for their authority and factual basis. This finding aligns with established research that emphasizes the importance of expert opinions in shaping consumer perceptions and reinforcing brand trust.

While earlier research acknowledged the influence of micro-influencers, our study reveals a more pronounced shift towards their prominence. The growing emphasis on micro-influencers reflects a broader trend toward valuing niche engagement and authenticity over sheer reach.

Previous studies may have underestimated the impact of micro-influencers compared to celebrities, but our research highlights their increasing importance in contemporary endorsement strategies.

The concept of virtual influencers is a relatively new development in social media marketing. Previous research did not extensively address virtual influencers, as they have only recently gained traction. Our research explores their role in endorsement strategies and the implications for authenticity and consumer connection. This emerging trend indicates a shift towards innovative and controlled endorsement strategies that were not as prevalent in earlier studies.

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics for optimizing endorsement strategies represents a significant advancement in the field. Earlier research did not extensively cover these technological developments, but our study highlights their growing importance in making data-driven decisions and enhancing endorsement effectiveness. The integration of AI and analytics marks a shift towards more precise and informed marketing strategies.

While previous research touched on the importance of social responsibility, our study finds that this factor has become more central in recent endorsement strategies. The increased emphasis on aligning endorsements with social responsibility and ethical values reflects a growing consumer preference for brands that demonstrate a commitment to broader societal issues. This trend signifies an evolution in endorsement practices, with a stronger focus on ethical considerations compared to earlier studies.

4. CONCLUSION

The research into the influence of endorsers on brand image formation on social media provides a comprehensive understanding of how various types of endorsers impact consumer perceptions and behavior. By analyzing the roles of celebrities, influencers, experts, and everyday consumers, this study reveals critical insights into the evolving dynamics of social media endorsements and their implications for brand strategy. The findings confirm the ongoing importance of authenticity and relatability in endorsements. Micro-influencers and everyday consumers, with their genuine and personal connections with audiences, are increasingly valued for their ability to foster trust and credibility. This shift underscores the need for brands to prioritize authentic and relatable endorsements to build stronger consumer relationships and enhance brand perception. Celebrity endorsements continue to play a significant role in boosting brand visibility and appeal, aligning with established research. However, the study highlights the necessity for effective risk management to mitigate potential negative impacts associated with celebrity endorsements. As public scrutiny and the potential for controversy increase, careful selection and proactive risk management are essential for sustaining the positive impact of celebrity partnerships. Expert endorsements maintain their value in credibility-sensitive industries, reinforcing previous findings on the importance of authority and factual accuracy. The endorsement of experts continues to enhance brand trust and credibility, particularly in sectors where expertise is crucial for consumer decision-making. The research also identifies emerging trends, such as the rise of virtual influencers and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics. These developments represent a shift towards more innovative and controlled endorsement strategies. Virtual influencers offer unique opportunities for customized content, while AI and analytics enable brands to make data-driven decisions, optimizing endorsement effectiveness and targeting. The increasing emphasis on social responsibility and ethical practices in endorsements reflects evolving consumer values. Brands are now expected to align their endorsements with broader societal issues and demonstrate a commitment to ethical practices. This trend highlights the growing importance of integrating social responsibility into endorsement strategies to resonate with socially conscious consumers and build a positive brand image.

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