

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS AS BRAND AMBASSADORS ON CUSTOMER RETENTION. A CASE OF ECONET WIRELESS ZIMBABWE

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Abstract

This work examines the determinants of the success of social media influencer (SMI) brand ambassadors' persuasive power on customer retention due to the fastest growing social network and the evolving of the influence marketing as a marketing strategy in the business world. It analyses the impact of social media influencers' characteristics on their followers 'and how it influences customer retention. It also investigates the impact of social media influencer characteristics like authenticity, credibility, trustworthy and their generated content has on customer retention. The social influence theory describes how SMIs characteristics endorse and how consumer behaviour of their followers is affected or influenced by them on a social network. A survey of the respondents that uses social media and follow influencers showed that influencer credibility, authenticity, trustworthy, generated content and influencer demographics plays an important role in customer retention since their opinions are valued by their followers. The study used a sample of 100 respondents' and suggestions were made to advance the understanding of this novel phenomenon.

INTRODUCTION

Obtaining information has drastically changed in recent years due to the use of social media. According to Kemp, (2021) over 4.20 billion people use social media globally as of 2021, and they log on for an average of two hours and twenty-five minutes every day (KEMP, 2021). Due to the

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increasing prevalence of ad blockers, marketers are depending more and more on social media influencers (SMIs) to promote brand messaging as traditional ads become less visible. In 2022, more than 75% of brand marketers anticipate spending money on SMI marketing (Geyser, 2022). SMIs are people who, based on the quantity of their followers, are viewed as having social influence (Council, 2018). According to Lou and Yuan (2019), one distinction between celebrities in traditional media and SMIs is that influencers are regular people who have found a name for themselves through become digital celebrities using their content and creations on social media. Social media influencers excel in their respective fields and consistently create valuable content on social media to nurture a dedicated and engaged audience. From the perspective of strategic communication (2019) de, Enke and Borchers fined SMIs as third-party endorsers.

In the USA social media influencers' ability to connect with large and engaged audiences has made them attractive partners for brands seeking to reach new customers and build brand loyalty. According to (Onofrei et al., 2022) influencer marketing has become a rapidly growing industry, with brands investing heavily in collaborations with social media personalities. Influencers are typically seen as experts in their specific niche or industry. They often demonstrate deep knowledge and expertise in their content, which gives them authority in the eyes of their followers. When influencers endorse a brand, it can leverage their perceived expertise, further enhancing the brand's credibility. These endorsers have established significant relationships with organizational stakeholders and influence others through the production, distribution, and interaction of their content and personal appearance.

In a study on the Georgians community on The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Brand Awareness, Image and Trust in their Sponsored Content (Martin *et al.*, 2022), the study highlights the significance of selecting suitable influencers, who possess the necessary intrinsic traits, to create a perception of authenticity among customers. This was also posited by Kumar & Mirchandani, (2012); Balakrishnan *et al.*, (2014); Audrezet *et al.*, (2017). Who added that the consumers should be helped to trust their influencer as their brand ambassadors. Social media influencers often have high levels of engagement with their followers (Onofrei *et al.*, 2022). They respond to comments, address queries, and create a sense of community. Marketer are leveraging with influencer marketing. This interactive

communication fosters a stronger connection between the influencer and their audience, making their endorsements and recommendations more influential and credible.

In Zimbabwe social media influencers like the comic Pastor have endorsed and collaborated with many company's so as to create brand awareness for their products His comedic talent, social media presence, and public appearances provide valuable exposure to the brand, reaching a wider audience and attracting attention that might not have been possible otherwise. The social media influencer's humour and comedic style can shape the perception of the brand he represents. In other studies Researchers have emphasized on the influencer characteristics, such as trustworthiness, credibility, or attractiveness, and how they can positively affect consumers' attitudes toward brands (Nafees *et al.*, 2021, :Reinikainen *et al.*, 2020), that is brand trust, and brand awareness (Lou and Yuan, 2019). On another hand studies were made on how consumers rely on the content of SMIs in making decisions because of their professional expertise and knowledge, SMIs' narrative strategies (Zhou *et al.*, 2021), content quality (Onofrei *et al.*, 2022), and content characteristics (Cheung *et al.*, 2022) influence followers' behavioural engagement.

However, understanding the precise mechanisms through which social media influencers influence customer retention requires a comprehensive and deeper understanding of the complex mechanisms underpinning the relationship between social media influencers, brand ambassadors, and customer retention. Econet wireless Zimbabwe is a renounces company in Zimbabwe and has collaborated with social media personnel to bring awareness to their target audience on their brands. The use of social media influencers like the Comic Pastor has increased the awareness of its brands in the mind of the people hence result in customer retention.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researcher used the secondary data information on the subject matter from previous scholars who wrote on the topics of influencer marketing and Data was collection using questionnaires. The study used scientific quantitative methods to test the hypothesis, adhering to the positivist paradigm. Data was collected using questionnaires. The study was a cross-sectional analysis that used a survey method to collect data from respondents in Zimbabwe. The variables used for this study were adopted from previous

researches about social media influencers and customer retention. Some of the wording was changed to match the context of this research. The measurements used the five likert scale from “strongly disagree to strongly agree”. The study was aimed at establishing the impact of Social media influencer as brand ambassadors on customer retention. Due to the time constraints the study used a population sample of 100 questionnaires to collect data. Data analysis, normality and reliability assessments were carried out using IBM SPSS 22. The validity and mediation analyses of the measurement model were also assessed using IBM SPSS 22. The hypotheses were subsequently tested, and the results were discussed. For this research, the questionnaire was developed as the leading mechanism to implement the research strategy. The questionnaire was prepared and distributed in two major methods: the electronic Internet and the photostat hard copy. The electronic questionnaire was distributed through a link on WhatsApp and email, which allowed participants to access the questionnaire online with ease and the results were available in real-time. Printed hard copy questionnaires were distributed to participants, who were not comfortable doing an online survey, especially elders and women. The questionnaire was divided into five parts. Part one was based on demographics in which information on participants, such as age, education, profession, gender and the social media platform the respondent use, was recorded to reflect this research study. Demographic questions were vital for establishing if the participant uses social media and the platform they usually visit. The other parts of the questionnaire were on the opinion of the respondents about the social media influencer credibility, social media influencer authenticity, social media trustworthy, and social media influencer created content.

MEASUREMENT SCALES

Measurement scales for the study were adapted from the previous research study. Previous literature was used to analyze the constructs of the proposed research model. The variables were measured using 5-point Likert scales, from 1, “Strongly disagree”, to 5, “Strongly agree”. The social media influencer and credibility variables scale were adapted from Sánchez- & Jiménez (2021), Masuda & Lee, (2022), Hajli, (2014) and Kwon, *et al.*, (2021). E-Marketing and brand credibility variable adapted from Erdem, T., and J. Swait. (2004) and Perera, (2023).

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The hypothesis tested in this study was derived from the proposed research model below which shows how the study was tested and what was tested and what the previous scholars had found out on the topic in their previous studies.

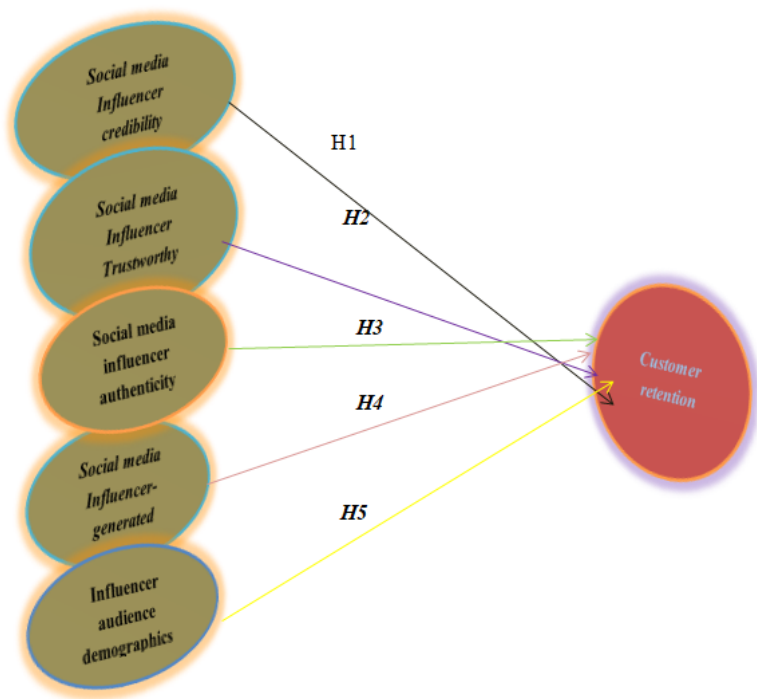


Figure 1: Research model (own source)

RESULTS

DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic section shows the general characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender, age, education, if the respondent uses social media and the social media platform they use. In terms of gender most respondents were males which constituted 67% while the female constituted 33% of the respondents. These findings showed that most male participated in the study more than women. In terms of age, the questionnaire were

distributed to various age groups and the study showed that those in the age range of 20 years constituted large proportion than all other groups since it earns higher percentage and that the GEN Z are the ones that are very active on social media platforms constituting (56%) followed by 21-30 year (22%), followed by 31-40 (13%) and lastly 41-50,9% constituted .The findings showed that the research involved all age groups in order to find accuracy and reliable information. When comes to education, the study revealed that 20.8% (22) of the respondents have diplomas, while 52.8% (56) attained degrees,12,3% indicated that they have got masters and 8,5% (9) showed that they have attained PhD in their educational level. These findings showed that respondents have enough knowledge to answer question that they were asked. Most of the respondents use social media and they constituted 98 %, only 2% of respondent were not using social media platforms. The findings showed that most Zimbabweans are using social media platforms. Most respondents use You tube platforms which had 52, 8%, followed by Facebook platform which constituted 20,8%, followed by Instagram which constituted 13 % and lastly Tiktok platform got 9%. The results showed that most respondents used You tube platforms mostly.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING RESULTS

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics are presented in this segment of the study and covered all five constructs of the research, namely: social media influencer credibility, social media influencer’s trustworthy, social media influencer authenticity social media influencer’s generated content and social media influencer’s audience demographics

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for decision making and customer retention *(Research, 2024)*

Code	Item description	SD	Mean score (X)	Mean response
SMIC.1	I enjoy watching and following the drama and comedy shared because there is interesting information through the influencers that I follow.	1.073	4.08	Agree
SMIC.2	The content (videos, pictures) provided by the influencers that I follow is useful to me and	1.076	3.73	Agree

	helps in the way I think			
SMIC3	I accumulate knowledge through the information shared by the influencers that I follow.	.915	3.91	Agree
SMIC4	The comedy that is generated by the influencer I follow gives makes me want to try what he is talking about	.936	4.18	Agree
	AVERAGES	0.996	3.975	Agree

Table 1 results show that responses of means ranged between 3.73, SD = 1.076 (Item SMIC2) and 4.18, SD= .936 (ItemSMIC4). Overall mean score averaged 3.975; SD= 0.996. The mean response ‘Agree’ rated out of a score of strongly agree (5). The results indicated that credibility is the perceived positive characteristics of the influencer that impact the degree of the acceptance of the content which build trust and connection with their audience.

Table 2: Social media influencer trustworthiness (*Researcher, 2024*)

Code	Item description	SD	Mean score	Mean response
SMIT.1	My perceptions often change when I receive information from the influencers that I follow.	1.172	3.75	Agree
SMIT.2	I value the opinion of the influencers that I follow as if they were someone close whom I trust	.954	3.82	Agree
SMIT.3	The influencers that I follow is trustworthy and helps me in decisions about products or services	1.007	3.72	Agree
SMIT.4	Over time, my experiences with this social media influencer led me to expect that they keep their promises	.880	3.97	Agree
	Averages	0.951	3.815	Agree

Social media influencer trustworthiness is how people perceive the influencer to be honest, reliable, and believable and how they are measured by their followers as genuine and someone whose recommendations they can trust.

Mean scores and standard deviation results for all items used when measuring social media influencer trustworthiness are shown in Table 2 above. The mean responses shown by the results indicate that they ranged between the mean responses ranged 3.72, SD= 1.007 (SMIT3 and 3.97, SD= .880 (Item SMIT4). Overall mean score calculated came up to 3.815, SD= 0.951 agree out of a possible score of 5(strongly agree). The results show that social media influencer trustworthiness is how people perceive the influencer to be honest, reliable, and believable. Social media influencers (SMIs)' authenticity has a positive influence on consumer loyalty and retention. Do you believe the statements below?

Mean scores and standard deviation results for all items that were used to measure ' authenticity, are shown below on Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for authenticity (*Researcher, 2024*)

Item description	SD	Mean score ($\bar{X}$)	Mean response
My favorite Influencers are important to me when it comes to new trends/products	.926	3.92	Agree
I have purchased this brand because of the information from my favorite influencer	.889	3.75	Agree
Based on my experience with my favorite Influencers I know they give correct information about any brand to their followers	.880	3.98	Agree
I will purchase the products of brands recommended by the influencers that I follow because I believe they cannot mislead me.	.899	3.89	Agree
Averages	0.863	3.974	Agree

Table 3 show results of mean responses ranging between 3.75, SD= .889 (Item SMIA2) and 3.92, SD=.926 (Item SMIA 1). Overall mean score average calculated of mean score is 3.974, SD= 0.863. Overall mean response = Agree out of a score of 5 (strongly agree). The results above suggest that Social media influencers (SMIs)' authenticity, such as trust, attractiveness and credibility, have a positive influence on consumer loyalty and retention

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS (SMIs)' CONTENT FEATURES, SUCH AS ATTRACTIVENESS AND CREDIBILITY, HAVE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER LOYALTY AND RETENTION. DO YOU BELIEVE THE STATEMENTS BELOW?

Mean scores and standard deviation results for all items that have been used to measure content features, such as attractiveness and credibility are shown in table in table below

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for Content features (*Researcher, 2024*)

Item Description	SD	Mean score ($\bar{X}$)	Mean response
I am very likely to buy a product which has been promoted by an Influencer on social media	.782	4.26	Agree
If I have little experience with a brand, I often search for related information from the influencers that I follow.	.753	4.27	Agree
I value the information posted and opinion of the influencers that I follow as if they were someone close whom I trust	.822	4.18	Agree
The content (videos, pictures) provided by the influencers that I follow is useful to me and helps in the way I think	.782	4.15	Agree
Averages	.778	4.25	Agree

Results shown in Table 4 above indicate that the mean responses ranged from between 4.15, SD= .782 (Item SMI4) and 4.27, SD .753 (Item SMI2). Mean score calculations averaged 4.25: SD= .778 agree out of a score of 5(Strongly Agree). The results suggest that Social media influencers (SMIs)' content features, such as attractiveness and credibility, have a positive influence on consumer loyalty and retention

REGRESSION MODELLING

MODEL FITNESS

The model summary presents the key statistics for the regression model. The table 5 below provided the model summary.

Table 5: Regression Model Summary (*Researcher, 2024*)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.687 ^a	.671	.639	.49467
a. Predictors: (Constant), SMIC, SMIT, SMIA				

The multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.687, indicating a moderate positive relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.671, meaning that approximately 67.1% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the predictors included in the model. Adjusted R Square: The adjusted R Square is 0.639, which accounts for the number of predictors and adjusts the R Square value accordingly. It suggests that approximately 63.9% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the predictors, considering the model's complexity. The predictors included in Model 1 are SMIC, SMIT, and SMIA along with the constant term. These predictors contribute to the overall prediction of the dependent variable.

ANOVA TEST

The ANOVA table 6 provides information about the overall significance and goodness of fit of the regression model.

Table 6: Anova Test Results (*Researcher, 2024*)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.709	5	1.942	12.860	.000 ^b
	Residual	21.440	142	.151		
	Total	31.149	147			
a. Dependent Variable: CE						
b. Predictors: (Constant), SMIC, SMIT, SMIA						

The data above indicates, that the sum of squares for the regression model is 9.709, with 5 degrees of freedom (df). This sum of squares represents the amount of variance in the dependent variable (SMI) that is accounted for by the predictors (SMIC, SMIT, SMIA). The significance value (p-value) associated with the F-value is 0.000, denoted as .000b. This value indicates that the regression model is statistically significant.

The ANOVA results suggest that the regression model, with the predictors SMIC, SMIT, SMIA, has a significant overall fit in explaining the variation in the dependent variable SMI.

REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS RESULTS

The table 7 below summarises the regression results

Table 7: Regression Coefficients Results *(Researcher, 2024)*

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.784	.473		6.526	.000
	SMIC	.338	.115	.331	2.927	.004
	SMIT	.152	.114	.148	2.505	.010
	SMIA	.210	.292	.249	2.293	.023
a. Dependent Variable: SMI						

The coefficients table provides information about the estimated coefficients for each predictor variable in the regression model.

SMIC (Credibility): The coefficient for SMIC is 0.338 with a standard error of 0.115. The standardized coefficient (Beta) is 0.331. This suggests that a one-unit increase in SMIC is associated with a 0.338 increase in the predicted value of SMI, when controlling for other variables. The coefficient is statistically significant (p = 0.004).

SMIT (Trustworthy): The coefficient for SMIT is 0.152 with a standard error of 0.114. The standardized coefficient (Beta) is 0.148. This indicates that a one-unit increase in SMIT is associated with a 0.152 increase in the predicted value of SMI, when controlling for other variables. The coefficient is statistically significant ($p = 0.010$).

SMIA (Authenticity): The coefficient for SMIA is 0.210 with a standard error of 0.292. The standardized coefficient (Beta) is 0.249. This suggests that a one-unit increase in SMIA is associated with a 0.210 increase in the predicted value of SMI, when controlling for other variables. The coefficient is statistically significant ($p = 0.023$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

ECONET WIRELESS ZIMBABWE AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Econet Wireless Zimbabwe is Zimbabwe's largest provider of telecommunications services, providing solutions in mobile and fixed wireless telephony, public payphones, internet access and payment solutions. Econet launched its network on 10 July 1998 and listed on 17 September 1998. It is one of the largest companies on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange in terms of market capitalization. The company continues to upgrade its network to carry more subscribers, and further widen its geographical coverage, which is already the most extensive in Zimbabwe. As the largest telecommunication company in Zimbabwe also use social media marketing. Social networks used by Econet Wireless includes Facebook, which has the capacity to communicate with- and reach a lot of people, as well as exchange information through live questions and answers (Choi *et al.*, 2018). Tuten and Solomon (2017) said that advertising through Facebook offers a business an opportunity to use electronic word of mouth to increase their reach and to create a more persuasive message. Choi *et al.* (2018) posit that the use of Facebook had become important for a business's marketing strategy this has driven Econet Wireless Zimbabwe to use Facebook to shares live videos, text messages and images marketing its products and services (Econet, 2018). Econet Wireless Zimbabwe Limited also makes use of Twitter to understand their customers better and to get feedback on the areas that they need improvement. According to Barnes (2018), businesses that are use Twitter and other social media channels have more followers on average than businesses that are not using social media channels. The company has benefitted from social media marketing.

SOCIAL INFLUENCE THEORY

Using the social influence theory (SIT), the concept of celebrity endorsement could be properly explained. The social influence theory takes consideration of how consumer behavior is affected by others in a social network. Venkatesh and Brown (2001), posit that in the social influence theory people are pushed to conform to a certain behavior through messages and signals that assist in establishing these impressions. The social influence theory is hinged on two types that is Informational and normative influence (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). Informational social influence persuade individuals to acknowledge that external source of information is real, while normative social influence refers to the influence of members in a group to conform to the expectations of another member (Li, 2013). With this in mind social media endorsers relate real and genuine information about a brand. These sentiments may alter individual perceptions of the brand as a result of social identification (Hsu & Lin, 2008) these lead to the tendency of individuals to adjust their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors to match those of a larger group.

SMIS CREDIBILITY

The study found out that Social media influencer credibility is effective for brand endorsement, as witnessed by the respondents' acknowledgement that SMIs credibility affects the behavior of the customer hence have an effect on customer retention as also posits Hovland and Weiss (1951); Taghipoorreyneh and de Run (2016) who said source credibility refers to the perceived trustworthiness and expertise of the influencer in the eyes of their audience. Wiedmann&Mettenheim, (2020), defined source credibility as the perceived positive characteristics of the communicator that impact the degree of the acceptance of the content. Since, communicators' characteristics have a significant impact on the persuasion process (Ohanian, 1990), therefore, it is essential for the source to be perceived as credible to make the communication process more credible and persuasive (Breves, *et al.*, 2019). When customers perceive an influencer as credible, (Taghipoorreyneh and de Run 2016) it can positively influence their decision-making process and subsequent behavior, including their likelihood to continue following the influencer and engaging with their content. Specifically, a credible endorser generally exhibits positive effect towards consumers' perception (Goldsmith *et al.*, 2000).

TRUSTWORTHY OF SMIS

Trust is a quality that develops over time through repeated contact and interaction. Based on their trust in their partners, people can predict and evaluate the value of future exchanges based on the way they trust other result in trust gluing relationships together. Trustworthiness represents an endorser's dignity, believability, and honesty (Erdogan 1999). Metzger et al. (2003) note that an endorser who is perceived as highly trustworthy and expertise would lead to consumers' indifference towards the advertising message, resulting in higher acceptance of the delivered message. In a similar vein, trust in the influencer makes followers believe that they will benefit from their relationship with the influencer. As also outlined by this study credible influencers are seen as trustworthy sources of information and recommendations

AUTHENTICITY OF SMIS

Authenticity is one of attributes identified by marketing research. Consumers of late now value brand authenticity (Kwan Soo Shin, *et al.*, 2019). Authenticity increases receptivity of messages, enhances consumer perception on quality, increases purchase intentions and increases customer retention (Moulard *et al.*, 2012; Duffy, 2013; Gannon & Prothero, 2016; Garcia-Rapp, 2017) Authenticity is a crucial aspect of credibility. Influencers who are perceived as genuine and transparent in their interactions with their audience are more likely to foster a sense of connection and loyalty. As found out by this study that respondent's considered the brand that their SMIs endorsed because they are authentic.

The study found out that all the literature reviewed with regarded to the hypothesis above had shown positive results (Sánchez- & Jiménez, 2021), Masuda & Lee, (2022) show that social media marketing if it is used efficiently it will enable an organization to draw many audience be it loyal customers or potential customers as concurred by (Suhartanto *et al.*, 2018) the effective online advertising of brand results in awareness followed by customer retention. The current body of literature has acknowledged the significance of social media influencer on purchase intentions, brand awareness and customer loyalty (Saroj, 2020; Suhartanto *et al.*, 2018) as also highlighted by this study, which show that SMIs have a positive significance with customer retention. In Zimbabwe, social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and Twitter have become prominent in the promotion of the concept of influencer marketing (Brown, & Hayes,

2008). Businesses are teaming with renowned influencers in Zimbabwe to attract a younger, tech-savvy audience.

It has also shown that social media influencer characteristics are predictor of brand credibility and customer retention, the influencer credibility, authenticity, trustworthy and content they generate and its effect on customer retention. Therefore, this study bridges this gap by investigating these factors as predictors of customer retention through the endorsement by SMIs. The findings from the study indicate a significant impact of the all five SMI characteristics aforementioned factors on customer retention.

Evidenced by the results from this study social media influencers are effective when they have the characteristics that are considered by their follower which are credibility, trustworthy, authenticity and they must generate content that attract followers this was also found out by (Erdem, 2004) in their study. According to (Joshi and Joshi, 2020), credibility influence purchase intentions as evidenced by this study, which found out that credibility has a positive effect on purchase intentions. Consumers follow SMIs that are credible. Credibility attracts potential customers.

CONCLUSION

On the other hand, social media influencer is a powerful tool that can be used by Econet wireless marketers to increase their market share and to gain competitive advantage over their rivals in the industry (Shin, 2019) Social media influencers often have a genuine and relatable persona that resonates with their followers. This study found out that influencers build trust and credibility by sharing personal stories, experiences, and recommendations. When influencers endorse a brand, their followers perceive it as a genuine recommendation from someone they trust, which enhances customer retention. Influencers have a strong ability to create a sense of social proof and the fear of missing out (FOMO) among their followers. When influencers showcase a brand or product, it creates a perception that others are using and benefiting from it, which can influence followers to trust and consider the brand.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This finding of this research gives valuable insight into the impact of social media influencer as brand ambassadors on customer retention. By understanding the impact of these factors Econet wireless can develop

effective strategies to market their brand and improve their relationships with social media audiences that will result in customer retention. The findings of the study can help organizations understand how to choose the right influencer who is credible, trustworthy authentic and who generate content that will endorse the brand in the mind of the customer. However it is important for Econet wireless to carefully select influencers whose values align with their own and whose audience matches their target market.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

None of the studies is without limitations. The researcher faced some challenges in this research. First, was the timeframe to under gore this study. Access to the resources that enables a smooth flow of the research was a major limitation. Access to respondents who uses social media platforms, follow influencers and have a brand of Econet Wireless was difficult since they were reluctant to answer questionnaires. For example, the target sample of this study was the common social media service users of different age groups who also use Econet brand. Similarly, if detailed secondary data of Econet customer social media users is available it may lead to an interesting case study on the impact of influencers. Finally, future research may expand the sample size and include a more diversified population from all regions of the country.

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