Influencer Marketing Mechanism on Psychological Ownership (PO) among Generation Z

Nadine Mohamed Alaa Elgendy, Eiman Medhat Negm, Ahmed Ghazal

College of Management and Technology, Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport, Alexandria, Egypt
Email: n.gendy97@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the influencer marketing mechanism by exploring the link between social media and the concept of psychological ownership (PO) among Generation Z in the Egyptian market. The research examines theories on source attractiveness and a connection to the PO concept, which helps assess the influence of social media influencers on consumers' perception of the products that influencers advertise. **Methodology:** This study was conducted in January 2024, using a cross-sectional timeframe. By employing a quantitative approach, questionnaires were distributed online using Google Forms. The link to the questionnaire was published on various social media pages that contained famous influencers and their recommendations for products and services. 392 questionnaires were completed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the relations among the variables of the study. **Findings:** This study shows that the influencers' attractiveness dimensions (similarity, likeability, and familiarity) impact the perceived PO feeling toward an advertised product; this means the feeling of owning a product without purchasing it can be achieved if consumers admire influencers who speak highly of the product and portray that it can be achievable to the consumer one day. **Implications:** This study addresses the significant gap in the literature, explaining the impact of the attractiveness of influencers on the development of psychological ownership; consumers must see themselves long-term with the product to trigger their purchases. **Originality:** The findings not only offer valuable insights into the preferences of Generation Z customers but also have practical implications for businesses aiming to attract this demographic. They illustrate useful insights on how to select influencers to represent their brand and the importance of making consumers first feel that the product is reachable for them to own; thus, this leads to potential intention development.

1. Introduction

Social media serves as an effective medium for collaborative communication between users and businesses as it has become an essential part of people's lives. It has significantly transformed the dynamics of interaction and communication, reshaping how businesses engage with their consumers [1] [2]. Social media channels like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are no longer considered private sharing platforms; they have evolved into essential advertising channels for businesses [3]. A key feature of social media is its extensive network and the network effect, which enables users to communicate, create, and share content with others [4].

Influencer marketing involves identifying and cultivating relationships with individuals who have the power to influence potential buyers. This strategy focuses on leveraging these influences to impact consumer purchasing decisions [5]. This type of marketing, where influencers contribute on social media, is considered advertising when 1) influencers are compensated (either with free products or financial payment) and 2) advertisers have control over the content. This control can include final approval of the post or providing general instructions [6]. As a result, marketers have transitioned from using traditional celebrities to social media influencers, also known as micro-celebrities. When it comes to influencers as a form of marketing and advertising, it is deemed effective among the young generations due to their high internet usage, focusing primarily on social media [1] [7]. Many businesses today seek to attract Generation Z due to how large the segment is and how much money they spend. Research explains that advertising to this segment must be through digital marketing as they are constantly online and using new media; rarely do they use traditional media [1] [7].

With about two billion members, Generation Z comprises nearly half of the global population. This generation is the world's largest consumer group. As of 2024, nearly 40% of Egypt's population is under the age of 20, indicating that a substantial portion of the population falls within Generation Z. This demographic is set to play a critical role in Egypt's future, given its significant size and potential influence on the nation's cultural and economic development. Consequently, Gen Z represents a viable target market with substantial purchasing power [8].

This study seeks to assess social media influencers as research shows that it is a popular marketing approach; and an effective method of reaching this audience [9]. This approach has become a significant factor in shaping consumer decisions

[3]. Nevertheless, businesses are interested in knowing how to select influencers that would be beneficial in marketing their brand and how influencers impact consumer behavior. Existing studies have focused on the characteristics of social media influencers but neglected to focus on their impact on consumers' psychological mindset. Influencers to be able to create an impact on consumers purchasing, must impact consumers' psychological ownership [10]. People can develop feelings of ownership for a wide range of objects, both tangible and intangible. This mental state is known as psychological ownership [11]. Moreover, psychological ownership refers to how marketing techniques allow consumers to feel and desire that they can and will possess the marketed object [10].

This study connects social media influencers as a primary factor in the development of psychological ownership, addressing a gap in the literature where little is known about the significance of consumers' evaluation of influencers in fostering ownership feelings towards advertised products. Hence, this study aims to answer the following questions: (RQ1) What are the reasons behind the effectiveness of social media influencers in marketing? (RQ2) Do consumers' views on influencer attractiveness affect their psychological ownership of the products influencers promote? By answering these questions, empirical evidence will emerge that aid decision-makers in using influencers whose audience matches their brands, to untapped customer segments, to enhance brand awareness. This authentic promotion attracts attention to the brand's content, products, and services, and can lead to higher conversion rates and direct traffic increases.

The following section of this paper illustrates the literature review that supports the research topic, and the research methodology used to investigate the influencer marketing mechanism, exploring the link between social media and the concept of psychological ownership (PO). The next section of the paper illustrates the research results and then discusses those results to pinpoint research conclusions and recommendations.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Social media influencers serve as modern-day substitutes for pre-digital era role models and opinion leaders. Unlike traditional celebrities, famous for their professional talents, social media influencers have risen to prominence through self-created content, establishing themselves as experts in specific areas. Due to their origins, influencers frequently come across as more credible than traditional celebrity endorsements [3] [12]. Therefore, it is essential to understand their true impact, especially regarding whether the characteristics of those influencers have an impact on consumer behavior. The following sections review prior studies to gain insights into the practice of social media marketing, how to select the appropriate influencers and the impact of its use on consumer behavior.

2.1. Social Media Influencer

Social media influencers are defined as individuals who have created their network of followers on social media platforms and have become trusted sources of

information to those followers regarding specific fields such as fashion, beauty, travel, etc. [4] [13]. Influencers have an important role in building brands as they have the power to reach customers and influence their opinions regarding specific products [4]. Moreover, studies have shown that today's influencers are perceived as a more reliable source of information than traditional celebrities [14]. Although research has explained that both parties have an impact on consumers' purchase decisions. It was found that influencer marketing is more effective compared to a company's branded content among the younger generations [4] [14]. Hence, brands are shifting to influencer marketing as an integral marketing strategy.

2.2. Psychological Ownership

Any marketing campaign aims to impact consumer behavior, encouraging the purchase of the product and/or service. Psychological ownership (PO) is a cognitive-affective state where a consumer feels a sense of ownership over a target, and it is understood to be separate from actual legal ownership [10] [11]. It refers to the feelings and meanings associated with possessing a target object, it is the sense that the object belongs to the individual, as in "This is mine!" [3] [10] [11]. Studies claim that if consumers develop PO, they can easily trigger consumers' decision-making and buying behaviors. Consequently, it is important that marketing strategies develop PO; marketers should know that three distinct pathways lead to PO: 1) exerting control over an ownership target, 2) developing an intimate understanding of the target, or 3) investing oneself in the target [11]. Studies have found that PO, the organizational behavior concept, was also related to better product assessments and higher customer purchase intentions [3].

Recent studies indicate that consumers who experience a strong sense of PO of products demonstrate increased demand for those products [4]. Karahanna *et al.* (2015) applied these findings to social media usage. They elaborated that PO encourages people to invest their time, energy, and self in things that satisfy their sense of ownership, such as social media [10]. Karahanna *et al.*'s (2018) ongoing research demonstrated this phenomenon specifically within the context of Facebook [15]. We can extend these findings to Instagram and TikTok, as these platforms also satisfy the underlying psychological ownership needs [3]. Moreover, influencers and their content fulfill users' needs to control the content they watch and follow. Users invest their time in getting to know influencers better by engaging with and following their content. These criteria lead to the development of PO toward the influencer and the content they showcase, as they satisfy users' underlying needs [3] [15]. Pick (2020) stated that consumers' PO feelings for products can be amplified if the endorser, such as a social media influencer, has specific characteristics such as attractiveness, as meanings could be transferred from celebrities to products.

2.3. Source Attractiveness Model

Researchers suggest that influencer's characteristics enhance their overall value [16]. For instance, a former study explained that endorsers who are physically

appealing have a higher influence on consumer behavior compared to less appealing ones [17]. Companies aim to match the endorser's physical attractiveness with the advertised product, as various works of literature have highlighted the importance of brand/product congruence or "match-up" with the endorser for the success of advertising [18]. This results in a process known as "identification" in which advertising messages from an attractive source are accepted as a way to identify with this endorser [18]. However, attractiveness is not only limited to physical characteristics. McGuire 1985 explained that source attractiveness depends on 3 factors namely similarity, familiarity, and liking for an endorser [19]. The similarity is the resemblance between the sender and the receiver of the message. While familiarity refers to the awareness of the source as a result of exposure. Lastly, likeability is the affection for the endorser that occurs due to the source's behavior and physical appearance [18]. It was also found that the attractiveness of the endorsers has a positive impact on consumers' brand attitude, product attitude, and purchase intention [3]. Given this, evidence indicates that digital influencers can boost purchase intention by improving their attractiveness, which refers to their likability, similarity to consumers, familiarity, and attractiveness [20].

2.3.1. Source Similarity

Prior studies explain that influencer similarity is recognized as the resemblance between a sender and a receiver. To illustrate, consumers who share similarities with their endorsers are exposed to a greater interpersonal attraction, trust, and understanding rather than those who are seen as dissimilar [12]. Studies explained that if consumers feel that the influencers are similar to themselves, they are more likely to be persuaded by the influencers and see them as attractive [21]. Consumers identify themselves to what they see on social media, especially the influencers that they are exposed to, resulting in their influence on their opinions to have the desire to be like the influencer and thus consider brands that the influencers promote [12]. Accordingly, this study assumes that the more similar consumers (gen-z) feel towards the influencer the more trust they have towards them and accordingly, develop PO. So, it is hypothesized that: H1: The influencer's similarity has a positive impact on the perceived PO feeling for an advertised product.

2.3.2. Source Likability

Related to credibility, source likability is theorized as an affective evaluation linked to an object, which in this research is the social media influencer [22]. According to prior studies, individuals tend to drift and begin to listen, respect, and admire those who they perceive and find pleasant and likable [8]. Some scholars further explain that when influencers make a positive first impression on their followers online, they can create a foundation of trust and rapport [21]. Many studies found that when influencers' characteristics are described as "likability", it can help them establish a connection with consumers, leading to more open and constructive conversations; likability among followers allows influencers to have their content used as a reliable source of information that consumers use in their buying

decision making [18]. Likability is a deep-rooted trait; people's brain trusts people they like as psychologically they believe that they can trust those people. This leads to their brand recommendations triggering PO [20]. So, it is hypothesized that: H2: The influencer's likeability has a positive impact on the perceived PO feeling for an advertised product.

2.3.3. Source Familiarity

Studies claim that influencers' attractiveness comes from the audience's perception that the influencers are familiar in their eyes; familiarity reflects that consumers know the influencers through exposure or past association [8]. Prior studies explain that when consumers hold familiarity with influencers, it provides them with a level of comfort, therefore making the influencer seem more persuasive [20]. With the high usage of social media among individuals, certain influencers are visible to these individuals; the individuals notice their patronized and detailed content every day and observe a regular flow of private photos and videos, which can generate a sense of intimacy and closeness with the influencer, especially if the consumer has been following the influencer for a longer period. This allows the follower to often feel like they know the influencer [12]. Scholars conclude that familiarity due to high exposure to an influencer will lead to consumers accepting their messages and becoming a source of information for their product decisions, product use, and personal consumption [21]. Accordingly, this study assumes that if the follower is more familiar with the influencer, it means that there will be a positive relationship; consumers get to: 1) see the influencer often, 2) develop an outgoing, approachable, responsive, friendly relation, 3) use them as a role model, which then impact their PO, giving them the sense that the object belongs to the individual. So, it is hypothesized that: H3: The influencer's familiarity has a positive impact on the perceived PO feeling for an advertised product.

Based on the literature review, a proposed research model was developed, as shown in **Figure 1**. This study assumes that social media influencers need to be perceived by the consumer as being similar to the consumer, likable to the consumer as well, and familiar to the consumers to allow consumers to develop a PO feeling for the advertised product. Based on the model, three hypotheses were established to be tested in a quantitative approach. If individuals relate to an endorser and accept their influence, they will be encouraged to buy products endorsed by them to acquire the transferred meanings. Therefore, the theory of PO is relevant and useful in marketing to impact consumer behavior. Despite this, research on PO in the social media context is still limited [22]. Furthermore, this research gap is particularly pronounced when examining Egyptian Gen Z consumers, whose behaviors, interests, and challenges remain underexplored. Understanding this demographic's responses to influencer marketing is essential for developing effective marketing strategies, highlighting a clear need for more research. Conclusively, this article explores the complex dynamics between Generation Z and social media influencers. The study uses influencer attractiveness attributes (similarity, likeability, and familiarity) as independent variables that

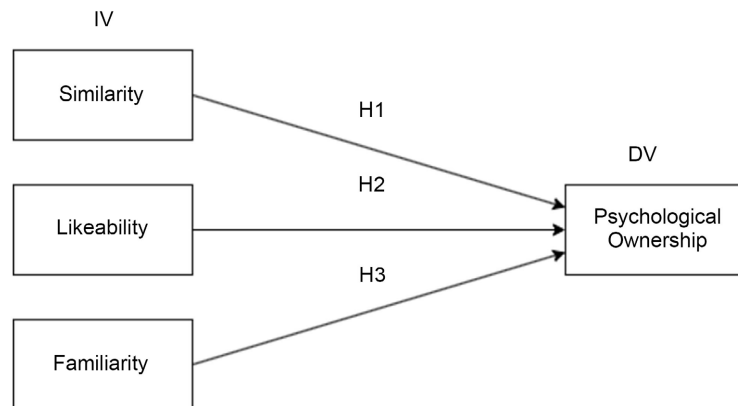influence consumers' sense of psychological ownership toward influencers and the products they endorse.

Figure 1. The proposed research table.

3. Research Methodology

This research is considered descriptive quantitative research as it sought to accurately and systematically describe the population understudy as well as the phenomenon regarding the role of social media influencers in creating PO. This study uses a deductive approach in which it begins with the conduction of the literature review to identify the theory that can explain the role of influencers in marketing and the impact they have on consumer behavior; thus, the research starts with a theory and forms hypotheses and then tests it through observations and data collection.

The research used administrated questionnaires to collect the necessary data. The questionnaire was created online, using Google Forms. The link to the form was placed on several social media platforms on which influencers would comment. These platforms are popular shopping destinations for Generation Z. Generation Z is the population of focus in this study. The target population for the study consisted of Generation Z individuals living in metropolitan cities in Egypt, aged 16 to 27. According to previous studies, this demographic is considered to be consistent users of social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Also, a large proportion of the demographic follow influencers on those social media channels.

Anyone from the gen-z who entered the page can participate in the study by clicking on the link. Accordingly, this study used convenience sampling; participants were selected based on their accessibility and availability to the link that was made for this research. Rather than being drawn at random from a bigger population, participants in this strategy are picked because they are easily available to the researcher.

The questionnaire in this study contained three main sections. Section one was an introduction to the purpose of the study and explained to the participants how to take part in the study. This section ensured that the ethical issues of research

were met. It also confirmed to the participants their confidentiality as well as assuring them if they want to end their participation at any point, they have the freedom to do so. The second part of the questionnaire assessed the traits of the influencers. The questions in this section were taken from prior studies to assess the variables of familiarity, likability, and similarity. A 5-point Likert scale was employed in the questions, ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 representing "Strongly Disagree," 2 representing "Disagree," 3 representing "Neutral" or "Neither Agree nor Disagree," 4 representing "Agree," and 5 representing "Strongly Agree." The scale that measures similarity and the scale that measures familiarity was taken from Al-Darraji, Al Mansour, & Rezai, 2020, while the scale that measures likeability was taken from Magano *et al.*, 2022 [20] [23]. The third section assessed psychological ownership (PO). A 5-point Likert scale taken from Tan 2021 was used to measure the variable in question [4]. The final section of the questionnaire contained several socio-demographic trait questions.

4. Data Analysis

Out of 400 questionnaires that were filled out, only 392 questionnaires were used as they were the ones in the right age group that the research wanted to study. The responses were then statistically analyzed to identify patterns, make predictions, test proposed relationships, and generalize the findings to a broader population. The research used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 for analysis.

4.1. Scale Reliability and Validity

Scale reliability refers to the extent to which a measure is error-free and consistent across time. Reliability indicates how much a measure yields consistent and stable results [24]. Conversely, validity is concerned with whether the developed measure is indeed measuring what is supposed to measure and not something else. In other words, it indicates that the measure is testing the right thing [24]. According to Table 1, all the scales used in the study have a Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.5, indicating their reliability. The accuracy of a scale in measuring its intended construct is assessed through validity analysis, which involves comparing the scale's outcomes with a recognized criterion or standard. This analysis ensures that the scale accurately measures the target variable. Additionally, it's important to evaluate the scale's ability to capture all relevant aspects of the construct, thereby ensuring a comprehensive representation of the phenomenon being studied. In this study, factor loading highlights the relationship between each item and its corresponding factor, where a factor loading above 0.30 indicates a moderate correlation. Referring to Table 1, the findings suggest that all values exceed 0.30, indicating that these items effectively reflect the variables. Moreover, in this research, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was assessed to evaluate construct validity. The AVE indicates how effectively a latent construct explains the variance in its indicators. Since all AVE values were above 0.50, the results demonstrate

strong convergent validity. Considering both the factor loadings and the AVE values, it can be concluded that discriminant validity was achieved, indicating that each construct is distinct from other constructs in the model.

Table 1. Reliability and validity analysis.

VARIABLE	F. L		AVE %	CRONBACH ALPHA
ATTRACTIVENESS	A1	0.792	68.5%	0.842
	A2	0.867		
	A3	0.860		
	A4	0.788		
FAMILIARITY	F1	0.769	53%	0.717
	F2	0.749		
	F3	0.744		
	F4	0.645		
LIKABILITY	L1	0.822	68.6%	0.770
	L2	0.868		
	L3	0.792		
SIMILARITY	S1	0.784	61.3%	0.789
	S2	0.789		
	S3	0.828		
	S4	0.727		
PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP	PO1	0.814	66%	0.826
	PO2	0.881		
	PO3	0.780		
	PO4	0.772		

4.2. Frequency Analysis

Frequency analysis is a descriptive statistical tool used to display the frequency of each response chosen by respondents. This analysis was utilized in the study to determine the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants (See Table 2). Most of the respondents were females, accounting for 77.0%, while males accounted for 23.0%. Regarding the distribution of age, most of the participants were young adults aged between 20 and 28, making up 79.3% of the sample. In contrast, those aged between 16 and 20 accounted for only 20.7% of the sample. Moreover, the majority of the participants have a college degree and represent 78.3% of the sample, while 21% have a high school degree. The rest of the participants either held an elementary school degree, accounting for 0.5%, or another type of educational degree, representing 0.2%. Regarding the respondents' marital status, 82.1% are single, 17.3% are married, and only 0.5% are divorced. Most of the respondents do not have children, representing 92.1%, whereas 3.8% have one child, followed by 1.8% with two children, and only 2.3% with more than two children.

Table 2. Sociodemographic characteristics of the participants.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENT	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender	
Male	23.0
Female	77.0
Age	
20 - 28	79.3
16 - 20	20.7
Education	
College degree	78.3
High school degree	21.0
Elementary school degree	0.5
Others	0.2
Marital status	
Single	82.1
Married	17.3
Divorced	0.5
Number of children	
None	92.1
One child	3.8
Two children	1.8
More than two	2.3
City of residence	
Alexandria	79.6
Cairo	14.8
Other	5.6
Current job status	
Student	52.3
Employed	38.5
Unemployed	8.2
Other	1.0
Average household income	
5000 - 10,000	38.8
10,000 - 30,000	29.8
30,000 - 50,000	14.3
Above 50,000	17.1

As for the city of residence, most of the sample population lives in Alexandria, accounting for 79.6%, while 14.8% live in Cairo, and the remaining 5.6% live in

other locations. Additionally, in terms of the respondents' current job status, approximately half of them were students, accounting for 52.3%, while 38.5% were employed, 8.2% were unemployed, and the remaining 1% had a different job status. In terms of the average monthly household income, 29.8% of participants reported a monthly household income ranging from 10,000 to 30,000 EGP, while 14.3% indicated a monthly household income between 30,000 and 50,000 EGP. Additionally, 38.8% of the survey respondents reported a monthly household income of 5000 to less than 10,000 EGP; the remaining 17.1% stated that their monthly household income exceeds 50,000 EGP.

In the study, participants were asked if they follow social media influencers and depend on them for product and service recommendations. The results indicated that 92.9% of the participants follow social media influencers, while only 7.1% do not. The majority of respondents (63.5%) stated that they typically rely on the recommendations of social media influencers when making purchases, while 36.5% of respondents do not consider influencer recommendations (See Table 3).

Table 3. Follower behavior on social media.

FOLLOWER BEHAVIOR ON SOCIAL MEDIA	PERCENTAGE
Participants who follow social media influencers	92.9
Participants who do not follow social media influencers	7.1
Participants who rely on influencer recommendations for purchases	63.5
Participants who do not rely on influencer recommendations for purchases	36.5

4.3. Correlational Analysis

Correlation analysis involves a statistical method that assesses the strength of the relationship between two quantitative variables [24]. A strong correlation suggests a significant relationship between two or more variables, while a weak correlation implies minimal to no relationship between them. The researcher conducted a Pearson correlation analysis for each hypothesis in this study. Furthermore, this analysis enables the identification of potential predictors or factors that may influence the dependent variable.

*H*1: *The similarity of the influencer has a positive impact on the perceived psychological ownership (PO) feeling for an advertised product is supported*: The Pearson correlation analysis showed an alpha value of 0.603**. This indicates a strong, positive, and significant relationship between the similarity of social media influencers and the perceived psychological ownership of the advertised product. The r Pearson value of above 0.5 suggests a strong relationship. As a result, the proposed hypothesis is supported.

*H*2: *The influencer's likeability positively influences the perceived PO feeling for an advertised product is supported*: The Pearson correlation analysis revealed an alpha value of 0.326**, suggesting a positive, weak, and significant relationship between the likability of social media influencers and the perceived psychological ownership of the advertised product. The Pearson correlation (r) value

is less than 0.3, indicating a weak yet supported relationship.

H3: *The influencer's familiarity positively influences the perceived PO feeling for an advertised product is supported*: The Pearson correlation analysis alpha for the variables in this hypothesis was 0.554**, which shows a positive, strong, and significant relationship between social media influencers' familiarity and the perceived psychological ownership of advertised products. The Pearson correlation (r) value is above 0.5 which suggests that the relationship is strong, and the proposed hypothesis is supported.

5. Research Conclusion and Discussion

Influencer marketing has emerged as a prominent topic in research and marketing practice in recent years. This study is one of the first to explore the positive impact of influencers on consumer behavior by applying the source attractiveness model and the concept of psychological ownership (PO). Researchers have already extensively studied these factors and shown that they have a positive influence on customers [3] [19] [20]. The results show that PO has a positive influence on product evaluation and purchase intention. The findings of this research replicate and add to the connection between an influencer's evaluation and PO. The following hypotheses were tested; first, H1: The similarity of the influencer has a positive impact on the perceived psychological ownership (PO) feeling for an advertised product. Secondly, H2: the influencer's likeability positively influences the perceived PO feeling for an advertised product. Lastly, H3: The influencer's familiarity positively influences the perceived PO feeling for an advertised product. The analysis revealed that all the proposed hypotheses in the study were supported.

5.1. Theoretical Contribution

According to Bandura's (1977) social learning theory [25], people learn new behaviors by observing and imitating others in their environment, such as parents or TV characters. In today's world, consumers spend a considerable amount of time on social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok, leading them to view social media influencers as credible sources of information and product recommendations [26]. In addition, recent studies found that the interactive nature of social media contributes to a sense of psychological ownership (PO) [4]. When influencers endorse products, it can enhance followers' psychological ownership of those products, positively impacting their purchase intentions and product evaluations [3] [4]. In this context, the objective is to examine how attitudes towards social media influencers impact psychological ownership (PO). Specifically, the focus is on understanding how the perceived attributes of these influencers can serve as predictors of PO.

5.2. Managerial Implications

The findings from this research are not only valuable for academic purposes but also have significant implications for marketing practice. As highlighted by Jussila

et al. (2015) in their discussion on psychological ownership (PO) [22], understanding how customers interact with products, services, and brands through the lens of psychological ownership is crucial for marketing professionals. One of the key challenges in influencer marketing is selecting the right influencer for a campaign. Investing in the right influencers is vital for creating the most impactful content. The developed model helps in identifying which influencers can enhance the sense of psychological ownership among consumers. The results indicate that companies should prioritize influencers who are perceived as similar, likable, and familiar to the target audience. This approach helps deepen the customers' emotional connection to the brand. Fundamentally, the concept of psychological ownership provides a framework for understanding customers' relationships with products, services, and brands [3] [22]. It offers valuable insights for decision-makers, enabling them to develop new strategies and create value for customers. Moreover, viewing customer interactions from a psychological ownership perspective encourages a shift from seeing consumers merely as objects to be targeted to recognizing them as active participants in the value-creation process. This perspective helps marketing practitioners design more engaging and effective campaigns that resonate with customers on a deeper level.

5.3. Research Limitations

The study focused on influencer marketing, which is a relatively new and dynamic research field offering many opportunities for further investigation. Previous studies have revealed that the influencer industry poses a significant challenge to traditional advertising, largely due to the exceptional popularity of social media among consumers [27]. Additionally, social media influencers have the power to establish trends and societal norms by exerting their influence over their followers [28]. In this research, the impact of social media influencers' attributes on generating PO was studied. However, as one of the first studies in this field, certain limitations could be addressed in future research. For instance, the research demographic was limited to Gen Z customers only. This research was also conducted in specific cities in Egypt, further studies could consider cross-cultural differences. Another potential area of research could involve exploring additional characteristics of influencers beyond their attractiveness dimensions. Since this study explores psychological ownership (PO) toward both influencers and products, future research could also investigate differences in PO based on follower personality traits, as studies have found that different personalities differ in their perceptions and attitudes towards social media influencers and the brands they endorse [29].

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

[1] Rathore, A.K., Ilavarasan, P.V. and Dwivedi, Y.K. (2016) Social Media Content and

Product Co-Creation: An Emerging Paradigm. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, **29**, 7-18. https://doi.org/10.1108/jeim-06-2015-0047

[2] Erwin, E., Saununu, S.J. and Rukmana, A.Y. (2023) The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Generation Z Consumer Behavior in Indonesia. *West Science Interdisciplinary Studies*, **1**, 1028-1038. https://doi.org/10.58812/wsis.v1i10.317

[3] Pick, M. (2020) Psychological Ownership in Social Media Influencer Marketing. *European Business Review*, **33**, 9-30. https://doi.org/10.1108/ebr-08-2019-0165

[4] Tan, C.S.L. (2021) Is This Mine? Psychological Ownership and the Social Media Follower. *Young Consumers*, **23**, 33-52. https://doi.org/10.1108/yc-11-2020-1256

[5] Lisichkova, N. and Othman, Z. (2017) The Impact of Influencers on Online Purchase Intent. Master Thesis, Mälardalen University.

[6] De Veirman, M., Hudders, L. and Nelson, M.R. (2019) What Is Influencer Marketing and How Does It Target Children? A Review and Direction for Future Research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, **10**, Article 2685. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02685

[7] Lalwani, E., Kumar, U. and Rani, M. (2021) The Influence of Social Media on Buying Behaviour of Generation-Z.

[8] Worldometer (2024) Egypt Demographics 2024 (Population, Age, Sex, Trends). https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/egypt-demographics/

[9] Liu, Y. (2023) The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Generation Z Online Consumer Behavior (Take the Social Media Platform Douyin as an Example). *Advances in Economics, Management and Political Sciences*, **41**, 19-24. https://doi.org/10.54254/2754-1169/41/20232026

[10] Karahanna, E., Xu, S.X. and Zhang, N. (2015) Psychological Ownership Motivation and Use of Social Media. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, **23**, 185-207.

[11] Pierce, J.L., Kostova, T. and Dirks, K.T. (2003) The State of Psychological Ownership: Integrating and Extending a Century of Research. *Review of General Psychology*, **7**, 84-107. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.7.1.84

[12] Schouten, A.P., Janssen, L. and Verspaget, M. (2019) Celebrity vs. Influencer Endorsements in Advertising: The Role of Identification, Credibility, and Product-Endorser Fit. *International Journal of Advertising*, **39**, 258-281. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1634898

[13] Nugroho, S.D.P., Rahayu, M. and Hapsari, R.D.V. (2022) The Impacts of Social Media Influencer's Credibility Attributes on Gen Z Purchase Intention with Brand Image as Mediation. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, **11**, 18-32. https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i5.1893

[14] De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V. and Hudders, L. (2017) Marketing through Instagram Influencers: The Impact of Number of Followers and Product Divergence on Brand Attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, **36**, 798-828. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035

[15] Karahanna, E., Xin Xu, S., Xu, Y. and Zhang, N. (2018) The Needs-Affordances-Features Perspective for the Use of Social Media. *MIS Quarterly*, **42**, 737-756. https://doi.org/10.25300/misq/2018/11492

[16] Chung, S. and Cho, H. (2017) Fostering Parasocial Relationships with Celebrities on Social Media: Implications for Celebrity Endorsement. *Psychology & Marketing*, **34**, 481-495. https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21001

[17] Adnan, A. (2018) Relationship between Celebrity Endorsements and Consumer Purchase Intentions. Doctoral Dissertation, Iqra National University.

[18] Erdogan, B.Z. (1999) Celebrity Endorsement: A Literature Review. *Journal of*

Marketing Management, **15**, 291-314. https://doi.org/10.1362/026725799784870379

[19] McGuire, W.J. (1985) Attitudes and Attitude Change. In: Lindzey, G. and Aronson, E., Eds., *Handbook of Social Psychology*, *Vol.* 2, Random House, 233-346.

[20] Al-Darraji, Z., Al Mansour, Z. and Rezai, S. (2020) Similarity, Familiarity, and Credibility in Influencers and Their Impact on Purchasing Intention. Dissertation. https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn%3Anbn%3Ase%3Amdh%3Adiva-48502

[21] Gaied, A.M. and Rached, K.S. (2015) The Congruence Effect between the Endorser and the Product on the Advertising Persuasion. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, **6**, 43-53.

[22] Jussila, I., Tarkiainen, A., Sarstedt, M. and Hair, J.F. (2015) Individual Psychological Ownership: Concepts, Evidence, and Implications for Research in Marketing. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, **23**, 121-139. https://sci-hub.se/https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2015.1002330

[23] Magano, J., Au-Yong-Oliveira, M., Walter, C.E. and Leite, Â. (2022) Attitudes toward Fashion Influencers as a Mediator of Purchase Intention. *Information*, **13**, Article 297. https://doi.org/10.3390/info13060297

[24] Sekaran, U. and Bougie, R. (2016) Research Methods for Business: A Skill-Building Approach. 7th Edition, Wiley.

[25] Bandura, A. (1977) Social Learning Theory. Prentice-Hall.

[26] Koay, K.Y., Cheung, M.L., Soh, P.C. and Teoh, C.W. (2021) Social Media Influencer Marketing: The Moderating Role of Materialism. *European Business Review*, **34**, 224-243. https://doi.org/10.1108/ebr-02-2021-0032

[27] Peng, C. (2023) Influencer Marketing: Statistics and Skepticism. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, **11**, 744-754. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2023.112040

[28] Chen, Y. (2023) Influencer Marketing. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, **11**, 2310-2320. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2023.115127

[29] Mete, M. (2021) A Study on the Impact of Personality Traits on Attitudes towards Social Media Influencers. *Multidisciplinary Business Review*, **14**, 40-51. https://doi.org/10.35692/07183992.14.2.5