

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT AND INFLUENCER PERSONAL BRANDING RELATION

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ABSTRACT

The most excellent and straightforward method for creating a personal brand today is using social media to gain visibility in a particular industry or specialty. Personal branding can flourish in this environment because almost everyone is now online and will go there to discover more about someone's personality and activities. This study aimed to determine the connection between some influencers' branding and social media involvement. This study used a Google Form Survey to collect information from Indonesians born between 1965 and 2022 and familiar with Dedy Corbuzier and Cinta Laura as influencers with different personal branding strategies. The result shows that influencer social media engagement is affected by their branding. The independent variable (personal branding) tested influences the dependent variable (social media engagement). The implications of this research can be used for people working in a business where influencers' specific criteria will affect their engagement.

Keywords: *Influencer; Personal Branding; Social Media; Engagement.*

ABSTRAK

Metode yang paling baik dan mudah untuk menciptakan *personal brand* saat ini adalah menggunakan media sosial untuk mendapatkan visibilitas dalam industri atau spesialisasi tertentu. *Personal branding* dapat berkembang di lingkungan ini karena hampir semua orang sekarang online dan akan pergi ke sana untuk menemukan lebih banyak tentang kepribadian dan aktivitas seseorang. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui keterkaitan antara branding beberapa influencer dengan keterlibatan media sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan Google Form Survey untuk mengumpulkan informasi dari masyarakat Indonesia yang lahir antara tahun 1965 hingga 2022 dan mengenal Dedy Corbuzier dan Cinta Laura sebagai influencer dengan strategi personal branding yang berbeda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa engagement media sosial influencer dipengaruhi oleh branding mereka. Variabel independen (personal branding) yang diuji mempengaruhi variabel dependen (social media engagement). Implikasi dari penelitian ini dapat digunakan untuk orang-orang yang bekerja di bisnis di mana kriteria khusus influencer akan mempengaruhi keterlibatan mereka.

Kata Kunci: *Influencer; Personal Branding; Media Sosial; Engagement.*

INTRODUCTION

Social media consists of online communication channels based on content-sharing for a specific community, interaction, dialogue, and collaboration ("Social networking and the exchange of information," 2014). Social media is currently the best and most straightforward approach to building a personal brand,

building a reputation, and becoming visible in a specific sector or niche (Petruca, 2016). Since everyone is now online and will turn to that source to learn more about a person's personality and activities, it is the ideal location for personal branding to take root. Therefore, anyone can create an account and promote their activity to gain more followers and alter how they are regarded online with minimum work

(Huffingtonpost, 2016). We are interested in how diverse personal branding is made by several influencers, ranging from the impression of being very eccentric, wealthy, intelligent, and independent women to urban girls.

Therefore, this research aimed to answer the question of the relationship between some influencers' branding and their social media engagement. To answer those questions, we sampled two influencers with different personal branding as the independent variable and analyzed some dimensions ranging from trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness (Ohanian, 1990) and compared it with the social media engagement dimensions such as affection, cognitive processing, and activation (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). Our scope of the study will involve social media influencers/artists based in Indonesia, and the social media platform taken for the survey is Instagram.

The research is needed due to the many options of influencer in social media with many kinds of personal branding, which causes the question, 'Which influencer get the most engagement on social media? And why is it?'. This study can be implemented in real life regarding what kind of personnel branding can drive a high engagement on social media relevant to the niche. Moreover, this research is beneficial for two main reasons. First, it will help the general society determine what personal branding you need to reach user demography and engagement. Secondly, it will help those in the marketing field determine which Indonesian social media influencer works best with their brand image and target market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Influencers

Based on these definitional viewpoints and with an eye toward the future (Appel et al., 2019). see social media as a technology-centric, but not entirely technological, ecosystem where a wide

range of complex behaviors, interactions, and exchanges involving various interconnected actors (individuals and businesses, organizations, and institutions) can occur. Social media is omnipresent, popular, and relevant to the culture (Appel et al., 2019). This definitional perspective is purposefully broad because social media has evolved into anything that can exist in a connected, networked digital environment where interactivity is possible, including content, information, behaviors, people, organizations, and institutions (Appel et al., 2019). Those are the exact reasons why many companies and brands have started to use more than a website and brochure to advertise their product through social media, using the people in the field called Social Media Influencers.

Personal Branding

Karaduman (2013) defines personal branding as including but not limited to physical appearance and personal knowledge; it leads to a uniquely different and memorable impression. As Socrates once said over 2400 years ago, "The way to achieve a good reputation is to attempt to be what you intend to appear," which perfectly captures the significance of the term "personal brand" today. Although branding is crucial and social media is widely used, very few in-depth empirical research has addressed these concerns (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Hsu and Tsou, 2011). The measurements taken for this variable are attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise (Ohanian, 1990)

Social Media Engagement

The rise in social media activity for peer-to-peer contact is a sign that businesses and people use social media for both personal and professional purposes (Lacoste, 2016). Social media engagement is a measure of how people are interacting with your social media accounts and content (Buffer, 2022). The literature we use to measure that engagement is sourced from Hollebeek et al., 2014, which use

affection, activation, and cognitive processing for the variable measurements.

Hypothesis

The specific theme of the influences of social media personal branding on the influencer's engagement is still uncommon based on our findings from the journal ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and more. Most existing journals and sources only talk about social media engagement or branding rather than write about the relationship between them.

We analyzed literature that uses a novel, mixed-method approach and consenting participants. The research posted in the Journal of Interactive Marketing Labrecque et al., 2011 examines how people manage online personal branding. The mixed method through survey and interview was designed for participants to learn about their online and personal branding behavior, their reactions to their brand audits and judgments by others, and any subsequent changes in their behavior. From that research, several conclusions were made. First, branding is inevitable in an online environment. However, not all participants were aware that they were self-branding and did not realize the potential adverse outcomes that may result from their actions.

Moreover, self-branding needs a feedback mechanism to be successful. Second, misdirected branding highly affects professional status, while inferior branding is more critical to social status. Last, managing those branding is difficult, especially when those people are professionals trying to separate the social and professional world (Labrecque et al., 2011).

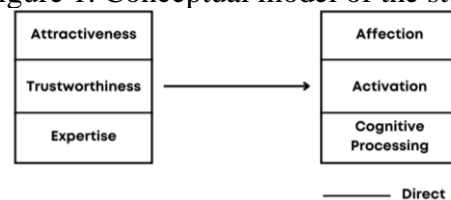
This research fills the gap in the online branding phenomenon that has not been examined from a personal perspective (Labrecque et al., 2011) despite its growing importance. It explains the process people use to brand themselves digitally and the challenges they face when considering the audience's feedback. However, the research

conducted by Labrecque et al., 2011 only focused on Facebook profiles as the most prominent social networking platform at that time. In contrast, social media branding involves more platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, which are more relevant to the professional and social world. In addition, the age of the survey participants also lacks diversity, with most in their 20s and two people above 35 years old.

The approach should be expanded to different demographics and cultures in future studies and include more diverse assessors. Because the Internet is a global medium, understanding how cultural factors affect personal brand actions may provide insights for international businesses. Through this study, we can learn more about how personal branding affects social media engagements, which many businesses use to identify the right influencer. Our studies will look at how perceptions and efforts at personal branding are influenced by developing programs like Instagram or TikTok, with their immediate impressions and scant data points that the previous study we analyzed has not explained.

Through this research, we will not only fill those gaps mentioned by Labrecque et al., 2011 but also relate to it why personal branding on social media affects engagement which results in a brand's decision to use the services of those social media influencers.

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the study



Based on these considerations modeled in Figure 1, it is hypothesized that: Influencer personal branding that is measured using three factors (Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, and Expertise) will affect their social media engagement which is measured by (Affection, Activation, and Cognitive Processing). The relation between social

media engagement and personal branding is positive, which means that if an influencer has good branding and engagement, they will be related to a positive brand linked to their scope of work (Endorsements, et cetera.).

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection

The previous study analyzed 12 participants reflecting gender and age (18–25 and 26–40 years) criteria (Labrecque et al., 2011). They sought to portray men and women equally because these young adults are undergoing lifestyle and job changes. They chose a sample size of 12 because they believed adding more participants would only marginally contribute to the explanation. In this study, as many as two influencers were sampled with different personal branding: 1) Deddy Corbuzier (@MasterCorbuzier): Deddy Corbuzier is a former Indonesian magician who still exists through his YouTube channels, Close the Door and Somasi. As of December 2021, the channel has over 16.7 million subscribers, and its videos have over 3,160,638,445 views. 2) Cinta Laura Kiehl (@claurakiehl) Cinta Laura is an Indonesian-German actress, singer, and influencer. Apart from being known for her talent and beauty, she is known for her

intelligence through pursuing a master’s degree after graduating from Columbia University. Other than that, Cinta is now also active as a public figure who often carries out social and environmental activities.

The samples from previous studies came from abroad, so they might not be suitable as the choice of businesspeople in Indonesia to market their brands; therefore, we focus on influencers from Indonesia. We try to gather information from 100 people we target for the quantitative study to learn their opinions on the influencer account. The criteria for the respondents we are looking for are knowing and being familiar with our sample (Cinta Laura and Deddy Corbuzier), active social media users. We do not limit the domicile where they live or the age and year of birth. We use Google Forms as a data collection medium with a target audience of all ages, active social media users, and know both samples.

Measurement

Numerous researchers incorporated the measurements from this research project into six conceptual difference inquiry scales.

Table 1. Research Questions

Variable	Items	Reference
Attractiveness	How interested are you in <i>(subject)</i> content?	Roobina Ohanian (1990) Construction and Validation of a Scale to Measure Celebrity Endorsers’ Perceived Expertise, Trustworthiness, and Attractiveness, Journal of Advertising, 19:3, 39-52.
	In your opinion, what is the attractiveness level of <i>(subject)</i> ?	
	In your opinion, is <i>(subject)</i> classified as charismatic?	
	In your opinion, is <i>(subject)</i> classified as good-looking?	
Trustworthiness	In your opinion, is <i>(subject)</i> physical appearance admired by many people?	Roobina Ohanian (1990) Construction and Validation of a Scale to Measure Celebrity Endorsers’ Perceived Expertise, Trustworthiness, and Attractiveness, Journal of Advertising, 19:3, 39-52.
	In your opinion, how honest is <i>(subject)</i> level of honesty in his social media?	
	In your opinion, is <i>(subject)</i> a reliable figure?	
	In your opinion, is <i>(subject)</i> a sincere person?	
Expertise	In your opinion, is <i>(subject)</i> a trustworthy person?	Roobina Ohanian (1990) Construction and Validation of a Scale to Measure Celebrity
	In your opinion, what is the level of likeability of <i>(subject)</i> on social media?	
	In your opinion, what is the level of relatability of <i>(subject)</i> on social media?	

	In your opinion, is <i>(subject)</i> a unique and distinctive figure on social media?	Endorsers' Perceived Expertise, Trustworthiness, and Attractiveness, Journal of Advertising, 19:3, 39-52.
Affection	I feel <i>(subject)</i> left a positive impression	Hollebeek, Linda & Glynn, Mark & Brodie, Roderick. (2014). Consumer Brand Engagement in Social Media: Conceptualization, Scale Development and Validation. Journal of Interactive Marketing.
	Seeing <i>(subject)</i> content makes me happy	
	I feel comfortable with social media content <i>(subject)</i>	
	I feel proud to watch/follow social media content <i>(subject)</i>	
Activation	Activation I spend more time watching <i>(subject)</i> content than other influencer content	Hollebeek, Linda & Glynn, Mark & Brodie, Roderick. (2014). Consumer Brand Engagement in Social Media: Conceptualization, Scale Development and Validation. Journal of Interactive Marketing.
	Every time I open social media to find entertainment, I will choose <i>(subject)</i>	
	Content/account <i>(subject)</i> is one of the accounts that I visit/watch every time I play social media	
Cognitive Processing	I became more curious about <i>(subject)</i> when watching his/her content	Hollebeek, Linda & Glynn, Mark & Brodie, Roderick. (2014). Consumer Brand Engagement in Social Media: Conceptualization, Scale Development and Validation. Journal of Interactive Marketing.
	I think of <i>(subject)</i> when I watch <i>(subject)</i> content	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent Demographic

The survey is being done by 42 respondents with demographic as follows:

Table 2. Respondents Demographic

Category	Categories	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	13	31.7%
	Female	28	68.3%
Birth Year	1995 – 1980	1	2.4%
	1981 – 1994	2	4.9%
	1995 – 2010	34	82.9%
	2011 – 2025	4	9.8%
Domicile	Sumatera	3	7.32%
	Jawa Barat	1	2.44%
	Banten	2	4.88%
	Jakarta	16	39.03%
	Jawa Timur	16	39.02%
	Jawa tengah	3	7.32%
Most used social media	Instagram	29	70.73%
	TikTok	7	17.07%
	Twitter	3	7.32%
	WhatsApp	1	2.44%
	YouTube	1	2.44%

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familiar with our sample (Cinta Laura and Deddy Corbuzier), active social media users. We do not limit the domicile where they live or the age and year of birth. We use Google Forms as a data collection medium with a target audience of all ages, active social media users, and know both samples.

Reliability and Validity Test

Table 3. Reliability Test

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha (Deddy Corbuzier)
Affection	0.88
Activation	0.831
Cognitive Processing	0.801
Attractiveness	0.768
Trustworthiness	0.876
Expertise	0.766

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha (Cinta Laura)
Affection	0.908
Activation	0.973
Cognitive Processing	0.894
Attractiveness and Preference	0.857
Trustworthiness	0.892

Cronbach's alpha is a metric used to evaluate the internal consistency or reliability of a group of scale or test items (Table 3). In both the cases of Cinta Laura and Deddy Corbuzier, the data shows a strong α coefficient as the reasonable α coefficient is 0.65. Even in the case of Cinta Laura, the α coefficient ranges from 0.892 to 0.973. However, in the case of Cinta Laura, the dimensions of the independent variables according to the data are only

attractiveness and trustworthiness, so there is no Cronbach's Alpha data on the Expertise dimension (excluded from the independent variable dimensions). High α indicates that the items have shared covariance and measure the same underlying concept or are reliable and consistent. It demonstrated that the questionnaire score had acceptable data consistency.

Table 4. Deddy Validity Test

	Affection	Activation	Cognitive	Trustworthiness	Expertise	Attractiveness
Affection	1	0,577	0,535			
Activation	0,577	1	0,293			
Cognitive	0,535	0,293	1			
Trustworthiness				1	0,484	0,608
Expertise				0,484	1	0,661
Attractiveness				0,608	0,661	1

Table 5. Cinta Validity Test

	Affection	Activation	Cognitive	Trustworthiness	Attractiveness and Preference
Affection	1	0,832	0,77		
Activation	0,832	1	0,917		
Cognitive	0,77	0,917	1		
Trustworthiness				1	0,794
Attractiveness				0,794	1

In addition, the results of the Pearson correlation show that there is a positive and significant connection between the variables. The following are the values of each correlation for Deddy Corbuzier: Affection to Activation (0,577), Affection to Cognitive (0,535), and Activation to Cognitive (0,293). Trustworthiness to Expertise (0,484), Trustworthiness to Attractiveness (0,608), and Attractiveness to Expertise (0,661)

Moreover, these are the following values for each correlation for Cinta Laura Affection to Activation (0,832), Affection to Cognitive (0,77), Activation to Cognitive (0,917), Trustworthiness to Attractiveness, and preference (0,794). In summary, the other variable will likely increase due to an increase in one variable.

Values below the diagonal represent the correlations between the constructs, and the Average Variance

Extracted (AVEs) for each relevant construct is represented by the bold diagonal parts; Values above the diagonal represent squared correlations. Correlations are represented by values below the diagonal; n = 41. The data shows solid correlations and tells that our variable is valid. However, Cinta's dimensions in the independent variable are reduced from three into two dimensions since the data recognize it as two variables only, which comes from the respondent's point of view on how the aspect of expertise is being recognized as a part of attractiveness aspects. Thus, we compile the data dimensions as Attractiveness and Preference (Table 4).

Multiple Linear Regression (R Square)

The survey is being done by 42 respondents with demographic as follows:

Table 6. Deddy Model Summary

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	0.8	0.69	0.668	0.362	0.69	27.768	3	37	0

Table 7. Deddy Anova

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	10.921	3	3.640	27.768	0
Residual	4.850	37	131		
Total	15.771	40			

Table 8. Dedy Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Std Coefficient	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistic	
	B	Std.Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.344	0.167		2.055	0.047		
Trustworthiness	0.300	0.081	0.431	3.718	0.001	0.618	1.619
Expertise	0.419	0.086	0.596	4.859	0.000	0.553	1.810
Attractiveness	-0.407	0.080	-0.079	-0,59	0.561	0.455	2.199

Dedy Corbuzier's Data Interpretation

In Table 6, the R-squared demonstrates how the independent variable affects the dependent variable. It means personal branding influence engagement by as much as 60,9%; meanwhile, 39.1% is influenced by other variables which are not investigated in this study.

Based on the F value (Table 7), all dimensions in the independent variable simultaneously affect social media engagement. The degree of freedom is three and alpha=5%, df within the group is 37, $F_{0,5\%}(3,37)$ is 3.453, while the F from the ANOVA table is 27.768 since the $F_{ANOVA} > F_{0,5\%}(3,37)$. Then H_0 is rejected at a significant level of 0.05 (H_1 is accepted). Then H_0 is rejected at a significant level of 0.05 (H_1 is accepted). In conclusion, the tested independent variable

(personal branding) influences the dependent variable (social media engagement). The regression result is positive, which means that the higher the independent variable score (personal branding) the social media engagement score will increase and vice versa.

Furthermore, it is crucial to analyze each factor on the independent variable. The t-value shows very significant results for the relationship between trustworthiness and expertise, and engagement. However, attractiveness is not related to social media engagement (Table 8). Finally, expertise has the highest beta value among the other two factors, equal to 0.596, so it has the most

Table 9. Cinta Model Summary

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	0.78	0.606	0.585	0.684	0.606	29.16	2	38	0

Table 10. Cinta Anova

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	27.323	2	13.666	29.166	0
Residual	17.806	38	469		
Total	45.138	40			

Table 11. Cinta Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistic	
	B	Std.Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-1.613	0.898		-1.798	0.080		
Trustworthiness	0.422	0.322	0.220	1.311	0.198	0.369	2.712
Attractiveness	0.720	0.204	0.592	3.528	0.001	0.370	2.713

Cinta Laura's Data Interpretation

The R-squared of 60% reveals that 60% of the social media engagement variable is explained by the regression model, while 40% is influenced by other variables which are not investigated in this study (Table 9)

The F from ANOVA is 27.768 since the $F_{ANOVA} > F_{0,5\%}(3,37)$. Then H_0 is rejected at a significant level of 0.05 (H_1 is accepted). In conclusion, the independent variable (personal branding) influences the dependent variable (social media engagement). The regression result is positive, which means that the higher the independent variable score (personal branding) the social media engagement score will increase and vice versa. Hence, the F value reveals that all dimensions of personal branding influence social media engagement (Table 10).

Additionally, the t-statistic shows a very significant result that each dimension of personal branding significantly affects social media engagement (Table 10). Attractiveness has the highest beta (0.592) compared to the trustworthiness factor; it has the most substantial influence on the dependent variable (Table 11). Moreover, trustworthiness influences the target variable, social media engagement, although its strength is not as great as expertise.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusions

In this work, a theoretical model that considers the relationship between social media engagement and personal branding is provided and empirically tested. The study's findings indicate that influencers' branding significantly impacts social media engagement.

The independent variable (personal branding) tested influences the dependent variable (social media engagement). The regression result is positive, which means that the higher the independent variable score (personal branding), the higher the social media engagement score will

increase, and vice versa. Moreover, each influencer's branding variable that affects their engagement is different. Influencers' branding variable that is most known to them is the one that affects their social media engagement the most. For example, Dedy Corbuizer's attractiveness did not significantly impact his social media engagement, yet his expertise did. As for Cinta Laura, all aspects of attractiveness and preference, and trustworthiness affect her engagement significantly.

Practical Implications

The implications of this research can be used for people that work in a business where influencers' specific criteria will affect their engagement. Thus, before making a contract, they can use this research to decide which influencers' branding affects them the most.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This work has two main limitations. The first is regarding the limited number of respondents we succeeded in achieving due to the time limitations. We aimed for 100 respondents but only received less than 50 responses. Future research should be able to overcome this problem by planning the research thoroughly, including measuring the time needed to get the number of respondents needed. More respondents are needed in this kind of research to have a more concrete result.

The second limitation is the measurement used. We measure both personal branding and social media engagement using three dimensions. However, we think those measurements or questions used are still ambiguous. It can be seen from the data result of Cinta Laura, which changed a lot from three dimensions reduced to only one dimension after the factor analysis. Those can happen due to the vagueness of the measurements of questions used, making the respondents mistake some questions for other dimensions. This can happen when the pre-

test scope is only distributed in a small party once, while more than five people should have tested it to get a better view of the idea and more than once so this kind of vagueness can be avoided. Future research should be able to make better questions to approach the measurements used that also might cover the topic of personal branding and social media engagement more thoroughly.

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