



Authenticity as a Market Signal: A Theoretical Examination of Gen Z's Responses to Social Media Marketing

1. Nathiya T – Corresponding Author

Research Scholar

Department of Management

School of Commerce and Business Management

Central university of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvarur, Tamil Nadu. India

2. Dr J Ashokkumar

Assistant Professor

Department of Management

School of Commerce and Business Management

Central university of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvarur, Tamil Nadu. India

3. Balaji B

Research Scholar

Department of Management

School of Commerce and Business Management

Central university of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvarur, Tamil Nadu. India

Abstract

Authenticity is one of the most popular but at the same time least clearly defined concepts in social media marketing. This lack of definition is especially evident in regard to Generation Z, who can be defined as consumers lacking in authenticity of any kind, and being too sensitive to the inauthentic forms of communication. Rather than seeing authenticity as a property of brands and content creators, this article suggests looking at authenticity as a market signal that is produced on purpose and interpreted and processed within the social media marketing context.

The article creates a theoretical framework that describes the process of generating authenticity signals by Generation Z consumers utilizing signaling theory, source credibility research, and studies of algorithmic mediation. According to this framework, the authenticity responses depend on the interpretation of the signal in terms of its costs, consistency, and correspondence with the existing values on a cultural and platform level.

The article also explores how algorithmic processes on social media platforms and brand-creator partnerships shape the distribution and credibility of authenticity signals, often obscuring the distinction between authentic self-expression and performance. The significance of this paper is that it makes a contribution to the field of

digital marketing and consumer studies by conceptualizing authenticity as a contextual and negotiated construct, as opposed to a pre-existing property. This paper can also be considered as a conceptual base for future empirical studies on social media marketing targeting Gen Z.

Keywords: Authenticity, Social Media Marketing, Generation Z (Gen Z), Signaling Theory and Authenticity Cues.

1. Introduction

Background and Problem Statement

Growth of social media marketing and influencer-driven brand communication:

The emergence of digital and mobile technology has transformed the way brands interact from traditional media to social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook, where brands can interact with their customers in real time and create user-generated content (UGC) on a large scale.(Dwivedi, Y., et al., 2020)

Centrality of authenticity in contemporary marketing discourse:

Analysis of research over the past two decades indicates that authenticity is currently considered a fundamental resource and even a “cornerstone” of modern marketing and consumption talk.. (Södergren, J. 2021). Bibliometric and systematic analyses of the literature demonstrate a dramatic increase in authenticity branding research in the fields of tourism, food, retail, social media, and CSR.. (Li, X., Lim, et al., 2024)

Gen Z as a focal audience:

Digital native status:

Prensky’s original definition considered people born after ~1980 as digital natives, “native speakers” of digital technology, while people born earlier were “digital immigrants”(Helsper, E., et al., 2010). Characteristics that are usually attributed to digital natives include familiarity with technology, multitasking, preference for visual information, need for instant gratification, always being connected, and reliance on the internet as a source of information. Scales such as the Digital Native Assessment Scale (DNAS) and more recent ones (SDNA) attempt to quantify these.(Milutinović, V. 2022)

High exposure to advertising, sponsorships, and influencer content:

High levels of advertising, sponsorship, and influencer content drive brand attitudes and purchase intentions, with disclosure and influencer type as strong moderators. Mega-influencers are more likely to induce persuasion knowledge (viewers notice “this is an ad”), which decreases trust and brand attitudes, particularly when sponsorship is not disclosed(Giuffredi-Kähr, A., et al 2020).

Authenticity is widely invoked but poorly theorized

- **Semantic Overload:** In everyday language, the word "authentic" is used as a synonym for sincerity, originality, reality, and trustworthiness. Researchers have found that it is very often used as a synonym for the word "truth," which diminishes the special theoretical significance of the concept.
- **Performance Paradox:** One of the biggest theoretical challenges is whether one can be authentic while knowing how to perform authenticity perfectly. This creates a "gap" between inner reality and outer expression that is difficult to bridge.
- **Subjective Interpretation:** There are many theories that propose authenticity is not something that can be found in an object or a person, but rather something that is accepted or rejected by the audience.

1.2 Research Gap

Although there is a lot of interest into the behavior of Gen Z towards digital media and the idea of authenticity in influencer and social media marketing, the existing literature is now primitive and mostly empirical, lacking thorough theoretical analyses. Analyses performed by scholars focus on the concept of authenticity being linked to intent to purchase as well as the trust to influencers (e.g., perceived authenticity impact on customer loyalty and engagement) but the authenticity aspect is nowhere specified as a market signal that plays a role in the interpretation of messages sent to Gen Z audiences (Ofosu-Boateng & Jose, 2025). Moreover, analyses point to the signaling theory used with regard to authenticity cues and motivations to engage used by Gen Z audience but not when relating it to the source credibility and values being perceived by Gen Z in connection to some signals being authentic or impactful (Haskins et al., 2025; studies on micro-influencer content perception).

1.3 Research Purpose and Contribution

Reframe authenticity as a market signal rather than an inherent quality:

In the realms of marketing, consumer behavior, and organization theory, authenticity is being increasingly conceptualized as something that is signaled and perceived in the market, rather than something that is an essence of people, brands, or products. Companies and consumers use signals to communicate "authenticity," and these are interpreted as a sign of quality, commitment, or values.

Develop a theoretical framework explaining:

Authenticity as a Market Signal in Gen Z's Responses to Social Media Marketing. This theory describes the role of authenticity as a signal that determines Gen Z's response to social media marketing. In social media marketing, consumers are not in a position to know the truth about the brand's intentions and quality. Authenticity, therefore, serves as a signal that helps Gen Z determine the trustworthiness of a brand.

Variables:

Perceived Brand Authenticity(Independent)
(Transparency, Honesty, Consistency, Relatability)



Trust (Mediating)
(Reduced Skepticism)



Gen Z Consumer Responses (Dependent)
(Engagement, Brand Attitude,
Purchase Intention)

Source: Kunjiapu, S., Syed Ali, S. F., Umar Baki, N., & Mak, K. Q. (2025)

How authenticity signals are produced:

In all areas, politics, brands, influencers, and social interaction, authenticity signals are created through congruent identity and behavior, truthful self-disclosure, particular linguistic/narrative selections, and audience validation, all of which are situated within cultural expectations.

How Gen Z evaluates these signals:

Gen Z appears to assess signals by a combination of social proof, authenticity, and trust cues, heavily weighted toward peers and metrics. investing, and activism, Gen Z assesses signals largely through peers, metrics, and visible trust cues, adjusted by authenticity and values—but cost, convenience, and overconfidence frequently condition the assessment of those signals into actual behavior.

What outcomes result from these evaluations

The decoding of social, trust, and authenticity signals by Gen Z consumers primarily translates into behaviors of purchase, repurchase, loyalty, and word-of-mouth communications. As Gen Z consumers decode signals as trustworthy, authentic, and value-consistent, it has been found to result in higher intentions to purchase, repurchase, loyalty, and online advocacy.

Contributions:**Theoretical contribution to digital marketing and consumer research**

The “triple helix” framework integrates UTAUT, signaling theory, and herding behavior to explain Gen Z’s repurchase in social commerce, demonstrating how technological utility, trust signals (such as return policy leniency), and FOMO-based imitation influence the phenomenon.(Khoa, B. 2025).

The “Impulse Engine” integrates S O R with dual-process theory to model Gen Z’s impulse purchases of electronics via interface friction reduction, identity signaling, and neuro-marketing loops.(Narah, P. 2025).

A dual-route framework proposes affective (trust) and cognitive (brand image) routes between social media marketing and purchase intention, explaining emotional versus rational processes.(Zulkifli, A. 2025)-

Conceptual foundation for future empirical studies

The current reviews and conceptual articles in digital marketing and consumer research collectively provide multi-level, psychologically grounded frameworks that are ready to be tested in future studies. Multi-stage models of consumer journeys, Theory-based integrative frameworks offer a ready-made conceptual framework with well-defined constructs, hypothesized paths, and boundary conditions that are ready to be tested in future empirical studies.

2. Literature Review**2.1 Authenticity in Marketing and Consumer Research****Historical uses of authenticity in branding and cultural consumption:**

Authenticity is deployed as a positional device to demarcate “good taste” or deep-level connoisseurship from mass consumption in subcultures (for example, MG car owners) and mainstream culture. (Leigh, T., et al., 2006). Authenticity in branding is deployed through heritage, continuity, craftsmanship, sincerity, and morality. Heritage brands in the corporate world are based on memories, continuity of product attributes, and credibility to be authentic. (Napoli, J., et al., 2014)

Common dimensions:**Sincerity:**

Acting on motives and values that are truly one’s own; sincerity, truthfulness, honesty, commitment to values, and “not wishful speaking” belong here.(John, S. 2018).

Originality:

Being different or unique rather than derivative; associated with creativity and nonconformity in media, branding, and art.(Hopwood, C., 2021)

Transparency:

Congruence between inner states and outer behavior (acting outside as one feels inside), often framed as realness or transparency.(Hopwood, C., 2021)

Realness:

Historical or factual accuracy, or truthful endorsement and accurate representation (e.g., “authentic Picasso,” truthful CSR or influencer statements).(Lee, J., et al., 2021)

Key critique:

Authenticity as a cloudy moral ideal

Essentialist “true self” and its problems

Authenticity as ideology / soft power

Toward non-essentialist or extra-moral accounts

Over-reliance on authenticity as a moral or essentialist concept:

In philosophy, psychology, and social theory, the over-emphasis on authenticity as a moralized or essentialized concept is criticized for conceptual confusion, exclusion, and ideological misuse. More promising are relational and existential approaches that conceptualize authenticity as a contestable, social, and fallible practice rather than a morally pure true core. (Beerends, S.,2021)

Lack of attention to strategic performance:

In philosophy, psychology, and social theory, the over-emphasis on authenticity as a moralized or essentialized concept is criticized for conceptual confusion, exclusion, and ideological misuse. More promising are relational and existential approaches that conceptualize authenticity as a contestable, social, and fallible practice rather than a morally pure true core(Ocasio, 1997)

2.2 Social Media Marketing and Influencer Culture:

Social media marketing has created a culture of influencer marketing, where opinion leaders influence consumer values, identity, and consumption patterns through interactive and user-generated content. Social media sites facilitate cultural diffusion and peer influence on a massive scale, which alters the traditional marketing communication process.(Kaplan., et al., 2010).

2.3 Generation Z as Media Consumers:

Generation Z has a set of distinct media consumption behaviors as digital natives, using on-demand and social media platforms extensively compared to previous generations. Research has shown that the gratifications of communication, socialization, and identity expression influence Gen Z’s media behaviors, which are distinct from previous generations due to their habits and motivations.(Hu et al., 2022; media consumption patterns research).

2.4 Algorithmic Mediation in Social Media:

Algorithmic mediation in social media operates as a cultural intermediary that shapes the content that users view and how cultural norms and values are communicated and lived. This is because it reconfigures traditional media gatekeeping by incorporating computational logic into cultural production and consumption (Striphas, 2015). Algorithms thus act as active cultural agents, not neutral filters.

3. Theoretical Foundations

3.1 Signaling Theory

Signaling theory, which was developed to explain decision-making in situations involving information asymmetry, explains how the sender is able to signal the receiver to reduce uncertainty about unobservable attributes (Connelly et al., 2011). In organizational and management studies, signaling theory has emerged as a prominent approach for analyzing behavioral situations in which the parties have asymmetric information, for instance, recruitment, strategic communication, and market entry. For instance, visible signals such as educational credentials, reputation, or executive compensation packages can be reliable indicators of quality and intentions (Connelly et al., 2011). Recent reviews have highlighted that the cost and credibility of signals are key determinants of their effectiveness and that researchers are extending the theory's domain of application in the areas of strategic management, international marketing, and human resource management, among others. (Shahid et al., 2024)

Overview of signaling theory in economics and marketing

Signaling theory: This theory describes how economic agents communicate credible information in situations of information asymmetry, where one agent has more information than another. The theory began in economics and argues that better-informed agents use costly and observable signals like education, pricing, or warranties to signal unobservable quality or intentions to the less-informed party (Spence, 1973). In marketing, signaling theory is widely used to explain how firms use brand reputation, advertising intensity, price premiums, and endorsements to signal product quality and reduce consumer uncertainty (Kirmani & Rao, 2000). In marketing, signaling theory is widely used to explain how firms use brand reputation, advertising intensity, price premiums, and endorsements to signal product quality and reduce consumer uncertainty (Connelly et al., 2011). Therefore, signaling theory constitutes a strong paradigm for analyzing firm-consumer interactions, competitive differentiation, and decision-making in uncertain market environments.

Key concepts:

Signals:

In signaling theory, signals are observable actions or attributes deliberately used by informed actors to convey credible information about otherwise unobservable qualities to less-informed actors under conditions of information asymmetry (Spence, 1973).

Signalers:

In signaling theory, signalers are actors who have private information and deliberately send observable signals to decrease information asymmetry and affect the perceptions or decisions of the receivers.(Spence, 1973).

Receivers:

Receivers are the agents who do not have complete information and make sense of the signals sent by the signalers to infer the unobservable characteristics.(Spence, 1973).

Signal cost and credibility:

Signal cost and credibility are key mechanisms in signaling theory that help decide whether signals can successfully decrease information asymmetry. Signals are credible if they are sufficiently costly to acquire, transmit, or maintain, which makes imitation by low-quality agents economically unattractive.(Spence, 1973).

Application to social media authenticity:

According to signaling theory, authenticity on social media is inferred through observable, costly, and difficult-to-fake cues. Content consistency, self-disclosure, and engagement serve as signals of authenticity that decrease uncertainty about the true intentions of influencers or brands..(Spence, 1973)In digital environments, best practices in authentic communication and disclosure can increase trust by raising perceived signal cost and verifiability, which can influence audience assessments and behavioral reactions . (Audrezet et al., 2018)

Authenticity cues as signals under conditions of information asymmetry:

Authenticity cues serve as signals that facilitate the inference of the genuine intentions, values, or quality of the signalers by the receivers. Based on signaling theory, cues such as transparency, consistency, self-disclosure, and message congruence between communicated messages and observed behaviors are viewed as credible if they are costly or difficult to fake.

3.2 Source Credibility Theory:

Source Credibility Theory describes how the credibility of a communicator is a function of audience perceptions of trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness/relatability . (Ohanian, 1990).

Dimensions:**Trustworthiness:**

Within Source Credibility Theory, trustworthiness is defined as the degree to which a source is perceived as honest, sincere, and unbiased by the audience .(Hovland et al., 1953).

Expertise:

Under Source Credibility Theory, expertise is the degree to which a source is seen as knowledgeable, competent, and able to provide accurate information on a particular subject. (Hovland et al., 1953).

Attractiveness / relatability:

In influencer marketing, these factors improve persuasive efficacy by promoting emotional ties and feelings of similarity, which in turn boost engagement and message acceptance. In contrast to expertise, attractiveness and relatability are more closely tied to affective and social identification processes and are necessarily subjective, audience-specific perceptions rather than objective properties.(Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Relevance for influencers and creator-brand partnerships:

The Source Credibility Theory is very applicable to the partnership between influencers and brands, as the credibility of the influencer is a factor that determines the persuasiveness of the branded content. Credible influencers are more successful in building positive brand meanings and overcoming consumer skepticism about the branded messages. It has been found that the perceived fit between the influencer and the brand has a positive effect on credibility judgments, authenticity perceptions, and engagement, brand attitudes, and purchase intentions. Therefore, effective partnerships are less dependent on the number of followers and more on the perceived credibility and fit judgments made by the audience(Ohanian, 1990; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2020).

Credibility as perception, not objective truth:

In Source Credibility Theory, credibility is defined as a subjective perception rather than an objective or factual quality of the source. The audience judges credibility on the bases of certain cues including trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness, which are gleaned from personal experience, social norms, and media context (Hovland et al., 1953).

3.3 Integrating Signaling and Credibility in Social Media Contexts:

The integration of signaling theory with source credibility theory establishes the framework necessary to conduct research on influence in social media environments with an information asymmetry. Influencers and brands act as signalers, utilizing observable cues including consistency, transparency, expertise, and engagement as signals of their quality/authenticity (Spence, 1973; Connelly et al., 2011).

Gen Z as skilled signal interpreters rather than passive audiences:

Generation Z is increasingly being thought of as an active and skilled interpreter of digital signals rather than a passive media audience. As digital natives, Gen Z consumers have a high level of literacy in decoding cues related to authenticity, credibility, and commercial intent on social media platforms.(Prensky, 2001)

4. Conceptualizing Authenticity as a Market Signal:

Especially social media, authentic communication enhances trust and differentiation by signaling sincerity and commitment, thereby shaping consumer evaluations and behavioral responses under uncertainty. (Beverland, 2005)

4.1 Authenticity as a Signal:

Gen Z's participation in social media marketing is highly driven by the perceived authenticity of influencers, which has an impact on trust and attitude towards the content. Authenticity cues are used as a signal of credibility that influences purchase intentions, although there is limited theoretical development that focuses on authenticity as a market signal perceived by Gen Z consumers.(Audrezet et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Observable cues rather than inner states:

Marketing research also highlights that consumers perceive authenticity through externally visible signs embedded in communication and practice, rather than through inner sincerity, thus reaffirming the notion of authenticity as a perceptual construct.(Beverland, 2005; Audrezet et al., 2018).

Performative but not necessarily deceptive:

Marketing and cultural research also contends that authenticity is socially constructed and performed rather than being based on inner sincerity. Therefore, performative authenticity is strategic self-presentation that is in line with audience expectations, as long as the signals are perceived as consistent and trustworthy.(Beverland, 2005; Audrezet et al., 2018).

Distinction between:“Being authentic” and “Signaling authenticity.”

It underlines that audiences cannot make direct judgments about the internal states of others and thus make authenticity judgments based on authenticity signals rather than authenticity itself. This means that the effectiveness of the market is less dependent on authenticity and more dependent on the authenticity signals being credible, coherent, and trustworthy to the audience(Beverland, 2005; Audrezet et al., 2018).

4.2 Types of Authenticity Signals in Social Media Marketing

In social media marketing, authenticity is conveyed through a set of visible signals that can reduce information asymmetry between the creators, brands, and audiences. Consistency signals (values, tone, and behavior) convey authenticity and commitment(Beverland, 2005). Transparency signals, such as sponsorship disclosures, enhance trustworthiness (Audrezet et al., 2018). Engagement signals (responsive interaction, dialogic communication) convey relational authenticity (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Expertise signals (demonstrated knowledge, skill-based content) support credibility (Ohanian, 1990). Together, these signals shape perceived authenticity as a market-based evaluation rather than an inner state.

4.3 Signal Production and Strategic Performance:

The significance of credible signals in enhancing the synchronization between strategy formulation and market perception has also been stressed in research on strategic management, although ineffective signals may impede strategic success (Connelly et al., 2011).

Brands, creators, and platforms as signal producers:

In online markets, firms, authors, and online websites are important signal generators that influence how audiences are affected by differences in information. Firms provide information about quality and values of their brand through pricing, marketing, narratives, and certification signals while authors signal their authenticity and reliability through regularity and self-revelation in their content. Websites also produce their own signals by using algorithms giving visibility signal like certificates (badges), number of followers, and recommendation algorithms that affect credibility of the content.

Commercial incentives shaping authenticity displays:

In social media marketing, authenticity displays are increasingly influenced by commercial motives, as content creators weigh and balance self-expression with commercial objectives. Studies have found that sponsorships and brand collaborations impact the curation of authenticity displays, as content creators align with commercial objectives while maintaining authenticity (Audrezet et al., 2018)

5. Gen Z's Evaluation of Authenticity Signals

Generation Z is a keen scrutinizer of cues of authenticity in social media advertising, evaluating visible cues such as transparency, consistency, and value alignment rather than accepting marketing messages blindly. As tech-savvy consumers, Gen Z is highly attuned to sponsorship disclosure and influencer-brand fit as authenticity cues to infer credibility and commercial intent. Research suggests that authenticity perceptions have a significant impact on Gen Z's trust, engagement, and behavioral outcomes, solidifying their position as critical interpreters of market signals rather than passive audiences. (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021).

5.1 Signal Cost

High advertising expenditure, high content quality, long-term brand-creator relationships, and reputational risk serve as costly signals that increase perceived authenticity and credibility. (Kirmani & Rao, 2000; Connelly et al., 2011).

The perceived effort, risk, or sacrifice required in the production of the signal is the core of the signal's credibility within the context of information asymmetry. Signals that involve opportunity costs, such as forgoing lucrative brand endorsement deals or taking public value positions that may alienate audiences, are considered costly and thus hard to counterfeit by those of low credibility (Spence, 1973).

Example: Maintaining long-term partnerships with limited brands, sacrificing short-term revenue for consistency and credibility (Kirmani & Rao, 2000)

5.2 Signal Consistency

Temporal consistency in content and across platforms is an important signal of authenticity because it is expensive to maintain such communication patterns and hard to mimic for opportunistic reasons. Viewers perceive authenticity when there is consistency between the values espoused by the creators and their practices. (Beverland, 2005).

5.3 Cultural and Platform Norms

Authenticity signals are decoded based on cultural and platform-specific conventions, which means that what constitutes authenticity on one platform may be downplayed on another. Platforms such as TikTok and Instagram create unique expectations around production, self-presentation, and commercial disclosure that influence the assessment of authenticity (Abidin, 2016).

6. Role of Algorithms and Brand–Creator Collaborations

Platform algorithms determine the visibility and authenticity of social media content as a function of engagement-optimized formats, which can be seen to strategically perform rather than authentically . (Cotter, 2019).

6.1 Algorithmic Amplification of Authenticity Signals

The algorithms on social media platforms favor engagement-based content, which indirectly promotes certain authenticity signals, including emotional expression, vulnerability, and relatability. Studies have found that algorithmic processes favor content styles that maximize visibility and engagement, leading to the adoption of identifiable authenticity performances instead of intrinsic self-expression.(Gillespie, 2014)

6.2 Brand–Creator Collaborations

Collaborations between brands and creators are characterized by the co-creation of authenticity cues, where individual stories and brand communication are intertwined. Although the practice of disclosure is aimed at improving transparency, evidence has shown that it can have ambivalent effects, sometimes increasing credibility while at other times triggering persuasion knowledge (Boerman et al., 2017).

6.3 Credibility Tensions

Notably, Gen Z appears to have an elevated level of awareness regarding algorithmic mediation and commercial logics, which enables them to decode influencer content critically and identify when authenticity performances are optimized for visibility or commercial gain rather than self-expression.(Bucher, 2018)

7. Outcomes of Authenticity Signal Evaluation

Assessments of authenticity signal form influence important consumer outcomes such as trust, parasocial connection, and persuasion effectiveness. Perceptions of authenticity signals as credible and costly lead to increased brand attitudes and purchase intentions, but as strategic or inauthentic, skepticism and resistance are heightened.(Audrezet et al., 2018; Kirmani & Rao, 2000). Thus, authenticity evaluations function as a mediating mechanism linking social media communication to relational and behavioral outcomes.

8.2 Managerial Implications

For managers, over-engineering authenticity signals carries reputational risks, as highly choreographed performances can be viewed as disingenuous. Authenticity signal consistency over time, platforms, and partnerships is vital, as inconsistency undermines the credibility of authenticity signals (Beverland, 2005).

Furthermore, cultural and subcultural competence is vital when marketing to Gen Z, who critically assess context-specific cues. Strategic humility, focusing on alignment, self-restraint, and long-term credibility rather than engagement optimization, improves credibility in algorithmically mediated spaces.(Audrezet et al., 2018; Connelly et al., 2011).

8.3 Directions for Empirical Research

Future research needs to investigate how members of Gen Z interpret authentic signals using qualitative research, paying attention to the context, culture, and specifics of the platform (Abidin, 2016). Experimental studies can examine the effects of cost of the signal and consistency over time on trust and credibility (Kirmani & Rao, 2000). It would be helpful to conduct comparative studies to analyze the impact of specific features of different platforms in shaping perceptions of authenticity (Cotter, 2019) as well as longitudinal research to explore trust destruction/repair after a signal is perceived to be inauthentic (Audrezet et al., 2018).

9. Conclusion

The paper posits that Gen Z does not merely trust authenticity in social media marketing but assesses it. Instead of viewing authenticity as an inherent attribute of brands or creators, it is defined as an evident indicator of reliability that has to have a consistent presence, proper context, and incur some cost. As Gen Z uses social media heavily, they become sensitive to marketing motives, algorithmic incentives, and the performance of “realness.” Thus, instead of exaggerating authenticity or employing emotional appeals, it works through consistency over time and matching words to deeds. All things considered, the paper shows that Gen Z are knowledgeable participants of the market and that a thoughtful approach to social media marketing is required.

Additional Information and declaration

Funding

The authors received no funding for this work.

Competing Interests

The Authors declare that they have no competing interest

Author Contribution

Nathiya T was solely responsible for all aspects of this conceptual paper, including conceptualization, literature review, theoretical framework development, writing (original draft), and writing (review and editing).

Dr. J. Ashokkumar: Conceptualization, critical review of the literature, validation of the proposed framework, writing – review and editing.

Mr. Balaji B: review and editing and References.

All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Ethics and Consent to Participate Declarations

Ethics Approval:

This study is a theoretical examination based on existing literature, published research, and publicly available secondary sources. It does not involve human participants, animals, clinical interventions, or the collection of primary personal data. Accordingly, ethics approval was not required. The study was conducted in accordance with accepted principles of research integrity, responsible scholarship, and ethical standards for theoretical and literature-based research.

Consent to Participate:

Not applicable. This study does not involve human participants or the collection of primary data from individuals.

Consent for Publication:

Not applicable. The study does not contain any personal or identifiable information relating to individual participants.

Ethics and Consent to Participate Declarations:

Not applicable.

Ethics

This is a conceptual paper based on a review and synthesis of existing literature. It does not involve primary data collection, human participants, or animal subjects, and therefore did not require ethical approval from an institutional review board (IRB) or ethics committee.

Data availability

No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article, as this is a conceptual paper based on a review and synthesis of existing, publicly available literature.

Supplemental Information

No supplementary materials are associated with this article.

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