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Exploring the Inner Path: A Comprehensive Literature Review on Self-Engagement Behaviour and Its Impact on Business-Oriented Social Media Content

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ABSTRACT

Social media serves as a widely utilized channel for communication between businesses and individuals. Self-engagement on social media is a crucial aspect of online behaviour, shaping both individual experiences and digital communities. Hence, this paper focuses on the layout content and its contribution to cognitive processes in relation to users' self-engagement. The methodology employed in this paper is literature-based, with data collected from numerous sources. The findings suggest that the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) can serve as a theoretical framework, providing an understanding of persuasion mechanisms via peripheral routes. This model holds particular significance in the realm of self-engagement, where users interact with content using diverse cognitive processes. Social media platforms have the capacity to adjust and improve their features to align with user preferences, ensuring a more fulfilling and satisfying user experience. By employing successful tactics grounded in theoretical frameworks such as the ELM, companies and individuals can refine their strategies for engagement and communication on social platforms.

Keywords: *Cognitive, Self-engagement, Behaviour, Persuasion, Media Social*

1 INTRODUCTION

Self-engagement on social media involves individuals expressing themselves, interacting, and engaging within the digital realm of social networking platforms (Jan et al., 2017). It encompasses a range of activities, including sharing personal updates, posting photos, videos, or thoughts, engaging with content from others, and participating in online conversations (Saggar, 2021). The significance of engaging oneself on social media spans various facets.

Social media platforms provide users with a space to express their identities, interests, and personality. According to Boursier et al. (2020), individuals can construct and showcase different identities through posts, comments, and shared content. Additionally, self-engagement on these platforms fosters social connections and bonding with others. Users interact with each other through likes, comments, and shares, creating a sense of community and interpersonal relationships in the digital realm (Eckstein, 2023). Furthermore, self-engagement plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining a digital presence. Users consciously or unconsciously engage in personal branding by showcasing their skills, achievements, and unique qualities, influencing how others perceive them online (Febrian & Husna, 2023)

"Positive self-engagement, such as receiving affirmation through likes and positive comments or posts, can contribute to a sense of validation and well-being. Meanwhile, negative interactions can impact mental health, highlighting the complex interplay between self-engagement and emotional states (Easton et al., 2018; Bradman & Gustafson, 2021). Participating in self-engagement on social media, whether through observation or active involvement, allows individuals to stay informed about cultural trends, societal discussions, and the interests of their peer groups (Vromen et al., 2014; Škorić et al., 2016). This contributes to a heightened sense of belonging and cultural awareness.

For businesses and influencers, self-engagement is pivotal for building an audience and cultivating a loyal following (Dessart, 2017b). According to Harrigan et al. (2018), the more actively individuals engage with their content, the higher the visibility and impact in the digital landscape. Self-engagement on social media is a dynamic and influential aspect of online behaviour, shaping both individual experiences and digital communities. It serves as a tool for self-expression, fostering connection, and contributing to the formation of digital identities. Therefore, the question arises: 'What insights can the existing literature offer regarding the self-engagement behaviours and influencing factors of layout content among social media users?'

1.1 Social media

Social media is used to exchange knowledge, interact with people, and socialize with friends and family as well as to discover innovative ideas, pursue hobbies, and enjoy entertainment. Akram and Kumar (2017) stated that social media platforms have numerous positive effects such as aiding young individuals to develop their social skills. According to Dollarhide (2021), social media is a term for device technology that enables the exchange of concepts, thoughts, and knowledge through online platforms and allows users to send material instantly, including documents, movies, and images. It is now necessary to use social media for business as a means of connecting with customers, gaining insightful data, and raising brand recognition (McLachlan, 2021). This shows that entrepreneurs can promote their brand and engage with more new customers using various kinds of social media as each of them have distinctive characteristics.

Figure 1 Example of social media (Source: KOSMO!, 2021)

With a skilful marketing strategy and ongoing social media interaction with consumers, brands may develop their own identities. According to Walsh (2022), the top 10 social media apps are Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Reddit, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Business owners utilize social media to improve their performance in a variety of ways, such as to achieve corporate goals and boost their yearly sales (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). Moreover, social

media can be used to interact with consumers, learn what others are suggesting about the brand, and identify areas for improvement (Wicks, 2015). Social media is also effective for assisting businesses in developing marketing plans that meet their needs.

With a skilful marketing strategy and ongoing social media interaction with consumers, brands may develop their own identities. Furthermore, the technological gadget revolution continues to expand and getting better with more creative and innovative applications, such as smartphone applications (Ramlie et al., 2023). According to Walsh (2022), the top 10 social media apps are Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Reddit, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Business owners utilize social media to improve their performance in a variety of ways, such as to achieve corporate goals and boost their yearly sales (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). Moreover, social media can be used to interact with consumers, learn what others are suggesting about the brand, and identify areas for improvement (Wicks, 2015). Social media is also effective for assisting businesses in developing marketing plans that meet their needs.

Figure 2 Example of social media
(Source: Cassandra, 2019)

1.2   Viewer Engagement

Viewer engagement, also known as audience engagement, refers to the cognitive, affective, or emotional experiences individuals undergo when dedicating their time and concentration to a particular subject (Lehmann, Lalmas, Elad, & Dupret, 2012). It is a crucial factor to consider when developing an online business since connecting with users on social media may switch them from viewers to clients (Ferreira, 2021). According to McLachlan (2022), every social platform needs participation and engagement to create a favourable business impression and foster deep connections with current and prospective consumers. Dessart (2017) stated that successful viewer engagement totally strengthens brand connections, especially in terms of business connection, trust, and loyalty. It is known that viewer engagement not only builds customer loyalty but also is able to increase sales.

Figure 3 Example of engagement
(Source: Parnity Blog, 2021)

Whenever a business launches a social media campaign, many encounter issues with viewer engagement but there are a lot of ways to increase viewer engagement while strengthening customer relationships. Apply a diversity of visual or graphic to assist maintain the fascinating concept for business since audiences are more attracted to them instead of text only (Storm, 2022). Putting a picture, GIF, or short media clip into social media posts can enhance their accessibility and appeal to all user types (Rose, 2020). According to Lashand (2022), visually appealing graphics are especially powerful in generating memories in people's thoughts. Hence, sellers and customers can communicate with each other in a way that goes further beyond words.

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2 SELF- ENGAGEMENT AMONG MEDIA SOCIAL USERS

The term 'self-engagement' in the context of social media can be interpreted in various perspectives, and different scholars may provide nuanced definitions and conceptualizations. It is often viewed as the active involvement of individuals on social media platforms which includes actions such as posting content, commenting on posts, sharing, liking, and participating in online discussions (McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2016). However, according to Smith and Gallicano (2015), engagement is a state of mind and emotion, a level of involvement that comprises social media activities, but is simultaneously, distinct from them. In simpler terms, being engaged may involve interacting on social media, but mere interactivity may not necessarily indicate engagement. Some may conceptualize self-engagement as a process where individuals construct and present their digital identities (Wood et al., 2015; Brown, 2016; Takemiya & Vanieiev, 2018; Naik & Jenkins, 2020; Adjei et al., 2020; Gorea, 2021; Pattiyanon & Aoki, 2022; Chen, 2023). This involves curating and sharing content that reflects aspects of one's personality, interests, and life.

Self-engagement also can be defined in relation to the social connections and interactions individuals establish on social media (Wood et al., 2015). It encompasses forming and maintaining relationships, along with content created by others (Agustina, 2020). Some interpretations focus on the emotional aspects of self-engagement, highlighting how individuals utilize social media as platform to express emotions, seek validation, and receive feedback from their online community (Magu et al., 2017; Fitri et al., 2019). As stated from Dessart (2017b), self-engagement may involve deliberate efforts to build and promote a personal brand, showcasing skills, achievements, and unique qualities to influence how others perceive the individual online. Notably, heightened social media engagement significantly impacts brand relationships, particularly influencing brand trust, commitment, and loyalty (Muntinga et al., 2011). Additionally, community engagement appears as a precursor of brand engagement.

The concept of self-engagement may also be explored in relation to psychological well-being, emphasizing the role positive interactions and affirmation on social media in validating and satisfying individuals (Robinson et al., 2015). Previous research studies may incorporate various viewpoints when investigating self-engagement on social media. The diverse pattern of social media usage enables a broad range of definitions, reflecting the multifaceted ways individuals engage with and contribute to the digital space.

3   SOCIAL COMPARISON AND VALIDATION

On social media, individuals participate in social comparison and actively seek affirmation or validation through self-engagement activities. Commonly, users share content, such as achievements, experiences, or aspects of their lives, with the intention of garnering positive comparisons from their peers (Yılmaz & Soylu, 2015). This may include posting pictures from notable events, accomplishments, or exciting activities to highlight a desirable lifestyle. Additionally, social media serves as a platform for individuals who share similar experiences to connect, offering continuous access to support and get advice from a group of empathetic individuals with comparable lived experiences. As highlighted by Pearson et al. (2019), social media has recently emerged as an effective and cost-efficient means of widely disseminating health information to validate the experience of illness, provide reassurance, and alleviate feelings of isolation. Many people leverage social media to share their personal experiences with mental health challenges, seek support from others, and acquire information about treatment recommendations, accessing mental health services, and managing symptoms (Naslund et al., 2020; Alsisi et al., 2020).

As per Rachmadany et al. (2018), sharing motivational quotes, affirmations, or positive statements about oneself serves as a strategy for self-engagement, with the goal of seeking validation and encouragement from the online community. In this context, quotes are expressions crafted in the aspiration that individuals can cultivate strong personalities, consistently enhance themselves, and progress toward success. Furthermore, individuals might actively pursue validation from influencers or celebrities on social media by tagging them in posts, using relevant hashtags, or imitating their behaviors (Kim et al., 2016). This is because positive engagements from influencers can markedly enhance a user's feeling of validation. It is crucial to acknowledge that when individuals seeking validation through self-engagement, it can also have psychological implications, influencing self-esteem, social comparison, and overall well-being. Individuals may need to navigate a balance between online self-expression and maintaining a healthy perspective on social media interactions. Self-engagement individuals engage with social media allows for the improvement of platform features and functionalities (Ure et al., 2020). Platforms can be designed to better align with user preferences, thereby enhancing the overall user experience.

4   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Persuasion is an internal process that can be achieved by presenting a compelling argument supported by factual evidence and tapping into emotions. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is a theory that explains how attitudes are formed and changed through the process of information acquisition and processing (Cacioppo & Petty, 1984). Introduced by Petty and Cacioppo in 1981, this dual process theory suggests that individuals' attitudes are influenced by the type of information they receive and the cognitive effort they invest in processing that information. The ELM provides a framework for understanding persuasion, encompassing various factors such as the source, message, recipient, and context (Cacioppo & Petty, 1984). According to this model, the persuasive impact of a message can significantly impact the recipient's attitude, even if the intention of the message sender were not explicitly to change attitudes. According to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), persuasion can occur through two distinct routes: the central route and the peripheral route.

5   CENTRAL ROUTE PERSUASION

Central route persuasion involves deep cognitive processing and high level of elaboration as individuals spend more time contemplating a received message, they are more likely to be persuaded (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This route assumes that the audience is highly motivated and carefully examines the message's content. Users invest effort in analysing a message presented in a credible manner and if users are persuaded through central route processing, they will have focused on the message's merits (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Their decision to agree with the message will be the result of their own cognitive effort and thoughtful consideration. Additionally, they will be more inclined to

concentrate on the message and disregard distractions as they focus on their desire (Geddes, 2016). According to Wolswijk (2019), this approach is particularly effective when individuals are inclined towards analytical thinking, can evaluate arguments, and are not easily swayed by external information. As example, gamers will focus on computer quality and attributes such as CPU Speed and Ram size when it comes to buy a computer (Gong, 2016).

6 PERIPHERAL ROUTE PERSUASION

Peripheral route persuasion focuses on changing beliefs and involves minimal cognitive processing as individuals who follow this route do not critically evaluate messages for their effectiveness (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Instead, it is assumed that they are influenced by factors such as distractions or their limited knowledge about a particular product. These consumers pay more attention to peripheral cues in a design, such as visually appealing imagery, rather than the message's details (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). For example, even if a message is powerful, an image of a celebrity endorsing the product will capture their attention more. If a message successfully persuades them, such as through an engaging and informative advertisement design, they may act based on that message (Maharjan, 2018). Their behaviour is likely to be consistent and less susceptible to change, although they might be influenced by another convincing argument in the future. Due to their lower motivation, these consumers have limited capacity to remember the important or relevant aspects of a design and they are also more prone to disengaging from a design if they encounter distractions (Geddes, 2016). For instance, individuals who want to buy a good computer but cheap are more likely to rely on the peripheral route because of lack specific knowledge about computer features (Gong, 2016).
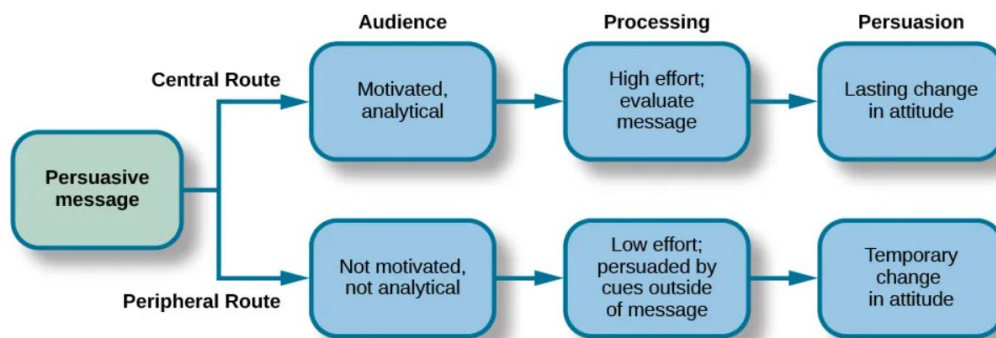

Figure 4 Elaboration Likelihood Model - Theories of Attitude and Behaviour Change - MCAT Content
(Source: Jack Westin, 2020)

7 PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL BASED ON ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD MODEL (ELM)

Social media needs to be better adapted to today's market conditions to create contents that can attract customers to engage effectively (Karlsson, 2007). This is necessary because modern markets operate differently, especially since the internet has emerged. Moreover, consumers engage with advertisements on different media platforms in unique ways, each platform having its own composition and the advent of digitalization has significantly influenced consumers' media habits (Sama, 2019).
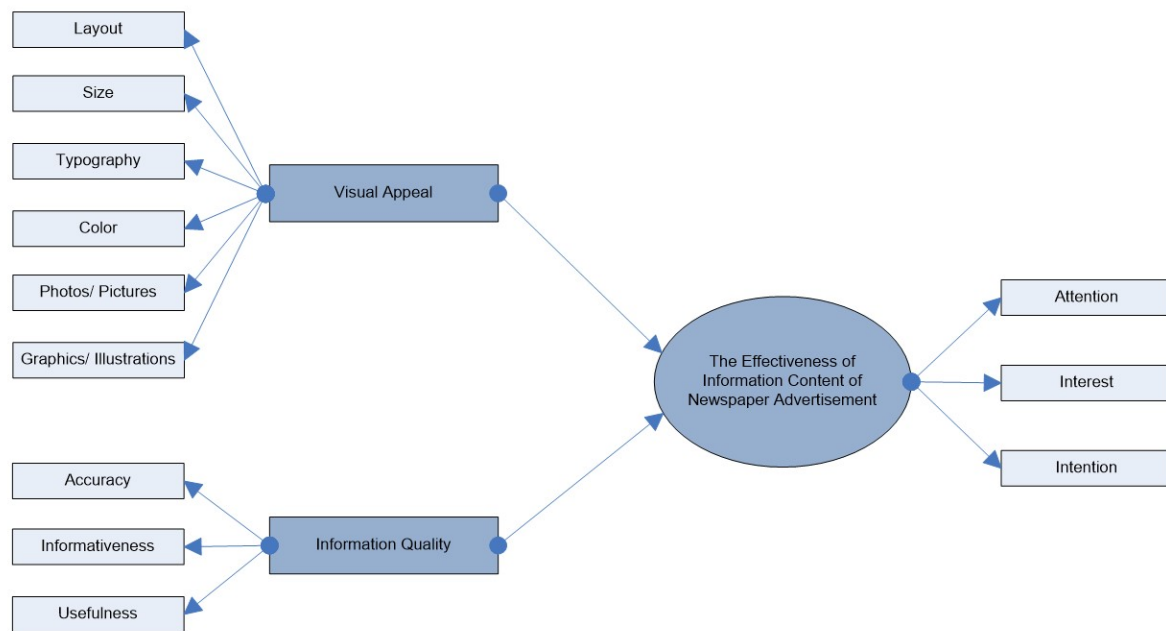
Figure 5 Information Content Effectiveness Strategy in Print Advertisement.
Malaysia (Source: Shahibi, Mazlan & Dollah, 2017)

Shahibi et al. (2017) conducted a study to explore the use of newspaper advertisement as a communication and persuasive tool by examining the factors that influence the progress of information content and the involvement of persuasive elements. They employed the information content effectiveness strategy, which was derived from the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), to discuss the advertising strategy and its advantages (Shahibi et al., 2017).

Wang (2018) highlights the importance of visual attractiveness in visual communication, as it allows designers to consider the audience's visual psychology and evoke various visual sensations. In advertising, the visual design emphasizes the informational aspects and provides additional aesthetic value within the advertisements (Shahibi et al., 2017). To capture the customers' interest, it is important to generate a unique design and captivating visual elements that can impress and provide impactful experience towards customer (Mitrović et al., 2020).

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According to Hayes and King (2014), information content is essential in generating consumer exposure, capturing attention, and fostering a positive perception of advertisements. The information in social media post should provide crucial details about the content, helping to eliminate uncertainty and enabling individuals to take appropriate actions (Shahibi et al., 2017). Hence, if the content details provide valuable information that aligns with customer needs, customers will seize the opportunity to engage with the post (Kim & Han, 2014).

8 PROPOSED GUIDELINES

Figure 6 below shows the proposed strategy for effectiveness of information content in print advertisement conducted by Shahibi et al., (2017). The guideline was developed using data collected in Malaysia, specifically tailored to align with the local context and environment. Shahibi et al. (2017) aim to offer solutions and recommendations for improving the effectiveness of print advertising by focusing on the development of information content. Their study also provides valuable insights into understanding the information needs of the target audience and how persuasion influences their perception of information (Shahibi et al., 2017).
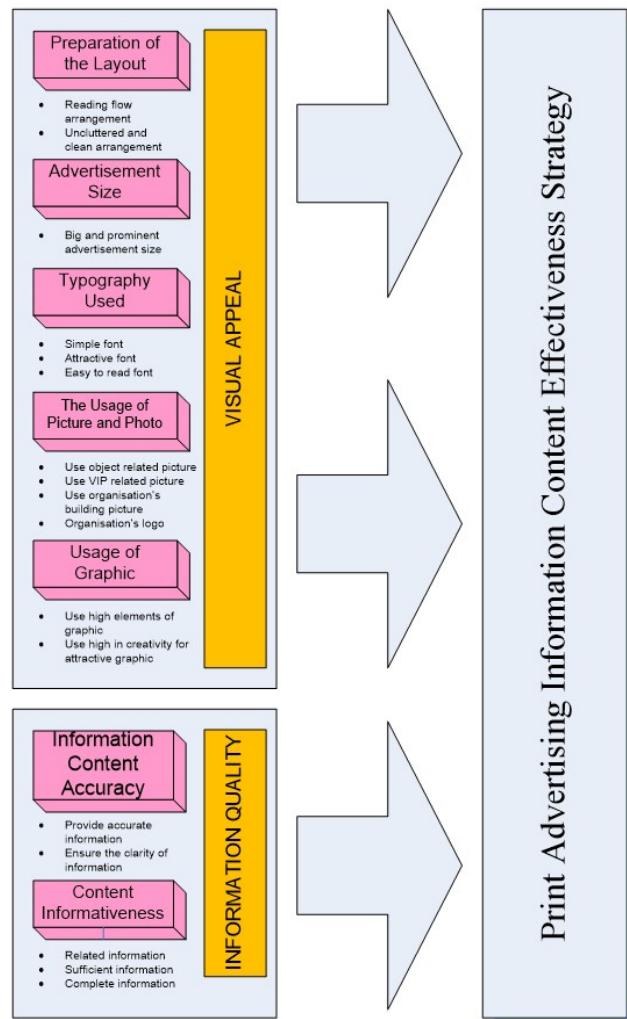

Figure 6 Proposed Guideline for an Effective Advertising Information Content for Newspaper Advertisement

The information presented in any post should have a significant impact on viewers' thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours towards the product or service being publish. Therefore, it is important to use the right layout to create an emotional connection with viewers and encourage them to engage with the posts by liking, commenting, or sharing it. Social media are commonly used by marketers, businesses, politicians, and other professionals to communicate their message to the public.

9 CONCLUSION

To sum up, self-engagement on social media is a complex phenomenon that actively shapes individual experiences and the dynamics of digital communities. Social media platforms serve as a canvas for individuals to present their identities, interests, personalities, fostering connections and building social bonds. Furthermore, self-engagement holds significant importance for businesses and influencers aiming to grow their audiences and establish devoted followings. Positive interactions play a crucial role in enhancing feelings of validation and well-being, while negative interactions can have repercussions on mental health.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) furnishes a theoretical structure for comprehending the mechanisms of persuasion via peripheral routes. This model holds particular significance in the context of self-engagement on social media, where users interact with content employing diverse cognitive processes. Utilizing successful tactics grounded in theoretical frameworks such as the ELM, businesses and individuals can refine their strategies for engagement and communication on social media platforms. Concurrently, social media platforms can adapt and improve their features to align with user preferences, guaranteeing a more fulfilling and satisfying user experience.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest declared for this paper.

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