Consumer Attitude Toward Viral Marketing among Generation Z

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Abstract: The proliferation of E-commerce and social networking of adoption has shaped the way how marketing works and thus the viral marketing has proven to be most effective and sought-after strategy that well suited with this technological era. Viral marketing deemed to have benefits from consuming less implementation cost, reaching wider target audience to being high efficiency. In spite of the potential provided by viral marketing, issue and problem has still arise. Many marketers are still struggling on utilizing and running the viral marketing to its highest forms through social media to influence the consumer. In order to mitigate such issue, the factor of consumer attitude (perceived of informativeness, perceived of entertainment, perceived of source credibility, perceived of emotion and perceived of irritation) were analysed to investigate the relationship between consumer attitude and viral marketing. This study used explanatory research as the research design. The researcher used sampling technique by distributing questionnaires to 384 respondents across Malaysia. Statistical and Service Solution (SPSS) among generation Z were employ to analyse the data collected. Pearson's correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were used in this study. It is recommended for marketer to highly provide viral messages that consist of beneficial content. Beneficial content could develop positive consumer perception toward viral marketing. Next, marketer should pay more attention on crafting viral content or video consist of deeper moral values and meaning. This could help marketer to influence the emotion features of each individual consumer and increase consumer recognition. Lastly, marketer should provide reliable and credible source to their consumer as the reliability of the source will generate a positivity or negativity consumer perception and reaction.

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INTRODUCTION

Viral Marketing has played a vital role in establishing the relationship between the modern era consumers and bringing the fundamental of marketing into the digital era. In today, Malaysia has been witnessed to experience an advancement in term of internet utilization from an increase in digital economy in an individual state to an increase in internet penetration rate per resident in a past few years. In accordance to the report We Are Social's (2019), four out of fifth of total Malaysian population are now statuses toward online which ramp up the active media social user to an increase to 78% and of Malaysia has ranked as 27th of worldwide as one of the country that has the highest internet penetration rate of 79%. Malaysia recorded to has the highest level of online penetration of 67% whereby each user has an average of four social media account Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC).

Consequently, viral marketing may still be a newly coined term that has many potential strategies to be explored as many corporate firms are still struggling on utilizing and running the viral marketing in the correct way to influence the respective target market. Furthermore, the succession rate of planting a viral message toward may deviate due to certain factor of the virality. Such ramification is driven by the short understanding on the application of viral strategies. Therefore, research has been done by research has been carrying out to identify the relationship between the viral marketing and consumer attitudes.

Pandey survey shows that the content of that are encode in the viral message are the major factor that influence the chances of consumer trust. The content include in the message is of the viral marketing are factor that causes consumer to value their time toward the marketing message. Additionally, Huynh[1] survey stresses on that content in viral message that consist of the element of fun and surprise are the main driven forces that determine a the successes of a viral campaign. For instance, viral message that portray the element of humour can increase the consumer involvement and attitude toward the advertisement. This shows that the factors of viral marketing do have positive relationship toward consumer attitude.

From Yu and Kamarulzama specified that message that is embedded in the viral message must be consumer-oriented. Such message must not contain corporate profit-oriented message through the medium of WhatsApp as a viral message conveyor. This goes to shows that content plays a key major role in ensuring the message were appealing and fascinating from the consumer perception.

Many of the above research has link the major influential factor that affect consumer. However, none of the research carried out were focusing on the corresponding respondent from Generation Z specifically. Nevertheless, Generation Z is the deemed to be the new uprising forces that carry greater impact to the future of purchasing power[2]. This research established to determine the potential viral marketing factor that influence consumer attitude of generation Z. The research will be carried out through the quantitative method.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Viral Marketing is defined as a marketing strategy that uses the medium of social network to promote a product or services. In laymen terms, viral marketing can be represented a promotional way where consumer help spread marketing message through internet. According to Stevenson, term such as "word of mouth marketing" and "buzz marketing "is normally used as a replacement word for Viral Marketing. Kiss and Bichler stated that viral marketing is refer to modern days marketing tools that adopted social network as an instrument in create brand awareness in such way that the message is often declared as a virus that distribute in all different corresponding ways. With this, viral marketing often encourage consumer to share marketing message within the community[3].

Viral Marketing has been used as an alternative solution by many famous organization. The viral marketing also considered to be more profitable as compared to commercial marketing strategy. This is because viral marketing harnesses many benefits such as delivered to broader of target market, personalized content message, message transmission disseminates in a short period of time and measurable consumer reaction. Furthermore, viral marketing can enable brand to have boundless target market as compared to conventional marketing. Hence, viral marketing is indisputably one of the most effective promotional tools to conquer the consumer interest in today's technological era.

In this research, the conceptual framework is proposed to specify the schematics of this study, variable under the examination and the relationships between the independent variable and variable. This study will examine the variable of informative, entertainment, source credibility and emotion. The variables are from the research done by Zernigah and Sohail[4]. The constructed framework above shows the relationship between independent variable (informative, entertainment, source credibility and emotion) and dependent variable (Generation Z consumer attitude toward viral marketing) (Fig. 1).

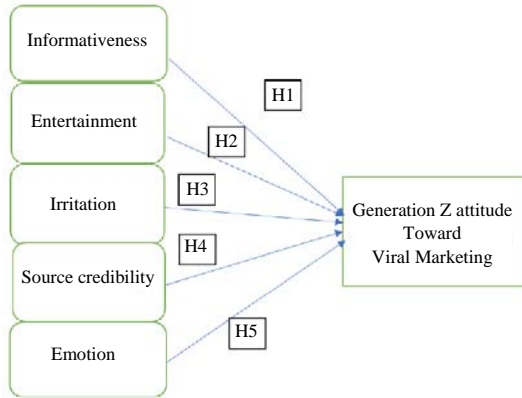Fig 1: Conceptual research framework adapted from framework of Zernigah and Sohail[4]

METHODOLOGY AND RESULT

Explanatory research and quantitative method were chosen by the research in this study. The research data source is obtained from both primary and secondary data. Survey was further chosen as the research strategy. The questionnaires were chosen as the method of data collection. Hence, the sample size of the respondent chosen for questionnaires is 384 respondents. The data obtained will be analyse through Cronbach's alpha, validity test, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression Analysis. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) were used by researchers to formulate and tabulate the data.

Exploratory factor analysis was used to identify whether the item associated within its group of independent variables. This shows that the purpose of EFA is to measure the specific set of items that affect the variables in the data structure (Table 1-4). EFA was

Table 1: Variables

Independent variable	No	Item
Informativeness	IE1	I find viral marketing messages to be informative
	IE2	Viral marketing messages displayed on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) are informative
	IE3	Viral advertisements provide beneficial information about products and services
	IE4	I feel that viral advertisement can be an important source of information provider
	IE5	I feel that viral marketing messages are a good source for timely information
	IE6	Viral message provides useful information that I need
Entertainment	EN1	I find marketing messages received from emails to be entertaining
	EN2	Joining fan pages on social media for more viral news can be entertaining and exciting
	EN3	The element of comedy and fun adds to the enjoyment of viral advertising
	EN4	I find viral information enjoyable since it allows people to share their opinions on products and services which makes them fascinating and worthwhile to read
	EN5	I feel that receiving viral advertisements is enjoyable and entertaining
	EN6	I feel that receiving viral advertisements is pleasant
Irritation	IR1	Frequent receiving of viral messages can be a source of irritation
	IR2	I believe that some viral messages contain viruses
	IR3	On social media, viral marketing messages irritate people
	IR4	I often ignore reading viral messages in social media
	IR5	I feel that some viral advertisement can be annoying
	IR6	I find viral information to be misleading and unreliable
	IR7	Some contents in viral advertisements can be offensive
Source credibility	SC1	Viral information on social media is trustworthy
	SC2	I trust viral message that I received
	SC3	I trust the information provided in viral messages
	SC4	I use viral information as a reference for purchasing
	SC5	I trust viral advertisement to come from authentic source
Emotion	EM1	I feel that some viral message inspired me to share to others
	EM2	Some viral messages can change my view on certain things differently
	EM3	Viral messages can give me an impact of sadness
	EM4	Viral messages can give me an impact of anger
	EM5	Viral messages can give me an impact of joyfulness

Table 2: The communalities extraction using principal component analysis method

Variables	Initial	Extraction
IE1	1.000	0.780
IE2	1.000	0.757
IE3	1.000	0.718
IE4	1.000	0.760
IE5	1.000	0.759
IE6	1.000	0.701
EN1	1.000	0.788
EN2	1.000	0.737

Table 2: Continue

Variables	Initial	Extraction
EN3	1.000	0.767
EN4	1.000	0.786
EN5	1.000	0.791
EN6	1.000	0.788
IR2	1.000	0.691
IR3	1.000	0.659
IR4	1.000	0.682
IR5	1.000	0.713

Table 3: Total variance explained using PCA method

Component	"Initial Eigenvalues"			"Extraction sum of squared loadings"			"Rotation sum of squared loadings"		
	Total	Variance (%)	Cumulative (%)	Total	Variance (%)	Cumulative (%)	Total	Variance (%)	Cumulative (%)
1	11.863	43.937	43.937	11.863	43.947	43.937	4.694	17.384	17.384
2	2.671	9.891	53.828	2.671	9.891	53.828	4.277	15.842	33.226
3	2.383	8.826	62.654	2.383	8.826	62.654	4.264	15.794	49.020
4	2.061	7.633	70.287	2.061	7.633	70.287	4.070	15.073	64.093
5	1.355	5.019	75.306	1.355	5.019	75.306	3.028	11.213	75.306
6	0.665	2.463	77.769	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	0.614	2.274	80.043	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	0.501	1.856	81.899	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	0.471	1.743	83.642	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	0.456	1.689	85.331	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	0.424	1.572	86.903	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	0.401	1.487	88.390	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	0.373	1.383	89.773	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	0.331	1.227	91.000	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	0.314	1.162	92.162	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	0.293	1.085	93.283	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	0.280	1.036	94.283	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	0.248	0.917	95.200	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	0.218	0.809	96.009	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	0.200	0.742	96.751	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	0.184	0.681	97.432	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	0.160	0.594	98.026	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	0.133	0.493	98-519	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	0.114	0.422	98.941	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	0.106	0.393	99.334	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	0.95	0.350	99.684	-	-	-	-	-	-
27	0.085	0.316	100.000	-	-	-	-	-	-

Extraction method: Principal component analysis

Table 4: Rotated component matrix (Extraction: principal component analysis, Varimax with Kaiser normalization)

Variables	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
EN5	0.836				
EN4	0.818				
EN2	0.807				
EN6	0.806				
EN3	0.799				
EN1	0.761				
SC2		0.877			
SC3		0.869			
SC1		0.849			
SC5		0.831			
SC4		0.713			
IE4			0.818		
IE1			0.810		
IE2			0.786		
IE5			0.769		
IE6			0.740		
IE3			0.641		
IR5				0.812	
IR2				0.775	

Table 4: Continue

Variables	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
IR6				0.775	I R 4
				0.773	I R 3
				0.710	I R 7
				0.681	
EM5					0.768
EM3					0.714
EM1					0.709
EM2					0.672

Extraction method: Principal component analysis; Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization[a]; a. Rotation converged in 6 iteration

Table 5: Pearson's correlation coefficient A; Saunders *et al*.[5]

Pearson's correlation coefficient (R values)	Description of the relationship
±0.70 to ±1.0	Very strong relationship
±0.40 to ±0.69	Strong relationship
±0.30 to ±0.39	Moderate relationship
±0.20 to ±0.29	Weak relationship
±0.01 to ±0.19	No relationship

Table 6: Correlation analysis of independent and dependent variables

Variables	DV1	IV1	IV2	IV3	IV4	IV5
DV1						
Pearson correlation	1	0.438**	0.346**	0.184**	0.306**	0.371**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	400	400	400	400	400	400
IV1						
Pearson correlation	0.438**	1	0.721**	0.74	0.122*	0.222*
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	-	0.000	0.140	0.015**	0.000
N	400	400	400	400	400	400
IV2						
Pearson correlation	0.346**	0.721**	1	-0.59	0.210**	0.242**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	-	0.242	0.000	0.000
N	400	400	400	400	400	400
IV3						
Pearson correlation	0.184**	0.074	-0.059	1	-0.040	0.122*
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.140	0.242	-	0.430	0.015
N	400	400	400	400	400	400
IV4						
Pearson correlation	0.306**	0.122*	0.210**	-0.040	1	0.500**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.015	0.000	0.430	-	0.000
N	400	400	400	400	400	400
IV5						
Pearson correlation	0.371**	0.222**	0.242**	0.122*	0.500**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.015	0.000	-
N	400	400	400	400	400	400

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); DV1 = Consumer attitude toward Viral Marketing; IV1 = Informativeness; IV2 = Entertainment; IV3 = Irritation; IV4 = Source credibility; IV5 = Emotion

conducted to reduce the variable to a smaller number in comparison to the original variables. In short, exploratory factor analysis was used by the researcher to use to confirm either the listed item in questionnaires belong to the suitable independent variable.

After that the questionnaire were distributed again and the data was analysed to find out the questions of the research.

Pearson's correlation coefficient: Pearson's correlation coefficient is a method that was perform in this research

to test the validity and the strength of the data relationship. The consumer attitude toward viral marketing can be influence from the factors of informativeness, entertainment, irritation, source credibility and emotion. Table 5 shows the guidelines of Pearson's correlation coefficient for interpreting correlation range of the R values.

Table 6 showed the correlation between the five independent variables which are informativeness, entertainment, irritation, source credibility and emotion to dependent variable which is customer attitude towards

Table 7: Model summary of multiple regression analysis

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	SE of the estimate
1	0.555[a]	0.308	0.299	0.87484

a. Predictors: (Constant), emotion, irritation, informativeness, source credibility, entertainment

viral marketing among generation Z in Malaysia. Multiple regression was utilized in this research to analyse the independent variables which were emotion, irritation, informativeness, source credibility, Emotion and the dependent variable of consumer attitude toward Viral Marketing. The aim of multiple regression analysis is to identify the significant relationship between independent variable and dependent variable (Table 7).

This means that 30.8% of variation in Malaysia consumer attitude among generation Z toward Viral Marketing are influenced by the independent variable of emotion, irritation, informativeness, source credibility and entertainment. The regression coefficient is stated as R = 0.555[a] which indicate that there is correlation between dependent variable (Consumer Attitude toward Viral Marketing) and independent variable (Emotion, irritation, informativeness, source credibility and entertainment).

CONCLUSION

In summary, informativeness has proved to be the most significant factor that influence the consumer attitude. The result is congruence with previous researches by Zernigah and Sohail[4] which agrees on informativeness play the most important roles in influencing consumer attitude in Malaysia. The researcher further indicated informativeness as a prediction tool of viral marketing and held a major role in determine the outcome of consumer's attitude. This is further proved by the statistic report from MCMC where 82.7% of Malaysian internet user claimed that sharing beneficial content is the main purpose of using social media platform. Since, viral marketing is marketing method that emphasize on spreading marketing message or propaganda using the influencing power of individual consumer[8]. Hence, the informativeness of the viral content play a vital role in motivating the reader to spread the message to the online community. The following significant of were followed by the emotion as the second significant factor, source credibility as the third significant factor, Irritation as the fourth significant factor. The entertainment factor does not have significant impact on consumer attitudes

As opposed to the research finding, there are several local researchers such as Nordin et al.[7] and Hashim et al.[8] finding shows difference result on the significant within the variable. Based on the research of Nordin et al.[7], the independent variable of source credibility is proven to be the most significant variable

that influence consumer attitude. The reason behind the disparities is due researcher selection of respondent from generation Y and secluded research location. From the research of Hashim et al.[8], the results shows that entertainment is proven to be the most significant variable that influence consumer attitude. The reasons behind the disparities is due to the wider scope of Malaysian respondent as compared to the current research which focus on generation Z as the main target survey respondents.

From the theoretical contribution, this research could be used as reference for study, other research purposes and contribute in gaining addition knowledge. Moreover, this research has expanded the factor of viral marketing by adding "Emotion" as an independent variable. The additional determinant of emotion has proven to be one of the newly found viral marketing factor that influence the consumer attitude. For the practical contribution, in order to produce effective viral messages, marketer should understand and prioritize the vital component of viral marketing that influence the consumer attitude in Malaysia. This research tried to provide depth measurement and understand the antecedents of components that effect on consumer attitude from the group of generation Z in Malaysia. Firstly, the research study has suggested that marketer should incorporate the element of viral marketing such as informativeness, emotion, source credibility to its viral campaign. From the study, it is recommended for marketer to highly provide viral messages that consist of beneficial content. Beneficial content could develop positive consumer perception toward viral marketing. Next, marketer should pay more attention on crafting viral content or video consist of deeper moral values and meaning. This could help marketer to influence the emotion features of each individual consumer and increase consumer recognition. Lastly, marketer should provide reliable and credible source to their consumer as the reliability of the source will generate a positivity or negativity consumer perception and reaction.

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