



Exploring the Impacts of Viral Captions in Digital Content Promotion on Impulse Buying Decisions

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Abstract. This article explores the utilization of marketing promotion techniques, with a particular focus on strategies applicable to digital marketing for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs). It aims to examine the role of these techniques in influencing unplanned consumer buying decisions, which can provide transient strategic opportunities complementing long-term strategies. The research sample consisted of 110 respondents, with the research centered on two MSME brands that had undergone digital training. The data collection process involved the distribution of questionnaires, seeking to gauge the extent to which the presence of viral captions in promotional content, particularly in the digital media realm, influences the propensity for unplanned purchases. Experimental testing was conducted, dividing participants into two groups: the control group and the experimental group. Subsequently, quantitative analysis was applied to assess the experimental results following the training period. The findings of this study underscore the significant impact of incorporating introductory words or text alongside viral content on social media in boosting the number of purchases, relative to the pre-implementation period without viral captions in promotional content. This observed increase surpasses previous rates, attracting new buyers from diverse geographical locations. Consequently, the analysis suggests that viral promotion strategies have the potential to exert a notable influence on consumer behavior, expediting purchasing decisions. This insight holds particular relevance for MSMEs, offering a valuable reference point as they navigate the realm of digital marketing and seek to optimize their promotional efforts.

Keywords: Decisions, Impulse Buy, Promotion, Viral Caption.

1 Introduction

The utilization of social media as a digital marketing tool has emerged as a potent means of influencing target audiences, particularly in the context of Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs). A growing number of these enterprises are embracing social media as an integral component of their marketing strategies. At the heart of

this transformation lies the creation of captivating and distinctive content, a pivotal element within the domain of digital marketing. Astute businesses recognize the importance of crafting content that resonates with their audience, as previous research has illuminated the critical role played by the language, written communication, and messages conveyed to consumers in digital promotion[1]. The ability to adapt to evolving consumer behaviors and demands is paramount for MSMEs. The advent of digitalization has precipitated a profound transformation in consumer habits, disrupting traditional consumption patterns while simultaneously offering a host of opportunities and challenges[2].

Digitalization has wrought significant alterations in lifestyle, ushering in both positive and negative impacts[3]. On the positive side, it has facilitated enhanced access, convenience, and efficiency, thereby revolutionizing the manner in which individuals connect, learn, and work, transcending geographical barriers. Digitalization has enabled cross-border collaboration, virtual education[4], and remote business interactions, resulting in remarkable gains in time efficiency and resource optimization. However, these shifting lifestyle dynamics have also signaled a shift in consumer segmentation and purchasing behavior, underscoring the critical importance of effectively communicating promotional messages. As posited in prior research, consumer behavior can be molded by controlled factors, influencing planned or impulsive purchasing decisions[5].

The ascent of viral content in the realm of digital promotion represents an emergent trend of significance. It is noteworthy to mention that in the context of Bangladesh, product quality and equitable pricing were found to be less pivotal in explaining the purchase intentions of Bangladeshi women[6]. Impulse buying decisions, particularly in the domain of online shopping, can be precipitated by an array of factors, including enticing discounts, attention-capturing advertisements, and emotional responses evoked during product exploration. This trend proffers a tantalizing opportunity for MSMEs to fashion effective promotional strategies anchored in the creation of imaginative, distinctive, and viral content, capable of captivating consumers and stimulating unplanned purchases[7]. Such strategies transcend traditional marketing paradigms, focusing instead on seizing the attention of consumers and stimulating impromptu buying decisions[8].

The application of factor analysis can serve as a valuable tool to identify the principal factors exerting influence on consumer behavior. Grasping these factors empowers enterprises to pinpoint the most influential market variables and to craft more potent marketing strategies[9]. One salient characteristic of consumer behavior is the propensity to satisfy consumption needs to be driven by a curiosity about a product. This curiosity frequently translates into prompt online purchases, fueled by consumers' perpetual quest for compelling, unique, fashionable, and cost-effective offerings. The shift in consumer attitudes, characterized by a proclivity for curiosity-driven consumption, engenders a distinctive opportunity for MSMEs. Therefore, this article delves into how the influence of viral captions can enhance impulse buying decisions, ultimately benefiting businesses by augmenting sales and encouraging consumer purchasing behaviors, even for goods that lie beyond immediate necessity. This discourse is elucidated through the

lens of MSMEs, shedding light on their particular needs and aspirations within the domain of promotional strategies.

2 Methods

The experimental method serves as a rigorous research approach designed to scrutinize hypotheses by the meticulous control of variables while observing resultant outcomes. Within this experimental paradigm, the ensuing data is subjected to quantitative analysis and statistical scrutiny to discern the presence of statistical significance. This article employs the pre-test and post-test control group design as the chosen methodology for data analysis. In this experimental setup, variables are measured both before and after the intervention within two distinct groups: the control group and the experimental group. Data analysis entails the comparison of mean differences between these two groups, considering factors such as the utilization of viral captions within the content and the absence thereof. Additionally, a power analysis is conducted to ascertain whether the inclusion of viral captions in product advertisements exerts a substantial influence on impulsive buying decisions, thereby engendering heightened sales figures. To substantiate the hypothesis underpinning this research, a hypothesis test is executed, guided by a predefined significance level of 0.05. Subsequently, a statistical test, specifically the t-test, is employed to gauge the divergence in average purchase behavior between the control group and the experimental group. The study encompasses 110 experimental respondents who have been meticulously partitioned into these two groups. Through comprehensive data analysis, the hypothesis test aims to elucidate whether viral captions indeed wield a discernible impact on impulsive buying decisions, ultimately culminating in amplified sales. The pivotal criterion for asserting this influence rests upon the determination of a p-value that falls below the stipulated significance level. Should this condition be met, it becomes tenable to assert that the presence of viral captions does indeed engender a consequential effect on impulsive buying behaviors, consequently augmenting sales figures.

3 Result and Discussion

The study encompassed two distinct groups, each comprising 55 respondents. The first group, labeled as the control group, underwent a promotional strategy bereft of viral captions, while the second group, designated as the experimental group, received promotional content enriched with viral captions[10].

The research design hewed to the pre-test and post-test control group framework. Within this experimental paradigm, variables were meticulously assessed both before and after the experiment's implementation, with data collection spanning across the control and experimental groups. The primary analytical focus centered on discerning the average differences observed between these two groups in terms of their sales performance before and after the experimental intervention. The ensuing stages of the experimental procedure were carried out to evaluate the influence of viral captions on

impulsive buying decisions. The research sought to ascertain whether the inclusion of viral captions yielded a discernible impact on the inclination to make impulsive purchasing decisions. This effect was gauged by scrutinizing variations in average sales between the control group and the experimental group before and after the experiment.

Correspondent

- a. 110 with 2 control groups and an experimental group
- b. With the criteria of respondents like to shop through digital applications

Control variables for the effect of viral captions on making impulsive buying decisions:

1. Product type: fashion adult for both women and men
2. Product price: the price range taken is between Rp. 50,000-150,000
3. Psychological condition of the participants: is a consumptive character

By meticulously controlling these variables, we can mitigate the influence of extraneous factors that may affect impulsive buying decisions, thereby ensuring that the experimental outcomes accurately reflect the genuine impact of viral captions on such decisions. To assess the statistical influence of viral captions on impulsive buying decisions, a regression analysis was conducted. In addition, it is imperative to establish the baseline average sales figures for two MSMEs offering similar products, specifically in the fashion industry, before the experiment took place during the 8-month period spanning 2021-2022. These figures were measured in terms of quantity per score. Upon analyzing the sales data for these two fashion-based MSMEs, the average sales over the course of 8 months amounted to 30 scores, with no specific consideration given to the quality of promotions and content. Subsequently, the results of the quantitative analysis were applied to the control group, which did not receive the viral caption treatment. This was done using the following formula:

$$t = (r\sqrt{(n-2)})/\sqrt{(1-r^2)} \quad (1)$$

where r is the correlation coefficient, and n is the number of respondents.

With a value of $n = 55$ and $r = 0.1756$, then:

$$t = (0.1756\sqrt{(55-2)})/\sqrt{(1-0.1756^2)} \quad (2)$$

$$t = (0.1756\sqrt{53})/\sqrt{(0.694984)} \quad t = 1.389 \quad (3)$$

The calculated t -value of 1.389 was obtained. However, to assess the statistical significance of this t -value, it must be compared to the critical t -value at a specific significance level, typically 5% (0.05). In this case, we are referring to the critical t -value at the 5% significance level with degrees of freedom (df) equal to 53, which can be obtained from a t -distribution table. For this degree of freedom, the critical t -value is found to be 2.007. Comparing the calculated t -value (1.389) to the critical t -value (2.007), we conclude that the relationship between the use of viral captions and unplanned purchase decisions is not statistically significant at the 5% significance level. Moving to the experimental group, to calculate the t -value, the following formula is utilized:

$$t = (r\sqrt{(n-2)})/\sqrt{(1-r^2)} \quad (4)$$

where r is the correlation coefficient, and n is the number of respondents to the experimental treatment.

With a value of $n = 55$ and $r = 0.746$, then:

$$t = (0.746\sqrt{(55-2)})/\sqrt{(1-0.746^2)} \quad (5)$$

$$t = (0.746\sqrt{53})/\sqrt{(0.446564)} \quad (6)$$

$$t = 8.602 \quad (7)$$

The t -value for this analysis is calculated to be 8.602. To assess its statistical significance, we compare it to the critical value of t at a 5% significance level (0.05), which corresponds to degrees of freedom (df) equal to 53. This critical t -value can be obtained from the t -distribution table and is found to be 2.007. Since the calculated t -value (8.602) is significantly greater than the critical t -value (2.007), we can conclude that the relationship between the use of viral captions and unplanned purchase decisions is indeed statistically significant at the 5% significance level. Comparing the results of the regression analysis in the two groups, it becomes evident that the experimental group, which utilized viral captions in their promotions, showed a significantly higher impact compared to the control group, which did not use viral captions. This underscores the potency of leveraging psychological factors related to consumers' lifestyle needs and social status. The statistical significance of this impact provides compelling evidence that crafting viral captions in promotional content on social media stimulates consumers' psychology, leading to impulsive transactions driven by lifestyle goals or social recognition[11].

These findings align with existing literature, emphasizing that psychological and social factors play substantial roles in influencing product promotional styles. The objective is to generate consumer interest and prompt swift purchasing decisions, even when the initial intention was merely to browse or engage with social media, essentially resulting in impulsive buying decisions. While promotional treatments utilizing viral captions have the potential to boost sales and increase brand awareness, it is crucial to maintain consistency and relevance in caption content. This is necessary to address consumers' concerns about product and service quality and to avoid any potential backlash. It is advisable for business owners to consider segmentation and target the appropriate audience by tailoring caption styles to match product values[12]. This provides a valuable reference for future research aimed at enhancing brand awareness and empowering consumers to make informed impulsive purchasing decisions without feeling deceived by viral promotions[13]. Moreover, viral marketing can impact online consumer behavior by fostering brand trust through message dissemination. When individuals receive promotional messages from people within their social network, trust and confidence in the brand or product can be instilled[14]. This strengthens brand trust and increases the likelihood of product purchase.

Furthermore, viral marketing can enhance brand credibility as a result of the spontaneous and natural virality process. As promotional messages spread widely through social networks, consumers perceive that many others have accepted and trusted the brand or product. This, in turn, boosts consumer perceptions of brand credibility and strengthens

trust[15]. The effectiveness of viral marketing on social media is influenced by message appeal and consumer engagement. Creative and engaging messages tend to capture more attention and leave a lasting impact on consumers. Unique, humorous, or emotional messages are particularly effective in driving consumer actions, including product purchases. Consumer engagement, which refers to active participation in marketing campaigns, can amplify the reach and effectiveness of the campaign. Engaged consumers are more likely to share campaigns with their networks, expanding the campaign's reach and impact[16]. In summary, the combination of attractive messages and high consumer engagement can significantly enhance the effectiveness of viral marketing campaigns on social media. This can trigger consumer actions, such as making purchases, and fortify trust in the brand[17].

4 Conclusion

The research findings presented here clearly indicate that viral captions wield a significant influence over consumers, driving them to make rapid and, at times, impulsive purchasing decisions. This underscores a shift in promotional trends toward targeting psychological segmentation. Previous research has further bolstered this notion by shedding light on the psychological factors that play pivotal roles in shaping impulsive buying decisions. These factors encompass emotions, perceived self-control, perceived life satisfaction, and brand trust, all of which exert a notable impact on consumer impulsive buying behavior. Additionally, brand trust is intertwined with perceptions of self-control and pleasure, while anxiety can influence perceptions of self-control. These findings offer valuable insights for businesses aiming to boost their sales through strategic marketing, particularly within the realm of promotions. They underscore the importance of astutely leveraging the opportunities presented by digitalization to capture consumers' attention through viral captions that target the right audience. By doing so, businesses can not only increase brand awareness but also cultivate consumer loyalty, even when impulsive buying decisions are primarily driven by lifestyle or consumptive needs. It is imperative for producers and marketers to uphold certain key principles in this endeavor. Chief among them is a commitment to product quality and the promotion of core product values. These elements form the foundation for a sustained, consistent, and relevant promotional strategy, particularly when employing viral captions. This approach ensures that promotional efforts remain effective and align with consumer expectations and preferences, ultimately fostering enduring success in the ever-evolving landscape of marketing and consumer behavior.

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