

Influence of social media influencers and testimonials on consumer attitudes and purchase decisions for Scarlett Whitening products

Rahmad¹, Irvan Adi Girsang², Crisda Emeliana Girsang³, Aldini Syahputri⁴, Vhiona Mayari Tandela⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5}Fakultas Ekonomi, Universitas Simalungun, Pematang Siantar, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received : May 18, 2023
Revised : Jun 17, 2023
Accepted : Jul 26, 2023

Keywords:

Social;
Media;
Influencer;
Testimonials.

ABSTRACT

Product marketing through influencers on social media is a new phenomenon in the marketing industry. Therefore, marketing through social media is carried out by a company to reach a certain target market through people who have great influence on social media or are called influencers. These influencers are adjusted to the values of the product to be marketed in order to find suitable potential customers. Influencers will also provide new information and demonstrate their skills to influence consumer attitudes or behavior in making purchasing decisions. Apart from influencers, there are also testimonials that are used to attract customers to make a decision before making a purchase. These testimonials are real evidence shared by consumers who have felt satisfied or disappointed with the products or services they bought on social media. The method used in this study is data collection in the form of a questionnaire given to 56 respondents by providing structured questions, and using variable data, namely data on the dependent variable (Y) and the independent variable (X). The results of data processing obtained from 56 respondents who are USI economics students who use social media, it can be concluded that social media influencers and testimonials of a beauty product called Scarlett Whitening are quite significant in influencing consumer behavior and determining consumer satisfaction. Because the results of the percentage of answer scores that each indicator have are in the strong category, namely 3.24% for the influencer variable, 2.98% for the testimonial variable, and 3.23% for the consumer behavior variable.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](#) license.



Corresponding Author:

Vhiona Mayari Tandela
Fakultas Ekonomi, Universitas Simalungun
Jl. Sisingamangaraja Barat, Bah Kapul, Kec. Siantar Sitalasari, Kota Pematang Siantar, Sumatera Utara
21142.
Email: vhionamayari4@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing via social media is used when a company wants to direct marketing efforts to specific individuals called influencers (Biaudet, 2017; Glucksman, 2017). These influencers are aligned with brand values and are used by companies to find potential customers (Jacobson et al., 2023). Apart from that, influencers also provide new information and have the ability to influence the attitudes and behavior of other people, including helping potential customers make purchasing decisions. Trust in

an influencer is very important because if not, the brand risks losing its credibility (Woods, 2016). Influencer marketing has experienced rapid growth since 2016 and this trend continues to grow, even being listed as one of the biggest trends. Experts predict that influencer marketing will continue to grow in 2018.

The millennial generation, or also known as generation Y, refers to individuals born between 1980 and 2000. This generation is interesting because they are familiar with internet developments and actively use social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Blogs (Fietkiewicz et al., 2016). They were the first to get involved in the digital world, actively sharing and contributing content to other users on social media platforms (Ma et al., 2011). On average, millennials spend five hours a day on social media, making them excellent targets for online influencer marketing (Chopra et al., 2021). Apart from that, millennials also make up the majority of the population who have independent incomes, so they are an attractive segment for businesses (Mičík & Mičudová, 2018).

Product marketing through influencers on social media is a new phenomenon in the industry (Kadekova & Holienčinova, 2018). Currently, there is much discussion of this topic in contemporary media, but little scientific research has been conducted (Lunt & Livingstone, 1996). The literature review covers the identification of social media influencers, the importance of digital marketing, and its impact on brands, as well as planning strategies used in communicating with consumers (Hudders et al., 2021).

The skin care industry is experiencing rapid growth, with a variety of beauty product brands leading to intense competition (Martins et al., 2014). Today's consumers are very critical in choosing beauty products, and manufacturers need to always try to understand consumers' needs in order to achieve a good image in their minds (Gilmore & Pine, 1997). If consumers have no experience with a product, they tend to trust brands that are well-known, well-liked, or have a good image (Mukherjee, 2009). This encourages manufacturers to strengthen their brand position positively and include a brand image that gives a good impression to consumers (Kotler et al., 2019). One of the beauty product brands from Indonesia is Scarlett, which was founded by artist Felicya Angelista in 2017. This brand has attracted the attention of Indonesian women with various products such as Body Lotion, Body Scrub, Facial Wash, Shower Scrub, Moisturizer and Serum. Scarlett is a product brand.

2. METHOD

2.1 Operational Definition of Variables

Variables refer to characteristics of individuals or objects that have different values, scores, or measures for each different individual or variable. The operational definition of a variable refers to a complete set of instructions for determining what to measure and how to measure the variable (Ma'ruf, 2015: 175). In the context of this research, the operational definition of variables can be explained as follows:

2.1.1 Dependent Variable (Y) - consumer behavior

Scarlett Whitening product decisions refer to the attitudes or behavior of USI economics faculty students in choosing between several alternative products purchased via social media or e-commerce. Indicators of purchasing Scarlett Whitening products by USI economics faculty students include: Pay more attention to visible things; Interest in something that triggers further curiosity; The desire to own the product; Generate confidence to make decisions; Take action.

2.1.2 Independent Variable (X)

Social media influencers (X1): Social media refers to internet platforms that allow users to represent themselves, interact, collaborate, share, communicate with other users, and form social bonds virtually. Social media is digital media where social interactions and activities of its users occur. The values that exist in society or communities can also appear in the same or different forms on the internet.

Testimonials (X2): Testimonials refer to consumer testimonials or statements uploaded by sellers on social media platforms, such as Facebook, regarding consumer satisfaction with a product that has been purchased. Testimonial indicators in this research include: The content of the message emphasizes factual and logical matters; Content of the message that creates trust among the audience; The content of the message comes from a trustworthy source.

2.2 Type and Location of Research

2.2.1 Type of Research

This research is quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2011: 14), quantitative research is a research method that is based on the philosophy of positivism and is used to investigate certain populations or samples. Sampling techniques are generally carried out randomly (random sampling), data collection uses research instruments, and data analysis is carried out quantitatively/statistically with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses.

2.2.2 Research Location

This research was conducted at the Faculty of Economics, Simalungun University, Jalan Sisingamangaraja Barat, Pematang Siantar City 21139.

2.3 Research Approach

The approach used in this research is a correlation research approach, which aims to determine the relationship between product displays (X1) and testimonials (X2) on social media and the decision to purchase Scarlett Whitening products by USI economics faculty students.

2.4 Population and Sample

2.4.1 Population

According to Sugiyono (2011: 117), population is a collection of subjects or objects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to study and draw conclusions. In this study, the population was all USI economics faculty students.

2.4.2 Sample

According to Sugiyono (2011: 118), the sample is part of the number and characteristics of the population. The sampling method used in this research is purposive sampling, where data is selected based on certain criteria in accordance with the research objectives. The criteria used in determining the sample for this research are: USI economics faculty student who owns a smartphone; USI economics faculty student who has a social media account; USI economics faculty student who has purchased Scarlett Whitening products via social media (e-commerce) and offline.

2.5 Data Type

The type of data used in this research consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained through direct research from respondents related to the research object. In this research, primary data was obtained through distributing questionnaires to respondents regarding product displays (X1) and testimonials (X2) on Facebook social media, as well as purchasing decisions for Scarlett Whitening products by USI economics faculty students. Secondary data is data and information that already exists in ready-made form and is owned by USI economics faculty students, such as university profile, number of students and lecturers, vision and mission, institutional organizational structure, etc.

2.6 Data Collection Methods

The data collection method used in this research is by giving questionnaires to respondents and asking them to fill them out. The questionnaire consists of structured questions, where respondents only need to tick (√) the selected answer. After filling it in, the respondent returns the questionnaire. The measurements in this study used a Likert scale, where respondents were asked to rate according to their opinion. All research instruments use a Likert scale with a value of 1 to 4. The answers given by respondents will be scored according to the Likert scale, which will provide information about the responses given by each respondent.

Then, each answer obtained will be given a score: SS (Strongly Agree) = 4; S (Agree) = 3; TS (Disagree) = 2; STS (Strongly Disagree) = 1

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

In quantitative research, data analysis includes data processing and data presentation, as well as hypothesis testing using statistical tests (Siregar, 2017: 125). By using quantitative methods, it is hoped that 40 accurate measurement results will be obtained regarding the responses given by respondents regarding the influence of product displays (X1) and testimonials (X2) on Facebook social media on the decision to purchase Scarlett Whitening products by USI economics faculty students. Therefore, data obtained in the form of numbers can be processed using statistical methods. The techniques used in this research are: Validation and Reliability Test; Classic Assumption Test (classical assumptions, namely that the residual data is normally distributed, there is no multicollinearity and there is no heteroscedasticity); Hypothesis Testing (T test (Partial, F Test, Determination Test (R2).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Scarlett Whitening Product Overview

3.1.1 A Short History of Scarlett Whitening

Scarlett Whitening is a local company that specializes in beauty care products. Founded in 2017 by Felicya Angelista, a famous artist, Scarlett Whitening is produced by PT. Motto Beringin Abadi based in Bogor, Indonesia. All Scarlett Whitening products have passed testing by the Indonesian Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOMRI).

Scarlett Whitening offers a variety of beauty products that focus on brightening and maintaining healthy skin. Apart from that, Scarlett Whitening is also an online shop that sells local beauty products via the Instagram platform, and they work with influencers, including Agnes Monica, to help promote their products to their Instagram account followers. As a new company in the world of online commerce, especially on Instagram, it is important for Scarlett Whitening to understand whether trust in influencers influences purchasing interest in the products they promote.

Scarlett Whitening products are divided into three main categories, namely body, face and hair care. This company's main focus is on a series of body and facial skin care products that can brighten and whiten the skin, thanks to the glutathione and vitamin E content in them. These products are perfect for those who want brighter, healthier looking skin. One of their superior products is a body care series which is claimed to provide instant white results from the first use.

According to Felicya Angelista, as the owner of Scarlett Whitening, this company started from the many questions she received about what products she used to care for her skin. Through Scarlett Whitening, Felicya wants to provide a solution for those who want to care for their skin and get bright and healthy skin.

3.1.2 Scarlett Whitening logo



Figure 1. Scarlett Whitening logo
Source <https://scarlettwhitening.com>

3.1.3 List of Scarlett Whitening products

Scarlett Whitening products include the following: Scarlett Body Care Series (Body Scrub: Used to remove dead skin cells and make body skin brighter; Shower Scrub: Thoroughly cleanses the body and provides freshness that improves mood and Body Lotion: Moisturizes the skin and provides a fragrant aroma throughout the day.); Scarlett Facial Care Series (Facial Cleanser: Clean your face from dust and pollution after activities; Scarlett Toner: Clean facial skin down to the pores; Scarlett Serum: Nourishes facial skin, prevents acne, and makes facial skin more radiant; Scarlett Cream: Helps overcome acne and dull skin problems effectively); Scarlett Hair Care Series (Scarlett Shampoo: Controls excess oil production on the scalp and prevents hair from looking limp and Scarlett Conditioner: Gives volume to hair, reduces hair loss, and is easy to manage).

3.1.4 Biodata of Founder Scarlett Whitening

Full Name: Felicya Angelista

Nickname: Feli

Place, Date of Birth: Jakarta, November 2 1994

Indonesian citizenship

Education: Nusantara Business Institute

Christianity

Profession: Actress, Singer, Host, Entrepreneur

Social Media Accounts:

Twitter: @felicyangelista
 Instagram: @felicyangelista_
 TikTok: @felicyangelista_
 YouTube: FELITogether Official



Source <https://journal.sociolla.com>

3.2 Description of Frequency of Research Respondents

The respondent description data in this study aims to provide additional information that strengthens understanding of the research results. The number of respondents in this research were 50 economics faculty students at USI University who purchased Scarlett Whitening products, either through social media or offline.

3.2.1 Age

Based on data from distributing questionnaires, information was obtained regarding the ages of respondents, which can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. ages of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
17 – 20	21	37.5%
21 – 24	31	55.4%
25 – 28	4	7.2%
Total	56	100%

From the table data above, it can be seen that in this study, there were 21 respondents aged between 17-20 years or 37.5%, respondents aged between 21-24 years were 31 people or 55.4%, and respondents who aged between 25-28 years as many as 4 people or 7.2%. Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of economics faculty students at USI University who purchased Scarlett products, either through social media or offline, were in the 21-24 year age range, namely 31 people or 55.4% of the total 56 respondents. . This shows that their consumption patterns tend to encourage them to immediately buy new products and attractive product displays on social media support purchasing decisions, especially at that age.

3.2.2 Gender

Based on data collected through distributing questionnaires, the following is information regarding the gender of the respondents in this study:

Tabel 2. gender of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Man	17	30.4%
Woman	39	69.6%
Amount	56	100%

Based on the data in the table above, there are significant differences in terms of the gender of the respondents in this study. There were 17 male respondents or 30.4%, while there were 39 female respondents or 69.6%. This shows that in this research, economics faculty students at USI University who purchased Scarlett Whitening products via social media tended to be dominated by female respondents, namely 39 students or 69.6% of the total 56 respondents. This data indicates that women are more likely to like shopping for Scarlett Whitening products via social media.

Influence of social media influencers and testimonials on consumer attitudes and purchase decisions for Scarlett Whitening products (Rahmad)

3.3 Respondents' Responses to Research Variables

To understand respondents' responses to research variables, which include the influence of social media influencers, testimonials, and consumer behavior towards Scarlett Whitening products, an analysis was carried out of respondents' answers to the statements in the questionnaire. By analyzing respondents' responses to these statements, we can find out the average answers to all statements. After knowing the average respondents' answers to the research variables, the next step is to determine the classification. Determining the classification of respondents' answers can be explained as follows:

Lowest value: $1 \times 1 = 1$

Highest value: $1 \times 5 = 5$

Class interval: $(5-1) / 5 = 0.8$

So the class distribution becomes:

- 1.00 - 1.80 = Very Low

- 1.81 - 2.60 = Low

- 2.61 - 3.40 = Fairly High

- 3.41 - 4.20 = High

4.21 - 5.00 = Very High

Respondents' responses to the research variables can be explained as follows:

3.3.1 Consumer behavior (Y)

The following is a table showing respondents' responses to consumer behavior variables regarding Scarlett Whitening products on social media:

Table 3. Consumer behavior regarding Scarlett Whitening products on social media

Statement Items	Answer Frequency				Score	Average
	STS	T.S	S	ST		
Statement 1	-	-	41	15	183	3.26
Statement 2	-	1	41	14	181	3.23
Statement 3	-	2	40	14	180	3.21
Overall Average Score						3.23

Based on the table above, it shows that the majority of respondents responded to consumer behavior variables towards Scarlet Whitening Products, namely Agree and Strongly Agree.

Based on the average score of respondents' responses to 3 statements related to consumer behavior towards Scarlet Whitening Products, it is 3.23. So, based on these results, it can be concluded that the consumer behavior variable is in the quite high category.

3.3.2 Social Media Influencers (X1)

Table 4. Social media influencer respondents

Statement Items	Answer Frequency				Score	Average
	STS	T.S	S	ST		
Statement 1	1	-	42	13	179	3.19
Statement 2	1	1	45	10	181	3.23
Statement 3	-	1	36	19	186	3.32
Overall Average Score						3.24

Based on the table above, it shows that the majority of respondents responded to the social media influencer variable, namely Agree and Strongly Agree.

Based on the average score of respondents' responses to 3 statements related to social media influencers, it was 3.24. So, based on these results, it can be concluded that the social media influencer variable is in a fairly high category.

3.3.3 Testimonials (X2)

Table 5. Respond to Testimonials

Statement Items	Answer Frequency				Score	Average
	STS	T.S	S	ST		
Statement 1	1	1	31	14	170	3.03
Statement 2	1	-	36	19	155	2.76
Statement 3	-	1	45	10	177	3.16
Overall Average Score						2.98

Based on the table above, it shows that the majority of respondents responded to the Testimonial variable, namely Agree and Strongly Agree.

Based on the average score of respondents' responses to 3 statements related to Testimonials, it was 2.98. So, based on these results, it can be concluded that the Testimonial variable is in a fairly high category.

3.4 Validation Test

Table 6. Validation Test

Variable	Statement Items	Correlated items total correlations (r count)	r table	Sig	Information
A	B	C	D	E	F
Consumer behavior (Y)	Statement 1	0.796	0.195	0,000	Valid
	Statement 2	0.776	0.195	0,000	Valid
	Statement 3	0.853	0.195	0,000	Valid
Social Media Influencers (X1)	Statement 1	0.795	0.195	0,000	Valid
	Statement 2	0.722	0.195	0,000	Valid
	Statement 3	0.721	0.195	0,000	Valid
Testimonial (X2)	Statement 1	0.816	0.195	0,000	Valid
	Statement 2	0.677	0.195	0,000	Valid
	Statement 3	0.680	0.195	0,000	Valid

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the calculated r for social media consumer behavior variables and testimonials is greater than the r table value. This means that the data quality test shows that social media consumer behavior and testimonials are valid.

3.4.1 Classic assumption test

The classical assumption test is used to determine whether there is residual normality, multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity in the regression model.

Residual Normality Test

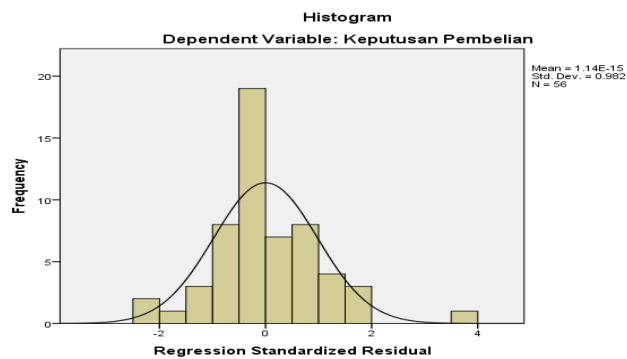


Figure 2. Residual Normality Test

Based on the table above, it shows that the diagram goes up and down on a normal graph so it can be concluded that in this study the residual distribution is normal (Regression Standardized Residual).

Heteroscedasticity Test

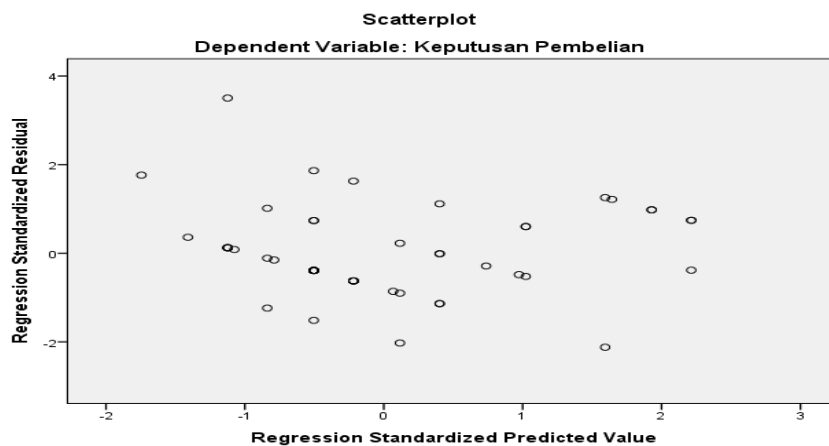


Figure 4. Heteroscedasticity Test

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there is no clear pattern in the scatterplot image. Apart from that, the distribution of points in the scatterplot image is seen spreading above and below the number 0 on the y and x axes. It can be concluded that this research does not occur Heteroscedasticity.

Reliability Test

Table 7. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Standards	Information
Consumer Behavior (Y)	0.800	0.40	Reliable
Social Media (X1)	0.786	0.40	Reliable
Testimonials (X2)	0.830	0.40	Reliable

Based on the table above, it shows that for the consumer behavior variable, the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.800, which is greater than the reliability standard, namely 0.40, while for the social media influencer variable, the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.786, greater than 0.40 and for the testimonial variable, the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.830, which is greater. of 0.40. These results show that consumer behavior, social media influencers and testimonials show reliable values.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted on students at the Usi Faculty of Economics, the author draws the conclusion that consumer behavior towards social media influencer variables and Scarlett whitening product testimonials by Usi economics faculty students is quite significant in determining decisions. This is proven by the percentage of the Tendency Score answers for each Indicator being in the Strong category, namely the social media influencer variable of 3.24%, the Testimonial Variable of 2.98%, Consumer behavior 3.23%. This can happen because almost all social media accounts are filled with testimonials about Scarlett products and plus reviews from well-known influencers who are paid to be brand ambassadors as their main strategy to attract consumer interest. so that consumers, especially students, rely on product influencer reviews and testimonials as material for consideration in making purchasing decisions, especially Scarlett products, and because basically every consumer wants to get proof, not promises. The most influential variable in this research is product testimonials because it has the highest coefficient value, namely 0.830. So it can be concluded that Usi economics faculty students pay more attention to product testimonials in purchasing decisions, thus the four hypotheses in this research are accepted. The most influential variable in this research is product testimonials because it has the highest coefficient value, namely 0.830. So it can be concluded that Usi economics faculty students pay more attention to product testimonials in purchasing decisions, thus the four hypotheses in this research are accepted. The most influential variable in this research is product testimonials because it has the highest coefficient value, namely 0.830. So it can be concluded that Usi economics faculty students pay more attention to product testimonials in purchasing decisions, thus the four hypotheses in this research are accepted.

It is hoped that this research will produce findings that are useful for marketers in determining interesting influencers and testimonials as a strategy in online and offline sales so that they can cause consumers to make purchases. The findings from this research can be used as input and consideration for marketers in developing marketing strategies effectively. It is hoped that the results of this research will provide benefits in the form of a theoretical framework regarding the influence of influencers and testimonials on consumer behavior and purchasing decisions that cause it and can later be used as consideration in conducting further research. It is hoped that this research can provide benefits in the form of knowledge about influencers and testimonials on social media so that consumers decide to buy a product that suits their needs and consumers get satisfaction in buying the product.

REFERENCES

- Biaudet, S. (2017). *Influencer marketing as a marketing tool: The process of creating an Influencer Marketing Campaign on Instagram*.
- Chopra, A., Avhad, V., & Jaju, and S. (2021). Influencer marketing: An exploratory study to identify antecedents of consumer behavior of millennial. *Business Perspectives and Research*, 9(1), 77–91.
- Fietkiewicz, K. J., Lins, E., Baran, K. S., & Stock, W. G. (2016). Inter-generational comparison of social media use: Investigating the online behavior of different generational cohorts. *2016 49th Hawaii International*

- Conference on System Sciences (HICSS)*, 3829–3838.
- Gilmore, J. H., & Pine, B. J. (1997). The four faces of mass customization. *Harvard Business Review*, 75(1), 91–102.
- Glucksman, M. (2017). The rise of social media influencer marketing on lifestyle branding: A case study of Lucie Fink. *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 8(2), 77–87.
- Hudders, L., De Jans, S., & De Veirman, M. (2021). The commercialization of social media stars: a literature review and conceptual framework on the strategic use of social media influencers. *International Journal of Advertising*, 40(3), 327–375.
- Jacobson, J., Gomes Rinaldi, A., & Rudkowski, J. (2023). Decoding the employee influencer on social media: applying Taylor's six segment message strategy wheel. *European Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 29–59.
- Kadekova, Z., & Holienčinova, M. (2018). Influencer marketing as a modern phenomenon creating a new frontier of virtual opportunities. *Communication Today*, 9(2).
- Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H., & Setiawan, I. (2019). *Marketing 3.0: From products to customers to the human spirit*. Springer.
- Lunt, P., & Livingstone, S. (1996). Rethinking the focus group in media and communications research. *Journal of Communication*, 46(2), 79–98.
- Ma, L., Lee, C. S., & Goh, D. H.-L. (2011). That's news to me: The influence of perceived gratifications and personal experience on news sharing in social media. *Proceedings of the 11th Annual International ACM/IEEE Joint Conference on Digital Libraries*, 141–144.
- Martins, A., Vieira, H., Gaspar, H., & Santos, S. (2014). Marketed marine natural products in the pharmaceutical and cosmeceutical industries: Tips for success. *Marine Drugs*, 12(2), 1066–1101.
- Mičík, M., & Mičudová, K. (2018). Employer brand building: Using social media and career websites to attract generation Y. *Economics & Sociology*, 11(3), 171–189.
- Mukherjee, D. (2009). Impact of celebrity endorsements on brand image. Available at SSRN 1444814.
- Woods, S. (2016). # Sponsored: The emergence of influencer marketing.