

ABSTRACT

## The engagement between social media influencers and their followers on Instagram: A case study of #StopAsianHate

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With the ongoing growth of social media, social media influencers are starting to play a critical role in the marketing plans of organisations. While most companies are keen to employ influencers to generate profits and gain market share, only a few studies have discussed how social media influencers can contribute to non-profits or social activities (Park & Cho, 2015). This inspires the present study to explore the mechanism of online influencers endorsing social problem campaigns. This research has two main objectives: 1) to examine which impression management tactics have been utilised by social media influencers; 2) to identify consumers' responses to those tactics. This research used a qualitative case study approach with Asian hate as the case. Content analysis was adopted to analyse the Instagram posts of eight social media influencers and the comments of their followers in relation to those posts. I have found two dominant tactics, which are Solution and Campaign-promotion, and two supplement tactics, including Supplication and Association. In accordance with these tactics, the Instagram audience comments revealed five themes of responses: Educated, Feelings, Support, Resonance and Seeking reasons. The analysis revealed Solution as one of the leading tactics that will trigger people to feel educated and be supportive of the campaign posts, while Campaign-promotion will provoke Resonance, Reasons seeking and feeling Educated. The findings of this dissertation enrich the knowledge of impression management theory and tactics. It also encourages policymakers and social marketers to formulate appropriate policies to deal with social problems and adopt influencers as a tool to promote social causes. In this presentation, I will introduce the impression management tactics used by social media influencers as well as followers' responses triggered by those tactics in the context of the #StopAsianHate movement.

### References

Park, S. Y., & Cho, M. (2015). Celebrity endorsement for non-profit organizations: The role of celebrity motive attribution and spontaneous judgment of celebrity-cause incongruence. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 21(2), 224-245.