

Instagram Endorsement Content Analysis: Depiction of Luxury Lifestyle Representation

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Abstract

The lifestyle portrayed by an influencer in endorsement content encourages the audience to adopt similar behaviors by using the same products or services. Therefore, influencers with a large follower base can help marketers expand their target audience and potential customer base. Building on previous research, this study aims to examine how Maria Rahajeng's endorsement content on Instagram represents lifestyle. Researchers used the concept of lifestyle and 4R concept (reach, relevance, resonance, and relationship). This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis techniques. The results of this study show that there is high engagement in the content uploaded by Maria Rahajeng with topics associated with everyday life which makes the content message acceptable to the audience. In addition, Maria Rahajeng's Instagram content also shows interactive elements through the comment column feature. Maria Rahajeng also shows a luxurious lifestyle through the products she advertises and the elegant concept in wrapping her endorsement content. Apart from the luxury products she advertises, Maria Rahajeng also shows a luxurious lifestyle through documentation of her attending exclusive events for influencers.

Keywords: *Endorsement Content, Instagram, Influencer, Lifestyle, Social Media Marketing*



A. INTRODUCTION

Marketers leverage social media, particularly Instagram, to advertise their products. Databoks reports that Instagram has 106 million users in Indonesia (Annur, 2022) Hootsuite's 2023 survey indicates that Instagram is an effective marketing platform, with 50% of active users visiting brand websites through Instagram Stories. Promotional efforts on Instagram are notably effective in targeting the demographic of men and women aged 18-24 (Beveridge & Lauron, 2023) Marketers have the potential to leverage social media platforms to promote their products either through their official accounts or by collaborating with intermediaries such as influencers, thereby reaching a wider audience. Influencers are particularly valuable in product marketing efforts due to their substantial influence over a considerable number of potential customers through the content they share with their audience. One effective strategy employed by influencers is the endorsement technique. Through endorsements, influencers can advertise products in a manner that is seamlessly

integrated with their regular content, thereby capturing and retaining the audience's attention more effectively. This method not only enhances product visibility but also builds a sense of trust and authenticity, as endorsements from influencers are often perceived as genuine recommendations by their followers. Consequently, utilizing influencers as a marketing channel can significantly amplify the reach and impact of promotional efforts. In the realm of influencer marketing, four critical factors determine an influencer's effectiveness. The first factor, Reach, quantifies the number of followers an influencer can engage. The second factor, Relevance, pertains to the thematic coherence and organization of the influencer's content on Instagram, whether it is consistent or appears scattered. The third factor, Resonance, evaluates the alignment of the content with the audience's interests, which can be measured by the average engagement rates, including likes and comments. Finally, the fourth factor, Relationship, examines the nature of the influencer's connection with brands, distinguishing between authentic, organic content and content that appears forced or is sponsored (Sammis et al., 2015).

In endorsement content, an influencer presents and promotes products by integrating them into their personal lifestyle, effectively demonstrating their use and benefits. This portrayal of the influencer's lifestyle, as seen through the endorsement content, generates a desire within the audience to emulate or adopt a similar lifestyle by utilizing the same products or services endorsed by the influencer. Consequently, the audience is influenced not merely by the product itself but by the aspirational lifestyle that the product is associated with (Wulandari & Septrizola, 2021). Consequently, influencers typically present marketers with a detailed rate card outlining the costs associated with leveraging their services to promote the marketers' products through the influencers' official social media channels, as documented by Abidin (2018). According to the findings presented in the "Digital 2023: Indonesia" report by We Are Social, an analysis of data pertaining to active social media users aged 16 to 64 reveals that individuals within this demographic predominantly follow influencers or experts on social media platforms, constituting approximately 34.4% of the sampled population (Kemp, 2023).

In disseminating a message, influencers are supported by technological advancements, which enable the spread of information to alter individuals' lifestyles (Pertwi, 2020). Therefore, the reviews and opinions presented by an influencer gain significant influence, making advertisements more memorable to the public. This influence drives the audience's desire to purchase and use the products advertised by the influencer, thereby fulfilling their lifestyle needs (Rusanti & Sofyan, 2021). The phenomenon prompts adolescents to emulate the lifestyle of influencers as a means to assert their identities within their social milieu (Sari et al., 2022). Furthermore, certain audiences are drawn to the narratives of opulence portrayed by influencers through Instagram posts, which often feature material possessions symbolizing worldly pleasures (Tansia et al., 2022). This assertion is supported by Kristinova (2022) research, indicating that society is not merely consuming such content but actively participating in its creation. Influencers emanate not exclusively from the beauty

industry, but rather encompass a diverse array of categories, including lifestyle, fashion, travel, and beyond.

According to Michaelidou (2022), there are three primary themes of lifestyle representation displayed by influencers on Instagram: display of luxury goods, consumption of time, and style and power resources. Consequently, the researchers applied these thematic codes in analyzing Maria Rahajeng's endorsed content. Maria Asteria Sastrayu Rahajeng, alternatively recognized as Maria Rahajeng, epitomizes an Instagram influencer paradigm. Noteworthy for her reign as Miss Indonesia 2014, where she served as an ambassador for West Sulawesi, Rahajeng attained international acclaim through her representation of Indonesia in the esteemed Miss World 2014 competition. As of November 2, 2023, the Instagram account under the handle @mariarahajeng boasts a substantial following of 233,000 users, with the account itself following 1,300 others and having shared 5,334 uploads. Additionally, @mariarahajeng actively utilizes various features provided by the Instagram platform, including Feeds, Reels, Highlights, and Instagram Stories. The study authored by Syukur & Salsabila (2022) elucidates that social media influencers wield significant influence over societal consumption patterns, thereby enhancing marketing effectiveness. Promotion of products through influencers can be executed with individual creativity, exemplified by Maria Rahajeng's utilization of Instagram tools in crafting endorsement content. In addition to Maria Rahajeng, two other influencers, Christabel Chua (@jellywellybelly) and Rachel Wong (@rchlwngxx), also exhibit a luxurious lifestyle and boast similar follower counts, originating from Singapore. While both Chua and Wong are lifestyle influencers, their backgrounds differ, with Chua identified as a businesswoman and Wong solely as an influencer. Notably, both influencers maintain YouTube accounts, diversifying the platform focus of their endorsement content beyond Instagram. Conversely, Rahajeng, a former Miss Indonesia winner, primarily engages with her audience on Instagram despite having a YouTube presence. This contextualization aligns with our research inquiry, which seeks to explore the depiction of lifestyle within Instagram endorsement content. In light of the aforementioned data, the present study endeavors to address a specific research question: to what degree does the endorsement content presented by Maria Rahajeng on Instagram serve as a portrayal of a luxury lifestyle.

B. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative methodology to analyze and descriptively examine the endorsement content shared by Maria Rahajeng on Instagram, focusing on her presentation of a luxurious lifestyle. The primary data were collected using the Directed Qualitative Content Analysis (DQICA) technique from the @mariarahajeng Instagram account, specifically Feed photos and Reels videos, during the period from November 2023 to January 2024 (Kibiswa, 2019). Michaelidou et al., (2022) identified three primary motifs of lifestyle portrayal exhibited by influencers, which encompass luxury goods, time consumption, and power style. These motifs serve as conceptual

constructs within this study and have been operationalized into codes as follows: 01 for luxury goods, 02 for time consumption, and 03 for power style. Qualitative coding serves as a method for researchers to derive significance from words within qualitative data in order to address research inquiries. Prior to coding the data, researchers are required to undertake three crucial steps: data preparation, pre-coding annotation, and coding scheme determination (Priharsari & Indah, 2021). Additionally, direct and digital observations of Maria Rahajeng's endorsement content constitutes the primary data. Secondary data were obtained from books, journal articles, and websites. To ensure data validity and accuracy, the study employs source triangulation, cross-referencing observational data with findings from a literature review.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Maria Rahajeng is a mid-tier influencer with an Instagram following of 241,000. She began her career by creating a travel blog website in collaboration with her sister (Bhagchandani, 2017). During the research period, it was observed that Maria Rahajeng uploaded 90 Instagram posts, comprising both Feed photos and Reels videos. From these 90 posts, the authors aims to examine the 46 posts that constitute Maria Rahajeng's endorsement content. Utilizing the established coding framework, authors can analyze the nature of the luxury lifestyle that Maria Rahajeng portrays through her endorsement posts on Instagram, as detailed in the table below.

No	Tanggal Unggahan	Foto/Video	Kode
1	1 November 2023	Video Reels	01, 02, 03
2	2 November 2023	Foto Feeds	01, 03
3	3 November 2023	Foto Feeds	01, 02, 03
4	4 November 2023	Video Reels	01, 02, 03
5	16 November 2023	Foto Feeds	02
6	23 November 2023	Foto Feeds	01, 03
7	25 November 2023	Video Reels	01, 02
8	26 November 2023	Foto Feeds	3
9	27 November 2023		
10	28 November 2023		
11	30 November 2023		

No	Tanggal Unggahan	Foto/Video	Kode
1	2 Januari 2024	Foto Feeds	01, 02
2	9 Januari 2024	Video reels	02
3	10 Januari 2024	Foto Feeds	01, 02, 03
4	12 Januari 2024	Foto Feeds	01, 02
5	15 Januari 2024	Foto Feeds	03
6	17 Januari 2024	Foto Feeds	01, 03
7	18 Januari 2024	Foto Feeds	03
8	19 Januari 2024	Video Reels	01
9	21 Januari 2024	Foto Feeds	03

No	Tanggal Unggahan	Foto/Video	Kode
1	1 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	01
2	1 Desember 2023	Video Reels	02
3	3 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	02, 03
4	3 Desember 2023	Video Reels	01
5	6 desember 2023	Foto & Video Feeds	02
6	8 Desember 2023	Video Reels	02
7	9 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	01, 02
8	11 Desember 2023	Video Reels	02
9	11 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	02
10	12 Desember 2023	Video Reels	03
11	12 Desember 2023	Video Reels	02
12	13 Desember 2023	Video Reels	02
13	13 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	03
14	14 desember 2023	Video Reels	01
15	15 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	03
16	16 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	01
17	17 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	01
18	18 Desember 2023	Video Reels	02
19	20 Desember 2023	Foto Feeds	01, 02
20	21 Desember 2023	Video Reels	01
21	23 Desember 2023	Video Reels	02
22	27 Desember 2023	Video Reels	01

Figure 1 Maria Rahajeng's Endorsement Content Coding

As depicted in the above table, Maria Rahajeng exhibits a luxurious lifestyle through her endorsement content, which features luxury items such as branded bags and luxury vehicles, as well as large houses in the backgrounds of her photos and videos. Additionally, her lifestyle is evident from the settings presented in her endorsement content, which appear 25 times under code number 02. These settings include attending exclusive events hosted by well-known brands or designers, vacationing abroad, socializing with fellow influencers, and engaging in elite sports activities such as paddling and tennis.

Maria Rahajeng demonstrates the presence of power dynamics within her endorsement content, manifesting through gestures characterized by dominant poses or assertive facial expressions, particularly when juxtaposed with the promoted products. While the portrayal of power is occasionally observed in visuals featuring Indonesian artists, Maria Rahajeng's endorsement posts generally do not extensively accentuate this aspect. Such depictions of power occur in only 20 instances out of 46 endorsement contents, classified under code number 03. Throughout the span of a month, Maria Rahajeng has shared endorsement content on numerous occasions, exemplified by 11 uploads in November 2023, 22 uploads in December 2023, and 12 uploads in January 2024. Her portrayal of a luxurious lifestyle extends beyond singular elements, encompassing various facets within her endorsement posts. For instance, she showcases moments of social cohesion with fellow influencers during product launch events hosted by fashion designers. Additionally, Maria Rahajeng incorporates luxury accessories from renowned brands into her endorsement content, even when promoting products from local beauty brands.

This demonstrates Maria Rahajeng's consistent incorporation of a luxurious lifestyle theme into her uploaded endorsement content, affirming her identity as an influencer associated with lifestyle categories, particularly fashion and travel, which project an "expensive" image. Despite this emphasis on opulence, Maria Rahajeng effectively communicates the intended message of the advertised product, ensuring comprehension and reception by her audience. Content with notably higher engagement rates features Maria Rahajeng strategically integrating her endorsement materials within a framework of opulent living, notably exemplified by depictions of her accessorizing with branded bags. Furthermore, Maria Rahajeng portrays a lifestyle aesthetic encompassing the utilization of both limited edition domestic beauty products and international brands. Notably, Maria Rahajeng opts to feature a self-portrait as the cover image for her Reels video endorsements, facilitating immediate recognition of her endorsement content by viewers upon accessing the video. Moreover, Maria Rahajeng appears to curate her content with attention to cohesive color palettes, particularly evident during seasonal festivities such as Christmas and autumn celebrations.

The thematic concept of Maria Rahajeng's endorsement content in November, December, and January aligns with prevalent social media discussions, as demonstrated by a Reels video incorporating themes from popular movies such as "Gadis Kretek" and "Girl Math," which resonate with a female audience. Furthermore, Maria Rahajeng's video and photographic compositions are imbued with a luxurious and refined aesthetic, consistent with her Instagram lifestyle centered around fashion and travel pursuits.

According to the research journal Tansia et al (2022), the luxurious lifestyle displayed by an influencer can be seen from fashion, luxury objects, to gathering places. This is in line with the results of this study which show that Maria Rahajeng has a luxurious lifestyle that can be seen from the fashion products used such as Channel bags, Dior accessories, and luxury places as a place to gather with friends. The results of this study are also in line with the results of Rusanti & Sofyan's research (2021) which also says that influencers have a luxurious lifestyle such as luxury goods to traveling abroad. This is also supported by the 4R concept, namely Reach, where Maria Rahajeng wraps her endorsement content with the concept of a luxurious lifestyle displayed through her being photographed using a branded bag.

D. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the foregoing discussion elucidates Maria Rahajeng's positioning as a notable influencer within the lifestyle domain, particularly in fashion and travel categories. This characterization is discerned through her Instagram uploads, meticulously tailored to harmonize with the visual and thematic elements of endorsed content. Notably, Rahajeng's endorsement uploads garnering the highest engagement underscore her adeptness in crafting content that resonates with audiences, fostering a sense of connection and piquing interest in prevailing social media trends. Additionally, her portrayal of a glamorous lifestyle is evident in endorsement content characterized by a fusion of luxury and elegance, in alignment with contemporary trends. This portrayal extends beyond brand affiliations to encompass documentation of her participation in exclusive influencer events, further enhancing the perception of her opulent lifestyle.

Following the derived conclusions, the authors intends to propose several recommendations aimed at advancing subsequent investigations, particularly pertaining to endorsement content on Instagram. It is anticipated that forthcoming studies will augment the findings through quantitative methodologies and diversify the scope of lifestyle research across alternative influencer categories. Practical recommendations include enhancing Maria Rahajeng's endorsement content to reflect a more luxurious lifestyle, emphasizing both showcased items and demonstrating authority through dominant poses or associating with influential individuals. A limitation of this study lies in its examination of only one influencer account. Subsequent research endeavors are encouraged to explore additional influencer

accounts, particularly those depicting a minimalist lifestyle in their endorsement content, to enrich the scope of inquiry.

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