

The Influence of Social Responsibility of Internet Celebrities on Brand Loyalty of Chinese Consumers in Jiangsu Province: A Case Study of Down Jacket Brand in Jiangsu Province

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Abstract

With the popularity of social media, Internet celebrities have become an indispensable force in brand marketing. Not only do they promote products through their personal influence, but the socially responsible behaviors they demonstrate also have a profound impact on consumers' brand loyalty. Based on the research background, the objectives of this study were: 1) To analyze the direct relationship between the social responsibility of Internet celebrities and consumer brand loyalty; 2) To evaluate the influence of Internet celebrity social responsibility on brand trust and brand reputation; and 3) To explore the impact of brand trust and brand reputation on consumer brand loyalty and their mediating roles. The sample consisted of 368 consumers from Jiangsu Province who purchased down jacket brands through Internet celebrity live broadcasts within one year. They were selected using a random sampling method. The research instrument for data collection was structured questionnaires. Data analysis included reliability analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, path analysis, and mediation effect analysis.

The research results were found as follows: 1) Internet celebrity social responsibility has a significant positive impact on consumer brand loyalty; 2) Socially responsible behaviors of Internet celebrities significantly enhance brand trust and brand reputation; and 3) Brand trust and brand reputation positively influence consumer brand loyalty, and brand trust and brand reputation partially mediate the relationship between Internet celebrity social responsibility and consumer brand loyalty. Suggestions for brand managers include leveraging Internet celebrities with strong social responsibility records to enhance brand loyalty through improved trust and reputation.

Keywords: Internet celebrity; social responsibility; brand loyalty; brand trust; brand reputation

Introduction

In the current digital era, Internet celebrities are increasingly favored by companies and brands as an emerging marketing tool. They reach a large fan base through social media platforms, thereby becoming an important force in driving sales of goods and services. However, the influence of Internet celebrities is not only reflected in their marketing capabilities. Their social responsibility performance has also attracted increasing attention from the public and academic circles (Hsu and Tsou, 2011:49). This study aims to explore how the social responsibility of Internet celebrities affects the brand loyalty of consumers in Jiangsu Province, China, towards down jacket products, especially the mediating role of brand trust and brand reputation in this process.

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In recent years, social responsibility has become an important dimension in evaluating the public image of companies and individuals. For Internet celebrities, their social responsibility performance can not only shape their personal brands but may also affect the market performance of the products they endorse (Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen, 2010:12). In Jiangsu Province, as consumers pay more and more attention to brand values, the socially responsible behaviors of Internet celebrities can especially influence the purchasing decisions of their fans (McWilliams and Siegel, 2001:26). Therefore, understanding how the social responsibility of Internet celebrities changes consumers' brand loyalty by affecting brand trust and brand reputation has important practical significance for brand managers and marketers.

Despite the growing interest in the marketing influence of Internet celebrities, several problems remain unresolved. Firstly, the current literature lacks comprehensive studies examining the specific impact of Internet celebrity social responsibility on consumer loyalty. This gap is significant as consumer expectations regarding social responsibility are rising, necessitating brands to adapt their strategies to meet these expectations (Smith, 2003:45). Additionally, most research has focused on Western markets, leaving a gap in understanding these dynamics within the Chinese context, particularly in regions like Jiangsu Province which possess unique cultural and economic characteristics (Hofstede, 2001).

Therefore, there is an urgent need to conduct mediation effect studies that include brand trust and brand reputation as mediating variables to better understand the mechanisms through which Internet celebrity social responsibility influences consumer brand loyalty. Trust and reputation are critical components of brand equity, and their mediating roles can provide deeper insights for brand managers, helping them leverage Internet celebrities more effectively (Fombrun, 1996).

To explore this issue in depth, this paper will use path analysis and mediation effect analysis to examine the relationships between Internet celebrity social responsibility (independent variable), brand trust and brand reputation (mediating variables), and consumer brand loyalty (dependent variable). Through an empirical study of the down jacket market in Jiangsu Province, this study hopes to provide strategic suggestions for brands on how to improve consumer loyalty through Internet celebrities.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to systematically analyze the impact of Internet celebrities' social responsibilities on consumers' loyalty to down jacket brands in Jiangsu Province. Specifically, it includes the following research objectives:

- 1) Analyze the direct relationship between the social responsibility of Internet celebrities and consumer brand loyalty. Investigate whether the socially responsible behavior of Internet celebrities directly affects consumer loyalty to the brand.
- 2) Explore the relationship between the social responsibility of Internet celebrities and brand trust and brand reputation. Assess how the social responsibility demonstrated by Internet celebrities influences consumers' trust in partner brands and the brand's market reputation.
- 3) Evaluate the relationship between brand trust and brand reputation and consumer brand loyalty. Examine how these two mediating variables impact consumers' brand loyalty. Explore whether consumers' loyalty increases when they have higher trust and positive reputation perceptions of a brand.

Through these research objectives, this study aims to comprehensively understand the specific mechanisms by which the social responsibility of Internet celebrities affects brand trust and brand reputation, and how this, in turn, translates into consumers' loyal support for the brand.

Significance of the Study

Through these research objectives, this study aims to comprehensively understand how the social responsibility of Internet celebrities translates into consumer brand loyalty through brand trust and brand reputation. This study holds several significant implications:

1.Theoretical Significance

This study provides a new theoretical perspective on the relationship between the social responsibility of Internet celebrities and consumer brand loyalty, filling a gap in the existing literature. By systematically analyzing the interrelationships between social responsibility, brand trust, and brand reputation, this study helps to deepen the understanding of consumer behavior and provides a theoretical foundation for future research in related fields.

2.Empirical Significance

Through empirical research, this study validates the direct and indirect impacts of Internet celebrities' social responsibility behaviors on brand loyalty, providing concrete empirical data support. The research results will offer robust empirical evidence for brand managers and marketers, helping them to develop more effective brand strategies and enhance their competitive edge in the market.

3.Practical Significance

The findings of this study are of significant reference value for companies and brand managers in selecting Internet celebrity endorsers. By choosing Internet celebrities with a strong sense of social responsibility, brands can better enhance consumers' brand trust and brand reputation, thereby increasing consumer brand loyalty. Additionally, the research results can guide brands in how to more effectively showcase and communicate their social responsibility behaviors in marketing activities to attract and retain more loyal consumers.

In summary, this study not only enriches the theoretical content of research on the social responsibility of Internet celebrities but also provides practical and feasible strategic recommendations for brand management and marketing practices.

Literature Review

This article determines the scale of this article based on previous relevant research on Internet celebrity social responsibility, brand trust, brand reputation and consumer brand loyalty. Based on previous research on the correlation between social responsibility of Internet celebrities and brand trust, brand reputation and consumer brand loyalty, the research hypothesis of this article is given.

1.Review of related concepts

Regarding the social responsibilities of Internet celebrities, predecessors believed that Internet celebrities should fulfill their social responsibilities in four aspects: product quality, after-sales service, product introduction, and words and deeds. Meng, F et al., (2023:35) explored the social responsibility of Internet celebrities in terms of product quality and after-sales service. Research emphasizes that online celebrities need to maintain the credibility of product quality and the reliability of after-sales services to effectively influence consumers'

purchasing decisions. Halima, N. B et al., (2017:7) deeply discussed the impact of the credibility of product introductions by Internet celebrities and the impact of endorsed products on consumer behavior, emphasizing that Internet celebrities should be true and reliable in product introductions and actively perform Social Responsibility of Product Introduction. Marwick, A. E., and Boyd, D., (2011:17) emphasize that Internet celebrities should ensure that they speak and behave appropriately to give the audience a good impression. Based on previous research and referring to the social responsibility scale of Benavides Paz, N. F., (2021:1), this article's scale on the social responsibility of Internet celebrities is determined.

Most previous studies on brand trust have been conducted from the perspective of consumers, and the research results are as follows. Azzahra, P. A. K., and Astarini, D., (2023:7) believe that brand trust is a consumer's expectation of the brand. Based on this expectation, consumers believe that the brand can fulfill its promise. This trust is built on the reliability, integrity and competence of the brand and is an important factor in consumer purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. Husain, R et al.,(2022:9) Brand trust can be gradually established through a series of positive brand experiences, including the quality of products and services, the efficiency of customer service, positive word-of-mouth, and effective communication strategies. Based on previous research and the actual situation of this article, and with reference to the brand trust scale of Delgado-Ballester, E., (2004:13), the scale of brand trust in this article is determined.

Most previous studies believe that brand reputation is a powerful driving force for a company's market position. Da Camara, N., (2007:14) believes that brand reputation is the perception of a company by all stakeholder groups and plays a vital role in the success or failure of a company's brand and products. This concept is related to, but distinct from, the brand itself, which is directly managed and focused on customer engagement. Ozyer, Y.,(2016:8) Brand reputation is determined by factors such as brand authenticity, ethical practices and the consistency between the brand identity and its public image. Based on previous research and the actual situation of this article, and with reference to the brand reputation scale of Shin, D., (2017:8), the scale of brand reputation in this article is determined.

Most previous studies believe that consumer brand loyalty is a multifaceted understanding of how customers develop continued preferences for certain brands over other brands. Khoury, A. H.,(2013:32) states that consumer brand loyalty is a consistent pattern of repeat purchases driven by positive emotions towards a brand and involves multiple dimensions including cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral elements. Back, K., and Parks, S., (2003:27) believe that the key factors affecting brand loyalty include brand predictability, brand preference, capabilities, reputation and trust in the brand. These factors help create a strong bond between a brand and its consumers, making brand loyalty the cornerstone of a successful brand management strategy. Based on previous research and the actual situation of this article, and with reference to the consumer brand loyalty scale of Punniyamoorthy, M., and Raj, M., (2007:15), the scale of consumer brand loyalty in this article is determined.

2.Previous research on related relationships

Previous studies on the impact of social responsibility on consumer brand loyalty were mostly from the perspective of enterprises. Luo, Consumers view corporate social responsibility behavior as a key factor in increasing trust and loyalty. Porter, M. E., and Kramer, M. R., (2006:84) Socially responsible behavior can increase consumer loyalty, and consumers tend to support brands that demonstrate social and environmental responsibility. Based on previous research and combined with the research background of this article, hypothesis 1 is given.

H1: Internet celebrity social responsibility has a significant impact on consumer brand loyalty

Most previous researchers have studied the correlation between social responsibility and brand trust from the perspective of enterprises. Chaudhuri, A., and Holbrook, M. B., (2001:65) point out that consumers tend to trust brands that demonstrate a high degree of social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility behaviors (such as environmental protection, charitable donations, fair trade) can enhance the brand's integrity and ethical image, thereby increasing consumer trust. Peloza, J., and Shang, J., (2011:39) Corporate transparency and effective communication in social responsibility practices are also crucial to enhancing brand trust. Open and transparent information disclosure and active communication strategies help consumers better understand corporate social responsibility behaviors, thereby improving trust. Based on previous research and combined with the research background of this article, hypothesis 2 is given.

H2: Internet celebrity social responsibility has a significant impact on brand trust

Most previous researchers have studied the correlation between social responsibility and brand reputation from the perspective of enterprises. Sen, S., and Bhattacharya, C. B., (2001:38) believe that a company's socially responsible behavior directly affects its brand reputation. When companies demonstrate their concern for society and the environment, they usually gain consumers and other stakeholders highly praised by readers. Godfrey, P.C., (2005:30) Research has found that socially responsible activities, including environmental practices, fair trade, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, community involvement and charitable giving, have all been shown to enhance brand reputation. Based on previous research and combined with the research background of this article, hypothesis 3 is given.

H3: Internet celebrity social responsibility has a significant impact on brand reputation

Most previous studies on the correlation between brand trust and consumer brand loyalty have been conducted from the perspective of enterprises. Harris, L. C., and Goode, M. M., (2004:80) argue that consumer trust in a brand promotes loyalty because trust reduces the motivation to search for substitutes. Sirdeshmukh, D et al., (2002:66) showed through research that brand trust is a key variable in predicting brand loyalty. Trust makes consumers more inclined to make repeat purchases and recommend them to others when faced with numerous choices. Based on previous research and combined with the research background of this article, hypothesis 4 is given.

H4: Brand trust has a significant impact on consumer brand loyalty

Most previous studies on the correlation between brand reputation and consumer brand loyalty have been conducted from the perspective of enterprises. Walsh, G., Mitchell, V. W et al., (2009:20) Research has found that a good reputation not only attracts new customers, but is also key to maintaining the loyalty of existing customers. Keh, H. T., and Xie, Y., (2009)

stated that high brand reputation is usually associated with high consumer loyalty. Consumers view brands with high reputations as more trustworthy and are therefore more willing to continue purchasing and recommend them to others. Based on previous research and combined with the research background of this article, hypothesis 5 is given.

H5: Brand reputation has a significant impact on consumer brand loyalty

Research Conceptual Framework

Based on the independent variables, dependent variables and mediating variables of this article, a construction framework diagram is given, as shown in Figure 1.
(Intervening variable)

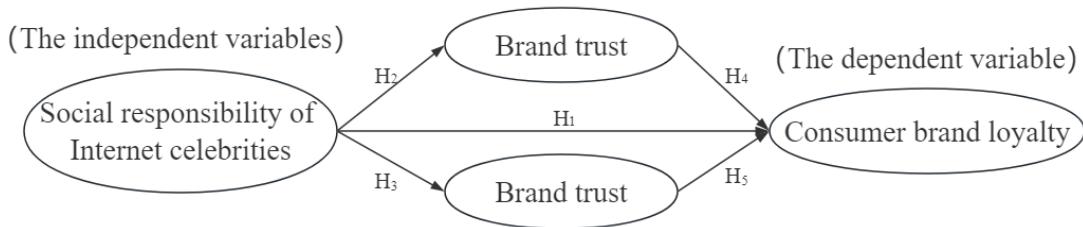


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Research Scope

The research scope of this article is consumers in Jiangsu Province who purchased Jiangsu down jacket brands through online celebrity live broadcasts within one year. Currently, there are 44 down jacket brands in Jiangsu Province. Consumers who are more than one year old, have not purchased through online celebrities, are not from brands in Jiangsu Province, and do not live in Jiangsu Province are not within the scope of this study.

Research Methodology

1. Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research method, with the primary research method employed being a questionnaire survey, which has passed STIU-HREC047/2024 certification. Data were collected through random sampling. Reliability analysis of the collected data was conducted using Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951:16). The content validity of the questionnaire was analyzed using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) (Rovinelli and Hambleton, 1977:2). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to conduct validity analysis, including fit indices, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Kline, 2005). Path analysis was used to verify whether the hypotheses were true, and mediation effects were tested by examining the confidence intervals of the total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect (Baron and Kenny, 1986:51).

2. Source of Data

Since the majority of Jiangsu Province's population resides in Nanjing, the questionnaires were distributed and collected in the five regions of Nanjing: East, South, West, North, and Central. To ensure representativeness and reliability, the study strictly followed random sampling methods to collect sample data. This approach helps reduce sampling bias and ensures the generalizability and credibility of the research findings (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010).

3. Population and Sampling

The study population consisted of consumers in Jiangsu Province who purchased down jacket brands through Internet celebrity live broadcasts in the past year. A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed, with 368 valid questionnaires returned, resulting in a recovery rate of 52.57%. Analysis of the demographic characteristics of the sample revealed that the participants were primarily young and middle-aged women, with most having an education level between junior college and undergraduate, and a monthly income mostly between 3000 and 5000 yuan.

4. Data Collecting

Data were collected using structured questionnaires, designed based on relevant theories and literature. The questionnaire covered multiple dimensions, including social responsibility behaviors, brand trust, brand reputation, and brand loyalty. Measurements were conducted using a seven-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932:140), with multiple specific items for each dimension to ensure comprehensiveness and accuracy. Data collection took place from March 16 to March 31, 2024, lasting 15 days.

Data analysis

1. Population

Random sampling method was used to distribute questionnaires in Nanjing City, Jiangsu Province on March 16, 2024. By March 31, 2024, the questionnaires were collected. A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed, and 368 valid questionnaires were recovered, with a recovery rate of 52.57%. It lasted 15 days in total. Through the analysis of the population distribution of the effective sample, it was found that consumers in Jiangsu Province who purchased Jiangsu down jacket brands through online celebrity live broadcasts within one year were mainly young and middle-aged women. Most of them have an education level between college and undergraduate, with monthly Income is mostly between 3,000 and 5,000 yuan.

2. Reliability analysis

A reliability analysis was performed on the valid questionnaire data received. The Cronbach's Alpha values of the four dimensions of Internet celebrity social responsibility, brand trust, brand reputation and consumer brand loyalty are all greater than 0.8, which is considered to have high internal consistency. The CITC value and Cronbach's Alpha value after deleting items show that each individual item is closely connected to the entire dimension, and there is no need to delete any item to improve reliability. These results support the reliability of the scale. The reliability is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Cronbach's Alpha

| Name | No. | CITC | Cronbach's Alpha value for item removed | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--|-----|-------|---|------------------|
| Social responsibility of Internet celebrities | SR1 | 0.819 | 0.917 | 0.932 |
| | SR2 | 0.771 | 0.923 | |
| | SR3 | 0.795 | 0.920 | |
| | SR4 | 0.803 | 0.919 | |
| | SR5 | 0.787 | 0.921 | |
| | SR6 | 0.830 | 0.916 | |
| Brand trust | BT1 | 0.675 | 0.826 | 0.856 |
| | BT2 | 0.695 | 0.818 | |
| | BT3 | 0.757 | 0.797 | |
| | BT4 | 0.684 | 0.826 | |
| Brand reputation | BR1 | 0.712 | 0.884 | 0.895 |
| | BR2 | 0.784 | 0.858 | |
| | BR3 | 0.766 | 0.865 | |
| | BR4 | 0.807 | 0.849 | |
| Consumer Brand Loyalty | BL1 | 0.812 | 0.901 | 0.922 |
| | BL2 | 0.850 | 0.888 | |
| | BL3 | 0.785 | 0.910 | |
| | BL4 | 0.832 | 0.895 | |

3. Content validity

The item-objective consistency index (IOC) was used to evaluate the content validity of the scale by 5 experts, and each item of the questionnaire was scored. The score range was -1 to +1, and items with scores lower than 0.5 were revised. On the other hand, for projects with scores, if the average score is lower than 0.4, it is improved, if it is greater than or equal to 0.5, it is retained, and if it is greater than 0.6, it is acceptable. The IOC test result of this study is 0.8444, which is greater than 0.8. Therefore, all items in this study are acceptable.

4. Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the structural equation model, and each performance index was excellent: CMIN/DF showed that the model fit was excellent, the RMSEA value was far lower than the excellent standard, and the GFI, AGFI, and CFI values were all higher than the recommended standard, showing the excellent fitting of the model, and the RMR value also meets the requirements of excellent fitting. Taken together, these metrics together indicate a very good fit to the data. The specific values of the fitting degree of each indicator are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Goodness of fit

| Indicators | CMIN/DF | RMSEA | GFI | AGFI | CFI | RMR |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Value | 1.086 | 0.015 | 0.961 | 0.948 | 0.997 | 0.037 |
| Criterion | ≤ 3 | ≤ 0.05 | ≥ 0.95 | ≥ 0.90 | ≥ 0.95 | ≤ 0.07 |
| Reference | Kline (1998) | MacCallum et al (1996); | Kline (2005) | Tabachnick & Fidell (2007); | West et al. (2012) | Steiger (2007) |

Convergent validity analysis was performed on the structural equation model, as shown in Table 3. The measurement items of each dimension (SR, BT, BR, BL) have high standardized estimated values, exceeding the ideal threshold of 0.7, showing strong convergent validity. At the same time, the composite reliability (CR) of each dimension exceeded the standard of 0.7, further confirming the reliability of each dimension. The average variance extracted (AVE) also exceeded the recommended value of 0.5, indicating that the items in each dimension can well explain the variance of the variables. Overall, the model has good convergent validity.

Table 3 Convergent validity

| | | | Unstandardized estimates | Standardized estimates | CR | AVE |
|-----|------|----|--------------------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| SR6 | <--- | SR | 1.000 | 0.868 | 0.933 | 0.698 |
| SR5 | <--- | SR | 1.062 | 0.818 | | |
| SR4 | <--- | SR | 1.057 | 0.838 | | |
| SR3 | <--- | SR | 0.983 | 0.829 | | |
| SR2 | <--- | SR | 0.920 | 0.801 | | |
| SR1 | <--- | SR | 1.001 | 0.856 | | |
| BT4 | <--- | BT | 1.000 | 0.753 | 0.860 | 0.607 |
| BT3 | <--- | BT | 0.908 | 0.840 | | |
| BT2 | <--- | BT | 0.904 | 0.772 | | |
| BT1 | <--- | BT | 0.901 | 0.747 | | |
| BR4 | <--- | BR | 1.000 | 0.873 | 0.896 | 0.682 |
| BR3 | <--- | BR | 0.970 | 0.823 | | |
| BR2 | <--- | BR | 0.951 | 0.847 | | |
| BR1 | <--- | BR | 0.867 | 0.757 | | |
| BL4 | <--- | BL | 1.000 | 0.879 | 0.922 | 0.748 |
| BL3 | <--- | BL | 0.899 | 0.821 | | |
| BL2 | <--- | BL | 1.034 | 0.902 | | |
| BL1 | <--- | BL | 0.961 | 0.855 | | |

Annotation: SR is Social Responsibility of Internet Celebrities; BT is Brand trust; BR is Brand Reputation; BL is Consumer Brand Loyalty.

Discriminant validity analysis was performed on the structural equation model, as shown in Table 4. The square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) of each dimension (SR, BT, BR, BL) (the value on the diagonal) is greater than the correlation coefficient between this dimension and other dimensions (the value below the diagonal). Meets the criteria for discriminant validity. This means that each dimension has a stronger correlation with its own items than with items from other dimensions, proving that the dimensions are distinct from each other. At the same time, the correlation coefficients between each dimension are significant but not very high (all below 0.5), which further supports the existence of discriminant validity. The significance level P value of the correlation coefficient between each dimension is less than 0.05. The correlation between all variables is statistically significant, which further strengthens the reliability of the model. Overall, the model performed well in terms of discriminant validity.

Table 4 Discriminant validity

| | SR | BT | BR | BL |
|----|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| SR | 0.835 | | | |
| BT | 0.238*** | 0.779 | | |
| BR | 0.235*** | 0.124* | 0.826 | |
| BL | 0.370*** | 0.344*** | 0.230*** | 0.865 |

Note: *** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, the value on the diagonal represents the root mean square of AVE, and the correlation coefficients between variables are below the diagonal.

By analyzing the fit, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the structural equation model, it was found that the model passed confirmatory factor analysis and had good structural validity.

5. Path analysis

Through path analysis, it was found that the P values of all paths were lower than 0.05, which meant that these paths were statistically significant and therefore all hypotheses (H1 to H5) were accepted. Specifically, Internet celebrity social responsibility (SR) has a significant positive impact on brand trust (BT), brand reputation (BR) and consumer brand loyalty (BL), and brand trust has a positive impact on consumer brand loyalty. It is also significant that brand reputation also has a significant positive impact on consumer brand loyalty. These results confirm that all hypothesized paths in the model are valid. The path model diagram is shown in Figure 2, and the path test of the research hypothesis is shown in Table 5.

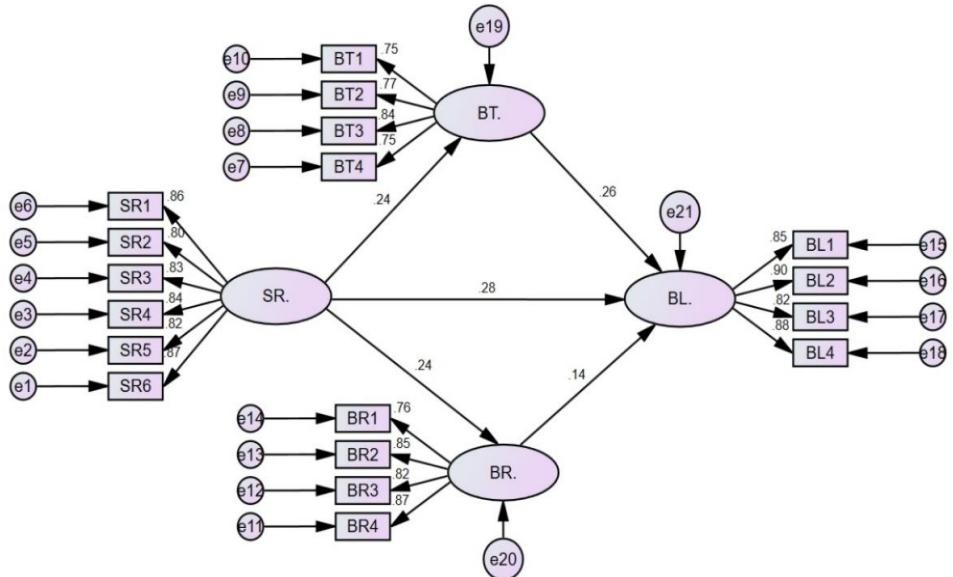


Figure 2 Path model diagram

Table 5 Research hypothesis path test

| Path | Non-standard estimates | Standard estimates | S.E. | C.R. | P | Hypothesis | Result |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------|--------|
| BL<--SR | 0.404 | 0.277 | 0.081 | 5.004 | 0.000 | H1 | Accept |
| BT<--SR | 0.206 | 0.239 | 0.050 | 4.112 | 0.000 | H2 | Accept |
| BR<--SR | 0.269 | 0.236 | 0.064 | 4.186 | 0.000 | H3 | Accept |
| BL<--BT | 0.444 | 0.262 | 0.095 | 4.655 | 0.000 | H4 | Accept |
| BL<--BR | 0.173 | 0.135 | 0.068 | 2.525 | 0.012 | H5 | Accept |

6. Mediation effect analysis

Through mediating effect analysis, it is found that Internet celebrity social responsibility (SR) has a significant total effect (0.5005), direct effect (0.3857), and brand trust (BT) and brand reputation (BR) on consumer brand loyalty (BL). indirect effects. Among the indirect effects, the mediating effect of Internet celebrity social responsibility on consumer brand loyalty through brand trust is 0.0745, and the mediating effect through brand reputation is 0.0403, both of which are statistically significant (p values are less than 0.05), and the confidence interval (LLCI and ULCI) do not contain zero, further confirming the significance of the mediating path. The total indirect effect is 0.1148, indicating that Internet celebrity social responsibility has a significant impact on consumer brand loyalty through these two mediating variables, thus revealing the complex mechanism by which Internet celebrity social responsibility affects consumer brand loyalty. The mediation effect checklist is shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Mediation Effect Checklist

| | | Effect | se | t | p | LLCI | ULCI |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| | Total effect | 0.5005 | 0.0729 | 6.8660 | 0.0000 | 0.3571 | 0.6438 |
| | Direct effect | 0.3857 | 0.0729 | 5.2896 | 0.0000 | 0.2423 | 0.5290 |
| Indirect effect | TOTAL | 0.1148 | 0.0291 | | | 0.0640 | 0.1784 |
| | SR-->BT-->BL | 0.0745 | 0.0279 | | | 0.0304 | 0.1388 |
| | SR-->BR-->BL | 0.0403 | 0.0224 | | | 0.0023 | 0.0918 |

Research Findings

This paper analyzes the impact of Internet celebrities' social responsibility on Jiangsu consumers' brand loyalty to down jackets. The research results are summarized in Table 7. Through path analysis and mediation effect analysis, this study obtained the following main findings:

First, the social responsibility of Internet celebrities has a significant positive impact on consumers' brand loyalty. This shows that when online celebrities demonstrate a high sense of social responsibility in their behaviors and communications, they can directly enhance consumer loyalty to the brand.

Secondly, the socially responsible behaviors of online celebrities not only directly affect brand loyalty, but also significantly enhance brand trust and brand reputation. This shows that the performance of social responsibility can enhance consumers' trust in the brand and improve the brand's market reputation.

Thirdly, both brand trust and brand reputation have a significant positive impact on consumers' brand loyalty. This means that consumer loyalty is not only directly affected by the social responsibility of online celebrities, but also indirectly affected by enhanced brand trust and reputation.

Finally, the significance of the mediating effect is that the social responsibility of Internet celebrities has a significant mediating effect on brand loyalty through brand trust and brand reputation. Specifically, the social responsibility of online celebrities indirectly enhances consumers' brand loyalty by enhancing brand trust and brand reputation. This reveals the complex mechanism by which online celebrity social responsibility affects consumer brand loyalty, that is, social responsibility not only directly affects consumer loyalty, but also plays an indirect role by enhancing brand trust and reputation. Brand trust and brand reputation exhibit partial mediating effects.

Table 7 Summary of findings

| Research Findings | Research Method | Verified Hypothesis | Achieved Objective |
|--|---|--|--|
| Internet celebrity social responsibility has a significant positive impact on consumer brand loyalty | Path analysis (path coefficient = 0.277, $p < 0.001$) | Verified hypothesis H1 | Achieved Research Objective 1: Analyze the direct relationship between the social responsibility of Internet celebrities and consumer brand loyalty. |
| Internet celebrity social responsibility has a significant positive impact on brand trust and brand reputation | Path analysis (brand trust path coefficient = 0.239, $p < 0.001$; brand reputation path coefficient = 0.236, $p < 0.001$) | Verified hypotheses H2 and H3 | Achieved Research Objective 2: Explore the relationship between the social responsibility of Internet celebrities and brand trust and brand reputation. |
| Brand trust and brand reputation both have a significant positive impact on consumer brand loyalty | Path analysis (brand trust path coefficient = 0.262, $p < 0.001$; brand reputation path coefficient = 0.135, $p < 0.05$) | Verified hypotheses H4 and H5 | Achieved Research Objective 3: Evaluate the relationship between brand trust and brand reputation and consumer brand loyalty, and analyze how these two mediating variables affect consumers' brand loyalty. |
| Brand trust and brand reputation have partial mediating effects | Mediation effect analysis (brand trust mediating effect = 0.0745, $p < 0.05$; brand reputation mediating effect = 0.0403, $p < 0.05$) | Confirmed the significance of indirect effects | Achieved Research Objective 3: Evaluate the mediating role of brand trust and brand reputation in the relationship between Internet celebrity social responsibility and brand loyalty. |

Discussion

The results of this study provide an in-depth understanding of how online celebrity social responsibility affects consumer brand loyalty, particularly in the down jacket market in Jiangsu Province, China. Through detailed data analysis and model verification, this article confirms that the social responsibility of Internet celebrities has a significant positive impact on brand trust and brand reputation, and these two factors further affect consumers' brand loyalty. The following is a discussion of the main findings of this study:

First, the socially responsible behaviors displayed by online celebrities can directly enhance consumers' loyalty to the brand. This effect may stem from consumers' high evaluations of online celebrities' integrity and ethical behavior, which translate into positive perceptions of the endorsed brand. This is consistent with previous research showing that brand trust is a crucial antecedent of consumer brand loyalty (Azzahra and Astarini, 2023:7). Similarly, Harris and Goode (2004:80) found that brand trust is an essential component of brand loyalty.

Secondly, brand trust and brand reputation play a mediating role between Internet celebrity social responsibility and consumer brand loyalty. This means that the positive social responsibility performance of Internet celebrities first enhances consumers' trust in the brand and positive perception of the brand's reputation, and then these two factors work together to enhance brand loyalty. This finding highlights the importance of trust and reputation management in brand management, especially when working with online celebrities. This aligns with the findings of Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001:65) and Morgan and Hunt (1994:58), which also emphasize the crucial role of brand trust and reputation in consumer loyalty.

Thirdly, for brand managers, choosing to cooperate with Internet celebrities with good social responsibility records can be an effective marketing strategy. Through the positive influence of online celebrities, brands can not only enhance their market reputation but also build a stronger sense of trust among consumers, thereby increasing loyalty and purchase intentions. This requires brands to consider their public image and social responsibility performance when selecting spokespersons, rather than just focusing on their market influence. Peloza and Shang (2011:39) also support this view, noting that corporate social responsibility can significantly enhance a brand's market performance.

Finally, the influence of Internet celebrities may be unique in specific geographical and cultural contexts. Consumers in Jiangsu Province may pay more attention to the social responsibility of brands, which may be related to the regional economic development level and consumer education level. Therefore, a brand's market strategy in different regions may need to be adjusted based on local culture and consumer behavior. This is consistent with Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions theory, which emphasizes the significant impact of cultural background on consumer behavior.

In summary, this study highlights how online celebrities' socially responsible behaviors influence consumer loyalty through brand trust and brand reputation. For brands, understanding and leveraging these factors can lead to more effective design and implementation of marketing strategies, especially when working with online celebrities.

Recommendations

1. Theoretical Recommendation

First, to further study the relationship between Internet celebrity traits and consumer behavior, future research should explore the specific impact of different types of Internet celebrities (such as knowledge-based, entertainment-based) and their socially responsible behaviors on brand loyalty, as well as this impact How to behave among different consumer groups. This can help understand how online celebrity traits influence consumer psychology and behavioral patterns.

Secondly, it is recommended to carry out cross-cultural comparative research, and it is recommended to carry out cross-regional or cross-cultural comparative research to explore the impact mechanism of social responsibility of Internet celebrities on consumer brand loyalty under different cultural backgrounds. This will enrich existing theory and provide a more comprehensive perspective to understand consumer behavior in the context of globalization.

Finally, by comprehensively considering the complex model of multiple factors, it is recommended to construct a more complex theoretical model that takes into account other potential variables such as consumers' personal values, brand personality and other factors to provide a deeper understanding and explanation.

2. Policy Recommendation

First, formulate a code of conduct for Internet celebrities. The government or relevant industry associations should formulate clear behavioral and social responsibility standards for Internet celebrities to guide their words and deeds in public and ensure the transparency and integrity of their socially responsible behaviors, thereby safeguarding consumer rights and market order.

Secondly, strengthen consumer education. Government departments should strengthen consumers' education about brand knowledge and the influence of Internet celebrities, improve their brand recognition capabilities and rational consumption awareness, and help consumers establish correct consumption concepts.

Finally, oversight and transparency mechanisms. It is recommended that policymakers strengthen supervision of online celebrity marketing activities, require brands and online celebrities to disclose cooperation details, ensure the authenticity and transparency of their advertising and marketing activities, and protect consumer interests.

3. Practical Recommendation

First, choose the right celebrity partner. Brands should choose Internet celebrities with good social responsibility records and positive public images as spokespersons. Before cooperation, brands need to have an in-depth understanding of the online celebrity's fan base, influence, and past social behavior.

Secondly, create a socially responsible image of the brand. Brands should actively assume social responsibilities and strengthen the brand's positive image through environmental protection, charity and other activities. At the same time, they should use the influence of Internet celebrities to spread the brand's social responsibility information and improve the brand's market competitiveness and consumer loyalty.

Finally, strengthen interaction and communication with consumers. Brands should use social media platforms to strengthen direct interactions with consumers, transparently share brand value and the results of social responsibility activities, and enhance consumer trust and loyalty to the brand. At the same time, consumer feedback should also be collected and analyzed to continuously optimize products and services.

The above suggestions are designed to help brands better utilize the social responsibility influence of Internet celebrities from three levels: theory, policy and practical operation, so as to enhance brand loyalty and form a positive brand image.

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