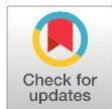# HR's Role in Developing Incentive Programs for Micro Influencers in Social Media Marketing

Nadhila Adelfrini Mansyur[1]

[1]Universitas Muslim Indonesia, Indonesia

**Article History**

Check for updates

**Keywords**

Human Resources
Incentive Programs
Micro Influencers
Social Media Marketing

**Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to analyse the dynamic position of Human Resources (HR) in designing and implementing incentives for micro influencers in the fashion, technology, and the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector. Drawing on a phenomenological research paradigm, the study aims at understanding how HR departments of companies associated with digital marketing are responding to the fluctuating demands of the field and, therefore, designing original and versatile incentive systems that appeal to the micro influencers self-motivational factors. The studies show that simple incentive structures and mainly monetary based incentives are incapable of encouraging sustained participation. However, using organization specific professional development opportunities, brand management, and public recognition is crucial. In the same respect, the study also reveals how the role of HR is important in influencer marketing where it involves working closely with the marketing department to ensure that influencer practices are in line with the rest of the organization. Additionally, the implications of the research cover the issues related to the formalization of the influencer relationships, which may indeed be challenging when gaining the necessary degree of control for the proper management of the influencer's work, while at the same time remaining consistent with the creative freedom which is required for the influencer content. Hence, this study adds to the existing literature on the subject of HR for the digital economy as it provides best practice guidelines for HR managers that can help organizations to navigate through the ethical and cultural aspects of influencer collaboration.

## Introduction

This modern era has signal a seismic change in the landscape of marketing, with social media as the leading force for brand interaction. A key factor in this process is the use of micro influencers, which, unlike large celebrities and stars, have a sense of trust since they have many followers who can identify with the content they post (Baumgarth et al., 2021; Andonopoulos, 2021; Levitan, 2020). Such micro-influencers have often been celebrated for their prowess in

---

[1]Corresponding Author: Nadhila Adelfrini Mansyur, Email: nadhilaadelfrinimsy@gmail.com, Address: Jl. Urip Sumoharjo, KM. 5 Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan 90231

creating close knit communities with customers which has been seen as an advantage in the wake of more targeted consumer groups that brands want to penetrate (Zhou et al., 2021). Therefore, identifying the reasons behind micro influencer actions and the obstacles they face can now be considered critical for brands seeking to make adequate use of these individuals.

Though, managing incentives and encouraging performance of micro influencers involves concepts that are different from managing ordinary organisational employees. All the more, I share the opinion of authors Amiri & Ghourdou (2024) that micro influencers act in a constantly changing competitive environment where reputation and personal branding are crucial. This competitive environment implies that HR departments need to step outside the basic motivation strategies, which do not take into account the requirements or motivational levers of influencers. As suggested by the recent researches, the traditional incentive mechanisms have been proved to be inefficient in this regard, therefore more and more HR has to focus on the development of the effective personalized programs (Huang et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2024). For instance, Doyuran (2024) and Chen & Chen (2021) highlight that effective incentive structures for micro bloggers focus on monetary and non-monetary incentives such as skill development, appreciation and brand associations.

Some of the previous studies also pinpoint the specificity and variability as key components to focus on in such incentive schemes. According to Lv et al. (2023) and Myers et al. (2023), it is unresponsive to the variety of micro influencer preferences to employ a standardized strategy. Instead, brands need to constantly communicate with influencers to create such incentive mechanisms that are tailored for each influencer as well as flexible to fit the goals of the influencer and the organization as a whole (Goanta & Ranchordás, 2020; Khan et al., 2020). This increases the quality of incentive programs as well as builds sustainable partnership of brand and influencers.

Furthermore, the position of HR is also very important for creating and implementing such incentive programs, it will help to maintain micro influencers interest and keep them loyal. According to Pallant et al. (2020) and Jhawar et al. (2023), the effectiveness of current influencer marketing campaigns also lies in the recognition of the HR departments of a company as to the changing needs of influencers. This entails not only availing the correct motivational tools in a form of programs but is also entails constant evaluation and alteration of the programs available based on opinions given and quantitative results generated. As such, Zhou et al. (2021) and Ying et al. (2020) also highlight the importance of the continuing assessment of incentive system and their considerations regarding periodic modification.

This research therefore seeks to fill this gap in existing literature on influencer marketing by establishing the different facets of incentives for micro influencers. Particularly, it explores the role of incentive customization, flexibility, relationship between the incentive provider and the recipient, and evaluation in designing successful incentive programs. With the help of the recent studies and consultation with the HR experts, the present research offers a systematic approach towards designing the incentive programs that targets micro influencers and the organization effectively (Mero et al., 2023; Syed et al., 2023). It is believed that the results of this research will be useful for HR specialists, marketers and brand managers who want to improve the effectiveness of influencer marketing in the modern conditions of social networks.

## Methods

Based on the above, this study embraces a qualitative research paradigm seeking to gain deep insight into the responsibilities of Human Resources (HR) in creating and sustaining the incentive system for micro influencers in social media marketing initiatives. Qualitative

research approach was used based on the reason that it accommodates the flexibility and richness of capturing the nature and the lived experience of micro influencers and HR practices, which are generally excluded by quantitative research. This approach enables the richness and context on how the strategies of HR are aligned to the dynamics of digital marketing environment.

A multiple case study approach was adopted to understand HR strategies in several sectors such as fashion, technology and Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). Such design allows for understanding how various organizational environments shape policies and practices of facilitating micro influencers. The use of multiple case study approach is applicable in this research since it facilitates comparison across different sectors thus providing rich and transferable information. The cases chosen were such that they cover each respective industry to avoid biases while undertaking the study to establish various HR practices and issues. The research design of the study will thus involve the identification of several cases with a view of looking for patterns and themes that cut across the sector without losing the specificity of the channel.

Thus, the choice of participants is one of the key factors in qualitative studies that brings in depth data. The participants for this study were selected purposively because they are the HR professionals and social media managers who have the most experience in dealing with influencer partnerships and in designing the HR led incentive programs. To achieve the required level of relevance, 15 participants were selected from key industries based on the choice presented in the paper and top companies within these industries. This ensures that the participants provide actual data from their industries as well as their experiences.

To augment this, the technique known as snowball sampling was used where the initial participants identified subsequent participants who also qualified the criteria of the study. This method was especially convenient for reaching senior HR managers or specialized social media strategists who could offer more profound penetration into the topic of research (Tsuriel et al., 2021; Zhang & Chen, 2024). Thus, this approach guaranteed a broad and diverse pool of information, limiting nothing of relevance to solely positive or negative views.

The first source of data was semi structured interviews which were used as they enable the researcher to provide clear specific and contextualised responses as well as offering the option to expand on new themes that arise. Semi structured interviewing is in between structured and unstructured interviewing, and it can be defined as structured in the sense that the interviewer has some area of focus while unstructured in that the participant is allowed to freely express him/her/itself on any issue.

All interviews were semi structured and took between 60 and 90 minutes face to face or via secure video conferencing where the participant preferred. To conduct the interviews, an interview schedule was derived from a literature review on various matters such as the types of incentives offered by brands, processes used while formulating these incentives, effectiveness of the deployed strategies, and challenges faced while managing micro influencers. The use of these questions allowed the participants freedom to give detailed answers which uncovered the dynamics of HR practice in this regard (Cañibano, 2019; Doz, 2020). Audio taped structured interviews were taken from participants with their consent and then transcribed in detail for analysis. The use of written notes was not as effective because it did not allow for the specific details and tone of the participants speech to be captured, which is vital for analysis when using this type of research method.

Thematic analysis is also ideal for qualitative research as it helps to capture the patterns of some data with a view of making sense of the subject matter of the study. The analysis involved

six key phases. They include: (1) Data familiarization this involved the researchers engaging in a close read of interview transcripts in order to ensure they have an overall appreciation of the content; (2) Initial coding this step involves identifying segments of data that is deemed meaningful; (3) Search for themes by joining related codes into broader themes; (4) Review of themes to ensure that they are apt representations of the data and are supported by sufficient data.

## Results and Discussion

### Context of the Study

This research was conducted in a rather dynamic technological environment that is witnessing the increasing prominence of social media as key marketing channels. The study targeted HR personnel and social media managers from the fashion, tech, and the consumer goods industries, specifically as these industries are pioneering change in digital marketing and CRM strategies.

This decision to select these industries was deliberate because of their peculiarity in addressing the use of digital influencers. The fashion industry, which targets clientele that is highly sensitive to trends and novelties, has shifted its focus to micro influencers as a way of staying relevant among the younger generation that is inherently connected to social media. This shift means transferring from advertising messaging to content with influencers that makes it possible for brands to speak to consumers more sincerely, on par with peers. In this respect, the HR departments of fashion organizations have the objective of creating motivation models to retain influencers while at the same time taking in to account the highly rapidly evolving and competitive market. Since the technology industry is generally known for complex products which are usually fine tune for a niche market, micro influencers help bring elegance to complicated technologies. That is why they are good team members in brand communication strategies since they understand how to work technical terms into layman language. However, the swift upgrading of technology products, the cycle of innovation requires the HR strategies within the sector also to be dynamic, creative and updated in a way that makes sure that the incentive program is the best it can be and is inclusive of the current trends in the market.

The FMCG industry for a long time used very general forms of marketing and promotion and turned to the use of micro influencers to target niche markets and build brand loyalty among such target customer segments. The ubiquity of FMCG products when it comes to consumption level that the incentive programs cover and the individual level of engagement that is offered by the influencer marketing make it important to find a balance between these two ideas for the HR driven incentive programs. This evolution in this industry points to the need for HR departments to develop compelling incentives that can cater to the various needs of micro influencers. The selected professionals were practicing in an environment that was characterised by much disruption and innovation. The fact that micro-influencers have tended to have relatively small but very engaged audiences has meant that, from an HRM perspective, traditional incentive schemes have had to be rethought. Finally, it is crucial to understand that the rewards for micro-influencers are different from rewards given to macro or celebrity influencers or even mid-level influencers, as they require more individualized approach focusing on the intrinsic value they bring to the table. This means that instead of focusing only on monetary rewards, such as bonuses and promotions, companies need to start offering professional development, brand affiliation, and individual recognition (Amiri & Ghourdou, 2024).

This study was done when the process of affiliating with influencers was gradually shifting from informal to formal. There was a shift from setting up haphazard partnerships with the influencers to legal agreements with them or partnerships through contracts due to the growing insistence on performance Marketing has become less of an art and more of a science as businesses have increasingly applied formal and systematic techniques to it. This formalization has put further pressure on the HR departments to devise motivational promos that can not only attract but also engage influencers in the long run hence creating healthier and enduring win win relations (Chen et al., 2024). The research was conducted in a time which can be characterized by deep digitalization and marketing perversion through the HR function. While earlier their roles included internal talent management, they were now most actively involved in external branding through outsourced influencers outside the employee fold. A unique aspect of HR was being a part of both internal and external human capital management which implies that one had to think outside the box and to analyze markets of influencers. The participants in this study were therefore operating in a dynamic environment that requires innovation especially in the area of marketing. The inputs they gave are fairly grounded on the issues of the specialisation area, which gives a good background to the thematic analysis proposed next. By contextualizing the results within this ever broadening industry and organizational landscape, this research offers a complex view on how HR can become strategically positioned within the dynamic environment of digital marketing.

## Understanding Influencer Motivation

Knowing what motivates the micro influencers is one of the crucial insights from the interviews. An HR expert cited:

> *"Micro influencers aren't simply motivated by means of economic incentives, they fee recognition, one of a kind access to products, and opportunities for professional increase."*

The quote supports that micro influencers primary motivation is not only financial compensation but reputation, the possibility to gain access to specific products, and professional development. This underscores the need to go beyond the past exclusive use of a mere Non-Monetary Reward System for learning and adopting a more comprehensive approach that includes other facets such as Non-Economic Rewards. The practices confirmed by Pallant et al (2020) reveal that to understand and meet these motivations effectively, organizations want to apply a right and in intensity approach when interacting with micro influencers. This approach means identifying and satisfying the man or woman wants and needs of the influencer, for the person's need to be clearly understood.

The daily gratitude reinforcement program had identified Recognition as one of the number one motivation diagnosed in these studies. It involves not only reward but also acknowledgment by the public. One influencer interviewed said:

> *"When a logo appreciates my efforts publicly, it makes me feel valued and motivates me to retain collaborating."*

The quote is a clear indication of how much engagement from the public increases the experience of price and motivation to continue to engage a brand by an influencer. There are many explicit forms of public acknowledgment, in addition to social media mentions, featuring the influencers account on the business enterprises webpage, or giving out special awards at corporate events, according to Karagür et al. (2022) and Aleti et al. (2019). These varieties of recognition now not most effective develop the influencer's audience and reputation but also increase pleasure and self-belief. Public appreciation makes influencers sense valued, as a result's brands can improve the relation with influencers, making them more engaged and

committed. Micro influencers are often motivated through virtually getting entry to new goods earlier than they may be made available for sale. It not only makes them feel valued but also provides them with quality content to share with their audience. A social media supervisor defined:

> *"Giving early get entry to to influencers for brand spanking new merchandise now not handiest excites them but additionally facilitates us advantage valuable early feedback."*

The quote therefore highlights how giving influencers early access to products launches is not only thrilling for them, but it is also important to getting early feedback from brands. Open opportunities may come in different forms. For instance, product samples, invitation to launch, or sending of trial products. The above approach enhances the bond between the brand and the influencer and makes the influencers feel that they are part of the marketing solutions. Zhou et al. (2021) endorse this by stating that when brands involve influencers at the product development stage, it is easy to create a buzz around the product and at the same time, get valuable information on how to enhance the specified product before its public release. This not only increases the loyalty and interaction level of the influencer but also benefits the promotion of the newly launched product.

Micro influencers also are searching for chances to professional development together with the inducement programs. It can include training and education, as well as opportunities for networking. An HR expert mentioned:

> *"We provide workshops and education that assist influencers develop their competencies in virtual marketing and content material control."*

Laying emphasis on the fact they offer workshops and training sessions enable the influencers to develop their digital marketing and asset management competencies. Such type of education not only enhances their technical skills but also facilitates the incorporation of tools and knowledge that shall prove useful in the long run. Matarazzo et al. (2021) also adds that such opportunities make it possible for influencers to link up with other people, in the business, meaning that they get to know the opportunities that are available for collaborations. Thus, brands do not only contribute to increasing the influencers skills and self-esteem, which will result in better cooperative outcomes in further collaborations but also guarantee the improvement of the business relationships. Apart from having extraordinary get entry to and reputation, to be able to provide worthwhile enjoys is similarly a massive motivation for the man or woman running a micro blogging account. For example, to join one of the kind of occasions or providing them with transit at the cost of logos. One influencer shared their experience:

> *"Attending special activities hosted via the emblem gives me unforgettable studies and strengthens my dating with the logo."*

A valuable study can be a trip, and unconventional events, or an opportunity to work on the most significant projects. This builds a solid emotional connection of the influencer and the logo, so the branding timeline becomes long term.

**Customization and Flexibility**

Another issue of significance is the need for personalisation and flexibility of reward incentives. A social media supervisor defined:

> *"Every influencer is unique, and a one length fits all method doesn't work. We tailor our incentive programs based on man or woman choices and overall performance metrics."*

Such an attitude underlines the importance of the matter concerning finely tuned incentive strategies. The HR branch should team up with the advertising crew to understand the specific needs and opportunities of each influencer so they can design personal encouragements that will meet the interests and strengths of the candidates. For instance, it may be hypothetical to have influencers demanding efficiency primarily based bonuses, whereas others would be more optimistic about career progress opportunities.

In order to localize the rewards it is necessary to define all unique features of the particular influencer. This requires real time dialogues and constant interactions with the influencers to sense the appeal that would probably depict their greatest motivation. One influencer referred to:

> *"What motivates me the most is not just the financial rewards however the possibility to develop professionally and gain recognition in my discipline."*

Such man or woman options may allow the groups in place to come up with extra focused approach. Thus, for example, those people who are engaged in the development of careers can be given an opportunity to attend the educational sessions, workshops or get the opportunity to participate in mentoring at some company, while the people who can be motivated by reputation can receive some medals or other kinds of public appreciation.

While some influencers could be more motivated by means of performance based triggers. These may be goal based incentives or goals which can include the number of engagements, attain or conversions that have been realized from their content. An HR supervisor noted:

> *"We have visible big enhancements in influencer overall performance whilst we introduce clean, performance based objectives tied to their incentives."*

Many changes over time have occurred to underline that the goals, which are clear, performance based and linked to incentives have boosted performance among influencers. It encourages the influencers to achieve and even overachieve their targets while at the same time ensuring that their actions and production processes are in tandem with the organizational marketing goals. Some examples of a performance-based incentive are bonus, increase in commission percentage or extra privileges for the accomplishment of certain goals. Rishi & Mohammed (2022) and Lisnik & Majerník (2023) further explained that by using measurable and attainable goals, brands put in place an organised and highly motivating environment that motivates influencers to deliver the best for marketing campaigns hence improving the efficiency of marketing endeavours and increasing the production of effective collaborations.

It is important for the incentive program to accommodate a numerous range of influencers thus the need for flexibility. This can include offering numerous incentive forms which an influencer can intention based fully on the probabilities on provide. One social media supervisor explained:

> *"We offer a menu of incentive alternatives, so influencers can pick what suits them great, whether it's economic bonuses, product samples, or unique event invites."*

The quote emphasizes the fact that providing the list of incentives ensures that each influencer is free to select the option that is most preferable to them, including extra financial rewards, new products, or invitations to certain events. It also allows influencers to choose which of the incentives would appeal to them the most, thereby increasing their satisfaction levels and productivity. For example, some influencers may opt for monetary incentives as a way to increase their earnings, while others value the opportunity to be a first tester of the new products, or receive personal invitations to elite socially significant events. This way, it turns out that brands can create a much more effective incentive program that will be oriented

personally for distinct influencers to keep motivating them. Customization and flexibility also imply that the inducement programs have to be reviewed and modified more frequently depending on feedback and program results. This ensures that the applications remain useful and effective many years down the line. An HR expert emphasized:

> *"We constantly accumulate remarks from our influencers and examine performance records to refine our incentive packages, making sure they continue to be effective and aligned with each influencer needs and employer desires."*

System assessments enable organizations to remain relevant to the evolving wants and opportunities of influencers, and ensure they retain focused and inspired. This iterative process allows determining what makes an idea work exceptional and make changes necessary to retain the influencers. Khan et al. (2020) agree with this, exposing that organizations can design better strategies targeting influencer training by possessing overall performance-based motivators, flexible options, and evaluating and rewashing the packages ceaselessly on knowledge person possibilities. This method now not only builds better relationship with influencers but also ensures that the partnership is aligned with the company's advertising objectives for higher influence collaborations that are more effective and long-lasting.

## Building Long-Term Relationships

Evaluations are focused on long-term partnerships as essential in influencer relations. An HR professional said:

> *"Sustainable relationships with micro influencers are constructed on consider and mutual admire. Consistent communique and honest repayment are important to maintaining those partnerships."*

This quote speaks volumes and underlines the importance of not letting the interaction die or become obscure while and communication stays shrouded in opaqueness. As reconstruction consider and providing genuine and steady rewards, HR can develop long duration contingents that might be profitable for both. This also includes handling complaints or trouble promptly and effectively so as not to create dissatisfaction among influencers. Long run associations with micro influencers need belief and identification to be established. Trust is built up over time and depends on factors such as understanding, dependability and ethical behavior. One influencer referred to:

> *"I hold working with manufacturers which are obvious approximately their expectancies and respectful of my creative manner. It builds a level of trust that makes me need to live."*

This means that when the emblem wins the hearts of the influencers they will be more loyal and would not shift around. To sustain this believe, it is imperative to respect their artistry, comprehend and appreciate their personal brand, and recognize their inputs. Therefore, it plays an important role in maintaining long lasting relationships that take place in the process of long term communication. Blogging, comments sections, and appeals to conduct ongoing communication help to keep influencers aware and stimulated. A social media manager defined:

> *"We make certain everyday check in with our influencers to talk about ongoing campaigns, offer remarks, and address any concerns they might have. This ongoing talk enables in building a sturdy rapport."*

Capability troubles can, therefore, be recognized when they are still low, and before they go higher due to frequent communication. It also ensures influencers are not only satisfied, but also heard which is crucial for lengthy time period cooperation. Influencer remuneration is an

important foundational element in building loyal influencer relations. There is no doubt that influencers should have the feeling that they are fairly paid for their efforts. An HR specialist emphasized:

> *"Ensuring that influencers are compensated fairly for their work is non-negotiable. We often evaluate our repayment packages to ensure they are competitive and reflect the cost the influencers bring."*

Reasonable compensation can include monetary compensation, free products or samples and any other benefits that are expected by the influencers. Account monitoring and updating reimbursement packages especially based on efficiency and market tendencies retain the influencers influenced and dedicated. Speaking concerned lawsuits and problems is of crucial concern in creating and maintaining beneficial relationships. Influencers need to know they can bring their concerns and they will be addressed and attended to as soon as possible. One influencer shared:

> *"When I had an issue with a campaign, the logo's short and green decision made me sense valued and revered. It reinforced my choice to keep running with them."*

Clear and efficient issue decision where ever and ever shows the logo involvement in partnership and how it can help in keeping believe. It is important to note that it keeps petty problems from becoming major problems that may threaten the relationship.

It is important to also notice that long time period relationships are also based on social bonds. Social bonding can be strengthened by setting up amazing stories and by being not only greatful but actively appreciating the influencer. An advertising and marketing director stated:

> *"We arrange exclusive events and personalized thank you notes for our influencers to show our appreciation. These gestures pass an extended way in strengthening our relationship."*

Special and kind actions might help to make influencers really feel increased associated with the logo, which might help to construct a loyal audience and a long term partnership. For example, in an act called Watkins (2022) and Lou (2022) defined that it takes time to understand and develop authenticity through creating a long term relationship with micro influencers and the trust, communication and fairness in the reciprocal exchange and need to solve problems. This means that to achieve such strong and long lasting bonds between the brands and the influencers in these specific areas, brands must specialize in these areas because it will also be mutually beneficial for both parties. Through this technique, influencer pleasure and loyalty are now not simply increased, however the advertising efforts of the logo are additionally assured to be backed by way of influenced and excited influencers, thus resulting in more effective and more lasting influencer engagements.

**Measuring Program Effectiveness**

Another important theme relates to the assessment of incentive applications efficiency. One respondent shared:

> *"We robotically review our incentive applications via comments from influencers and overall performance metrics to make sure they're powerful and aligned with our goals."*

This technique also puts emphasis on the constant process of evaluation and the changes that have to be made. Also HR should employ comments mechanisms and performance analytics to gauge the degree of fulfillment of incentive packages and make necessary changes. Dwivedi et al. (2023) and Horgan et al. (2020) pointed out in the study that by employing the analytical

gear to fine tune social media marketing campaign performance and the influencer engagement levels one may acquire valuable information on the success of incentive programs.

Information on how well the incentive applications are running can be sourced from feedback which influencers provide. Opinion polls, focus groups and feedback lectures can give direct access to the actual stories of the influencers and their delight towards the program. One influencer remarked:

> *"Providing normal remarks opportunities allows us to voice our reviews and advise enhancements, which makes us experience valued and part of the technique."*

The quote shows that influencers should have frequent chances to provide feedback regarding the partnership, as it makes them feel valued and involved. In a similar way, Castillo (2022) pointed out that when businesses look for feedback and use them, there is a way to understand which areas should be improved and, thus, adapt to the necessities and demands of influencers. The fact that both parties embrace each other creates a bond that extends to influencing the effectiveness of the collaboration, making it highly successful.

It is important in monitoring the general performance indicators with regards to incentive packages. These can include engagement costs, impressions, conversions, and other relevant KPIs for the social media promotion. An advertising analyst explained:

> *"We use loads of performance metrics to gauge the fulfillment of our influencer campaigns. This statistic helps us apprehend which incentives are riding the best results."*

That way the various metrics allows and enables businesses to identify which of the components in their incentive application is enough and which part still require improvement. This fact oriented technique ensures that all the decisions made are based purely on the facts and not on surmises.

Constant monitoring and adjustment are necessary to keep the incentive applications useful and effective. This means frequently analyzing both the remarks from the influencers as well as the overall performance records to make timely modifications. An HR manager noted:

> *"Our incentive applications aren't static, they evolve primarily based on continuous comments and overall performance evaluations. This flexibility helps us live aligned with our desires and the changing desires of influencers."*

Hence, bendy technique holds of executing incentive programs helps businesses to make sure that their incentive applications remain powerful and continue to encourage those influencers.

It is crucial to use analytical tools to understand all stages of the software efficiency and the performance of the social media marketing campaign and the use of influence. They can come up with unique and detailed info on any number of categories that may help an organization to identify what is right and wrong. A virtual marketing professional commented:

> *"Analytical equipment are integral for monitoring the achievement of our campaigns. They offer actual time facts that facilitates us make knowledgeable selections about our incentive packages."*

Such equipment may encompass web analytics instruments similar to Google Analytics, social media analytics tools, and different custom built software program used to measure influencer advertising effectiveness. These give cherished data that can guide key adjustments and improve the general efficiency of the inducement packages.

Evaluating the impact of incentives is a complex process that requires the use of comment accumulation, measuring performance indicators, continuous evaluation, and analytical tools. That through such measures, corporations can guarantee that incentive packages are effective, dream compatible and capable of evolving in response to changes incorporated into the desires of the influencers. This comprehensive assessment aids in improving the applications, which, over time, results in more successful and enduring influencer partnerships.

Other than direct incentives, other elements who form part and parcel of incentive packages include professional developments as well as schooling. An HR supervisor noted:

> *"We provide education and workshops for micro influencers to help them expand their skills and stay relevant in the ever converting industry."*

This means that placing resources in tweaking within the position of experts that are influencers not only improves the information output, but also deepens their commitment toward the branding. Training can also include how to effectively use the new social media tools, latest techniques of digital marketing, different strategies for increasing engagement levels.

Career development and upgrade assistance magnify their talent portfolios, thus strengthening them in creating content and appealing to the audience. One influencer mentioned:

> *"Attending workshops and schooling classes has improved my know how of virtual advertising techniques, permitting me to create greater impactful content for my fans."*

Educational assets help influencers to strengthen their expertise and attain higher outcomes for any company that offers them get admission to the resources.

The digital landscape is never stagnant and to retain the impact that micro influencers have on the public, it is pertinent to remain relevant. Providing expert development chances guarantees that influencers are in touch with the ultramodern development and approaches. A social media strategist explained:

> *"Continuous getting to know is critical within the fast paced world of social media. Our schooling applications equip influencers with the knowledge and skills they want to adapt to modifications and thrive inside the industry."*

As influencers invest their career growth, larger organizations can prove they are committed to the technique and the influencer's improvement.

Offering the pros inside the professional conditions not only offers benefits influencers but also improves their commitment to the brand. When investments are made inside the increase and fulfillment of influentials, this makes organizations to develop a sense of reciprocation. An influencer shared:

> *"The fact that the brand offers training and sources to help me enhance my skills makes me experience valued and stimulated to collaborate with them lengthy time period."*

In this way, by showing commitment to the influencer's success beyond simple promotions, brands are able to form deeper relationships with them, which leads to more organic and effective partnerships.

It is crucial to adjust the schooling applications to target customer needs and interests, especially influencers, in order to achieve optimal results. So, knowing the talent deficits and preferences of influencers, businesses can create applications that are more appealing and suitable. A marketing supervisor said:

> *"We tailor our education applications based at the feedback and pursuits of our influencers. This guarantees that the content material is significant and valuable to them."*

Now education applications don't just address particular person wants of influencers however also depict a custom approach so making a reinforced bond with the brand name.

The improvement of micro influencer professional competencies, who adapt to the company's requirements, can improve abilities encompassing emblem loyalty and human relationships with shoppers and different businesses. By providing bespoke schooling bundles that address the want and hobbies of influencers, brands can help them produce even more significant content and obtain better effects for the brand. It does not only benefit person influencers but also helps enhance the overall effectiveness of influencer advertising campaigns.

The findings of this research therefore reaffirm the growing versatility and sophistication of the Human Resources department in the design and administration of micro influencer incentives in the fashion, technology, and Fast Moving Consumer Goods industries. As these industries evolve more and more towards the digital marketing world, the lines of the traditional Human Resource department are becoming more blurred as they have to collaborate with these influencers and manage their internal human capital with both strategic and tactical approaches. In this discussion, the meanings of these findings are explored and contextualized within the literature, while the tactics for practical usage by the HR professionals are considered.

Thus, a central research implication from the current study is the call for targeting individual micro influencers in the incentive programs design. Contrary to the 'macro' influencers or the more 'conventional' employees, micro influencers work in a constantly evolving and highly saturated environment where a strong focus is placed on the micro influencer's own brand and the audience that interacts with it. The research also finds that most of the standardized incentive systems that have been developed and are centered on financial compensation are not sufficient in encouraging micro influencers. Thus, a more contextual approach which takes into consideration potential self-serving incentives of each influencer is required to develop long term cooperation with both parties benefiting (Chen et al., 2024). This need for personalization also fits well with the current state of the HR literature which is inclining towards the frameworks and design of rewards motivating the workforce internally as well as acknowledging the individual differences of the employees. People are more committed and inspired when they require higher level of autonomy, competence and perceived relatedness. Regarding micro influencers they are compensated using incentive programs that extend beyond monetary reward to cover training, access to the brands activities, and recognition. These features do more than satisfy the influencer basic psychological needs: they also help to maintain brand consciousness and a guaranteed partnership.

Furthermore, the study also confirms the need to have flexibility on these incentive programs as a way of meeting the needs of different organisations. The presented analysis of the digital marketing environment proves that the HR departments have to be as flexible as they can when it comes to the strategy that will address the changes both in the market and in the motivation of the influencers. To illustrate, for the category such as technology where product life cycles are rather short and the rate of innovations is very high, the influencers may appreciate gifts in terms of the early access to technology products and services or chances to co-create content with the brand. While, fashion influencers might be more inclined to gain public acknowledgement and the opportunity to attend such events as these help them in gaining reputation and acknowledgement within the niche communities they serve (Matarazzo et al., 2021).

New responsibilities of HR involvement in managing the partnerships with influencers also characterize a broader trend in the changing strategic objectives of the HR departments. Historically focused on the internal organization's employee management, this function has recently become critical in the external partnerships, especially with the non-regular workforce like influencers. This duality means that the HR professionals need to be well conversant with human capital management and digital marketing techniques (Nayebpour & Sehhat, 2024; Morris et al., 2021; Ambituuni et al., 2021).

It is crucial to involve HR into influencer marketing at its strategic level as well for a sake of guarantying that these partnerships are not merely effective in the tactics level, but also aligning these tactics into the authentic organizational visions and goals. This study aligns with the research argument that the role of HR in influencer marketing is not limited to operational support but can be regarded as a strategic level of activity where HR specialists are expected to develop motivational schemes for influencers to promote brands, increase customer trust, and ultimately develop a competitive advantage (Kang & Lee, 2021; Gupta, 2020).

The research also points out that there must be a proper collaboration between the HR department and the marketing teams in order to have a specific agenda that would connect the actions of the influencers with the values and objectives of the brand. Such cross functional cooperation is crucial to establish smooth cooperation within the field of influencer marketing to create a collection of HR driven incentive programs that would fit to brand's marketing efforts. For instance, instead of giving out ego incentives directly to the influencers, HR can make sure that these incentives created relates with the brand marketing initiatives in order to ensure the influencers working for the brand is inspired to create posts that not just capture the audience's attention but also feature the main brand messages and goals (Hughes et al., 2019; Argyris et al., 2020).

According to the findings of this research, one of the biggest questions for future investigation is the definition of the nature of the relationships with micro influencers. Since influencer marketing is still a relatively new concept, brands are gradually turning to legal contracts and benchmarks to regulate these collaborations. Of course this kind of formalization helps to make things more clear and to avoid unpredictable situations as well as to state accountability for what an influencer is doing, yet it can potentially harm creative flair and genuinely effective presence typical for successful influencer marketing strategies (Zhou et al., 2021). The discussion regarding the scope of formalization of creative collaborations and its impact on the organizations is measured by analyzing the pros and the cons of limiting creativity within partnership frameworks. Influencers enjoy the element of creativity that comes with the job since it means they get to create content that is relatable in the market. Yet, it is essential for brands to regulate risk and guarantee their marketing aims are met, which results in the adoption of strict standards and control over performance, consequently hindering creativity and making influencer marketing less effective (Amiri & Ghourdou, 2024).

This paper can be taken as a contribution to this debate by showing how HR can work across these tensions. Regarding freedom, the influencers must be allowed freedom to operate in order to post content that will interest the public but at the same time, the HR department must ensure that all these activities are in conformity with the overall strategic plan of the brand. A strategy can be to create and use motivation and reward systems that are based on creativity and innovation, for instance, monetary incentives for the content that records high engagement ratio or special collaborations with selection of influencers providing non-recurring and distinctive value providing content.

**Practical Implications for HR Practices in Digital Marketing**

These findings have great implications to the Human Resource management practices in the digital marketing firms. First, they will emphasize the necessity of the HR departments expanding their knowledge base acquired in relation to the topic of influencers and various factors that may inspire influencer's actions. This means that the HR professionals, designing these incentive programs for their organizations, will have to undertake more learning and be fully aware of the latest trends in digital marketing and especially the use of social media platforms to remain relevant and impactful to the corporate goal of the organizations they serve (da Silva et al., 2022; Cascio, 2019; Thite, 2022). Second, the research also underscores the need to use data information in the creation and the organization of the incentive programs. With help of analytics and performance measures, the HR departments may also receive crucial data concerning the efficiency level of the applied practices and make changes if necessary. For instance, observing the engagement rates, content reach, and audiences sentiments can help HR better understand what strategies should be kept and which ones should be eliminated as the incentive programs can be altered in the real time (Ewing et al., 2019; Dolan et al., 2019; Li & Xie, 2020). Third, the implications of the findings point to the fact that much more needs to be done by HR to ensure long term relations with influencers. This includes not only in creating appealing incentive schemes but also in making the influencers feel appreciated and appreciated during the course of the relationship with the brand. Stakeholder engagement and loyalty can only be achieved by constant interaction, sharing of information and effective provision for professional development since it leads to long standing partnership between the influencers and the firms (Leung et al., 2022; Matarazzo et al., 2021).

To a certain extent, this paper fits into the scholarly discussion of the blurring of roles of the HR and marketing departments in the context of advancing digitalisation. It contests the conventional role of HR that is an internal function to a broader context that involves the external interface, associated with non-traditional workforce segments. This broadening of the role of HR is well aligned with recent prescriptions in the scholarly literature for HR to mastery new competencies and approaches that embody the shift in the workplace and the workforce (Cayrat & Boxall, 2023; Harney & Collings, 2021). Furthermore, the study participates in discussions that evaluate degrees and ways of formalization of creative collaborations especially in the framework of influencer marketing. It contributes to the conversation by highlighting the tensions between order and openness and a tension that, as we have noted, HR professionals are well placed to negotiate. In this way, it is possible for institutes to provide adaptable, individualized, and evidence based motivational systems which will enable influencers while at the same time steering them toward common goals of sharing valuable, attention grabbing posts.

Last, the findings of the study shall have implications in the future of work especially in view of the increasing gig economy and other non-standard work arrangements. This means that as more organizations interface with the outside world through freelancers, contractors, and influencers, the HR profession will continue to change form and require the understanding of new paradigm shifts in employment where employment is less govern by the older traditional models of hiring but more on the ability to manage the independent workforce. Subsequently, this research lays the groundwork for additional studies on these new trends and delivers findings which may be useful for theoretical and applied research in the sphere of HR and digital marketing.

## Conclusion

From this research, it was established that Human Resources (HR) have become pivotal in the continued development and management of incentive mechanisms geared towards efficient micro influencer operations in the fashion, technology, and FMCG sectors. Given the changing dynamics of the present day digital world and the resultant shift in how brands and consumers interact, the traditional had known parameters of HR are no longer as rigid to work within, which means that a more diverse and evolved approach to handling not only internal talent but also external partnerships is now the norm. In particular, the study highlights the key factors associated with personalisation and flexibility when developing incentive programs for micro influencers. Other than the tradition employees or the macro influencers, micro influencers come with specific needs that should be met in exchange of their services which are things like career progression, access to brand's experiences as well as public appreciation. This personalization is also crucial for the brand as it helps not only to increase engagement and commitment from users but also to prevent influencers from losing sight of the primary goals and objectives of the brand.

Furthermore, it must be noted that the future of influencer partnerships for many organisations should be guided by HR departments to have more strategic approach. Through close cooperation with the marketing departments and embedding their knowledge of managing human capital, HR personnel can create motivation programs that will directly contribute to brand advancement, consumer loyalty, and overall organizational edge. It is important for organizations to embrace such a strategic approach in a time where talent management is complex due to the enhancement of technology. The professionalization of influencer relationships is helpful in many ways due to the reasons mentioned above. However, setting boundaries that are enforceable come with unique issues that HR must approach with caution. The question here is, where to draw the line between the ability to control and have influence, and where is HR in achieving this? In maintaining the authenticity and effectiveness of the influential content, HR plays a critical role in providing the structure to creativity and vice versa at the same time.

## References

Aleti, T., Pallant, J. I., Tuan, A., & Van Laer, T. (2019). Tweeting with the stars: Automated text analysis of the effect of celebrity social media communications on consumer word of mouth. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *48*(1), 17-32. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2019.03.003

Ambituuni, A., Azizsafaei, F., & Keegan, A. (2021). HRM operational models and practices to enable strategic agility in PBOs: Managing paradoxical tensions. *Journal of Business Research*, *133*, 170-182. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.04.048

Amiri, C. E. I., & Ghourdou, T. (2024). Beyond the Screen: Moroccan Women Crafting Digital Empowerment through Personal Branding in Social Media. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, *12*(3), 293-314. https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2024.123021

Andonopoulos, V. (2021). *Authentic, but make it personal: an examination of social media influencer personal authenticity* (Doctoral dissertation, UNSW Sydney). https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/2339

Argyris, Y. A., Wang, Z., Kim, Y., & Yin, Z. (2020). The effects of visual congruence on increasing consumers' brand engagement: An empirical investigation of influencer marketing on Instagram using deep-learning algorithms for automatic image

classification. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *112*, 106443. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106443

Baumgarth, C., Kirkby, A., & Kaibel, C. (2021). When fake becomes real: The innovative case of artificial influencers. In Creativity and marketing: The fuel for success (pp. 149-167). Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80071-330-720211010

Cañibano, A. (2019). Workplace flexibility as a paradoxical phenomenon: Exploring employee experiences. *Human Relations*, *72*(2), 444-470. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726718769716

Cascio, W. F. (2019). Training trends: Macro, micro, and policy issues. *Human Resource Management Review*, *29*(2), 284-297. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2017.11.001

Castillo, M. (2022). Managing corporate social responsibility through social learning. *Global Business and Organizational Excellence*, *42*(1), 10-21. https://doi.org/10.1002/joe.22170

Cayrat, C., & Boxall, P. (2023). The roles of the HR function: A systematic review of tensions, continuity and change. *Human Resource Management Review*, 100984. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2023.100984

Chen, J., Zhang, Y., Cai, H., Liu, L., Liao, M., & Fang, J. (2024). A Comprehensive Overview of Micro-Influencer Marketing: Decoding the Current Landscape, Impacts, and Trends. *Behavioral Sciences*, *14*(3), 243. https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14030243

Chen, Y., & Chen, Y. (2021). The Activated Businesses and Public. *Internet Philanthropy in China*, 151-193. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-2566-4_4

da Silva, L. B. P., Soltovski, R., Pontes, J., Treinta, F. T., Leitão, P., Mosconi, E., ... & Yoshino, R. T. (2022). Human resources management 4.0: Literature review and trends. *Computers & Industrial Engineering*, *168*, 108111. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cie.2022.108111

Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Frethey-Bentham, C., Fahy, J., & Goodman, S. (2019). Social media engagement behavior: A framework for engaging customers through social media content. *European journal of marketing*, *53*(10), 2213-2243. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-03-2017-0182

Doz, Y. (2020). Fostering strategic agility: How individual executives and human resource practices contribute. *Human Resource Management Review*, *30*(1), 100693. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100693

Dwivedi, Y. K., Kshetri, N., Hughes, L., Rana, N. P., Baabdullah, A. M., Kar, A. K., ... & Yan, M. (2023). Exploring the darkverse: A multi-perspective analysis of the negative societal impacts of the metaverse. *Information Systems Frontiers*, *25*(5), 2071-2114. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-023-10400-x

Ewing, M., Men, L. R., & O'Neil, J. (2019). Using social media to engage employees: Insights from internal communication managers. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, *13*(2), 110-132. https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2019.1575830

Goanta, C., & Ranchordás, S. (2020). The regulation of social media influencers: An introduction. In *The regulation of social media influencers* (pp. 1-20). Edward Elgar Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788978286.00008

Nadhila Adelfrini Mansyur

Gupta, A. D. (2020). *Strategic human resource management: Formulating and implementing HR strategies for a competitive advantage*. Productivity Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429327728

Harney, B., & Collings, D. G. (2021). Navigating the shifting landscapes of HRM. *Human Resource Management Review*, *31*(4), 100824. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2021.100824

Horgan, D., Hackett, J., Westphalen, C. B., Kalra, D., Richer, E., Romao, M., ... & Montserrat, A. (2020). Digitalisation and COVID-19: the perfect storm. *Biomedicine hub*, *5*(3), 1-23. https://doi.org/10.1159/000511232

Huang, X., Yang, F., Zheng, J., Feng, C., & Zhang, L. (2023). Personalized human resource management via HR analytics and artificial intelligence: Theory and implications. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, *28*(4), 598-610. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmrv.2023.04.004

Hughes, C., Swaminathan, V., & Brooks, G. (2019). Driving brand engagement through online social influencers: An empirical investigation of sponsored blogging campaigns. *Journal of marketing*, *83*(5), 78-96. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242919854374

Jhawar, A., Kumar, P., & Varshney, S. (2023). The emergence of virtual influencers: a shift in the influencer marketing paradigm. *Young Consumers*, *24*(4), 468-484. https://doi.org/10.1108/YC-05-2022-1529

Kang, E., & Lee, H. (2021). Employee compensation strategy as sustainable competitive advantage for HR education practitioners. *Sustainability*, *13*(3), 1049. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13031049

Karagür, Z., Becker, J. M., Klein, K., & Edeling, A. (2022). How, why, and when disclosure type matters for influencer marketing. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *39*(2), 313-335. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2021.09.006

Khan, M., Roychowdhury, I., Meghani, A., Hashmani, F., Borghi, J., & Liverani, M. (2020). Should performance-based incentives be used to motivate health care providers? Views of health sector managers in Cambodia, China and Pakistan. *Health Economics, Policy and Law*, *15*(2), 247-260. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1744133118000506

Leung, F. F., Gu, F. F., & Palmatier, R. W. (2022). Online influencer marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *50*(2), 226-251. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-021-00829-4

Levitan, S. (2020). *Social Media and the Mediating Role of Perceived Authenticity in Covert Celebrity Endorsement: Influencing Factors* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Westminster). https://doi.org/10.34737/w4w2v

Li, Y., & Xie, Y. (2020). Is a picture worth a thousand words? An empirical study of image content and social media engagement. *Journal of marketing research*, *57*(1), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243719881113

Lisnik, A., & Majerník, M. (2023). Aspects of strategic management and online marketing. In *Developments in Information and Knowledge Management Systems for Business Applications: Volume 7* (pp. 49-80). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25695-0_3

Lou, C. (2022). Social media influencers and followers: Theorization of a trans-parasocial relation and explication of its implications for influencer advertising. *Journal of advertising*, *51*(1), 4-21. https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2021.1880345

Lv, J., Yang, R., Yu, J., Yao, W., & Wang, Y. (2023). Macro-influencers or meso-influencers, how do companies choose?. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, *123*(12), 3018-3037. https://doi.org/10.1108/IMDS-05-2022-0310

Matarazzo, M., Penco, L., Profumo, G., & Quaglia, R. (2021). Digital transformation and customer value creation in Made in Italy SMEs: A dynamic capabilities perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, *123*, 642-656. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.10.033

Mero, J., Vanninen, H., & Keränen, J. (2023). B2B influencer marketing: Conceptualization and four managerial strategies. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *108*, 79-93. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.10.017

Morris, J., Hassard, J., Delbridge, R., & Endo, T. (2021). Understanding managerial work in the modern Japanese firm: The influence of new organizational forms and changing human resource management practices. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, *42*(4), 1378-1406. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X19875785

Myers, S., Syrdal, H. A., Mahto, R. V., & Sen, S. S. (2023). Social religion: A cross-platform examination of the impact of religious influencer message cues on engagement–The Christian context. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *191*, 122442. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122442

Nayebpour, H., & Sehhat, S. (2024). Designing the competency model of human resource managers based on paradox theory (case study: information and communication technology industry). *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, *32*(7), 1181-1203. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-02-2023-3645

Pallant, J. L., Sands, S., & Karpen, I. O. (2020). The 4Cs of mass customization in service industries: a customer lens. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *34*(4), 499-511. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-04-2019-0176

Rishi, B., & Mohammed, J. (2022). Design, execute, and manage promotions: Study on social media platforms. In *Promotional practices and perspectives from emerging markets* (pp. 226-245). Routledge India. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003315582

Syed, T. A., Mehmood, F., & Qaiser, T. (2023). Brand–SMI collaboration in influencer marketing campaigns: A transaction cost economics perspective. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *192*, 122580. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122580

Thite, M. (2022). Digital human resource development: where are we? Where should we go and how do we go there?. *Human Resource Development International*, *25*(1), 87-103. https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2020.1842982

Tsuriel, K., Dvir Gvirsman, S., Ziv, L., Afriat-Aviv, H., & Ivan, L. (2021). Servant of two masters: How social media editors balance between mass media logic and social media logic. *Journalism*, *22*(8), 1983-2000. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884919849417

Watkins, B. (2022). An Examination of the Influencer–Brand Relationship: Implications and Future Directions for Influencer Marketing. In *The Emerald Handbook of Computer-Mediated Communication and Social Media* (pp. 287-303). Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80071-597-420221017

Ying, Z., Xin-gang, Z., & Zhen, W. (2020). Demand side incentive under renewable portfolio standards: A system dynamics analysis. *Energy Policy*, *144*, 111652. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2020.111652

Zhang, J., & Chen, Z. (2024). Exploring human resource management digital transformation in the digital age. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, *15*(1), 1482-1498. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-023-01214-y

Zhou, S., Barnes, L., McCormick, H., & Cano, M. B. (2021). Social media influencers' narrative strategies to create eWOM: A theoretical contribution. *International Journal of Information Management*, *59*, 102293. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102293

Nadhila Adelfrini Mansyur