

Who Does Gen-Z Trust with Their Finances? A Comparative Analysis of Influencers vs. Traditional Celebrities

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ABSTRACT

Social media platforms have become key channels for disseminating unverified financial information, such as cryptocurrency advice, credit card recommendations, and investment tips (FTC, 2019; Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General, 2023; U.S. SEC, 2022; U.S. SEC, 2023). Understanding how Gen Z evaluates financial information from influencers and traditional celebrities on these platforms is essential, as it directly impacts their susceptibility to misinformation based on perceived source credibility. This study addresses the research question: How do Gen-Z individuals evaluate financial information presented by influencers compared to traditional celebrities? To explore this, the study will employ a qualitative approach, conducting interviews and performing thematic analysis on the transcripts. Participants will be randomly selected, with a target of 20 interviews for the pilot study or fewer if data saturation is achieved. The study is grounded in source credibility theory, which examines information sources' perceived attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness. The findings aim to contribute to the existing literature (Kaabachi, 2021) and enhance financial literacy among Gen-Z individuals in the United States. Furthermore, insights gained can guide policymakers in addressing ethical challenges related to financial information on social media and help regulate information dissemination practices.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Social media; information use; sociology of information

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

commodification; Gen-Z; information evaluation; financial information

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