Beyond Age Stereotype: How Fashion-Based Portrayals of Granfluencers Challenge Norms in Influencer Advertising

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Abstract: As granfluencers become increasingly visible in digital spaces, their fashion-based self-presentation challenges age stereotypes. Drawing on Expectation Violation Theory, this study examines how age-stereotypical and counter-stereotypical fashion portrayals, distinguished by non-sexualized and sexualized forms, shape attitudes toward granfluencers and eWOM engagement intentions in advertising. Results indicate that counter-stereotypical non-sexualized portrayals generate the most favorable attitude and eWOM engagement, whereas sexualized portrayals weaken these outcomes. In addition, social attractiveness and parasocial interaction serially mediate the effects of portrayal type on advertising effectiveness. Overall, the findings advance theoretical understanding of aging in influencer marketing while offering practical guidance for brands and granfluencers.

Keywords: granfluencers portrayals; aging stereotypes; expectation violation theory; parasocial interaction; social attractiveness; influencer marketing