



Beyond the Follower Count: Unravelling the Dynamics of Social Media Influencer Research.

Priya Bansal¹, Dr. Surinder Singh², Anchal Bansal^{3*}

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa, Haryana, India.

Email: priyaphd209@cdu.ac.in

² Professor, Department of Commerce, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa, Haryana, India.

Email: sskundu@cdu.ac.in

³ Assistant Professor, Government College for Women, Rohtak, Haryana, India.

Email: anchalbansalcomphd@cdu.ac.in

Corresponding Author

Priya Bansal

Email: priyaphd209@cdu.ac.in

Cite this paper as: Priya Bansal, Dr. Surinder Singh, Anchal Bansal (2026) Beyond the Follower Count: Unravelling the Dynamics of Social Media Influencer Research..... Journal of International Marketing and Marketing Research, 4(3) 114-124

ABSTRACT

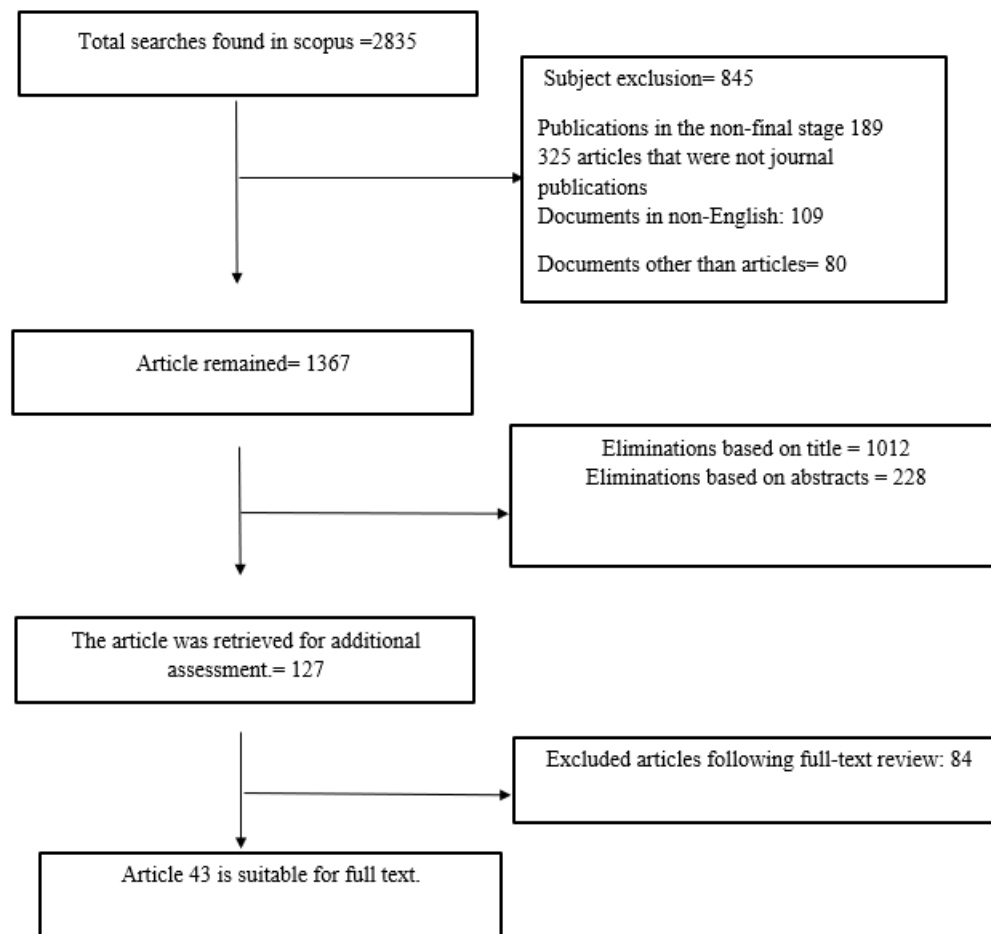
Social media influencers have become an important component of digital marketing, influencing consumers' perceptions, attitudes and purchase decisions. This study presents a systematic literature review of 43 research articles to examine the development and major research trends in the field of social media influencer research. The selected studies were analyzed based on article type, social media platform, major research themes, key variables, and future research directions. The review indicates that empirical research dominates the existing literature, with Instagram, YouTube and other social media platforms being the most frequently examined platforms. The analysis also highlights the growing interest in influencer characteristics and their role in shaping consumer responses and marketing outcomes. Overall, the study consolidates the existing literature on social media influencers and provides a structured understanding of the field while identifying potential directions for future research...

Keywords: Social Media Influencers; Influencer Marketing; Consumer Behaviour; Source Credibility; Purchase Intention.

Introduction

With recent developments in the marketing sector, the critical role of social media influencers has attracted significant attention. Influencer marketing aims to use influencers to convince businesses to market their goods or services to a specific target audience (Kurdi et al., 2022). The emergence of social media and digitization has changed how people communicate, conduct research, and make purchases, driving rapid growth in the global influencer marketing industry. Because social media platforms have large audiences, marketers increasingly use them to tell consumers about products (Koay et al., 2022). Recent estimates indicate that 5.52 billion people utilize the internet globally, making up 67.5% of the world's population (Statista, 2025). India already has more than 1.24 billion internet users, making it the nation with the highest online population in the world (Statista, 2025). In addition, more than 900 million Indians use social media, accounting for about 62.07% of the country's total population (Statista, 2025). These figures demonstrate the immense promise and potential of social media marketing. Social media has significantly changed how people interact and communicate. Businesses now see social media influencers as effective marketing tools and valuable social network resources for potential collaborations. These relationships can lead to long-term collaborations focused on sales and marketing (Masuda et al., 2022). Customers frequently check social media platforms before making purchases. Notably, they depend on influencers, who are thought to have a big impact on companies and have become powerful motivators for purchasing decisions. Consumers see influencers as more trustworthy, relatable, and comparable than celebrities (Bansal et al., 2024). As a result, individuals have more positive perceptions of what influencers promote than what celebrities advocate (Tian et al., 2023). The use of influencers in marketing is not new. Celebrities primarily influenced consumer behavior through traditional media prior to the emergence of social media. By directly or indirectly advertising goods and services through traditional media channels like television and newspapers, people emulated and followed powerful, well-known individuals (Masuda et al., 2022). Research on the importance of social media influencers (SMIs) as marketing tools has increased in tandem with their growing popularity....

Additionally, scholars are paying increasing attention to this topic in business press sources. Professionals and scholars are becoming more interested in identifying these SMIs and how they impact consumer behavior. (Vrontis & colleagues, 2021). Therefore, both academic research and marketing practice need a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. The present study of social media influencer marketing is motivated by several factors. First, a systematic review may more comprehensively assess the large amount of literature on this subject, giving practitioners and scholars a comprehensive overview of the state of the art. Second, by highlighting important issues that have become better known over time, researchers can track the subject's development and spot trends and new ideas in social media influencer marketing. Third, it provides marketers with crucial insights into how influencer marketing impacts customer behavior, such as purchase decisions, brand perception, and influencer trust. Fourth, it will examine how influencers interact with their followers and how this interaction impacts marketing campaign results.-..



This review offers many benefits for marketing practice and research. The first section provides a thorough overview of relevant research and outlines the key topics researchers have examined. Additionally, we present the first thorough examination of the literature on the topic. Furthermore, we structure the SMI phenomenon and its impact on consumer behavior by combining diverse theoretical frameworks and empirical findings into a comprehensive, multidisciplinary framework. Future researchers and practitioners may use the suggested paradigm to develop effective social media influencer marketing plans. Furthermore, our objective is to pinpoint research gaps and suggest possible remedies.

2.Methodology

This section describes the research design, data collection techniques, and analytical tools used in this study. To thoroughly analyze the role of social media influencers, this study used a systematic review methodology. Reputable databases like Scopus were used to gather pertinent scholarly works and empirical research on social media influencer marketing.

2.1 Literature Identification and Refinement Process

This study used Scopus, a renowned academic database known for its extensive and diverse collection of peer-reviewed literature, to guarantee a solid foundation and extract reliable findings (Figure 1). To ensure academic rigor, the search was limited to English-language peer-reviewed journal articles; novels, book chapters, editorials, conference papers, and other non-refereed sources were intentionally excluded. Using the terms "social media influencers" and "influencer marketing," a general keyword search first produced 2835 results. To narrow the focus, additional filters were applied to confine the results to articles within the disciplines of Social Sciences, Business, Management, and Accounting, and to include only final-stage published journal articles. This refinement brought the total down to 1367 articles (refer to Figure 1 for a visual overview). Next, a manual screening process removed duplicates and irrelevant publications. Titles and abstracts were reviewed thoroughly, resulting in a refined pool of 127 relevant articles. After a detailed full-text assessment, 43 journal articles were selected for in-depth analysis. These articles form the core of the systematic literature review and provide a solid foundation for exploring the influence of social media influencers on consumer behavior, particularly purchase decision-making.

3.Description

3.1 Overview of Article Types and Platform Focus

A preliminary step in understanding the academic landscape of social media influencer (SMI) research involves conducting a descriptive analysis of the selected literature. This section specifically focuses on two key elements: the types of articles reviewed and the social media platforms examined within those studies. The analysis of article types revealed that most selected works are empirical research papers, often based on survey-based or experimental designs. These studies aim to test hypotheses related to influencer effectiveness and consumer behavior. A smaller portion of the literature includes conceptual or theoretical articles, which propose frameworks or models to understand influencer dynamics within digital marketing.

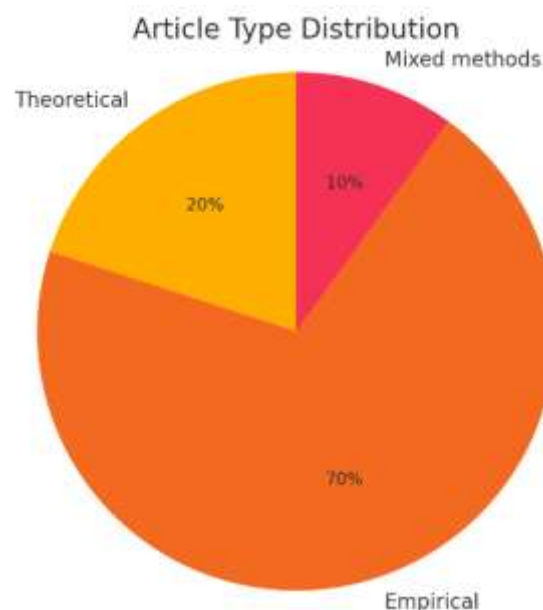


Figure 1 Article type

In terms of platform focus, many studies centered on Instagram, reflecting its popularity as a visually driven, influencer-dominated space. YouTube also emerged as a widely studied platform due to its video-based content and high engagement rates. Other platforms like TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter were examined to a lesser extent, often in studies comparing cross-platform behavior or investigating influencer marketing trends more broadly. The emphasis on Instagram and YouTube highlights the current research priority on platforms where influencer engagement is most prominent.

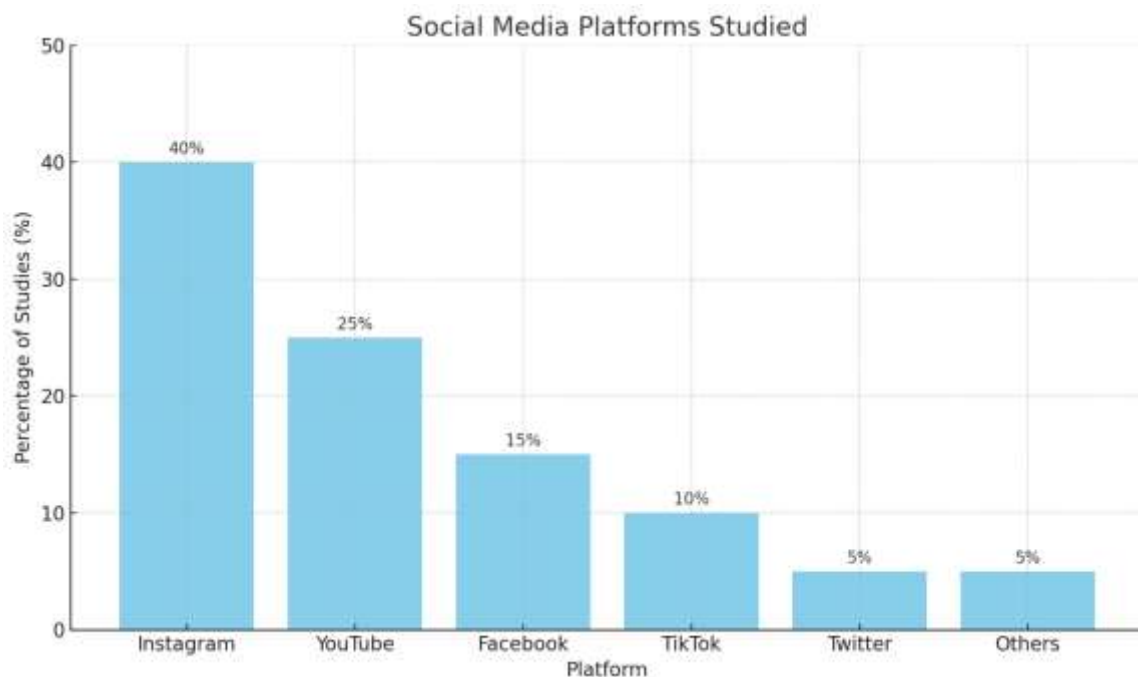


Figure 2 social media platform usage

This descriptive overview lays the groundwork for more targeted thematic analysis by outlining the academic attention given to specific platforms and article formats. It also signals potential gaps, such as the underrepresentation of emerging platforms or limited diversity in research formats, which future studies can address.

4. Emerging themes:

4.1 Emotional Bonds and Audience Interaction

A growing body of research explores parasocial relationships (PSRs)—the one-sided emotional attachments consumers develop with influencers—and how these bonds influence their online behaviors, particularly regarding engagement and purchasing patterns. These relationships mimic real-life friendships, even though they are mediated through digital platforms and lack direct reciprocation. Influencers, through consistent posting, personal storytelling, and interaction in comment sections, construct an illusion of intimacy that fosters emotional investment from followers. This perceived closeness often leads to higher engagement rates and greater receptivity to branded content. Research on this theme shows that emotional connection boosts trust, which in turn enhances the persuasiveness of marketing messages.

Studies such as Masuda et al. (2022) argue that PSRs greatly enhance the efficacy of digital marketing by increasing followers' emotional engagement.

. Similarly, Sokolova and Kefi (2020) confirm that PSRs directly impact purchase intention by creating a sense of trust and familiarity. Additionally, scholars emphasize the ethical dimensions of such relationships—especially the need for media literacy to help consumers critically assess content and avoid manipulation. As these digital interactions continue to evolve, understanding the psychological roots of PSRs is essential for both marketers and scholars to predict consumer responses and build ethical engagement strategies.

4.2 Strategic Use of Influencer Marketing

In today's digital era, influencer marketing has become a core strategy for brands aiming to enhance visibility, credibility, and consumer engagement. Unlike traditional advertising, which often relies on broad demographic targeting, influencer marketing enables personalized communication through trusted voices. Influencers are usually niche experts, lifestyle personalities, or trendsetters whose opinions carry weight with specific online communities. Their value lies in their ability to integrate product promotions organically into their content, making advertisements appear as genuine recommendations rather than overt sales pitches.

The strategic nature of influencer marketing lies in aligning brand values with the influencer's image and audience expectations. According to Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández (2019), authenticity, consistency, and value congruence

are critical factors in successful influencer-brand collaborations. Brands leverage influencers to create narratives that resonate emotionally with audiences, increasing recall and positive sentiment. Moreover, influencers often act as brand ambassadors who humanize the company and build trust over time. As the digital environment becomes increasingly saturated, selective and strategic influencer deployment offers a more efficient, engaging, and emotionally resonant alternative to conventional promotional methods.

4.3 Trust and Authenticity Indicators in Influencer Campaigns

The success of influencer marketing campaigns depends heavily on credibility metrics—the parameters used to assess influencers' authenticity and trustworthiness. In an online world rife with fake followers and inauthentic promotions, these metrics help brands evaluate the true value and effectiveness of partnerships. Key indicators include the influencer's perceived expertise, content consistency, sponsorship transparency, and audience engagement (likes, comments, shares). Additionally, a genuine communication style and alignment between the influencer's content and their niche are considered essential markers of trust (Mabkhot et al., 2022).

These metrics allow marketers to filter out influencers who may appear popular but lack real influence. High engagement-to-follower ratios, sincere storytelling, and partnership disclosure are now viewed as signs of a credible influencer. Moreover, avoiding manipulative tactics—such as clickbait or excessive brand mentions—enhances long-term consumer trust. The increasing focus on ethical marketing and consumer protection also underscores the importance of using credibility metrics to maintain transparency and authenticity in digital campaigns. As influencer marketing matures, the reliance on data-driven credibility assessments will become even more crucial in fostering meaningful and responsible marketing relationships.

4.4 Influencer Traits and Their Impact on Consumer Behavior

Because of their individual traits that enable them to form close emotional ties and promote community, influencers have a big influence on consumer behavior. Traits such as authenticity, creativity, emotional intelligence, consistency, and adaptability make influencers relatable and trustworthy to their audience. These attributes allow them to connect with followers on a personal level, often creating a sense of shared values and belonging (Conde & Casais, 2023a).

The psychological bond between influencers and their followers often translates into enhanced consumer outcomes. When followers think the influencer is sincere and not just driven by money, they are more likely to believe the product recommendations. Fitriati & Madu Siwi (2023) emphasize the importance of this trust, noting that influencers who foster a supportive, engaged, and values-driven community tend to drive higher loyalty and purchase rates. Moreover, when influencers create inclusive, community-oriented spaces, they elevate the consumer experience from a simple transaction to a shared journey—resulting in deeper emotional investment and long-term brand loyalty. In essence, an influencer's personality and behavior are not only central to their own success but also pivotal in shaping consumer trust, engagement, and retention.

4.5 Drivers Behind Purchase Intent in Influencer Marketing

The concept of influencer-induced purchase intention captures how influencers shape consumer buying behavior through a blend of psychological and emotional triggers. Central to this is trust, which stems from an influencer's consistent and honest communication. When followers view influencers as reliable sources of information, they are more likely to consider their product recommendations credible and persuasive. Barbosa & Añaña (2023) emphasize how influencers, through authentic storytelling, make products seem more appealing and relevant. Another critical factor is social proof—the phenomenon where individuals mimic the actions of others in uncertain situations. Influencers serve as living testimonials, and their endorsements validate potential buyers. Visual content (e.g., product demonstrations, tutorials, or lifestyle imagery) further stimulates consumer desire by allowing them to visualize the product's benefits. Additionally, exclusivity strategies, such as limited-time discounts or product giveaways, create urgency and make followers feel like part of a privileged inner circle (Al-Sous et al., 2023). These tactics, when combined with a well-crafted persona and a loyal community, make influencer-driven campaigns highly effective in moving consumers from awareness to action. Understanding this ecosystem of credibility, social proof, emotional connection, and urgency is essential for brands aiming to optimize their digital marketing outcomes.

5. Framework development:

5.1. Social media Influencers (Core Element):

At the center of the framework, SMIs act as key agents influencing consumer behavior within the digital marketing landscape. SMIs leverage their brand, online visibility, and direct communication with followers to build trust and exert persuasive

power. Their content creation, audience engagement, and ability to convey authenticity position them as powerful intermediaries between brands and consumers. The core function of SMIs is to foster connections that can significantly shape how audiences perceive and respond to marketing messages.

5.2. Antecedents of Influencer Effectiveness:

The effectiveness of SMIs is rooted in several antecedent factors, broadly categorized into source characteristics and source attributes. Source characteristics include trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness—qualities that determine how credible and appealing an influencer appears to their audience. Source attributes, on the other hand, involve factors such as authenticity, content quality, relatability, popularity, and consistency. These attributes contribute to the influencer's ability to sustain attention and influence over time by establishing a sense of reliability and relevance in followers' eyes.

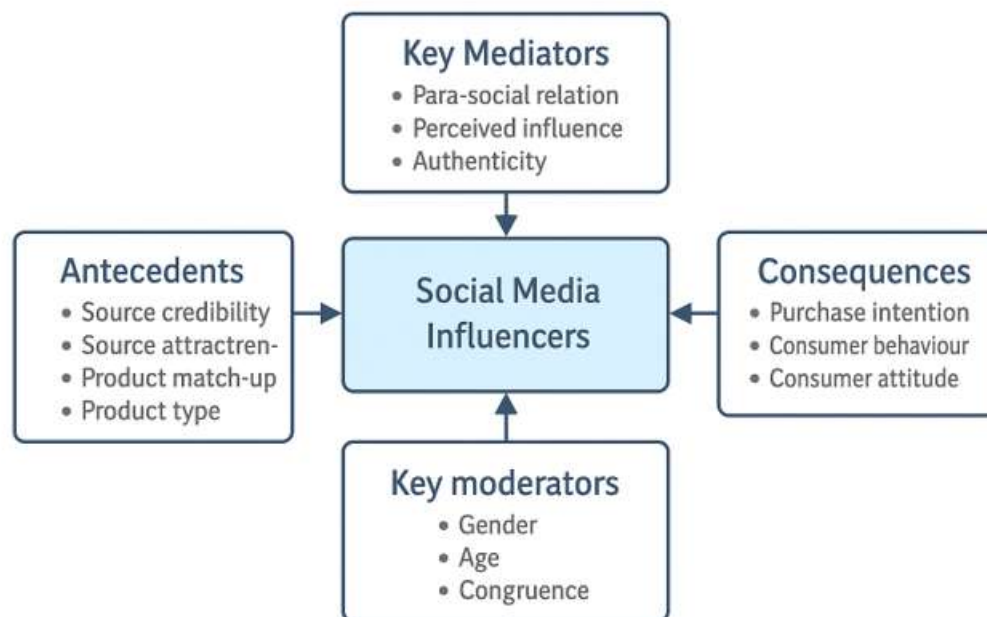


Figure 3 conceptual framework

5.3. Mediators (Psychological Mechanisms):

Mediators serve as the psychological channels through which the influence of SMIs is transmitted to consumer outcomes. Key mediators include parasocial relationships (PSRs), the one-sided emotional bonds followers develop with influencers. These perceived relationships often mimic real friendships, increasing the impact of the influencer's recommendations. Other important mediators include perceived influence (the belief that the influencer is influential or knowledgeable), emotional attachment (feelings of closeness or admiration), and behavioral engagement.

5.4. Moderators (Contextual and Demographic Factors):

Moderators affect the strength or direction of the relationships between the antecedents, mediators, and outcomes. These include demographic variables such as gender and age, as well as contextual factors like brand-influencer congruence, cultural alignment, and the platform used. For example, an influencer who matches a brand's target demographic may have a stronger effect on consumer attitudes. Similarly, the congruence between the influencer's persona and the brand's image can enhance perceived authenticity. Cultural differences and platform-specific features also shape how audiences interpret and respond to influencer content.

5.5. Consequence (Consumer Outcomes):

The final component of the framework focuses on the consequences of influencer engagement, which include a range of consumer responses. These outcomes can be cognitive, affective, or behavioral. Key outcomes include increased purchase intention, changes in consumer behavior (such as product trials or brand switching), and improved attitudes toward the brand. Influencers can also foster brand loyalty by creating a sense of community among followers. In some cases, SMIs contribute to the development of social identity, where consumers adopt the lifestyles, values, or behaviors showcased by the influencer.

These long-term effects solidify the influencer's role in shaping not just individual choices, but broader consumer culture.

Table 2: Research Variables with Mediators and Moderators

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Mediator	Moderator
Attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, and similarity	Purchase intention	Parasocial relation	—
Influencer credibility, celebrity effect, perceived entertainment, trust, and usefulness	Attitude towards influencer, impulse buying	Consumer attitude, celebrity effect, trust	—
(SMIs) intimate self-disclosure	Purchase intention	Parasocial relations and congruence	Congruence between the consumer and the influencer
Interactivity, credibility	Purchase behavior	Attitude toward SMI	Gender
Self-disclosure, environmental concern, and spending self-control	Consumer food purchase intention	Consumption value	—
Perceived information quality and emotional attachment	Purchase intention	Perceived influence	Influencer reputation
Trustworthiness, inspirational capacity, personal authenticity	Consumer behavior, purchase intention	Trustworthiness and inspirational capacity	—
Influencers' consistent cues (information and image consistency)	Behavioral intentions	Influencer lifestyle	—
Perceived similarity and wishful identification	Brand attitude, purchase intention, engagement behaviors	Emotions and self-improvement motives	—
PSR	Purchase intention	Influencer credibility, product attitude	Self-esteem
Parasocial relationship, no. of followers, popularity, opinion leadership	Audience intention	Perceived popularity and opinion leadership	PSR
Opinion leaders, perceived influence	Brand value perception, brand engagement, consumer purchase intention	Brand engagement in self-concept and brand expected value	—
Credibility, consumer involvement, self-brand congruence	Behaviour intention	Self-brand congruence	—

Parasocial interaction, attractiveness, realism, trustworthiness	Purchase intention	Attitude toward SMI	Gender, persuasion knowledge
Communication skills, influence, perceived authenticity, expertise	Purchase intention	PSR	—
Expertise, content quality, Trustworthiness, similarity, PSR, attitude toward sponsored posts	Purchase intention	Attitude towards sponsored posts, blog content quality	—
Attractive celebrity influencers and expert influencers	Consumer-brand engagement, online impulse purchase	Consumer-brand engagement	Impulse buying tendency
Influencer marketing	Purchase intention	Brand admiration and brand attitude	Message involvement

Table 2 summarizes numerous empirical studies about how social media influencers (SMIs) affect customer behavior. These data are organized by independent variables, dependent outcomes, mediators, and moderators. The independent variables include critical influencer attributes such as attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, similarity, credibility, self-disclosure, emotional appeal, and communication skills. These elements are essential as they help establish the influencer's appeal and perceived reliability in the eyes of the audience. For instance, attributes like attractiveness, trustworthiness, and credibility consistently emerge as drivers of purchase intention and behavioral intentions, among the most common dependent variables across studies.

The mediators—such as parasocial relationships (PSR), consumer attitude, emotional attachment, brand image, and perceived influence—serve as the psychological mechanisms through which influencer attributes translate into consumer behavior. These mediators capture consumers' internal cognitive and emotional responses. For example, parasocial relationships reflect the one-sided emotional connections followers develop with influencers, often leading to higher trust and stronger purchase intentions. Likewise, emotional attachment or perceived entertainment mediates the relationship between influencer credibility and outcomes like impulse buying or attitude toward the influencer, indicating that emotional engagement plays a crucial role. Moderators such as gender, self-esteem, product involvement, generational cohort, influencer reputation, and congruence between the influencer and the client affect the strength or direction of these mediated interactions, respectively.

While gender may affect how customers view an influencer's credibility or beauty, congruence—the degree to which a customer identifies with an influencer's persona—can either increase or decrease the impact of PSRs on purchase intentions. Numerous studies have demonstrated the moderating effect of congruence, which is essential in situations where relatability or personalization drives influence. Overall, it reveals a complex, multi-layered process where influencers affect consumer outcomes through a web of interconnected variables. It underscores the importance of psychological engagement (e.g., PSR, emotional attachment) and contextual relevance (e.g., gender, product involvement) in shaping the effectiveness of influencer marketing. This highlights that the mere presence of an influencer is not sufficient; their success in driving consumer behavior depends significantly on how they connect with their audience and the context in which that influence is exerted.

6. Future research directions:

6.1 Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Influencer Engagement

Future studies should delve into the cultural dimensions of influencer marketing by analyzing how consumers from different cultural backgrounds respond to various influencer strategies. Differences in emotional responses, consumer preferences, and engagement patterns across cultures can offer vital insights for designing influencer campaigns that align with localized expectations. Such research can help marketers tailor influencer messaging to reflect cultural values, thereby increasing the effectiveness of international marketing efforts.

6.2 Platform-Specific Influencer Dynamics: Beyond Instagram

As social media ecosystems diversify, there is a growing need to investigate the unique influencer dynamics on emerging platforms like Snapchat and TikTok. Unlike Instagram, these platforms offer distinct user experiences, content formats, and audience demographics. By comparing influencer attributes such as trustworthiness and expertise across platforms, researchers can uncover key differences in how users interpret and respond to branded content. These insights will help shape platform-specific influencer strategies that resonate with targeted user communities.

6.3 Investigating the Influence of AI-Driven Digital Personas

With the growing popularity of virtual influencers, it becomes essential to examine what makes these digital personas compelling to consumers. Research should assess how audiences perceive their authenticity, credibility, and emotional resonance compared to human influencers. Additionally, exploring the limitations and ethical implications of using virtual entities in promotional campaigns can inform best practices for integrating these AI-based figures into brand narratives without eroding trust or engagement.

6.4 Emotional and Psychological Mechanisms in Influencer Content Consumption

Another fruitful area for investigation involves analyzing the emotional and cognitive processes triggered by influencer content. Applying cognitive dissonance theory can help explain the psychological discomfort that may arise when consumer values and influencer messaging are misaligned. Exploring how these emotional tensions influence decision-making, loyalty, and content sharing can deepen understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying influencer effectiveness and guide the creation of more emotionally congruent content strategies.

6.5 Broadening the Framework of Influencer Marketing Effectiveness

To fully grasp the complex nature of influencer marketing, research should expand to include a wider range of influencing factors and outcomes. This includes examining antecedents such as humor, influencer reputation, and reciprocity, as well as deeper outcomes like brand recall, equity, and long-term loyalty. Mediating variables like fantasy fulfillment, influencer loyalty, and social validation, along with moderating factors such as consumer well-being and product type, also warrant exploration. Furthermore, assessing how influencer marketing translates into tangible financial performance will provide critical data to justify and refine influencer strategies from a business perspective.

7. Implications and Limitations:

This study offers several practical and theoretical implications in the domain of social media influencer (SMI) marketing. From a managerial standpoint, the findings provide valuable guidance for brands and marketers in selecting and collaborating with influencers who align with their target audience's values, emotional expectations, and engagement behaviors. By identifying key influencer attributes such as trustworthiness, credibility, self-disclosure, and platform-specific nuances, this research supports the development of more targeted and culturally adaptable influencer campaigns. Additionally, understanding mediators and moderators, such as parasocial relationships and product involvement, can help marketers better predict consumer purchase intentions and brand loyalty outcomes.

However, the study has limitations. A primary limitation is the reliance on secondary data extracted from sources indexed in the Scopus database. While Scopus provides high-quality peer-reviewed content, it may exclude relevant literature from non-indexed journals, conference proceedings, or emerging regional publications, potentially overlooking novel insights or context-specific findings. Furthermore, the data synthesis is limited by the keywords used and publication biases inherent in indexed journals, which may influence the thematic focus and scope of the reviewed studies. Finally, it is difficult to prove causation or the long-term impacts of influencer marketing initiatives because most included research is cross-sectional. To capture a more complete and varied set of findings, future research could expand the data pool to include grey literature and other academic databases (such as Web of Science and Google Scholar). Furthermore, to better understand the changing dynamics and long-term effects of SMI programs, experimental designs and longitudinal studies are suggested..

REFERENCES

- [1] Alkan, Z., & Ulas, S. (2023). Trust in SMIs and purchase intention. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.30935/ojcm/12783>
- [2] Alrwashdeh, M., et al. (2022). Mediating role of brand credibility. *Int. J. of Data and Network Science*, 6(2), 305–314. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.1.007>
- [3] Al-Sous, N., et al. (2023). Antecedents of SMIs on customer purchase intention. *Int. J. of Data and Network Science*, 7(1), 125–130. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.11.010>
- [4] Andonopoulos, V., et al. (2023). Authentic is not always best: When inauthentic social media influencers induce

- positive consumer purchase intention through inspiration. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103521>
- [5] Ashraf, A., Hameed, I., & Saeed, S. A. (2023). How do social media influencers inspire consumers' purchase decisions? The mediating role of parasocial relationships. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 47(4), 1416–1433. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12917>
- [6] Bansal, P., Singh, S., & Bansal, A. SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS AND INFLUENCER MARKETING: A SYSTEMATIC.
- [7] Barbosa, B., & Añaña, E. (2023). The influence of Instagrammers' recommendations. *Cuadernos de Gestion*, 23(1), 75–86. <https://doi.org/10.5295/cdg.221693ea>
- [8] Bi, N. C., & Zhang, R. (2022). I will buy what my 'friend' recommends. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 17(2), 157–175. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jrim-08-2021-0214>
- [9] Bu, Y., et al. (2022). Influencer marketing: Homophily and purchase intention. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 66, 102904. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102904>
- [10] Cabeza-Ramírez, L. J., et al. (2022). How Gen X and Millennials perceive influencers. *JTAER*, 17(4), 1431–1449. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer17040072>
- [11] Chiu, C. L., & Ho, H. C. (2023). Celebrity, Micro-Celebrity, and Virtual Influencers. *SAGE Open*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231164034>
- [12] Conde, R., & Casais, B. (2023a). Micro, macro and mega-influencers on Instagram. *Journal of Business Research*, 158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113708>
- [13] Fitriati, R., & Madu Siwi, I. S. (2023). Mega-Influencers as Online Opinion Leaders. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 29(3), 359–382. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2022.2143992>
- [14] Gomes, M. A., et al. (2022). Impact of influencers on fashion purchase intention. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 13(3), 187–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2022.2039263>
- [15] Hmoud, H., et al. (2022). The effect of SMIs on purchase intention via brand image and customer engagement. *Int. J. of Data and Network Science*, 6(4), 1543–1556. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.4.022>
- [16] Hsieh, J. K. (2023). The impact of influencers' multi-SNS use on followers' behavioral intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 74, 103397. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103397>
- [17] Jansom, A., & Pongsakornrunsilp, S. (2021). Instagram influencers and Thai millennials. *Sustainability*, 13(15). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13158572>
- [18] Jiménez-Castillo, D., & Sánchez-Fernández, R. (2019). Digital influencers and brand recommendation. *Int. J. of Information Management*, 49, 366–376. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2019.07.009>
- [19] John, A., et al. (2021). Social media marketing and purchasing intentions of luxury brands. *Int. J. of Electronic Marketing and Retailing*, 1(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijemr.2021.10043408>
- [20] Kashif, M. A., et al. (2023). Disclosing Instagram Influencers' Advertising. *IBIMA Business Review*, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.5171/2023>
- [21] Koay, K. Y., Cheung, M. L., Soh, P. C. H., & Teoh, C. W. (2022b). Social media influencer marketing: the moderating role of materialism. *European Business Review*, 34(2), 224–243. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-02-2021-0032>
- [22] Koay, K. Y., et al. (2022a). The moderating role of materialism. *European Business Review*, 34(2), 224–243. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-02-2021-0032>
- [23] Koay, K. Y., Lim, W. M., Kaur, S., Soh, K., & Poon, W. C. (2023). How and when social media influencers' intimate self-disclosure fosters purchase intentions: the roles of congruency and parasocial relationships. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 41(6), 790–809. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-06-2023-0246>
- [24] Koay, K. Y., Lim, W. M., Kaur, S., Soh, K., & Poon, W. C. (2023). How and when social media influencers' intimate self-disclosure fosters purchase intentions: the roles of congruency and parasocial relationships. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 41(6), 790–809. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-06-2023-0246>
- [25] Kurdi, B. A., et al. (2022). Effect of SMIs on consumer intention. *Int. J. of Data and Network Science*, 6(4), 1135–1146. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.7.006>
- [26] Kurdi, B. Al, Alshurideh, M., Akour, I., Tariq, E., Alhamad, A., & Alzoubi, H. M. (2022). The effect of social media influencers' characteristics on consumer intention and attitude toward Keto products purchase intention. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 6(4), 1135–1146. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.7.006>

-
- [27] Kwiatek, P., et al. (2021). Credibility of influencer recommendations. *Informatologia*, 54(3–4), 181–196. <https://doi.org/10.32914/i.54.3-4.5>
- [28] Leite, F. P., & Baptista, P. de P. (2022). SMIs' self-disclosure and intentions. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 30(3), 295–311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2021.1935275>
- [29] Mabkhot, H., Isa, N. M., & Mabkhot, A. (2022). The Influence of SMI Credibility. *Sustainability*, 14(19). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su141912323>
- [30] Masuda, H., et al. (2022). Influencer attributes and purchase intentions. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121246>
- [31] Masuda, H., Han, S. H., & Lee, J. (2022). Impacts of influencer attributes on purchase intentions in social media influencer marketing: Mediating roles of characterizations. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121246>
- [32] Ooi, K. B., et al. (2023). Social media influencers: An effective marketing approach? *Journal of Business Research*, 160, 113773. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113773>
- [33] Pérez-Cabañero, C., et al. (2023). Influencers who most engage on Instagram. *Cuadernos de Gestion*, 23(2), 7–20. <https://doi.org/10.5295/cdg.221863cp>
- [34] Santiago, J. K., & Serralha, T. (2022). Attractiveness, homophily, and purchase intention. *Issues in Information Systems*, 23(1), 86–101. https://doi.org/10.48009/1_iis_2022_107
- [35] Santiago, J. K., & Serralha, T. (2022). Explaining purchase intent via homophily and authenticity. *Issues in Information Systems*, 23(1), 86–101. https://doi.org/10.48009/1_iis_2022_107
- [36] Sesar, V., et al. (2022). Advertising disclosure and influencer credibility. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 15(7). <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm15070276>
- [37] Shah, S. A., et al. (2023). What Drives Followers-Influencer Intention in Influencer Marketing? *SAGE Open*, 13(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231179712>
- [38] Sokolova, K., & Kefi, H. (2020). Instagram and YouTube bloggers. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.011>
- [39] Tian, S., Cho, S. Y., Jia, X., Sun, R., & Tsai, W. S. (2023). Antecedents and outcomes of Generation Z consumers' contrastive and assimilative upward comparisons with social media influencers. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 32(7), 1046–1062. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-02-2022-3879>
- [40] Tian, S., et al. (2023). Antecedents and outcomes of Gen Z consumers' upward comparisons. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 32(7), 1046–1062. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-02-2022-3879>
- [41] Torres, P., Augusto, M., & Matos, M. (2019). Digital influencer endorsement. *Psychology & Marketing*, 36(12), 1267–1276. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21274>
- [42] Trivedi, J. P. (2021). Influencer marketing and online impulse purchase. *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations*, 19(3), 49–64. <https://doi.org/10.4018/JECO.2021070104>
- [43] Trivedi, J., & Sama, R. (2020). Influencer marketing on brand admiration. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 19(1), 103–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332861.2019.1700741>
- [44] Venciute, D., et al. (2023). The role of influencer–follower congruence in the relationship between influencer marketing and purchase behaviour. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103506>
- [45] Vrontis, D., Makrides, A., Christofi, M., & Thrassou, A. (2021). Social media influencer marketing: A systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 617–644. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12647>
- [46] Wongkitrungrueng, A., Dehouche, N., & Assarut, N. (2020). An empirical investigation of the impact of influencer live-streaming ads in e-commerce platforms on consumers' buying impulse. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 116, 106373. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106373>
- [47] Wu, Y., Yang, S., & Liu, D. (2023). The effect of social media influencer marketing on sustainable food purchase: Perspectives from multi-group SEM and ANN analysis. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 416. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2023.137890>
- [48] Yap, Y. R., & Ismail, N. (2022). Factors of virtual influencer marketing. *Int. J. Internet Marketing and Advertising*, 17. [Exact DOI not provided]
- [49] Zirena-Bejarano, P. P., et al. (2022). Brand value and influencer credibility. *Innovative Marketing*, 18(2), 135–147. [https://doi.org/10.21511/im.18\(2\).2022.12..](https://doi.org/10.21511/im.18(2).2022.12..)