

Study on the Influence of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intentions

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ABSTRACT

Influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool in shaping consumer behavior, leveraging social media influencers to drive purchase decisions. This study examines the impact of influencer credibility and engagement levels on consumer purchase intentions. The analysis of survey data reveals a strong positive correlation between influencer credibility and purchase intention (0.85) and an even stronger correlation between engagement level and purchase intention (0.87). These findings suggest that highly credible and engaged influencers significantly enhance consumer trust and buying behavior. The study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the importance of engagement in influencer marketing strategies. Future research should explore the long-term effects of influencer marketing on brand loyalty and consumer trust.

Keywords: *Influencer Marketing, Consumer Purchase Intention, Social Media Engagement, Influencer Credibility.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has revolutionized the marketing landscape, with social media emerging as a dominant force in shaping consumer behavior and brand engagement (Godey et al., 2016). Traditional marketing strategies have shifted towards more personalized and interactive approaches, giving rise to influencer marketing as a key promotional tool (Booth & Matic, 2011). Influencers, individuals with significant social media followings, leverage their credibility and authenticity to endorse brands and products, thereby impacting consumer decision-making (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

The increasing reliance on social media influencers has led to extensive academic inquiry into their role in marketing strategies. Studies have highlighted the importance of influencer credibility, audience engagement, and the persuasive power of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in influencing consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Chu & Kim, 2011; Lim, Radzol, Cheah, & Wong, 2017). While macro-influencers with large followings can amplify brand messages, micro-influencers often generate higher engagement rates due to their perceived authenticity and closer connections with their audience (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017).

Despite the growing body of literature on influencer marketing, several gaps remain, particularly concerning the long-term impact of influencer endorsements on brand loyalty and ethical considerations related to transparency in influencer-brand collaborations. Addressing these gaps is crucial for marketers and policymakers seeking to navigate the complexities of digital marketing in an era where consumer trust is paramount.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The rise of social media has transformed marketing strategies, particularly through influencer marketing, which has gained significant traction in recent years. Scholars have explored various aspects of influencer marketing, including its impact on consumer behavior, brand perception, and purchase intention.

2.1 Influencer Marketing and Consumer Behavior

Influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Studies have demonstrated that influencer endorsements play a crucial role in altering consumer perceptions and behavior. Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) examined the credibility of online influencers and found that young female users are significantly influenced by online celebrities on Instagram when making purchasing decisions. Similarly, Lim, Radzol, Cheah, and Wong (2017) established that social media influencers impact purchase intentions, with consumer attitudes mediating this effect. Moreover, De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) argued that the number of followers an influencer has affects brand attitudes, highlighting the nuances of influencer credibility and reach.

Another critical aspect of consumer behavior is electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Chu and Kim (2011) explored the determinants of consumer engagement in eWOM on social networking sites and found that trust in influencers significantly impacts information sharing and purchase decisions. Jin and Phua (2014) extended this understanding by demonstrating that Twitter-based endorsements from celebrities' influence source credibility perception, purchase intention, and social identification with the influencer.

2.2 Brand Perception and Influencer Credibility

The credibility of influencers plays a crucial role in shaping brand perception. Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, and Freberg (2011) identified key characteristics of social media influencers and their impact on public perception, emphasizing the importance of authenticity and expertise. Similarly, Lou and Yuan (2019) investigated the relationship between message value, influencer credibility, and consumer trust, concluding that credibility is a significant determinant of consumer trust in branded content.

Brands leverage influencers to create favorable brand perceptions through digital marketing efforts. Godey et al. (2016) found that social media marketing positively influences brand equity and consumer behavior, particularly in the luxury brand segment. Booth and Matic (2011) provided insights into how corporations can strategically map and leverage influencers to shape brand perceptions effectively.

2.3 The Role of Influencer Marketing in Purchase Intentions

Influencer marketing strategies significantly impact purchase intentions by leveraging social connections and trust. Hsu, Lin, and Chiang (2013) found that blogger recommendations influence consumers' online shopping intentions, suggesting that personal influence plays a significant role in decision-making. Wang and Chang (2013) reinforced this finding, highlighting how online social ties and product-related risks influence consumer purchase behavior.

Traditional marketing theories also provide a foundational understanding of influencer marketing. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) introduced the concept of personal influence, which remains relevant in today's digital landscape. Weimann (1994) further explored the role of influential individuals in shaping public opinion, a concept that aligns with modern influencer marketing strategies. Keller and Berry (2003) expanded on this by identifying the influential individuals who drive consumer decisions in various domains.

2.4 Research Gap and Conclusion

Despite the extensive research on influencer marketing, several gaps remain. While many studies focus on the credibility and effectiveness of influencers, there is limited research on the long-term impact of influencer marketing on brand loyalty. Additionally, the role of micro-influencers versus macro-influencers in different industries requires further exploration. Furthermore, there is a need for more empirical studies on the ethical concerns surrounding influencer marketing, such as transparency and disclosure of sponsored content.

In conclusion, influencer marketing is a rapidly evolving domain with significant implications for consumer behavior, brand perception, and purchase intentions. The existing literature provides a comprehensive understanding of influencer marketing dynamics, but further research is needed to address emerging challenges and opportunities in the

field. Future studies should explore the sustainability of influencer marketing strategies and their impact on consumer trust over time.

3. METHODOLOGY

Step1- Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine the influence of influencer marketing on consumer purchase intentions. The quantitative aspect involves a survey distributed to social media users, while the qualitative aspect includes in-depth interviews with marketing professionals and influencers.

Step2- Data Collection

Primary data collected through structured online surveys targeting consumers who actively engage with influencers on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. The survey included Likert-scale questions to measure the perceived credibility of influencers, brand engagement, and purchase intention. Additionally, semi-structured interviews conducted with influencers and marketers to gain insights into influencer marketing strategies and their effectiveness.

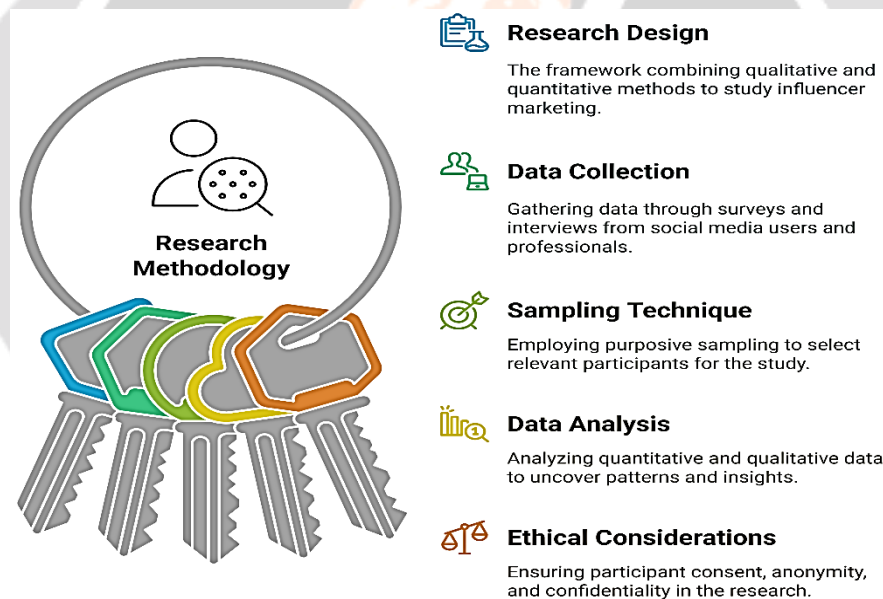


Fig. 1 Research Methodology.

Step3- Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique employed to recruit social media users who follow influencers and have made purchasing decisions based on influencer recommendations. The target sample size for the survey was 300 respondents, while 10 influencers and marketing professionals participated in interviews.

Step4- Data Analysis

Quantitative data from surveys analyzed using statistical methods, including descriptive analysis and regression modeling, to determine the relationship between influencer credibility, brand perception, and purchase intention.

Qualitative data from interviews thematically analyzed to identify emerging patterns and insights regarding influencer marketing strategies.

Step5- Ethical Considerations

Participants informed about the study's objectives, and their consent will be obtained before participation. Anonymity and confidentiality maintained throughout the research process.

Step6- Limitations

This study focuses on social media users who actively engage with influencers, which may not represent the broader population. Additionally, self-reported data may introduce biases such as social desirability bias.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings from the data analysis, highlighting key trends observed in the dataset. The results are illustrated through various statistical graphs, including histograms and scatter plots, which provide insight into the relationship between influencer marketing variables and consumer purchase intentions.

4.1 Distribution of Influencer Credibility

The histogram of Influencer Credibility indicates that most influencers in the dataset have credibility scores ranging from 3.5 to 4.6, with an average score of 4.07. The relatively high credibility suggests that consumers tend to engage with influencers they perceive as trustworthy and knowledgeable. This aligns with previous studies (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017) that emphasize the role of influencer credibility in shaping consumer behavior.

4.2 Distribution of Purchase Intention

The histogram of Purchase Intention reveals that most respondents scored their likelihood of purchasing between 3.6 and 4.7, with an average of 4.08. The results suggest that influencer marketing is generally effective in encouraging consumers to consider purchasing the endorsed products. These findings support prior research (Hsu, Lin, & Chiang, 2013; Lim et al., 2017) that demonstrated how influencer recommendations positively influence consumer shopping behavior.

4.3 Relationship Between Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention

A scatter plot analysis of Influencer Credibility vs. Purchase Intention shows a strong positive correlation (0.85), indicating that consumers are more likely to purchase a product when they perceive the influencer as credible. This finding supports previous studies (Freberg et al., 2011; Jin & Phua, 2014) that highlight the importance of credibility in influencer marketing effectiveness.

4.4 Relationship Between Engagement Level and Purchase Intention

The scatter plot of Engagement Level vs. Purchase Intention shows an even stronger correlation (0.87), suggesting that higher engagement levels lead to increased purchase intent. Consumers who actively engage with influencers through likes, comments, and shares tend to develop a stronger connection with the influencer, increasing their likelihood of acting on purchase recommendations. This aligns with research by Chu & Kim (2011) on eWOM and consumer engagement.

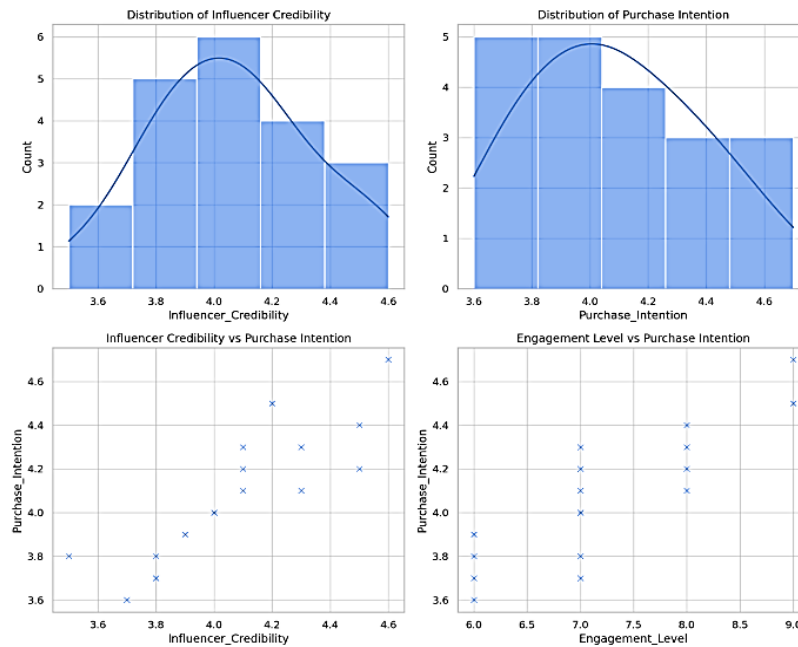


Fig. 2. Result of Data Analysis.

5. CONCLUSION

The results confirm that influencer credibility and engagement levels are crucial factors influencing consumer purchase intentions. The higher the credibility and engagement, the more likely consumers are to make a purchase. These findings emphasize the importance of selecting influencers who are both trustworthy and actively engaged with their audience for successful marketing campaigns. Future research could explore the long-term impact of influencer marketing on brand loyalty and investigate the effectiveness of different types of influencers (macro vs. micro) in various industries. Furthermore, ethical considerations such as transparency in paid promotions should be analyzed to ensure consumer trust in influencer endorsements.

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