



## **Understanding the Relationship Between Social Media Influencers and Consumer Purchase Intentions: A Review of Literature**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Social Media Influencers (SMIs) have gained popularity in recent years, resulting in the growth of Influencer Marketing (IM) as a crucial marketing approach. Despite increased focus from researchers and practitioners, the existing scholarly work in this field remains fragmented and incomplete. An in-depth and analytical evaluation of the current literature is urgently needed due to the critical role of Social Media Influencers (SMIs) in consumer-related outcomes and the changing landscape of this study subject. This paper addresses the gap by offering an initial thorough summary of the current research on social media influencers. Our study, comprising 16 publications sourced from the SCOPUS database, provides a thorough understanding of influencer marketing dynamics. This text elucidates the mechanisms that enhance the attractiveness of social media influencers and their significant influence on altering consumer intention and behavior. This research contributes to the existing understanding of instant messaging in social media and emphasizes its importance for both theory and practice. The study offers a thorough analysis of existing research and proposes future avenues for exploration, serving as a helpful tool for scholars, professionals, and advertisers engaged in influencer marketing.

Keywords: Social media influencers, Influencer marketing, Purchase intention

### **Introduction:**

According to (Nam and D an, 2018), the rapid development of the digital era has resulted in the emergence of social media as an essential online tool that has a significant impact on its users' lives. According to a survey published by Statista in 2022, more than fifty percent of the population of India participated in social networks. The percentage of people who are connected to social networks is expected to reach 67 percent by the year 2025. It is estimated that roughly 65 percent of the world's population and 60 percent of the world's population utilize social media out of the total population of 5.16 billion people who use the internet worldwide. In addition, it was projected that by the year 2025, the number of people in India who might be considered active Internet users will exceed 900 million. Therefore, it can be deduced that the potential for marketing through social media is enormous and promising. There is no denying that social media has fundamentally altered how people interact, communicate, and behave. It is now a potent instrument that can be utilized by businesses, sellers, advertising, and customers alike. According to (Radwan et al., 2021), consumers utilize Internet platforms to conduct information searches for products and services regularly. According to (Chetioui et al., 2020), the expanding trend of social media provides marketers with increased opportunities to strategize and interpret social media platforms as a channel for developing connections with a large consumer base. As a result of the tremendous scalability of the internet, specific contributors on the internet are able to attract a large number of consumers, establish a vast audience, and serve as a guide for their followers. These individuals are commonly referred to as social media influencers (SMI) (Vrontis et al., 2021). Marketers and businesses in this day and age used to take advantage of personalities or influencers like these in order to endorse their products and services on their behalf. According to (Mart nez-L pez et al., 2020), the process of using social media influencers (SMIs) to stimulate positive consumer reactions regarding their interests is referred to as influencer marketing. This practice serves the purpose of allowing SMIs and their followers to develop a brand image. According to Nam and Dan (2018), consumers are highly impacted by the growth of social media platforms and the creation of social media influencers for such platforms. There is a significant difference between the traditional type of marketing and the relationship and communication that exists between an influencer and a consumer. In the context of influencer marketing, influencers serve as opinion leaders who are regarded as experts in their respective communities. Following

(Folkvord et al., 2020), Their endorsement of the product can assist in the development of a strong confidence in them among their audience and followers. According to recent research (Hughes et al., 2019), more than seventy-five percent of marketers increasingly rely on social media influencers (SMIs) to spread information about their products. Influencers on social media are gaining popularity all over the world because of the impact they have on the consumers' intent to make a purchase. This impact is a result of their credibility, attractiveness, professionalism, and persuasive style. (Freberg et al., 2011) State that social media influencers are a brand-new category of impartial third-party endorsers who impact audience attitudes. These influencers

use social media platforms such as blogs, tweets, and other forms of social media to spread their message. Through conducting a comprehensive review, it is possible to accomplish a more unified analysis of the massive body of literature on social media influencer marketing. Providing academics and practitioners with access to a comprehensive description of the current state of the art makes it much easier to keep up with the most recent advancements in the field. The second benefit is that it will assist in recognizing trends and developing ideas regarding social media influencer marketing. Researchers are able to track the evolution of the area and identify significant issues that have acquired popularity with time because of this possibility. This article makes an effort to examine both the empirical and theoretical arguments in order to analyze whether or not the characteristics of social media influencers affect purchase intention.

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## **Theoretical background**

**Influencer marketing:** Many people often overlook the distinction between an influencer and a celebrity. Nevertheless, the distinction is particularly noticeable in the digital age. Influencers are individuals who have acquired fame on the internet by creating and marketing their material. (Kotler et al., 2016). In this day and age of the internet, social media endorsers also play an important part due to the increased capacity of buzz marketing and the fact that they have shown to be a somewhat more cost-effective option for businesses as a marketing strategy. (Harrison, 2017; Patel, 2016;). In their study, (Kotler et al., 2016) underline the fact that companies need to establish brand affinity in order to ensure a favorable buzz in the market and win more market share through the repurchase of new customers. According to (Kotler et al., 2016), one of the most important components of developing brand affinity is to implement an influencer marketing approach.

According to (Lim et al., 2017), consumers of Generation Z attribute credibility, trustworthiness, and knowledge to the employment of endorsers in marketing their products.

**Purchase intention:** Consumer purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by celebrity endorsements (Arai et al., 2014). Several research studies indicate that a consumer's likelihood to buy is connected to the participation of influencers or endorsers (Goldsmith et al., 2000; Mathur et al., 1997). Purchase intention is the likelihood and frequency with which an individual will purchase an item, indicating the propensity or intention to buy a product. Purchase intention is associated with word of mouth according to Shrestha (2019). Erkan and Evans (2018) propose that word of mouth (WOM) is more impactful when endorsed by well-known figures and significantly influences online customers' intention to purchase. Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) emphasize that the volume of electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) can impact consumers' buying intentions. An endorser with an inspirational image and high popularity can influence the consumer's buying intention (Staff, 2011). Purchase intention is a valuable factor for predicting market share and projected sales for a brand (Morwitz, 2014).

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## **Methodology**

This section provides an overview of the methodological approaches that were utilized in this investigation. It has been compiled, analyzed, and evaluated that a collection of publications from the Scopus database that are relevant to the research on social media influencers has been gathered. The keywords used for the research were social media influencers and customer purchase intention. The search strategy is given below

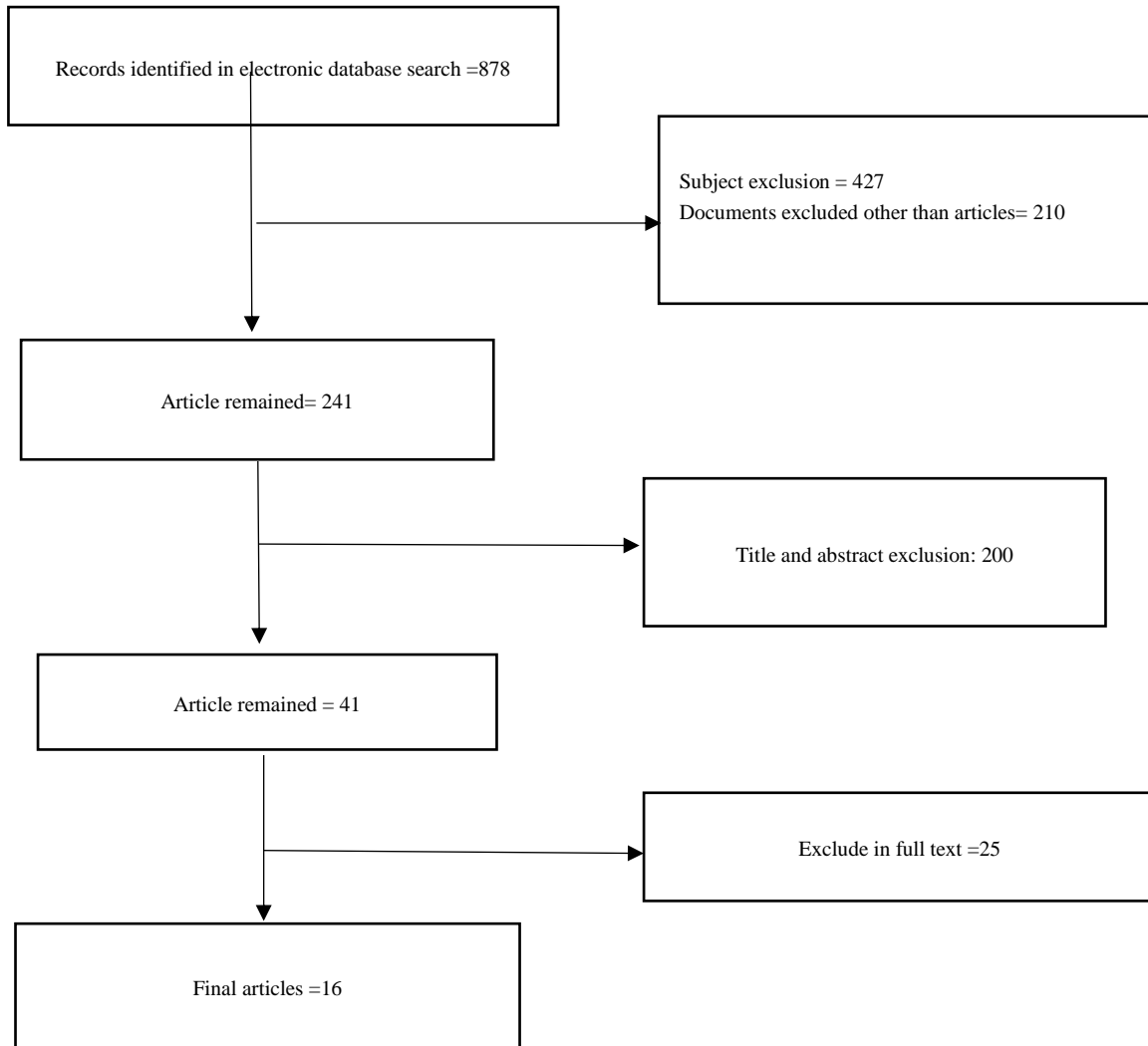


Figure 1. Search strategy

**Conceptual model**

The model that was constructed and presented in Table 1 is primarily founded on the idea of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), while other characteristics were obtained from previous research. The purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics that influence consumers' attitudes toward food influencers. After that, it investigates the ways in which the latter encourages the intention to make a purchase.

**(1) The Ohanian Model of Source Credibility.**

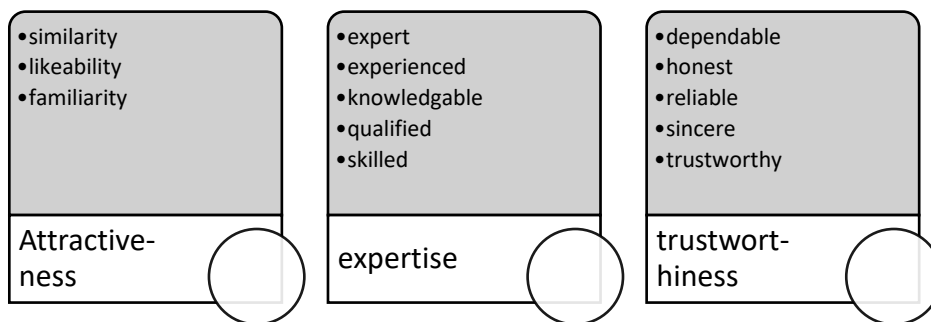


Figure 2. source credibility model.

Source: Louise E Canning, celebrity endorsement in Business Markets, 2005

**2) Ducoffe's 1995 Model (Informativeness & Entertainment)** Source: Ducoffe, R. (1995). How consumers assess the value of advertising. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 17(1), 1-18

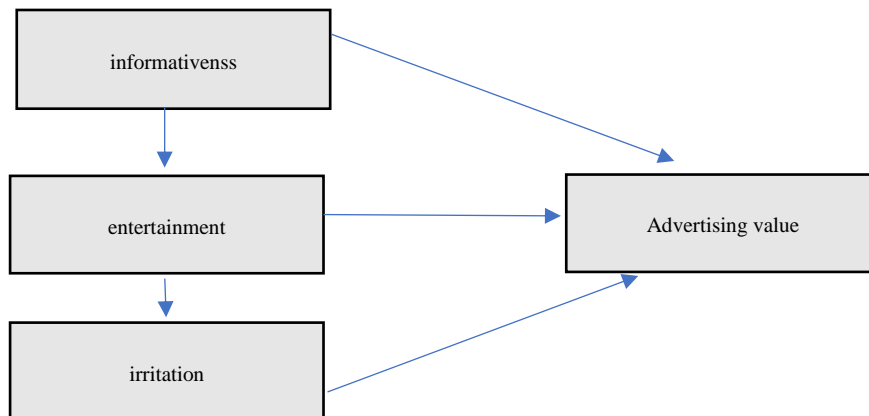


Figure 3. Informativeness and entertainment model.

### 3. Social media influencers and purchase intention model:

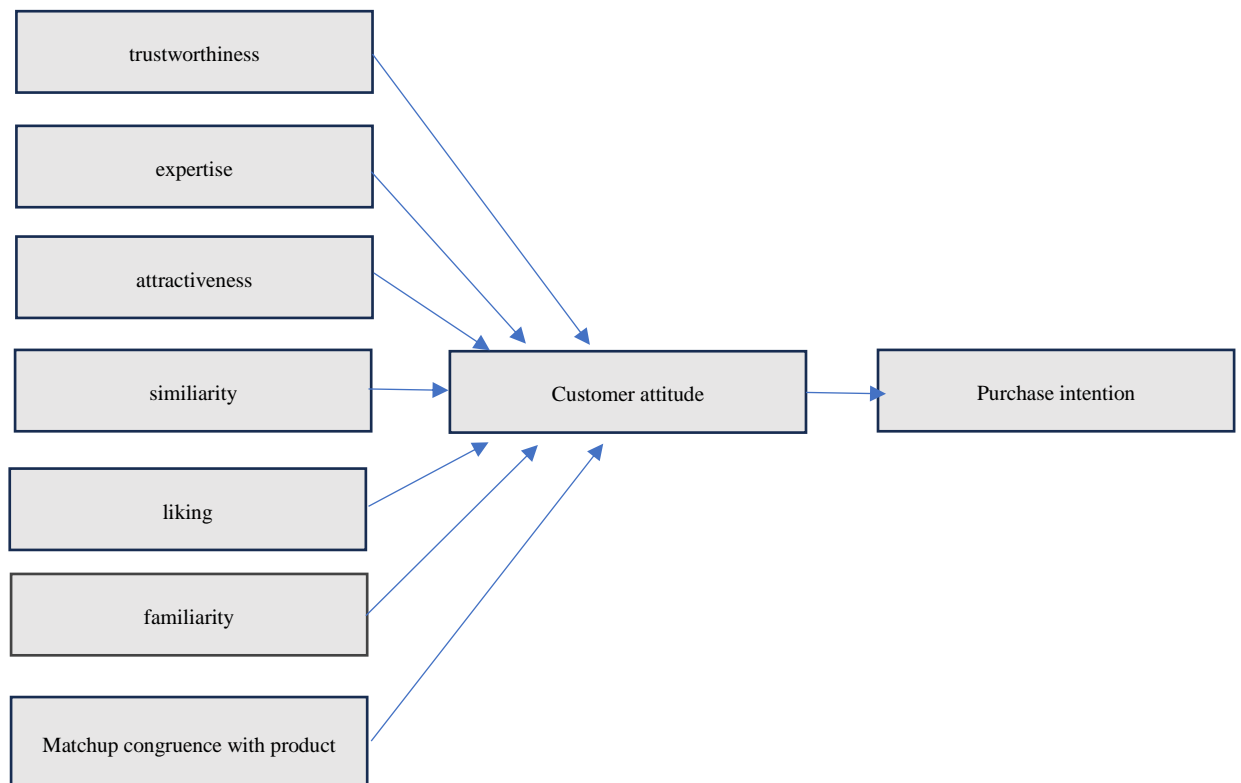


Figure 4. Social media influencers and purchase intention model

Source: Ha, N. & Lam, N. (2017) The Effect of Celebrity Endorsement on Customer's attitude towards brand and purchase intention. *International Journal of Economics and Finance*, 9(1), 64-77

**Literature review on social media influencers and purchase intention:**

TABLE 1. Review of social media influencers and their impact on purchase intention.

author	objective	Sample size	methodology	Results
<b>Ha and Lam (2016)</b>	outlined celebrity endorsement's impact on consumer attitude toward a brand and its effects on purchase intention.	306 individuals	The exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis were employed	The findings show a positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention
<b>Lim et al. (2017)</b> analyzed the effectiveness of social media influencers by mediating the role of consumer attitude between exogenous and endogenous relationships	analyzed the effectiveness of social media influencers by mediating the role of consumer attitude between exogenous and endogenous relationships	200 respondents	Purposive sampling was used to devise the data collection process, and the Partial least square structural equation model approach was employed	The findings showed a positive relationship between social media influencers and purchase intention with a mediating role of customer attitude
<b>Nam and Dân (2018)</b>	contributed to the model by perusing the impact of social media influencer marketing on the consumers' purchase intention	312 respondents	exploratory factor analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and ANOVA.	The findings suggested that all four factors notably influence consumer purchase intention
<b>Wardani et al. (2019)</b>	explained the connection between brand attitude, social media influencer credibility, and purchase intention in Indonesia's airline industry	131 respondents	examined through path analysis with a quantitative method	It was found that there is a connection between brand attitude social media influencer credibility, and customer purchase intention
<b>Hermanda et al. (2019)</b>	examined how social media influencers impacted cosmetic consumers' brand image, self-concept, and purchase intention in Indonesia	219 respondents	Smart PLS software, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was the analytical tool chosen	the research found a considerable negative influence on social media influencers and self-concept toward purchase intention
<b>Kasmi and Siham (2019)</b>	elucidated how consumers perceive "influencers" and whether they impact their purchasing decisions	200 respondents	Descriptive statistics analysis, along with correlation analysis, was employed to process the data.	The study concluded that consumers significantly respond to celebrity endorsements.
<b>(Nascimento, 2019)</b>	proposed to determine how characteristics of digital influencers concerning their social credibility dimensions affect purchase intention	1924 responses	Multiple regression analysis	it was perceived from findings that digital influencers' attributes prominently affect consumers' purchase intention but only in the case of low-involvement goods.
<b>Chetioui et al. (2020)</b>	evaluated the liaison between brand opinions, consumer purchase intentions, and sentiments toward fashion influencers	610 responses	Structural equation modeling was employed	The results show that fashion influencers have a great impact on brand perception and consumer purchase intention.

<b>Trivedi and Sama (2020)</b>	examined the comparative effect of celebrity versus expert influencers on consumers' online purchase intentions	438 respondents	Structural equation modeling, regression analysis, and the Hayes process method were used to test the proposed hypotheses	The findings indicate that choosing an expert influencer over an attractive celebrity influencer when planning marketing communications for consumer electronics products has a distinct advantage
<b>Saima and Khan (2020)</b>	identified the effect of various social media influencer attributes on their credibility and, ultimately, the consumer's purchase intention	76 respondents	Structural equation modeling with Smart PLS 3 was used for data analysis.	The inferences illustrated that trustworthiness, information quality, and entertainment value significantly directly affect influencer credibility and ancillary effects on consumer purchase intention.
<b>Isyanto <i>et al.</i> (2020)</b>	proposed this study to gauge the influence of micro-influencer marketing and brand image concurrently and partially on consumers' purchase intention of cosmetic products in Karawang	380 respondents	descriptive analysis, verification approach, and path analysis	It was concluded that both micro-influencer and brand image stimulate purchase intention simultaneously and partially

### Discussion and conclusion:

The literature reviewed underscores the significant impact that social media influencers wield on customer purchase intention. The findings reveal a complex interplay of various factors that influence consumers' decision-making processes when influenced by social media personalities. Firstly, the credibility and trustworthiness of influencers emerge as critical determinants of their persuasive power. Consumers tend to exhibit higher purchase intentions when they perceive an influencer as authentic, knowledgeable, and genuinely endorsing a product or service. However, the proliferation of sponsored content and undisclosed partnerships raises concerns about transparency and authenticity, potentially diminishing the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns. In conclusion, the literature reviewed underscores the pervasive influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase intention. Influencer marketing has emerged as a potent tool for brands to engage with consumers in a personalized and authentic manner, leveraging the reach and persuasive power of social media personalities to drive consumer behavior. However, the efficacy of influencer marketing hinges on various factors, including the credibility of the influencer, the nature of the product being promoted, and the dynamics of influencer-consumer relationships. Moving forward, marketers must navigate the evolving landscape of influencer marketing with caution, ensuring transparency, authenticity, and ethical conduct in their collaborations with social media influencers. Moreover, researchers are encouraged to explore novel avenues for inquiry, including the impact of cultural and contextual factors on consumer responses to influencer marketing and the long-term effects of influencer endorsements on brand loyalty and post-purchase behavior. By addressing these gaps in the literature, we can advance our understanding of the complex dynamics underlying social media influencer marketing and its implications for consumer behavior and marketing strategy.

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