



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Factors Influencing Consumer Attitudes towards Influencer Advertisements on Social Media and Their Relationship with Purchasing Behavior

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Sep 21, 2024 Accepted: Oct 27, 2024	This study investigates the factors that shape Saudi consumers' attitudes toward influencer advertisements on social media and the relationship between these attitudes and purchasing behavior. Through a survey conducted with 400 respondents, the findings reveal that the majority of participants are experienced and active users of social media platforms. The results indicate a positive relationship between convenience, interaction, and influencer credibility, all of which significantly affect consumer attitudes. Furthermore, a positive correlation was identified between attitudes toward influencers and the products they endorse. However, the study finds that attitudes toward either influencers or products do not have a significant impact on purchasing behavior. Instead, demographic factors such as income, urban residency, and age emerged as substantial influences on purchasing decisions. Overall, while consumer attitudes toward influencers are shaped by various factors, the actual decision to purchase is contingent upon additional variables.
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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital information and artificial intelligence has led to a substantial increase in budgets allocated for influencer marketing in recent years, underscoring the power and effectiveness of social media celebrities, commonly referred to as "influencers." These individuals have emerged as powerful marketing tools for companies and brands due to their engaging content and ability to connect with audiences. It is therefore not surprising that marketers increasingly leverage the impact of the most recognizable faces on social media to promote their products and services. Influencers have become trusted sources of information and recommendations for many consumers, enhancing their significance in the marketing landscape. In 2023, the global market value

of influencer marketing reached \$21.1 billion, more than tripling since 2019. As the field of influencer marketing continues to mature, the size and value of influencer marketing platforms expand annually, making collaborations between brands and creators more lucrative than ever (Statista, 2024).

Saudi Arabia stands out as one of the largest markets for influencer marketing within the Middle East and North Africa, where influencer advertising is experiencing rapid growth. Brands increasingly leverage local influencers to engage a highly active audience in the region (Al-Agha, 2023). Advertising expenditure in the influencer market in Saudi Arabia will reach \$85.09 million by 2024, with an anticipated compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.34% from 2024 to 2029, resulting in an expected market size of \$139.20 million by 2029. Saudi consumers are characterized by their high levels of engagement with social media and their trust in influencers, which are key factors contributing to the success of influencer marketing in the Kingdom (Statista, 2024).

Despite the abundance of studies on influencer marketing, there remains a notable gap concerning the impact of influencers on consumer purchasing behavior in Saudi Arabia. This study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the factors that affect consumer attitudes toward influencers and examining how these attitudes translate into actual purchasing decisions.

This study seeks to explore the impact of advertisements by social media celebrities on consumer purchasing behavior in Saudi Arabia. It analyzes the various factors that shape consumer attitudes toward influencers, including their credibility, attractiveness, and the quality of their content. Furthermore, the study investigates how these attitudes affect purchasing decisions, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between influencer marketing and consumer behavior in this context.

1.2 Previous Studies

Research on influencer marketing can be categorized into three primary areas: the impact of social media influencers on consumer attitudes and behaviors, the strategies for enhancing influence and identifying influencers, and the examination of practices associated with managing online presence and influence.

A significant literature review has investigated the effects of digital influencers on purchase intentions. For instance, (Lim et al., 2017) identified the factors of attractiveness, product suitability, and meaning transfer to significantly influence purchase intentions. However, source credibility was noted as an exception in their findings. (Xiao et al., 2018) highlighted the importance of trustworthiness, social influence, argument quality, and informational involvement in establishing the credibility of information on YouTube, as well as its subsequent impact on brand /video attitudes. Moreover, (Chekima et al., 2020) illustrated how influencer credibility—attraction, trustworthiness, and expertise—affects advertising effectiveness, particularly regarding consumer attitudes toward the product and advertisement, as well as purchase intentions within the Malaysian cosmetics sector.

Additionally, Yuan and Lou (2020) identified key factors that shape the relationship between influencers and their followers, investigating their impact on followers' interest in advertised products. The results revealed that influencer attractiveness, perceived similarity to followers, and procedural and interpersonal fairness significantly influence the related outcomes. Furthermore, (Pham et al., 2023) confirmed the effects of argument quality, perceived usefulness, and social influence on the attitudes of The Vietnamese generation perspective on social media influencers. (Ata et al., 2022) found that factors such as attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness positively influence purchasing behavior in Turkey; however, consumer attitude towards advertisements on social media did not significantly affect purchase intentions.

In contrast, (Ebrahimi et al., 2022) examined the effects of social media marketing on the purchasing behavior of Hungarian users on Facebook Marketplace, highlighting that elements such as entertainment, personalization, interaction, word-of-mouth, and consumer attitudes have positive influences on purchase decisions. (Niloy et al., 2023) demonstrated that source attractiveness, product suitability, and influencer knowledge positively affect consumer attitudes toward influencers, while source credibility was identified as insignificant (Al-Sous et al., 2023) underscoring the importance of information quality and trustworthiness in shaping consumer attitudes towards brands, thereby influencing purchase intentions among Jordanian Facebook users.

Furthermore, studies have underscored popularity and opinion leadership as significant in influencer marketing, suggesting that this influence can be enhanced through influencer-product congruence (Kim and Kim, 2021). However, perceived expertise and trust may wane when influencers attain high popularity and are associated with a wide range of products (Casaló et al., 2020). However, it is important to recognize that the parasocial relationship with the influencer (Belanche et al., 2021) serves as a crucial emotional dimension fostering perceived credibility (Reinikainen et al., 2020). The role of the parasocial relationship established with social media influencers, based on feelings of friendship and connection, is evident in the literature (Vrontis et al., 2021). Furthermore, the impact of this relationship on purchase intention has been investigated, revealing that the parasocial relationship exerts a stronger influence than the influencer's fit with the brand (Breves et al., 2019) and source credibility (Leite and Baptista, 2022). However, the congruence between influencers and consumers, as discussed within the framework of parasocial interaction theory, requires further exploration (Belanche et al., 2021). While parasocial interaction has been analyzed in several studies as a primary factor in consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior, as well as a consequence of specific source characteristics (Vrontis et al., 2021), additional research is necessary in this domain.

Research indicates a growing interest in exploring the impacts of social media influencers (Vrontis et al., 2021), with a particular focus on micro-influencers (Taylor, 2020). This shift in focus has sparked increased discussions regarding the value of influencers with smaller audiences (Borges-Tiago et al., 2023). Advocates for this category of influencers contend that they provide more targeted communication and cultivate a substantial level of trust with their followers (Bernazzani, 2021). While existing literature suggests that social media influencers with fewer followers may demonstrate higher engagement rates, those with larger followings tend to benefit from greater perceived popularity and opinion leadership (Borges-Tiago et al., 2023; Marques et al., 2021). The current understanding of the impact of parasocial relationships on consumer intentions has been reevaluated regarding the number of followers. Nevertheless, the concept of parasocial relationships remains tied to feelings of friendship and a sense of connection with the audience (Yuan & Lou, 2020).

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research lies in its exploration of the impact of advertisements by social media celebrities on consumer purchasing behavior. Understanding this relationship can aid companies in enhancing their marketing strategies and the effectiveness of their advertising campaigns. Furthermore, this research contributes to consumer awareness of influencer marketing mechanisms, enabling consumers to make more informed purchasing decisions.

1.4 Problem Statement

This study aims to investigate and analyze the impact of advertisements by social media influencers on consumer purchasing behavior. It seeks to identify consumer attitudes towards influencers, the factors that shape these attitudes, and the how such attitudes affect purchasing decisions regarding the products promoted by these influencers.

1.5 Aim of the Study

To assess consumer attitudes towards social media celebrities and their advertisements.

- To analyze the factors that shape consumer attitudes towards social media celebrities and the products they promote.
- To measure the impact of consumer attitudes towards social media celebrities on their purchasing behavior.
- To examine the effect of consumer attitudes towards the products promoted by social media celebrities on their purchasing behavior.

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

1. Convenience has a significant effect on consumer attitudes towards social media influencers.
2. Interaction has a significant effect on consumer attitudes towards social media influencers.
3. Influencer credibility significantly influences consumer attitudes towards social media influencers.
4. Influencer credibility significantly affects consumer attitudes towards products or services.
5. Consumer attitudes toward social media influencers significantly influence consumer attitudes towards products or services.
6. Consumer attitudes toward social media influencers significantly affect purchasing behavior.
7. Consumer attitudes toward products or services significantly influence purchasing behavior.
8. There is a significant relationship between the demographic characteristics of consumers and their purchasing behavior.

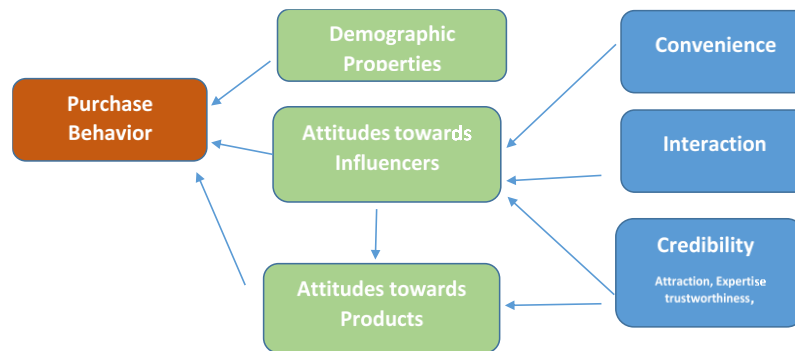


Figure (1) the relationship among the Study Variables

1.7 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study is descriptive and focuses on depicting and analyzing clearly defined characteristics or situations. It aims to obtain sufficient and accurate information without exploring the underlying causes or manipulating the variables involved (McNeill and Chapman, 2005). It employs the survey method a systematic approach to data collection designed to describe or predict specific actions or to analyze relationships among variables (Babbie, 2007).

1.8 Population and Sample of the Study

The study population comprises Egyptian consumers who utilize online shopping platforms. A randomly accessible sample of 400 participants was selected for this research.

1.9 Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

The questionnaire was selected as the primary research instrument due to its capacity to collect a substantial amount of data and facilitate analysis for insights into customer preferences and behaviors concerning social media influencers. Online surveys were preferred for accessibility, convenience, cost-effectiveness, and relatively rapid design and processing capabilities. The

questionnaire was developed based on prior research regarding customer perceptions of interactions with digital influencers and is organized into five main sections:

Introduction: Providing general information about the study and its objectives.

Demographic Information: Collect data on participant characteristics, such as age, gender, education level, and residence.

Experience with Social Media Influencers: Assessing the extent of participants' engagement with influencers and their following of their content.

Attitudes towards Influencers and Products: Measuring participants' attitudes towards influencers and the products or services they promote.

Purchase Intentions: Determining the extent to which influencers affect participants' intentions to purchase products or services.

Indicators of convenience, interaction, attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness were adapted from previous research. The survey link was disseminated online through partner organizations and social media platforms. The questionnaire includes various types of questions:

- Multiple-choice questions with a five-point Likert scale: To assess participants' attitudes towards influencers and products.
- Multiple-choice questions: To gather information about participants' preferences and behaviors.
- Open-ended questions: To obtain detailed opinions and suggestions from participants.
- Five-point linear scale questions: To evaluate certain aspects with greater precision.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

2.1 INFLUENCER MARKETING

Digital influencers are individuals recognized for their credibility or status in specific fields, often characterized by a large number of engaged followers on social media. They utilize this status to promote products, services, or brands, as consumers trust their information more than traditional marketing methods. This practice is viewed as a modern form of celebrity promotion (Wang and Huang, 2023).

TikTok, a recent addition to social media, has quickly become a reliable marketing platform due to its impressive download rates, broad audience reach, and high engagement with influencer content, especially among Generation Z. Collaborating with prominent influencers such as Bella Poarch allows brands to enhance visibility and connect with younger consumers. As of summer 2023, Khaby Lame was the most-followed content creator on TikTok, with over 160 million followers. Both macro and micro-influencers can significantly affect the platform, with micro-influencers often achieving higher engagement rates. As TikTok's global popularity grows and Generation Z's purchasing power increases, monitoring these influencers is crucial for understanding modern marketing dynamics (Statista, 2024).

Despite the growing emphasis on TikTok and its attractiveness to marketers, Instagram's brand value has resumed its upward trajectory in the aftermath of the pandemic. The platform has emerged not only as a popular avenue for discovering influencers but also as a means for businesses to engage directly with potential partners through its messaging application. Instagram provides a diverse array of formats that creators can utilize to promote a brand's products or services, including images, tags, Stories, and Reels. Furthermore, brand websites can be directly linked or accessed via a dedicated shopping tab, underscoring the platform's increasing focus on collaboration with brands. As of 2023, the average number of promotional posts published weekly by a brand on Instagram was

approximately five, contributing to the global influencer marketing market on Instagram valued at \$17 billion (Statista, 2024).

YouTube continues to be the leading platform for long-form video content produced by influencers. With millions of users accessing the site daily for music videos, tutorials, and vlogs, it is seen as an ideal space for advertising. In 2022, mid-tier to large influencers with follower counts between 100,000 and one million primarily drove engagement rates. The platform's capacity for longer videos allows creators to embed promotional content within videos that can last 30 minutes to an hour. These videos often incur significant production costs and can reach large audiences, with major influencers like PewDiePie having follower counts in the nine-figure range. Consequently, the average cost for a promotional video on YouTube begins at \$2,500 and can easily exceed tens of thousands of dollars (Statista, 2024).

2.2 Recent Trends in Influencer Marketing

2.2.1 Virtual Influencers

The marketing landscape is witnessing a significant rise in virtual influencers, which are generated by artificial intelligence as innovative means of promoting products and brands. These influencers are perceived as an emerging marketing tool that can mitigate the limitations and risks associated with reliance on human influencers. Researchers and marketing practitioners contend that virtual digital characters hold substantial commercial potential across various industries, effectively engaging audiences within the metaverse. A notable example is the virtual character "Liu Yexi," who achieved nearly 40 million likes through 40 posts on a short video platform. Many prominent companies and brands, including Coca-Cola, Pepsi, and McDonald's, have adopted virtual influencers as their official spokespeople (Belanche et al., 2024).

2.2.2 Increased Use of Video Content

Videos, especially short videos, have emerged as a popular form of content on social media platforms, reflecting a shift in consumer preferences towards more engaging visual content.

2.2.3 Platform Commerce

Social media platforms are increasingly facilitating direct product purchases, enabling users to buy items seamlessly within the platform's ecosystem.

2.2.4 Platform Diversification

Influencers are utilizing multiple platforms to broaden their reach and engage with diverse audiences, thereby maximizing their impact.

2.2.5 Data-Driven Influencer Marketing

The utilization of data analytics to identify appropriate influencers and assess the effectiveness of marketing campaigns is becoming increasingly prevalent, allowing for more strategic and informed decision-making in influencer partnerships.

2.3 Classification of Digital Influencers

Digital influencers possess distinct characteristics that appeal to a variety of audiences. Content creators can be classified in multiple ways based on various criteria, assisting brands in selecting the most suitable influencers for their marketing goals (Ilieva et al., 2024). The following criteria are commonly used for classification:

2.3.1 Content Focus: Influencers typically specialize in specific fields or types of content, such as business, technology, health, fashion, or travel. This specialization helps them cultivate targeted audiences.

2.3.2 Online Marketing Format: Influencers can be categorized according to the methods they employ, which may include content creation, social media presence, video production, blogging, and affiliate marketing. Each format offers different engagement opportunities.

2.3.3 Platform: Influencers can be grouped based on the social media platforms where they are active, including Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter). The choice of platform often influences the type of content they produce and their audience demographics.

2.3.4 Reach: This criterion refers to the size of an influencer's audience, typically measured by the number of followers or subscribers. Influencers may be classified as mega, macro, mid-tier, or micro, depending on their audience size.

2.3.5 Demographics of the Audience: Influencers can also be categorized based on the characteristics of their audience, including age, gender, location, and income level. Understanding audience demographics is crucial for brands seeking to target specific consumer segments effectively.

2.4 Evaluation of Online Influencers

The assessment of online influencers requires various tools to measure their quality and effectiveness. These tools can be categorized into three primary groups:

Marketing Metrics: This category includes metrics such as reach rate, engagement rate, and conversion rate.

Performance Indicators: This includes measures like the Influencer Impact Score and the Influencer Strength Score.

Theoretical Models: Examples in this category are Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and the AISAS model (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share).

Marketing Metrics: These metrics evaluate the efficiency of online influencers in a manner akin to the assessment of traditional online marketing tools, including website content, display advertising, email marketing, affiliate marketing, and video marketing. Social media platforms offer a variety of built-in analytics tools, such as Meta Business Suite Insights, TikTok Analytics, and X Analytics, which facilitate the evaluation of influencer impact and user engagement (Dimitrieska and Efremova, 2021). Key marketing metrics include:

Engagement Rates: This metric measures the audience interaction with an influencer's content. The engagement rate is calculated by comparing the number of likes, comments, shares, and reactions to the total number of followers or views. A high engagement rate suggests audience is actively interested in the influencer's posts.

Follower Growth: This metric indicates the rate at which an influencer's follower count increases over time. It reflects the influencer's capability to attract new followers, which may signal an increase in influence and popularity.

Website Traffic from Social Media: This metric assesses the relationship between influencer activities on social media and the resulting visits to the brand's website. It illustrates the effectiveness of influencer campaigns in motivating potential customers to engage with the brand's online presence.

2.5 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Key performance indicators (KPIs) for influencer marketing are contingent upon the specific objectives of a campaign and the metrics that hold significance for the brand (Zhuang et al., 2021). The following KPIs are particularly noteworthy:

Click-Through Rate (CTR): This metric quantifies the ratio of individuals who clicked on a link within an influencer's post relative to the total number of viewers. A higher CTR indicates effective audience engagement and interest in the content.

Conversion Rate: This KPI measures the percentage of individuals who completed a purchase or took another desired action after interacting with an influencer's post. It serves as a critical indicator of the effectiveness of the influencer's promotional efforts.

Brand Sentiment: This indicator assesses audience perceptions of the brand, derived from the content created by the influencer. Analyzing brand sentiment provides insights into the overall public perception and emotional response towards the brand.

Content Quality: This KPI evaluates the appeal, creativity, and storytelling proficiency of the influencer's content. High-quality content is likely to foster greater audience engagement and resonance.

Brand Mentions: This metric tracks the frequency and context of references to the brand made by the influencer. Analyzing brand mentions helps to elucidate the influencer's role in enhancing brand awareness and visibility.

Share of Voice (SOV): This KPI calculates the percentage of discussions or mentions generated by an influencer in comparison to others within the same industry. A higher SOV indicates a stronger influence and presence in market conversations.

Together, these KPIs provide critical insights into the performance and impact of influencer marketing campaigns, enabling brands to make informed strategic decisions and optimize their marketing efforts.

2.6 Theoretical Models

Theoretical models employ various theories to evaluate the effects of digital influencers' behaviors on their audiences (Tiwari et al., 2024, P. 215). Notable among these models are:

Interaction Theory: This theory emphasizes the significance of the interaction between influencers and their audiences in fostering trust and influencing purchasing behavior. It posits that meaningful engagement can enhance consumer relationships and drive sales.

Ohanian's Source Credibility Model: This model assesses the perceived credibility of influencers, considering factors such as expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. It suggests that higher credibility correlates with greater persuasive power.

Elaboration Likelihood Model: This framework examines how individuals process persuasive messages, categorizing influencer content into two pathways: the central route, which involves careful deliberation over arguments, and the peripheral route, which encompasses quick, emotional responses. This model elucidates the conditions under which audiences are likely to be influenced.

Social Cognitive Theory: This theory highlights the learning process through observation, illustrating how individuals acquire knowledge and behaviors by watching others, including influencers. It posits that behaviors and messages of influencers can significantly shape the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of their followers.

Theory of Planned Behavior: Building on the Theory of Reasoned Action, this model incorporates the component of perceived behavioral control, suggesting that individuals' intentions to engage in behavior are influenced not only by their attitudes and subjective norms but also by their perceptions of control over that behavior.

Theory of Reasoned Action: This theory extends the belief-attitude-behavior model by integrating the concept of subjective norms, which are the perceived social pressures to perform or not perform a behavior.

Belief-Attitude-Behavior Theory: This theory posits that beliefs influence behavioral intentions through their effects on attitudes. It underscores the role of cognitive processes in decision-making.

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory: This model focuses on the mechanisms through which new ideas, products, and behaviors disseminate within a community, emphasizing the role of influencers as early adopters and opinion leaders who can facilitate the adoption process.

Collectively, these models offer conceptual frameworks for understanding the dynamics of influence and can inform research into the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns.

To understand the influence of digital influencers on consumer purchasing behavior, several theoretical frameworks can be employed:

Source Credibility Theory: This theory asserts that the credibility of an influencer significantly affects consumers' attitudes toward the products or services being promoted. Higher credibility is often associated with more favorable consumer perceptions and increased likelihood of purchase.

Interaction Theory: This theory emphasizes the critical role of interaction between influencers and their audiences. Effective engagement fosters trust, which in turn can positively influence purchasing behavior.

Theory of Planned Behavior: This model suggests that behavioral intentions are shaped by three primary factors: individual attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control. Understanding these components can illuminate how influencers sway consumer intentions.

Based on a comprehensive review of existing literature, key factors influencing user attitudes toward influencers on social media can be delineated within a theoretical model comprising three principal components:

Convenience: This factor pertains to the ease of navigating social media platforms and the simplicity of communication with others. High convenience is associated with increased user engagement and interaction.

Interaction: This emphasizes the degree to which influencers actively engage with their audience, including their responsiveness to questions and comments. Greater interaction enhances the perceived value of the influencer's content.

Source Credibility: This encompasses the influencer's attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness. High levels of source credibility are correlated with positive consumer attitudes and increased likelihood of purchase.

These factors represent a synthesis of internal factors (convenience and interaction) and external factors (source credibility) associated with social media platforms. Together, they serve to bolster consumers' purchase intentions. The subsequent sections will provide a detailed examination of each of these factors.

Convenience: The concept of convenience is derived from the ease of using technology and its perceived utility, as articulated in the Technology Acceptance Model and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology. Convenience facilitates swift and effortless communication among users, allowing them to consume content and engage with posts and updates seamlessly. Additionally, it enables companies and influencers to effectively reach their target audiences, as users are generally more inclined to interact with content that is easily accessible and user-friendly.

Interaction: This term refers to the degree to which influencers actively engage with their audiences on various platforms. This engagement may include responding to comments and messages and participating in discussions. Such interaction is crucial for fostering trust and strengthening the relationship between influencers and their followers, ultimately enhancing the perceived value of the influencer's content.

Source Credibility: Source Credibility Theory posits that the credibility of endorsers significantly influences the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of recipients. This concept pertains to the extent to which the audience trusts influencers and accepts their assertions. Source credibility is shaped by several factors, including:

Attractiveness: The Source Attractiveness Model, proposed by McGuire, complements Source Credibility Theory by emphasizing the influence of source attractiveness on message effectiveness. This model suggests that factors such as familiarity, likability, and similarity can significantly affect how a message is perceived. Attractiveness encompasses various elements, including the influencer's personality, appearance, content style, and overall reputation. An attractive influencer is likely to capture the audience's attention, enhance engagement, and foster a loyal following.

Expertise: This factor refers to the influencer's knowledge and experience within a specific domain. An expert influencer is perceived as well-informed and serves as a reliable source of information, recognized as a specialist in their field. This expertise significantly enhances the influencer's capacity to sway the opinions, behaviors, and purchasing decisions of their followers (Nafees et al., 2021).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in social media influencers refers to the perceived reliability, honesty, and credibility of the influencer among their audience. A trustworthy influencer has a greater impact on their followers, as people tend to believe and follow the recommendations of those they trust, which in turn affects their purchasing decisions and brand preferences (Masuda et al., 2022).

Purchasing Behavior

The proposed model for the impact of influencers on social media users encompasses consumer attitudes toward influencers and brands and/or products/services, which collectively contribute to forming purchase intentions.

2.7.1 Attitudes Toward Social Media Influencers

The concept of attitudes toward social media influencers encompasses the feelings, beliefs, and overall evaluations that individuals have regarding influencers on various platforms. This construct can be analyzed through the belief-attitude-behavior model, which elucidates how beliefs about influencers translate into subsequent attitudes and behaviors (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2000). Such attitudes can profoundly influence consumer interactions with influencer content, their willingness to adhere to recommendations and their overall perception of the associated brand

2.7.2 Attitudes toward Brands, Products, or Services

This concept is integral to theoretical frameworks such as the Theory of Reasoned Action and the Theory of Planned Behavior, which elucidate how attitudes toward products and services shape consumer behaviors and intentions. It encompasses an individual's preferences, feelings, beliefs, and evaluations concerning a specific brand, product, or service (Hudson and Elliott, 2013).

2.7.3 Consumer purchasing behavior

Consumer purchasing behavior is defined as the actions individuals engage in or the stages they navigate when making purchasing decisions aimed at fulfilling their needs. Understanding consumer

behavior is crucial for brand owners, as it informs the design of effective strategies and targeted advertising campaigns.

RESULTS

3.1 Characteristics of Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Goal-Oriented: Consumer purchasing behavior is fundamentally aimed at fulfilling a specific need, which may manifest as either implicit or explicit objectives. This focus on goal achievement drives the decision-making process.

Flexible: Consumer behavior is inherently adaptable, allowing modifications based on individual circumstances, capabilities, and preferences. This flexibility reflects the dynamic nature of consumer needs and market conditions.

Not Arbitrary: Such behavior does not emerge in isolation; rather, it is shaped by a range of internal and external motivations and stimuli. These influences underscore the complexity of the factors driving purchasing decisions.

Information-driven: Consumer purchasing behavior is closely associated with the availability and processing of information. Information plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' perceptions and ultimately influences their purchasing decisions.

Table 1: Main Characteristics of Respondents in the Sample

Attribute	Variables	Number of Consumers	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	219	54.7
	Female	181	45.3
Total	Total	400	100
Age	Under 20 years	81	20.2
	20 to under 30 years	218	54.5
	30 to under 40 years	44	11
	40 to under 50 years	38	9.5
	Over 50 years	19	4.8
	Total	400	100
Residence	City	311	77.7
	Village	89	22.3
	Total	400	100
Monthly Income per Individual	Less than 5,000 SAR	76	19
	5,000 to 10,000 SAR	311	77.7
	More than 10,000 SAR	13	3.3
	Total	400	100
Education	Intermediate qualification or less	32	8
	Bachelor's degree	291	72.7
	Postgraduate studies	77	19.3
	Total	400	100

3.2 Follow-Up of Respondents on Social Media and Influencers

Table 2: Follow-Up of Respondents on Social Media and Influencers

Variable	Category	Number of Consumers	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Experience with Social Media		Less than 5 years	18	4.5	2.3350
		5 to 10 years	230		
		More than 10 years	152		
		Total	400		
Frequency of Social Media Use		Once a week	18	4.6925	1.18594
		Two or three times a week	13		
		Several times a week	21		
		Once or twice a day	40		
		Several times a day	238		
		Several times an hour	70		
		Total	400		
Number of Influencers Followed on Social Media		Less than 5 influencers	94	2.4875	1.09446
		5 to less than 10 influencers	112		
		10 to less than 15 influencers	99		
		More than 15 influencers	95		
		Total	400		

The data in Table (2) reveals that 57.5% of respondents have experience using social media for a duration ranging from 5 to 10 years, while 38% possess over 10 years of experience. In terms of usage frequency, 59.5% of respondents engage with social media several times a day, and 17.5% utilize it several times an hour. These findings suggest that the majority of the study sample has moderate to extensive experience with social media and actively engages with it frequently. Regarding the number of influencers followed by respondents, 28% follow between 5 and fewer than 10 influencers, while 24.75% follow between 10 and fewer than 15 influencers. These results indicate that most respondents in the study sample follow a moderate number of influencers on social media.

3.3 Factors Influencing Consumer Attitudes toward Influencers

Table 3: Factors Influencing Consumer Attitudes toward Influencers

Variable	Statement		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Convenience	Using social media is convenient because I can access it at any time.	F	139	7	20	197	37	2.9650	1.50813
		%	34.8	1.8	5.0	49.3	9.3		
	I do not find it difficult to	F	154	7	21	180	38	2.8525	1.54002
		%	38.5	1.8	5.3	45.0	9.5		

	browse social media because my phone is usually with me.								
	I can find what I am looking for on social media with minimal effort.	F	115	33	64	156	32	2.8925	1.39132
		%	28.8	8.3	16.0	39.0	8.0		
	I feel comfortable using social media.	F	138	11	32	183	36	2.9200	1.49136
		%	34.5	2.8	8.0	45.8	9.0		
	I can use social media anytime and anywhere.	F	151	18	28	164	39	2.8050	1.52407
		%	37.8	4.5	7.0	41.0	9.8		
Interaction	Social media influencers usually allow direct communication with them.	F	15	139	140	70	36	2.9325	1.01515
		%	3.8	34.8	35.0	17.5	9.0		
	Influencers listen to what users say.	F	9	127	165	66	33	2.9675	0.95063
		%	2.3	31.8	41.3	16.5	8.3		
	They encourage users to communicate directly with them.	F	10	119	179	63	29	2.9550	0.91929
		%	2.5	29.8	44.8	15.8	7.3		
Credibility Attractiveness	They respond to users quickly and efficiently.	F	13	101	155	98	33	3.0925	0.97536
		%	3.3	25.3	38.8	24.5	8.3		
	I find social media influencers very attractive.	F	9	132	161	36	62	3.0250	1.06405
		%	2.3	33.0	40.3	9.0	15.5		
	Influencers are very stylish.	ك	14	87	159	107	33	3.1450	0.96763
		%	3.5	21.8	39.8	26.8	8.3		
Credibility Attractiveness	They look good.	ك	18	74	147	128	33	3.2100	0.98658
		%	4.5	18.5	36.8	32.0	8.3		
	They are appealing .	ك	29	41	113	190	27	3.3625	1.00430
		%	7.3	10.3	28.3	47.5	6.8		

Expertise	They are usually well-informed about the products they promote	F	12	71	208	77	32	3.1150	0.89374
		%	3.0	17.8	52.0	19.3	8.0		
	They can evaluate the products or services they endorse competently.	F	5	140	118	78	59	3.1150	1.08384
		%	1.3	35.0	29.5	19.5	14.8		
	They are knowledgeable about the products or services they advertise at an expert level.	F	5	141	129	54	71	3.1125	1.11263
%		1.3	35.3	32.3	13.5	17.8			
They possess sufficient expertise to promote products or services.	F	2	162	110	31	95	3.1375	1.19883	
	%	0.5	40.5	27.5	7.8	23.8			
Trustworthiness	I believe that the opinions of social media influencers are usually sincere.	F	11	108	144	64	73	3.2000	1.11044
		%	2.8	27.0	36.0	16.0	18.3		
	They are trustworthy	ك	2	165	128	23	82	3.0450	1.14510
		%	0.5	41.3	32.0	5.8	20.5		
	Their opinions are honest.	ك	3	155	140	24	78	3.0475	1.12178
		%	0.8	38.8	35.0	6.0	19.5		
Their contributions are genuine.	ك	5	154	127	39	75	3.0625	1.13217	
	%	1.3	38.5	31.8	9.8	18.8			

Table 3 highlights the factors influencing consumer attitudes toward influencers, as detailed below: Convenience Factor: There is a positive attitude regarding the convenience of using social media, with average scores ranging from 2.80 to 2.97 on a 5-point Likert scale. Interaction Factor: Respondents exhibited a positive attitude toward interactions with influencers on social media, with average scores between 2.93 and 3.09. Credibility Factor: The findings indicate that respondents have a favorable attitude toward the attractiveness of influencers, with average scores ranging from 3.02 to 3.36. Additionally, a positive attitude was observed concerning the expertise of influencers, with average scores between 3.11 and 3.14. Finally, respondents demonstrated a positive attitude toward the trustworthiness of influencers, with average scores ranging from 3.04 to 3.20.

Table 4: Consumer Attitudes toward Influencers and Products

Attitude	Statements		1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Standard Deviation
Attitude Toward Influencers	Exciting / Boring Comfortable / Uncomfortable	F	3	122	158	52	65	3.1350	1.04858
		%	0.8	30.5	39.5	13.0	16.3		
	Liked / Disliked Good / Bad	F	53	19	66	233	29	3.4150	1.13180
		%	13.3	4.8	16.5	58.3	7.3		
	Exciting / Boring Comfortable / Uncomfortable	ك	48	37	77	210	28	3.3325	1.12700
		%	12.0	9.3	19.3	52.5	7.0		
	Liked / Disliked	F	47	26	80	220	27	3.3850	1.09991
		%	11.8	6.5	20.0	55.0	6.8		
Trend Toward Products	Desirable / Undesirable Useful / Useless	F	39	50	108	171	32	3.2675	1.09267
		%	9.8	12.5	27.0	42.8	8.0		
	Valuable / Worthless Good / Bad	F	30	35	97	211	27	3.4250	1.00344
		%	7.5	8.8	24.3	52.8	6.8		
	Desirable / Undesirable Useful / Useless	F	17	40	115	204	24	3.4450	0.90776
		%	4.3	10.0	28.8	51.0	6.0		
	Valuable / Worthless	F	28	36	101	211	24	3.4175	0.98265
		%	7.0	9.0	25.3	52.8	6.0		

The results in this table indicate that consumers exhibit a positive attitude toward influencers and the products they promote, with average scores ranging from 3.13 to 3.42 on a 5-point scale. The statement "Comfortable / Uncomfortable" garnered the highest average score of 3.42, suggesting that respondents perceive influencers as comfortable. Conversely, the statement "Exciting / Boring" received the lowest average score of 3.13, indicating that some respondents may not consistently find influencers engaging. In terms of attitudes toward products, respondents demonstrate a favorable outlook on the items endorsed by influencers, with average scores between 3.27 and 3.45. Notably, the statement "Valuable / Worthless" achieved the highest average score of 3.45, suggesting that respondents view the products advertised by influencers as providing substantial value.

Table 5: Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Behavior	Statement		Never Purchased	Rarely Purchased	Few Times	Many Times	Always Purchased	Mean	Standard Deviation
Purchase	Frequency of purchasing products or services recommended by social media influencers	F	186	114	73	24	3	1.8600	0.96837
		%	46.5	28.5	18.3	6.0	0.8		
Financial Expenditure	Amount of money spent by respondents on products recommended by social media influencers		Did not spend any money	Spent a little money	Spent a reasonable amount	Spent a large amount	Spent a very large amount	Mean	Standard Deviation

		F	200	133	54	11	2	1.70 50	0.83949
		%	50.0	33.3	13.5	2.8	0.5		

The results presented in Table 5 indicate that advertisements by influencers on social media do not consistently lead to changes in consumer purchasing behavior. Respondents display a relatively low tendency to purchase products recommended by these influencers, with the option "I have never purchased anything" receiving the highest percentage (46.5%), while the option "I always purchase" received the lowest percentage (0.8%). This diminished inclination to purchase can be attributed to several factors, including a lack of trust in specific influencers, an absence of need for the advertised products, or a preference for sourcing items from alternative outlets, such as traditional retail stores or reputable online platforms.

Moreover, respondents exhibit a reduced tendency to expend financial resources on products endorsed by social media influencers, as the option "I did not spend any amount" achieved the highest percentage (50%), while the option "I spent a very large amount" recorded the lowest percentage (0.5%). This finding further substantiates the assertion that influencer advertisements do not invariably stimulate financial expenditure. The low propensity to spend may be explained by various factors, including the elevated prices of advertised products, consumer skepticism regarding their quality or utility, or a preference for saving funds for other purposes.

3.4 Hypothesis Testing:

Table 6: The Relationship between Influencing Factors and Attitudes toward Influencers

Relationship Between		Convenience	Interaction	Credibility
Attitude toward Influencers	Pearson Correlation	.269**	.100*	.294**
	Sig	0.000	0.045	0.000
	No	400	400	400

This table presents the results of an analysis examining the relationship between three factors—convenience, interaction, and credibility—and consumer attitudes toward influencers on social media.

Convenience: A statistically significant positive correlation exists between convenience and consumer attitudes toward influencers, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.269 ($p < 0.01$). This finding indicates that as consumers experience greater comfort using social media, their likelihood of forming positive impressions of influencers increases. Consequently, an enhanced perception of convenience in utilizing social media is associated with a more favorable attitude toward influencers.

Interaction: A statistically significant positive correlation is also observed between interaction and consumer attitudes toward influencers, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.100 ($p < 0.05$).

This suggests that increased interaction between consumers and influencers, coupled with a sense of connection and communication, enhances the likelihood of consumers forming positive impressions of these influencers.

Credibility: Finally, there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the credibility of influencers and consumer attitudes toward them, indicated by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.294 ($p < 0.01$). As consumers regard influencers as more credible and trustworthy, their likelihood of developing positive impressions significantly increases.

Table 7: The Relationship between Attitudes toward Influencers and Attitudes toward Products

Relation between		Attitude toward product
Attitude toward Influencers	Pearson Correlation	.635**
	Sig	0.000
	No	400

The results presented in Table 7 show a moderate, statistically significant positive correlation between attitudes toward influencers and attitudes toward products, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.635 ($p < 0.01$). This finding suggests that there is a congruence between consumers' attitudes toward the influencers themselves and their attitudes toward the products endorsed by these influencers. In other words, as consumers' attitudes toward influencers become more positive, the likelihood of developing positive attitudes toward the products they promote also increases, and vice versa.

Table 8: The Relationship between Attitudes toward Influencers and Products and Purchasing Behavior

Relationship Between		Attitude Toward Product	Attitude Toward Influencers	Purchase	Education	Income	Residence	Age
Purchasing Behavior	Pearson Correlation	-0.005	-0.021	1	-0.081	.145**	.121*	-.175**
	Sig	0.915	0.675		0.107	0.004	0.015	0.000
	No	400	400	400	400	400	400	400

The data presented in Table 8 indicate that there is no statistically significant correlation between attitudes toward products and purchasing behavior (Pearson correlation coefficient = -0.005, $p > 0.05$), between attitudes toward influencers and purchasing behavior (Pearson correlation coefficient = -0.021, $p > 0.05$), and between education and purchasing behavior (Pearson correlation coefficient = -0.081, $p > 0.05$). In contrast, a statistically significant positive correlation is observed between purchasing behavior and income (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.145, $p < 0.01$), as well as between purchasing behavior and urban residence (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.121, $p < 0.05$) and age (Pearson correlation coefficient = -0.175, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that younger individuals are more likely to purchase products advertised by influencers.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of this study demonstrate that influencer marketing on social media has fundamentally transformed the way companies engage with customers, providing diverse platforms for online interaction. By presenting valuable content in an interactive format, influencers effectively bridge the gap between brands and consumers; enabling businesses to revise their advertising strategies and expand their reach beyond geographical limitations. The results reveal a complex relationship between consumer attitudes toward influencer advertisements and their purchasing behavior. While

factors such as convenience, interaction, and the credibility of influencers positively influence consumer attitudes, these attitudes do not consistently translate into actual purchasing actions.

These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that source credibility, attractiveness, and congruence with the product significantly affect purchase intentions (Lim et al., 2017; Chekima et al., 2020; Niloy et al., 2023). Additionally, trustworthiness, social influence, argument quality, and informational engagement have been shown to affect the credibility of information and brand perception (Xiao et al., 2018; Al-Sous et al., 2023). Furthermore, the results corroborate studies that emphasize the importance of the relationship between influencers and their followers and its effect on followers' interest in advertised products (Yuan and Lou, 2020; Belanche et al., 2021; Reinikainen et al., 2020; Leite and Baptista, 2022).

However, the results of this study diverge from other research that has highlighted a significant impact of consumer attitudes toward advertising on purchase intentions (Ata et al., 2022). This discrepancy may stem from the current study's focus on influencer advertisements on social media in a general context, while other studies have concentrated on specific types of advertisements or products.

Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of demographic, social, and economic factors in influencing purchasing behavior, aligning with prior studies that affirm the impact of these factors on technology acceptance and usage (Kim and Kim, 2021; Casalo et al., 2020; Vrontis et al., 2021; Taylor, 2020; Borges-Tiago et al., 2023; Marques et al., 2021; Yuan and Lou, 2020).

The results can be interpreted through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that behavioral intention is influenced by three primary factors. These factors are consumer attitudes toward purchasing products advertised by influencers, social norms—specifically, the influence of others (friends, family, society) on purchasing decisions—and perceived behavioral control, which refers to the consumer's perception of their ability to manage their purchasing choices.

In summary, the findings suggest that attitudes toward behavior (attitudes toward products) and social norms (social influence) significantly influence behavioral intention; however, perceived behavioral control (demographic, social, and economic factors) plays a more substantial role in shaping actual purchasing behavior.

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