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The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Perception

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Abstract

The growing popularity of social media has revolutionized marketing communication, making influencer marketing a highly visible and attractive marketing tool for brands. The current study examines the effect of influencer attributes on brand perception and purchase intention, with a special focus on the psychological aspects of credibility and authenticity. A quantitative research approach was employed, and primary data were gathered from 145 frequent social media users using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and Pearson correlation analysis.

The results of reliability analysis showed acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.734). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of 0.794 and significant Bartlett's test confirmed the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis. The results showed a two-factor solution for perceived credibility and perceived authenticity. Correlation analysis showed a combination of strong, moderate, and weak positive correlations among influencer traits, brand perception, and purchase intention. Some of these correlations were found to be statistically significant, suggesting that perceptions of transparency, consistency, and authenticity play an important role in influencing consumer attitudes and intentions.

The study concludes that the effectiveness of influencer marketing is more dependent on the psychological assessment of credibility and authenticity by consumers than mere visibility.

Keywords: Influencer marketing; Brand perception; Coolness; Authenticity; Credibility; Purchase intention; Social media endorsement

1. Introduction

The rapid evolution of digital technologies and social media platforms has greatly influenced the current state of marketing communication. Conventional advertising practices are increasingly being supplemented by digital approaches that focus on interactive engagement, personalization, and content-driven influence. Among these approaches, influencer marketing has become a popular means of brand promotion. Influencers, with their online presence and network of followers, possess the potential to influence audience perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing behavior.

Unlike conventional celebrity endorsements that are largely dependent on fame and mass appeal, influencer marketing is based on perceived relatability, credibility, and authenticity. Consumers perceive influencers as more accessible and credible sources of information, which may have a positive effect on the persuasive potential of brand endorsements. As brand perception is a critical determinant of consumer purchase intention, there has been an increasing need to understand the underlying mechanisms by which influencer characteristics influence consumer responses.

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Despite the increasing popularity of influencer marketing, there is a need to systematically investigate the role of specific psychological attributes, such as perceived credibility and authenticity, in influencing brand-related outcomes. The current study proposes to explore the effect of influencer characteristics on brand perception and purchase intention, with a special focus on the mediating roles of credibility and authenticity.

2. Literature Review

Influencer marketing has become a dominant strategy in digital branding due to the growing influence of social media platforms on consumer decision-making. Researchers have examined how influencer endorsements affect brand perception, consumer trust, and purchase intention. While prior studies confirm the effectiveness of influencer marketing, they differ in terms of focus, industry context, and variables examined. The following studies provide important insights into the relationship between influencer marketing and brand-related outcomes.

2.1. The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Perception: A Study of Jordanian Customers Influenced on Social Media Platforms

This study investigates how influencer marketing strategies affect brand perception among social media users. The research emphasizes the importance of influencer credibility, cultural alignment, engagement, and visual content in shaping positive brand perception. The findings suggest that consumers are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward brands endorsed by influencers perceived as trustworthy and authentic. The study highlights credibility and engagement as key drivers of brand perception.

2.2. Influencer Marketing and the Effect on Brand Personality and Brand Perception

This study compares influencer marketing with traditional celebrity endorsements and examines how influencer personality alignment affects brand perception. The findings indicate that consumers engage more with influencers than celebrities due to perceived relatability and personal connection. The research also emphasizes that alignment between influencer personality and brand identity strengthens brand perception. However, over-commercialization may negatively impact consumer trust.

2.3. Consumer Perception on Influencer Marketing Efforts of Brands in the Beauty and Cosmetics Industry

This research focuses on how influencer credibility affects consumer perception and purchase intention within the beauty sector. The study finds that authenticity plays a significant role in shaping brand trust and purchase behavior. Micro and mid-tier influencers were perceived as more genuine than celebrity endorsers, leading to stronger consumer responses. The research highlights authenticity as a crucial psychological factor influencing brand perception.

2.4. Consumer Perceptions of Influencer Marketing: Application of Q Methodology and Implications for Business Communication

This study categorizes consumers based on how they perceive influencers—such as advertising tools, entertainers, information sources, and tastemakers. The findings show that authenticity, transparency, and credibility influence how consumers interpret influencer endorsements. The research suggests that influencer characteristics significantly affect consumer perception and engagement levels.

Although these studies confirm the positive influence of influencer marketing on brand perception and purchase intention, limited research integrates psychological constructs such as coolness and authenticity within a single comparative framework involving influencer and celebrity endorsements. This highlights the need for a structured model that examines how endorser type influences consumer outcomes through mediating mechanisms.

3. Research Gap and Rationale

The usefulness of influencer marketing in influencing customer attitudes, brand perception, and purchase intention is well acknowledged in the literature currently in publication. In order to explain consumer reactions to influencer endorsements, previous research has looked at elements such as influencer reputation, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and engagement. However, a significant amount of this study either highlights result variables or concentrates on particular industries, such as fashion and beauty, without adequately elucidating the psychological mechanisms that underlie the power of influencer marketing. Furthermore, a lot of research looks at influencer marketing separately without directly contrasting it with conventional celebrity endorsements using a single analytical framework.

Furthermore, despite the fact that concepts like coolness and authenticity have been covered in marketing and consumer behavior literature, there are still few empirical studies that incorporate these factors as mediating mechanisms in influencer marketing.

Comprehensive models that describe how these psychological aspects affect brand perception and purchase intention in relation to the type of endorser (influencer versus celebrity) are scarce.

This disparity emphasizes the necessity of a methodical study that looks at endorser type, mediating factors, and consumer results all at once. By putting forth and evaluating a mediated framework to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which influencer marketing affects brand perception and purchase intention, the current study fills this knowledge gap and advances both academic research and management practice.

Objectives of the Study

The current study's objectives are as follows:

- To examine the impact of endorser type (influencer versus celebrity) on brand perception.
- To analyze the effect of endorser type on perceived coolness.
- To analyze the effect of endorser type on perceived authenticity
- To examine the impact of perceived coolness on brand perception and purchase intention.
- To examine the impact of perceived authenticity on brand perception and purchase intention
- To investigate the mediating role of coolness and authenticity in the relationship between endorser type and consumer outcomes (brand perception and purchase intention).

3.1. The Study's Hypotheses

The following theories are put forth in light of the conceptual framework and the literature review:

- H1: Brand impression is significantly impacted by the type of endorser (influencer versus celebrity).
- H2: Perceived coolness is significantly influenced by endorser type.
- H3: Perceived authenticity is significantly influenced by the sort of endorser.
- H4: Perceived coolness has a significant positive impact on brand perception and purchase intention.
- H5: Perceived authenticity has a significant positive impact on brand perception and purchase intention.
- H6: Coolness and authenticity mediate the relationship between endorser type and consumer outcomes (brand perception and purchase intention).

3.2. Definition of Key Constructs

For clarity and consistency, the key constructs used in the study are defined as follows:

3.2.1. Endorser Type

Endorser type is the type of person who endorses the brand, which in this study is either a social media influencer or a traditional celebrity. This is the independent variable that affects consumer perception.

3.2.2. Coolness

Coolness is the perceived trendiness, modernity, uniqueness, and social appeal of the endorser and the endorsed brand. This is how contemporary and culturally relevant consumers perceive the endorsement to be.

3.2.3. Authenticity

Authenticity is the perceived genuineness, honesty, and transparency of the endorsement. This indicates how much consumers perceive the endorser to be sincere in endorsing and using the promoted product.

3.2.4. Brand perception

Brand perception is the overall evaluation and impression that consumers have about a brand, including its credibility, attractiveness, and emotional appeal.

3.2.5. Purchase intention

Purchase intention is the likelihood or willingness of consumers to purchase the endorsed product in the future based on their perceptions and attitudes

4. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the current research is designed based on the literature on influencer marketing, celebrity endorsement, and theories of consumer perception. The proposed framework argues that the type of endorser (influencer or celebrity) is the independent variable that affects the consumer's judgment and behavior. The proposed framework assumes that the process of endorsement effectiveness does not happen directly but through psychological processes that mediate the consumer's interpretation of the message. Two mediating variables, coolness and authenticity, are proposed to explain the process by which the type of endorser affects the consumer's outcomes. Coolness is defined as the perceived trendiness, modernity, and uniqueness of the endorser and the endorsed brand. Authenticity is defined as the perceived genuineness, transparency, and sincerity of the endorsement. These variables are considered to be the most important psychological evaluations that affect the consumer's interpretation of the message. Based on the proposed framework, the type of endorser affects the consumer's perception of coolness and authenticity, which in turn affect the overall brand perception.

The brand perception is a critical determinant of purchase intention because the consumer is more likely to purchase products from a brand that they perceive favorably. The proposed framework therefore, proposes both direct and indirect channels through which the type of endorser affects the behavioral intention of the consumer.

The model therefore suggests both direct and indirect pathways through which endorser type influences consumer behavioral intention.

By incorporating coolness and authenticity as mediating variables, the framework provides a structured explanation of the psychological processes underlying influencer marketing effectiveness. This mediated model enables a comprehensive comparison between influencer and celebrity endorsements and offers a theory-driven approach to understanding how endorsement strategies impact brand perception and purchase intention.

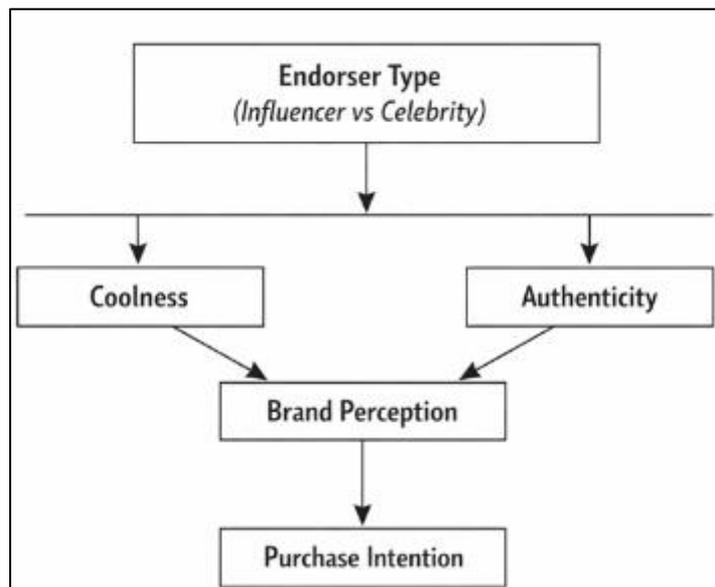


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the study

5. Research Methodology

5.1. Research Design

This research used a quantitative and descriptive research design to investigate the effect of influencer marketing on brand perception and purchase intention. The research was intended to empirically validate the proposed conceptual

framework by investigating the relationships between endorser type, perceived coolness, authenticity, brand perception, and purchase intention.

5.2. Sample and Data Collection

The primary data was collected from 145 respondents using a structured questionnaire method via Google Forms. The respondents included active social media users who are constantly exposed to influencer and celebrity endorsements on digital media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook.

A convenience sampling method was used due to convenience and time limitations. The sample size of 145 respondents was deemed sufficient for carrying out multivariate statistical analysis, including reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and regression analysis.

The survey was conducted voluntarily, and informed consent was sought from all respondents before data collection.

5.3. Instrument Design

The questionnaire consisted of **15 structured items** designed to measure the key constructs of the study, including:

- Endorser type perception
- Perceived coolness
- Perceived authenticity
- Brand perception
- Purchase intention

All items were measured using a **five-point Likert scale**, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

The questionnaire was developed based on prior literature in influencer marketing and endorsement research to ensure content validity.

5.4. Variables of the Study

The study included the following variables:

- Independent Variable: Endorser Type (Influencer vs Celebrity)
- Mediating Variables: Perceived Coolness and Perceived Authenticity
- Dependent Variables: Brand Perception and Purchase Intention

5.5. Statistical Tools Used

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software. The following statistical techniques were employed:

- Descriptive statistics to summarize respondent characteristics
- Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) to assess internal consistency
- Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to examine construct validity
- Pearson correlation analysis to assess relationships among variables

These statistical procedures enabled systematic testing of the proposed hypotheses and validation of the conceptual framework.

6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

6.1. Profile of Respondents

A total of 145 valid responses were gathered for the study. The respondents included active social media users who are regularly exposed to influencer and celebrity endorsements. The sample size was deemed sufficient for statistical analysis, such as reliability analysis and factor analysis, as it met the recommended ratio of respondents to items for multivariate analysis.

6.2. Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency of the scale was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha. The four-item construct yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.734, indicating acceptable internal consistency among the items. Since the value exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.70, the scale was considered reliable for further statistical analysis.

Table 1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.734	4

6.3. Sampling Adequacy and Factorability

The suitability of the data for factor analysis was evaluated using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity. The KMO value was 0.794, indicating good sampling adequacy. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 24.247$, $df = 6$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the correlation matrix was appropriate for factor extraction.

Table 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.794
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	24.247
	df	6
	Sig.	0

6.4. Factor Analysis

Principal Component Analysis was performed to explore the underlying structure of the construct. Two components with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted.

The first component included items related to transparency and content consistency, representing perceived credibility. The second component included items related to genuine and unscripted emotional expression, representing perceived authenticity. All items had high factor loadings above 0.60, establishing construct validity.

Table 3 Factor Analysis

Component Matrix	Component	
	1	2
Being transparent about sponsorships increases the promoter’s authenticity.	0.829	
When a promoter is consistent in their content, it increases their credibility.	0.744	-0.307
Real and unscripted emotions from a promoter make the content feel authentic.		0.807
Product promoters who seem genuine make the advertisement more trustworthy.		0.642
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		
a. 2 components extracted.		

6.5. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was performed to explore the relationships among the study variables. The findings showed a combination of strong, moderate, and weak positive correlations among the selected variables. Some of the relationships were statistically significant, indicating important links between influencer characteristics and consumer outcomes. However, some correlations were weak and nonsignificant, suggesting that the relationships among individual items were not significant. These results suggest that there is partial construct-level support for the proposed relationships, and further construct-level analysis is recommended to enhance interpretative clarity.

Table 4 Correlation analysis

		The person promoting a product online can make the brand appear cool.	Online promoters with unique personalities make the product stand out.	A promoter’s personal style can make a brand seem trendy and modern.	Product promoters who seem genuine make the advertisement more trustworthy.
The person promoting a product online can make the brand appear cool.	Pearson Correlation	1	0.436	0.397	0.884
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.034	0.045	0.015
	N	145	145	145	145
Online promoters with unique personalities make the product stand out.	Pearson Correlation	0.323	1	0.427	0.336
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.084		0.044	0.074
	N	145	145	145	145
A promoter’s personal style can make a brand seem trendy and modern.	Pearson Correlation	0.039	0.027	1	-0.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.045	0.044		0.059
	N	145	145	145	145
Product promoters who seem genuine make the advertisement more trustworthy.	Pearson Correlation	0.484	0.306	0.349	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.115	0.074	0.059	
	N	145	145	145	145
When a promoter is consistent in their content, it increases their credibility.	Pearson Correlation	0.442	0.384	0.358	0.048
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.016	0.013	0.089	0.067
	N	145	145	145	145
Being transparent about sponsorships increases the promoter’s authenticity.	Pearson Correlation	0.311	0.378	.193*	0.458
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.099	0.051	0.02	0.49
	N	145	145	145	145

Real and unscripted emotions from a promoter make the content feel authentic.	Pearson Correlation	0.14	0.095	0.105	0.145
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.092	0.058	0.007	0.082
	N	145	145	145	145
I am more willing to buy a product when the promoter seems reliable.	Pearson Correlation	0.388	0.586	0.408	0.429
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.091	0.006	0.028	0.029
	N	145	145	145	145
I am likely to purchase a product if I find the promotion convincing.	Pearson Correlation	0.129	0.016	0.116	0.177*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.123	0.046	0.164	0.033
	N	145	145	145	145
A positive impression of the promoter increases my interest in the brand.	Pearson Correlation	0.136	0.428	0.515	0.399
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.102	0.335	0.458	0.235
	N	145	145	145	145

6.6. Interpretation in Relation to Research Objectives

The current research was intended to investigate the effect of influencer marketing on brand perception and purchase intention, with a special focus on psychological aspects such as coolness, authenticity, and credibility. The results of the empirical study offer significant implications with respect to the research objectives.

The first research objective was to assess how consumers respond to influencer marketing in terms of perceived credibility and authenticity. The reliability analysis confirmed acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.734$), suggesting that the items employed to assess the constructs were statistically reliable. Moreover, the factor analysis indicated a distinct two-factor structure for credibility (transparency and consistency) and authenticity (genuine and authentic emotions). This lends credence to the theoretical postulate that consumers make a distinction between professional credibility and emotional authenticity in the assessment of online promoters.

The second research objective was to explore the inter-relationships between influencer attributes and brand outcomes. Pearson correlation analysis indicated a set of strong, moderate, and weak positive correlations between the chosen variables.

There were a number of significant relationships, which suggested that the perceptions of credibility, authenticity, and influencer uniqueness are important and related to brand perception and purchase intention. Although there were some relatively weak and non-significant relationships at the item level, the overall findings suggested that the characteristics of influencers are important in influencing consumer attitudes towards the brand and their purchase intentions.

The third objective of the research was to investigate whether the characteristics of influencers affect the purchase intention of consumers. The findings suggested that if the promoters are seen as credible, authentic, and genuine, then consumers are more likely to buy the product being promoted. This supported the conceptual framework, which suggested that the effectiveness of the influencer is mediated by psychological evaluation processes.

The empirical findings supported the research objectives and suggested that the characteristics of influencers are important in influencing brand perception and purchase intention.

7. Discussion

The current study was conducted to investigate the effects of influencer marketing on brand perception and purchase intention and explore the role of credibility and authenticity in influencer marketing.

The reliability analysis confirmed that the measurement instrument demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.734$), indicating that the items used in the study were sufficiently consistent for exploratory research in social sciences. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value of 0.794 and the significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) further confirmed that the data were suitable for factor analysis. These results validate the adequacy of the sample and the correlation structure among the variables.

The Exploratory Factor Analysis showed a two-factor solution. The first factor was related to perceived credibility, which was captured by transparency and content consistency. The second factor captured perceived authenticity, which was measured by genuine and unscripted emotional expression. The strong factor loadings above 0.60 show that respondents differentiate between professional credibility and emotional authenticity in their assessment of online promoters.

The correlation analysis showed moderate correlations between the selected variables, indicating that characteristics of influencers are related to consumer perceptions of brands. Although some correlations between individual items were quite low, the overall pattern of results indicates that authenticity and credibility are important factors in shaping consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions.

The results indicate that the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends on the psychological assessment of promoters by consumers, not merely on visibility. Promoters who are perceived as transparent, consistent, and authentic are more likely to have a positive impact on brand-related perceptions. These results confirm the theoretical assumption that trust-based and authenticity-driven processes are crucial for the effectiveness of digital endorsement.

In conclusion, this study makes a contribution to the expanding literature on influencer marketing by providing empirical evidence that credibility and authenticity are two distinct but interrelated dimensions that influence consumer perception within social media contexts.

8. Findings

The key findings of the present study are summarized as follows:

- The reliability test showed that the internal consistency of the measurement scale was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.734$), thus confirming that the measurement scale was appropriate for further statistical analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of 0.794 and the significance of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed that the data was suitable for factor analysis.
- The exploratory factor analysis showed that there were two factors: perceived credibility and perceived authenticity. The items that pertained to transparency and consistency loaded highly on the credibility factor, while the items that pertained to genuine and unscripted communication loaded on the authenticity factor. This suggests that consumers make a distinction between professional credibility and emotional authenticity when assessing online promoters.
- The Pearson correlation analysis showed that there were strong, moderate, and weak positive correlations between influencer characteristics, brand perception, and purchase intention. Some of the correlations were statistically significant, suggesting that perceptions of credibility, authenticity, and uniqueness are important for positive brand perceptions and purchase intentions.
- Overall, the results offer partial support for the conceptual framework proposed in the study, suggesting that characteristics of influencers are important for shaping brand perception and consumer purchase intention through psychological evaluation processes.

9. Managerial Implications

The results of the current study have a number of implications for marketing managers and social media professionals operating in the social media context.

First, the results of the study show that consumers make a distinction between credibility (transparency and consistency) and authenticity (genuine and unscripted communication) in the context of online promoters. Therefore, brands should choose influencers who communicate in a consistent and transparent manner rather than those who are popular and visible.

Second, the moderate correlations between the characteristics of influencers and consumer outcomes suggest that credibility and authenticity have an important role in influencing brand perception and purchase intention. Marketing managers should be cautious in evaluating the behavior and communication style of influencers before establishing a relationship with them.

Third, the results of the study emphasize the role of transparency in sponsored communications. Influencers who communicate in a transparent manner and have content consistency are likely to be perceived as credible, which can have a positive effect on brand-related judgments.

Fourth, authenticity-based communication strategies should be promoted. Influencers should be given the opportunity to communicate their genuine experiences and opinions rather than scripted communications.

Fifth, the engagement metrics of qualitative engagement, such as perceived credibility, emotional engagement, and authenticity, need to be incorporated into performance metrics, as opposed to the sole use of quantitative metrics such as likes, shares, and reach.

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that influencer marketing approaches need to be designed around credibility, authenticity, and psychological evaluation processes to improve consumer responses and improve brand positioning on digital platforms

10. Conclusion

The current study aimed to explore the impact of influencer characteristics on brand perception and purchase intention in a social media setting. The results of this study suggest that consumers perceive a difference between credibility-related attributes and authenticity-related attributes, such as genuine and unscripted communication. These psychological evaluations have a significant impact on the way in which brands are perceived and the intention to purchase the endorsed product.

The results of this study suggest that the effectiveness of influencer marketing goes beyond the mere visibility of the influencer. Instead, trust and authenticity are identified as key mechanisms that influence the impact of influencer marketing on brand-related outcomes.

This paper adds to the existing literature on influencer marketing by emphasizing the role of psychological evaluation processes in digital endorsement practices. In a practical sense, marketers should focus on influencer marketing practices that stress the need for transparency, consistency, and authentic communication to improve consumer trust and brand positioning. In this context, the paper highlights the increasing importance of authenticity-based marketing practices in the current digital setting.

10.1. Limitations

Although the paper is helpful in understanding the role of influencer marketing in shaping brand perception and purchase intention, there are certain limitations to the study that need to be recognized.

- First, the paper relied on self-reported information collected using a structured questionnaire. In this context, the information may be prone to social desirability bias, response bias, or individual differences in interpretation, which may affect the findings related to the relationship between variables.
- Second, the paper used a cross-sectional approach to study consumer perceptions at a point in time. In this context, the findings may not be reflective of dynamic changes in consumer attitudes toward influencers, which may be influenced by changes in trends, platform dynamics, and marketing exposure.

- Third, the sample was comprised of a particular subset of active social media users, which could potentially impact the generalizability of the findings to other populations, age groups, or cultural settings.
- Fourth, the analysis was conducted with a focus on credibility and authenticity-related variables. Other potentially important variables, such as influencer expertise, attractiveness, number of followers, platform type, and content quality, were not included in the current framework.
- Fifth, the correlations found in the correlation analysis were of moderate strength, which could potentially indicate the presence of other variables that may impact brand perception and purchase intention beyond the scope of the current study.

These points to the fact that although the findings have added to the understanding of the dynamics of influencer marketing in the current context, they must be treated with caution when generalized to other populations and settings.

10.2. Future Research Directions

There are a number of ways in which future research studies could build on the current study.

- First, longitudinal research studies could be conducted to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of credibility and authenticity perceptions over time and their impact on brand perception and purchase intention.
- Second, future research may include more variables that were not considered in the present framework. Variables related to the influencer, such as expertise, attractiveness, number of followers, quality of content, and engagement on the platform, could also be used to explain differences in consumer responses.
- Third, comparative studies that compare different types of influencers (micro-influencers versus macro-influencers) or different social media platforms (Instagram, YouTube, TikTok) could provide insights into the differences in the effectiveness of influencers in different contexts.
- Fourth, cross-cultural studies could investigate the differences in perceptions of credibility, authenticity, and brand evaluation for different demographic or geographic groups, thus improving the generalizability of the results.
- Fifth, future studies may extend the conceptual framework by considering other psychological mechanisms, such as emotional bonding, brand identification, perceived value, or parasocial interaction, to gain better insights into how influencer characteristics are linked to consumer decision-making processes.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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