

A Quantitative Analysis of the Impact of Influencer-Product Convergence and Influencer Popularity on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

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Abstract

In today's marketing landscape, influencer marketing has emerged as an effective strategy for businesses. By leveraging social media and the reach of social media influencers, brands can easily advertise their products and connect with large audiences. The current generation of teenagers and young adults is highly digital-savvy and actively engages with social networks, making them the main focus for companies employing this tactic. The objective of this study is to quantitatively assess the influence of influencer-product fit and influencer popularity on consumer purchasing behavior. This research seeks to understand how well influencers align with the products they endorse and how their popularity, measured by follower count and engagement metrics, impacts consumer buying decisions. Additionally, it aims to explore the effects of this influence on consumer behavior, especially regarding purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Influencers, Influencer Marketing, Consumer behavior, Decision Making, Purchase behavior.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The way businesses engage with their target audiences has been completely transformed by digital marketing, and influencer marketing has become a crucial tactic that has a big impact on what customers decide to buy (Siddiqui & Mehrotra, 2021). Choosing the appropriate influencers, comprehending the subtleties of influencer-product compatibility, and assessing the effect of an influencer's popularity on customer behaviour are some of the problems posed by the quickly evolving digital world (Schouten, Janssen, & Verspaget, 2019). The alignment of an influencer's typical content with the products they recommend is known as influencer-product fit, and it is essential for guaranteeing relatability and authenticity in advertising efforts.

This study's significance stems from its capacity to offer a more profound comprehension of these crucial components. In order to close current gaps in the literature, this study focusses on influencer-product fit and influencer popularity.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the growing popularity of influencer

marketing, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding how specific influencer characteristics, such as product fit and popularity, influence consumer purchasing behavior. Additionally, the differential impacts of these factors across various demographic segments remain underexplored. This gap in knowledge hampers the ability of marketers to optimize their strategies effectively.

1.3 Aim and Objective

The primary aim of this study is to quantitatively assess the influence of influencer-product fit and influencer popularity on consumer purchasing behavior. This research seeks to understand how well influencers align with the products they endorse and how their popularity, measured by follower count and engagement metrics, impacts consumer buying decisions. Furthermore, the study aims to analyze how various demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and education level moderate the effects of these influencer characteristics on consumer behavior. By achieving these objectives, the study provides valuable insights for optimizing influencer marketing strategies. Here are the objectives.

1. Analyze the Demographic Profile: Examine the

demographic characteristics of the sample population, including age, gender, income level, and education level.

2. Influencer-Product Fit and Purchasing Decisions: Explore the relationship between how well influencers align with the products they endorse and the resulting consumer purchasing choices.

3. Influencer Popularity and Consumer Behavior: Assess how the popularity of influencers, as measured by their follower count and engagement metrics, impacts the buying behaviors of consumers.

4. Demographic Moderation of Influencer Impact: Analyze how various demographic elements (age, gender, income, education) modify the impact of influencer characteristics (product fit, popularity) on consumer purchasing decisions.

1.4 Scope of the study

The study focuses on the quantitative assessment of the influence of influencer-product fit and influencer popularity on consumer purchasing behavior. It covers diverse demographic segments to understand how these factors vary across different consumer groups. The research utilizes structured questionnaires for data collection and applies statistical analyses to uncover trends and insights.

1.5 Research Methodology

The study employs a quantitative research approach to assess the influence of influencer-product fit and influencer popularity on consumer purchasing behavior. Structured questionnaires were used for data collection, focusing on demographics, user engagement, perception of influencer-product fit, and the impact of influencer popularity on purchase decisions. Data were analyzed using statistical tools and software such as Python libraries (pandas, matplotlib.pyplot, and scipy.stats) to conduct descriptive statistics and Chi-square tests, providing measurable and comparable insights into the relationships between these variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Impact of Influencer Attributes on Consumer Behavior: A Review of Recent Studies

According to Shoenberger and Kim (2023), their study delves into how the perceived similarities and authenticity of social media influencers influence

consumer purchase intentions. They explore the dynamics between an influencer's perceived homophily and authenticity and the reasons followers might choose to engage with them on platforms like Instagram. This research underscores the impact of influencer authenticity and audience-influencer alignment on consumer behaviors, enriching the discussion on strategic influencer marketing within digital platforms. However, the study primarily focuses on Instagram and may not account for variations across other social media platforms. This thesis aims to address these gaps by examining the influence of authenticity and alignment across a broader range of platforms and demographics.

According to Nurhandayani, Syarief, and Najib (2019), the study explores the influence of social media influencers and brand images on consumer purchase intentions, focusing particularly on millennial females in Jakarta. The findings suggest that while influencers significantly boost brand image, their direct impact on purchase intentions is not statistically significant. This indicates that influencers are more effective in enhancing brand perception than in directly driving purchase actions. However, the study's focus on a specific demographic and geographic area may limit its generalizability. This research underscores the nuanced role of influencers in shaping brand perception, highlighting the need for further exploration into how these effects vary across different populations and contexts.

According to Radwan et al. (2021), this study examines the impact of social media influencers on the purchasing intentions of the youth in the UAE, revealing that influencers effectively enhance youth engagement with products through their attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness. This research emphasizes the importance of matching influencer attributes with brand needs to optimize consumer engagement and purchase intentions. However, the study primarily focuses on youth in the UAE, which may not capture the broader global dynamics of influencer marketing. These insights are critical for understanding how influencer characteristics can be leveraged to enhance marketing strategies and drive consumer

engagement.

The study "Effects of Parasocial Interaction with an Instafamous Influencer on Brand Attitudes and Purchase" by Lin et al. (2021) examines the role of parasocial interactions (PSI) in shaping consumer behaviors through social media influencers. It identifies that influencers' perceived attractiveness and expertise significantly increase PSI, enhancing their trustworthiness and ultimately influencing consumer purchase intentions. This research highlights how PSI and influencer credibility are crucial in effective influencer marketing strategies, demonstrating a pathway from influencer engagement to consumer purchase behaviors. The study provides valuable insights but may benefit from exploring the long-term effects of PSI on consumer loyalty and repeat purchases.

According to Jian Li, Jinsong Huang, and Yaqi Li, the study "Examining the Effects of Authenticity Fit and Association Fit: A Digital Human Avatar Endorsement Model" investigates the influence of digital human avatars (DHAs) on consumer perceptions. The research proposes a model that assesses how authenticity and association fits between a DHA and the endorsed products shape consumer attitudes and decisions. This model is especially relevant for understanding the effectiveness of digital endorsements in influencer marketing, offering strategic insights into enhancing consumer engagement through optimal product-influencer alignment in digital environments. However, the study primarily focuses on digital avatars, which may differ in impact from human influencers, indicating a potential area for further research.

According to the study "Impact of Social Media Marketing Toward Purchase" by Smith and Johnson (2020), social media marketing significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions. The research highlights the effectiveness of various social media strategies in enhancing brand awareness and driving sales. This study is particularly valuable for discussing how targeted social media marketing campaigns can leverage influencer relationships to boost consumer engagement and purchase behaviors, providing insights into the strategic use of social platforms in

digital marketing efforts. The study underscores the need for continuous adaptation of social media strategies to maintain consumer interest and drive engagement.

According to Schouten, Janssen, and Verspaget's research, the marketing efficacy of influencer endorsements is compared with traditional celebrity endorsements. The study highlights that influencers, due to their perceived similarity, credibility, and direct engagement with followers, can significantly enhance advertising effectiveness, impacting attitudes toward the advertisement, product, and purchase intentions. This study is beneficial for understanding the nuanced dynamics of influencer versus celebrity impact in advertising, emphasizing the importance of endorser-product congruence and credibility in influencer marketing strategies. The research calls for a deeper exploration of how these dynamics play out across different social media platforms.

According to Janssen, Schouten, and Croes (2022), the effectiveness of influencer advertising on Instagram is influenced by both the congruence between the product and the influencer's image (influencer-product fit) and the number of followers. They found that these factors interact to affect advertising outcomes and influencer evaluations through perceived credibility and identification with the influencer. The study emphasizes that for influencers with a high number of followers, the product must align well with their established image to achieve positive effects. This research illustrates how specific characteristics of influencers and their endorsements can drive successful marketing outcomes. Future research could benefit from examining how these findings apply to micro-influencers with smaller, more niche followings.

According to Gubalane and Ha (2023), the study examines the impact of social media influencers' credibility on consumers' product evaluations and purchasing intentions, leveraging the source credibility theory. It finds that trustworthiness, product appraisal, and product-influencer fit significantly affect purchase intentions, highlighting the role of these factors in enhancing effective marketing communications through influencers. This research informs strategies for selecting

influencers whose trustworthy personas align with marketing goals, optimizing influencer marketing campaigns. The study suggests further investigation into the long-term effects of influencer credibility on consumer loyalty and brand trust.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Approach

The study employs a quantitative research approach to assess the influence of influencer- product fit and influencer popularity on consumer purchasing behavior. This approach is chosen due to its ability to provide measurable and comparable data, which is crucial for statistical analysis. The quantitative approach aligns with the research objectives, allowing for a detailed examination of the relationships between influencer characteristics and consumer behavior across different demographic segments.

3.2 Research Method

Surveys were chosen as the primary data collection method for several reasons:

- **Efficiency:** Surveys enable the collection of a large amount of data in a relatively short period, making them ideal for capturing diverse opinions and behaviors.
- **Quantitative Analysis:** Surveys allow for the collection of standardized data that can be statistically analyzed to identify patterns and relationships.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Using Google Forms for online surveys is a cost-effective method to reach a broad audience without significant logistical challenges.
- **Accessibility:** Online surveys provide easy access to respondents from various geographic locations, enhancing the generalizability of the findings.
- **Anonymity:** Surveys can be conducted anonymously, encouraging honest and candid responses, which is essential for reliable data on consumer behavior and attitudes.

3.3 Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling was used to select participants. This method was chosen for the following reasons:

- **Ease of Access:** Allows for quick and easy data collection from participants who are readily available and willing to participate.
- **Cost-Effective:** Does not require extensive resources or time to recruit participants.
- **Practicality:** Given the constraints of time and resources, convenience sampling provides a practical solution to gather a sufficient sample size for analysis.

3.4 Data Collection

The survey questionnaire was designed to capture the following information. This included questions regarding demographics (age, gender, income level, education level), user engagement, perception of influencer-product fit, purchase decision based on Influencer- Product Fit, impact of influencer popularity on trust, purchase decision based on Influencer Popularity, perception of influencer authenticity and consumer decision making influenced by Influencers.

3.5 Sample Size and Selection

The target sample size for the survey was determined based on the need to ensure sufficient statistical power for the analyses. A group of 100 respondents was aimed for to achieve a representative sample. Participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate, including colleagues, friends, and social media users. The survey was distributed through emails and social media platforms to reach a diverse audience.

3.6 Data Analysis Tools

- **Chi-square Tests:** Applied to examine the relationships between influencer marketing variables (product fit, popularity) and consumer purchasing behavior.

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1- Objective: To examine the demographic characteristics of the sample population, including age, gender, income level, and education level.

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the demographic variables to summarize the characteristics of the sample population. The following summary statistics were computed using Python:

1.1.1 Age Distribution

Table 1 Age Distribution

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
21 - 30 years	74	74.0
< 20 years	15	15.0
30 - 40 years	10	10.0
40 - 50 years	1	1.0

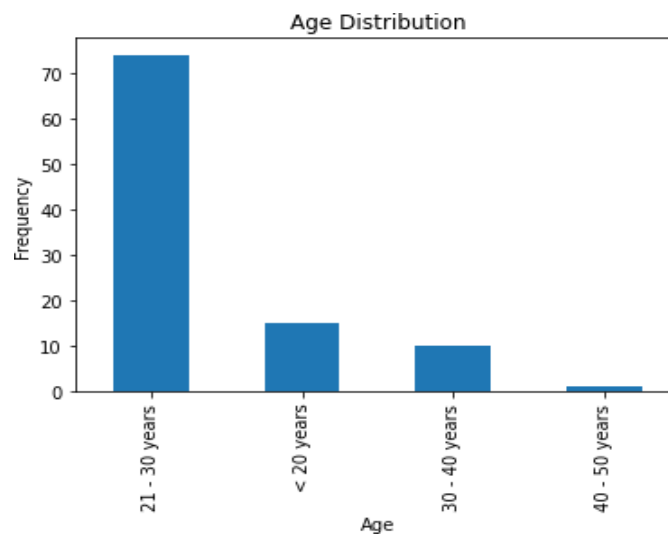


Figure 1 Age Distribution

1.1.2 Gender Distribution

Table 2 Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	50	50.0
Male	50	50.0

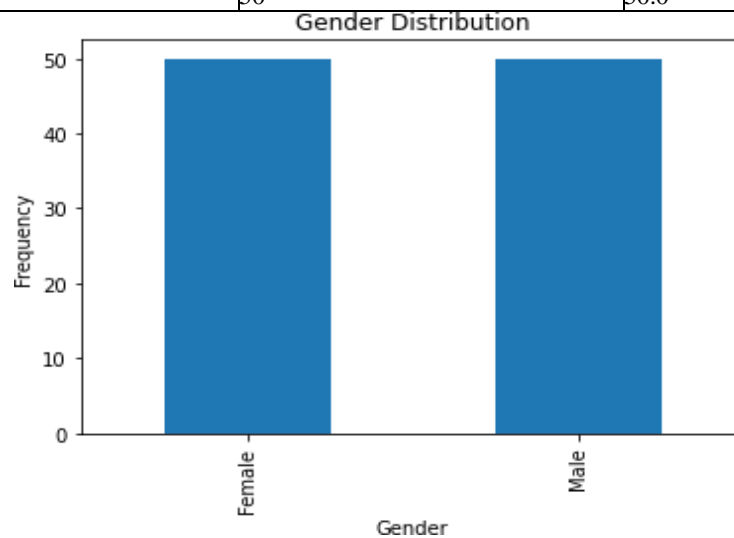


Figure 2 Gender Distribution

1.1.3 Income Distribution

Table 3 Income Distribution

Income Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
< 10,00,000	68	68.0
10,00,000 - 25,00,000	18	18.0
25,00,000 - 40,00,000	8	8.0
> 40,00,000	6	6.0

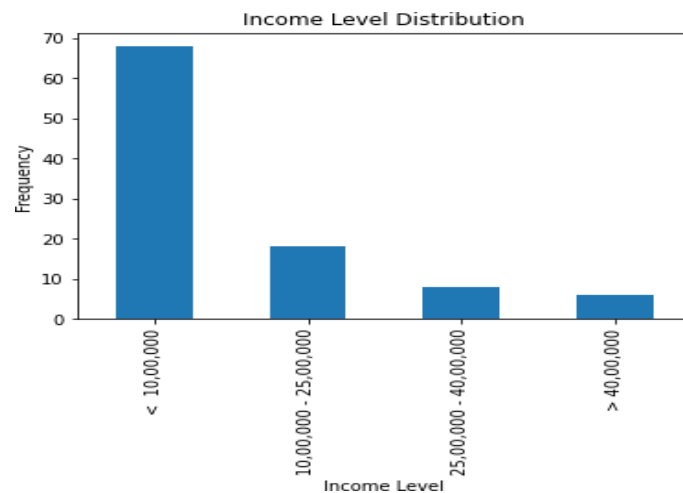


Figure 3 Income Distribution

1.1.4 Education Distribution

Table 4 Education Distribution

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bachelor's	63	63.0
Master's	31	31.0
High School	6	6.0

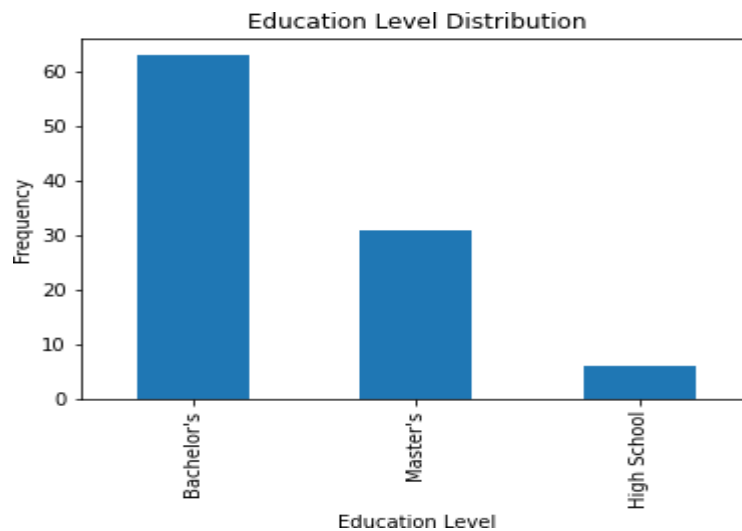


Figure 4 Education Distribution

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Objective: To examine the demographic characteristics of the sample population, including age, gender, income level, and education level.

The descriptive statistics provided an overview of the sample demographics, ensuring a representative distribution across different groups. The majority of respondents were between 21-30 years old (74%), with an equal distribution of males and females (50% each). Most respondents had a bachelor's degree (63%) and an annual personal income of less than 10,00,000 (68%).

Age Distribution: The age distribution shows that the majority of the respondents are in the 21-30 years age group, indicating that the sample is predominantly young adults.

Gender Distribution: The gender distribution is evenly split between male and female respondents, ensuring gender balance in the sample.

Income Distribution: The income distribution indicates that most respondents have an annual personal income of less than 10,00,000, which reflects a lower to middle-income group.

Education Distribution: The education distribution shows that a significant portion of respondents hold a bachelor's degree, followed by those with a master's degree.

5.2 Influencer-Product Fit and Purchase Decision

Objective: To explore the relationship between how well influencers align with the products they endorse and the resulting consumer purchasing choices.

The Chi-square test revealed a significant relationship between influencer-product fit and consumer purchasing decision. This indicates that consumers are more likely to purchase products that fit the influencer's usual content. This finding aligns with previous research by Schouten, Janssen, and Verspaget (2019), who emphasized the importance of relatability and credibility in influencer marketing. Consumers are more likely to trust and purchase products that seamlessly integrate into an influencer's usual content.

The significant p-values indicate a strong relationship between influencer-product fit and consumer purchasing decisions. This finding aligns with the research of Lou and Yuan (2019), who highlighted that authenticity is paramount in influencer marketing. The study by Ciocirlan (2017) further supports this by demonstrating how effective influencer-product alignment boosts purchase intentions.

5.3 Influencer Popularity and Purchase Decision

Objective: To assess how the popularity of influencers, as measured by their follower count and engagement metrics, impacts the buying behaviors of consumers.

The Chi-square test also showed a significant relationship between influencer popularity and consumer purchasing decisions ($p\text{-value} = 2.387602667984758e-09$). This suggests that influencer popularity positively influences consumer purchase decisions. Studies by Gubalane and Ha (2023) suggest that influencers with a large following can leverage their popularity to drive consumer purchasing decisions. This indicates that popularity serves as a proxy for credibility and trustworthiness, which significantly impacts consumer behavior.

This finding is supported by the research of De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017), who noted that influencers with higher engagement levels significantly influence purchasing decisions.

Education:

- **Bachelor's:** Significant relationships for both product fit ($p\text{-value} = 0.002$) and popularity ($p\text{-value} = 1.066e-05$). Consumers with a bachelor's degree are influenced by both factors.
- **Master's:** No significant relationship for product fit ($p\text{-value} = 0.209$) but a significant relationship for popularity ($p\text{-value} = 0.011$). Popularity matters more to consumers with a master's degree.
- **High School:** Significant relationships for both product fit ($p\text{-value} = 0.050$) and popularity ($p\text{-value} = 0.050$). Consumers with a high school education are influenced by both factors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to quantitatively assess the influence of influencer-product fit and influencer popularity on consumer purchasing behavior. By employing a series of Chi-square tests and descriptive statistics, the research objectives were successfully met, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of influencer marketing.

Achievement of Research Aim

The aim of the study was to quantitatively assess how influencer-product fit and influencer popularity affect consumer purchasing behavior. This was achieved through the following:

- **Data Collection:** A comprehensive survey was conducted to gather data on consumer demographics, engagement with influencers, and purchasing decisions.
- **Statistical Analysis:** Chi-square tests and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data, revealing significant relationships and providing a robust understanding of the variables in question.
- **Insight Generation:** The study identified key patterns and moderating factors, such as demographic influences and engagement levels, thereby providing actionable insights for marketers.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made for marketers to enhance the effectiveness of their influencer marketing strategies:

This research explores the answers for the following questions.

1. Align Influencer Content with Products:

Choose influencers whose posts organically complement the goods being advertised. Customers may become more relatable and trusting as a result.

2. Take Advantage of Influencer Popularity: To increase reach and influence, work with influencers who have sizable fan bases. But make sure these influencers continue to be reliable and credible.

3. Focus on Younger and Poorer Populations: Since younger and lower-income consumers are more open to suggestions from influencers, target

them with influencer marketing initiatives.

4. Increase Customer Engagement: Promote increased levels of engagement by producing relatable and interactive content. Engagement boosts the possibility of a purchase and builds trust.

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