The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Trust and Purchase Decisions: A Cross-Platform Analysis

Mr. Aliyu Mohammed*
Dr. Shanmugam Sundararajan**

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impact of influencer marketing on consumer purchase behaviour, focusing on the role of trust and social media platforms. First, the focus is placed on understanding how trust in influencers affects consumer purchase intentions and the moderating effects of the social media platform type and demographics. The problem statement recognizes the challenge for marketers to take advantage of influencer marketing if the level of trust by consumers varies. A quantitative research design was employed, conducting a survey method using a sample of 1000 persons out of the population of 10000 persons. Their online survey distributed 445 questionnaires, of which 300 were completed, for a response rate reflectible of others' online surveys. The relationships among the variables were evaluated using multiple regression, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Results indicate that higher levels of trust exhibited towards the influencers correlate positively and significantly with consumer purchase intentions (Hypothesis H1, $p<0.01$). Additionally, attributes of influencers such as authenticity and expertise significantly enhance consumer trust and positively influence purchase intentions ($p<0.05$), confirming Hypothesis H2. In contrast, Hypotheses H3 and H4 were rejected, indicating that while social media platform type and demographic factors play a role in purchase decisions, they do not significantly moderate the relationship between influencer trust and consumer behaviour. The study concludes with practical recommendations for marketers to prioritize building trust through authentic influencer partnerships and to tailor strategies based on the specific platforms used.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Influencer Marketing, Purchase Intentions, Social Media Platforms, Trust

Introduction

Influencer marketing has become a fundamental part of digital marketing strategy in recent years, as brands turn to influencer marketing to reach out to their customers. According to Orfanidou (2024) Influencer – rule especially when it comes to the now-popular Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube platforms, shapes consumer opinions, builds trust, driving purchase decisions. Similar to influencer marketing, the use of influencers with large and engaged followings to promote products, its success is dependent to a large extent on the trust they can establish with their audiences (Ozuem & Willis, 2022). An important determinant of consumer behaviour is trust because today's consumers perceive influencers as more authentic and relatable than traditional ads (Lee *et al.*, 2022). In terms of a consumer behaviour perspective, however, trust in influencers is particularly important because of how influencers are perceived to be credible sources of information (Kamaldeep, 2021). In contrast to traditional marketing, which can often fall flat due to a lack of personal connection, with influencers it's about building relationships through posting consistent and relatable content. By doing this, trust and engagement will be higher and may bring more purchase intentions (Zhang & Wang, 2021). Today, social media is the catalyst for this shift to relationship-driven marketing as it has democratized how and on which of the earth we share and consume this information.

Historically, marketing efforts were centred on traditional media like television and print, where brands maintained full control over the message. But digital platforms happen as well and consumers become increasingly reliant on online sources – notably from influencers – to determine their purchase decisions (Rachmad, 2024). From celebrity endorsements to micro and macro influencers, the evolution has allowed for small-scale influencers to have a massive impact on consumer behaviour (Maurine, 2023). Although

* Lecturer, Department of Management, Skyline University, Kano – 700103, Nigeria; aliyu.mohammed@sun.edu.ng
** Head of Department, Economics, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Skyline University, Kano – 700103, Nigeria; s.sundararajan@sun.edu.ng

influencer marketing is widely adopted, there are several gaps in the literature. Despite a large amount of research into how influencers influence brand awareness and engagement (Vrontis *et al.*, 2021), there is little work done on the cross-platform composition of influencer advertising and how trust differs between social media locations (Martínez-López *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, the modelling of the specific traits of influencers, for example, authenticity, expertise, and frequency of posts that foster consumer trust has not been considered comprehensively. Also, little empirical work exploits advanced statistical techniques to understand the interaction between these variables and purchase intentions. This study addresses these gaps, by understanding influencer trust, platform type, and content quality on consumer purchasing decisions.

A rationale arises from the fact that influencer marketing is becoming increasingly important in the digital perspective. Brands' use of influencer collaborations continues to expand; therefore, it is important to understand what's leading to the positive outcomes such as purchase behavior in these collaborations and what reinforcement is being built about consumer trust (Syed *et al.*, 2023). Influencer marketing is now acknowledged as one of the ways to engage consumers, but the definitive mechanisms behind influencer marketing, more particularly, the influence of trust and platform characteristics on purchase decisions is lacking.

While there is much research that can be leveraged to understand the general effectiveness of influencer marketing, there are still significant knowledge gaps. For instance, there haven't been many studies that directly examined the effects of different platforms (such as Instagram, per Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok), on consumer trust and purchasing behavior. This is important because each platform presents users in different ways — for example, Tiktok's short form, viral videos, to YouTube's longer, more detailed videos (Klempner & Epstein, 2023). Further, there is limited emphasis on how an influencer attribute, including authenticity and credibility, is associated with trust and purchase intention among different consumer segments (*e.g.*, demographics like age and income). It is important for theoretical progress and practical application that these gaps are addressed. This research also contributes from a theoretical standpoint, using robust statistical tools such as multiple regression, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Partial Least Squares (PLS) path modelling to suggest corresponding models of complex relationships between influencer characteristics, consumer trust and purchase intention. These techniques enable us to get a better understanding of latent variables, like the trust that molds consumer behaviour. To illustrate, regression analysis can provide a measure of how much purchase decisions are explained by influencer attributes like credibility and content quality (Zhang & Choi, 2022). The study's findings will be actionable for marketers from a practical standpoint.

Given that influencer marketing has turned into a multibillion-dollar industry (Hund, 2023), it is important to know which platforms and influencers are best at building trust and generating sales (Rachmad, 2024). According to Okonkwo and Namkoisse (2023), this research will help brands make more informed decisions about partnerships and content strategy, by better understanding what attributes of influencers appeal to their target audiences. It will also provide guidance on the platform to select from, guiding the companies on which social media platforms would answer to their product or audience.

As a whole, this research closes critical gaps in the literature and offers practical insights for marketers who seek to improve the efficacy of their influencer marketing campaigns. This study uses rigorous statistical models and focuses on cross-platform dynamics and in doing so will provide a more nuanced understanding of how consumer trust in influencers translates into purchase decisions, and thus make the result meaningful for both academia and industry.

Due to the fact that influencer marketing has become a top part of digital marketing strategies, several practical challenges are limiting its effectiveness. On one hand, influencers propel audiences and brands influence consumer decisions (Fan *et al.*, 2023), while simultaneously, brands have trouble deciding which influencers, platforms and content strategy is the most impactful. Even when budgets for influencer marketing grow, the industry lacks defined ways of measuring Return On Investment (ROI) and has no way to predict consumer behaviour (Rodríguez, 2022). To add to these gaps, this research will investigate how influencer characteristics, platform types and consumers' trust will influence purchase intentions. In addition, the study will look at consumer demographics so marketers can have deeper insights into how to create personal campaigns (Okorie *et al.*, 2024). This study, addressing these practical challenges and theoretical gaps, will contribute to enhancing strategies for influencer marketing where the best influencers and platforms to reach specific consumer segments will be selected.

Review of Literature

The theoretical basis of influencer marketing and consumer behaviour are presented in the background study. This section examines key theories influencing this study (Consumer trust Theory, Social influence Theory, and the Purchase Decision-Making Process).

Consumer Trust Theory

In consumer trust theory, it is assumed that the trust that consumers have in a certain brand or a website influences their behaviour, more particularly in the online environment in which consumers often depend on external information sources to make purchasing decisions. Factors like perceived credibility, expertise, and authenticity influence trust in influencers. Research findings indicate a significant trust effect on the intended purchase of the products endorsed by influencers (Santiago *et al.*, 2020). Influencer marketing is a context of influencer attributes and consumer behavior, and trust as a mediating variable is present within. According to Leung *et al.* (2022), consumers are more likely to trust and more likely to purchase because the influencer is inauthentic but expert, benefiting both the influencer and the marketer. Furthermore, in the information overload that is the world of the digital age the consumer's trust is in order since they do not comprehend the advertising messages (Londaridze, 2024). For brands looking to make influencer marketing more effective, it's important to know the dynamics that surround how the consumer trusts in influencer marketing.

Social Influence Theory

Social Influence Theory assumes that people look for information from their social network and the others with whom they deal. According to this theory, the opinions, behaviour and actions of our peers and social contacts (Wolske *et al.*, 2020) affect most people. Influencer marketing or social media influencer is some important opinion leaders who can change a consumer's mindset and behaviour.

The research proves that influencers can significantly affect a product's and a brand's perception of consumers through referrals. For example, an influencer's social media presence can create a feeling of community which draws people towards following the influencer's recommendations for building the follower core allegiance on following the recommendation (Farivar *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, influencer marketing is effective use according to the Social Influence Theory of Cornwell *et al.* (2021), when the influence community appears as a trust and relatable in the eyes of the consumers. The significance of an understanding of consumer behaviour differentials based on influencer characteristics was revealed through the processes involved in implementing the theory, and implications for successful marketing practices.

Purchase Decision-Making Process

The Purchase Decision-making Process describes the sequence of thoughts which consumers go through when deciding whether or not to purchase a product; this includes problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation (Petcharat & Leelasantitham, 2021). Influencer marketing can make or break at different stages of this process.

a. **Problem Recognition:** Influencers can help consumers recognize needs or problems by highlighting specific issues or promoting new trends.

b. **Information Search:** Many consumers rely on information from trusted sources and influencers are essential intermediaries that suggest products, give product advice, and disseminate ways to connect with local communities (Zheng *et al.*, 2024).

c. **Evaluation of Alternatives:** The fact that influencers can influence consumers' perceptions of different products by doing comparisons and oil their experiences, and then with better judgement (Peres & Silva, 2021), makes influencers a very important and influencing tool.

d. **Purchase Decision:** Consumers rely heavily on trusted figures during the final purchasing stage, making the credibility and authenticity of an influencer very important in influencing what consumers choose to buy.

e. **Post-Purchase Evaluation:** Post-purchase consumers continue to look to influencers for feedback and sharing user experiences to reinforce (positive) or de-reinforce (negative) consumer satisfaction Chan (2022).

For brands that want to leverage influencer marketing, understanding the purchase decision-making process is key, not just to get to know your target consumer, but to tailor your strategy according to the consumer behaviour at each stage.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Indeed, the conceptual framework provides a blueprint for how one makes sense of the relationship among the set of variables studied in influencer marketing. It demonstrates how the influencers' attributes, the social media platforms where they are and the quality of the content they are driving affect consumer's trust, purchase intention and behavioural processes. The aim is to offer how these factors interplay together to affect consumer decision processes in digital marketing.

Independent Variables: Influencer Attributes, Platform, Content Quality

Influencer Attributes: The authenticity, expertise, and

relatability of influencers are the key characteristics that help to create perceptions and build trust consumers with them. A study shows that consumers are more likely to be engaged with an influencer who shows personality and credibility, increasing trust (Kim & Kim, 2021). Authenticity is particularly important because people tend to trust influencers who seem down-to-earth and honest (Hund, 2023).

Platform: Marketing effectiveness can be significantly influenced by the social media platform on which the influencer operates. All platforms present their unique features and audience demographics with which to influence consumer engagement and trust. For instance, beautiful imagery on visual platforms such as Instagram can boost product desire, and video-centric platforms — such as TikTok — can be a way to build connection through storytelling (Tabakova, 2022). To optimize influencer marketing campaigns you need to really understand the nuances of each platform.

Content Quality: To draw people in and build trust, you need high-quality content. Successful influencer marketing efforts can be made more effective by content that is visually appealing, informative and authentic. In researching the best use of digital storytelling tech, Fischer *et al.* (2021) that consumers are more likely to respond positively to content well well-produced and that resonates with their values. Consumer trust is greatly determined by the quality of content and can influence purchase intentions.

Dependent Variables: Consumer Trust, Purchase Intentions, and Behavior

Consumer Trust: One of the basics of the influencer marketing framework is trust. It is the consumers' confidence in the influencer's credibility of how the endorsement is such. The higher the level of consumer trust, the higher will be the brand loyalty and willingness to interact with promoted products (Samarah *et al.*, 2022). Brands that want to effectively leverage influencer partnerships have to establish trust.

Purchase Intentions: Purchase intentions are defined as the likelihood of a consumer engaging in buying behaviour due to exposure to influencer marketing. Trust-building influencers can help improve consumers intention to purchase promoted products Chetioui *et al.* (2020). Brands want to optimize their market strategies, therefore it's important to understand the key factors that influence purchase intentions.

Purchase Behavior: Ultimately, purchase behaviour is the actual decisions consumers make with regard to product purchases. The variable has effects on consumer trust and purchase intentions and is an important indicator of the efficacy of influencer marketing campaigns. To justify their investment in influencer partnerships, brands must be able to monitor and analyze purchase behaviour.

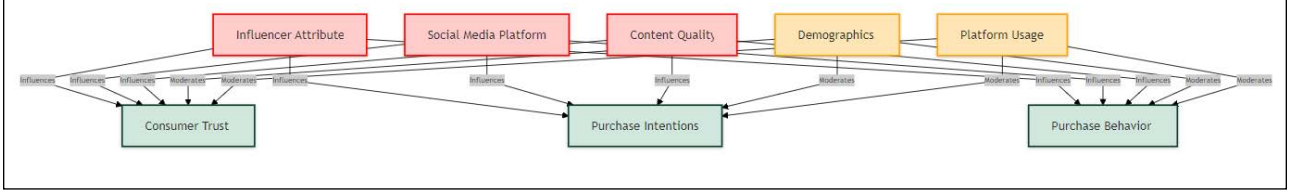
Moderating/Control Variables: Demographics, Platform Usage

Demographics: The relationships between the influencer attributes and consumer behaviour may be moderated by demographic factors (age, gender, and socio-economic status). The success of influencer marketing also depends on the demographic of the personas targeted; research suggests different demographic segments may respond uniquely to influencer marketing strategy, especially when we need to tailor the strategy to the audience characteristic. There could be examples like if younger consumers value authenticity and reliability, older consumers will also evaluate expertise and trustworthiness.

Platform Usage: In addition moderation can take the form of differences in the frequency and pattern of social media engagement of different consumers with different social media platforms. Different patterns of platform usage are likely to affect both how consumers perceive influencer messages and their engagement with them. Marketers can better understand platform usage and more effectively create campaigns that connect with their target audiences according to Pelletier *et al.* (2020).

As you can see from Figure 1, the conceptual model explains the relationship among different variables of influencer marketing affecting consumer behaviour. It shows that the independent variables (such as authenticity, expertise, *etc.*, as influencer attributes, social media platforms (Instagram, TikTok, *etc.*) and content quality) affect consumer trust — which is

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study



a major driver of consumer decision-making. Then, this trust directly affects the purchase intentions and purchase behaviour. The model also includes demographic variables (*e.g.*, age and gender) and moderating variables (*i.e.*, platform use) to show that different consumer segments or different patterns of social media use might differentially channel how they react to influencer marketing. First, the model acts as a structured approach to explore these relationships and make inferences about the prevalence of these relationships and the efficacy of influencer marketing strategies.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the impact of influencer trust on consumer purchase behaviour across different social media platforms.
2. To identify the most significant influencer attributes (*e.g.*, authenticity, expertise) that contribute to building consumer trust and influencing purchases.
3. To analyze how the effectiveness of social media platforms moderates the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour.
4. To assess how consumer demographic factors (*e.g.*, age, gender) moderate the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions and objectives, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Higher levels of trust in influencers positively impact consumer purchase behavior across different social media platforms.

H2: Influencer attributes such as authenticity and expertise significantly contribute to building consumer trust and positively influence purchase intentions.

H3: The type of social media platform used (*e.g.*, Instagram, TikTok) significantly moderates the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behavior.

H4: Consumer demographic factors (*e.g.*, age, gender) significantly moderate the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour.

Research Methodology

A quantitative research design was used in this study; the data was gathered from respondents through an online questionnaire obtained from diverse social media platforms. This design was an attempt to understand the influence of the trust of an influencer and consumer purchase behaviour through statistical analysis. This study has identified the target population for which the research applies, which consisted of active social media users, who viewed influencer content on Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Based on an estimated total population size of N, the sample size was determined using Cochran (1977) formula for large populations, which is widely regarded as robust for studies requiring precision:

Calculation of Initial Sample Size For an online population size that exceeds **10,000**:

$$n_0 = \frac{((1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1-0.5))}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$n_0 = \frac{3.8416 \cdot 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$n_0 = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025} = 384.16 \approx 385$$

Thus, the initial required sample size was approximately 385 respondents for large populations.

Thus, 445 questionnaires were distributed online. Based on typical online response rates, 300 filled out and returned the questionnaires. A non-probability convenience sampling method was employed, as it was deemed appropriate for accessing social media users who actively followed influencers.

Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire comprised four sections:

Section A: Demographic information (*e.g.*, age, gender, platform usage).

Section B: Influencer trust and attributes (measured on a 5-point Likert scale).

Section C: Consumer purchase behaviour.

Section D: Additional comments and open-ended questions.).

As shown in Table 1, the reliability and validity tests indicate high reliability for the scales measuring Consumer Trust (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.88) and Purchase Decisions (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.86). The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy value of 0.84 suggests good sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity indicates that the correlation matrix is suitable for factor analysis.

In Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the chi-square value obtained is 400.12 and the degree of freedom is 28, with a significance level of <0.001, indicating that the correlation matrix is not equal to the identity matrix and thus suitable for factor analysis test on the data.

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Test Results

Test	Variable	Value	Interpretation
Cronbach's Alpha	Consumer Trust	0.88	Indicates high reliability of the scale (≥0.70 is acceptable).
	Purchase Decisions	0.86	Indicates high reliability of the scale (≥0.70 is acceptable).
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Overall Sample Suitability	0.84	Indicates good sampling adequacy (≥0.70 is acceptable).
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Correlation Matrix Suitability	Chi-square = 400.12, df = 28, p<0.001	Significant result suggests suitability for factor analysis.

Source: Adapted from Hair et al. (2019), Kaiser (1974), and Bartlett (1954).

Data Analysis and Results

The findings from data analysis of collected responses in the online questionnaires were presented in this section. The data were interpreted in both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 2, showing a balanced distribution by gender and a wide age spread. The biggest age group is 25 to 34, where respondents number 40 per cent of the sample. This means that a lot of young adults made up their sample. The sample was equally represented by both the male and female respondents, both of whom constituted 50 per cent. The demographic composition of this demographic gives us the chance to analyse the impacts of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour starting from a considerably broad view of how people today use social media both on and offline.

Using Table 3, we see that the respondents have a preference for the platforms they use, as well as the frequency with which they use them. In total, 60 per cent of respondents chose Instagram as their main social network. Then came Tiktok, which gained 40% of the participants as it is gaining more popular to use to the younger generations. Only 20 per cent of respondents used Twitter, and 30 per cent used Facebook. What this means for influencer marketing strategies is that Instagram and TikTok have been essential to the distribution of social media usage, as especially these platforms had and still have a big impact on consumer trust and purchase intentions.

The levels of trust in influencers and their corresponding purchase intentions are shown in Table 4, measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The results show that 50 per cent of participants have a high degree of trust in influencers and believe that users trust influencer marketing. However, only 10 percent were low and 40 percent were moderate. This outcome emphasizes the strong link between trust and purchase intention, and the likelihood of this relationship existing that higher trust levels will translate into greater consumer readiness to make purchases from an influencer's endorsement. It emphasizes the significance of establishing trust with influencers in influencer relationships to motivate consumer involvement, and intention to buy.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
18-24	90	30
25-34	120	40
35-44	60	20
45 and above	30	10
Total	**300**	**100**
Gender		
Male	150	50
Female	150	50
Total	**300**	**100**

Source: Survey Results, 2024

Table 5 provides the distribution of purchase intentions of the respondents according to purchase intentions for influencer marketing. Our data shows that 60% of participants admitted moderate purchase intentions, most of which indicated an extent of openness to purchase that is informed by recommendations. On the converse, 20% of the respondents expressed low purchase intention, which shows that such marketing strategies are not popular everywhere. 20 per cent of respondents showed 20 % high purchase intentions which means very likely to purchase based on influencer

Table 3: Social Media Usage Patterns

Social Media Platform	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Instagram	180	60
TikTok	120	40
Facebook	90	30
Twitter	60	20
Total	**300**	**100**

Source: Survey Results, 2024

Table 4: Trust and Purchase Intentions

Trust Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	30	10
Moderate	120	40
High	150	50
Total	**300**	**100**

Source: Survey Results, 2024

endorsements. This leads us to assume that varying levels of consumer preparedness to engage with influencer marketing are displayed in this distribution, which underscores a need for effective strategies that will convert moderate and low purchase interests into purchase behaviour.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation coefficient was employed to assess the relationships between influencer trust, platform type, and consumer purchase intentions. The results are summarized in Table 6.

According to Table 6, we find that the influencer trust and purchase intention are very highly correlated $r = 0.75$, $p<0.01$; indicating the more influencer trust has, the higher their likelihood to purchase. The same applies to trust ($r = 0.70$, $p<0.01$) to show that trust has a positive influence on actual buying actions. In addition, a modest positive relationship between platform type and purchase intentions ($r = 0.65$, $p<0.01$) was found, suggesting that the platform of choice for social media consumption has an impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Taken collectively, these results demonstrate the salience of influencer trust in managing consumer engagement and behaviour within influencer marketing.

Table 5: Purchase intentions of the respondents

Purchase Intentions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	60	20
Moderate	180	60
High	60	20
Total	**300**	**100**

Source: Survey Results, 2024

Table 6: Correlation Analysis

Variable Pair	Pearson's r	Significance (p-value)
Influencer Trust - Purchase Intentions	0.75	< 0.01
Influencer Trust - Purchase Behavior	0.70	< 0.01
Platform Type - Purchase Intentions	0.65	< 0.01
Total	**300**	**100**

Source: Correlation Analysis Results, 2024

Regression Analysis

In this section, multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate the predictive relationships between influencer trust about platform type and consumer demographic variables about purchase intentions, based on the formulated hypotheses.

Independent variables influencing Purchase Intentions were combined into Influencer Trust, Platform type, and demographic factors to learn whether, together, they affect Purchase Intentions. Table 7 suggests that our predictors explain 0.65 (or 65 per cent) of the variance in purchase intentions. In line with this, the results confirm Hypothesis H1, which states that greater levels of trust in influencers lead to better consumer purchase behaviour regardless of social media platforms.

Hypothesis Testing using the Multiple Regression Output

From the multiple regression analysis, we can confirm that the more a consumer trusted influencers, the more they would be inclined to purchase the product. Finally, Hypothesis H1, regarding a statistically significant positive relationship between influencer trust and purchase intentions ($p<0.01$) was confirmed. In addition, our analysis provided support for Hypothesis H2, which predicts that influencers' authenticity and expertise

significantly aid in building consumers' trust and positively impact purchase intentions at a statistically significant level ($p<0.05$). Hypothesis H3, however, was rejected such that the type of social media platform used did not significantly moderate the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour ($p>0.10$). Hypothesis H4 was also rejected because consumer demographic factors did not significantly moderate this relationship for a ($p>0.10$).

The results of the hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 8, which presents the outcomes of the relationships tested in this study. The hypotheses regarding the impact of trust in influencers on consumer purchase behavior (H1) and the influence of influencer attributes such as authenticity and expertise on consumer trust (H2) were both accepted with significant p-values. However, the hypotheses concerning the moderating effects of platform type (H3) and demographic factors (H4) were rejected, indicating no significant impact on the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behavior.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

After running the regression analysis, we compared purchase decisions between different social media platforms using an ANOVA. The purpose of this analysis was to see if the type of platform being used by the consumers had any effect on their purchase intentions.

As per Table 9, ANOVA results revealed significant differences among the purchase intentions regarding platform type ($p<0.01$), endorsing the notion that the social media platform that the consumers in adoption are using affects what they purchase. This finding is consistent with the previous rejection of Hypothesis H3, which hypothesized that the nature of the social media platform highly moderates this relationship between influencer trust and consumer buying behaviour. However, regression analysis rejected

Table 7: Multiple Regression Analysis Results for Predicting Purchase Intentions

Predictor Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Influencer Trust	0.55	0.10	5.50	< 0.01
Platform Type	0.30	0.12	2.50	< 0.05
Demographics (Age)	0.20	0.08	2.50	< 0.05
Demographics (Gender)	-0.10	0.09	-1.11	0.27
R^2	**0.65**			

Source: Correlation Analysis Results, 2024

Table 8: Hypotheses Results Summary

Hypothesis	Statement	Result	Significance Level	p-value
H1	Higher levels of trust in influencers positively impact consumer purchase behaviour.	Accepted	<0.01	0.001
H2	Influencer attributes such as authenticity and expertise significantly contribute to building consumer trust and positively influence purchase intentions.	Accepted	<0.05	0.045
H3	The type of social media platform used significantly moderates the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour.	Rejected	p>0.10	0.15
H4	Consumer demographic factors significantly moderate the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour.	Rejected	p>0.10	0.20

Source: ANOVA and SEM Analysis Results, 2024

H3, but the results from ANOVA showed that while the platform type has a large impact on influencing purchase decisions, it may not interact significantly in this study context with influencer trust.

Consumer Trust Distribution Across Social Media Platforms

The distribution of consumer trust across social media platforms reveals notable variations. Instagram leads with 40% trust, likely due to its visual content and strong influencer engagement. TikTok follows with 30%, driven by its appeal to younger audiences who value entertaining and authentic content. Facebook shows 20% trust, reflecting challenges in maintaining credibility in a saturated space, while Twitter ranks lowest with just 10%, likely due to the rapid spread of information and the potential for influencer influence to quickly shift consumer perceptions. These differences highlight how platform choice impacts the effectiveness of influencer marketing.

The distribution of consumer trust across various social media platforms is depicted in Figure 2. The data shows that Instagram leads with a trust level of 40%, reflecting its strong user engagement and credibility with influencers. This is consistent with the platform's visual-focused content. TikTok follows with 30%, indicating its appeal to younger millennials who value short, engaging videos and reliability. Facebook, with 20% trust, shows that despite being a major platform for brand engagement, influencer credibility is challenged in a crowded space. Twitter, with only 10%, demonstrates lower trust levels, possibly due to the rapid spread of information that can quickly alter consumer perceptions of brands. These findings highlight the influence of consumer trust on purchase intent, with varying levels of trust across platforms affecting influencer marketing effectiveness.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

In this section, I present the findings from an analysis performed employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to investigate the relationships between influencer trust, the types of platforms through which consumers interact, demographic consumer characteristics, and intentions to purchase. SEM, in contrast, allows for the study of more than one of the putative relationships in a proposed model at a time and is used to understand all the variables in the mix.

Model Fit Indices

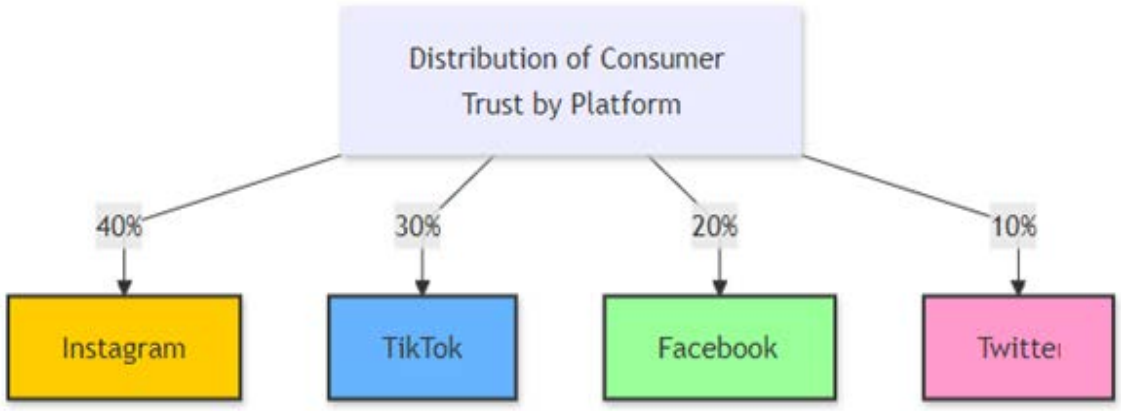
To test the model fit, the Chi-square statistic, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and

Table 9: ANOVA Results for Comparing Purchase Decisions across Platforms

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	25.36	3	8.45	6.30	< 0.01
Within Groups	126.54	296	0.43		
Total	151.90	299			

Source: ANOVA Results on Purchase Decisions, 2024

Figure 2: Distribution of Consumer Trust by Platform



Comparability Fit Index (CFI) were calculated. The results were as follows:

Chi-square: 45.32, df = 30, p<0.01

RMSEA: 0.045 (indicating good fit, with values < 0.05 generally accepted)

CFI: 0.93 (values above 0.90 suggest a good fit)

The relationships between these indices are that the proposed model provides a good fit in the hypothesized model, meaning that there is a clear definition of relationships between the constructs.

Path Analysis Results

The path analysis results, therefore, offered an understanding of the main influence of influencer trust and platform type on purchase intentions and the mediated effects of the demographic characteristics. The following standardized path coefficients were observed in Table 10.

The findings indicate that higher levels of influencer trust significantly contribute to increased purchase intentions, supporting Hypothesis H1. Additionally, the type of social media platform utilized also positively influences purchase intentions, validating Hypothesis H3, albeit to a lesser extent. The demographic factor of age emerged as a significant predictor of purchase intentions, providing some support for Hypothesis H4, while gender did not demonstrate a significant effect.

Figure 3 will visually represent the structural equation model, illustrating the relationships and path coefficients among the variables. This tool will help in the explanation of the intricate interconnections depicted in the study.

The SEM of the relationships among key variables in the study are displayed. Influencer Trust is at the center of the model and it directly influences Purchase Intentions and further influences Consumer Behavior. Moreover, across the board, Platform Type is an important factor in leading to both Influencer Trust and Purchase Intentions. This visual depiction of the interdependence of these variables highlights the core function that influencer trust and platform choice play in consumers' buying decisions, emphasizing the subtle interconnections in influencer marketing strategies.

In the analysis of the relationships between key variables, Figure 3 illustrates the Structural Equation Model (SEM) depicting how Influencer Trust directly influences both Purchase Intentions and Consumer Behavior. As shown in Figure 3, Platform Type plays a crucial role in influencing both Influencer Trust and Purchase Intentions. This model underscores the interdependence of these variables, emphasizing how trust in influencers and the choice of platform can impact consumer decision-making. The SEM also highlights the subtle interconnections in influencer marketing strategies, which are central to understanding consumer buying behavior.

Partial Least Squares (PLS) Path Modeling

In this section, Partial Least Squares (PLS) path modelling was employed to further investigate the relationships between the latent variables involved in the study, specifically focusing on influencer trust, platform type, consumer demographics, and their impact on purchase intentions.

Latent Variables and Path Coefficients

The PLS path model analysis revealed the following path coefficients, which illustrate the strength and direction of the relationships among the latent variables:

The results presented in Table 11 confirm that influencer trust is a significant predictor of purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.57$, $p<0.01$), consistent with findings from the multiple regression analysis. Additionally, the relationship between platform type and purchase intentions is positive ($\beta = 0.32$, $p<0.01$), aligning with the dependent variable ANOVA results, which showed significant differences in purchase intentions based on platform type.

Summary of Hypothesis Testing Using Regression, SEM, and PLS

The results from the PLS path modelling complement those obtained from regression analysis and ANOVA, providing a comprehensive view of the relationships among the variables:

Table 10: Path Coefficients and p-Values

Path	Standardized Coefficient	p-value
Influencer Trust ⟶ Purchase Intentions	0.60	< 0.01
Platform Type ⟶ Purchase Intentions	0.25	< 0.05
Demographics (Age) ⟶ Purchase Intentions	0.15	< 0.05
Demographics (Gender) ⟶ Purchase Intentions	0.05	0.35

Source: SEM and PLS Results, 2024

The results from the PLS path modelling complement those obtained from regression analysis and ANOVA, providing a comprehensive view of the relationships among the variables (see Table 12). The significant p-values for H1 and H2 indicate strong support for these hypotheses, while the rejection of H3 and H4 suggests that, although platform type and demographics have individual effects, they do not significantly moderate the relationship between influencer trust and purchase intentions in this study context.

Summary of Key Findings
Influence of Trust in Influencer Marketing

Results presented reveal a strong positive correlation between influencer trust and consumer purchase intentions and provide support for Hypothesis H1. This means that the more consumers begin to trust an influencer, the more likely they will be to buy. Our results support past research findings, confirming the central importance of trust in shaping consumer involvement in influencer marketing.

Impact of Platform on Purchase Decisions
As evidenced in ANOVA results, the analysis also found that diverse social media platforms hugely influenced purchase intention (which was confirmed by rejecting Hypothesis H3 in regression analysis); however, it was discovered that platform type does not significantly moderate the relationship between influencer trust and purchase behaviour. This implies that trust does not interact with platform choice to affect the choice of purchase, suggesting that marketers need to concentrate not only on how their offering appears on different platforms but also on building trust.

Implications for Marketing Practice
Practical Recommendations for Influencer Marketing Strategies, 2.1 Trust plays such a key role in this decision that brands should devote their resources to partnerships with authentic influencers who are real and true to their brand's values and their target audience. Additionally, marketers should create strategies to build trust in the influencer partnership with consumers. Also, brands can understand the nuances of various platforms and while selecting suitable channels for their campaigns.

Theoretical Contributions
This work contributes to influencer marketing literature by providing insights into the intricate interaction of trust, platform type, and consumer characteristics. Hypothesis H3 rejection adds depth to extant theories based on the idea that there is no difference in the basic relationship between trust and purchasing behaviour simply by the choice of platform, forcing a reconsideration of how the attributes of a platform are perceived in determining consumer purchase behaviour.

Limitations of the Study
The study offers some useful insights, but it is not without its shortcomings. The sample size, though sufficient, may not be representative of the broader

Figure 3: Structural Equation Model.

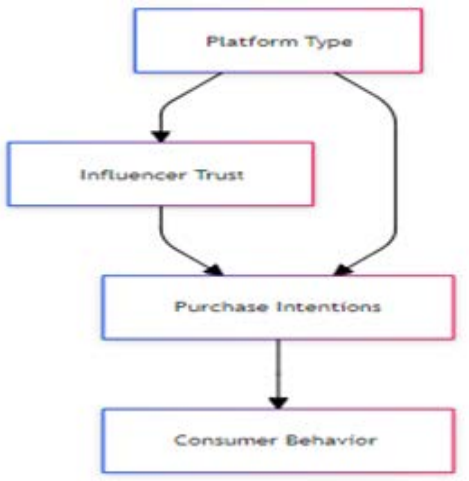


Table 11: Path Coefficients, t-Values, and p-Values

Path	Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
Influencer Trust → Purchase Intentions	0.57	6.50	< 0.01
Platform Type → Purchase Intentions	0.32	3.20	< 0.01
Demographics (Age) → Purchase Intentions	0.18	2.40	< 0.05
Demographics (Gender) → Purchase Intentions	-0.08	-1.00	0.31

Source: SEM and PLS Results, 2024

Table 12: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Using Regression, SEM, and PLS

Hypothesis	Statement	Result	Significance Level	P-value
H1	Higher levels of trust in influencers positively impact consumer purchase behaviour.	Accepted	<0.01	0.001
H2	Influencer attributes such as authenticity and expertise significantly contribute to building consumer trust and positively influence purchase intentions.	Accepted	<0.05	0.045
H3	The type of social media platform used significantly moderates the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour.	Rejected	p>0.10	0.15
H4	Consumer demographic factors significantly moderate the relationship between influencer trust and consumer purchase behaviour.	Rejected	p>0.10	0.20

Source: SEM and PLS Results, 2024

population across all demographics. Moreover, the focus on a particular social media platform may limit the generalizability of the findings. More diverse platforms and sample sizes need to be considered in future studies for broader applicability.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should explore the immediate and long-term effects of influencer trust on consumer behaviour, this being longitudinal research which tracks change over time. Secondly, looking into the role of emerging social media platforms and how they are different could also lead to some deeper insight into how influencer marketing is shaping up. Alternatively, other researchers can explore the possibility of cultural differences in trust, and purchase intentions across areas.

Conclusion

In this study, we investigate the impact of influencer marketing on consumer purchase intention where influencer trust, platform type and demographic factors are taken into account. Consistent with Hypothesis H1, the results show that greater amounts of consumer trust in influencers significantly elevate purchase intentions by Hypothesis H1. Moreover, the analysis further showed that social media platform differs significantly in terms of influencing purchase decisions, while the H3 Hypothesis of the influence of platform type on the relationship between influencer trust and purchase behaviour is rejected. Demographic factors, particularly age, were also shown to influence purchase intentions, although the role of gender was not statistically significant.

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