

The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Behavior

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Received: March 20, 2025; **Accepted:** August 12, 2025

Abstract: The present study has examined the impact of the influencer marketing on the development of the brand-audience relationship in terms of the factors affecting purchase decisions about the promoted products and consumer interaction with the influencers' content. With a quantitative approach based on a descriptive-analytical design, the data have been obtained from a random sample of 175 social media users in the Gaza Strip through the structured questionnaire evaluating three dimensions of the influencer marketing (credibility, attractiveness, and interaction with followers) and consumer behavior. Simple and multiple regression analysis found that all three dimensions significantly affected consumer behavior, where the strongest impact was demonstrated by interaction with followers ($\beta = .358$, $p < .001$), whereas the impact was less pronounced for attractiveness ($\beta = .354$, $p < .001$) and credibility ($\beta = .246$, $p < .001$); overall, the three dimensions contributed to the prediction of consumer behavior for 78.9%. In terms of one-way ANOVA and independent samples t-test, there have been no statistically significant differences in respondents' attitude towards the influencer marketing by such criteria as gender, age, educational qualification, time spent on social media daily, and marital status, but there have been some differences depending on the place of residence (the respondents from North Gaza).

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Credibility, Attractiveness, Social Media Engagement.

Type: Research Paper



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DOI: 10.51325/j2x8rc40

1. Introduction

The fast advancement in technology and extensive use of the internet have led to a major shift in marketing strategies. Social media has become an indispensable channel for influencing customers and determining their behavior, and in this context, influencers have emerged as a vital element in defining the buying behavior of people (Christiarini & Edy, 2024). The strategic use of social media platforms has been used by many organizations to enable them to communicate more effectively with their audiences, develop brands,

generate loyal customers, and earn profits through marketing (Runtiko et al., 2023).

As the world population of social media users exceeds five billion in 2024, and is expected to be at six billion by 2028 (Demir & Gür, 2025), influencer marketing remains one of the most popular ways businesses use to communicate with their intended audience. The reason for this popularity lies in the unique way that influencers can establish interactions with their followers. People would rather learn about products by means of their authentic experiences shared than depend on advertisements only. Such an approach is influential when it comes to purchasing attitudes and consumption behavior (Chiguvi et al., 2025; Liepa, 2021).

Although there is an increasing trend towards influencer marketing, firms still have trouble determining how effective it actually is in terms of creating strong and long-lasting relationships between brands and the target audience, and the impact level seems to differ greatly. Consumers do not develop trust without any reasons; it all depends on how credible the source of information about the products is, specifically, social media influencers (Nafis et al., 2020). Therefore, this paper attempts to explore the issue of influencer marketing and its impact on brand–consumer relations, paying special attention to the process of purchase decision making.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is all about working together with people who have significant influence over their fans or followers in the online world by using their content to market different products and services. The widespread use of social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok makes influencer marketing even more important because of the ability of influencers to establish connections on the basis of trust and constant interactions. According to previous studies, this type of marketing strategy works better than conventional advertising strategies because of the growing role of the opinions of other people in making purchase decisions (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

2.2. Influencer Credibility

Credibility of an influencer is one of the crucial factors affecting consumer attitude towards a brand, serving as a mediator between the impact of the influencer and the audience reaction to the content (Nafis et al., 2020). The credibility is associated with several aspects, namely, the expertise of the influencer, the sincere intentions behind his/her actions, and the extent of followers' trust to him/her, which affect the acceptance of the message. The credibility, along with the expertise and the attractiveness, increases purchase intention, as people are becoming more willing to purchase due to trusting the source of the recommendation (Weismueller et al., 2020). The revelation of sponsored content serves as an indirect determinant of purchase intention through influencing the perception of the credibility, as the clearer disclosure improves the perception of it (Shamim & Islam, 2022). The congruency between an influencer's persona and the promoted product improves the perception of

credibility and contributes to consumer attitude (Belanche et al., 2021), while the perception of commerciality of the content can deteriorate it (O'Neil & Eisenmann, 2017).

2.3. Influencer Attractiveness

Content attractiveness refers to the capacity of influencer-produced content to attract the attention of the audience and is positively related to brand trust and intention to purchase (Liu et al., 2012). Content attractiveness is highly correlated with the engagement of the audience in terms of likes, comments, and shares, which indicates the effectiveness of the marketing message, and visual content plays an especially important role here (Dhanesh et al., 2022). Visual similarity between the content and audience preferences helps to create an illusion of connection between the influencer and follower and makes the brand more engaging (Argyris et al., 2020); however, it does not work on its own without credibility and expertise.

2.4. Interaction With Followers

User interaction with the content is considered an exchange of information between user and marketer, where the former goes beyond simple content consumption and engages in actions such as liking, commenting, sharing, asking questions, demonstrating their interests and reactivity (Heldman et al., 2013). Such involvement in digital content marketing is seen as one of the goals of such kind of marketing activities, where the marketers seek to establish a trust-based relationship rather than simply influence the audiences (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). Brand-consumer engagement refers to cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes consumers exhibit towards the brand (Hollebeek et al., 2014), which have been found to correlate with purchase intention.

2.5. Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Purchase behavior refers to the process through which individuals actually purchase their goods or services in a manner that changes the process from being an intention into action (Yoo et al., 2000). The Theory of Planned Behavior suggests that intention is one of the best predictors of purchase behavior (Liobikiene et al., 2017); however, there is a possibility that the presence of an attitude-action discrepancy can be as a result of lack of knowledge, poor trust, expensive pricing, or access problems (Liu et al., 2012).

3. The Present Study and Hypotheses

From the above-mentioned literature, this study assumes that the three aspects of influencer marketing, namely credibility, attractiveness, and engagement with their followers, influence consumer behavior both collectively and separately and that this influence can differ between different demographics. Hence, the hypotheses tested below are:

H1: Influencer marketing (credibility, attractiveness, and interaction with followers) has a statistically significant effect on consumer behavior ($\alpha = .05$).

H2: Respondents' attitudes toward the effect of influencer marketing on consumer behavior differ significantly according to demographic variables (gender, age, place of residence, educational qualification, daily hours of social media use, and marital status).

4. Method

4.1. Research Design

A descriptive-analytical, quantitative, cross-sectional design was used, in which existing phenomena were measured and analysed as they naturally occur, without researcher intervention (Darwish, 2018). A structured questionnaire was administered to a random sample drawn from social media users, and the resulting data were analysed statistically to test the study hypotheses.

4.2. Participants and Sampling

The study population comprised Palestinians using social media sites in the Gaza Strip. The simple random sample size was 175 participants. Of these participants, 63.4% were females and 36.6% were males; the most frequent age category was above 20 to 30 years old (49.1%); 45.1% lived in Gaza City; 44.6% had a bachelor's degree; 36.6% used social media for 3 to 4 hours per day; and 43.4% were married. All demographic data can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N = 175)

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	64	36.6
	Female	111	63.4
Age	Under 20 years	18	10.3
	Over 20–30 years	86	49.1
	31–40 years	38	21.7
	41–50 years	19	10.9
	Over 50 years	14	8.0
Place of residence	North Gaza	20	11.4
	Gaza City	79	45.1
	Middle Area	40	22.9
	Khan Younis	23	13.1
	Rafah	13	7.4
Education	High school or below	19	10.9
	Diploma	45	25.7
	Bachelor's degree	78	44.6
	Master's degree	18	10.3
	Doctorate	15	8.6
Daily social media use	1–2 hours	30	17.1
	3–4 hours	64	36.6
	5–6 hours	50	28.6
	More than 6 hours	31	17.7
Marital status	Married	76	43.4
	Single	75	42.9
	Divorced	13	7.4
	Widowed	11	6.3

4.3. Instrument

The data was gathered through a self-administered questionnaire that had been constructed through reviewing the literature and had been validated by two referees in terms of face and content validity. The survey questionnaire had three parts. The first part included demographics like gender, age, residence, level of education, time spent using social media daily, and marital status. The second part consisted of 15 questions related to influencer marketing through three five-question scales, namely credibility, attractiveness, and interaction with followers. The third part consisted of seven questions about consumer behavior.

Each subscale's internal consistency was checked through Pearson correlation coefficients and Cronbach's alpha. All subscales were found to have high reliability: influencer credibility ($\alpha = .913$), influencer attractiveness ($\alpha = .901$), followers' interaction ($\alpha = .929$), and consumer behavior ($\alpha = .956$). The overall reliability coefficient for the whole scale was found to be .970.

4.4. Procedure

The questionnaire was sent through electronic media to users of social media in the Gaza Strip. The response was purely voluntary and confidential; no personal information was required from the participants and all data collected was used exclusively for academic research. The data collected was then coded and analyzed using SPSS.

4.5. Data Analysis

Based on the results obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it was clear that the data were not normally distributed ($p < .001$ for all subscales); however, parametric methods were applied, similar to previous research using this study design, such as one-sample and independent samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA with Scheffé post-hoc analyses, and simple and multiple regression with statistical significance level of $\alpha = .05$.

5. Results

5.1. Descriptive Statistics

From Table 2 below, all the three dimensions of influencer marketing were ranked as moderately important. Attractiveness had the highest ranking with a weightage of 69.49% ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.93$). Interaction with followers and credibility came second and third with weights of 63.89% ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.03$) and 63.38% ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.04$) respectively. Both the overall influencer marketing dimension ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.93$, Weight = 65.58%) and consumer behavior dimension ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 1.01$, Weight = 66.53%) scored significantly above the neutral point of 3 ($p < .001$).

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, and One-Sample t-Tests Against the Neutral Midpoint (Test Value = 3)

Dimension	M	SD	Relative Weight (%)	t	p
Influencer credibility	3.17	1.04	63.38	2.15	.033
Influencer attractiveness	3.47	0.93	69.49	6.75	< .001
Interaction with followers	3.19	1.03	63.89	2.49	.014
Influencer marketing (overall)	3.28	0.93	65.58	3.97	< .001
Consumer behavior	3.33	1.01	66.53	4.28	< .001

5.2. Hypothesis 1: Effects of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Behavior

Simple regression analyses showed that each dimension of influencer marketing significantly predicted consumer behavior: credibility, $R^2 = .673$, $F(1, 173) = 356.1$, $p < .001$; attractiveness, $R^2 = .659$, $F(1, 173) = 350.1$, $p < .001$; and interaction with followers, $R^2 = .693$, $F(1, 173) = 390.9$, $p < .001$.

A multiple regression analysis, including all three dimensions together at once, proved to be statistically significant, $F(3, 171) = 212.90$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .888$, adjusted $R^2 = .789$, which means that all three dimensions collectively accounted for 78.9% of the variation in consumer behavior. All three predictors significantly contributed to variance (see Table 3 below), but interaction with followers was the most significant predictor ($\beta = .358$), followed by attractiveness ($\beta = .354$) and credibility ($\beta = .246$).

Table 3: Multiple Regression of Consumer Behavior on the Dimensions of Influencer Marketing

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	0.119	0.138	—	0.87	.388
Influencer credibility	0.239	0.068	.246	3.52	.001
Influencer attractiveness	0.384	0.064	.354	5.96	< .001
Interaction with followers	0.349	0.066	.358	5.30	< .001

5.3. Hypothesis 2: Differences by Demographic Variables

An independent-samples t-test found no significant difference in overall responses by gender, $t(173) = 1.52$, $p = .131$. One-way ANOVA likewise revealed no significant differences by age, $F(4, 170) = 2.48$, $p = .055$, by educational qualification, $F(4, 170) = 2.22$, $p = .069$, by daily hours of social media use, $F(3, 171) = 0.25$, $p = .858$, or by marital status, $F(3, 171) = 1.06$, $p = .368$. The first meaningful difference was found based on place of residence, with an F value of 3.77 ($p = .006$). Using Scheffé post hoc comparisons, it was revealed that individuals residing in North Gaza had significantly higher means compared to Gaza City (mean difference = 0.74, $p < .05$) and Khan Younis (mean difference = 0.95, $p < .05$) residents, whereas other pair comparisons were not statistically significant.

6. Discussion

The current study assessed the influence of influencer marketing (measured by the constructs of credibility, attractiveness, and engagement with followers) on consumer behavior among social media users in the Gaza Strip. In line with H1, all three constructs were found to be significant predictors of consumer behavior both separately and collectively, explaining 79% of consumer behavior variance. The results of the study are in line with previous studies indicating that influencers' attributes have a strong and direct impact on purchase behavior (Chiguvi et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2025).

Interactions with followers proved to be the most important predictor, closely followed by attractiveness, whereas credibility had the least impact, although it was still significant. It can be said that, at least in this specific sample, the relational and emotional components of influencer marketing (interaction and attractiveness) seem to play a bigger role in influencing purchase behavior compared to credibility and honesty. This distinction is generally in line with studies pointing out the importance of follower interactions and content for influencing behaviors and the relatively indirect role of influencer credibility (Weismueller et al., 2020).

Regarding H2, the lack of any kind of demographic difference among men and women, different ages, levels of education, hours of social media usage per day, and marital status shows that the effect of influencer marketing on consumer behavior is generalized across these demographics and is not limited to any specific demographic. Influencer marketing seems to be a mainstream activity for consumers now. However, the only exception was the place of living of the participants since the scores of participants living in North Gaza were significantly higher compared to Gaza City and Khan Younis. Since different parts of the Gaza Strip have varying economic and infrastructure-related situations, it can be said that this difference might be due to access to products and other similar reasons instead of a difference in psychological processes.

6.1. Practical Implications

Such results lead to several recommendations for marketers and brands that operate under similar conditions of the digital world. First, since interaction and attractiveness had the highest weights, brands must focus on those influencers that have constant interaction with their audience and create appealing visual content rather than just on the number of followers. Second, although credibility did not play such a big role as other variables, it is a major factor in consumer behavior and has an ethical aspect of importance; therefore, brand must continue creating authentic partnerships and sponsorships. Finally, since there was no segmentation in terms of age and gender, but there was a geographical one, brands may use general influencer marketing campaigns but also may think about geographically based strategy.

6.2. Limitations and Future Research

There are a number of limitations associated with this research. First of all, the cross-sectional nature of the study prevents causal conclusions, while the self-reporting technique might be prone to common-method variance bias leading to the exaggeration of the results found. Second of all, the sample used in the research consisted only of the Gaza Strip residents, so the findings cannot be generalized to any other social/cultural/economic environments. Moreover, the survey used in this study measured only the consumers' behavioral intentions and not the actual purchase behavior.

7. Conclusion

The marketing approach that revolves around the integrity, appeal, and interactivity of influencers has a considerable effect on consumer behavior in Gaza on social media sites. The influence is uniform among all demographic profiles apart from location. As far as implementation of an influencer marketing strategy goes, businesses must focus on establishing authentic relationships and keeping up a very high level of integrity.

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