

Received: October 2023 Accepted: December 2023
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/ks.v12i1.072>

The Impact of Influencers on Purchase Intention

Hang Thi Thuy Nguyen^{1*}, Nhu Huynh Tam Tran², Thuong Thi Mong Nguyen³, Lam Hoang Nguyen⁴, Tuan Quoc Lam⁵

Abstract

Using the Can Tho market in Vietnam as an example, this research looks at how social media influencers affect consumers' propensity to buy. The data collected via structured questionnaires is analysed using a quantitative research technique in this study. In order to gather information, 308 people were interviewed in Can Tho, Vietnam. Amos 25.0 and IBM SPSS are used to assess the study's results. According to the research, influencers are those who may greatly impact reputation due to their social attractiveness, expertise in content creation. Appearance and credibility also play a significant role in determining whether or not a customer wants to buy a product. The research stresses the significance of influencer marketing and the need for organisations to prioritise the development of genuine and meaningful connections with influencers. A key component of successful marketing tactics, according to the statistics, is placing a premium on genuine and relevant influencer-brand interactions. This research sheds light on the function of influencer marketing in the context of contemporary consumerism and provides tactical recommendations for enhancing brand perception and generating more purchase intent via the use of influencers.

Keywords: Impact, Purchase Intentions, Influencer.

Introduction

The significance of social media influencers is increasing as consumers' proficiency and involvement levels continue to increase. This study investigates consumers' purchasing inclination, the genuineness of products, and the impact of influencers. The primary emphasis is on Can Tho, Vietnam. There is a significant shift happening in the way organisations engage with their consumers, as influencers are becoming a crucial component of contemporary marketing strategy.

As to Torres et al. (2019), the size of an individual's fan base serves as a reliable measure of their fame, which is a widely used statistic for both influencers and celebrities. Marketers get significant advantages from their influence, which extends to other domains like beauty, fashion, fitness, and lifestyle (Abidin, 2016). customers see authentic brands as possessing strong ethical values, demonstrating steadfastness (i.e., unaffected by passing trends), exhibiting dependability (i.e., consistently fulfilling their commitments), and carrying symbolic importance (i.e., fostering a sense of identity and connection for customers). Dwivedi and McDonald (2018) assert that an authentic brand consistently upholds its promises. Purchase intention refers to the probability that a client intends to purchase a certain product, and it is associated with the consumer's conscious choice to get a particular brand (Martiningsih & Setyawan, 2022b). There has been little research and attention given to the effect of influencers' and

¹ Department of Business Administration, FPT University, 90000, Can Tho City, Vietnam. Email: hangnttcs160362@fpt.edu.vn

² Department of Business Administration, FPT University, 90000, Can Tho City, Vietnam.

³ Department of Business Administration, FPT University, 90000, Can Tho City, Vietnam.

⁴ Department of Business Administration, FPT University, 90000, Can Tho City, Vietnam.

⁵ International Business, Faculty of Business Administration, FPT University, 90000, Can Tho City, Vietnam.

businesses' reputations on customers' likelihood to make a purchase. There is a paucity of academic study on certain variables associated to influencers, such as aesthetics and experience, as well as true brand attributes, such as a rich history and memorable images. The primary objective of this study is to determine the impact of brand authenticity and influencer credibility on purchase intent. Its main objective is to provide concrete data on the factors that contribute to a brand's authenticity and the factors that impact customers' purchasing choices.

The contribution of this research to our understanding of how influencer marketing impacts consumer behaviour and brand image is very useful. This article offers significant insights for brand strategists and marketers seeking to leverage influencer marketing in the digital age. It examines the correlation between influencers, brand legitimacy, and purchase intention. This study has extensive implications that extend beyond the realms of marketing and consumer behaviour. This study explores the correlation between the influence of influencers, the level of trust customers have in a company, and the likelihood of making a purchase. The study revealed that the genuineness of a brand has a significant impact on consumers' confidence and their process of selecting choices. Contemporary marketers and brand strategists aiming to use influencer marketing must possess a comprehensive comprehension of the dynamic relationship between influencers and a company's reputation. According to the survey, in order for organisations to align their authenticity with consumer expectations, they must establish robust influencer-brand alliances and cultivate transparent collaborations.

Literature Review

Brand authenticity, as defined by Morhart et al. (2013), refers to the extent to which consumers see a brand as trustworthy and dependable in its obligations to itself and its customers. Due to this perception, customers are more inclined to maintain their loyalty. Given the intricate and diverse characteristics of brand authenticity, as explored by Akbar and Wymer (2017), it would be unwise to attempt a succinct description including the many connotations linked to this notion (Sodergren, 2021). Consumers, as stated by Morhart et al. (2013), hold the belief that authentic brands have long-lasting value and are not swayed by passing trends. Additionally, it is believed that these brands possess the qualities of reliability (consistently fulfilling their commitments), moral principles by Beverland & Farrelly (2010), and symbolic significance (influencing customers' self-perception). According to Dwivedi and McDonald (2018), a genuine brand consistently upholds its promises. Previous research (Rose & Wood, 2005; Napoli et al., 2016) have shown that authentic objects have a greater likelihood of receiving positive responses, forming stronger emotional connections, and generating more consumer purchases. Consumers actively want authenticity as a strategy to avoid the problem of authenticity that affects contemporary society (Cohen, 1988; Leigh et al., 2006).

The brand's authenticity has a significant impact on consumers' attitudes, intentions to buy, and beliefs about the company's honesty and dependability, as indicated by several studies (Bruhn, Schoenmüller, Schafer, & Heinrich, 2012; Gillmore & Pine, 2007; Moulard, Rice, Garrity, & Mangus, 2014; Morhart et al., 2013; Arnould & Price, 2000). Authenticity is a crucial aspect of brand strategy for successful organisations as it enhances their identity (Aaker, 1997). Brand managers strive to enhance the authenticity of their goods by using marketing strategies that imbue them with distinctive attributes, distinguishing them from rival alternatives, as stated by Beverland and Farrelly (2010).

Due to its subjective nature, individuals have varying perspectives on the concept of authenticity. However, when it comes to the authenticity of brands, the following deductions might be made: Brand authenticity, unlike personal authenticity, pertains to the dependability of commercially available

products and services rather than one's own character. The credibility of a brand is contingent upon the perception of its target audience, rather than only relying on the brand's intrinsic characteristics. This citation is derived from a publication authored by Beverland and Farrelly in 2010. Although there is no agreement on the exact definition of authenticity, there are many distinct features that contribute to the concept of brand authenticity in the context of branding (Bruhn, 2012).

Our study has shown that individuals who see commercial entities such as events, brands, and experiences as real tend to enjoy many benefits in terms of identification, particularly in terms of presenting their true selves in a favourable manner. The study yielded three prominent advantages: virtue, control, and connection. Each of these had significance in our own situations. The identity-related benefits, which may be extended to products, services, and experiences, reflect the concept of genuineness, authenticity, and veracity. The source cited is a publication authored by Beverland and Farrelly in 2010. According to Morhart et al. (2015), factors such as consistency, trustworthiness, integrity, and symbolism might influence the perceived authenticity of something. Conversely, a brand's authenticity is primarily shaped by true sincerity, a solid historical basis, and an unwavering dedication to quality (Napoli et al., 2016). When attempting to define the essence of a real brand, it is crucial to consider five key factors: credibility, symbolism, authenticity, market longevity, and dedication to quality. A comprehensive comprehension of the attributes that really epitomise a reliable and genuine brand forms the basis for ascertaining these dimensions. These factors are the fundamental criteria that purchasers use to ascertain the authenticity of a brand.

The data originated from De Veirman et al., (2017). Customers have significant power over companies and influencers. These points of view might perhaps provide a moderator or an explanation for the impact that influencers have on customers' inclination to make purchases. Equally significant is the manner in which the influencer presents the product pitch. Customers that are receptive to influencer marketing and see the product as aligning with their values are more inclined to engage in a purchase. Extensive scholarly study has shown significant findings about the impact of influencers on the beliefs and behaviours of their followers. This facilitates the comprehension of how firms may use social media influencers to establish favourable relationships with consumers and enhance brand visibility.

Lou (2022) and De Veirman et al., (2017) assert that the content generation process involves evaluating many attributes such as authenticity, engagement, distinctiveness, and reach. Social attractiveness is determined by the quantity of likes, comments, and following a person receives. The aesthetic features are based upon the concepts presented by Ohanian, R. (1990). These features characterise the appearance as possessing qualities of sophistication, attractiveness, refinement, and elegance. Expertise, as described by Masuda et al. (2022) and Liu, R., & Suh, A. (2017), encompasses knowledge, experience, and recognition. The key characteristics of a commitment focused on excellence are proactivity, concentration, foresight, and adaptability. The enduring influence of Rick will be experienced for an extended period of time due to his engaging and famous personality. Ohanian (1990) asserts that symbolism encompasses elements such as uniqueness, significance, and inventiveness. Credibility, however, is associated with factors such as qualifications and ethical conduct. A genuine individual is characterised by their integrity, trustworthiness, and honesty. The motivation to make a purchase is derived from the concepts presented by Martiningsih and Setyawan (2022b) and Spears and Singh (2004). The topic pertains to the impact of influencer evaluations on customers' inclination to make a purchase. Porteous (2018), De Veirman et al. (2017), and Conde and Casais (2023) have classified influences into three categories: micro, macro, and macro. Every kind of influencer specialises in a certain field. Broadening the target audience's demographics.

Contemporary marketing strongly depends on the intricate network of connections between influencers

and the reputation of a business. The genuine and authentic product recommendations made by influencers may enhance a company's reputation due to their demonstration of empathy. Nevertheless, if a company excessively pushes its goods or fails to match with its core brand values, its authenticity may be compromised. Abidin (2016), Kaplan and Haenlein (2020), and De Veirman et al. (2017) have shown that fostering transparent collaboration and establishing a robust connection between influencers and corporations is essential for preserving authenticity.

Methodology

Sampling Technique

For this experiment, we devised a structured questionnaire with a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The delivery of this questionnaire facilitated the assessment of certain observational criteria. A score of 5 denoted an exceedingly elevated position, whilst a score of 1 denoted an exceptionally low one. Data was collected via a comprehensive survey that included several aspects such as authenticity, trustworthiness, social appeal, appearance, knowledge, devotion to quality, symbolism, honesty, credibility, and willingness to purchase. The study was conducted in Can Tho, Vietnam, with a sample size of 308 people aged between 18 and 45. The data collection was conducted using Google Forms to enhance the outcomes and convenience. Following the removal of mistakes, a total of 308 respondents were considered appropriate for further examination.

Research Hypothesis

Liu and Suh (2017) define "personal branding" or "self-branding" as the deliberate construction of a unique public persona with the aim of achieving recognition, wealth, or both. The concept of self-branding suggests that individuals might gain advantages by constructing a distinctive and attractive public image that resonates with the interests and values of their intended audience (Khamis et al., 2016). Self-brand congruity refers to the degree of alignment between an individual's self-perception and their evaluation of a brand's image. Customers often behave in accordance with their self-perception, demonstrating a predilection for and utilisation of certain brands and products. One's self-perception is frequently reflected in their beliefs and ideals. As a result, shoppers exhibit greater loyalty towards businesses that align with their ideals (Phua & Kim, 2018).

H1: *Appearance of Influencers impacts Symbolism of Brand Authenticity.*

H2: *Appearance of Influencers impacts Credibility of Brand Authenticity.*

H3: *Appearance of Influencers impacts Purchase Intention.*

An individual's distinctiveness or remarkable attributes are supplementary aspects that contribute to their attractiveness beyond their outward look. Within the realm of prominent individuals, "attractiveness" refers to the capacity of a person's facial appearance to captivate the curiosity of others. The reference is derived by Setyawan and Martiningsih (2022a). According to Masuda et al. (2022), influencers have the ability to establish a deep emotional connection with their followers that extends beyond the mere accumulation of "likes" on social media platforms. This phenomenon is referred to as social attractiveness. Taking into consideration the points mentioned above, the research puts forward the subsequent hypothesis:

H4: *Social Attractiveness of Influencers impacts Symbolism of Brand Authenticity.*

H5: *Social Attractiveness of Influencers impacts Credibility of Brand Authenticity.*

H6: *Social Attractiveness of Influencers impacts Purchase Intention.*

Influencers have transformed the digital marketing terrain with their content. De Veirman et al. (2017) found

that influencers are seen as more accessible than conventional celebrities due to their ability to provide content that really resonates with their audience. This fosters trust and promotes active participation. Regardless of the platform, their content is often assumed to be genuine, making it a potent instrument for corporate advertising (Freberg et al., 2011). Influencers play a crucial role for firms aiming to establish genuine connections with their customers due to their substantial followings and tangible impact (Lou & Yuan, 2019). The increasing prevalence of online media has led to a greater importance of "influencers" in the realms of advertising and content creation. Typically, audiences have a positive perception of influencer-sponsored content and see the influencers' sponsorship disclosures as authentic and comprehensible. Due to this, they have a greater sense of commitment towards the influencers' content as a whole entity (Lou, 2022). Based on the above arguments, the study proposed the following hypothesis:

H7: *Content creation of Influencers impacts Symbolism of brand Authenticity.*

H8: *Content creation of Influencers impacts Credibility of Brand Authenticity.*

H9: *Content creation of Influencers impacts Purchase Intention.*

Experts are individuals or organisations that possess profound comprehension, proficiency, and mastery in a certain field. Reliable sources possess profound expertise and proficiency in a certain domain, enabling them to instill confidence. Martiningsih and Setyawan (2022a) argue that establishing trust is crucial in instilling confidence and assurance in knowledge recipients. Developing self-confidence requires achieving expertise in one's domain, acquiring a comprehensive comprehension of that domain, and gaining relevant hands-on experience. Additional crucial factors in establishing trust include a commendable reputation and unwavering dependability. Their profound knowledge, competence, and mastery distinguish them as authorities. Credible sources, due to their substantial expertise and knowledge, have the ability to persuade readers that their opinions have significance (Masuda et al., 2022). It is presented the following hypothesis:

H10: *Expertise of Influencers impacts Symbolism of Brand Authenticity.*

H11: *Expertise of Influencers impacts Credibility of Brand Authenticity.*

H12: *Expertise of Influencers impacts Purchase Intention.*

A brand's trust is established not just by its honesty and transparency with consumers, but also by its capacity to fulfil its commitments. As stated by Morhart et al. (2013), this information is derived from. As per the findings of Frazier and Lassar (1996), credibility may be likened to the authenticity aspect of a brand's personality (Aaker, 1997). This encompasses attributes such as honesty and sincerity, as well as brand quality, which reflects how well a brand fulfils client expectations. According to CHEIKH et al. (2021), a company's reputation enhances customer confidence during purchase transactions. The decrease in customer behaviour may be attributed to the diminished likelihood of making a purchase after exposure to the brand's widely recognised reputation and the subsequent psychological uplift it provides (Frazier & Lassar, 1996).

H13: *Credibility of Brand Authenticity impacts Purchase Intention.*

In the context of branding, the term "symbolism" refers to the ability of a company to influence individuals' identities by conveying signals that embody values, beliefs, and connections. In essence, it embodies the fundamental principles of the company and offers consumers a platform to articulate their individuality or distinguish themselves. Both the component of brand attachment that relates to identification, which refers to the connection between the brand and the individual (Park et al., 2010), and the advantage of association, which is observed in authentic brands, are similar to the symbolic aspect being discussed here (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). The second statement illustrates how buyers use the brand as a means to construct their own identity, rather than only emphasising the brand's symbolic worth. Chen et al. (2021) define symbolism as the ability of a brand to effectively convey its

significance and impact a consumer's sense of self in a manner that encourages them to identify with and express their own identity via the brand.

H14: *Symbolism of Brand Authenticity impacts Purchase Intention.*

Results and Discussion

In order to thoroughly investigate the connections between different variables, Wang and Rhemtulla (2021) used sophisticated statistical methods including structural equation modelling (SEM). The experiment was conducted utilising the SEM method and the well recognised AMS 25.0 software suite. Researchers used this procedure to study and evaluate the proposed ideas in depth. We accomplished this by assessing the statements' veracity and correctness using statistical methods such as confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Table 1 displays the topics' relative importance and level of confidence. Looks, social appeal, content development, competency, credibility, symbolism, and purchasing intention are all clearly reflected in the Cronbach's alpha coefficients. With Cronbach's alpha values between 0.693 and 0.816, these variables demonstrate high levels of internal consistency. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 indicates a strong relationship between visible and hidden characteristics, according to De Leeuw et al. (2019).

Table 1: Factor Loading and The Cronbach's A Estimates (Cronbach's Alpha).

Appearance_A (Cronbach's Alpha)		0.752
A1	Influencer X has an elegant appearance.	0.624
A2	Influencer X has a handsome/beautiful appearance.	0.752
A3	Influencer X has an elegant appearance.	0.721
A4	Influencer X has a charming appearance.	0.657
Social Attractiveness_SA (Cronbach's Alpha)		0.809
SA1	Influencer X has a substantial number of followers.	0.745
SA2	Influencer X has a significant number of likes.	0.726
SA3	Influencer X has a high number of comments.	0.742
Content Creation_CC (Cronbach's Alpha)		0.693
CC1	Your assessment of the authenticity of the content provided by Influencer X.	0.641
CC2	Your evaluation of the interactivity of the content.	0.603
CC3	Your assessment of the uniqueness of the content.	0.675
CC4	Your evaluation of the content's influence on consumption, provided by Influencer X.	0.597
Expertise_EXP (Cronbach's Alpha)		0.747
EXP1	Your evaluation of Influencer X's experience.	0.663
EXP2	Your assessment of Influencer X's expertise.	0.616
EXP3	Your evaluation of the level of recognition that Influencer X has achieved in their field of activity.	0.705
Symbolism_SB (Cronbach's Alpha)		0.795
SB1	Brand X consistently maintains uniqueness in providing products/services.	0.743
SB2	Brand X has achieved recognition from consumers.	0.685
SB3	Brand X is at the forefront of innovation.	0.737
Purchase intention_PI (Cronbach's Alpha)		0.725
PI2	If there's a choice between brands, I would choose Brand X.	0.570
PI3	Brand X is my first choice when I have shopping needs.	0.572
Credibility_C (Cronbach's Alpha)		0.816
C1	Brand X strictly adheres to ethical standards.	0.768
C2	Brand X demonstrates reliability in delivering products/services.	0.791
C3	Brand X confronts their mistakes truthfully.	0.780
C4	Brand X always displays sincerity towards customers.	0.768
C5	Brand X consistently demonstrates transparency in their business operations.	0.791

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

There is not a single factor loading value in Table 2 that is less than or equal to the specified 0.5. This

particular frequency range has been validated by scholarly investigations conducted by Al-Lozi et al. (2018) and Sung et al. (2019). By using covariance-based structural equation modelling (SEM) to test hypotheses, Rimkeviciene et al. (2017) demonstrated the discriminant validity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was used to assess the sufficiency of the relationship performance measures included in the scale's factor analysis. At least one of the detected numbers was greater than the minimum requirement of 0.5. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) score of 0.803 was used to assess the data's statistical significance; this score was higher than the minimum threshold of 0.5. Furthermore, elements with eigenvalues higher than 1.004 were eliminated. To determine how well the factor-related variables correlate with one another, we use Bartlett's test of sphericity. The variables that were examined inside the factor have a significant association ($p < 0.05$, $\chi^2 = 0.00$), as shown by Bartlett's test. To find out how closely related two variables are, statisticians look at the factor loading coefficient. With respect to the relevant variable, a factor loading value of 0.7 indicates statistical significance. Every one of the seven parameter loadings were more than 0.60. Yu et al. (2014) demonstrated that loadings greater than 0.50 are legitimate. The measurement phase was completed by computing the averages of each multivariate construct. In order to follow the guidelines of the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) framework, it is crucial to correctly assign items to the right dimensions using the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

Table 2: Scale of Factors and Test Parameters in Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

Items	Factors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Appearance (A)							
A1	0.828						
A4	0.756						
A3	0.671						
A2	0.581						
Social Attractiveness (SA)							
SA3		0.814					
SA2		0.757					
SA1		0.708					
Content Creation (CC)							
CC4			0.718				
CC2			0.664				
CC1			0.658				
CC3			0.630				
Expertise (EXP)							
EXP3				0.894			
EXP2				0.871			
Symbolism (SB)							
SB1					0.844		
SB2					0.830		
SB3					0.809		
Purchase Intention (PI)							
PI3						0.844	
PI2						0.841	
Credibility (C)							
C4							0.811
C1							0.744
C3							0.692
C5							0.673
C2							0.577
Parameters of test						Result	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)						0.803	
Cumulative % (Initial Eigenvalues)						66.89	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Sig.)						0.000	
Initial Eigenvalue						1.004	

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

The degree of convergent validity is assessed based on the extent to which the selected objects exhibit a robust association with the concept under consideration. An effective method for assessing the degree of agreement among many measures is to study composite reliability, factor loading, or average variance extracted (AVE). Factor loading is a numerical indicator of the degree to which an object is associated with the underlying concept it represents, as stated by Hashmi and Tawfiq (2020) and Hsieh and Hiang (2004). Optimal performance is often described as a minimum threshold of 0.40 or above. Studies conducted by Khan et al. (2022a) and Hashmi et al. (2021) indicate that the construct's internal consistency, as assessed by composite reliability, should exceed 0.70. According to the research conducted by Khan et al. (2022b) and Fornell & Larcker (1981), it is recommended to have a Minimum Variance Extracted (AVE) value of 0.5. The phrase "Average Variation Extracted" (AVE) refers to the average amount of variation that is accounted for by the indicators of a construct. The statistics shown in Table 3, with values ranging from 0.554 to 0.689, provide evidence of the investigation's contemporaneous validity. The obtained results exceed the crucial value of 0.5 necessary to establish concurrent validity. The AVE value exceeds the previously defined limit of 0.5. The Composite Reliability (CR) exceeds the minimal requirement of 0.70. Table 3 presents a concise summary of the findings. Consequently, there exists a substantial amount of evidence that supports the validity of the model's components.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity.

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	EXP	C	A	SB	SA	CC	PI
EXP	0.815	0.689	0.130	0.831	0.830						
C	0.817	0.572	0.276	0.819	-0.008	0.756					
A	0.762	0.554	0.306	0.806	0.076	0.251	0.744				
SB	0.802	0.575	0.130	0.808	0.361	0.093	0.074	0.758			
SA	0.813	0.592	0.319	0.815	-0.020	0.565	0.553	0.016	0.769		
CC	0.703	0.574	0.176	0.713	0.113	0.690	0.427	0.080	0.537	0.757	
PI	0.730	0.577	0.173	0.746	-0.026	0.416	0.293	-0.012	0.199	0.281	0.759

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

The statistical analysis yielded a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$), providing definitive evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The structural model developed for this inquiry has robustness, as shown by the 1.841 chi-square/df score. The model's suitability is confirmed by the analytical result of 0.903 and the GFI value of 0.900. The previously mentioned symptoms are really significant. Since the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) score of the study model is 0.910, which above the cutoff value of 0.900, it satisfies the necessary criteria. In addition, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.055 and the comparative fit index (CFI) value of 0.925 both above the criterion of 0.080. The study findings corroborate and authenticate the chosen research framework, as per Yu et al. (2014). The data that has been collected is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Model Fit Indicators in SEM.

Indicators	Cut-off values	Calculated values	Conclusion
Chi-square/df	≤ 3.000	1.841	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.900	0.925	Fit
GFI	≥ 0.900	0.903	Fit
TLI	≥ 0.900	0.910	Fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.080	0.055	Fit

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Note: Cut-off values adopted from Yu et al. (2014)

Figure 1: SEM Model

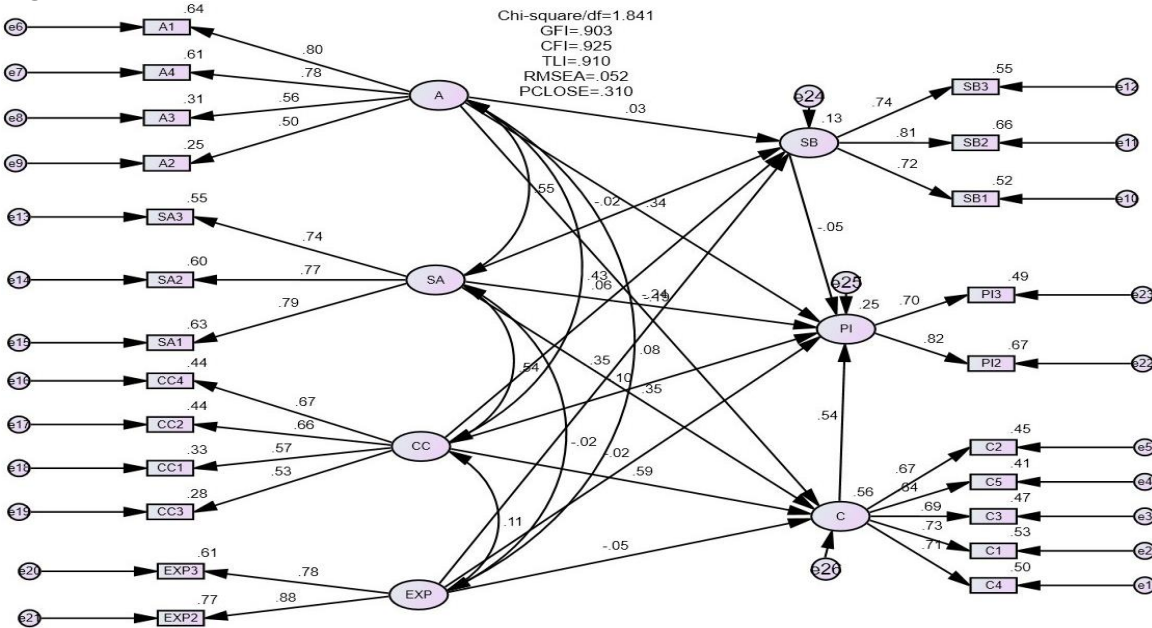


Table 5: Final Estimates of The Influencers and Symbolism.

Relationship	Estimate β	S.E	C.R	P – value	Hypothesis Result
SB β A	0.025	0.080	0.310	0.757	Reject
SB β SA	-0.020	0.112	-0.181	0.856	Reject
SB β CC	0.085	0.130	0.651	0.515	Reject
SB β EXP	-0.447	0.095	4.700	***	Not accepted
R² SB = 0.134					

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Note: *, **, and *** are levels of significance at $P < 0.05$, $P < 0.01$, and $P < 0.001$, respectively.

Table 5 presents Hypothesis 10, which demonstrates a statistically significant correlation between knowledge and symbolism. The beta coefficient of -0.447, the critical ratio of 4.700, and the p-value < 0.001 all provide support for this conclusion. Conversely, a negative beta value indicates that H10 is not supported. If the P-value exceeds 0.1, the existing evidence is insufficient to support H1, H4, and H7. Consequently, it is advisable to eliminate them.

Table 6: Final Estimates of The Influencers and Credibility.

Relationship	Estimate β	S.E	C.R	P – value	Hypothesis Result
C β A	-1.250	0.052	-2.420	0.016	Not accepted
C β SA	0.283	0.073	3.856	***	Accepted
C β CC	0.594	0.101	5.864	***	Accepted
C β EXP	-0.044	0.054	-0.817	0.414	Reject
R² C = 0.560					

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Note: *, **, and *** are levels of significance at $P < 0.05$, $P < 0.01$, and $P < 0.001$, respectively.

Table 6 displays the correlation between influencer credibility and several attributes. A significant correlation exists between credibility and three variables: appearance, social attractiveness, and content development ($P < 0.05$). The study's results provide support for the viability of hypotheses H5 and H8, as shown by the positive beta values ($\beta = 0.283$; $\beta = 0.594$). The H5 hypothesis is rejected because to the negative beta value of -1.250.

Table 7: Final Estimates of the Influencers and Purchase Intention.

Relationship	Estimate β	S.E	C.R	P – value	Hypothesis Result
PI β A	0.344	0.105	3.269	0.001	Accepted
PI β SA	-0.300	0.146	-2.047	0.041	Not accepted
PI β CC	-0.159	0.2200	-0.724	0.469	Reject
PI β EXP	-0.033	0.111	-0.297	***	Not accepted
PI β C	0.847	0.219	3.873	***	Accepted
PI β SB	-0.060	0.086	-0.695	0.487	Reject
R² PI = 0.251					

Source: Field Survey Data, 2023

Note: *, **, and *** are levels of significance at $P < 0.05$, $P < 0.01$, and $P < 0.001$, respectively.

The findings from testing hypotheses H3, H6, H12, and H13 are shown in Table 7. These theories propose that factors such as social attractiveness, appearance, credibility, expertise, and H3 significantly influence purchase intention. Within each of these groups, the p-value is below 0.05. There is a significant correlation between purchase intention and the beta coefficients of credibility (0.847), social attractiveness (-0.300), competence (-0.033), and appearance (0.344). The negative beta coefficients refute hypotheses H6 and H12 and support hypotheses H3 and H13.

Conclusion

To sum up, this research emphasises the importance of influencers in affecting client attitudes and intentions to make purchases, specifically in the setting of Can Tho, Vietnam. The study's results suggest that influencers who possess both social appeal and content production skills may significantly influence trustworthiness. Moreover, qualities such as aesthetic appeal and reliability have a significant impact on customers' purchasing intentions. The research unequivocally demonstrates the significance of influencers and strongly indicates that organisations should prioritise cultivating genuine and relevant connections with influencers. To summarise, the study's significant findings may assist firms in formulating efficient marketing strategies that align with their brand's principles and effectively target their desired consumer group.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Availability of data and materials: Availability

Reference

- Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of Brand Personality. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224379703400304>, 34(3), 347–356. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224379703400304>
- Abidin, C. (2016). Visibility labour: Engaging with Influencers' fashion brands and #OOTD advertorial campaigns on Instagram. *Media International Australia*, 161(1), 86–100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878x16665177>

- Akbar, W. W. & M. M. (2017). Brand authenticity, its conceptualization, and its relevance to nonprofit marketing. *ideas.repec.org*. https://ideas.repec.org/a/spr/irpnmk/v14y2017i3d10.1007_s12208-017-0177-z.html
- Al-Adwan, A. S., Al-Madadha, A., & Zvirzdinaite, Z. (2018). Modeling Students' Readiness to Adopt Mobile Learning in Higher Education: An Empirical Study. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v19i1.3256>
- Al-Lozi, M. S., Almomani, R. Z. Q., & Al-Hawary, S. I. S. (2018). Talent Management Strategies as a Critical Success Factor for Effectiveness of Human Resources Information Systems in Commercial Banks Working in Jordan. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 18(1), 31–43.
- Amould, E. J. & Price, L. (2000). Authenticating acts and authoritative performances in The why of consumption: Contemporary perspectives on consumers' motives, goals, and desires, eds. Ratneshwar, S., Mick, D. & Huffman, C, New York: Routledge, 144–163.
- Beverland, M. B., & Farrelly, F. J. (2010). The quest for authenticity in consumption: Consumers' purposive choice of authentic cues to shape experienced outcomes. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(5), 838–856. <https://doi.org/10.1086/615047>
- Bruhn, M., Schoenmueller, V., Schäfer, D. B., & Heinrich, D. (2012). Brand authenticity: towards a deeper understanding of its conceptualization and measurement. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263442915_Brand_Authenticity_Towards_a_Deeper_Understanding_of_Its_Conceptualization_and_Measurement
- Cheikh, A. B., Ferchichi, G., & Chaabani, R. (2021). THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER MARKETING ON CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION OF FASHIONABLE PRODUCTS: EVIDENCE FROM TUNISIA. *DOAJ (DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals)*. <https://doi.org/10.48375/imist.prsm/remses-v6i2.24951>
- Cohen, E. (1988). Authenticity and commoditization in tourism. *Annals of tourism research*, 15(3), 371–386.
- Conde, R., & Casais, B. (2023). Micro, macro and mega-influencers on instagram: The power of persuasion via the parasocial relationship. *Journal of Business Research*, 158, 113708. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2023.113708>
- De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035*, 36(5), 798–828.
- Dwivedi, A., & McDonald, R. E. (2018). Building brand authenticity in fast-moving consumer goods via consumer perceptions of brand marketing communications. *European Journal of Marketing*, 52(7/8), 1387–1411. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejm-11-2016-0665>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18, 39–50.
- Frazier, G. L., & Lassar, W. M. (1996). Determinants of distribution intensity. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(4), 39–51. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299606000405>
- Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K., & Freberg, L. A. (2011). Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public Relations Review*, 37(1), 90–92. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PUBREV.2010.11.001>
- Gilmore, J. H., & Pine, J. (2007). Authenticity: What consumers really want. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hashmi, A. R., & Tawfiq, A. M. (2020). The effect of disruptive factors on inventory control as a mediator and organizational performance in Health Department of Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Sustainable Development & World Policy*, 9(2), 122–134. doi:10.18488/journal.26.2020.92.122.134

- Hashmi, A. R., Amirah, N. A., Yusof, Y., & Zaliha, T. N. (2021). Mediation of inventory control practices in proficiency and organizational performance: State-funded hospital perspective. *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 9(1), 89-98. doi:10.5267/j.uscm.2020.11.006
- Hsieh, Y.-C., & Hiang, S.-T. (2004). A study of the impacts of service quality on relationship quality in search-experience-credence services. *Total Quality Management Business Excellence*, 15(1), 43-58.
- Khamis, S., Ang, L., & Welling, R. (2016). Self-branding, 'micro-celebrity' and the rise of Social Media Influencers. *Celebrity Studies*, 8(2), 191–208. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392397.2016.1218292>
- Khan, S., Benhamed, A., Rashid, A., Rasheed, R., & Huma, Z. (2022a). Effect of leadership styles on employees' performance by considering psychological capital as mediator: evidence from airlines industry in emerging economy. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, 18(8).
- Khan, S., Rasheed, R., Rashid, A., Abbas, Q., & Mahboob, F. (2022b). The Effect of Demographic Characteristics on Job Performance: An Empirical Study from Pakistan. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 9(2), 283-294. DOI: 10.13106/jafeb.2022.vol9.no2.0283
- Leigh, T. W., Peters, C., & Shelton, J. (2006). The consumer quest for authenticity: The multiplicity of meanings within the MG subculture of consumption. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34(4), 481-493.
- Liu, R., & Suh, A. (2017). Self-Branding on social Media: An analysis of style bloggers on Instagram. *Procedia Computer Science*, 124, 12–20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2017.12.124>
- Lou, C. (2022). Social Media Influencers and Followers: Theorization of a Trans-Parasocial Relation and Explication of Its Implications for Influencer Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 51(1), 4–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2021.1880345>
- Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer Marketing: How Message Value and Credibility Affect Consumer Trust of Branded Content on Social Media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 58–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2018.1533501>
- Martiningsih, D. A., & Setyawan, A. A. (2022). The impact of influencers' credibility towards purchase intention. *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.220602.025>
- Masuda, H., Han, S. H., & Lee, J. (2022). Impacts of influencer attributes on purchase intentions in social media influencer marketing: Mediating roles of characterizations. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 174, 121246. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.TECHFORE.2021.121246>
- Moulard, J. G., Rice, D. H., Garrity, C. P., & Mangus, S. M. (2014). Artist authenticity: How artists' passion and commitment shape consumers' perceptions and behavioral intentions across genders, *Psychology & Marketing*, 31, 576–590
- Napoli, J., Dickinson-Delaporte, S., & Beverland, M. B. (2016). The brand authenticity continuum: strategic approaches for building value. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2016.1145722>
- Ohanian, R. (1990). Construction and validation of a scale to measure celebrity endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. *Journal of advertising*, 19(3), 39-52.
- Park, C. W., MacInnis, D. J., Priester, J. R., Eisingerich, A. B., & Iacobucci, D. (2010). Brand attachment and brand attitude strength: conceptual and empirical differentiation of two critical brand equity drivers. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(6), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.74.6.1>
- Phua, J., & Kim, J. (2018). Starring in your own Snapchat advertisement: Influence of self-brand congruity, self-referencing and perceived humor on brand attitude and purchase intention of advertised brands. *Telematics and Informatics*, 35(5), 1524–1533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2018.03.020>
- Porteous, J. (2018, 20 June). Micro influencers vs macro influencers, what's best for your business? Retrieved from: <https://www.socialbakers.com/blog/micro-influencers-vs-macro-influencers>.

- Rimkeviciene, J., Hawgood, J., O’Gorman, J., & De Leo, D. (2017). Construct Validity of the Acquired Capability for Suicide Scale: Factor Structure, Convergent and Discriminant Validity. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 39, 291–302. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10862-016-9576-4>
- Rose, R. L., & Wood, S. (2005). Paradox and the Consumption of Authenticity through Reality Television. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(2), 284–296. <https://doi.org/10.1086/432238>.
- Södergren, J. (2021). Brand authenticity: 25 Years of research. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 645–663. <https://doi.org/10.1111/IJCS.12651>
- Spears, N., & Singh, S. N. (2004). Measuring attitude toward the brand and purchase intentions. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 26(2), 53–66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2004.10505164>
- Sung, K.-S., Yi, Y. G., & Shin, H.-I. (2019). Reliability and validity of knee extensor strength measurements using a portable dynamometer anchoring system in a supine position. *BMC musculoskeletal disorders*, 20(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12891-019-2703-0>
- Torres, P., Augusto, M., & Matos, M. (2019). Antecedents and outcomes of digital influencer endorsement: An exploratory study. *Psychology & Marketing*, 36(12), 1267–1276. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21274>
- Xiao-Hua, C., You, E. S., Lee, T. J., & Li, X. (2021). The influence of historical nostalgia on a heritage destination’s brand authenticity, brand attachment, and brand equity. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 23(6), 1176–1190. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2477>
- Yu, W., Chavez, R., Feng, M., and Wiengarten, F.(2014). Integrated green supply chain management and operational performance. *Supply Chain Management*, 19(5/6), 683-696. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SCM-07-2013-0225>