

# The Relationship of Consumer Trust and Influencer Credibility towards Online Purchasing Decision

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## Abstract

E-commerce in Malaysia has witnessed remarkable expansion over the past decade, propelled by technological advancements, greater internet accessibility, and a shift in consumer preferences from traditional retail to online shopping. Malaysian consumers are increasingly drawn to the convenience, diverse product offerings, and competitive pricing available on social commerce platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. This trend has led brands and companies to adopt social media influencer marketing strategies over conventional marketing approaches. This paper aims to explore the relationship between Herbert Kelman's (1953) Social Influence Theory which posits that individuals are influenced by the decisions of others perceived as competent, trustworthy and online shopping behavior. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data was gathered through a self-administered survey distributed via simple random sampling. A total of 350 were returned, yielding a response rate of 91 percent. The study focused on tech-savvy residents of Klang Valley who actively use social commerce platforms for online shopping. Results indicate a strong, significant positive relationship between influencer credibility and consumers' online shopping decisions. These findings offer valuable insights for brands and marketers seeking to optimize their marketing strategies to enhance product sales and revenue.

**Keywords:** E-commerce, Social Commerce, Influencer Marketing, Social Influence Theory, Online Shopping, Influencer Credibility, Consumer Behavior

## Introduction

The rise of social commerce platforms like Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram has coincided with the growing influence of social media influencers on consumer purchasing decisions. Major brands are investing in these influencers, recognizing that consumers often perceive

them as more trustworthy than traditional marketing campaigns. A key study by (Khan F. R. & Phung S. P, 2021) highlights that consumer trust and influencer credibility are major factors in online purchasing decisions within the Malaysian context. (Amrollahi, Kummer, Rajaeian, & Hadinejad, 2024) identify the connection between social influence and trust, particularly in services that hinge on user-generated content, which further illustrates the influence skilled figures wield in shaping opinions and behaviors within social networks. This study further examines the relationship between influencer credibility, consumer trust, and online purchasing decisions among social commerce users.

Despite the growth of online shopping in Malaysia, obstacles persist, including trust issues, privacy concerns, and usability limitations (Naseri, Othman, & Ibrahim, 2020). A survey in Malaysia revealed that 74% of respondents are concerned about security risks, underscoring the need for robust security measures. While progress has been made, the effectiveness of influencer credibility in online purchasing decisions remains underexplored. Product-related issues, such as false advertising, also remain significant barriers (Longgang & Ming, 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the importance of secure digital infrastructure, while delivery delays eroded consumer trust (Isamudin & Islam, 2023). Online reviews significantly shape consumer perceptions, with negative reviews disproportionately impacting trust (Saad, Wan Mahamad, & Ali Akbar, 2023). Fake reviews and difficulties in navigating online platforms add to these challenges (Naseri, Othman, & Ibrahim, 2020). These findings highlight the need to understand how consumer trust, influencer credibility, and social media influencers collectively impact online purchasing decisions in Malaysia.

This research aims to address existing gaps in understanding the influence of social media influencers on consumer trust and online purchasing decisions. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) examine the significance of the relationship between consumer trust and online purchasing decisions, and (2) explore the impact of influencer credibility on consumers' likelihood to engage in online purchases.

By investigating these relationships, the study contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of influencer marketing. The findings are expected to inform marketing strategies for brands, guide influencers in creating authentic and engaging content, support consumers in making informed decisions, and enable businesses to adapt effectively to evolving market trends.

## **Literature Review**

### *Social Influence Theory*

Social Influence Theory, as initially articulated by (Kelman, 1953), posits that individual attitudes are products of societal norms, values, and conventions. This assertion has garnered validation in contemporary research, particularly in the context of consumer behavior influenced by celebrity endorsements. For instance, (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2024) argue that while celebrity endorsements can effectively sway consumer purchase behaviors, the attractiveness of the endorsers does not necessarily correlate with their perceived credibility. Instead, it underscores that the knowledge and expertise of the celebrity are paramount in affecting consumer perceptions towards brands. This aligns with the social influence principle that credibility is a critical determinant in attitude change, supporting the view that effective influence relies not just on the source's likability but also on their competence.

Additionally, the differential effects of social influence can be observed in how variations in the source's attributes affect consumer acceptance. (Wu, Yang, & Ma, 2023) explore this concept through online celebrity live streaming, demonstrating that perceived functional and emotional values significantly enhance consumer purchase behavior while reducing perceived risk. This finding illustrates how the power and trustworthiness of the influencer directly influence consumer attitudes, resonating with Herbert's assertion that acceptance of social influence hinges on the attributes of the influencer and the message conveyed.

Moreover, the relevance of trust in shaping consumer attitudes is emphasized by (Mkerwa, 2024), who highlights the role of credible information sources in altering personal preferences. The study reveals that the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements is contingent upon perceived trustworthiness, supporting the notion that consumers are more inclined to adopt influences when they regard the source as authoritative and reliable. (Upadhyay & Singh, 2024) further support this by stating that celebrity credibility defined by trustworthiness and expertise is crucial in influencing consumer attitudes and intentions toward products. These findings reinforce the idea that the acceptance of social influence is intricately linked to the powers and attributes of the influencing entity.

Moreover, the dynamics of compliance and identification within social influence become evident when analyzing how consumers engage with endorsements. Research by (Tseng & Wang, 2023) confirms that certain characteristics of celebrity endorsements, such as credibility and attractiveness, positively correlate with consumer buying behavior, particularly in contexts where such endorsements play a significant role in shaping consumer identities and preferences. This illustrates the dual mechanisms of compliance and identification in action, as consumers engage with brands endorsed by individuals whom they admire or perceive as similar to themselves.

Social Influence Theory elucidates the mechanisms through which societal factors shape attitudes, especially in the realm of consumer behavior influenced by celebrity endorsements. The evidence consistently supports the idea that credibility, expertise, and likability of the influencer are central to fostering acceptance of influence, thereby triggering attitude changes among consumers. This underscores the multifaceted nature of social influence, which operates through complex interactions between perceived risks, functional values, and the trustworthiness of the endorsing figures.

### **Online Purchasing Decision**

The online purchasing decision-making process is multifaceted, as it intricately weaves together the identification of consumer needs, extensive research, evaluation of alternatives, and eventual purchase. (Solomon, 2020) outlines this complex pathway, emphasizing that consumers begin by recognizing a specific want and engage in a thorough examination of available options, considering factors such as product features, brand reputation, pricing, and personal preferences. Recent studies underscore the significance of influencer marketing, which plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behaviors in today's digital landscape. (Hansaram, Hansaram, Loy, & Pradhaa, 2022) emphasize that consumers' attitudes toward online shopping and their acceptance of the internet as a purchasing medium play a vital role in shaping their online buying intentions. These attitudes are directly linked to their decisions to engage in online transactions.

A recent study indicates that social media influencers significantly affect online purchasing decisions by fostering brand awareness and establishing consumer trust. (Nursansiwati, 2024) articulates that influencer credibility is crucial; higher credibility often correlates with increased consumer engagement and conversion rates in purchasing. This observation is echoed by (Hu, Abd Rahman, & Yusof, 2024), who posit that micro-influencer attributes, including trustworthiness and expertise, mediate their impact on consumer choices, thus highlighting the necessity for brands to align with credible influencers who can effectively endorse their products. Additionally, (Chen, Qin, Yan, & Huang, 2024), corroborate these findings, noting that influencer credibility positively influences consumers' purchase intentions, establishing a solid link between perception and purchasing behavior.

Moreover, the segmentation of online shoppers also remains a critical area of research. (Prashar, Sai Vijay, & Parsad, 2016) identified distinct shopper types, such as Traditional Shoppers and Benefit Seekers, revealing the complexity of motivations behind online purchases. The influence of family also plays a significant role, as consumers often regard familial input as a trustworthy source for purchasing decisions. Building on this notion, (Zhang, Mercado, & Bi, 2025) suggest that social media dynamics, including parasocial relationships and perceived influencer credibility, effectively shape consumer behavior, further emphasizing the role of social networks in purchasing decisions.

In terms of recent insights into influencer strategies, (Mrisha & Xixiang, 2024) bring to light the interconnectedness of an influencer's strategy, content, and credibility in effectively engaging consumers. They argue that nonverbal cues in influencer marketing enhance perceived credibility and, in turn, influence consumer decisions. Similarly, (Azhar, Shah, Ahmed, & Iqbal, 2024) assert that the interplay between influencer self-disclosure and source credibility cultivates brand trust, which is crucial in motivating purchase decisions. These findings indicate that brands must strategically collaborate with influencers who not only resonate with their target audience but also possess high credibility and align with the product's value propositions.

The consumer behavior research landscape continues to evolve, as studies examine various factors influencing decision-making in online spaces. (Paul, Jagani, & Yadav, 2024) expand the dialogue on social media influencers as change agents in shaping consumer perspectives and behaviors, reinforcing the importance of credibility and authenticity in marketing strategies. Furthermore, (Ahsan, Jamil, & Rais, 2024) found that about 60% of consumers consult social media before making purchase decisions, underscoring the critical role of influencer marketing in the consumer journey.

The synthesis of these studies illustrates that the online purchasing process is increasingly influenced by social media dynamics, where engagement from credible sources significantly impacts the consumer's journey from need recognition to final purchase. This trend calls for businesses to adopt adaptive marketing strategies that prioritize influencer partnerships grounded in trust and credibility to foster effective consumer engagement.

### *Consumer Trust*

The evolution of social commerce platforms has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behavior, particularly through the lens of influencer marketing. This

transformation has been underscored by recent studies highlighting the critical role of consumer trust in personal recommendations over traditional advertising methodologies. For instance, research indicates a direct correlation between influencer marketing and an increase in consumer trust regarding online advertisements and purchases, suggesting that platforms tailored for social commerce are reshaping advertising efficacy in the digital marketplace (Chavda & Chauhan, 2024). This aligns with findings by (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2024), who emphasize that consumers' trust in sources validated by others, such as social media influencers, often leads to enhanced purchasing decisions, further accentuating the importance of credibility in influencer marketing.

The phenomenon of influencer credibility is pivotal in determining consumer trust and intent to purchase. Numerous studies affirm that when consumers perceive influencers as trustworthy, their purchase intentions are likely to escalate. This credibility encompasses the influencer's trustworthiness, the accuracy of the information provided, and their expertise regarding the endorsed products (Panra, Malik, & Bibi, 2024). For example, a study concentrating on the trustworthiness of online celebrities on Instagram found that credible endorsements significantly influence the purchasing decisions of young audiences, particularly those connecting with influencers sharing relatable personal experiences (Mkerwa, 2024). This underscores the relevance of personal connection in influencing decision-making processes.

Recent findings suggest that celebrity endorsements, especially from influencers, can effectively sway consumer perceptions and behaviors. According to (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2024), the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in altering consumer buying behavior is highly contingent upon the perceived trustworthiness of the endorsing celebrity. Support for this claim is evident in multiple studies pointing to the positive impact of celebrity credibility on purchase intentions (Upadhyay & Singh, 2024). Moreover, the effectiveness of influencers in appealing to consumer emotions and aspirations has been highlighted, where endorsements by familiar figures create an aspirational value that brands leverage to enhance their market appeal.

Furthermore, understanding the role of social media influencers in shaping brand trust is essential. (Chavda & Chauhan, 2024) discuss the intricate relationship between influencer marketing and consumer behavior, asserting that consumer trust is a fundamental component that shapes purchasing decisions. Their findings illustrate that as influencer credibility increases, so does consumer engagement with brands, resulting in heightened purchase intentions. Research has indicated a strong correlation between the perceived effectiveness of influencers and the willingness of consumers to act on their recommendations, rendering influencers a vital aspect of modern marketing strategies (Yang, 2024).

Additionally, studies emphasize the mediating role of brand credibility, where celebrity endorsements enhance the perceived trustworthiness of a product and significantly influence the purchasing decisions of consumers (Kusvabadika, Magoba, Mutombo, Zvimba, & Manhimanzi, 2024); (Rahayu, Cahyani, & Cahya, 2024). This mediating effect illustrates that consumers are more likely to trust and act on recommendations from credible endorsers, making the selection of influencers a critical component of effective marketing strategies.

As social commerce platforms gain traction, the interplay between consumer trust, influencer credibility, and effective marketing strategies become increasingly apparent. The evidence supports that leveraging influencers as credible sources is paramount in forging connections with consumers and facilitating positive purchasing outcomes. Future researchers and marketers alike must consider the nuanced dynamics of this relationship, ensuring that partnerships are forged with influencers who can genuinely resonate with their target demographic.

### *Influencer Credibility*

The emergence of social media influencers as key players in digital marketing has reshaped consumer engagement strategies in recent years. Influencers are individuals or groups who can sway consumer choices through their popularity and perceived credibility can leverage their fan bases on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook to foster brand relationships and drive sales (Pradhan, Kishore, & Gokhale, 2023). The influence of these personalities can be linked to the shift from traditional advertising mediums to social commerce platforms, which have become increasingly effective in reaching and engaging consumers (Pandowo, Rahmani, & Hapsari, 2024). Recent studies demonstrate that social media influencers are viewed as authentic sources of brand recommendations, making them essential for brands looking to leverage social proof to enhance consumer trust and redirect purchase intentions (Pradhan, Kishore, & Gokhale, 2023). (Ahmad, Malik, Sondoh, & Mahmud, 2024) found that expertise, homophily, and trustworthiness play a significant and positive role in influencing both information adoption and consumers' purchase decisions, whereas attractiveness has a comparatively lower impact.

Moreover, the dynamic nature of influencer marketing highlights the pivotal role of credibility and expertise in shaping consumer behavior. Influencers who successfully authenticate their endorsements by conveying relatable content and genuine experiences tend to create a loyal community that values their opinions (Rafiah, Humairah, & Prasetyo, 2024). This sentiment is reinforced by findings indicating that consumers exhibit higher purchasing intentions when they perceive influencers as credible and relatable, emphasizing the importance of authenticity in influencer-brand collaborations (Pramesthi, Prasetyo, & Safitri, 2024). The synergy between influencer engagement and consumer trust has significant implications for businesses aiming to build loyalty and stimulate consumer interest.

The interaction between social media marketing strategies and consumer behavior has also garnered attention in contemporary research. Studies emphasize that brands can enhance their visibility and foster trust by partnering with influencers who resonate with their target audience (Dirgayasa & Darma, 2024). By providing endorsements that reflect shared values or interests, brands can drive consumer engagement and improve brand perceptions (Kartomo, 2024). This relationship underscores how strategic influencer partnerships can serve as catalysts for larger consumer trends and behaviors in the social commerce landscape (Arista, Tjahjanto, Ernawati, Purabaya, & Abdullah, 2023).

Additionally, as the competitive landscape of influencer marketing grows, brands face the challenge of identifying authentic influencers whose messages align with their values and resonate with their target consumers (Jeromina, 2024). The effectiveness of influencer marketing is not solely based on follower count, but rather on how deeply these influencers

can connect with their audience (Pramesthi, Prasetyo, & Safitri, 2024). Consequently, finding the right influencer whose credibility aligns with brand messages becomes vital for the success of marketing campaigns. This principle is further supported by evidence indicating that influencer authenticity significantly affects consumer purchasing decisions, highlighting a clear link between an influencer's public persona and their ability to impact sales (Chandra & Mansur, 2024).

The evolution of influencer marketing calls for ongoing exploration of its implications for consumer engagement. The increasing importance of social media influencers necessitates further studies into the factors that drive consumer trust and purchasing behavior, particularly as digital marketing practices continue to evolve alongside technological advancements in social commerce platforms (Gupta, et al., 2023).

Social media influencers play a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions within the social commerce domain. Their ability to sway consumer sentiments is anchored in their perceived credibility, relatability, and engagement with followers. As brands navigate this complex landscape, the effectiveness of influencer partnerships hinges on their ability to connect authentically with their audiences, thereby fostering trust and facilitating more meaningful consumer interactions.

## Methods

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the relationship of consumer trust and influencer credibility towards online purchasing decisions. Convenience sampling was employed due to the accessibility of participants and their familiarity with the subject matter and a total of 350 respondents were gathered for analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to present the demographic profile, while inferential statistics such as Pearson's Correlation, and Regression Analysis were employed to determine the strength and significance of the relationships among variables. A normality test was also conducted to assess data distribution.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1

### *Demographic Profile*

Variables		n=350	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	223	58%
	Female	127	33%
Age	18-24	25	7%
	25-34	57	15%
	35-44	106	28%
	45-54	134	35%
	55 and above	28	7%
Highest Education	Doctorate	14	4%
	Master's Degree	81	21%
	Bachelor's Degree	173	45%
	Diploma	61	16%
	High School	21	5%
Occupation	Employed (Full-time)	249	65%
	Self-employed	46	12%

	Student	26	7%
	Unemployed	15	4%
	Retired	10	3%
	Employed (Part-time)	4	1%
Working Tenure	0-3 years	42	11%
	4-6 years	19	5%
	7-10 years	25	7%
	More than 10 years	264	69%
Online Shopping Frequency	Daily	52	14%
	Weekly	80	21%
	Monthly	137	36%
	Rarely	81	21%
Social Commerce Platforms	One	134	35%
	Two	129	34%
	Three	64	17%
	Four	16	4%
	Five	5	1%
	Six	2	1%

Based on Table 1, a total of 350 respondents participated in the study. The majority were male (58%), and most were between the ages of 45–54 (35%) and 35–44 (28%). In terms of education, nearly half (45%) held a Bachelor's degree, followed by 21% with a Master's degree.

Most respondents were employed full-time (65%), with 69% having more than 10 years of working experience. In terms of online shopping frequency, 36% shopped monthly, while 21% shopped weekly and 14% daily. Regarding social commerce usage, 35% used one platform and 34% used two platforms.

Table 2

*Cronbach's Alpha Value of Each Variables*

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Consumer Trust	6	0.908
Influencer Credibility	6	0.945
Online Purchasing Decision	7	0.920

Table 2 presents the Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct measured in the study. The results demonstrated high levels of internal consistency for all variables. Consumer Trust, measured using six items, yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.908, indicating excellent reliability. Influencer Credibility, also measured with six items, recorded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.945, showing very strong reliability. Likewise, Online Purchasing Decision, assessed through seven items, resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.920. All values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming that the measurement instruments used in this study are both reliable and consistent.

Table 3

*Descriptive Analysis*

Variables	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Consumer Trust	350	2.956	0.948	0.050357
Influencer Credibility	350	2.771	0.944	0.050134
Online Purchasing Decision	350	2.809	0.992	0.051951

Descriptive analysis of the study variables, including consumer trust, influencer credibility and online purchase decision was conducted by calculating the mean and standard deviation as shown in Table 3. Consumer Trust had the highest mean score ( $M = 2.956$ ,  $SD = 0.948$ ), followed by Online Purchasing Decision ( $M = 2.809$ ,  $SD = 0.992$ ), and Influencer Credibility ( $M = 2.771$ ,  $SD = 0.944$ ). These results indicate a moderately positive perception among respondents toward all three constructs.

Table 4

*The Correlation Between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variables*

		Consumer Trust	Influencer Credibility	Online Purchasing Decision
Consumer Trust	Pearson Correlation	1	.822**	.661**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000
	N	350	350	350
Influencer Credibility	Pearson Correlation	.822**	1	.773**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000
	N	350	350	350
Online Purchasing Decision	Pearson Correlation	.661**	.773**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	
	N	350	350	350

As shown in Table 4, the Pearson correlation results indicated that both independent variables (consumer trust and influencer credibility) have significant positive relationships with online purchasing decision. Consumer trust was found to have a moderate positive correlation with online purchasing decision ( $r = .661$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that higher levels of trust in online platforms or sources are associated with an increased likelihood of consumers making purchase decisions online.

In contrast, influencer credibility demonstrated a strong positive correlation with online purchasing decision ( $r = .773$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that consumers are more likely to engage in online purchasing when they perceive influencers as credible, trustworthy, and knowledgeable. Furthermore, there was a very strong correlation between consumer trust and influencer credibility ( $r = .822$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), reflecting the close link between the trust consumers place in the overall system and the credibility of influencers operating within it.

Table 5

*Multiple Regression Analysis*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.567	0.759		6.018	0.000
Consumer Trust	0.097	0.072	0.080	1.344	0.180
Influencer Credibility	0.804	0.068	0.707	11.869	0.000

The analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which consumer trust and influencer credibility collectively predict online purchasing decision. The overall model was statistically significant, indicating that the independent variables explain a significant portion of the variance in online purchasing decisions.

Specifically, influencer credibility emerged as a strong and significant predictor of online purchasing decision ( $\beta = 0.707$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The high standardized beta coefficient suggests that influencer credibility has a substantial impact on consumers' purchasing behavior. Conversely, consumer trust was found to be not a significant predictor in the presence of influencer credibility ( $\beta = 0.080$ ,  $p = 0.180$ ), suggesting that its influence on online purchasing decision diminishes when influencer credibility is accounted for.

These findings suggest that while both variables are positively related to online purchasing decisions, influencer credibility plays a more dominant role in influencing consumer behavior. This could be attributed to the growing reliance on social media influencers in shaping consumer preferences and attitudes, especially in the context of digital marketing.

### Conclusion

This study highlights the critical roles of consumer trust and influencer credibility in shaping online purchasing decisions. The findings reveal that while consumer trust contributes significantly to purchase behavior, influencer credibility has a stronger and more direct impact. Consumers are more inclined to purchase products endorsed by influencers perceived as credible, knowledgeable, and trustworthy.

These insights underscore the importance for brands and marketers to collaborate with credible influencers and design strategic campaigns that resonate with target audiences. By aligning marketing efforts with influencers who hold domain expertise and authenticity, companies can strengthen consumer trust and drive online sales more effectively. The results of this study offer valuable implications for marketing strategies in the digital age and contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior in the context of social commerce.

### Implication of the Study

The findings of this study have significant implications for both academic research and practical marketing strategies. From an academic perspective, this research contributes to the understanding of how key factors like consumer trust and influencer credibility influence

online purchasing decisions, particularly in the context of social commerce. By emphasizing the relative importance of influencer credibility, this study adds to the existing body of literature on consumer behavior in the digital era, suggesting that influencer credibility plays a pivotal role in shaping purchasing intentions, often outweighing the traditional factor of consumer trust.

Practically, the results provide valuable insights for brands and marketers looking to optimize their digital marketing strategies. As influencer credibility emerged as a stronger predictor of online purchasing behavior, businesses should prioritize collaborating with influencers who are perceived as credible and authentic. This can be done by selecting influencers with a proven track record in relevant domains, fostering a sense of trust and expertise among their audiences. Additionally, brands should design marketing campaigns that align with the values and interests of the target demographic, leveraging influencers to enhance engagement and drive conversions. In a broader context, the study emphasizes the importance of building trust not only through product quality but also through effective relationships with credible influencers, which can significantly impact consumer buying decisions in the growing landscape of social commerce.

#### **Limitation and Recommendation for Future Research**

One significant limitation is the potential influence of external factors such as seasonal trends, economic conditions, and recent events, which may have impacted respondents' online purchasing behaviors at the time of data collection. These external factors could introduce variability in consumer decision-making that was not accounted for, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research could address this limitation by conducting studies across different time periods or by incorporating such external variables as control factors in the analysis to ensure more robust results.

Additionally, the scope of this research was limited to social commerce platforms, which may not fully capture the diversity of online shopping behaviors across other types of e-commerce platforms. While social commerce has garnered significant attention, traditional e-commerce websites and mobile applications also play an essential role in online purchasing decisions. To provide a more comprehensive understanding of online consumer behavior, future studies could compare and contrast the influence of influencers and consumer trust across both social commerce and traditional e-commerce settings.

Lastly, this study focused on examining the direct relationships between consumer trust, influencer credibility, and online purchasing decisions, without considering the potential mediating or moderating factors that could affect these relationships. Variables such as consumer involvement, perceived value, or product type may influence the strength or direction of the relationships explored in this study. Future research should investigate these additional factors to provide deeper insights into the mechanisms that underlie online purchasing behavior and further enrich the understanding of consumer decision-making in the digital marketplace.

This study offers several avenues for future research that could further enrich the understanding of consumer behavior in the context of social commerce. One key area for exploration is the impact of different types of influencers, such as celebrity influencers, micro-

influencers, or brand ambassadors, on online purchasing decisions. Future studies could examine how the perceived credibility of these influencers varies and whether their influence differs across various consumer segments. Additionally, it would be beneficial to investigate demographic factors, such as income level, geographical location, and cultural background, moderate the relationships between consumer trust, influencer credibility, and online purchasing decisions.

Moreover, future research could delve deeper into the role of social media platforms in shaping consumer behavior. Given the prominence of platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube in social commerce, it would be insightful to explore how platform-specific features, such as content type, user engagement, and algorithm-driven recommendations, affect influencer credibility and consumer trust. Another promising direction is the use of longitudinal studies to track changes in consumer trust and influencer credibility over time, which would help to understand how shifts in consumer perceptions and social media trends influence online purchasing decisions.

Finally, further research could explore additional psychological and emotional factors that influence online purchasing behavior, such as the role of social proof, fear of missing out (FOMO), and personalized marketing strategies. By expanding the scope of factors considered, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms that drive online purchasing decisions, offering valuable insights for the development of effective digital marketing strategies.

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