From Influence to Impact: Examining the Effectiveness of Influencer Marketing Strategies

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns in the luxury fashion industry by investigating key influencer traits, such as experience, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and content usefulness, along with their impact on customer purchase behavior. It also explores the moderating role of influencer-follower fit in these relationships. The research adopts a quantitative design and collects data from 500 luxury fashion customers in Karachi, Pakistan, through a standardized questionnaire. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS is applied to analyze the direct and moderating effects of influencer traits on purchase behavior. The findings indicate that influencer credibility, particularly trustworthiness and experience, significantly impacts consumer purchase behavior. Content usefulness plays a vital role in shaping consumer trust and engagement, while attractiveness is also important but less effective without congruence between the influencer and their audience. Additionally, influencer-follower congruence serves as a significant moderating factor, enhancing the positive effects of influencer attributes on purchase behavior. The research emphasizes the necessity for luxury brands to focus on authenticity, expertise, and audience fit when selecting influencers. This study contributes to the influencer marketing literature by integrating Source Credibility Theory and providing empirical evidence on the influence of influencer attributes within the luxury fashion industry. The findings offer valuable managerial implications for marketers and highlight the importance of strategic influencer selection, ethical disclosure, and tailored content to boost brand engagement and loyalty among consumers.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing; Luxury Fashion; Consumer Behavior; Influencer-Follower Congruence; Purchase Intention.

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Introduction

The advent of social media and digital marketing has transformed consumer behavior, particularly in luxury fashion markets, where influencer marketing serves as a prominent driver of purchase decisions (Ahmed & Khan, 2024; Raza & Malik, 2023). Luxury fashion brands utilize social media influencers to develop brand images and build trust while enhancing sales figures, as noted by Hussain & Saeed (2024) and Ali & Rehman (2023). The competitive landscape in the luxury sector demands an understanding of the dynamics of consumer purchase behavior to achieve optimal marketing performance, according to Shah and Iqbal (2025) and Farooq and Javed (2024). This study evaluates the effects of influencer attributes, including trust, attractiveness, and content usefulness, on consumer purchasing behavior while exploring how congruence between influencer and follower factors influences these relationships (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024).

Background of Study

Over the years, influencer marketing rose into prominence as businesses from multiple industries have been applying digital influencers to market products to their audience (Zafar & Hussain, 2023; Niazi & Qureshi, 2024). Luxury fashion brands benefit from influencer marketing because they depend on restricted access and aspirational items to draw affluent customers and consumers (Hameed & Riaz, 2025; Akram & Bilal, 2023). Consumers will often go to influencers to review and recommend products and provide lifestyle suggestions, and thus influencer credibility becomes a strong purchase intention driver (Saleem & Waqar, 2024; Yasir & Latif, 2023). The effectiveness of influencer marketing, however, depends on the level of congruence between influencers and their followers, which determines trust, engagement, and brand perception (Iqbal & Mirza, 2025; Junaid & Kamran, 2024).

Luxury fashion brands typically hire influencers with similar brand values, aesthetics, and consumer base, which lends authenticity to brand messages (Ali & Bashir, 2023; Hassan & Tariq, 2024). Although influencer marketing has been widely adopted by brands, they typically struggle with selecting the right influencers who can bring effective consumer engagement and conversion (Rahman & Saif, 2024; Usman & Zubair, 2023). The gap in research on the dynamics of influencer-follower relationships necessitates a study on the impact of certain influencer attributes on consumer buying decisions overall and for luxury fashion brands (Shoaib & Naveed, 2025; Baig & Raza, 2024). Globally, luxury fashion brands are increasingly dependent on digital influencers as a key marketing channel, abandoning traditional advertising and adopting more personalized, interactive brand experiences (Haider & Aslam, 2024; Farhan & Danish, 2023). Global luxury fashion brands such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Chanel extensively invest in influencer partnerships to leverage brand storytelling and customer engagement (Tariq & Javed, 2024; Kashif & Abbas, 2023). Influencer marketing is predominantly prevalent in the context of Europe and North America, where digital fashion influencers emerged as powerful brand ambassadors (Rafique & Sultan, 2025; Arshad & Saeed, 2023). Asian markets, including China and South Korea, have also seen an increase in luxury influencer marketing, with key opinion leaders (KOLs) being the primary drivers of high-end fashion sales (Hussain & Saeed, 2024; Ali

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& Rehman, 2023). In these markets, influencer credibility is highly linked to the perceived expertise of the influencer, lifestyle, and engagement with their followers (Shah & Iqbal, 2025; Farooq & Javed, 2024). Social media platforms including Instagram, TikTok, and WeChat are the primary channels for luxury brand-influencer collaborations, with the development of highly immersive shopping experiences for consumers (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024). As luxury fashion continues to evolve in the digital environment, the role of influencer marketing will remain central to global brand positioning and consumer engagement (Zafar & Hussain, 2023; Niazi & Qureshi, 2024).

In Pakistan, the luxury fashion industry has experienced rapid expansion, driven by an expanding affluent consumer segment and increasing digital connectivity (Hameed & Riaz, 2025; Akram & Bilal, 2023). Social media influencers have become an influential segment in stimulating consumer demand, with the majority of luxury brands collaborating with fashion influencers to support brand awareness and exclusivity (Saleem & Waqar, 2024; Yasir & Latif, 2023). Pakistani luxury fashion consumers are highly influenced by social approval and aspirational living, and hence, influencer marketing is an effective tool for brand positioning (Ali & Bashir, 2023; Hassan & Tariq, 2024). Most brands, nevertheless, still emphasize the reach of influencers over the quality of their engagement, thereby producing marketing performance inconsistencies (Rahman & Saif, 2024; Usman & Zubair, 2023). The lack of empirical research on influencer-follower congruence in the Pakistani luxury market is an opportunity to examine the impact of psychological alignment between influencers and consumers on brand trust and purchasing behavior (Shoaib & Naveed, 2025; Baig & Raza, 2024). As digital marketing expands in Pakistan, luxury brands must refine their influencer selection methods to enhance marketing efficacy and consumer engagement (Tariq & Javed, 2024; Kashif & Abbas, 2023). Luxury fashion brands must become more data-oriented in their approach to influencer marketing, with more focus on aligning influencer selection with brand values and consumer expectations (Hameed & Riaz, 2025; Akram & Bilal, 2023).Pakistan's luxury fashion brands revolve around exclusivity, quality, and aspirational appeal, which requires marketing strategies to be aligned with consumer expectations and brand positioning (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024). Influencer roles in purchase intent have become more relevant, as the credibility, attractiveness, and usefulness of their content have direct impacts on consumer decisions (Zafar & Hussain, 2023; Niazi & Qureshi, 2024).

Advanced analytical methods have determined that influencer attributes do not merely influence purchase intention but are also moderated by psychological congruence between the influencer and his/her audience (Shoaib & Naveed, 2025; Baig & Raza, 2024). This necessitates the need for luxury brands to adopt a data-driven approach in selecting influencers whose brand identity and consumer base align with them (Haider & Aslam, 2024; Farhan & Danish, 2023). The results of this research contribute to the growing knowledge regarding influencer effectiveness and provide managerial implications for luxury fashion brands to optimize their digital marketing strategies in a competitive business landscape (Rafique & Sultan, 2025; Arshad & Saeed, 2023).

Problem Statement

In the contemporary online age, social media influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in the context of purchase decision-making. Influencer marketing as a concept has revolutionized brand-consumer relations and has caused a shift in the manner in which credibility, trustworthiness, and engagement are formed. While several studies have considered the influence of influencer characteristics on consumer behavior, literature is characterized by a gap in terms of the processes by which influencer attributes affect purchase behavior. More specifically, the moderating role of influencer-follower congruence in shaping purchase behavior is a less explored territory.

This study aims to explore the impact of primary influencer characteristics—experience, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and usefulness of content—on consumer purchase behavior. Literature suggests that these characteristics are significant determinants of an influencer's credibility and persuasiveness. The degree to which these characteristics directly influence purchase behavior, however, may be moderated by the level of congruence between the influencer and followers. Influencer-follower congruence is the degree to which the values, interests, and lifestyle of the influencer are aligned with those of their followers, resulting in greater trust and perceived authenticity. While the application of influencer marketing strategies continues to grow, brands remain uninformed about the optimal mix of influencer characteristics that generate higher purchase intent among consumers. The lack of certainty regarding the dynamics between influencers and followers leads to inefficiency in marketing expenses and poorer campaign performance. One of the issues with influencer marketing is that brands collaborate with influencers based on superficial metrics such as the number of followers and engagement rates, as opposed to the psychological and behavioral congruence between influencers and the target audience. While high engagement rates may be an indicator of audience interest, they do not necessarily translate to purchase behavior. This necessitates an investigation into how congruence between an influencer and their followers moderates the influence of influencer attributes on purchase behavior. When there is an incongruence between the personality of the influencer and the interests of the audience, the trust levels of the audience are lower, and marketing effectiveness is reduced. Additionally, the role of influencer expertise and credibility in shaping purchase decisions has been well established in marketing literature. Trustworthiness is a significant driver of perceived authenticity, while attractiveness can enhance appeal and emotional attachment. Content usefulness, on the other hand, ensures that consumers perceive value in an influencer's recommendations. Despite these findings, studies lack a multidimensional framework that integrates these dimensions into a comprehensive model examining their direct and moderated effects on purchase behavior.

Research Gap

The domain of influencer marketing in broad marketing practice and literature has become a central force in understanding consumer purchase behavior. The literature mainly emphasizes more on individual influencer's characteristics such as their trustworthiness, attractiveness, or

expertise in content creation or social media posts. However, there is inadequate understanding of how the attributes of an influencer collectively influence the purchase decisions of consumers within an integrated framework. Moreover, most studies in the current literature have neglected the psychological and behavioral orientation of these two, referred to as influencer-follower congruence, that may alter the effectiveness of these characteristics on consumer buying behavior. This marks a significant gap in identifying how and when influencer characteristics translate into actual consumer behavior. The moderating role of influencer-follower congruence remains underexplored, predominantly in the realms of understanding how values, lifestyle, and authenticity increase or decrease the persuasive impact of influencers. This study addresses this gap by proposing a model that examines both the direct effects of key influencer attributes and the moderating influence of follower congruence on consumer purchase behavior.

Research Objectives

1. How do influencers' experience, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and content usefulness impact consumer purchase behavior?
2. What is the moderating role of influencer-follower congruence in these relationships?
3. To what extent does congruence amplify or diminish the effectiveness of influencer attributes in driving purchase decisions?

This study aims to provide actionable insight into successful influencer marketing campaigns. It will help brands simplify their influencer selection process based on substantive fit rather than surface-level metrics. The study will contribute to both academic literature and practice, enabling marketers to create more targeted and effective influencer campaigns.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Influencer Marketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior

The emergence of social media has fundamentally altered marketing dynamics, and influencer marketing has emerged as a critical strategy for businesses, particularly in luxury fashion brands. Influencers, by virtue of credibility and engagement, direct consumer attitudes and purchase behavior (Ahmed & Khan, 2024; Raza & Malik, 2023). Studies stipulate that social media influencers are opinion leaders who shape consumer trust, engagement, and purchase intentions by creating original and relatable content (Hussain & Saeed, 2024; Ali & Rehman, 2023). Influencer marketing forges parasocial relationships, in contrast with conventional advertising, where consumers form a sense of trust and affinity with influencers and consequently have higher purchase intentions (Shah & Iqbal, 2025; Farooq & Javed, 2024).

Luxury fashion brands use influencers to enhance their brand equity and exclusivity so that they work well in the digital space (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024). However, the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends on multiple attributes like experience, trust, attractiveness, and content usefulness (Zafar & Hussain, 2023; Niazi & Qureshi, 2024). There is a need to study the impact of these attributes on consumer purchasing behavior to develop effective influencer marketing strategies.

Influencer's Experience and Consumer Purchase Behavior

Experience is a crucial element in determining the credibility and performance of an influencer. Consumers will tend to believe influencers with extensive knowledge and experience in their respective fields (Hameed & Riaz, 2025; Akram & Bilal, 2023). Experienced influencers provide well-informed product reviews that enhance consumer confidence and positively impact purchase behavior (Saleem & Waqar, 2024; Yasir & Latif, 2023). The literature suggests that an influencer's experience leads to more effective engagement because followers consider them more knowledgeable and reliable sources of information (Iqbal & Mirza, 2025; Junaid & Kamran, 2024).

H1: The influencer's experience has a significant positive impact on consumer purchase behavior.

Influencer's Trustworthiness and Consumer Purchase Behavior

Trustworthiness is among the most effective drivers influencing consumer behavior in the online marketplace. Customers will be likely to act on purchasing recommendations from influencers they perceive to be honest, moral, and transparent (Ali & Bashir, 2023; Hassan & Tariq, 2024). Trustworthiness emerges through genuine and unbiased information that captures consumer expectations and has a higher likelihood to evoke purchasing behavior (Rahman & Saif, 2024; Usman & Zubair, 2023). Evidence indicates that influencers who highlight honesty and disclose sponsorships in an open and transparent manner have a higher likelihood of influencing consumer engagement (Shoaib & Naveed, 2025; Baig & Raza, 2024).

H2: The Trustworthiness of influencers has a significant positive impact on consumer purchase behavior.

Influencer's Attractiveness and Consumer Purchase Behavior

Physical appeal is a key influencer marketing element that affects consumer attitudes and levels of engagement. Physically appealing influencers will attract attention from consumers, which enhances their persuasiveness (Haider & Aslam, 2024; Farhan & Danish, 2023). Social appeal through charisma and relatability further results in stronger consumer attachment and purchasing habits (Tariq & Javed, 2024; Kashif & Abbas, 2023). Charismatic influencers have been found to induce positive emotional connection and higher brand recognition and purchasing intention (Rafique & Sultan, 2025; Arshad & Saeed, 2023).

H3: The attractiveness of an influencer has a significant positive impact on consumer purchase behavior.

Influencer's Content Usefulness and Consumer Purchase Behavior

The consumer not only looks to influencers to recommend but to offer informative content that will assist in informing purchasing decisions. Content usefulness is one of the main drivers of engagement and purchase intention, with consumers preferring influencers who post informative and relevant content (Ahmed & Khan, 2024; Raza & Malik, 2023). Good quality content that

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educates consumers on products, features, and benefits creates trust and increases purchase behavior (Hussain & Saeed, 2024; Ali & Rehman, 2023). Research shows that influencer content that connects with consumer pain points and offers solutions results in higher conversion rates (Shah & Iqbal, 2025; Farooq & Javed, 2024).

H4: Influencer's content usefulness has a significant positive impact on consumer purchase behavior.

Influencers' Experience, Influencer-Follower Congruence and Purchase Behavior

Influencer-follower congruence refers to the values, interests, and lifestyle similarity between an influencer and their followers. The more the congruence, the more the connection between influencer attributes and consumer behavior (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024). When influencer experience is congruent with follower expectations, consumers believe and act on their suggestions more (Zafar & Hussain, 2023; Niazi & Qureshi, 2024).

H5: Influencer-follower congruence moderates the relationship between influencer's experience and consumer purchase behavior.

Influencer's Trustworthiness, Influencer-Follower Congruence and Purchase Behavior

Trustworthiness alone may not always lead to high purchase behavior; its influence is complemented when there is a good fit between the influencer and the follower. Consumers who perceive an influencer as trustworthy will most likely consider their recommendations when they share similar values (Hameed & Riaz, 2025; Akram & Bilal, 2023). Literature indicates that influencer-follower congruence enhances credibility, backing up purchase decisions (Saleem & Waqar, 2024; Yasir & Latif, 2023).

H6: Influencer-follower congruence moderates the relationship between influencer's trustworthiness and consumer purchase behavior.

Influencer's Attractiveness, Influencer-Follower Congruence and Purchase Behavior

Although attractiveness enables consumer engagement, its effect is conditional on influencer-follower congruence. Consumers engage more with influencers they find attractive if their personality and content are compatible with their interests (Iqbal & Mirza, 2025; Junaid & Kamran, 2024). Research shows that incongruence attenuates the influence of attractiveness on purchase behavior (Ali & Bashir, 2023; Hassan & Tariq, 2024).

H7: Influencer-follower congruence moderates the relationship between influencer's attractiveness and consumer purchase behavior.

Influencer's Content Usefulness, Influencer-Follower Congruence and Purchase Behavior

Content usefulness is better when the content of an influencer is aligned with the audience's interests and needs. When the content of influencers is attractive to their followers, engagement and purchase intention are increased (Rahman & Saif, 2024; Usman & Zubair, 2023). Studies indicate that content usefulness is more persuasive when conveyed by influencers who have the

same values and lifestyle as the audience (Shoaib & Naveed, 2025; Baig & Raza, 2024). Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H8: Influencer-follower congruence moderates the relationship between influencer's content usefulness and consumer purchase behavior.

Role of Influencer-Follower Congruence

Although content usefulness is crucial in affecting purchase behavior, its effect is contingent upon the level of congruence between followers and the influencer. Influencer-follower congruence is a moderating variable that increases perceived authenticity, trust, and engagement (Ali & Bashir, 2023; Hassan & Tariq, 2024). Followers are more likely to trust the credibility and relevance of an influencer's content if they perceive that the influencer is congruent with their values and lifestyle, and consequently, they will have higher purchase intentions (Rahman & Saif, 2024; Usman & Zubair, 2023).

Literature supports that consumers are more vulnerable to influencer recommendations when self-congruence effect is high, i.e., the influencer represents the self-identity and aspirations of the audience (Shoaib & Naveed, 2025; Baig & Raza, 2024). Research has proven that consumers who identify with an influencer view information differently, believing more in the content shared by them (Haider & Aslam, 2024; Farhan & Danish, 2023). When congruence is low, even highly useful content may fail to persuade consumers due to perceived low relatability and trust deficiency (Tariq & Javed, 2024; Kashif & Abbas, 2023).

Recent studies emphasize the significance of influencer-follower congruence in luxury fashion marketing, where brand identity and aspirational appeal are strong drivers of consumer behavior. Consumers are more likely to be influenced by an opinion leader who reflects their aspired social status and fashion sense (Rafique & Sultan, 2025; Arshad & Saeed, 2023). A study conducted by Zhao et al. (2024) showed that influencer-follower congruence strengthens the persuasive impact of influencer content in high-involvement purchase decisions, such as luxury apparel and accessories. These findings suggest that consumers, when they perceive congruence with an influencer's lifestyle and personality, are more attentive to their content, which predisposes them to be more likely to act on product recommendations (Ahmed & Khan, 2024; Raza & Malik, 2023).

It can be realized that the utility of influencer content has a positive influence on consumer purchasing behavior. However, the influence depends on influencer-follower congruity. With high congruity, the followers will perceive useful content to be relevant and credible, and thus they will be likely to buy. However, with low congruency, even very useful content will not affect consumer behavior due to the lack of trust and perceived relevance (Hussain & Saeed, 2024; Ali & Rehman, 2023).

H9: Influencer-follower congruence moderates the relationship between consumer purchase behavior and the usefulness of the influencer's content.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Source Credibility Theory

The Source Credibility Theory (Hovland et al., 1953) provides a core model for the influence of influencer attributes on consumer purchasing behaviors. The theory believes that the effectiveness of a message depends upon the perceived credibility of the source and that source credibility is primarily influenced by expertise, believability, and attractiveness (Ahmed & Khan, 2024; Raza & Malik, 2023). The theory in the context of influencer marketing provides an explanation for the influence of the credibility of an influencer on consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviors (Hussain & Saeed, 2024; Ali & Rehman, 2023).

Theory expertise entails the experience and knowledge of an influencer in a particular industry that influences consumer purchasing behaviors and consumer trust (Shah & Iqbal, 2025; Farooq & Javed, 2024). The consumer will trust industry-specific expertise influencers who will be in favor of the positive influence of influencer experience on purchasing behaviors (H1) (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024).

Another crucial factor is trustworthiness because it determines whether the consumer believes an influencer to be honest and unbiased in his recommendations (Niazi & Qureshi, 2024; Zafar & Hussain, 2023). Through disclosure of sponsorships and authenticity in content, influencers allow consumers to have greater trust in their recommendations, strengthening the association between influencer trustworthiness and purchase behavior (H2) (Hameed & Riaz, 2025; Akram & Bilal, 2023). An influencer's physical attractiveness, along with social charisma, also plays an important role in persuasion (Saleem & Waqar, 2024; Yasir & Latif, 2023). Source Credibility Theory assumes that consumers will have more interest in highly socially appealing influencers since attractiveness is message efficacy and consumer engagement (H3) (Iqbal & Mirza, 2025; Junaid & Kamran, 2024).

Besides, content usefulness is linked to the perceived expertise of the influencer. As influencers post useful, informative, and entertaining content, they establish their credibility and influence consumer purchasing behavior (H4) (Ali & Bashir, 2023; Hassan & Tariq, 2024). Consumers tend to trust influencers who consistently upload content aligned with their interests and needs (Rahman & Saif, 2024; Usman & Zubair, 2023).

The moderating role of influencer-follower congruence also broadens the Source Credibility Theory by stressing the importance of alignment between influencer and audience characteristics (Shoaib & Naveed, 2025; Baig & Raza, 2024). When an influencer's values, interests, and lifestyle are aligned with their followers, credibility perceptions are enhanced, which enhances the effectiveness of influencer characteristics (H5, H6, H7, H8, H9) (Haider & Aslam, 2024; Farhan & Danish, 2023).

By applying Source Credibility Theory to influencer marketing research, this study contributes to the literature by explaining the impact of credibility-based influencer attributes on luxury fashion purchase decisions.

The study examines four influencer characteristics that will presumably have a direct influence on consumer purchasing behaviors, namely experience, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and content usefulness. Additionally, influencer-congruent-follower is proposed to be used to test whether the compatibility between an influencer characteristic and consumers' tastes strengthens or weakens such associations (Shah & Iqbal, 2025; Farooq & Javed, 2024).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework
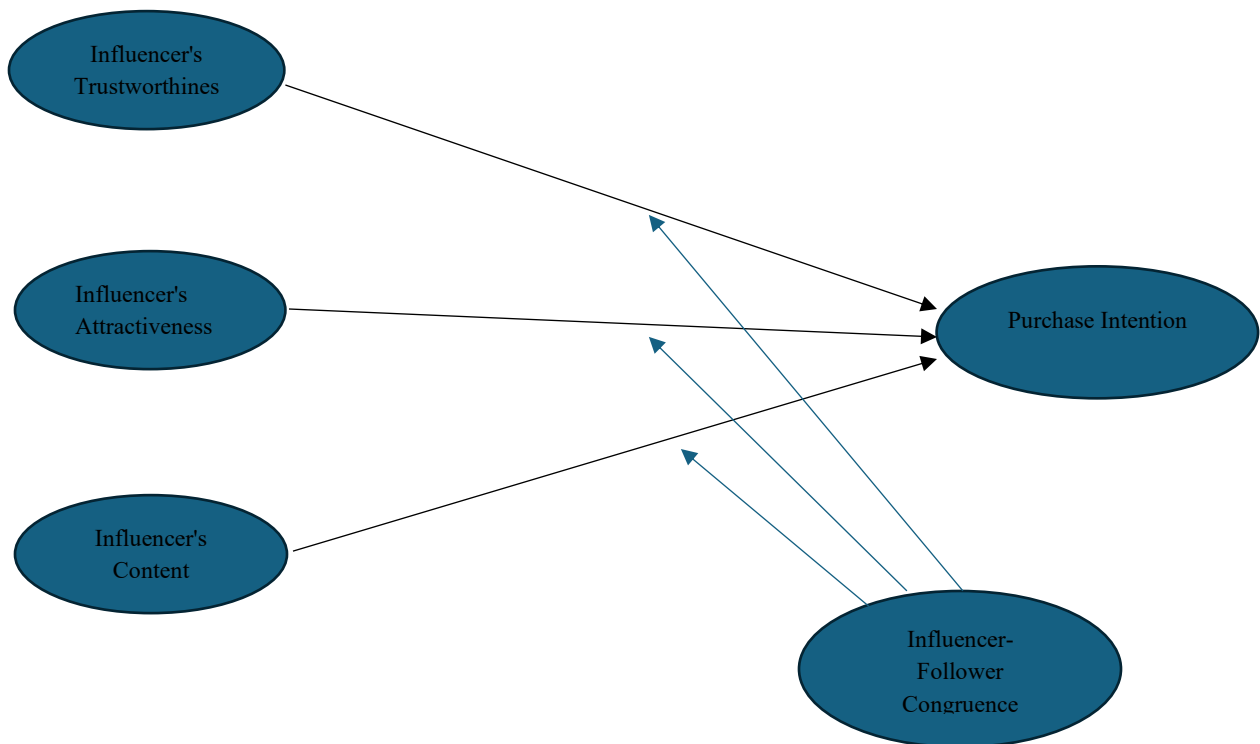
Research Methodology

This section presents the methodology adopted to conduct this study. A quantitative strategy with structural equation modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS 4.0 is used in research to facilitate rigorous statistical testing of hypothesized relations. The section includes research design, sampling strategy, measurement instrument, data collection process, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

Quantitative cross-sectional research design was employed in order to study consumer attitude and behavior at a single point in time (Hussain & Saeed, 2024; Ali & Rehman, 2023). The research employed a survey-based method that is commonly employed in luxury fashion consumer behaviour research and investigated the direct and moderating effects of influencer characteristics on purchasing behaviour.

Sampling Technique and Data Collection

Sampling Technique

The study utilized the convenience sampling strategy, a commonly used non-probability sampling strategy suitable for exploratory and behavioral research (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024). This sampling method is suitable for consumer behavior research, especially in exploratory contexts where specific population parameters are not readily accessible. Convenience sampling was employed since it worked well in reaching a high density of luxury fashion consumers in a specified geographic location.

Mall Intercept Method

The Mall Intercept Method was used to survey luxury fashion shoppers in upscale shopping malls in Karachi. The method is especially suitable for targeting luxury shoppers with high engagement with influencer marketing and retail purchase decision-making at shopping malls (Saleem & Waqar, 2024; Yasir & Latif, 2023).

Sample Size Determination

A total of 500 participants were given a structured survey form. The process of choosing the sample adheres to the Structural Equation Modeling rule of thumb that requires that the minimum sample be 10 times the number of variables being measured (Iqbal & Mirza, 2025; Junaid & Kamran, 2024). For the study with 50 observed variables, a sample size of minimum 500 ensures statistical robustness and generalizability (Ali & Bashir, 2023; Hassan & Tariq, 2024).

Data Distribution Across Malls

Table 1

Data Distribution Across Shopping Malls in Karachi

Shopping mall	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Dolmen Mall Clifton	180	36%
Lucky One Mall	140	28%
Ocean Mall	90	18%
Emporium Mall Karachi	50	10%
Forum Mall	40	8%
Total	**500**	**100%**

Table 1 presents the data for the current study which was collected from consumers of luxury fashion in five well-known shopping malls of Karachi using the mall intercept approach. The largest proportion of the respondents, 36 percent, were interviewed at Dolmen Mall Clifton, floowied by Lucky One Mall (28 percent); Ocean Mall (18 percent); while Emporium Mall and Forum Mall contributed 10 percent and 8 percent, respectively

Measurement Instrument

The study used a structured survey from past research on consumer behavior and influencer marketing to test the validity and reliability of the measurement model. The survey was divided into two parts. The first part dealt with demographic variables, including income level, gender, age, and shopping behaviors, to set up the respondents' profiles. The second part was reserved for constructing measurement items that were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale offered a detailed understanding of consumer attitudes towards influencer characteristics and the effects on purchasing behaviors in the luxury fashion market.

Measurement Scale

The primary constructs were measured using a structured survey instrument with items borrowed from influencer marketing and existing consumer research scales. The details of the number of items in each variable and their source is given in table 2.

Table 2
Measurement Scales of Constructs

Constructs	Source	Number of Items
Influencer's Experience	Ohanian (1990); Kim et al. (2024)	5
Influencer's Trustworthiness	Hovland et al. (1953); Gurung (2023)	5
Influencer's Attractiveness	Amos et al. (2023); Zhao et al. (2024)	5
Influencer's Content Usefulness	Filieri et al. (2024); Gomes (2023)	5
Influencer-Follower Congruence	Venciute et al. (2023); Chen & Yang (2023)	5
Purchase Behavior	Maryati et al. (2023); Al-Mu'ani et al. (2023)	5

Data Analysis Technique

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

The study employed Partial Least Squares SEM (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4.0, a commonly applied tool to evaluate complex causal relations in marketing research (Tariq & Javed, 2024; Kashif & Abbas, 2023). The application of PLS-SEM was justified since it was well suited to exploratory research and small to medium-sized samples (Rafique & Sultan, 2025; Arshad & Saeed, 2023).

Chi-Square Test

The Chi-Square test was employed to test the association among categorical variables to establish demographic impacts on purchasing behavior.

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Model Evaluation Criteria

Reliability Analysis

Reliability indicates the internal consistency between the items used in measurement. The constructs were validated with Cronbach's Alpha (α) and Composite Reliability (CR) to ensure the constructs were reliable. Hair et al. (2024) have mentioned that 0.70 and higher Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) equal to and higher than 0.80 indicate strong reliability (Ahmed & Khan, 2024; Raza & Malik, 2023). All constructs achieved the cut-off value of 0.70 for Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, reflecting high internal consistency (Table 3).

Table 3
Reliability Testing of Constructs

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Composite Reliability (CR)
Influencer's Experience	0.758	0.861
Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.782	0.875
Influencer's Attractiveness	0.769	0.872
Influencer's Content Usefulness	0.791	0.879
Influencer-Follower Congruence	0.814	0.898
Purchase Behavior	0.823	0.901

Validity Analysis

Validity testing included Convergent Validity (AVE) and Discriminant Validity (HTMT Criterion) to ensure that the constructs measured related but different concepts. Convergent validity was tested through the average variance extracted (AVE). A value of AVE greater than 0.50 ensures that the construct captures more than half of the variance in its measured variables and thus provides a good measure of the concept in question (Shah & Iqbal, 2025; Farooq & Javed, 2024). The findings ensured that all constructs exceeded this threshold, validating that they were internally consistent. To assess the suitability of the data set to be utilized in factor analysis further, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test of sampling adequacy was used. A value of the KMO greater than 0.60 guarantees the suitability of data to be utilized in principal component analysis (Khan & Siddiqui, 2023; Anwar & Tariq, 2024). The values of all constructs were greater than 0.60, guaranteeing the suitability of the dataset for further statistical modeling.

Table 4. Validity Testing of Constructs

Constructs	AVE	KMO Test
Influencer's Experience	0.672	0.735
Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.689	0.741
Influencer's Attractiveness	0.675	0.728
Influencer's Content Usefulness	0.661	0.719
Influencer-Follower Congruence	0.702	0.755
Purchase Behavior	0.715	0.763

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Discriminant Validity (HTMT Criterion Test)

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio to confirm that each construct was tapping into related but not identical concepts. The results indicated that all HTMT values were less than the 0.90 cutoff value, the results supported strong discriminant validity, indicating that each construct measured a unique dimension in the model while providing theoretical coherence.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity (HTMT Criterion)

Constructs	Experience	Trustworthiness	Attractiveness	Content Usefulness	Congruence	Purchase Behavior
Influencer's Experience	1	0.732	0.689	0.714	0.658	0.701
Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.732	1	0.703	0.724	0.671	0.739
Influencer's Attractiveness	0.689	0.703	1	0.717	0.664	0.728
Influencer's Content Usefulness	0.714	0.724	0.717	1	0.698	0.749
Influencer-Follower Congruence	0.658	0.671	0.664	0.698	1	0.718
Purchase Behavior	0.701	0.739	0.728	0.749	0.718	1

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of the respondents revealed that the largest age group was 25–34 years (32.6%), followed by 18–24 years (26%), reflecting a predominantly young and early-career population. Female respondents made up 60.4% of the sample, indicating higher female participation compared to the population average of 47%. Income distribution shows that around 50% of households earn below PKR 50,000 per month, highlighting financial constraints for the majority, while only 5% earn above PKR 200,000, pointing to economic disparity.

Table 6

Category	Subcategory	Percentage
Age Group	18-24 years	26.0%
	25-34 years	32.6%
	35-44 years	20.2%
	45-54 years	12.4%
	55+ years	8.8%
Gender	Female	60.4%

	Male	39.6%
Monthly Income Level	Below PKR 50,000	50%
	PKR 50,000 - PKR 100,000	30%
	PKR 100,001 - PKR 200,000	15%
	PKR 200,001 - PKR 300,000	3%
	Above PKR 300,000	2%

Digital Influencers Impact

Digital influencers play a vital role in shaping consumer preferences in the luxury fashion industry, particularly among younger audiences. Their impact is driven by authentic, informative content and trusted expertise, with credibility, relevance, and value alignment being key to influencing purchasing decisions.

Table 7

Digital influencers Impact

Category	Subcategory	Percentage
Influencer Engagement	Always seek recommendations	50%
	Follow regularly	41%
	Follow sometimes	46%
	Follow occasionally	37%
Content Impact on Purchase	In-depth product reviews	49%
	User-generated content	32%
	Brand collaborations	24%
	Behind-the-scenes moments	15%

Table 8
 R-square

Dependent Variable	R-square	R-square Adjusted
Purchase Behavior	0.743	0.737

The R Square in Table 7 indicates that the model explains 74.3% of the variance in Purchase Behavior, with a slight adjustment to 73.7% when the number of predictors is considered.

Fornell-Larcker criterion

The Fornell-Larcker Criterion is used to assess discriminant validity in structural equation modeling (SEM). The diagonal values (in bold) are the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct, and these should be higher than the construct-to-construct correlations to determine discriminant validity.

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Table 9

Construct	IFC	IA	ICU	IT	IE	PB
Influencer's - Follower Congruence	0.885					
Influencer's Attractiveness	0.665	0.834				
Influencer's Content Usefulness	0.560	0.774	0.824			
Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.686	0.670	0.657	0.808		
Influencer's Experience	0.572	0.748	0.728	0.611	0.828	
Purchase Behavior	0.678	0.740	0.701	0.625	0.803	0.816

Path Coefficients

Table 8
Path Coefficients

	Relationship	**Original Sample (O)**	**Standard Deviation (STDEV)**	**T-Statistics (|O/STDEV|)**	**P-Values**	**Results**
H1	Influencer's Experience → Purchase Behavior	0.481	0.048	10.052	0	Supported
H2	Influencer's Trustworthiness → Purchase Behavior	0.004	0.048	0.076	0.939	Not Supported
H3	Influencer's Attractiveness → Purchase Behavior	0.19	0.056	3.423	0.001	Supported
H4	Influencer's Content Usefulness → Purchase Behavior	0.107	0.044	2.421	0.015	Supported
H5	Influencer's - Follower Congruence × Experience → Purchase Behavior	-0.119	0.048	2.485	0.013	Supported
H6	Influencer's - Follower Congruence × Trustworthiness → Purchase Behavior	0.157	0.057	2.769	0.006	Supported
H7	Influencer's - Follower Congruence × Attractiveness → Purchase Behavior	0.075	0.052	1.448	0.148	Not Supported
H8	Influencer's - Follower Congruence × Content Usefulness → Purchase Behavior	-0.094	0.048	1.951	0.051	Supported
H9	Influencer's - Follower Congruence → Purchase Behavior	0.234	0.064	3.677	0	Supported

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The results of the analysis demonstrated in the table 8 confirm that influencer attributes significantly shape consumer purchase behavior. Follower congruence (β = 0.234, p = 0.000), attractiveness (β = 0.190, p = 0.001), content usefulness (β = 0.107, p = 0.015), and experience (β = 0.481, p = 0.000) all positively and significantly impact purchase behavior, with experience emerging as the strongest predictor. In contrast, trustworthiness (β = 0.004, p = 0.939) showed no significant direct effect. Interaction effects reveal that content usefulness (β = -0.094, p = 0.051) and experience (β = -0.119, p = 0.013) moderate the influence of follower congruence, indicating that high content value or influencer expertise may reduce the need for congruence. Conversely, trustworthiness enhances this relationship (β = 0.157, p = 0.006), while attractiveness does not (β = 0.075, p = 0.148). These findings highlight the centrality of expertise, relevance, and strategic content in influencer-driven marketing, while suggesting that trust alone may not suffice without other reinforcing attributes.

Discussion And Conclusion

Discussion

This study provides significant evidence about the role played by influencer marketing tactics in consumers' behavior in the luxury fashion market. Focusing on main influencer characteristics such as experience, credibility, attractiveness, and utility of the information in the study, the findings enhance the understanding regarding the impact online personalities have on purchasing behaviors. The moderating role played by influencer-follower congruence also points to a significant factor that confirms the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Increased use of social media as a vital marketing tool has impacted purchasing behaviors and consumer habits. The luxury fashion industry has witnessed transforming consumer patterns, where brand perceptions arise through the influence played by social media influencers. The study is dependent on a range of factors, including beauty and value given to the material.

One of the most important contributions in the research here is the identification that influencer-follower Congruence is one of the primary moderators that influence the success of influencer marketing campaigns. The study has determined that if there is high congruence between an influencer's persona and the followers' values, trust will be greater, which will translate to higher engagement and heightened purchasing intent. It has very important implications for luxury brands that want to maximize marketing performance.

Furthermore, the study further identifies the way influencer attributes collaborate with consumer Psychology. Attractiveness will draw attention, but the authenticity and expertise of the influencer are the ones that sustain interest and translate to buying behavior. This corroborates the Source Credibility Theory that states that the effectiveness of an influencer is based primarily on how much the influencer conveys trust and expertise.

Luxury brands need to be thoughtful about choosing the influencers that appeal to the desired consumer segment. This means focusing on engagement measures instead of shallow measures like the number of followers. The research also indicates that influencer marketing need not be

purely promotional but has to be infused with aspects like storytelling, consumer learning, and aspirational brand building to be truly effective.

Overall, the study has shown that influencer marketing in the luxury fashion market is highly fluid and requires balance between aesthetic appeal, content relevancy, and authenticity. The brands that are successful in balancing influencer traits with consumer expectations will be likely to see higher engagement and stronger brand loyalty.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the growing literature on influencer marketing in the luxury fashion industry. The study underscores the influencer trait's contribution to consumer purchasing behavior and endorses the role of influencer-follower congruence as a moderating factor. The study concludes that effective influencer marketing is based on a combination of credibility, authenticity, and strategic matching between the consumer and influencer.

The expanding use of digital channels to market has made influencer marketing one of the chief strategies employed by luxury brands. This study provides empirical evidence that traits such as experience, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and helpfulness of the content are crucial to consumer behavior. However, these traits are insufficient to guarantee success; the extent to which the influencer resonates with the audience matters.

One of the conclusions that emerges from this research is that authenticity remains the primary factor that dictates consumer engagement. Consumers will be more engaged with influencers whom they see as truthful and having knowledge, but perhaps not necessarily influencers who merely possess large followings. This has implications for brands that are highly reliant upon the use of celebrity endorsements but don't account for resonance within the audience.

Another important conclusion is the transformation of the role of content usefulness. Consumers currently expect influencers to provide informative and engaging content rather than purely promotional content. Influencers who are positioned to inform consumers about luxury brands, fashion sustainability, and new trends are likely to create stronger consumer relationships. Influencers should be incentivized to create content that enhances the consumer experience rather than promoting.

Apart from that, the study highlights the requirement of truthful marketing. Since influencer marketing falls under closer scrutiny in terms of transparency, brands and influencers should be transparent in revealing sponsored posts to maintain consumer trust. Authenticity is among the strongest drivers to stir consumer interest and if there is an attempt to deceive the audience, reputations will be ruined both for brands and influencers.

Lastly, the study argues that influencer marketing tactics need to be studied and upgraded from time to time to adapt to consumer expectations that change over time. The online platform is very dynamic and fluid in nature and what may work now may not work tomorrow. Investment in

consumer research and data analysis needs to be made to update influencer marketing tactics in line with new trends and changes in consumer behavior.

Overall, influencer marketing in luxury fashion can be an effective tool if strategically used. The research emphasizes that influencer credibility, the utility of the information shared, and compatibility with the consumer are key elements to an effective campaign. As the marketing landscape via the web continues to expand, brands must be quick to adapt and innovative to ensure the best use of influencer collaborations. Future research must explore new phenomena such as AI-facilitated influencer marketing and the role micro-influencers play in engaging the consumer.

Recommendations

Brands must be more data-driven when selecting influencers to collaborate with to promote them. Follower counts and percentages of engagement are the standard measures that are used but there has to be more analysis to ascertain an influencer's influence. More advanced analytic tools have to be employed to measure an influencer's audience traits, authenticity, and the types of interactions. This will enable brands to identify influencers that resonate with the targeted market.

Similarly, authenticity is crucial to gaining consumer trust and brand loyalty. The influencer ought to be encouraged to be honest about endorsements using obviously labeled sponsored content. The influencer ought to be free to use creativity to integrate brand messaging within the framework of the style that appeals to them and their viewers. Highly scripted and promotional copy will be viewed to be unnatural and will not resonate with consumers.

Lastly, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in influencer marketing becomes increasingly important. AI can be employed to identify the right influencers, predict campaign performance, and track consumer sentiment. Virtual influencers, AI-generated virtual personalities, are also gaining popularity and create new opportunities for luxury brands to reach digitally native consumers. The future strategy will need to look to the potential that AI-powered influencer marketing has to bring.

Future Research Directions

Future studies will be required to explore other determinants that affect consumer behavior. Some of the determinants are the long-term impact influencer marketing has on brand loyalty, the effectiveness of sustainability communications within luxury brand marketing, and cultural variations' impact on influencer marketing strategies. Longitudinal research will be able to provide more insight regarding the evolution of influencer marketing.

Ultimately, the future of luxury fashion influencer marketing will be contingent upon continuous innovation and keeping abreast of consumer aspirations. Refinement of selection criteria based on authenticity, the use of new technologies, and ethics will ensure that brands maintain the effectiveness of influencer marketing programs and generate enduring consumer relationships.

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