

The Role of Influencers on Young Consumer Behavior: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

The systematic review approaches the role of influencers on young consumers. It provides clues about the consumption behavior of young people and the characteristics of influence. The methodology follows the PRISMA statement. The Scopus and Web of Science search yielded 432 articles from the last 5 years, and 29 were selected. The significant impact of influencers on young consumer behavior is highlighted, emphasizing the crucial role of social media and influencer marketing, especially influencer credibility. Key topics include the magnitude of influence on young people, the relationship between relationship strength and trust, and the perception of authenticity in collaborations with brands. Disclosure affects perception, highlighting the importance of trust and credibility in influencer marketing campaigns. Brands must carefully evaluate influencers to maintain audience trust in their publications. Future studies could evaluate whether the influence of influencers is long-term or studies with different cultural contexts or how this influence psychologically affects the mental health of young people.

Keywords: youth, human behavior, social media, marketing, social influence

1. Introduction

In the digital and social media era, influencers have become a fundamental part of the marketing strategies for many brands. Influencer marketing has evolved into a multibillion-dollar industry, with young individuals playing a significant role. Although there are ethical concerns about targeting an audience too young to grasp this subtle form of advertising, clear disclosures can help trigger children's awareness of persuasive tactics. However, there is still a lack of deep understanding regarding how influencers exactly impact the purchasing behavior of young consumers (Castonguay, 2022).

The definition of influencers extends beyond celebrities. They are individuals based on social media platforms that are accessible and can easily relate to their audiences. Additionally, influencers can foster a new sense of brand awareness (Barrueta-Pinto et al., 2024) and cultivate a user image suitable for brands and retailers (Lee & Watkins, 2016).

Moreover, businesses need to leverage social media influencers to implement effective marketing campaigns. Daily interaction between companies and customers through social media influencers is crucial for creating effective marketing strategies. The effectiveness of these interactions largely relies on the trust young individuals place in influencers and what they recommend or use. This is the main reason why influencer marketing is so robust nowadays (Febriyantoro, 2020).

Generation Z, comprising a significant portion of young consumers, is characterized by being socially conscious, innovative, constantly seeking change, and inherently comfortable in the virtual world. These characteristics make Generation Z particularly receptive to the influence of influencers on their purchasing behavior (Mueller & Perreault, 2021).

Considering the importance of influencers in the purchasing behavior of young consumers and the need for a profound understanding of this phenomenon, the purpose of this systematic review is to analyze and synthesize existing research

on the role of influencers in the behavior of young consumers. The goal is to identify key factors influencing this process and implications for marketing strategies.

To achieve this objective, a systematic literature review will be conducted using databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. A thorough search for articles published in high-impact academic and scientific journals, preferably classified as Q1 according to Scopus and Web of Science, will be undertaken. Selected articles should address the relationship between influencers and young consumer behavior and provide relevant information on influencing factors.

This systematic review provides an updated understanding of the role of influencers in the purchasing behavior of young consumers, identifying key factors and their practical implications for brands and retailers. It also identifies gaps in existing knowledge and suggests future research.

General Objective.

To determine the impact of social media influencers on the purchasing behavior of young individuals.

Specific Objectives.

1. Analyze the impact of social media on purchasing behavior.
2. Investigate the extent of influencers' influence on young people regarding their purchasing decisions.
3. Determine how young consumers perceive the authenticity of collaborations between influencers and brands.

2. Method

PRISMA Statement

This study utilized the **PRISMA methodology** (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) as the primary framework for systematically reviewing scientific literature. PRISMA's structured approach facilitated a rigorous selection process, ensuring a clear differentiation between relevant and non-relevant studies (Moher et al. 2009; Page et al. 2021). A detailed flowchart was developed to guide the identification and filtration of articles, optimizing the selection of studies most pertinent to the research topic. By establishing well-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, the methodology strengthened the reliability of the findings, ensuring that only high-quality and methodologically sound research was considered.

Initially, **768 articles** were identified, but after applying the PRISMA selection criteria, the dataset was refined to **303 articles** directly related to influencer marketing. This rigorous screening ensured that the final selection included only the most relevant and insightful studies, enhancing the depth and accuracy of the analysis. The implementation of PRISMA not only streamlined the organization of the review but also provided a solid foundation for interpreting the literature, reinforcing the validity of the research conclusions.

For the information selection process, the following user databases were utilized: Scopus and Web of Science (WOS). These databases were chosen due to the relevance of articles related to business, management, and marketing. In total, 432 articles were recorded, with 522 articles found in Scopus and 467 in Web of Science.

The search for articles was conducted using the following keywords: "**Young**" "**consumer behavior**" "**Gen Z**" "**influencer**" and "**marketing**". These phrases or words aimed to yield articles referencing our study's target audience and studies related to the influence of marketing on specific age groups, such as Gen Z, young, or youth. The other phrases, "marketing" and "consumer behavior," helped identify articles focused on the second variable of study, namely consumer behavior or the marketing branch studying consumers. Finally, "influencer" was used to find studies related to influencers or topics related to influencer marketing. In addition to word combinations, the filter for accepting only peer-reviewed articles and those published within the last 5 years (2018-2023) was applied. The following combination of words and operators was used.

- 1) (Young OR Youth OR "(Gen Z)) AND "Consumer Behavior"
- 2) Influencers AND (Young OR Youth) AND "Consumer Behavior"
- 3) "Influencer Marketing" AND "Young" OR "Youth"

The main research question is as follows: *What findings emerge from the published academic literature regarding the role of influencers in the purchasing behavior of young consumers?* The subsequent specific questions are:

- What is the impact of social media on purchasing behavior?
- What is the magnitude of influencers' influence on young consumers regarding their purchasing decisions?
- How do young consumers perceive the authenticity of collaborations between influencers and brands?
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Eligibility

Each of the articles focusing on the young segment were reviewed. In such a way that they are linked to the buying process by their own intention due to the individual characteristics that influence the acceptance or rejection due to the condition of influencers in different social media platforms. However, there are types of young influencers from Generation Z and young adults, and therefore, they tend to have different qualities regarding the buyer's choice and decision directly related to the influencer.

Inclusion

Research related to marketing and consumer behavior was selected to provide an in-depth understanding of how inclusion strategies affect consumers' purchase decisions and attitudes toward products and brands. In addition, differences in the influence exerted by influencers in different age groups were explored, with a special focus on young individuals. This analysis offers insight into attitudes toward inclusion in social and demographic contexts, focusing on young Generation Z and millennials. Articles published between 2018 and 2023 were reviewed to explore inclusion strategies and their impact on marketing, providing valuable insights for inclusive practices in business.

The process of choosing documents subject to this literature review is presented in Figure 1.

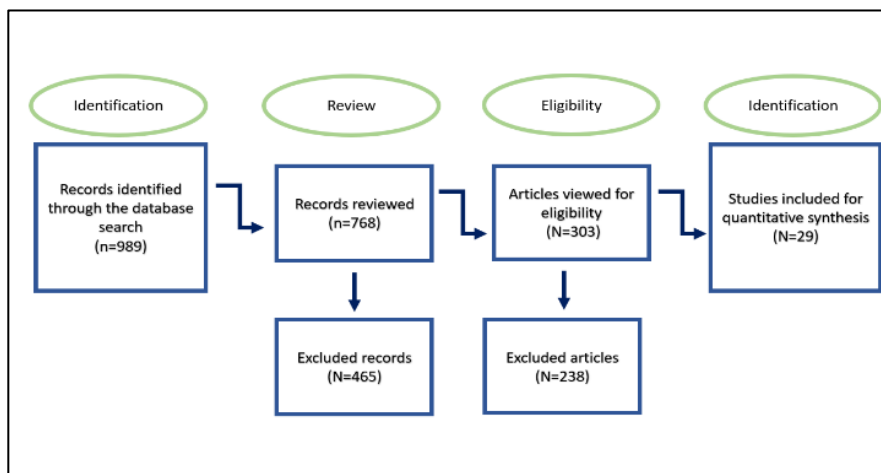


Figure 1. PRISMA methodology

The theories and concepts obtained on the subject from the selected documents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Theories – Concepts

Authors	Theories/ Concepts
Alam et al. (2022)	This study explores the impact of social media influencers (SMIs) in the context of social commerce (s-commerce) platforms in India. Focusing on SMIs' characteristics and their influence on consumer behavior, the research also examines the role of community trust and s-commerce intention in shaping online purchasing intentions.
Ao et al. (2023)	The study conducts a meta-analysis of social media influencers, identifying eight key characteristics. The results indicate a strong association between these characteristics and customer engagement, highlighting the influencer's "entertainment" and "credibility" as influential factors.
Bartosik-Purgat, (2018)	The paper examines the role of social media in electronic word of mouth (e-WoM) at two consumer behavior stages (pre-purchase and post-consumption) across different genders and countries. Key inquiries focus on social media frequency, stage dependency, and gender-based distinctions. Empirical data from 1246 respondents in China, Poland, the USA, and Turkey indicate country-specific variations and gender influence on e-WoM.
Belanche et al. (2021)	This study explores the role of congruence in influencer marketing, focusing on the alignment between influencers, consumers, and sponsored products. Grounded in balance, cognitive dissonance, and congruity theories, the research investigates the impact of high congruence in influencer-consumer and influencer-product relationships on consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions. The study, conducted with 372 followers of a fashion influencer on Instagram, reveals that strong congruence positively influences attitudes, purchase intentions, and product recommendations.
Boerman et al. (2024)	This study addresses the transparency challenge in influencer marketing, focusing on the development and testing of a Kijkwijzer pictogram to clearly signal advertising, specifically influencer marketing, in online videos for 8–18-year-olds. The three-phase project includes a co-creation workshop, a survey to understand minor's associations with pictograms, and a preregistered online experiment evaluating the selected pictograms' effectiveness in enhancing advertising literacy.
(Deng et al., 2023)	The influence of cause marketing on social media and its impact on consumer responses has been an underexplored topic. Based on the principles of equilibrium theory and coherence theory, this study seeks to understand and define the mechanism through which cause marketing in social networks affects consumer behavior and perceptions.
Feng et al. (2021)	This study explores the influence of narratives in influencer marketing on Instagram, analyzing the content of influencers' messages and how it affects the effectiveness of sponsorship disclosure. A combined approach of theme analysis based on machine learning and image analysis based on deep learning is employed to examine the posts of top beauty and fashion influencers targeting young adults.
Gani et al. (2023)	This study examines how social media influence and consumer engagement reinforce interest in organic beauty products and how they impact purchase intention. A total of 213 datasets were collected through an online platform and analyzed using structural equation modeling.
Gil-Quintana et al. (2021)	This study investigates the influence of Realfooders, individuals promoting healthy eating on Instagram, on a substantial follower base. The research analyzes the impact of selected Realfooders on 2,866,980 followers, considering variables such as gender, location, interests, and motivations. The study explores followers' engagement, interaction, and consumption patterns, along with message-related variables in 54 breakfast-themed posts. Results highlight the concentration of Realfooders' followers in Spain, predominantly women aged 18-24 and 35-44, linking food interests to body image and recreational areas. The content generated by Realfooders strategically employs advertising and marketing techniques to spark consumer interest.
Giuffredi-Kähr et al. (2022)	The study investigates how sponsorship disclosure affects evaluations of both the brand and the influencer across various influencer types. Through four experiments, it revealed that sponsored posts from mega influencers increase consumer persuasion knowledge compared to nano influencers. However, this decreases post reliability, negatively impacting brand and influencer evaluations. Interestingly, this indirect effect occurs only when sponsorship is not disclosed.
Grover et al. (2022)	The article explores the influence of social media at the individual level in various contexts, such as organizations, markets, and social environments.
Harms et al. (2022)	This study explores the advertising literacy of young viewers (8-16 years old) regarding influencer-sponsored vlogs. It focuses on two factors: how influencers disclose sponsorships (written/spoken) and parental mediation style (active/restrictive). Findings suggest that a combination of written and spoken sponsorship disclosure, along with active parental mediation, enhances cognitive advertising literacy. Restrictive mediation has a negative impact. Cognitive literacy, in turn, affects the evaluation of the vlogger and the attitude toward the sponsoring brand.
Javed et al. (2022)	This article explores the effects of fashion influencers on consumers' decision-making processes and content outreach on Instagram, utilizing the "dual AISAS model," an upgraded version of the AISAS Model. The research, based on the theoretical grounding of buying behavior and multi-step flow theory, involves both offline and online surveys with 969 Instagram users in Pakistan following digital influencers. The study employs structural equation modeling to analyze data, revealing significant and profound effects on every path in the dual AISAS model. Fashion influencers exert substantial influence, capturing attention, engaging consumers, and achieving broader outreach by increasing consumer intention to share fashion content within private and extended networks.
Johnson et al. (2022)	The first study interviewed leaders from governmental, private, and academic sectors to gather insights on how they address key aspects of social media influence, trust, and armed conflict. The perceptions and approaches of leaders in both technical and non-technical roles were examined regarding the influence of social media and its impact on trust and armed conflict. The second study explores how social media, particularly WeChat, influences the purchasing behavior of Chinese consumers regarding environmentally sustainable apparel (ESA). The Theory of Reasoned Action and the Prototype Willingness Model are employed to investigate how Chinese consumers learn about sustainable purchasing behavior through social media and how peer influence affects their purchase intentions.
Kim & Kim (2021)	Social media influencers are extensively used in marketing due to their ability to gain trust from followers. This study, grounded in social exchange theory and reciprocity principles, explores whether the influencer's characteristics (expertise, authenticity, physical attractiveness, homophily) serve as relational resources in

	forming follower trust. It investigates if trust leads to loyalty and favorable marketing outcomes. Results show that trust mediates the impact of expertise, authenticity, and homophily on loyalty and marketing outcomes. However, physical attractiveness doesn't significantly contribute to building relational trust. The study also confirms the moderating role of relationship strength in authenticity-trust and trust-loyalty linkages.
L. Wang & Lee (2021)	This research delves into the impact of K-beauty social media influencers (SMIs) on Chinese millennial consumers' acceptance of new products. Through an experimental approach considering influencer types, sponsorship display, and product exposure, the study reveals that posts by general public influencers without sponsorship display are most effective. The findings provide valuable insights for marketers navigating the dynamic landscape of beauty influencer marketing.
Mabkhot et al. (2022)	This study in Saudi Arabia investigates how social media influencers (SMIs) impact consumer purchase intentions, with credibility as a mediator. Analyzing data from 312 respondents through partial least squares (PLS-SEM), the research identifies a significant link between SMIs and purchase intentions, highlighting the role of credibility. The paper contributes insights into consumer behavior and suggests future research directions.
Pick (2021)	This study examines the influence of social media influencer marketing on consumer behavior, focusing on perceived influencer credibility (IC) and psychological ownership (PO). Utilizing the source credibility model, organizational behavior concepts, and self-influencer connection, the research aims to understand how influencers impact attitudes toward products, advertising, and purchase intentions. Conducted through an online study on Instagram and YouTube, the research addresses gaps in understanding these mechanisms.
Reinikainen et al. (2020)	It explores how the parasocial relationship (PSR) with the influencer influences the perception of the influencer's credibility and how comments from other audience members moderate this effect
Renchen (2020)	This study evaluates the impact of influencer marketing on fashion consumers, utilizing interviews and surveys. It identifies key factors such as the intensity of influencer engagement and the authenticity of communication.
Santiago et al. (2020)	The study investigates consumer attitudes towards fashion influencers on Instagram, focusing on online perception and trust as determinants of purchase intention.
Schmitt (2012)	The article introduces a consumer brand psychology model that integrates research findings and individual constructs into a comprehensive framework. The model distinguishes three levels of consumer involvement: object-focused, self-focused, and social and five processes: identification, experience, integration, meaning, and connection.
Scholz (2021)	Joachim Scholz addresses the gap in understanding how consumers "consume" influence from social media influencers (SMIs). He employs market ethnography to uncover six distinct actions through which consumers actively incorporate influencer content into their own identity and consumption projects. The study challenges some fundamental assumptions about influencer marketing and introduces the "Influencer Marketing Dartboard" as a conceptual and managerial tool.
Sesar et al. (2022)	This study examines the influence of advertising disclosure on influencer credibility, focusing on the relationship between the type of influencer (celebrity/micro-influencer) and purchase intention. With data from 364 respondents, it was found that disclosed advertising enhances credibility, with influencer credibility being a positive predictor of purchase intention, mediated by brand awareness.
Shepherd et al. (2023)	This study investigates the impact of deviant social media influencers (SMIs) on consumers' purchase of counterfeit goods. Utilizing two UK surveys, it estimates the prevalence of consumers influenced by SMIs in buying counterfeits. The findings reveal that influencer marketing exploits characteristics, making consumers susceptible to deviant SMIs, with higher prevalence in young adults and males.
Tafesse & Wood (2021)	This study examines the relationship between influencers' content and engagement strategy on Instagram and the engagement behavior of their followers. It was found that the number of followers and the volume of content are negatively associated with follower engagement, while the number of accounts followed is positively associated. The findings contribute to understanding how influencers' content and strategy influence follower engagement behavior on Instagram.
Wang et al. (2022)	This study explores the impact of Chinese online influencers' e-commerce live streaming on consumer purchasing intentions. Using the S-O-R model, it analyzes influencers' expertise, bargaining power, post-sales services, and live streaming schedules, revealing their significant influence on consumer trust, impulsivity, and purchasing intentions based on 430 valid questionnaires.
Wu et al. (2023)	This study delves into the influence of social media influencers (SMIs) on sustainable food purchases. Analyzing factors like self-disclosure and environmental concern, the research explores their impact on consumer intentions, mediated by perceived value. Using dual-stage analysis with 628 respondents, it uncovers generational differences and predicts sustainable food purchase intentions with 99.4% accuracy.
Zhao et al. (2019)	The first study interviewed leaders from governmental, private, and academic sectors to gather insights on how they address key aspects of social media influence, trust, and armed conflict. The perceptions and approaches of leaders in both technical and non-technical roles were examined regarding the influence of social media and its impact on trust and armed conflict. The second study explores how social media, particularly WeChat, influences the purchasing behavior of Chinese consumers regarding environmentally sustainable apparel (ESA). The Theory of Reasoned Action and the Prototype Willingness Model are employed to investigate how Chinese consumers learn about sustainable purchasing behavior through social media and how peer influence affects their purchase intentions.

Note: In this table is it described all the articles' theories and concepts.

Exclusion

Sources have been specifically selected, excluding Q4 journal articles and other types such as conferences and editorials, to focus only on rigorously reviewed scientific studies. The exclusion of articles classified as Q4 in Scopus within the selection criteria responds to the need to guarantee the quality, methodological rigor and scientific relevance of the studies included in the systematic review. Articles in Q4 journals usually belong to the lowest quartile in terms of impact and citation within their discipline, which implies that they may have lower academic visibility, less rigorous peer review and less influence in the scientific community compared to articles in higher quartiles (Q1, Q2 and Q3). However, it is

recognized that this decision may introduce a selection bias, since excluding Q4 studies could omit relevant or innovative research that, despite its classification, contributes significantly to the field of study. To mitigate this potential bias, the article selection process was based on recognized databases such as Scopus and Web of Science, applying strict inclusion criteria in terms of methodology and thematic relevance. In this way, the systematic review prioritizes the validity and reliability of the sources, ensuring that the findings are based on studies with a consolidated academic impact.

Social media-related topics that did not deal with youth were excluded, and exploration was limited to articles on influencer marketing that dealt with consumer behavior. This allowed us to include only 29 relevant articles, discarding those that did not fit the objective of understanding how marketing strategies influence consumer perception and actions, and how exclusion is perpetuated in specific business contexts. The articles are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Articles included in the systematic review

Authors	Subjects			Influence on Young Group ^a	Study Type				Year	Country
	MI Strategy	Social media			Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed	Review		
Bartosik-Purgat (2018)		X		X					2018	China, the USA and Poland, Turkey
Renchen (2020)	X	X							2020	German
Zhao et al. (2019)	X	X	X	X					2019	China
Reinikainen et al.(2020)	X		X				X		2020	Finlandia
Santiago et al. (2020)	X			X					2020	Portugal
Gani et al. (2023)		X	X	X					2023	Japan
Ao et al. (2023)	X	X		X					2023	China
Kim & Kim (2021)		X	X	X					2021	USA
Tafesse & Wood (2021)		X		X					2021	United Arab Emirates
Feng et al. (2021)	X	X	X	X					2021	USA
Scholz (2021)	X		X		X				2021	Canada
Deng et al. (2023)		X		X					2023	China
Belanche et al. (2021)	X	X		X					2021	España
Gil-Quintana et al. (2021)	X	X	X	X					2021	España
Shen (2021)	X	X		X					2021	China
Javed et al. (2022)	X		X	X					2022	Pakistan
Wang & Lee (2021)	X	X	X	X					2021	China
Grover et al. (2022)		X				X		X	2022	India
Harms et al. (2022)	X	X	X				X		2022	Netherlands
Giuffredi-Kähr et al. (2022)		X	X	X					2022	Switzerland
Sesar et al. (2022)		X	X	X					2022	Croatia
Johnson et al. (2022)		X				X			2022	USA
Alam et al. (2022)	X	X		X					2022	India
Wu et al. (2022)	X	X				X			2022	China
Wang et al. (2022)	X			X					2022	China
Mabkhot et al. (2022)	X	X	X	X					2022	United Arab Emirates
Wu et al. (2023)	X	X		X					2023	China
Shepherd et al. (2023)	X	X		X					2023	United Kingdom
Boerman et al. 2024)	X	X					X		2024	Netherlands

Note: The table provides a detailed overview of the topics addressed in each article, the type of study, and the year of publication.

3. Results and Discussion

In the review of the 29 articles, it could be observed that there is a general consensus that influencers have an impact on the behavior of their followers. It was also found that the authors have different approaches to determine this influence and other variables that could modify the behavior of young consumers. This study analyzed the data considering mainly the knowledge that the literature provides us on the behavior of young consumers influenced by influencers. However, the literature generally covers all consumers without differentiating primarily by a young age group.

Likewise, it can be seen that the role of influencers is actually part of a marketing strategy known as Influencer Marketing, and influencers also have a direct relationship with social networks, which are the channels of communication between influencers and their young consumers.

On the impact of social networks on purchasing behavior, the literature supports the idea that social media, especially through influencers, significantly influences the behavior of young consumers. Influencer Marketing (IM) emerges as a key response to advertising saturation and user fatigue in the digital environment (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Kietzmann et al., 2011). Instant messaging strategies, especially through influencers, play a crucial role in the way young consumers interact with purchase information. Some results from the articles will be provided in Table 2.

On the credibility of influencers (CI) and its impact, the perception of influencer credibility acts as a significant criterion that determines purchase intention, attitude toward advertising, and the product. The perceived credibility of influencers serves as a tool for conveying convincing messages (Pick, 2021). At the same time, Ao et al. (2023) studied 8 characteristics such as homophily, experience, product congruence, entertainment value, information value, attractiveness; and among them, trustworthiness and credibility showed a moderate to high correlation with young consumer loyalty or relationship.

With respect to the type of influential person, the literature also shows that there were results mentioning the difference in the influence or effect that influencers have on consumers based on their size. "Nano" influencers (type of social media influencer who has a relatively small audience, generally between 1,000 and 10,000 followers) have a closer relationship with their followers compared to large influencers. Additionally, there is a greater trust in the advertising of nano influencers than in that of large influencers (Giuffredi-Kähr et al., 2022). Furthermore, experience, authenticity, and homophily are positively related to trust, influencing influencer loyalty (Giuffredi-Kähr et al., 2022; Kim & Kim, 2021).

Social networks have a significant impact on individuals by satisfying their desires and facilitating connection, exchange, and access to information, empowering better job performance. In different contexts, such as the organizational one, social networks function as a virtual marketplace, promoting customer participation and retention, as well as innovation through community collaboration. In the market context, they are used for campaigns, promotions, and advertising, while in the social environment, they allow self-expression and social connections, influencing reputation. Theoretical contributions introduce the phenomenon of social media influence, amalgamating theories such as uses and gratifications, social capital, social cognitive, acculturation, and diffusion of innovation. The satisfaction of needs, the construction of social capital, and the importance of learning through observation in this context are highlighted. Practical implications include best practices for various entities, such as careful management of social perception in the organizational context, the evaluation of user-generated content for producers and retailers, and the strategic use of social media by governments and non-governmental organizations to refute rumors and monitor discussions on national or global agendas (Grover et al., 2022).

The influencers exert a significant influence on the purchasing decision of the young generation, building credibility through authentic relationships (Belanche et al., 2021; Shepherd et al., 2023). There are even strategies to make collaborations between brands and companies transparent. As the use of pictograms is proposed, the use of pictograms can also help younger individuals identify commercial content (Boerman et al., 2024).

The strength of the relationship between the influencer and the follower is identified as a critical variable in the influencer marketing process. The literature consistently emphasizes that trust is a crucial attribute for the success of influencer marketing strategies (Kim & Kim, 2021; Sesar et al., 2022).

Coco & Eckert (2020) also point out that transparency in influencer advertising enhances the relationship influencers have with the brand. It is noteworthy that in their study, women between 20 and 30 years of age engage with influencers via social media. The underlying theory explaining this behavior is social exchange. They further mention that the products they had purchased were supported by the perception of authentic endorsement from influencers.

Authenticity in collaborations between influencers and brands is a prominent theme. Despite the disclosure of sponsored relationships, authenticity in influencer marketing remains powerful, posing challenges to transparency. Educational strategies, such as "advertising literacy," could enhance the perception of authenticity (Evans et al., 2017; Friestad & Wright, 1994; Harms et al., 2022; Jung & Heo, 2019; Livingstone & Helsper, 2006).

Tafesse & Wood (2021) state that engagement behavior can increase depending on the strategy and content. They also note that followers tend to follow authentic and genuine content compared to what may appear promotional. Additionally, not only

authenticity but also trust or credibility is a positive factor in influencer marketing (Kim & Kim, 2021; Sesar et al., 2022). These influencer characteristics positively impact sponsors' marketing campaigns. For example, followers of influencers in the makeup, beauty, and women's care niche learn from or imitate the actions of influencers, and they even end up purchasing products that their influencers use or recommend (Belanche et al., 2021; Scholz, 2021). Consequently, the disclosure of the material relationship between the influencer and the brand affects how young consumers perceive the authenticity and trustworthiness of the promoted post. This influences brand evaluations and sympathy toward the influencer (Giuffredi-Kähr et al., 2022).

Culture plays a fundamental role in influencer marketing, as it shapes the perceptions, values and behaviors of consumers in different countries. In the context of the studies discussed in Table 2 of the paper, it is noted that research has been conducted in diverse regions, including China, the United States, India, Spain, Pakistan and the Netherlands, among others, reflecting the influence of different cultural orientations. In collectivist societies, such as China and India, where group cohesion and social influence play a significant role in decision-making, influencers tend to have a stronger impact when they reinforce values of community and belonging. In these environments, influencers' recommendations may be perceived as validated by the social group, increasing trust and the likelihood of product adoption. In contrast, in more individualistic societies, such as the United States and the Netherlands, consumers tend to prioritize authenticity and autonomy in their purchasing choices, implying that the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends to a greater extent on the perceived credibility and congruence between the influencer and their audience. These differences suggest that influencer marketing strategies should adapt to prevailing cultural values, emphasizing affiliation and group norms in collectivist contexts, while in individualistic environments authenticity, personal experience and consumer differentiation should be emphasized.

The systematic review on the role of influencers has revealed an extensive and varied body of research exploring the impact of influencers on the behavior of young consumers and the strategies used by brands. In this context, it highlights the crucial role influencers play in generating credibility through authentic relationships with their followers, influencing purchasing decisions. Factors such as the authenticity and affinity of influencers emerge as critical elements that amplify their influence on young consumers' decisions, especially in younger generations.

To strengthen the systematic review, it is recommended to broaden the search to other databases and consider the inclusion of restricted-access articles to enrich the diversity of perspectives in the field of IM. Furthermore, a deeper exploration of specific subtopics, such as the measurement of authenticity in IM and persuasive strategies employed by influencers, is suggested. Future research on the relationship between influencers and their followers on each social media platform, acknowledging that interaction on each platform is not uniform for everyone, is also proposed. Effective methods to enhance transparency should be investigated to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the current state of the literature on IM.

Information on various social media platforms can significantly increase young consumers' willingness to purchase certain products.

4. Conclusions

The primary purpose of this systematic review was to assess the impact of influencers on the purchasing behavior of young individuals, and the findings reveal a general consensus on their influence.

First, it highlights that social media, particularly through influencers, exert a significant impact on the behavior of young consumers. Influencer Marketing (IM) strategies are fundamental to young consumer interaction with purchase information, where influencer credibility emerges as a crucial criterion in purchase intent and attitude towards advertising and product. The literature supports the effectiveness of these strategies, especially when incorporating attributes such as trust and authenticity of influencers in their advertising posts. A relationship is observed between the size of influencers and their impact on followers, with greater perceived trust in "nano" influencers, whose posts are seen as more authentic compared to those with a large number of followers. Brands are suggested to carefully evaluate influencers, as the perception of a lack of genuine connection can affect the public's trust in their posts.

Additionally, the specific influence of influencers on young people is emphasized, as they tend to mimic lifestyles and consider acquiring products promoted by their influencers. The susceptibility of this demographic to influencer advertising is highlighted, attributable to the aforementioned trust and authenticity. Some researchers propose strategies to increase ad transparency, such as the use of pictograms or other icons indicating non-organic content, aligning with the advertising literacy strategy.

Future lines of research on the impact of influencers on young people's purchasing behavior can be oriented in several key directions. First, it is recommended to delve deeper into the 'role of authenticity and credibility' of influencers in young consumers' decision making, assessing how these factors affect the perception of trust and long-term purchase intention. For individuals who perform as influencers, it would be relevant to explore optimal personal brand management strategies, identifying practices that strengthen their credibility without compromising perceived authenticity. From the perspective of young consumers, future research could analyze the "psychological and emotional impact of influencer marketing," particularly on identity construction and financial decision-making in digital environments. Given that not all influencers act responsibly or

verify the veracity of the products or services they promote, it is critical to investigate the risks associated with misinformation and potential negative consequences on young consumers. Finally, for organizations that employ influencers in their marketing strategies, it is suggested to study the effectiveness of campaigns in different cultural contexts and digital platforms, as well as the development of metrics to more accurately measure the return on investment (ROI) of collaborations with influencers. Addressing these areas will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and will allow the development of more effective and ethical strategies in the digital marketing arena.

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Authors contributions

Sample: Dr. MBP, Prof. MVC and Prof. CRB were responsible for study design and revising. Prof. JCD y LAP was responsible for data collection. Prof. MVC and Prof. JCD drafted the manuscript and Prof. MVC and CRB revised it. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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