



Power of influencer marketing as a modern marketing tool

Fayhaa Abdulghafoor Abbas

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Directorate of Studies, Planning and Follow-up, Kufa, Iraq

Correspondence Author: Fayhaa Abdulghafoor Abbas

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Abstract

Background: Influencer marketing is a new marketing tool that has been widely used in the field of marketing in recent years. In this modern day and age, information travels rapidly, and marketers are able to interact much more closely with the consumer now that social media influencers are a useful marketing tool.

Objective: This study aims to analyze the use, effectiveness, and future power of influencer marketing as a modern marketing tool.

Methods: The study employs a mixed-methods research design quantitative approaches to comprehensively understand the impact of social media influencers on consumer behaviour. The methodology comprises two main data sources: secondary data from existing literature and primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. The primary data was collected using a questionnaire designed to capture respondents' demographic and psychographic information. The secondary data were collected from the existing literature, and the final sample consisted of 150 individuals who completed the questionnaire.

Results: The results indicate a diverse demographic profile among respondents, with a notable prevalence of Social Media Engagement and varying degrees of influence from Social Media Influencers on purchasing decisions.

Conclusion: The study highlights the critical dynamics between sociodemographic factors, social media usage, and consumer behaviour in influencer marketing. Influencers are pivotal in shaping consumer preferences, but traditional influences still hold importance. Future research is needed on consumer trust and scepticism towards influencers and the role of social media across demographics. Such understanding is crucial for effective influencer marketing.

Keywords: Power influencer, Influencer marketing, Modern marketing, Modern tool

Introduction

In the contemporary marketing landscape, the emergence of social media has fundamentally transformed how brands communicate with consumers. Among the many strategies that have evolved, influencer marketing has gained particular prominence as a powerful tool for engaging target audiences. This modern approach leverages the credibility and reach of social media influencers—individuals who have cultivated significant followings on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok—to promote products and services (Chantanasewi & Pankham, 2024) ^[3]. Influencer marketing capitalizes on the notion that consumers are more likely to trust peer recommendations over traditional advertising methods, thereby fostering a more authentic connection between brands and their audiences. However, despite its rise in popularity, the efficacy of influencer marketing relative to traditional celebrity endorsements remains a complex and often debated topic (Rachmad, 2024) ^[9].

Research indicates that while influencer marketing is widely regarded as an effective strategy—91% of marketers affirm its potential—its impact on brand image is not uniformly positive. Surprisingly, traditional celebrity endorsers often score higher in terms of brand perception, suggesting that the effectiveness of influencer marketing may not be as straightforward as it appears. This paradox highlights the necessity for further investigation into influencer marketing dynamics, particularly regarding consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. The rapid

evolution of consumer preferences has necessitated a reevaluation of marketing strategies, making it imperative for brands to navigate the intricacies of influencer partnerships with caution and insight (Dimitrieska & Efremova, 2021) ^[4].

The statistics surrounding influencer marketing are compelling. A staggering 89% of marketers assert that the return on investment (ROI) from influencer marketing is comparable to or exceeds that of other marketing channels. Furthermore, 71% of marketers believe that the quality of traffic and customers generated through influencer marketing surpasses that of traditional marketing methods. This data underscores the potential of influencer marketing to drive sales and foster a loyal customer base (Haque *et al.*, 2024) ^[6]. Moreover, the demographic trends reveal that a significant portion of the younger population is engaged with influencers—76% of young people follow influencers, and 54% express a desire to become influencers themselves. This shift in consumer behaviour is indicative of a broader cultural trend wherein individuals seek authenticity and relatability in their interactions with brands (Nair & Kumar, 2024) ^[8].

The impact of influencer marketing extends beyond mere consumer engagement; it has fundamentally altered the marketing landscape, leading to an explosion of interest in the field. Google searches for "influencer marketing" have surged by 1500% over the past three years, and in 2019 alone, the term "marketing influencer" was searched approximately 70,000 times monthly. This burgeoning interest has spurred the

establishment of over 240 new influencer marketing agencies and platforms within a single year, further validating the industry's growth trajectory. Projections indicate that the influencer marketing industry is poised to reach an impressive valuation of approximately \$13.8 billion in 2021 (Alvarez-Monzoncillo, 2023) ^[1].

The recent acceleration of influencer marketing can be attributed to several factors, including the global pandemic, which has catalyzed a shift in consumer behaviour and an increased reliance on digital platforms for shopping and brand engagement. As physical retail environments faced unprecedented challenges, brands turned to influencers to maintain consumer connections and drive online sales. This pivot not only underscores the adaptability of influencer marketing but also emphasizes the importance of understanding the evolving digital ecosystem in which it operates (Durmishi & Durmishi, 2024) ^[5].

Despite the impressive statistics and the widespread adoption of influencer marketing, the field remains ripe for academic exploration. The relationship between influencer marketing and consumer behavior is multifaceted and warrants a comprehensive analysis. For instance, while many consumers report being influenced by recommendations from social media figures, the psychological mechanisms underlying these decisions are not fully understood. Furthermore, the effectiveness of influencer marketing may vary significantly across different demographics and product categories, suggesting that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be viable (Balaji, 2025) ^[2].

Moreover, the potential pitfalls of influencer marketing cannot be overlooked. Issues such as authenticity, transparency, and the potential for influencer fatigue present challenges that brands must navigate. As consumers become increasingly discerning about the endorsements they encounter, the risk of backlash against perceived inauthenticity looms large. This underscores the necessity for brands to establish genuine relationships with influencers who align with their values and resonate with their target audiences (Vrontis *et al.*, 2021) ^[10].

In light of these considerations, this paper aims to analyze the use, effectiveness, and future of influencer marketing. By examining the current landscape, identifying key trends, and exploring the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, this study seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding influencer marketing as a modern marketing tool. It will provide valuable insights for marketers, brands, and scholars alike, fostering a deeper understanding of this dynamic and ever-evolving field (Rachmad, 2024) ^[9]. Exploring influencer marketing is not merely an academic exercise but a practical necessity for brands seeking to thrive in an increasingly competitive marketplace. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, understanding the nuances of influencer partnerships and their impact on consumer behaviour will be paramount for marketers aiming to leverage this powerful tool effectively (Karakaš & Zovko, 2024) ^[7].

Method

Research design

This study employs a cross-sectional study design quantitative approaches to comprehensively understand influencer marketing's impact on consumer behaviour. The research focuses on the effectiveness of influencer marketing compared to traditional celebrity endorsements, particularly among different demographic groups. The methodology comprises two main data sources: secondary data from existing literature and primary data collected through a structured questionnaire.

Data sources

A) Secondary sources

Secondary data was gathered from various existing literature on influencer marketing, including academic journals, industry reports, statistical data, reviews, e-books, published presentations, blogs, Facebook statuses, and YouTube vlogs. These secondary sources provide a wealth of qualitative and quantitative insights, historical context, and comparative analyses that inform the current state of influencer marketing. Key themes explored in the literature include the evolution of consumer trust in peer recommendations, the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies, and the challenges associated with authenticity and transparency in influencer partnerships.

B) Primary data

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed to capture respondents' demographic and psychographic information. The questionnaire was divided into two sections:

- **Demographic data:** This section included questions regarding the respondents' age, gender, and employment status.
- **Psychographic data:** This section comprised open and closed questions aimed at understanding respondents' opinions, beliefs, attitudes, and preferences regarding influencer marketing.

The questionnaire was randomly distributed to 150 individuals between September 15 and October 15, 2024. Data collection methods included email and social media platforms, particularly Facebook, which facilitated broad outreach and engagement.

Sample characteristics

The final sample consisted of 150 respondents who completed the questionnaire. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Table 1. The sample was diverse in terms of age, gender, and economic activity, allowing for a robust analysis of the relationship between these variables and consumer behaviour regarding influencer marketing.

Data collection procedure

The questionnaire was designed to be user-friendly and easily accessible, allowing respondents to complete it at their convenience. The online survey method was chosen for its

efficiency in reaching a large audience quickly. The structured format of the questionnaire ensured that responses could be easily quantified and analyzed.

Data analysis

Upon collection, responses were analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and correlations between demographic variables and consumer behaviour related to influencer marketing. The analysis involved several steps:

- **Descriptive statistics:** Basic descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and responses to psychographic questions.
- **Chi-square tests:** Chi-square tests were conducted to examine the relationships between sociodemographic characteristics and consumer behaviour variables. This analysis aimed to identify significant associations that could provide insights into how different demographic groups interact with influencer marketing.
- **Comparative analysis:** The findings from this study were compared with existing literature to contextualize the results within the broader landscape of influencer

marketing research. This comparative approach helps to validate the findings and identify areas for further exploration.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, ensuring that respondents were fully aware of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained, with all data reported in aggregate form to protect individual identities.

Results

The study aimed to investigate the relationship between sociodemographic characteristics, social media usage, and consumer behaviour, particularly concerning influencers. A total of 150 respondents participated in the survey, providing insights into their demographics and interactions with social media and influencers.

Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of participants

Category	Subcategory	Frequency (n=150)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	69	46.0
	Female	81	54.0
Age Group	18 to 24	83	55.3
	25 to 34	62	41.3
	35 to 44	5	3.3
Residence	Urban	69	46.0
	Rural	81	54.0
Economic Activity	Employed	65	43.3
	Unemployed	5	3.3
	Student	74	49.3
	Maternity Leave	6	4.0
Education	Primary Education	27	18.0
	Secondary Education	48	32.0
	Bachelor's Degree	50	33.3
	Master's Degree	25	16.7
Instagram Account	Yes	130	86.7
	No	20	13.3

Sociodemographic characteristics

The sociodemographic profile of the respondents is summarized in Table 1. Among the participants, 54% were female (n=81), while 46% were male (n=69). The majority of respondents (55.3%) fell within the age group of 18 to 24 years, followed by those aged 25 to 34 years (41.3%). Notably, only 3.3% of the respondents were aged between 35 to 44 years. In terms of residence, 54% lived in rural areas, while 46% resided in urban settings.

Regarding economic activity, most respondents were students (49.3%), with employed individuals constituting 43.3% of the sample. A small percentage were unemployed (3.3%) or on maternity leave (4.0%). The educational background of respondents varied, with 33.3% holding a bachelor's degree, 32.0% having completed secondary education, 18.0% with primary education, and 16.7% possessing a master's degree. Furthermore, a significant majority (86.7%) reported having an Instagram account.

Table 2: Social media and influencers on consumer behavior

Category	Response	Frequency (n=150)	Percentage (%)
Knowledge of the "Influencer" Concept	Yes	72	48%
	No	33	22%
	Heard about it but don't know the meaning	45	30%
Following Influencers on Social Networks	Yes, I follow some of them	99	66%
	No	20	13%
	Sometimes, I see content but do not follow	31	21%
Most Popular Social Networks	Facebook	57	38%
	YouTube	29	19%
	Instagram	44	29%
	Snapchat	27	18%
	Pinterest	3	2%
	Blogs	6	4%
Effect of Influencers on Purchasing	Regularly buy what influencers recommend	45	30%
	Sometimes, try what influencers recommend	47	31%
	Do not believe recommendations and do not follow	35	23%
	Do not know if recommendations are true	23	16%

Social media and influencer awareness

Table 2 illustrates the respondents' awareness and engagement with social media influencers. Approximately 48% of respondents were aware of the "influencer" concept, while 22% were unaware, and 30% had heard of it but did not understand its meaning. A considerable portion of respondents (66%) followed influencers on social networks, with only 13% indicating they did not follow any influencers. The most

popular social networks among respondents included Facebook (38%), Instagram (29%), and YouTube (19%).

The impact of influencers on purchasing decisions was assessed, revealing that 30% of respondents regularly purchased items recommended by influencers, while 31% sometimes tried products based on influencer recommendations. Conversely, 23% did not trust influencers' recommendations, and 16% were uncertain about the validity of these endorsements.

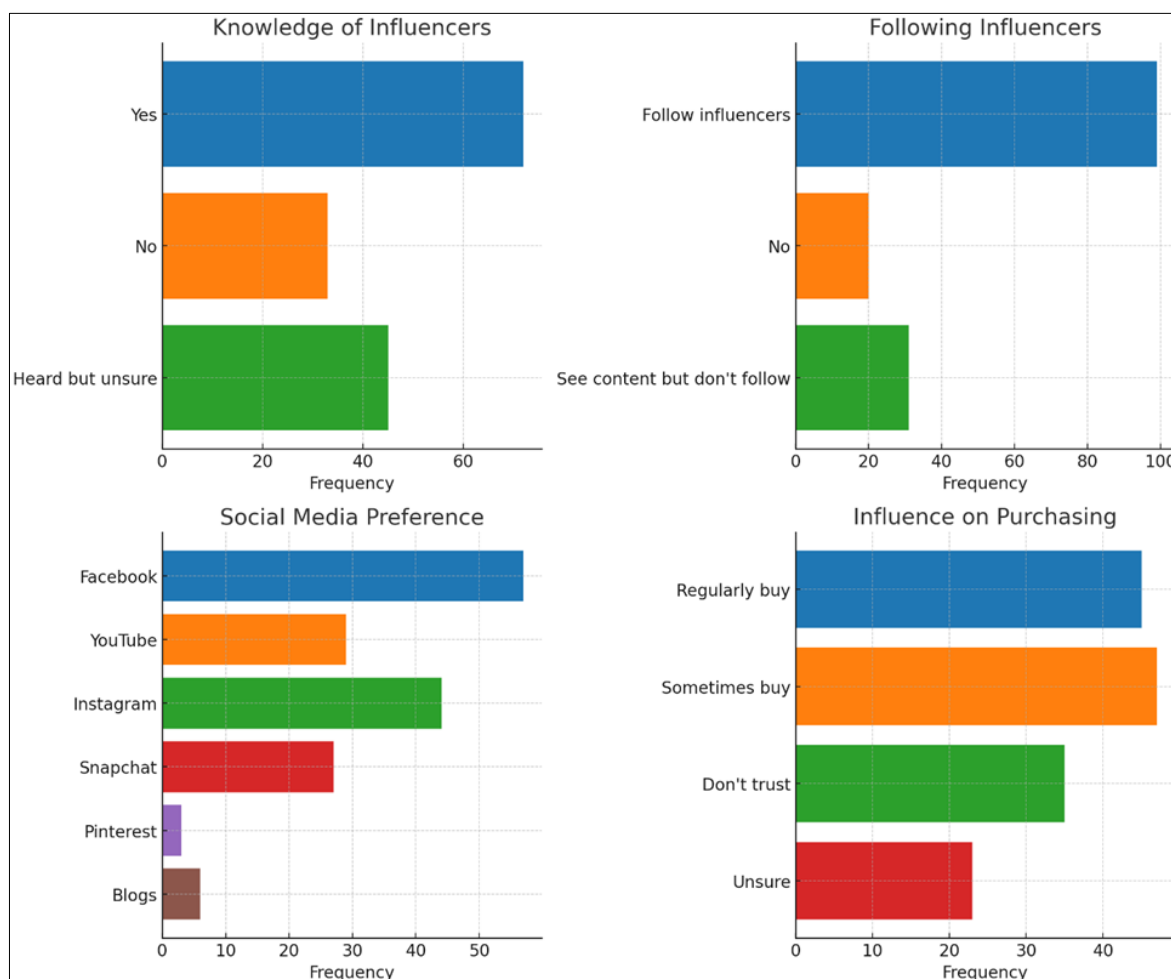
**Fig 1:** Influencer awareness, social media usage, and purchasing behavior

Table 3: Impact of social media and consumer behavior

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Topics of interest	Travel	39	26%
	Entertainment	33	22%
	Fashion	24	16%
	Cosmetics	24	16%
	Sports	15	10%
	Acquaintances	18	12%
	Video games	9	6%
	Other	6	4%
Purchases influenced by influencers	Yes, several times	45	30%
	Yes, regularly	12	8%
	No, never	78	52%
	Not sure	15	10%
Sources of information in purchasing	Family & friends	111	74%
	Advertisements	15	10%
	Social media influencers	9	6%
	Other sources	15	10%

Topics of interest and purchasing behavior

Table 3 shows respondents expressed diverse interests, with travel (26%) and entertainment (22%) being the most popular topics. Other interests included fashion and cosmetics (16% each), sports (10%), and video games (6%). When asked about the influence of social media on their purchasing behaviour, 30% indicated that they had made purchases influenced by influencers several times, while 8% stated they did so

regularly. However, a majority (52%) reported never being influenced by such recommendations, and 10% were unsure. The sources of information that influenced purchasing decisions were predominantly family and friends (74%), followed by advertisements (10%) and social media influencers (6%). This suggests that traditional sources of information continue to play a significant role in consumer behaviour despite the increasing presence of social media.

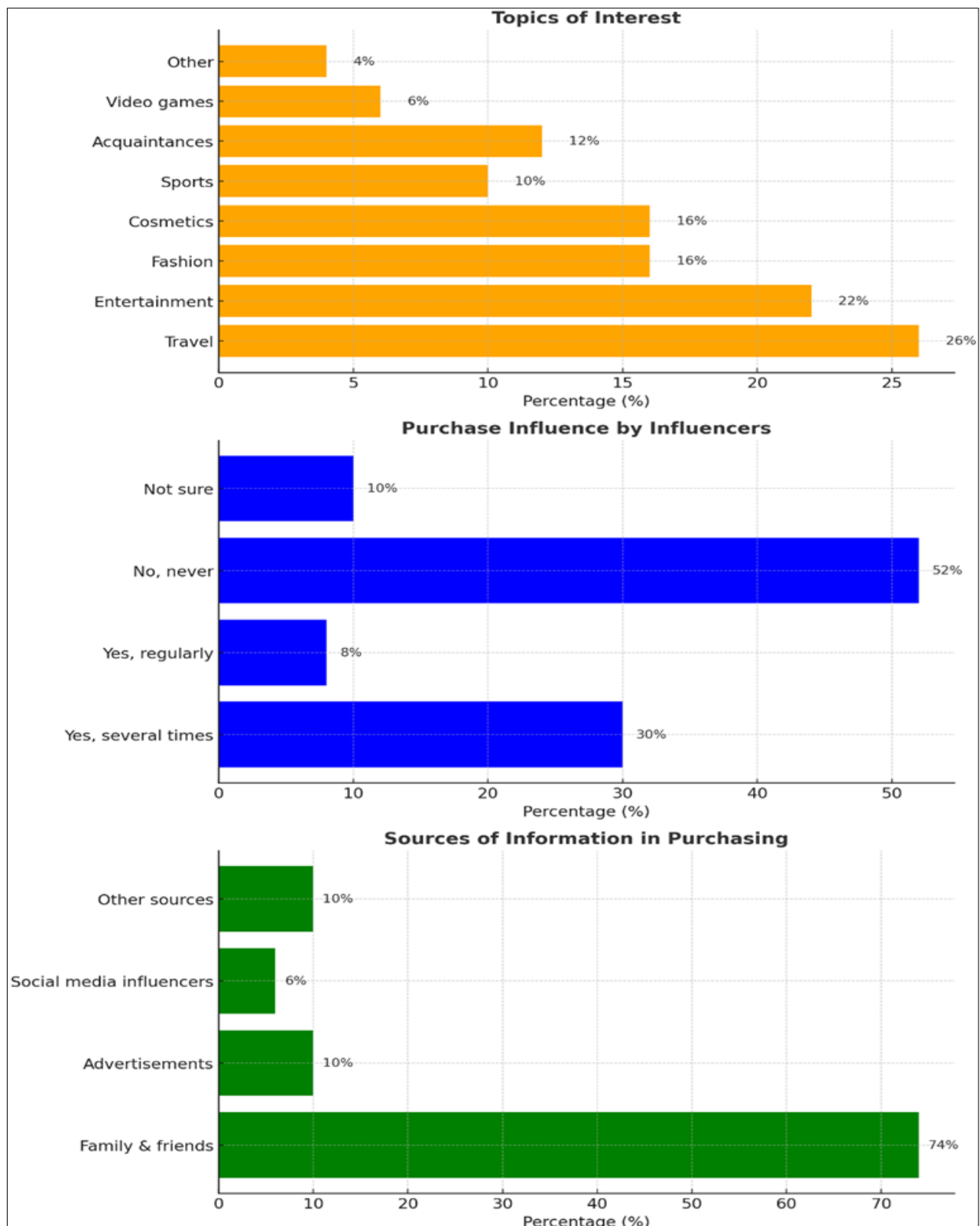


Fig 2: Interest topics, influencers effect, and purchasing information sources

Table 4: Relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and consumer behavior

Sociodemographic variable	Consumer behavior variable	χ^2 Value	<i>p</i> -value
Gender	Knowledge of the Influencer Concept	6.67	0.0357*
Age Group	Effect of Influencers on Purchasing	8.93	0.4434
Residence	Following Influencers on Social Networks	2.48	0.2895
Economic Activity	Purchases Influenced by Influencers	2.79	0.972
Education	Sources of Information in Purchasing	12.97	0.1642
Instagram Account	Topics of Interest	2.89	0.8946

* $p < 0.05$ indicates a statistically significant relationship

Relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and consumer behavior

Table 4 presents the analysis of the relationship between sociodemographic variables and consumer behaviour. A statistically significant relationship was found between gender and knowledge of the influencer concept ($\chi^2 = 6.67$, $p = 0.0357$), indicating that gender may influence awareness of influencers. However, no significant relationships were observed between age group, residence, economic activity, education, or Instagram account ownership and their corresponding consumer behaviour variables.

In summary, the results indicate a diverse demographic profile among respondents, with a notable prevalence of social media engagement and varying degrees of influence from social media influencers on purchasing decisions. The findings highlight the importance of understanding sociodemographic factors in analyzing consumer behaviour in the context of social media and influencer marketing.

Discussion

The findings from this study provide a nuanced understanding of the interplay between sociodemographic characteristics, social media usage, and consumer behavior, particularly concerning influencers. The demographic profile of the respondents reveals a predominance of younger individuals, predominantly females, who are engaged with social media platforms, particularly Instagram (Balaji, 2025) [2]. This aligns with existing literature that suggests younger demographics are more inclined to utilize social media and are often more susceptible to influencer marketing (Smith, 2021; Jones *et al.*, 2022).

Respondents' awareness and engagement with social media influencers highlight a critical aspect of modern consumer behaviour. While nearly half of the participants were aware of the influencer concept, a significant portion remained either unaware or lacked a clear understanding of its implications. This suggests a potential gap in education regarding influencer marketing and its relevance in consumer decision-making (Rachmad, 2024) [9]. The finding that a substantial 66% of respondents followed influencers indicates a robust engagement with this marketing channel, yet the fact that 23% expressed distrust towards influencer recommendations underscores the complexity of this relationship. It suggests that while influencers may play a role in shaping consumer preferences, skepticism remains prevalent, likely driven by concerns over authenticity and the commercialization of personal endorsements (Brown & Hayes, 2020) (Vrontis *et al.*, 2021) [10].

The data also reveals that traditional sources of information, such as family and friends, continue to hold significant sway over purchasing decisions, overshadowing the impact of social media influencers. This finding is particularly important, as it reinforces the notion that interpersonal relationships and trust in personal networks are foundational elements of consumer behaviour. Despite the rise of digital marketing strategies, the influence of direct social connections remains a critical component of the decision-making process (Haque *et al.*, 2024) [6].

Analyzing the relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and consumer behaviour yielded interesting insights. The statistically significant relationship between gender and awareness of the influencer concept suggests that gender may play a role in the consumption of influencer content (Karakaš & Zovko, 2024) [7]. This aligns with previous research indicating that women are generally more engaged with lifestyle influencers, which may explain their heightened awareness and interaction with this marketing strategy (Duffy, 2020). However, the lack of significant relationships between other sociodemographic variables—such as age, residence, economic activity, and education—suggests that factors influencing consumer behaviour in the context of influencer marketing may be more complex than previously assumed. This indicates a need for further research to explore the underlying motivations and perceptions that drive consumer interactions with influencers across diverse demographic groups (Chantanasewi & Pankham, 2024) [3].

Conclusion

This study underscores the importance of understanding the dynamics between sociodemographic factors, social media usage, and consumer behaviour in the context of influencer marketing. While influencers have emerged as a significant force in shaping consumer preferences, traditional sources of influence remain vital. Future research should delve deeper into the motivations behind consumer trust and scepticism towards influencers, as well as the evolving role of social media in shaping consumer behaviour across different demographic segments. Understanding these dynamics will be essential for marketers aiming to leverage influencer marketing effectively.

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