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How the Influencer Characteristics Impact Purchase Intentions: The Brand Image Mediation Effect

Esraa M. Alamayreh[1], Khalid Fadhil[2], Nash'at Issam[3]

Abstract

In this era, influencers have prompted organizations to restructure their marketing strategies through incorporating them as an effective strategy in the marketing campaigns. This study aims to understand how influencers influence purchase intention of customers through exploring the mediating role of brand image between influencer characteristics and customer purchase intention. Using a sample of 281 customers, a quantitative approach was utilized to test the proposed hypotheses. The data collected was analyzed using SEM-PLS. The findings revealed that all the study hypotheses are statistically supported. Specifically, the study showed that influencers positively the purchasing decision of customers and on the brand image. In addition, the study also revealed that brand image plays a mediating role in the relationship between influencers and purchase intentions. Such findings provide valuable insights for decision makers about the importance of influencers in shaping the perception and purchasing decisions of customers.

Keywords: *Influencers, Influencers Characteristics, Brand Image, Purchase Intention.*

Introduction

The pervasive influence of social media has transformed the marketing landscape, with influencer marketing emerging as a powerful strategy for connecting with consumers (Lisun et al., 2024). Consumers are increasingly relying on social media platforms for product information, recommendations, and purchase decisions (Hammouri & Abu-Shanab, 2017). This shift has elevated the role of social media influencers, individuals who leverage their online presence and perceived expertise to affect consumer behavior (Chan, 2022). Consequently, understanding the mechanisms through which influencers impact purchase intentions is crucial for both marketers and researchers (Hanandeh et al., 2023).

This study investigates how specific influencer characteristics impact consumer purchase intentions, with a particular focus on the mediating role of brand image (Al-Taie & Khattak, 2024). While prior research has explored the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer behavior (Chopra et al., 2021; Bognar et al., 2019; Arzhanova et al., 2022), the specific ways in which influencer characteristics shape brand image and subsequently drive purchase intentions remain less understood. This research addresses this gap by examining how credibility, attractiveness, and expertise influence consumer perceptions of the brand being promoted, ultimately affecting their willingness to purchase. Moreover, the study contributes to a more understanding of influencer marketing effectiveness.

[1] Applied Science Private University, Amman, Jordan.
[2] University of Tikrit, Iraq
[3] Ministry of Education, Jordan, Email: hammouriqais@yahoo.com

This research is theoretically significant as it extends the existing literature on source credibility theory to the context of social media influencers. Practically, the findings will provide valuable insights for marketers seeking to optimize their influencer marketing strategies. By identifying the key influencer characteristics that resonate with consumers and enhance brand image, businesses can make more informed decisions about influencer selection and campaign development. The study is expected to demonstrate that influencer credibility and expertise will have a stronger positive impact on brand image and purchase intentions compared to attractiveness alone. Furthermore, it is anticipated that a positive brand image will mediate the relationship between influencer characteristics and purchase intentions, highlighting the importance of brand building within influencer marketing campaigns.

Hypotheses Development

Influencer characteristics encompassing attributes like credibility, attractiveness, expertise, and perceived similarity, contribute to their persuasiveness. Consumers are more likely to trust and be influenced by influencers they perceive as credible and honest (Hammouri et al., 2025a). This trust translates into a greater willingness to consider and ultimately purchase the products or services endorsed by the influencer (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Attractiveness, both physical and in terms of personality also plays a role (Liu, 2020). Attractive influencers can generate positive associations with the promoted brand, making the product more appealing to consumers (Al-Gasawneh et al., 2024; Hammouri et al., 2025b). Furthermore, an influencer's expertise within a specific domain enhances their perceived authority and trustworthiness, particularly for specialized products where consumers seek expert guidance (Chen et al., 2024; Hammouri et al., 2021). When consumers perceive an influencer as like themselves, whether in demographics, values, or lifestyle, this fosters relatability and trust, increasing the influencer's impact on purchase decisions (Nayak & Megha, 2024). These characteristics work in concert to shape consumer attitudes and beliefs about the promoted products, ultimately driving purchase intentions (Jung et al., 2020; Hanandeh et al., 2023). Empirical evidence supports the positive relationship between influencer characteristics and purchase intention. For example, studies have shown that influencer credibility positively influences consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Al-Dwairi et al., 2024). Other research has demonstrated the impact of influencer attractiveness and expertise on consumer behavior. Therefore:

H1: Influencer characteristics have a positive effect on purchase intention.

Brand image comprises the overall perception and associations consumers hold about a brand including its attributes, benefits, and values (Zia et al., 2021). It's a multi-dimensional construct shaped by various factors, including marketing communications, product experiences, and word-of-mouth (Isimoya & Olaniyan, 2020l Akhorshaideh et al., 2024). Influencers through their online presence and engagement with their audience can significantly impact brand image (Bonus et al., 2022). When an influencer, particularly one perceived as credible and trustworthy, endorses a brand, this positive association can transfer to the brand itself, enhancing its perceived value and reputation (Schouten et al., 2021). An influencer's attractiveness can also contribute to a positive brand image by creating desirable associations and aspirational appeal (Listiawati et al., 2024). Furthermore, if the influencer is perceived as an expert in a relevant field, their endorsement can support the brand's perceived expertise and quality (AlFarraj et al., 2021; Orehovački et al., 2013). This positive influence on brand image is generated from the influencer's ability to shape consumer perceptions and attitudes towards the brand. Empirical research supports this idea, demonstrating how influencer marketing campaigns can positively

impact brand awareness, brand attitudes, and purchase intentions, all of which contribute to a stronger brand image (Li & Peng, 2021; Ali & Alqudah, 2022). Thus:

H2: Influencer characteristics have a positive effect on brand image.

Several empirical studies suggest that the positive effect of influencer characteristics on purchase intention is partially explained by the mediating role of brand image (Hien et al., 2020; Gomes et al., 2022). This means that influencer characteristics, such as credibility, attractiveness, and expertise, first influence the consumer's perception of the brand, shaping its image (AlFarraj et al., 2021; Hammouri et al., 2023). This altered brand image then influences the consumer's likelihood of purchasing. For example, a credible influencer endorsing a product can enhance the brand's perceived trustworthiness and quality, leading to a more positive brand image (Chin et al., 2020; Hammouri et al., 2023). This improved brand image increases the consumer's willingness to purchase the product. Therefore, the impact of influencer characteristics on purchase intention is not solely direct but also occurs indirectly through the mediating effect of brand image (Shan et al., 2020). Several studies provide empirical support for this mediating role. Research has shown that influencer endorsements can positively influence brand image, which subsequently affects purchase intentions (Weismueller et al., 2020; Macheka et al., 2024). Based on that:

H3: Brand image positively mediates the relationship between influencer characteristics and purchase intention.

Research Methodology

Research Sample

The study relied on the Uma Sekaran table (2010), which is one of the scientific references to determine the study sample based on the size of the population. The table classifies the target study population in a box, and corresponding to the smallest acceptable sample size is in a box to represent the community in a scientific manner. The size of the study population is 45 individuals due to the difficulty of communication. And access to all items due to cost and time constraints, and based on Sekaran tables, the sample size representing the community must not be less than (100) employees from the community members. To ensure accuracy in data collection, and fairness in distributing questionnaires and representation, the study took into account the proportions of the study population's distribution over organizations relied on it in the distribution process. Consequently, 100 sets of questionnaires were distributed (100 respondents).

Data Analysis and Findings

Table 1 depicts the characteristics of the sample. The findings showed that (60%) of the study sample members are male, and (40%) are female. As for the age of the individuals in the study sample, the table indicates that most of the sample members are between 30-45 years old, at a rate of (20%). The table also indicates that the number of years of experience less than 5 years was the largest category, reaching (30%) of the total study sample, and more Category between 10-15 years old (6.7.5).

Measure	Category	Count	Percentage %
Age	23 – 30	25	25%
	31 – 38	50	50%
	39 or above	25	25%
Gender	Male	60	60%
	Female	40	40%
Experience	Less than 5 years	37	37.5%
	5-10 years	30	30%
	10 -15 years	8	7.5%
	More than 15 years	25	25%

Table 1. Characteristics of the Study Sample

Testing the Study Hypotheses

The researcher made sure that there was no problem of multiple correlation between the independent variables represented by areas of content marketing, by using a method of regression analysis of no correlation High among the independent variables in addition to the data meeting the conditions of a normal distribution and it is clear.

Hypothesis	Sig	R^2	R
H1	0.000	0.364	0.603
H2	0.001	0.344	0.543
H3	0.002	0.387	0.409

Table 2. Hypotheses Testing

Through the results of Table (2), H1. the correlation coefficient of the value dimension with the influencer characteristics equals the value of 0.603, with a probability of 0.000 less than Sig = 0.05, and this indicates the accordingly influencer characteristics statistically significant on purchase intention. In addition, H2, the correlation coefficient of the value dimension with the Influencer characteristics equals the value of 0.543, with a probability of 0.001 less than Sig = 0.05, and this indicates the presence of a direct significant correlation between them in the company under study, we accept H2. We accept the hypothesis, which states: There is a statistically significant effect of the value of the content in promoting the brand. H3, the correlation coefficient of the value dimension with the influencer characteristics equals the value of 0.387, with a probability of 0.000 less than Sig = 0.05, and this indicates the presence of a direct, mediate the relationship between them in the company under study, we accept H3.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the impact of influencer characteristics on purchase intentions, focusing on the mediating role of brand image. The results confirmed that certain influencer characteristics, such as credibility, expertise, and attractiveness, significantly influence brand image. Furthermore, a strong brand image positively influences consumer purchase intentions. The results highlight the importance of influencer marketing strategies that carefully consider these characteristics to enhance brand image and ultimately drive purchase behavior. Future research could explore the impact of other influencer characteristics, such as their level of engagement with the audience, the type of content they provide, or even the number of real

followers and their influence. In addition, focus could be placed on studying the impact of influencer content on the perceived value of a product or service, and how influencers can build strong, long-term relationships with their audience to achieve the highest levels of influence.

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