The impact of influencer marketing on the consumer decision-making process

Ardian Durmishi\textsuperscript{a} | Lindita Durmishi\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a}Faculty of Economics, Aleksander Xhuvani University, Elbasan, Albania.
\textsuperscript{b}Faculty of Education Science, Aleksander Xhuvani University, Elbasan, Albania.

Abstract In the present paper, we aim to identify and analyze the impact of influencer marketing on consumer purchasing decisions in the fashion industry. This study focused on revealing the impact of influencer marketing on female and male individuals of different ages and identifying the categories of influencers that influence each gender and age group more. To achieve the objectives of the study, questionnaires, which were personally administered, were used. The data were collected from a sample of Albanian individuals. The statistical model of cross-tabulation was used for data analysis, while the chi-square test was used to check whether the results from this model were statistically significant. Findings from this study confirmed that there is a significant difference between females and males regarding influence by influencers, and there is a significant difference between ages in terms of the category of influencers that influence them.

Keywords: marketing influencer, influencer, fashion industry, consumer decision-making process

1. Introduction

The concept of a marketing influencer is no longer new, and its existence has been known for years. However, technological developments and the popularization of social media have recently made influencer marketing highly important. In the literature, there are numerous studies on the influence of influential marketing on the consumer decision-making process, and most of these studies are focused on young age groups, children, and teenagers. However, the data for older age groups are scarce. The consumer decision-making process consists of five stages through which consumers typically go before making their intentional purchase (Figure 1). These stages are compasses recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase evaluation, and post-purchase behavior (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008; pp. 262-267).

![Figure 1 Consumer decision-making stages according to Kotler.](image-url)

In practice, some purchasing decisions, such as routine decisions, are not driven by a strong sense of problem solving. Such decisions are called low-involvement decisions and are characterized by low levels of information research and evaluation activities. In contrast, high-involvement decisions require a serious investment of time and effort in the research and evaluation process (Oladeji et al., 2005, pg. 114). Low-involvement products are usually those that carry low levels of economic or psychosocial risk. High-involvement products are those that carry higher levels of risk and are often expensive, infrequent purchases (Mitchell, 1999).
As stated by Armstrong (2009), different factors influence consumers during the consumer decision-making process. “Consumer behavior is influenced during the purchase process by four specific characteristics such as cultural, social, personal and psychological factors” (Figure 2).

![Factors influencing consumer decision making](image)

Situational factors relate to the level of consumer involvement in purchase tasks and the available market offerings. Personal factors include individual characteristics and traits such as age, stage of life, economic status and personal psychological factors related to motivation, learning, socialization, consumer attitudes, and beliefs. Social factors include culture, social class, family, and reference groups (Yurchisin & Johnson, 2010). The purchase task refers to the consumer’s approach to solving a particular problem and the effort it requires. Market offerings are another important set of situational influences on consumer problem-solving marketing. The wider the product and brand choices available to the consumer are, the more complex the purchase decision process is likely to be (Gier, 2022; Trudel, 2018). Other significant factors that potentially influence the decision-making process include demographics. Demographics included variables such as age, sex, income level, education level, and marital status. The concept of life stage and quality of life is directly related to demographics: consumer behavior is related to important life events and circumstances that people are experiencing at any given moment. One of the newest and increasingly important groups being used to understand consumer behavior is the consumer lifestyle or the potential customer’s pattern of being or living in the world combined with his or her psychographics (a set of attitudes, opinions, aspirations, and interests). Personality in this set is used to sum up all the traits of a person who makes them unique. The consumer personality categories are divided into introversion and extraversion. The introvert is described as protective, inwardly directed, and attractive to others, while the extrovert is outgoing, directed by others and assertive (Ramanathan, 2022; Carducci, 2020).

A motive is an internal drive or pressure to take action to satisfy a need. In the context of consumer behavior, learning is defined as changes in behavior resulting from previous experiences. Learning is an ongoing process that is dynamic, adaptive, and subject to change. A belief is that a person holds about something, such as "dark chocolate is bitter," "dark chocolate is delicious," or "dark chocolate is good for baking." An attitude is a consistent view of something that includes belief, as well as an emotional feeling and associated behavior (Gier, 2022).

A person’s culture is represented by a large group of people with a similar heritage. Social class is determined by a combination of factors, including family background, wealth, income, education, occupation, power, and prestige. Reference group Consumer behavior can be influenced by the groups with which a person comes into contact through friendship, face-to-face interaction, and even indirect contact. Marketers often call these reference groups. A reference group can be either a formal or an informal group. One of the most important reference groups for an individual is the family. A consumer’s family has a major influence on attitude and behavior, and families themselves are critically important in society as consumer units (Lumen Learning).
1.1. Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing is nothing new. It has been around for many years (Dada, 2017). However, it has recently gained considerable importance, as stated in the studies of previous authors. Brands are increasingly using social media influencers as brand influencers; therefore, it has become imperative to confirm the effectiveness of influencer marketing as a tool for brand promotion and sales (Hollebeek, 2019; Armstrong, 2009). Over the past few years, the popularity of social media influencers has grown exponentially, making influencer marketing pervasive in firms’ strategies (Vrontis et al., 2021). It has recently become a hot topic for marketers, perhaps because we are realizing how powerful it is, especially as an alternative to traditional advertising, which can be expensive and ineffective (idem).

Social media helps consumers expand their social interactions with people they would otherwise not know. Social media helps users in different segments, which facilitates the distribution and financial benefit of the company's products. The introduction of social media has made businesses much more flexible and easier. The customer is available anytime from anywhere, and companies can quickly respond to customer feedback and new ideas (Trivedi, 2021).

Influencer marketing is defined in different ways by authors. At a basic level, influencer marketing is a type of social media marketing that uses endorsements and product mentions from influencers, individuals who have a dedicated social follower and are viewed as experts within their field. Influencer marketing is a type of social media marketing in which brands collaborate with influencers to attract their target audience and increase their brand awareness, which helps them generate more sales and exposure (idem). Influencer marketing is a hybrid of old and new marketing tools. It is the idea of celebrity endorsement and putting it into a modern content-driven marketing campaign. The main difference in the case of influencer marketing is that campaign results are collaborations between brands and influencers (Geyser, 2021). Influencer marketing is the process of identifying, researching, and engaging influencers who create high-impact conversations about their brand with their customers and potential customers (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Influencer marketing works because of the high level of trust that influencers have built in their followers, and recommendations from them serve as a test for potential customers of a brand (Leung et al., 2022). Consumers do not like to be advertised, and marketing messages have less credibility every day (Brodie et al., 2019; Vivek et al., 2012). Influencer marketing offers the potential to unify marketing, public relations, digital marketing, and social media through powerful and relevant communication-based communication (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Gomez et al., 2019).

1.2. Influencer marketing as a social phenomenon

Influencer marketing is a constantly developing reality. Increasingly becoming an influencer as an advertising structure allows consumers to connect with the voice and creativity of someone, they "know," at least virtually. The concept of this marketing phenomenon differs from traditional advertising practices but is also closely linked to it. When used together for a unique purpose, influencer marketing and traditional advertising are very effective. The first is based on the use of subjects, known as "influencers", to promote a product or service, making it clear that influencer marketing uses individuals as promotional paths rather than focusing only on a target market (Sharp, 2017). This practice identifies subjects who are able to guide the purchase preferences of potential buyers and orient marketing activities around these influencers, who can or cannot be VIPs: the important thing is, in fact, their visibility and credibility in front of users. The connection between potential buyers takes place on different virtual platforms, including Instagram in the first place, which is home to most influencers capable of attracting a considerable number of users—those belonging to the generations of the new millennium—such as "Generation Z" or "Millennials". The greatest difference between traditional forms of advertising and influencer marketing is therefore the feeling, complicity, and apparent closeness that consumers have of the individual they follow or with whom they are dialoging: it is generally known that when the product is sponsored on Instagram, a different approach is unleashed compared to other more traditional channels because consumers can interact more with those who are recommending or promoting the product or sponsoring the brand. The phenomenology of influencer marketing is based on data that express how much online consumers are exposed and ready to "react" to the opinions of subjects other than the company (the followers). The social economy, instead of being guided by what can be defined as real money, is guided and moves in a parallel world, that of the so-called "social currency", which identifies and expresses itself as the sharing by subjects of a brand as a living and daily part of their social life. This sharing helps companies create a unique brand identity and interact with consumers or customers (Belanche et al., 2021). Today, companies are almost forced to be competitive in the market and to invest in social currency, which has a real structure with different dimensions: affiliation, conversation, information, functionality, identity, and security. To analyze the first, it is essential to give rise to a sort of community and therefore establish a strong affiliation between potential customers and loyalists. With social money, therefore, the commitment of a company and a brand itself to its consumers increases, creating a sharing of words, a conversation, and, precisely, securing access to information that is shared and discussed among the customers themselves. Belonging to a community helps users with their personal growth with access to new features, as well as to develop an identity in the group that will be indispensable for the possible protection of the brand (Lovink, 2016). The most effective and efficient influencer marketing campaigns are those aimed at a specific audience with which these individuals can attract the attention of consumers and establish a direct connection since support made by
an influencer has much more capacity than a message promulgated by the company itself, converting consumer trust into Word-of-Mouth (Lovink, 2008, 2016). When you start developing the social media influencer for your brand or your person, the following concepts are fundamental, which quite accept what were the useful tips to succeed in creating and maintaining your blog:

1. Whether it is specific knowledge or a passion for its own sake, to build influence for small entrepreneurs, it is essential to present themselves and prove experts on a given issue.
2. It is relevant to choose a channel or content type and be consistent over time. The result will grow, but certainly, in principle, it is necessary to focus on quality.
3. Being loyal to your brand or that of your company and being consistent with the content means creating social currency while satisfying user demand with quality content perfecting the value of the brand. The major social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest, have a “button” that allows you to bring the user back to the site where he can buy the product directly; the so-called in-feed buy button demonstrates how the digital world has entered in effect to be part of online and social commerce. A report by Business Insider Intelligence reported that social commerce has grown 26% since 2018, compared to 16% growth for global e-commerce. In addition, site referrals and monetization from social networks grew by 200% in 2021 (Enberg, 2021). Influencer marketing does not use Instagram as the main or most commonly used social platform, but it is necessary to consider the correlation between products, influencers, and social platforms. It seems obvious that companies will orient themselves toward those subjects that are, through research and surveys, more popular and more able to influence consumer opinions.

1.3. The role of influencers in the consumer decision-making process.

An influencer has the power to influence the buying habits or quantitative actions of others by uploading original, often sponsored, content to social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, or social media channels. Others online, as Paris Martineau revealed. Researchers further suggest that “...influencers who influence consumers with their thoughts, attitudes, and opinions and thus, significantly influence demand trends for products” (Zak & Hasprova, 2020). Influencers are trusted by millions of consumers, and marketers are paying attention to them. 86% of them used influencer marketing in 2022, and budgets for influencer marketing are increasing (Digital Marketing Institute, 2023). Today, social influencers such as journalists, celebrities, and bloggers are considered “the most powerful force in the fashion industry”. They influence consumer purchasing decisions based on their opinions, ability, and personal position and are often considered experts in their field by consumers (Sheena & Sudha, 2017).

According to a study conducted by the Digital Marketing Institute, 49% of consumers depend on the recommendations of influencers, and 40% bought something after seeing it on Twitter, YouTube, or Instagram. When consumers feel confident about an influencer’s recommendation, they are more likely to make a purchase (Digital Marketing Institute, 2023).

One of the best characteristics of influencers, for both marketers and consumers, is that they are experts in their respective fields (Koay et al., 2022; Dhun & Dangi, 2022). Consumers rely on the suggestions and opinions of those they admire and respect more than ever before (Tong & Hawley, 2009). However, consumers’ responses to influencers are not the same. Different consumer segments respond differently to the types of influencers the company chooses to engage. We can say that the success of influence marketing is the choice of the right personality according to the audience that the brand targets (Zak & Hasprova, 2020).

Influencers can be categorized into diverse types. Their standard categorization is as follows:

- Mega influencers
- Macro influencers
- Microinfluencers

Below is the classification of influencers based on the fashion industry.

Types of influencers:
1. VIPs
2. Industry experts and leaders in a field
3. Bloggers
4. Microinfluencers

1.4. Microinfluencers

Microinfluencers are creators on social media platforms who have between 10,000 and 50,000 followers. These creators typically build followings around niches such as travel, fashion, beauty, and photography and cultivate communities around their content. Microinfluencers regularly interact with fans, and as a result, they often create highly engaged and active audiences (Influencer Marketing Agency Mediakix, 2019; cited in Al Lawati & Tewari, 2021).

1.5. Macroinfluencers
Macroinfluencers are the social media influencers with the largest followings on major social networks such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and, in some specific cases, individual blogs. Macroinfluencers are distinguished primarily by a high number of followers or subscribers on a specific platform and their ability to engage and deliver messages on an influential scale (Al Lawati & Tewari, 2021). Macroinfluencers are experts in many fields and categories, making them powerful tools and advertising channels that brands and marketers can use (Al Lawati & Tewari, 2021).

1.6. The benefits of using influencer marketing

"...knowing how it works and deciding which influencer is relevant to your business can drastically change and grow your business, making it an important marketing strategy. Influencer marketing offers many advantages that can help your business model stabilize and grow" (Slater, 2013) (Figure 3).

According to Jeffrey Slater (2013), some of the benefits of influencer marketing are as follows.

a. Increase brand awareness.
   One of the immediate benefits of using influencer marketing is an improvement in brand awareness. A target audience using social media will know your brand, your story, and the offers you have (idem).

b. Builds Trust and Authority
   Influencers have built strong relationships with their fans, building trust and credibility. Users respect their recommendations. Social influencers exercise a degree of authority over the products or services they are endorsing (Slater, 2013).

c. It reaches the target audience.
   Influencers who are relevant to their brand already have an established audience on social media. Therefore, you can easily capture your target group when using an influencer. There is no need to spend extra money just to try and find your market, as the influencer already has one (idem).

d. Connect with a wider market.
   By using an influencer, you are not only reaching your target audience. You will also be able to connect with another market segment (idem).

e. Set a Trend
   An influencer can become the driving force behind new movements because they often expose their audience to new ideas, products, and brands. By aligning your business with a trend-setting influence, you are also showing that your company is a pioneering leader (idem).

f. Creates partnerships.
Engaging with an influencer is the start of a strong relationship. You will also expand your connections through an influencer. In the long run, your relationship with an influencer will generate results that benefit both of you (idem).

\( g. \) **Drive conversions.**

Influencers have the power to direct their followers to a product or service. Because consumers see them as trustworthy, they look to influencers for recommendations. According to the Digital Marketing Institute, 49% of consumers depend on influencer recommendations that can lead to sales (idem).

\( h. \) **It provides value.**

Influencer marketing delivers content that provides solutions to problems. Educate and motivate your audience. Influencers are sensitive to the needs of their followers and fans, easily creating content that will also provide value to their target clientele (Slater, 2020).

\( i. \) **Assisting Content Strategy**

Producing fresh and engaging content is not always easy. If you are out of ideas, an influencer can help with your content development process. You can team up with an influencer to create high-quality, aesthetically pleasing content for your audience (Slater, 2020).

\( 2. \) **Materials and Methods**

To achieve the goals and objectives of the study, the methodology used was based on the search for secondary and primary data.

The secondary data in this paper were collected from previous studies, books in the field of marketing, conference papers, scientific journal articles and statistics published in Mediatix and Statista Research Department.

For the collection of primary data, a questionnaire with closed and open questions was completed by four hundred individuals in Albania with different demographic data. The questionnaire was distributed online on social networks as well as through private messages. The sample was selected to be as representative of the population as possible. The questionnaire was created using Google Forms. The collected data were analyzed through Microsoft Office Excel and PSPP programs.

To determine the sample, Cochran’s formula was used as follows:

\[
 n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}
\]

where:

- \( e \) is the desired level of accuracy (i.e., margin of error),
- \( p \) is the estimated proportion of the population that enjoys the attribute in question,
- \( q \) is \( 1 - p \),
- The \( Z \) values are listed in the \( Z \) tables.

Specifically:

\( e = 0.05 \) or 5 %
\( p = 0.5 \) (assume that 50% of the population is influenced by influencer marketing)
\( q = 1 - 0.5 \)

For a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the \( Z \) value is 1.96.

Therefore, we have.

\[
 (1.96)^2 (0.5)(0.5)/(0.05)^2 = 385.
\]

Therefore, to have a representative sample of the population, we need to have at least 385 observations.

The sample used in the study was composed of four hundred individuals. Two hundred of the individuals who participated in the questionnaire were women and two hundred men because we aimed to have the best possible representation of the population if the female: male ratio of the population in Albania was the same. The ruling ages ranged between 20 and 24 years old and between 25 and 29 years old.

\( a) \) **The hypotheses raised for this study are as follows:**

H1: There is a significant difference in the level of influence of influencer marketing by gender.
H3: There is a significant relationship between gender and the category of influencers they are influenced by.

b) Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing will be performed through chi-square test cross tabulations or cross tabulations. The chi-square test is the primary statistic used for testing the statistical significance of cross-tabulations.

3. Results

3.1. Analysis of results from the questionnaire

According to the completed questionnaire, women are more dedicated to fashion and beauty shopping. They make more purchases per month than men. Additionally, women spend more money on clothes than men.

The Figure 4 shows that women spend more on clothing than men. Most men spend 0-10,000 ALL cases per month. Most women spend more than 10,000 thousand ALL cases per month.

![Expenses on clothing](image)

**Figure 4** Expenses for clothing per month by gender.

Figure 5 shows the impact of influencers on consumer decisions. Forty-four percent of individuals state that they have not been influenced by influencers, and 28% state that they have. Never been influenced in their decision to purchase clothing by influencers. Moreover, 27% of them were not sure when there they were influenced by influencers.

![Influence of influencers](image)

**Figure 5** Influence of influencers.

The Figure 6 shows people's levels of agreement with the statement that influencer-promoted products are better than products that are promoted more traditionally.
Most people surveyed do not agree that products promoted by influencers are better than products promoted in other ways. People consider these products normal products.

3.2. Do you think that through social media, you can more easily find information and more alternatives on the clothes you want to buy?

Fifty-four percent of people say that they can find information more easily on social media and can see more alternatives for shopping for clothes. Nineteen percent of people do not agree with this, and 27% show uncertainty and doubt.

3.3. Photos, videos, or textual content?

Fifty-nine percent of people say that what attracts them the most on social networks are photos. Thirty-three percent of people like posts in the form of videos, and only 8% like text content.

3.4. What characteristics should an influencer have?

Most people would consider an influencer to be credible and more influenced by him or her if he or she had product experience; that is, the influencer was a user of the product he or she was promoting, and the results or good qualities of the product were seen by his or her followers. Second, as skill/expertise is seen as more important, an influencer with expertise in
the field/industry of the product looks more credible than someone who does not have much knowledge about the product but is just promoting it. Another important characteristic is attractiveness and popularity.

3.5. The promotion of clothing by VIPs has a significant impact on the decision to purchase.

Most people are not influenced by VIPs, and they are even considered the category with the least influence on consumer decisions. As revealed by Figure 8, young people are the ones who are most affected by this category Twenty-seven percent of people said that they strongly disagreed with the statement that bloggers influence their purchase decision, 36% agreed, and 64% were not sure about their attitude.

3.6. The promotion of clothing by bloggers has a significant impact on the decision to buy.

Teenagers and young people are the ones who are most affected by this category (Figures 8 and 9).

3.7. Experts/leaders of an industry/field have a considerable influence on the decision to buy.

Fifty-one percent disagreed on the importance of experts in the decision to buy, 9% were neutral, and 40% agreed. The age group most influenced by experts is those older than 35 years.

From the results, we conclude that VIPs influence the clothing purchase decisions of teenagers and young people more. Moreover, the 35-year-old and older age groups were much less affected.

Bloggers have a profound influence on teenagers and young women, while men are less influenced by this category, especially those under thirty-five years of age.
Industry experts or leaders in a field have more influence on the decisions of individuals over 35 years of age, while teenagers and young adults are less influenced.

3.8. Testing hypothesis H1

To determine whether there is a relationship between gender and influence from influencers, the following hypothesis was built (Figure 10):

H1: There is a significant difference in the level of influence of influencer marketing by gender.

With a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, hypothesis testing will be performed. If the error rate is greater than 5%, then the hypothesis is rejected, and the null hypothesis is accepted:

H0: There is no difference in the level of influence of influencer marketing by gender.

Through the chi-square test and cross-tabulation, we assess hypothesis H1.

![Figure 10 Influence by experts.](image)

From the Tables 1 and 2, we notice that the asymptotic significance (2-tailed) is 0.03, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H0) and accept hypothesis H1; that is, there is a significant difference in the level of influence of influencer marketing by gender. Those who are most influenced by influencers are women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 Gender x Influence by influencers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the Table 1, we see the following:

- A total of 20.5% of women claim that they are strongly influenced by influencers, while only 10.5% are men.
- A total of 12.5% of women are highly influenced by influencers, while 10.5% are men.
- Twenty-one percent of women and 19% of men remain neutral.
- Twenty-five percent of women and 32.5% of men are slightly influenced by influencers.
- Twenty-one percent of women and 27.5% of men are not influenced by influencers.

3.9. Testing hypothesis H3

To determine whether there is a relationship between gender and the influence of influencers, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H3: There is a significant relationship between gender and the category of influencers that influences it.

With a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, hypothesis testing will be performed. If the error rate is greater than 5%, then the hypothesis is rejected, and the null hypothesis is accepted:

H0: There is no significant relationship between gender and the category of influencers that influence it.

Through the chi-square test and cross-tabulation, we test hypothesis H3.

From the Tables 3 and 4, we notice that the asymptotic significance (2-tailed) is 0.00, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H0) and accept hypothesis H3; namely, there is an important relationship between gender and the category of influencers by which they are influenced.

### Table 2 Chi-square test. Gender x Influence by Influencers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>10.83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3 Gender x Category of influencers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Singer</th>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Totally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Row %</td>
<td>24 %</td>
<td>22.0 %</td>
<td>27.5 %</td>
<td>14.0 %</td>
<td>5.0 %</td>
<td>7.5 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Column %</td>
<td>55.2 %</td>
<td>43.5 %</td>
<td>52.5 %</td>
<td>77.8 %</td>
<td>10.5 %</td>
<td>39.5 %</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>12.0 %</td>
<td>12.5 %</td>
<td>10.5 %</td>
<td>7.0 %</td>
<td>2.5 %</td>
<td>3.8 %</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Row %</td>
<td>19.5 %</td>
<td>16.5 %</td>
<td>6.0 %</td>
<td>4.0 %</td>
<td>42.5 %</td>
<td>11.5 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Column %</td>
<td>44.8 %</td>
<td>42.9 %</td>
<td>17.9 %</td>
<td>22.2 %</td>
<td>89.5 %</td>
<td>60.5 %</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>9.8 %</td>
<td>8.3 %</td>
<td>3.0 %</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
<td>21.3 %</td>
<td>5.8 %</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Row %</td>
<td>21.8 %</td>
<td>19.3 %</td>
<td>16.8 %</td>
<td>9.0 %</td>
<td>23.8 %</td>
<td>9.5 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Column %</td>
<td>100,0 %</td>
<td>100,0 %</td>
<td>100,0 %</td>
<td>100,0 %</td>
<td>100,0 %</td>
<td>100,0 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>21.8 %</td>
<td>19.3 %</td>
<td>16.8 %</td>
<td>9.0 %</td>
<td>23.8 %</td>
<td>23.8 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the tables, we obtain the following results:

- The categories of influencers who influence women the most are singers at 27.5%, actors at 24%, and industry experts at 22%.

https://www.malque.pub/ojs/index.php/msj
• The categories of influencers who influence men more are athletes at 42.5%, actors at 19.5%, and industry experts at 16.5%.

4. Final Considerations and Conclusions

Technological developments and the growth of internet and social media users have played a positive role in increasing the importance of influencer marketing.

Influencers have the power to influence consumers' buying habits, thoughts, and attitudes. They are seen as a key and important point in the fashion industry for the promotion of products of different brands operating in this industry. Influencers can directly influence the company's target segment, as they already have a large following on their social media profiles.

Their recommendations are considered good by their followers because of the high trust that the latter have in the influencers. It is necessary to choose the right category or type of influencer, whether micro- or macroinfluencers, so that the marketing campaign is as successful as possible.

In this study, we found that for different types of influencers, such as VIPs, industry experts/leaders, and bloggers, people have different views and are more influenced by one category than by the other depending on their gender, age, and personal preferences. Specifically, VIPs have a greater influence on the decisions of teenagers and bloggers on the decisions of young people aged 20-30 years, while experts influence the decisions of adults over 30 years more. This can be explained as follows: teenagers are more in contact with celebrities, are the most active age group, and are more likely to use the internet and social networks. Meanwhile, young people like to follow more advice on how to dress and their style and to be more careful and attentive to the aspect of fashion, so they prefer to follow such influencers, such as bloggers who provide recommendations on what to wear, while also serving as product promoters of fashion brands. People aged 30 and above find it more appropriate to follow an expert, as they consider them more reliable because of the expertise they have.

One of the characteristics that people consider most important in an influencer and that would make the latter more reliable in their eyes is the product experience. When consumers transparently see real results, they are inclined to increase their trust not only in the product but also in the influencer who recommends it. The second is skill and expertise. An influencer must also be attracted to win the sympathy and trust of the audience.

Through the statistical model of cross tables and testing the significance of the results through the chi-square test, it was possible to validate the hypotheses raised in this study. All four hypotheses held, rejecting the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship or difference. Specifically, our research revealed that those who are most influenced by influencers are women. Those who are most influenced by influencers are the young age groups of 15-19 years, 20-24 years, and 25-29 years. Women are more influenced by singers and actors, while athletes influence men more. Teenagers and young people are more influenced by athletes and singers, while pundits and actors influence older people.

Ethical considerations

The authors declare that the interviewers consented to the research being carried out.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This research did not receive any financial support.

References

https://digitalmarketinginstitute.com/resources/podcasts/podcast-066-successful-social-selling-julieatherton-seangallagher


