

Trustworthiness of Micro-Influencers Affecting Purchase Intention in Products and Services in Bangkok, Thailand

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Abstract

This research investigates the trustworthiness of micro-influencers affecting purchase intentions for products and services in Bangkok. The objectives are to examine: 1) the importance of micro-influencer trustworthiness, 2) the importance of purchase intentions, and 3) the trustworthiness factors affecting the purchase intentions of consumers in Bangkok. Data were gathered through a questionnaire from a stratified sample of 400 individuals who have made purchases through micro-influencers in Bangkok. Statistical analysis, including percentages, means, standard deviations, and multiple regression, was used. Results indicate that the importance level of micro-influencer trustworthiness across five aspects is generally high, particularly consistency in brand alignment. Purchase intentions among consumers in Bangkok were generally high, with a preference for brands endorsed by micro-influencers. Hypothesis testing revealed that four trustworthiness factors—credibility, engagement and responsiveness, social proof, and consistency in brand alignment—significantly affect purchase intentions at the .05 significance level. These findings emphasize the crucial role of micro-influencers in shaping consumer behavior in Bangkok's market, offering valuable insights for marketers and businesses to leverage trustworthiness in their digital strategies.

Keywords: Trustworthiness, Purchase Intention, Micro-Influencer

Introduction

Influencer marketing has shifted from focusing solely on brand awareness to driving measurable business outcomes, with key performance indicators such as conversions, clicks, and purchases becoming central (MarketingOops, 2021). In Thailand, influencers are categorized as Celebrities, Power Influencers, Peer Influencers, and Micro Influencers, each serving distinct

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purposes. Celebrities are ideal for reach and awareness, while Micro Influencers build trust through authentic, relatable content. Despite high follower counts correlating with reach, trust inversely correlates, highlighting the nuanced dynamics of influencer marketing (Pp, 2018).

Influencer marketing has become a crucial element of digital marketing strategies due to its ability to effectively engage target audiences and influence purchasing decisions. Research underscores the growing significance of micro-influencers, who, despite their smaller follower counts, exhibit higher engagement rates and stronger connections with their audiences than macro-influencers or celebrities (de Veirman et al., 2017). Known for their authenticity and relatability, micro-influencers foster trust and inspire consumer action, especially in niche markets. Their content, often viewed as genuine and less promotional, resonates deeply with followers, making them ideal for campaigns focused on credibility rather than broad reach. Additionally, micro-influencers are considered more cost-effective, delivering substantial returns on investment while building long-term consumer relationships (Audrezet et al., 2020). This research examines the role of influencers, particularly micro-influencers, in shaping consumer behavior and their potential to enhance trust, engagement, and conversion in digital marketing campaigns.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the trustworthiness of micro-influencers and its impact on purchase intentions in Bangkok. By examining the factors that influence trustworthiness and how it translates to customer behavior, the research offers valuable insights for marketers looking to optimize their influencer marketing strategies in the digital age.

Objectives

1. To study the level of importance of the trustworthiness of micro-influencers to customers in Bangkok.
2. To study the level of importance of purchase intention for products and services among customers in Bangkok.
3. To study the factors of the trustworthiness (Credibility, Authenticity, Engagement and Responsiveness, Social Proof, Consistency in Brand Alignment) of micro-influencers that affect the purchase intention for products and services among customers in Bangkok.

Literature Review

The advent of social media has revolutionized marketing strategies, enabling brands to engage consumers through personalized communication and foster stronger relationships (Zimmerman & Ng, 2020; Nattawasa Sutthithada, 2020). Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and

YouTube have become essential tools for businesses to build customer relationships and achieve marketing objectives. Among these strategies, influencer marketing has gained prominence due to its ability to build trust and credibility through authentic endorsements (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Influencer marketing leverages social media influencers to promote products or services by capitalizing on their established relationships with followers. Influencers are categorized based on their audience size, ranging from mega-influencers or celebrities to micro-influencers (Ruiz-Gomez, 2019). While mega-influencers offer extensive reach, their high costs and overtly commercial content can lead to consumer skepticism (Martínez-López et al., 2020). This has led brands to shift focus toward micro-influencers, who, despite having smaller followings, often achieve higher engagement rates and stronger connections with their audiences (de Veirman et al., 2017).

Table 1 Categorization of influencer status by audience size, independent of the platform or content type used

	Type of Influencer		Size of audience
Micro - influencers	The largest group of influencers	They are considered to have the highest engagement with followers .	Up to 99K
Macro - influencers	Silver (YouTube)	Power middle users.	From 100K to 500K followers
	Macro (advanced level)	Very professional and consistent.	Over 500 followers and up to 1 million
Mega - influencers	Gold	They have gained significant recognition as leading experts in a particular field through deliberate and effective self-branding strategies.	Over 1 million
	Diamond	Elite of social media influencers that can command mass media size audiences.	Over 10 million

Table 1 Categorization of influencer status by audience size, independent of the platform or content type used (Continued)

Type of Influencer		Size of audience
Diamond	Elite of social media influencers that can command mass media size audiences.	Over 10 million

Note. Micro-influencers, though smaller in audience, often achieve higher engagement due to closer audience relationships. From “Digital fame and fortune in the age of social media: A classification of social media influencers,” by A. Ruiz-Gomez, 2019, *adResearch: Revista Internacional de Investigación en Comunicación*, 19(19), pp. 8-29 (<https://doi.org/10.7263/adresic-019-01>).

Trustworthiness is a cornerstone in influencer marketing, especially in the digital landscape where direct buyer-seller interactions are absent (Ilhamalimy & Ali, 2020). It refers to the influencer's perceived willingness to provide honest and lawful statements, offering truthful information about a product (Chekima et al., 2020). Micro-influencers excel in this area due to their authenticity and relatability, which foster trust and positively influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Closely linked to trustworthiness is the concept of credibility, which involves how trustworthy and reliable followers perceive an influencer to be (Liu et al., 2021). Credibility encompasses the authenticity, honesty, and objectivity of the influencer's claims (Chetioui et al., 2020). Research indicates that influencer credibility significantly impacts consumer behavior, with credible endorsements leading to higher purchase intentions and brand recommendations (Schouten et al., 2020; Chetioui et al., 2020).

Engagement and responsiveness further strengthen the influencer-consumer relationship. High engagement levels, reflected in likes, comments, and shares, indicate active audience involvement and trust (Tafesse & Wood, 2021). Micro-influencers often foster a sense of community through interactive communication, creating parasocial relationships where followers feel personally connected to the influencer (Masuda et al., 2022; Arora et al., 2019). This interactive environment contrasts with traditional celebrity endorsements, which lack direct interaction with consumers.

The role of social proof is also significant in shaping perceptions of authenticity. While larger follower counts can imply popularity, micro-influencers are often perceived as more authentic and credible due to their niche focus and higher engagement rates (Abreu, 2019; Bruns, 2018). This suggests that the quality of interactions holds more weight than sheer follower numbers in influencing consumer trust.

Maintaining consistency in brand alignment is essential for preserving authenticity and trust. The rise of overtly commercial content has led consumers to question the independence of influencer recommendations (Martínez-López et al., 2020). Transparency through clear sponsorship disclosures helps mitigate skepticism and enhances trustworthiness (Boerman et al., 2017). Aligning promotional content with the influencer's own values and ideals reinforces authenticity, positively affecting advertising outcomes like purchase intentions (Pöyry et al., 2022).

In the context of purchase intention, consumer trust plays a pivotal role. Trust increases confidence in the seller and encourages higher purchase rates, especially in online settings where physical interactions are lacking (Larasetiati & Ali, 2019; Firmansyah & Ali, 2019). Studies consistently support the positive link between trust and purchase intentions (Liu & Guo, 2017; Mosunmola et al., 2019; Marriott & Williams, 2018). Micro-influencers, through their trustworthiness and credibility, effectively enhance consumer purchase intentions by providing genuine endorsements that resonate deeply with followers (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

By intertwining concepts of social media marketing, influencer credibility, trustworthiness, engagement, social proof, and brand alignment, it becomes evident that micro-influencers play a crucial role in modern marketing strategies. Their ability to build authentic relationships with consumers not only drives engagement but also significantly influences purchase decisions, highlighting the interconnectedness of these theories in the study of digital marketing effectiveness.

Hypothesis

H₁: Trustworthiness of micro-influencers positively affects purchase intentions.

Sub-Hypotheses

H_{1a}: Credibility positively affects the purchase intentions.

H_{1b}: Authenticity positively affects the purchase intentions.

H_{1c}: Engagement and responsiveness positively affects the purchase intentions.

H_{1d}: Social Proof positively affects the purchase intentions.

H_{1e}: Consistency in Brand Alignment positively affects the purchase intentions.

Conceptual Model

According to the literature review and the current situation of consumer behavior in the digital age, this study investigates the trustworthiness of micro-influencers affecting purchase intentions for products and services in Bangkok. This research incorporates five factors of micro-influencer trustworthiness: credibility, authenticity, engagement and responsiveness, social proof, and consistency in brand alignment. Factors affecting purchase intention include consumer preferences for brands endorsed by trusted micro-influencers.

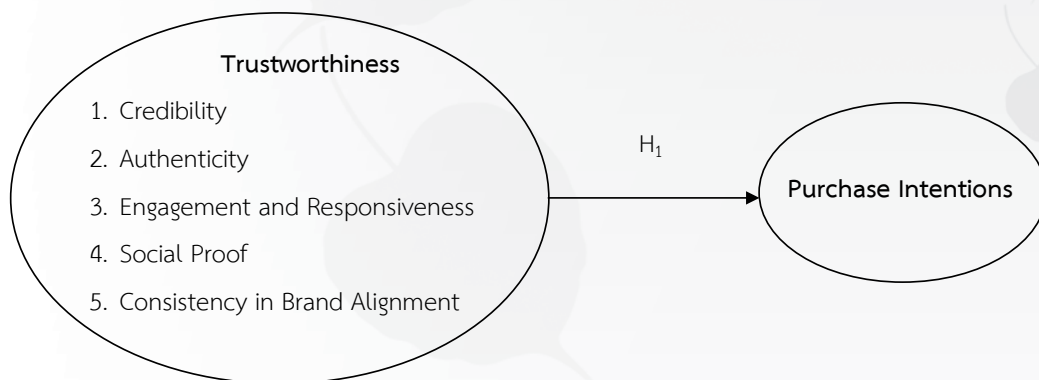


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Note. The conceptual model is synthesized from multiple studies, including. Adapted from “Impacts of Influencer Attributes on Purchase Intentions in Social Media Influencer Marketing: Mediating Roles of Characterizations,” by H. Masuda, S. H. Han, and J. Lee, 2022, *Journal of Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 174(1), Article 121246 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121246>); “An Investigation Into Viewers’ Trust in and Response Towards Disclosed Paid-for Endorsements by YouTube Lifestyle Vloggers,” by C. Chapple, and F. Cownie, 2017, *Journal of Promotional Communications*, 5(2), 101-138 (<https://promotionalcommunications.org/index.php/pc/article/view/95/109>); “Size Does Matter: How Do Micro-Influencers Impact Follower Purchase Intention on Social Media?.” G. H. W. Liu, Y. Li, and N. C.-A. Lee, 2021, December 3-7, In *ICEB’21 Proceedings of The International Conference on Electronic Business*, Vol. 21 (pp. 402-412), Nanjing, China. (<https://aisel.aisnet.org/iceb2021/1>).

Methodology

Subjects and data collection

The study was conducted in Bangkok due to its significance and feasibility. Bangkok, as

a major urban center in Thailand, represents a population with higher exposure to online marketing and influencer campaigns, making it an ideal location for studying the influence of micro-influencers on consumer behavior. The city's dense population, widespread use of social media, and active participation in e-commerce platforms provide a rich context for examining consumer interactions with micro-influencers.

The study utilized a stratified sampling technique to ensure a representative sample of individuals who had previously purchased products or services recommended by micro-influencers and resided or worked in Bangkok's 50 districts. This approach was chosen to enhance the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the findings by dividing the total population of 5,494,932 (The Office of Strategic Management, 2022) into 50 strata based on geographic districts. Each district was treated as a stratum, and proportional allocation ensured that the sample size corresponded to the population distribution within each district. A total sample size of 400 was determined using Taro Yamane's formula, and the allocation of respondents across districts was proportional to their respective population sizes, ensuring that larger districts contributed more respondents to the sample.

To select respondents, a screening question was included in the questionnaire to identify the district where each individual resided or worked, ensuring accurate stratification. Within each district, respondents were randomly selected to maintain the integrity of the stratified sampling process. Data collection was conducted through online surveys, combining convenience sampling and snowball sampling techniques to efficiently reach the target population. Initial respondents were recruited through accessible networks and online platforms, while the snowball sampling approach encouraged participants to share the survey link with peers who met the inclusion criteria. This methodology ensured a representative and unbiased dataset, providing valuable insights into the influence of micro-influencers on consumer behavior across Bangkok's districts.

Research instrument and variables measurement

The research instrument for this study is a questionnaire, which is divided into four sections as follows:

Section One: This section contains five questions regarding the personal factors of the respondents, including gender, age, education level, occupation, and average monthly income. These questions were adapted from the research of Jittinee Jintanasant (2017) and are close-ended questions (multiple choice), where respondents can select only one answer. The data measurement utilizes both nominal and ordinal scales.

Section Two: This section comprises 25 questions related to the trustworthiness of micro-influencers, covering the following aspects: 1) credibility, 2) authenticity, 3) engagement and responsiveness, 4) social proof, and 5) consistency in brand alignment. These questions employ a rating scale.

Section Three: This section consists of five rating scale questions regarding the purchase intentions of consumers in Bangkok. Both sections two and three use interval scales for data measurement, employing a rating scale where each question has five levels of importance according to the Likert scale (1 = least important to 5 = extremely important). There are 30 questions in total.

Section Four: This section contains open-ended questions for suggestions.

Content validity and reliability

The content validity of the questionnaire was verified by three experts who assessed the congruence between the questionnaire items and the research objectives using the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC). The analysis revealed that the IOC scores for the questionnaire items ranged from 0.67 to 1.00, which is considered acceptable (Laddawan Petchroj, & Atchara Chamniprasart, 2004). The overall average congruence index was 0.92. Since this value exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.50, the questionnaire items are considered consistent with the research objectives, thereby demonstrating strong content validity

Reliability testing was conducted with a sample group of 30 individuals, utilizing Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α) to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire. The reliability test results indicated a coefficient of 0.996, which significantly surpasses the widely accepted threshold of 0.70 for high reliability (Nunnally, 1978), confirming the strong reliability of the questionnaire.

Hypothesis Testing

The analysis involved calculating the mean and standard deviation to evaluate the trustworthiness of micro-influencers. Furthermore, the influence of micro-influencer trustworthiness on the purchase intentions for products and services in Bangkok was examined through multiple regression analysis. This analytical method was employed to ascertain the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of how micro-influencers affect purchase intention.

Results

With reference to descriptive statistics, most reside in the Khlong Sam Wa and Sai Mai districts (3.8%). The sample comprises mainly females (59.5%) aged between 24 and 41 years

(82.8%), with a Bachelor's degree (83.5%), employed in private companies (69.5%), and with a monthly income of 20,000 to 40,000 Baht (61.8%)

Table 2 Mean (\bar{X}), standard deviation (SD) and level of importance of micro-influencer trustworthiness affecting purchase intention for products and services in Bangkok

Trustworthiness	\bar{X}	SD	Level of Importance	Rank
1. (C) Credibility	4.07	0.78	Very Important	5
2. (A) Authenticity	4.11	0.79	Very Important	4
3. (E) Engagement and Responsiveness	4.13	0.77	Very Important	2
4. (S) Social Proof	4.12	0.77	Very Important	3
5. (B) Consistency in Brand Alignment	4.23	0.77	Extremely Important	1
Total	4.11	0.75	Very Important	

From Table 2, the overall importance of micro-influencers' trustworthiness affecting purchase intentions in products and services in Bangkok is generally regarded as very important (\bar{X} = 4.11, SD = 0.75). Further scrutiny indicates that the dimension with the highest average rating is (B) consistency in brand alignment (\bar{X} = 4.23, SD = 0.77), followed by (E) engagement and responsiveness (\bar{X} = 4.13, SD = 0.77), (S) social proof (\bar{X} = 4.12, SD = 0.77), (A) authenticity (\bar{X} = 4.11, SD = 0.79), and (C) credibility (\bar{X} = 4.07, SD = 0.78). Overall credibility (C) is rated very important. When considering individual items, five items (C5, C4, C3, C2, and C1) align with this finding. This is consistent with Unyavee Boonyasit (2022), who found that credibility in influencers for educational products is very important (4.03). Hypothesis testing revealed that the five factors of influencer trustworthiness—expertise, credibility, attractiveness, respect, and similarity to the target group—are not related to media exposure on social media channels. However, if an influencer is highly credible, the likelihood of purchasing educational products increases. Overall authenticity (A) is rated very important. When considering individual items, five items (A3, A4, A2, A1, and A5) support this finding. This is consistent with Abreu (2019), who found that the level of perceived authenticity is very important. Most respondents place significant importance on the authenticity of micro-influencers, such as reviewing products and services without financial benefits from the company (advertising), which increases credibility. Overall engagement and responsiveness (E) are rated very important. When considering individual items, five items (E3, E4, E5, E2, and E1) support this finding. This is consistent with Wanatana Siripanmanee (2022), who

researched factors affecting loyalty in influencer tracking for food product reviews of customers in each generation. Overall social proof (S) is rated very important. When considering individual items, five items (S5, S3, S4, S1, and S2) support this finding. This is consistent with the findings of Kunlada Jampanyakun and Pornphan Prajaknet (2021), who studied purchasing decisions through word-of-mouth communication on the internet and perceived trustworthiness of influencers. The level of similarity and closeness to the audience (social proof) is rated very important. Overall consistency in brand alignment is rated extremely important. When considering individual items, five items (B4, B5, B1, B2, and B3) support this finding. This is consistent with Li et al. (2024), who researched how micro-influencers and mega-influencers create word-of-mouth strategies in the digital economy. The study found that the consistency of micro-influencers with the brand is extremely important. The objective of this exploratory study was to examine the impact of micro-influencers on brand and the intention to purchase local food products on Instagram. It also aimed to provide recommendations for SMEs and local food businesses on using micro-influencers to enhance brand image and stimulate purchase intentions.

Table 3 Mean (\bar{X}), standard deviation (SD) and level of importance of purchase intention for products and services in Bangkok.

(PI) Purchase Intention	\bar{X}	SD	Level of Importance	Rank
1. (PI1) I have the intention to purchase products and services as recommended by micro-influencers.	4.09	0.77	Very Important	5
2. (PI2) I will choose to purchase products and services recommended by micro-influencers in the future.	4.10	0.79	Very Important	2
3. (PI3) If I intend to purchase products and services, the brands recommended by micro-influencers will be my primary consideration.	4.12	0.81	Very Important	1
4. (PI4) I will seek out products and services recommended by micro-influencers.	4.10	0.80	Very Important	3
5. (PI5) In future purchases, I will continue to buy products and services recommended by micro-influencers.	4.10	0.82	Very Important	4
Total	4.10	0.77	Very Important	

Table 3 reveals that the overall importance of purchase intentions for products and services in Bangkok is generally regarded as very important ($\bar{x} = 4.10$, $SD = 0.77$). Further scrutiny indicates that the dimension with the highest average rating is PI3 ($\bar{x} = 4.12$, $SD = 0.81$), followed by PI2 ($\bar{x} = 4.10$, $SD = 0.79$), PI4 ($\bar{x} = 4.10$, $SD = 0.80$), PI5 ($\bar{x} = 4.10$, $SD = 0.82$), and PI1 ($\bar{x} = 4.09$, $SD = 0.77$). Overall purchase intention is rated very important. When considering individual items, five items (PI3, PI2, PI4, PI5, and PI1) align with this finding. This is consistent with the findings of Ngamsiri Witooraphan (2024), who researched the influence of Social Media Marketing (SMM), Electronic Word-of-mouth (eWOM), Influencer Marketing, and Content Marketing on intentions to book hotel rooms in Pattaya. The study found that the sample group had a high intention to book hotel rooms, with an average rating of 4.08.

Table 5 The Analysis of Multiple Regression

Model	Question	Unstandardize	Std.	Standardized	t	Sig.
Trustworthiness		d Coefficients	Error	Coefficients		
		B		Beta		
(Constant)		0.044	0.060		0.732	0.465
(C) Credibility	5	0.380	0.040	0.388	9.520	*0.000
C ₁		0.413	0.040	0.433	10.289	*0.000
C ₂		0.049	0.050	0.052	0.978	0.329
C ₃		0.127	0.042	0.139	3.005	*0.003
C ₄		0.072	0.053	0.079	1.364	0.173
C ₅		0.272	0.049	0.290	5.604	*0.000
(A) Authenticity	5	0.043	0.048	0.044	0.904	0.366
A ₁		0.384	0.054	0.410	7.128	*0.000
A ₂		-0.017	0.059	-0.018	-0.285	0.775
A ₃		0.248	0.058	0.260	4.270	*0.000
A ₄		0.051	0.055	0.055	0.926	0.355
A ₅		0.231	0.053	0.254	4.384	*0.000
(E) Engagement and Responsiveness	5	0.260	0.049	0.261	5.340	*0.000



Table 5 The Analysis of Multiple Regression (Continued)

Model	Question	Unstandardize d Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Trustworthiness		B		Beta		
E ₁		0.287	0.049	0.302	5.889	*0.000
E ₂		0.118	0.058	0.122	2.055	*0.041
E ₃		0.108	0.064	0.110	1.689	0.092
E ₄		0.350	0.074	0.362	4.744	*0.000
E ₅		0.069	0.055	0.074	1.259	0.209
(S) Social Proof	5	0.142	0.061	0.144	2.334	*0.020
S ₁		0.298	0.049	0.315	6.142	*0.000
S ₂		0.140	0.059	0.149	2.374	*0.018
S ₃		0.161	0.053	0.168	3.026	*0.003
S ₄		0.138	0.049	0.145	2.809	*0.005
S ₅		0.194	0.050	0.202	3.886	*0.000
(B) Consistency in Brand Alignment	5	0.160	0.033	0.160	4.865	*0.000
B ₁		0.450	0.055	0.449	8.216	*0.000
B ₂		0.018	0.058	0.018	0.302	0.763
B ₃		0.009	0.044	0.009	0.204	0.838
B ₄		0.300	0.052	0.308	5.786	*0.000
B ₅		0.183	0.048	0.194	3.775	*0.000
R=0.962 : R ² =0.926 : S.E.=0.210 : Adjusted R ² =0.925 : F=978.947						

*Significant at p-Value < 0.05

From Table 5, the analysis of micro-influencers' trustworthiness affecting purchase intentions for products and services in Bangkok considered five aspects of micro-influencer trustworthiness. Credibility (C), engagement and responsiveness (E), social proof (S), and consistency in brand alignment (B) emerged as significant determinants affecting purchase intentions. Statistical analysis unveiled a substantial correlation coefficient (R) of 0.962, demonstrating statistical significance at the 0.05 significance level.

Conclusion

The dimensions of trustworthiness—consistency in brand alignment, engagement and responsiveness, social proof, authenticity, and credibility—are all rated as highly important, with consistency in brand alignment receiving the highest average rating. This study also examines the overall importance of purchase intentions, finding them to be highly regarded. Among individual items, PI3 scores the highest, indicating that specific aspects of purchase intentions are particularly critical. In the analysis of how micro-influencers' trustworthiness affects purchase intentions for products and services in Bangkok, credibility (C) positively affects purchase intentions, aligning with research indicating that millennials seek trustworthy sources, influencing their buying decisions. Engagement and responsiveness (E) positively impact purchase intentions, as supported by studies showing that follower engagement and quality content increase purchasing likelihood. Social proof (S) positively influences purchase intentions, with trustworthiness and transparency enhancing follower-influencer communication and purchase decisions. Consistency in brand alignment (B) positively affects purchase intentions, showing that the alignment of influencer content with brand image boosts consumer trust and purchasing behavior.

Table 6 Test Results for the Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Testing Result
H ₁ : Trustworthiness of micro influencers positively affects the purchase intentions.	Accepted
H _{1a} : Credibility positively affects the purchase intentions.	Accepted
H _{1b} : Authenticity positively affects the purchase intentions.	Not Accepted
H _{1c} : Engagement and responsiveness positively affects the purchase intentions.	Accepted
H _{1d} : Social Proof positively affects the purchase intentions.	Accepted
H _{1e} : Consistency in Brand Alignment positively affects the purchase intentions.	Accepted

Discussion

The research results are described as follows.

In H₁, trustworthiness of micro-Influencers positively affects purchase intentions. The results from the multiple regression analysis confirm that Trustworthiness of Micro-Influencers significantly

affects Purchase Intentions ($R=0.962$, $R^2=0.926$, $F=978.947$, $p<0.05$). The adjusted R^2 value of 0.925 indicates that 92.5% of the variance in purchase intentions is explained by the trustworthiness constructs—Credibility, Authenticity, Engagement and Responsiveness, Social Proof, and Consistency in Brand Alignment. This highlights the substantial impact of micro-influencer trustworthiness on consumer purchase intentions. This is consistent with Chakraborty (2019), who found that trustworthiness, as a component of source credibility, significantly enhances consumer purchase intentions by building consumer-based brand equity. Similarly, Lou and Yuan (2019) demonstrated that influencers' perceived trustworthiness and authenticity directly influence consumer trust in branded content, leading to higher purchase intentions. Additionally, Schouten et al. (2020) highlighted that influencer trustworthiness and alignment with brand values significantly affect consumer purchase decisions, emphasizing the role of trust in driving consumer behavior.

In H_{1a} , (C) Credibility positively affects purchase intentions, with a beta of 0.388 and a t-value of 9.520 ($p < 0.000$). This is consistent with Wahane (2019) on the impact of social media micro-influencers on the buying behavior of lifestyle products of Irish millennials. The study found that millennials seek trustworthiness from credible sources, which positively influences their purchasing decisions. This finding aligns with existing research, such as Chakraborty (2019), which examined the impact of source credibility in online reviews on purchase intentions. Chakraborty's study revealed that credible online reviews significantly enhance consumer-based brand equity dimensions, such as brand awareness and perceived value, ultimately leading to higher purchase intentions.

Authenticity does not positively affect purchase intentions, as indicated by a beta value of 0.044 with a t-value of 0.904 and a significance level of $p=0.366$, showing that this variable does not have a significant impact on consumer purchase intentions. This is consistent with Andonopoulos et al. (2023) in their study Authentic isn't always best: When inauthentic social media influencers induce positive consumer purchase intention through inspiration, which found that inauthentic influencers can sometimes inspire consumers and drive purchase intentions, suggesting that authenticity alone is not always decisive. Similarly, Boerman et al. (2017) in The Effect of Sponsorship Disclosure on Perceived Trustworthiness and Purchase Intentions in Influencer Marketing found that factors such as sponsorship disclosure and perceived trustworthiness significantly influence purchase intentions, indicating that authenticity may enhance trustworthiness but does not directly impact consumer behavior.

In H_{1c} , (E) Engagement and responsiveness positively affect purchase intentions, with a beta of 0.302 and a t-value of 5.889 ($p < 0.000$), aligning with Horanage and Hautala (2021). Their research suggests that active engagement by influencers drives higher consumer interaction, which in turn strengthens purchase intentions. Similarly, a study by Lim et al. (2017) found that influencers' interactive communication with followers enhances trust and purchase intentions, highlighting the importance of engagement in influencer marketing.

In H_{1d} , (S) Social Proof positively affects purchase intentions, with a beta of 0.144 and a t-value of 2.334 ($p < 0.020$). This finding is consistent with Liu et al. (2021), who showed that social proof, such as likes, shares, and comments, builds trust and positively impacts consumer purchase behavior. Similarly, Gunawan and Huarng (2015) found that social influence through social networks, including viral effects of likes and shares, significantly enhances consumer attitudes toward brands, ultimately increasing purchase intentions.

Finally, In H_{1e} , (B) Consistency in Brand Alignment positively affects purchase intentions, with a beta of 0.449 and a t-value of 8.216 ($p < 0.000$). This finding aligns with research by Li et al. (2024), which indicates that when influencers consistently align their content with a brand's values, consumer trust is strengthened, leading to higher purchase intentions. Similarly, Breves et al. (2019) found that consistent brand-influencer alignment enhances perceived authenticity and trustworthiness, significantly impacting consumer purchase behavior. Additionally, a study by Schouten et al. (2020) demonstrated that congruence between influencer and brand image positively affects consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of consistent brand alignment in influencer marketing strategies.

Previous research has predominantly focused on the credibility of influencers. However, this study underscores the paramount importance of consistency in brand alignment among influencers. The findings reveal that micro-influencers who consistently present the same brand, genuinely showcase the inherent value of products and services, and provide natural, unprompted reviews foster a higher level of trustworthiness. This consistency in brand messaging and authentic representation of products significantly enhances the perceived reliability and credibility of the influencer, thereby strengthening customer trustworthiness.

Recommendation

Implications for practice

The results highlight the significant role of micro-influencer trustworthiness in driving purchase intentions, with credibility, engagement and responsiveness, social proof, and consistency in brand alignment emerging as critical determinants. The acceptance of these hypotheses underscores the importance of selecting influencers who demonstrate expertise, interact actively with their audience, and align consistently with brand values, as these factors enhance consumer trust and purchasing behavior. The significant impact of social proof suggests that consumers are influenced by the perceived popularity of influencers, making metrics such as likes, shares, and comments crucial for effective campaigns. However, the lack of significance for authenticity indicates that while it may contribute indirectly, other constructs like credibility and brand alignment hold greater weight in influencing purchase intentions. These findings suggest that marketers should prioritize building multi-dimensional trustworthiness in influencer partnerships, focusing on engagement, social validation, and strategic brand alignment to optimize the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies.

Research limitations and future research

To delve deeper into the trustworthiness of micro-influencers and their impact on consumer purchase intentions, it is recommended to integrate qualitative research methodologies such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions alongside the administration of questionnaires. This multifaceted approach is designed to capture richer and more nuanced insights, empowering marketers, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders to devise strategies aimed at improving the accessibility of products and services to consumers

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