



CELEBRITY AND MICRO-INFLUENCER ENDORSEMENTS: IMPACT ON MARKETING OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a systematic literature review examining the impact of celebrity and micro influencer endorsements on marketing outcomes within social media platforms. As brands shift from traditional advertising to influencer-based strategies, this review synthesizes empirical and theoretical insights from peer-reviewed studies published between 2013 and 2024. Using PRISMA guidelines and VOSviewer-based bibliometric analysis, the review categorizes influencers by type and evaluates their effectiveness in driving brand awareness, trust, engagement, and purchase intention. Findings reveal that while celebrity influencers offer broad visibility, micro-influencers generate higher engagement and trust due to perceived authenticity and community bonding. The review also identifies emerging trends, key conceptual themes, and methodological gaps in the literature. Strategic recommendations emphasize the need for authenticity-centered, data-driven influencer selection aligned with brand identity. Additionally, challenges such as content oversaturation and the ethical use of AI influencers are addressed. This review contributes to a nuanced understanding of influencer marketing and outlines future research directions, including cross-cultural studies and long-term impact analysis.

Keywords: **authenticity, consumer engagement, influencer marketing, micro-influencer, social media**

1. INTRODUCTION

The advent of social media has fundamentally transformed marketing paradigms, particularly spotlighting influencer marketing as a driving force in shaping consumer behavior. This shift underscores a significant departure from traditional marketing strategies, positioning influencers as critical stakeholders in the evolving brand-consumer relationship. Unlike conventional advertisements that rely on scripted and impersonal messaging, influencer marketing leverages perceived authenticity and trustworthiness. Individuals with a substantial digital presence now serve as conduits for brand communication, wielding considerable persuasive power over their audiences (Joshi et al., 2025; Kalam et al., 2024; Wahab et al., 2025).

At the heart of influencer marketing lies the unique interplay between credibility, relatability, and content personalization. Social media influencers—ranging from celebrities with millions of followers to micro-influencers who cultivate tight-knit communities—are often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy compared to corporate brand voices. Their ability to generate relatable and engaging content enables them to influence consumer decisions more effectively. The alignment between an influencer's personal values and the brand's ethos significantly enhances message credibility. When such congruence exists, it fosters stronger emotional resonance with the target audience, ultimately resulting in increased campaign effectiveness and consumer loyalty (Ashraf et al., 2023; Shah et al., 2023).

Research has further demonstrated that influencers capable of forming genuine connections with their followers often serve as trusted opinion leaders within their respective niches. These emotional connections foster a sense of community and shared identity, enabling influencers to act as powerful mediators between brands and consumers. This trust-driven dynamic is particularly vital in today's digital landscape, where consumers are increasingly skeptical of overt, traditional advertising formats. Influencers who maintain authenticity in their content can mitigate such skepticism, making their endorsements appear more organic and persuasive (Thomas et al., 2024; Wahab et al., 2022).

Authenticity, in this context, extends beyond mere transparency. It encompasses a consistent and credible representation of the influencer's persona, lifestyle, and values. This authenticity drives higher engagement rates and enhances the perceived value of endorsed products or services. Studies have found that authentic content not only increases consumer trust but also reinforces brand image and encourages long-term consumer relationships Černikovaitė & Karazijienė, (2023); Chan et al., (2023). Furthermore, the type of content disseminated by influencers—whether educational, entertaining, or lifestyle-oriented—plays a critical role in determining the impact of the endorsement. Informative and engaging content strategies are often more successful in capturing attention and prompting consumer action (Libai et al., 2025; Rialti et al., 2024).

Despite the growing body of literature on influencer marketing, significant gaps remain in understanding the differential impact of various influencer types. While celebrity endorsements have long been a staple in marketing campaigns, recent years have witnessed a surge in the effectiveness of micro- and nano-influencers. These influencers, though having smaller follower counts, often boast higher engagement rates and stronger community bonds. Their niche focus allows them to cater to specific audience interests with a perceived higher degree of authenticity. However, comparative evaluations across influencer types concerning their impact on key marketing outcomes—such as brand awareness, trust, engagement, and purchase intention—remain fragmented and inconclusive (Chhabra et al., 2025; Gupta et al., 2025).

This lack of clarity presents a pressing problem for marketers and scholars alike. Without a consolidated understanding of how different influencer categories influence marketing outcomes, brands may misallocate resources or adopt strategies that fail to yield desired results. Additionally, the inconsistent terminology and methodological diversity across studies further complicate the synthesis of findings in this area. As influencer marketing continues to evolve and mature, there is a



critical need for a systematic and comprehensive review that maps the current knowledge landscape, identifies dominant themes and gaps, and offers insights into the strategic use of influencer endorsements (Karamchandani et al., 2025).

In response to this need, the present study conducts a systematic literature review titled "From Celebrity to Micro-Influencer: A Systematic Review of Endorsement Types and Their Impact on Marketing Outcomes." The primary objective of this review is to analyze and synthesize existing empirical and theoretical literature that compares different influencer types and their effectiveness in achieving key marketing goals. By categorizing influencers into groups such as celebrities, macro-influencers, and micro-influencers, this review seeks to uncover patterns, highlight discrepancies, and assess the moderating or mediating variables that shape campaign outcomes (Conde & Casais, 2023; Z. Guo et al., 2025; Mucundorfeanu et al., 2025).

Two key research questions guide this review:

1. What types of influencer endorsements are commonly studied in marketing literature?
2. What are the mediating or moderating factors influencing the effectiveness of influencer endorsements?

The scope of this review is confined to peer-reviewed studies published between 2013 and 2024 that focus on influencer marketing within the context of social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter. Studies selected for review examine marketing outcomes including, but not limited to, brand awareness, consumer trust, engagement, purchase intention, and brand loyalty. Articles that focus solely on traditional media or lack empirical grounding were excluded to maintain relevance and rigor (Bu et al., 2022; Thomas et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2025).

This review contributes to the academic and practical understanding of influencer marketing in several ways. First, it clarifies the conceptual distinctions between different influencer types and their relative effectiveness. Second, it highlights the contextual and psychological mechanisms that underlie successful influencer-brand partnerships. Third, it provides marketers with evidence-based recommendations for selecting appropriate influencer strategies based on campaign objectives and audience characteristics. Finally, by identifying under-researched areas, this review lays the groundwork for future studies that can deepen and broaden the field's theoretical and practical insight (Lou et al., 2023; Sharma, 2025; Wahba et al., 2025).

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. The next section outlines the methodology employed in conducting the systematic review, including database selection, inclusion criteria, and analytical procedures. This is followed by the results section, which presents key findings organized by influencer type and marketing outcome. The discussion section interprets these findings in relation to existing theories and practical implications. Finally, the paper concludes by summarizing the main contributions, limitations, and directions for future research. (Azhar et al., 2024; M. J. D. B. Silva et al., 2025; Syrdal et al., 2023)

By undertaking a systematic and critical examination of influencer types and their marketing impact, this review aims to advance scholarly understanding and inform more effective marketing

practices in the digital age. As brands increasingly rely on influencers to communicate with consumers, a nuanced comprehension of how and why these endorsements work—and under what conditions they are most effective—becomes essential for maximizing return on investment and building lasting brand equity (Y. Chen et al., 2024; Evans et al., 2022; Laor, 2024).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design and Objectives

This systematic literature review aims to synthesize empirical and theoretical research comparing various types of influencer endorsements—ranging from celebrities to micro-influencers—and their effects on consumer behavior and marketing outcomes. Guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework, this review addresses three core research questions: (1) What types of influencer endorsements are commonly studied in marketing literature? (2) How do different influencer types, particularly celebrities compared to micro-influencers, impact consumer behavior and marketing outcomes? (3) What are the mediating or moderating factors that influence the effectiveness of influencer endorsements?

2.2. Search Strategy

A comprehensive and systematic search was conducted across several academic databases including Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and Emerald Insight. The search utilized Boolean operators and keyword combinations to capture the breadth of relevant literature. Key phrases included “influencer endorsement” AND “marketing outcomes,” “celebrity endorsement” OR “micro-influencer” AND “consumer behavior,” and “social media influencer” AND “brand engagement” OR “purchase intention.” To ensure contemporary relevance, the search was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2013 and 2024 and written in English (Benevento et al., 2025; Fang et al., 2025; M. J. B. Silva et al., 2023).

2.3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To maintain analytical focus and methodological rigor, clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were established. Articles were included if they met the following conditions: (1) they were empirical studies or systematic reviews, (2) focused on influencer or celebrity endorsements, (3) analyzed outcomes such as brand awareness, brand trust, engagement, or purchase intention, and (4) were situated within the context of social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, or TikTok. Studies were excluded if they were non-peer-reviewed (e.g., blogs, opinion pieces), addressed only traditional media, or were not available in full text (Jha & Ray, 2023; Tser-Yieth et al., 2025; Vo et al., 2025)

All retrieved references were imported into reference management software such as Mendeley and Zotero to streamline the organization and eliminate duplicate entries. The study selection involved a multi-phase screening process. First, titles and abstracts were assessed for relevance. Articles that passed this stage underwent full-text screening to confirm compliance with



the inclusion criteria. This process is detailed in the PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1), which visually illustrates the identification, screening, eligibility, and final inclusion phases.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication year	2019 – 2024	Other than 2020-2025
Language	English	Non-English
Article Types	Research Article	Non-Research Article
Publication title	Business Research and Social Science	Non-Business Research & Non-Social Science
Subject area	Business, Management, Accounting, & Social Science	Non-Business, Management, Accounting, & Social Science
Paper status	Open Access	Closed Access

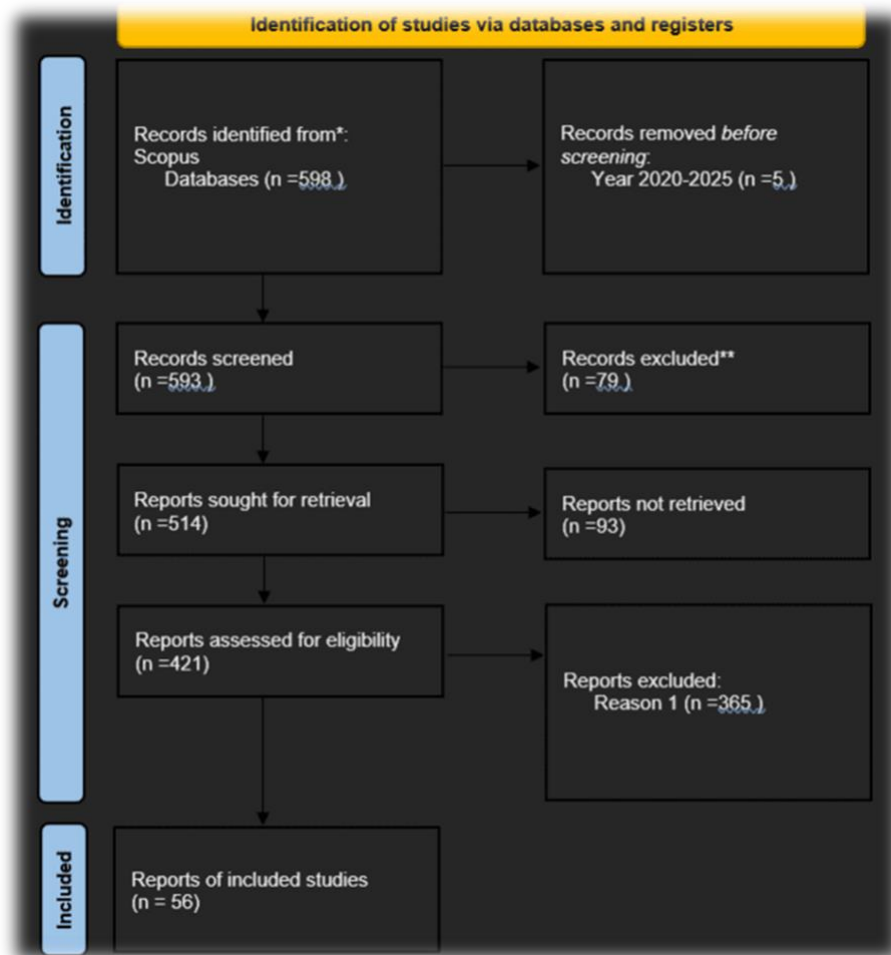


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of Study Selection

Source: Author's own work

2.4. Data Extraction

Data were extracted using a standardized coding sheet created in Microsoft Excel. This sheet captured key characteristics of each study, including author(s), year of publication, geographic context, influencer type (e.g., celebrity, macro-, or micro-influencer), marketing outcomes, platform focus, and major findings. Two independent reviewers conducted the data extraction to ensure accuracy and reduce bias. Any discrepancies in data coding were resolved through discussion and consensus (S. C. Silva et al., 2025; Walter et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2025).

2.5. Data Analysis and Synthesis

To extract meaningful insights from the selected literature, a thematic synthesis method was applied. This involved systematically coding the extracted data to identify recurring patterns and key differences in influencer types and their associated marketing outcomes. The initial coding process allowed for the organization of findings into conceptual categories, which were then synthesized into broader themes aligned with the review's core research questions. This approach enabled the integration of diverse qualitative insights, ensuring both analytical depth and consistency across the studies reviewed.

To complement the thematic analysis, a bibliometric analysis was also performed using VOSviewer software (version 1.6.18). This analysis helped uncover the conceptual structure and research trends within the influencer marketing domain by mapping the relationships between frequently used keywords and prominent authors. Only terms that appeared in a minimum of five distinct articles were included to ensure analytical relevance. Irrelevant or overly general terms were removed through a custom thesaurus to maintain focus on topic-specific language (Dong et al., 2024; Fayyaz et al., 2025; Vassey et al., 2025).

The bibliometric results revealed distinct clusters of keywords representing the dominant thematic areas of the literature, such as authenticity, consumer trust, engagement, and purchase intention. These clusters indicated how key concepts are interconnected and frequently co-occur in influencer marketing research. The visualization also highlighted central terms that serve as conceptual hubs, underscoring their importance in the discourse. This bibliometric perspective added an additional layer of insight, clarifying how the academic conversation around influencer endorsement has evolved and where it currently concentrates (N. Chen & Yang, 2023; Hsieh, 2023; Mulholland et al., 2025).

2.6. Quality Assurance and Rigor

To ensure the methodological integrity of this review, each selected study was assessed for quality based on its design, sample, clarity of findings, and relevance to the research objectives. Studies that did not meet minimum methodological standards were excluded. Inter-rater reliability was calculated for both screening and extraction phases, with agreement levels exceeding 85%.



This multi-method analytical approach, integrating both thematic and bibliometric methods, enhances the depth and breadth of the synthesis, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the role and impact of influencer types in digital marketing strategies (Weiger et al., 2025; Xu et al., 2023).

3. 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Bibliometric Analysis

Network Visualization The bibliometric analysis of selected articles (2019–2024) was conducted using VOSviewer software to identify keyword co-occurrence and conceptual trends in influencer marketing. Figure 1 illustrates the network visualization which maps frequently co-occurring terms. The color-coded clusters show key themes: the green cluster emphasizes core marketing concepts like "marketing," "interaction," and "effectiveness"; the red cluster focuses on endorsement mechanisms and platforms such as "Instagram," "brand attitude," and "purchase intention"; the blue cluster contains influencer typologies such as "micro-influencer" and "mega-influencer." These clusters suggest an integrated research landscape where influencer types, marketing channels, and psychological constructs converge.

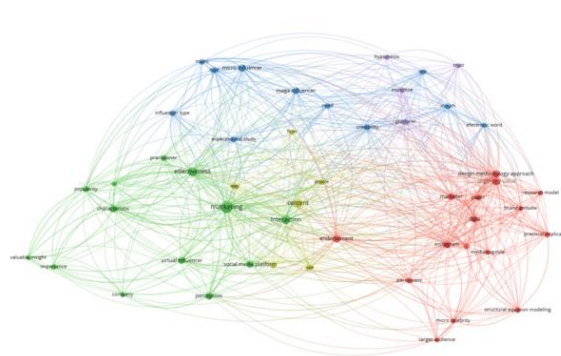


Figure 1. Network Visualization

Source: Authors' Own Work

Overlay Visualization In Figure 2, the overlay visualization maps keyword usage over time. Darker colors indicate older studies, while lighter hues represent recent publications. The shift from general marketing concepts (e.g., "effectiveness," "content") to more specific and current themes like "micro-celebrity," "structural equation modeling," and "Instagram" suggests the field is maturing and becoming increasingly specialized.

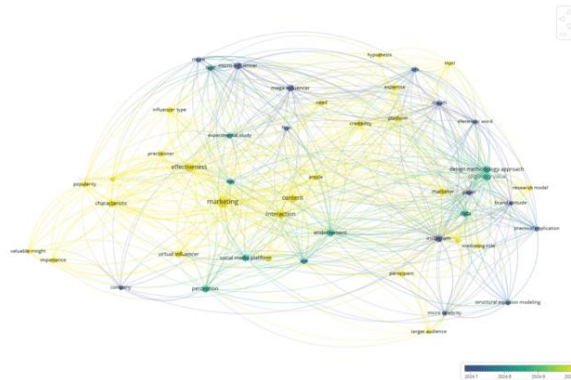


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization
Source: Authors' Own Work

Density Visualization Figure 3 displays the density visualization, highlighting the most frequently addressed terms in influencer marketing. Central themes include "marketing," "interaction," "endorsement," and "data," which form the foundation of current scholarly focus. High-density nodes reflect topics with strong scholarly interest, supporting the identification of research gaps.

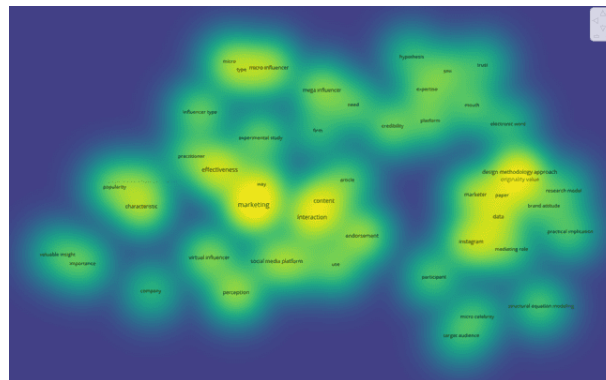


Figure 3. Density Visualization
Source: Authors' Own Work

These visualizations collectively demonstrate the field's evolution, with increased emphasis on digital platforms, psychological metrics, and influencer categorization. The convergence of terms like "micro-influencer," "brand attitude," and "purchase intention" indicates the academic community's growing interest in assessing tangible marketing outcomes from endorsement strategies.

3.2. Thematic Synthesis

Evolution of Influencer Marketing The transition from traditional marketing to influencer-driven strategies marks a fundamental shift in brand communication. Traditional top-down



approaches are being replaced by collaborative, trust-based influencer partnerships. Influencers bridge the gap between brands and consumers by creating authentic, relatable content that significantly influences purchasing behavior (Ashraf et al., 2023; Shah et al., 2023).

Authenticity and Trust Influencer marketing thrives on personal narratives and emotional resonance. Influencers share real-life experiences, making endorsements more persuasive than conventional advertisements. Studies emphasize that influencer authenticity and content credibility are central to consumer engagement. When influencers align with brand values, they build stronger emotional connections with audiences, enhancing brand trust and loyalty (Černikovaitė & Karazijienė, 2023; Wahab et al., 2025).

Micro- vs. Celebrity Influencers While celebrity endorsements offer broad visibility, micro-influencers provide deeper engagement through niche community building. Their higher follower interaction rates and perceived accessibility make them effective in driving purchase intentions and brand attitudes. Recent studies suggest that micro-influencers, due to their relatability, outperform celebrities in fostering genuine consumer trust (Li et al., 2024; Rialti et al., 2024).

Platform Dynamics and Engagement Platforms like Instagram and TikTok facilitate two-way communication, enabling influencers to engage in real-time with followers. This dynamic builds parasocial relationships—perceived personal bonds between influencer and follower—that enhance persuasive messaging. Visual storytelling on these platforms also boosts memory retention and emotional impact (Gerritsen & de Regt, 2025; Joshi et al., 2025).

Strategic Challenges and Opportunities Despite its effectiveness, influencer marketing presents challenges such as content saturation and trust erosion. Consumers are increasingly discerning, often detecting inauthentic promotions. Therefore, strategic alignment between influencers and brand identity is crucial. The rise of AI influencers also opens new opportunities and raises ethical questions around authenticity and transparency (S. Guo et al., 2024; Kalam et al., 2024).

3.3. Strategic Implications

Authenticity-Centered Strategy The success of influencer campaigns hinges on authenticity, consistency, and audience alignment. Brands must invest in thorough influencer vetting and long-term partnerships rather than one-off promotions. (Boukis et al., 2025; Cao et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025). **Data-Driven Selection and ROI** Data analytics should guide influencer selection based on audience overlap, engagement metrics, and content style. These practices ensure optimal return on investment (ROI) and sustained brand equity. (Abdullah & Ampauleng, 2024; Rialti et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2025).

Directions for Future Research Influencer marketing is evolving into a data-driven, authenticity-centered discipline. Future research should explore cross-cultural differences, AI influencer impact, and longitudinal outcomes to further deepen understanding in this domain (Ceylan & Hayran, 2025; Gupta et al., 2025; Ma et al., 2025).

4. Conclusion

This systematic literature review has explored the evolving landscape of influencer marketing, with a particular focus on the comparative effectiveness of celebrity and micro-influencer endorsements. Through thematic synthesis and bibliometric analysis, the review highlights the central role of authenticity, trust, and audience alignment in shaping marketing outcomes such as brand awareness, purchase intention, and consumer engagement.

The findings underscore that while celebrity influencers offer extensive reach, micro-influencers drive deeper connections and higher engagement due to their perceived relatability and niche community focus. This shift toward micro-influencers reflects broader changes in consumer preferences, which increasingly prioritize authenticity over popularity. Moreover, the rise of social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok has further amplified the importance of personalized, interactive content in building brand-consumer relationships.

Strategically, the review recommends a shift from transactional, one-off influencer campaigns to long-term partnerships based on value congruence and audience insights. Data-driven influencer selection, informed by engagement metrics and content alignment, is critical to maximizing return on investment (ROI). The study also highlights emerging challenges such as content saturation, influencer credibility, and the ethical implications of AI-generated influencers.

For future research, there is a clear need to examine the cross-cultural dimensions of influencer marketing, assess the long-term brand equity impact of influencer collaborations, and explore the evolving role of digital platforms in shaping consumer behavior. As the influencer marketing ecosystem continues to grow in complexity, marketers and scholars alike must adapt by embracing more nuanced, evidence-based strategies.

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