The Impact of Social Media Influencers characteristics on Customers' purchase Intension in the Egyptian Market

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Abstract

Purpose – This study focuses on social media influencers' characteristics to assess their impact on customers' purchase intention. Thus, it aimed to investigate the impact of social media influencers' Physical appearance (Attractiveness), Trustworthiness (honesty), and Expertise on consumers' purchase intention.

Design/methodology/approach – The questionnaire was created and shared online via Google Forms to the consumers in Egypt. The online survey covered the four social media platforms; YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. A quota sampling technique was used in the study to obtain responses, as only those respondents who were active users of social media were included in the study. 130 responses were obtained, of which 125 respondents followed a social media influencer, so only 5 were excluded.

Findings – The findings revealed that the personal characteristics of social media influencers affect consumers' purchase intention; Attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise had significant direct effects on consumers' purchase intention. Besides, the results revealed that the most important factor influencing customer purchase intention is the attractiveness of the influencer, while the lowest impact was for expertise of the influencers.

Originality/value – Although there are many previous studies done in other countries regarding the impact of Social Media Influencers on Customers' Buying Intension, there are very few similar studies in Egypt and most of these studies were testing the impact of the influencers' message content not the characteristics of the influencer and a study of (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022) included the influencer characteristics but without testing and recommended further testing in Egypt. So, the findings of this study add to the current literature by filling this gap and explaining the role of the influencer's characteristics in affecting the purchase intention of consumers in the Egyptian market.

Keywords Social media influencers, customers' purchase intention, Physical appearance (Attractiveness), Trustworthy (honesty), Expertise

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Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Social media usage has increased recently, it has become a daily habit for its users (Pentina, Guilloux, & Micu, 2018). Globally, social media channels provide great access to an immense variety of information about all kinds of industries like education, economics, tourism, healthcare, etc. (Chetioui, Benlafqih, & Lebdaoui, 2020). Social media has modified the communication space to a new configuration which significantly makes sure to be easily accessed, user-friendly, and economically. The increase in the popularity of social media encourages brands to assign social media influencers who can inscribe the brands on their channel, significantly affecting followers' perceptions through their communication style. A report published by the "World Federation of Advertisers" found that more than sixty-five percent of brands worldwide aim to advertise through social media influencers (Michel WEBER, 2020). Previously, firms appointed celebrities according to their social status and fame to advance their brands through classical media marketing techniques, like television, radio, newspaper, and billboards (Cant & Wiid, 2016); (Durmaz & Efendioglu, 2016). Now due to the growth of the internet and the rise of social media users globally, influencer marketing has become the rational next step of digital marketing (Jarrar, Awobamise, & Aderibigbe, 2020). Influencer marketing refers to presenting goods and services to followers on social media through influencers to make consumers realize the brand and promote buyers' interest and advantageous responses. So, through connection and interaction with influencers, customers can have a close bond with the brand and recognize the followers' commitment and how they become conscious on social media, forming an energetic span of brand information.

According to the Datareportal report "DIGITAL 2022: EGYPT" there were 59.19 million internet users in January 2021 in Egypt. The number of internet users in Egypt increased by 4.5 million (+8.1%) between 2020 and 2021. Internet penetration in Egypt stood at 57.3% in January 2021. There were 49.00 million social media users in Egypt in January 2021. The number of social media users in Egypt increased by 7.0 million (+17%) between 2020 and 20219. The number of social media users in Egypt was equivalent to 47.4% of the total population in January 2021. In January 2022, there were 2.5 million more active social media users in Egypt than in January 2021. The 51.5 million active social media users represent 70% of the Egyptian population aged 13 and above (49% of the overall population) (Kemp, 2021).

Because of the high rates mentioned above regarding social media interactions, many firms and brands started to think about how to take advantage of this new chance to penetrate their target markets. So, they started to realize that the role influencers play in convincing consumers' purchasing behavior is critical and is more effective than the role played through traditional marketing channels (Masuda, Han, & Lee, 2022).

Social media platforms have created new avenues for brands to advertise their products and services using social media influencers. Social media influencers (SMIs) are "Multiplatform high-profile Internet microcelebrities who accumulate a following on social media and/or blogs through the textual and visual narration of their personal lives and lifestyles and monetize their following by endorsing brands for a fee (Al Doghan, 2023). From this definition, it can be identified that SMIs are highly popular among their followers which is why they are termed as "microcelebrities." They gain popularity in terms of a high number of followers and reach due to their valuable and relatable content regarding a particular field or area (Al Doghan, 2023).

Brands increasingly use these SMIs to promote their products/services at a lower cost than they would have to pay a celebrity. Through social media and SMIs, these brands can communicate a more customized and targeted message to a specific audience, allowing for more reach and response by the right audience. For this reason, SMIs are sometimes referred to as opinion leaders, as their followers highly value their suggestions, recommendations, and opinions, as the followers or fans of these influencers keep them on a pedestal and regard their opinions as important because they believe that the influencer has sufficient knowledge and experience in that particular domain. Therefore, any suggestion and/or opinion provided by social media influencers on their platforms influences the followers to act or behave in a certain manner (Al Doghan, 2023).

So, it is clear that the concept of social media influencers is considered an evolution in marketing techniques and digital marketing as it has a great effect in one way or another on the customers' purchase intention. Although there are many previous studies done in other countries regarding the impact of Social Media Influencers on Customers' Buying Intension, there are very few similar studies in Egypt and most of these studies were testing the impact of the influencers' message content not the characteristics of the influencer and a study of (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022) included the influencer characteristics but without testing and recommended further testing. Also, in

Egypt, the criteria for choosing influencers are still not identified. Even though firms have been inspecting influencer marketing practices, related studies are still insufficient as there is still uncertainty about the effectiveness of influencer marketing especially in Egypt. Thus, it is important to interpret how influencers through social media can impact consumers' buying intention and investigate which personal characteristics of the influencer can motivate consumers' engagement toward certain products or services the most. So, the findings would help organizations to select the right influencer which can positively impact the volume of sales of the company and its profit.

So, this study aims to fill this gap by testing the role of the influencer's characteristics in affecting the purchase intention of consumers in the Egyptian market.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses development

Many studies investigated the relationship between using social media and customers' buying intention.

Uyar et al. (2018), examined 100 Turkish companies in 2014 and how their values were affected by social media and determined that a high level of social media engagement has a great relation to market value; while, the existence of a social media account and the number of social media tools used by a firm does not (Uyar, Boyar, & Kuzey, 2018). Other consideration was taken to show the effect of social media on a firm's stock prices that social media has a great effect on stock prices of publicly-traded companies while, this effect positive for a huge mass of followers (Paniagua & Sapena, 2014).

Mahboub (2018), investigated the impact of social media usage on the banking sector in different MENA countries by using Seven simple linear regression models to test this relation in 102 banks from 2012 through 2016. The study found a positive significant effect of using social media on financial and non-financial performance through the indicators of profitability, growth, and environmental performance of banks in the MENA countries (Mahboub, 2018).

Also, Darshan (2018), showed that car-buying decisions are greatly affected by social media. Most of the respondents were highly using social media resources for deciding on buying a particular car of a particular brand. Also, the study showed that socio-demographic factors such as age are positively related to the effect of social media. Customers in the younger ages are greatly affected by social media (Darshan, 2018).

Also, Fakhr Eldin, et al., (2020) found a positive impact on customer engagement (in terms of electronic word-of-mouth and customer inquiries) and brand performance (in terms of perceived brand image, customer loyalty, and retention). Also, they found that Facebook's impact is short-term as it achieves quick financial growth, while Instagram's impact is long-term, because it encourages higher customer engagement and better brand performance, which finally enhance financial growth (FakhrEldin, Shahin, & Miniesy, 2020).

On the contrary, Nurhandayani et al. (2019), found that the medial social influencer has a great effect on building the brand images, and it has a positive correlation. However, based on the study, using social media influencers to affect consumers' purchase intention had no significant impact, it will only aid the brand to build a considered image in consumers' minds then the brand image directing their contemplation to buy (Nurhandayani, Syarief, & Najib, 2019).

Finally, the use of social media platforms to form, raise posts, and manage different sites to attract customers leads to increased awareness, and product interest and consequently affects buying intention (Batra & Keller, 2016); (Majeed, Owusu-Ansah, & Ashmond, 2021).

2.1 Social Media Influencers' characteristics and customers' buying intension:

Nowadays, with the internet breakthrough in a change in digital media, Influencers have become the new role models and opinion leaders. People perceive those influencers as trustworthy, credible, and "accessible experts" (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022).

This growth of social media influencers has thus begun taking the eyes of researchers in the past years. Their influence on their audience is starting to increase, and they are playing a huge role now in shaping the attitudes and opinions of the public, whether by influencing them to live a certain lifestyle or to buy certain brands (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022).

Therefore, SMI increases the chances of the willingness of the customer to purchase as it affects purchase intention which can be defined as either "an individual's deliberate plan to make an effort to buy a product" (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021) or, as "a consumer's conscious plan or intention to make an effort to purchase a product" (Al Doghan, 2023).

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Several scholars have testified that social media plays a significant impact in persuading consumers' intentions and attitudes toward products (Nekmahmud, 2022).

Aggad and Ahmad (2021), investigate the impact of social media influencers' personality, content, and trustworthiness on consumers' purchase intention and eWOM towards different brands in Saudi Arabia. The results reveal that social media influencers' personality, content, and trustworthiness significantly impact consumers' purchase intention and eWOM (Aggad & Ahmad, 2021).

Also, Mabkhot, Isa, & Mabkhot (2022) study the influence of SMIs and credibility on consumers' purchase intentions among customers during the COVID-19 pandemic in Saudi Arabia using five dimensions: "expertise, likability trustworthiness, information quality, and entertainment value. This study's finding points out a significant link between SMIs and consumer intention to purchase. However, there are concerns about how trustworthy influencers and their ads are, as their ads sometimes advertise products that are not of good quality, which results in customers feeling tricked (Mabkhot, Isa, & Mabkhot, 2022).

Moreover, Pornpoj, Wasutida, & and Pathom (2021), explore the impact of online influencers on consumers' purchasing Japanese food in Bangkok, Thailand. The results reveal that the credibility of online influencers had the most influence on consumers' purchase intention, followed by the attractiveness of online influencers and trust in online influencers. However, expertise-online influencers did not significantly influence consumers' intent to purchase Japanese food (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021).

Another research by Faizan & Saad Ullah (2022), investigates the impact of social media influencer's credibility dimensions (Trustworthiness, Attractiveness, and Expertise), in shaping consumer behavior (Purchasing intention of customers and customer's attitudes toward the brand). Results reveal that social media influencer's credibility dimension (Trustworthiness, Attractiveness, and Expertise) positively influences the customer's attitude toward the brands as well as the purchase intentions of the customers (Faizan & Saad Ullah, 2022).

While, the study of Gomes, Marques, & Dias (2022), investigates the direct and indirect relationships of trustworthiness, expertise, content quality, similarity, para-social interaction, and attitude towards sponsored posts on purchase intention. Results indicate that blog content quality and para-social interaction positively influence purchase intention in fashion brands. Additionally, blog content quality plays a mediating role between trustworthiness and purchase intention. Moreover, consumers' attitudes towards sponsored posts affect directly and positively purchase intention and mediate the relationship between trustworthiness and purchase intention. Consumers' attitude toward sponsored posts was also found to mediate the relationship between expertise and purchase intention (Gomes, Marques, & Dias, 2022).

So, this paper will study three factors that the researchers believe are the main contributor to the change in the customers buying intention after reviewing the relevant literature which are Physical appearance (Attractiveness), Trustworthiness (honesty), and Expertise.

Based on the previous discussion, although there are many previous studies done in other countries regarding the impact of Social Media Influencers on Customers' Buying intentions, there are very few similar studies in Egypt and most of these studies tested the impact of the influencers' message content not the characteristics of the influencer.

So, this study aims to fill this gap by testing the role of the influencer's characteristics in affecting the purchase intention of consumers in the Egyptian market.

2.1.1 Relationship between social media influencer's attractiveness and customers' purchase intention.

Another critical factor when evaluating an endorser is source attractiveness. The term source attractiveness describes the unique physical characteristics of a source or endorser that attract the viewer's attention, it is defined as "the degree to which a stimulus person's facial features are pleasing to observe". Another definition by Wei and Li (2013) is "the endorser's appealing nature – such as physical beauty, personality, familiarity and likeability to consumers". Therefore, features such as sex appeal, beauty, and figure are usually stressed and highlighted when endorsing a product (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022).

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Also, Baker et al. (1977) defined attractiveness as face and physical beauty, as well as sensuality (Rogers, 1980). According to previous research on marketing and persuasion, appearance plays a crucial role in the first evaluation (Faizan & Saad Ullah, 2022). The physical attractiveness of social media influencers can be represented by posts and pictures continuously uploaded to their social media platforms. This is the point of engagement between the social media influencer and targeted customers. Social media influencer with stunning appearance has more propensities to attract customer's attention (Lim, Rozaini, Radzol, Cheah, & Wong, 2017). From the consumer perspective, they always follow people who look attractive to others. Also, some influencers who look and feel beautiful are pretty, handsome, or clever, the followers will imitate their appealing lifestyle, such as dressing like influencers or eating like influencers. Attractiveness influencers can bring followers and sponsors to support them because they want influencers to represent their products. The followers drawn in by influencers will seek out the product and make the same purchasing decision as the influencer (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021).

Comparing physical attractiveness and non-physical influencers, most attractive influencers have firm beliefs, are liked, and engage more. Also, the beautiful influencer will lead to customer purchase intent, which means that attractiveness could easily positively affect deciding to purchase (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021).

Several previous studies have shown that the attractiveness of social media influencers would form a highly favorable attitude among customers toward a brand or product, evolving in buying intention (Lim, Rozaini, Radzol, Cheah, & Wong, 2017), (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021), (Matthew, Yu-Ying, & Jiang, 2007).

Matthew et al. (2007), found that endorsers' attractiveness, could affect consumers' purchase intention more significantly in the Chinese sports market (Matthew, Yu-Ying, & Jiang, 2007). Practically speaking, the result suggests that companies that are related to sports should try their best to choose a highly attractive athlete endorser with outstanding performance and good morality to increase consumers' purchase intention.

Also, Wei et al. (2021), found that social media influencers' similarity and attractiveness were the two positive and significant indicators of customers' buying intention. While reliability, expertise, and respect, did not greatly affect customers ' buying intention (Wei, Singh, & Kularajasingam, 2021). While on the contrary, Lim et al., (2017) found that the source attractiveness of social media influencers didn't influence customers' buying intention (Lim, Rozaini, Radzol, Cheah, & Wong, 2017).

Thus, we developed the following hypotheses:

H1: *There is a significant relationship between social media influencer's attractiveness and the customers' purchase intention.*

Relationship between social media influencer's expertise and customers' purchase intention.

Another dimension that affects influencer reliability is expertise (Ohanian, 1990) since it establishes a strong link between the endorser and the endorsed product in customers' minds (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022).

Expertise is defined as the knowledge and level of expertise the endorser has in the specific area related to the product, or simply how well an individual knows about a product. The more experienced a source is, the more they tend to be more believable, resulting in a positive consumer attitude and impacting their purchase intentions (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022).

It can also be circumscribed as the extent to which the influencer is recognized to have the appropriate knowledge, experience, or skills to promote the products. The social media influencers used the expression of expertise to represent product-related tasks successfully (Alba & Hutchinson, 2007). Influencers use their expertise to post about the brands and products on social media and their followers usually see these messages about brands and products as more credible and trustworthy than paid sponsorship ads. Therefore, expert sources are more qualified to persuade customers to buy a certain product, as the level of experience an endorser has in a specific area, makes them regarded as persuasive in the eyes of the target audience (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022). As stated by Chetioui et al. (2020) "expert is generally perceived as highly qualified and therefore more likely to make assessments that are accurate and valid" (Gomes, Marques, & Dias, 2022).

Several past studies have shown that source expertise is related to customers' purchase intention; This was also proven by Ohanian, (1990) who interpreted that expertise as the degree to which the influencer as a communicator is assumed to be a source of reliable declaration (Ohanian, 1990).

Also, Martensen et al. (2018) concluded that expertise contributes to the persuasiveness of citizen influencers (Martensen, Brockenhuus-Schack, & Zahid, 2018). Moreover, a study by Chekima et al., (2020) included 126 Malaysian customers and found that the expertise aspect of source credibility had a great and positive impact on customer attitudes towards advertisement. This further affected the buying decisions of customers (Chekima, Chekima, & Adis, 2020). In addition, Ki and Kim (2019) confirmed that expertise can have a positive impact on consumers' attitudes, which through their desire to imitate digital influencers may result in a great purchase intention (Gomes, Marques, & Dias, 2022).

While on the other side, some studies have shown that the influencer's expertise did not positively and greatly affect customers purchasing behavior (Balabanis & Chatzopoulou, 2019); (Schouten, Janssen, & Verspaget, 2020). Where, Wei et al. (2021), in research aimed to explore the relationship between social media influencers and the intention to purchase by Malaysian females, it was found that source expertise showed an insignificant impact on the intention to purchase (Wei, Singh, & Kularajasingam, 2021).

Thus, we developed the following hypotheses:

H₂: *There is a significant relationship between social media influencers' expertise and the customer's purchase intention.*

2.1.3. Relationship between social media influencer's Trustworthiness and customers' purchase intention.

Trustworthiness is the credibility, honesty, and integrity the influencer owns (Waldt, Loggerenberg, & Wehmeyer, 2009) and is perceived in customers' minds (Aggad & Ahmad, 2021).

Moreover, trustworthiness is how neutral the followers recognize the influencer (Waldt, Loggerenberg, & Wehmeyer, 2009). Also, Wei et al. (2021), mentioned that trustworthiness can be transferred into believability, integrity, and expertise (Wei, Singh, & Kularajasingam, 2021). Trustworthiness is one of the aspects of the influencer's reliability to exert an effect upon their followers, Brown and Hayes (2008) declared that 54% of consumers would suggest the products bought to others if the firm gained a customer's trust (Brown & Hayes, 2008). In the digital world, companies are

increasingly seeking out influencers who are trusted by their followers (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022), to achieve this trust in the firm as Customers are more likely to trust the products proposed by social media influencers, they feel reliable (Shixi, Cuiqing, Zhangxi, & Yong, 2015). Thus, an endorser trusted and liked by others will automatically lead to liking and trusting the brand or product endorsed by them (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022); (Aggad & Ahmad, 2021).

Different dimensions of believability have been determined by researchers previously, but experience and trustworthiness are still considered the basic features of credibility (Pornpltakp, 2004).

Several previous studies have shown that influencer trustworthiness has an effect on customers' behavior and buying intention (Weismueller, Harrigan, & Soutar, 2020); (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018); (Wiedmann & Mettenheim, 2021).

Abdullah et al. (2020), Findings indicate that likability, trustworthiness, and familiarity are key factors that influence Instagram users' purchase intention towards fashion products. The study has implications for marketing strategy as social media influencer like Instagram has a powerful impact on effective marketing strategies (Abdullah, Deraman, Zainuddin, Azmi, & al., 2020).

Similarly, a study by Wiedmann and Mettenheim (2021) involving 288 participants concluded that trustworthiness was the strongest indicator of intention to buy products and services (Wiedmann & Mettenheim, 2021).

Similarly, Bhuvaneswari & Bharagath (2021), found that there is a positive relation between influencers' experience and reliability and the customers' buying intention, in other words, the greater a person feels that the influencer is honest and qualified the more customers are going to follow the influencer's recommendations (Bhuvaneswari & Bharagath, 2021).

Also, Halim et al. (3014), revealed that trust is the main characteristic of the Influencer which positively influences the Instagram user's purchase intention. An Influencer who has a large number of followers may not necessarily be used as an appropriate promotional strategy. A large number of followers is not enough to determine an Influencer but trust in the Influencer's characteristics will influence Instagram users to have purchase intention (Halim, Puspokusumo, Rianto, & Hebrard, 2020; Paniagua & Sapena, 2014).

Also, Saima & Khan (2020), concluded that the experience and trustworthiness of the influencer are from the factors which affect the buying intention of the customers (Saima & Khan, 2020).

Moreover, Dalangin et al. (2021), found that social media influencers have a great effect on the purchase intention of customers because most customers evaluate the effectiveness of the influencer by their reliability and honesty regarding the product offers, their trustworthiness in how they speak and give facts, and their attractiveness in terms of giving a sense of similarity to their viewers. Also, the research found that an influencer communicates and convinces people to be influential and can convert customer attitudes and actions toward a product (Dalangin, McArthur, Salvador, & Bismonte, 2021).

Also, the study of Ezenwafor et al. (2021), found that there is a great positive relation between buying intention and truthfulness, attractiveness, and influencer product match-up (Ezenwafor, Olise, & Ebizie, 2021). In addition, Liu (2021), revealed how influencer marketing in social media affects consumer engagement based on the Para-social relation, trustworthiness, and immersion theory (Liu, 2021).

In addition, Thanh, Tho, & and Quang, (2021), revealed that trustworthiness had a significant effect on source credibility consequently, it could be argued that trustworthiness causes more opinion exchanges compared to other heuristic factors, expertise is considered as the second factor which affects buying intension (Thanh, Tho, & Quang, 2021).

On the contrary, Aggad et al. (2021), concluded that the characteristics of the influencer, content by an influencer, and brand attitude positively affect consumers' purchase intention while the trustworthiness of the influencer does not affect consumer purchase intention. This indicates that consumers mainly recommend or appreciate a brand that popular influencers have recommended (Aggad & Ahmad, 2021).

Thus, we developed the following hypotheses:

H$_3$: *There is a significant relationship between social media influencer's trustworthiness and the customers' purchase intention.*
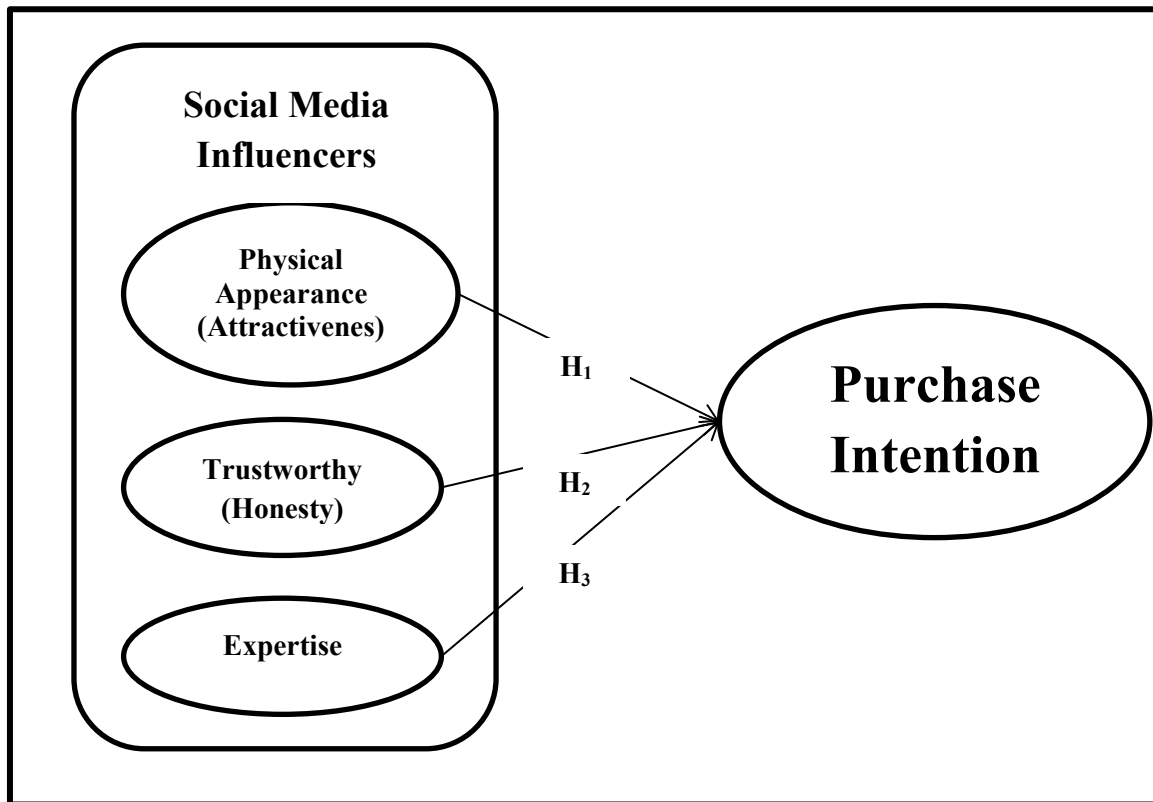
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Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

3.1. Instrument development

The instrument for this research was developed by adopting a 2-point scale. The scales to measure attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise were drawn from a study by (Ohanian, 1990). Purchase intention was measured by adopting scales from studies conducted (Kumar, 2011).

Sample and Data Collection

The questionnaire was created and shared online via Google Forms to the consumers in Egypt. Only those who were active on at least one social media platform were included in the survey. The online survey was conducted from June to October 2022, and the four social media platforms included in the online survey were YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. A filter question was asked to know whether the respondents followed any influencers on the social media platforms they used, and also to name one or two of their favorite

social media influencers whom they followed. Only if the respondents replied positively that they did follow an influencer on social media, they were taken to the next section of the questionnaire, which included the statements related to the factors taken in the study. A quota sampling technique was used in the study to obtain responses, as only those respondents who were active users of social media were included in the study. 130 responses were obtained, out of which 125 respondents followed a social media influencer, so only those 5 responses were utilized further for data analysis.

3.2. Data analysis

3.2.1. Respondents' demographic profile

The demographic profile of respondents is given below in Table 1. In terms of the respondents، educational qualification, 18.4% were Undergraduate, 49.6% were Graduate, 15.2% had a Master's degree, 15.2% had a Doctorate, and 1.6% had completed a Professional Diploma or Degree course. 100% of the respondents were daily users of social media. 43.2 of the users were active on Facebook, 40.8 on Instagram, 4.8 on TikTok, 3.2 on YouTube, and 8% on Twitter. 33.6% of the users spend 3-4 hours on social media, 26.4 spend 1-2 hours, 24% spend 5-6 hours, 7.2% of users spend 1 hour, and 8.8% spend more than 7 hours on social media. Among social media influencers followed, 43.2% of the respondents were following more than 6 influencers, 21.6% following 1 influencer, 14.4% following 2 influencers, 11.2% following 3 influencers, 6.4% following 3 influencers, and 3.2 following 5 influencers.

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Table 1. Respondents' demographic profile.

Profile	Characteristic	Frequency	Percent (%)
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate	23	18.4
	Graduate	62	49.6
	Master	19	15.2
	Doctorate	19	15.2
	Professional Diploma/Degree Course	2	1.6
Social media is used almost daily	Facebook	54	43.2
	Instagram	51	40.8
	TikTok	6	4.8
	Twitter	1	8
	YouTube	4	3.2
Time spent on social media every day	1 hour or less	99	7.2
	1-2 hours	33	26.4
	>2-4 hours	42	33.6
	>4-6 hours	30	24.0
	>6 hours	11	8.8
Number of SMI followers on social media	1	27	21.6
	2	18	14.4
	3	14	11.2
	4	8	6.4
	5	4	3.2
	More than 5	54	43.2

3.2.2. Data analysis procedure

The study used Logistic Regression to analyze the research hypotheses. Logistic regression is useful for situations in which you want to be able to predict the presence or absence of a characteristic or outcome based on the values of a set of predictor variables. It is similar to a linear regression model but is suited to models where the dependent variable is dichotomous. Logistic regression coefficients can be used to estimate odds ratios for each of the independent variables in the model. Logistic regression applies to a broader range of research situations than discriminant analysis.

3.2.3. Measurement model evaluation

Internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were analyzed to examine the measurement model. The Mean, Standard Deviation, and Coefficient Variation of all the constructs in the study are shown in Table 2.

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Table 3 shows that all four constructs met the required thresholds as the values of Cronbach's Alpha to ascertain internal consistency were also greater than 0.7 (Fornell, 1981). Thus, the convergent validity of the constructs was established.

Table 2. Mean, SD, and CV of constructs

Construct	No. of Items	Mean	SD	CV
Attractiveness	4	4.1660	0.92017	22.09
Trustworthiness	5	3.8160	1.05022	27.52
Expertise	5	3.7760	1.03849	27.50
Purchase Intention	3	3.4827	0.72023	20.68

Table (2) shows that the factor influencing the customer purchase intention the most is the attractiveness of the influencer, while the lowest impact was for expertise of the influencers.

Table 3. Reliability and validity of the constructs

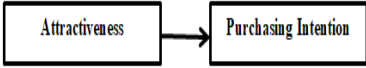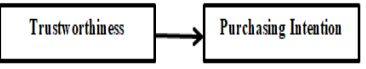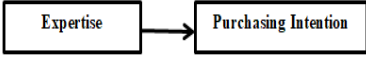| Construct	No. of Items	Reliability Coefficient	Validity
Attractiveness	4	0.762	0.873
Trustworthiness	5	0.863	0.929
Expertise	5	0.890	0.943
Purchase Intention	3	0.881	0.94
Total	17	0.949	0.974

3.2.4. Structural model evaluation

The structural model was evaluated to check the significance of the hypothesis (Table 4).

Hypothesis H_1 was supported, indicating that Attractiveness ($\beta=1.479$, $p<0.05$) was positively related to Purchasing Intentions. H_2 was supported, revealing that trustworthiness ($\beta=1.115$, $p<0.05$) was positively associated with Purchasing Intentions. Also, H_2 was supported, reported that Expertise ($\beta=1.677$, $p<0.05$) was positively affecting Purchasing Intentions.

Table 4. Results of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path		β	S.E.	P-value	Result
H₁	Attractiveness → Purchasing Intention		1.470	0.449	0.001	Supported
H₂	Trustworthiness → Purchasing Intention		1.115	0.468	0.017	Supported
H₃	Expertise → Purchasing Intention		1.677	0.509	0.001	Supported

3.2.5. Results Discussion

Regarding the results of the quantitative study, the characteristics associated with digital influencers were particularly emphasized as they may have a direct and positive impact on purchase intention.

Our key finding is that the personal characteristics (attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise) of social media influencers affect customers buying intentions. This finding rectifies our knowledge about the personal attributes of influencers by supporting that attractiveness; trustworthiness and expertise of social media influencers help companies to achieve their marketing objectives by impacting customers' purchase intentions.

This finding is consistent with previous literature (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022) (Faizan & Saad Ullah, 2022) (Mabkhot, Isa, & Mabkhot, 2022) (Nekmahmud, 2022), (Bhuvaneswari & Bharagath, 2021), (Thanh, Tho, & Quang, 2021), and (Masuda, Han, & Lee, 2022).

Consequently, the study found a significant positive relationship between attractiveness, and changing customers buying intentions which consequently will affect the sales of the company. This result aligns with the findings of (Faizan & Saad Ullah, 2022) and (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022), and (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021), who showed that the influencer's attractiveness can positively impact the purchase intention of the products suggested by the influencer. Unlike the findings of the research conducted by (Lim, Rozaini, Radzol, Cheah, & Wong, 2017), who found that the attractiveness of social media influencers failed to influence consumers' purchase intention.

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Furthermore, the study found a significant positive relationship between trustworthiness and changing customers' buying intentions which consequently will affect the sales of the company. This finding aligns with those of (Gomes, Marques, & Dias, 2022), (Mabkhot, Isa, & Mabkhot, 2022), (Alomair, 2022), (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022), (Aggad & Ahmad, 2021), (Faizan & Saad Ullah, 2022), (Masuda, Han, & Lee, 2022) and (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021) who found a significant positive relationship between trustworthiness and changing customers buying intension. This contradicts (Wei, Singh, & Kularajasingam, 2021) findings where trustworthiness showed an insignificant impact on the intention to purchase.

Moreover, the study found a significant positive relationship between expertise and changing customers' buying intentions which consequently will affect the sales of the company. Thus, this finding was supported from previous work (Gomes, Marques, & Dias, 2022), (Al Doghan, 2023), (Mabkhot, Isa, & Mabkhot, 2022), (Masuda, Han, & Lee, 2022), (Alomair, 2022), (Fayez, Labib, & Abo El-Naga, 2022), (Faizan & Saad Ullah, 2022) but contradicts (Pornpoj, Wasutida, & Pathom, 2021) and (Wei, Singh, & Kularajasingam, 2021) findings as the study didn't find a significant effect of expertise of social media influencers and the customer's buying intention.

Conclusion

The study has shown that the choice of influencers is essential to the success of a company aiming to use them in its marketing activities. where influencers' characteristics were proven to motivate consumers to follow the influencer and hence impact consumer purchasing intentions because an influencer is an individual who has the power to affect the purchase decisions of others because of his/her authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with his/her audience. (Alexandra Gomes, Marques, & Dias, 2022) (Jain, Shah, Tiwari, & Modi, 2019) These influencers tend to impact the consumer behavior of their followers in many ways. (Jain, Shah, Tiwari, & Modi, 2019) With the rise of social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat, the new age population is bound to look out for advice and recommendations in every social space they are active in. The people who give this advice to consumers are really where these influencers are at the core.

The theoretical perspectives of this research include enhancing the understanding of consumers' perception of influencer marketing in Egypt. Only a few studies have examined the role of social media influencers in affecting customers' purchase intention in Egypt. The findings of this study add to the current literature by presenting a comprehensive framework to explain the role of the influencer's characteristics in affecting the purchase intention of consumers.

The key finding is that the personal characteristics of social media influencers significantly affect customers buying intentions, the results revealed that attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise had significant direct effects on the purchase intention of consumers. Furthermore, the results revealed that the most important factor influencing customer purchase intention is the attractiveness of the influencer, while the lowest impact was for expertise of the influencers.

Our research provides several managerial implications. By identifying the particular characteristics that affect the purchase intention of the influencer's followers, the companies can be more assured that their influencer investment will pay off in the form of increased sales and brand awareness if the influencer they chose possesses the identified characteristics. The consumers' purchase intention might be positively affected by these attributes in combination with other factors. Thus, marketers should try to find and engage influencers who have those attributes to achieve their marketing objectives. Marketers should pay due consideration to choose an appropriate social media influencer who can enhance the credibility of the posts to influence purchase intention. Also. marketers should place more emphasis on choosing an influencer whose content is well-trusted among his/her followers. And finally, marketers should hire an influencer who can post informative as well as entertaining advertising content for his/her audience during their collaboration.

Also, for the influencers, this study suggests some important recommendations. Influencers should have experience, attractiveness, and trustworthiness. Even when their popularity grows in the long run, maintaining these attributes will be

advantageous for them. Therefore, if the influencers wish to keep and expand their alliances with brands, or to grow their existing audience, they must possess positive features and maintain them over time.

This study's limitations should be taken into consideration. First, this article only examined the impact of Social Media Influencers on Customers' Buying intentions in Egypt; thus, the results cannot be generalized to other countries. Also, Further research is required to examine Social Media Influencers on Customers' Buying intentions in specific industries to show differences in the impact according to product type or industry.

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تأثير خصائص المؤثرين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على نية الشراء لدى العملاء في السوق المصري

د. سلوى القاضي؛ د. ياسمين طارق

الملخص

هدف الدراسة ـ تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التركيز على خصائص المؤثرين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لتقييم تأثيرهم على نية الشراء لدى العملاء. وبالتالي، هدفت إلى دراسة تأثير المظهر الجسدي (الجاذبية) والجدارة بالثقة (الصدق) والخبرة لدى المؤثرين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على نية الشراء لدى المستهلكين.

منهج الدراسة — تم إنشاء الاستبيان ومشاركته عبر الإنترنت عبر نماذج Google للمستهلكين في مصر. غطى الاستطلاع عبر الإنترنت منصات التواصل الاجتماعي الأربع؛ يوتيوب وفيسبوك وتويتر وإنستغرام. تم استخدام تقنية أخذ عينات الحصص في الدراسة للحصول على إجابات، حيث تم تضمين فقط أولئك الذين كانوا مستخدمين نشطين لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الدراسة. تم الحصول على ١٣٠ ردًا، منها ١٢٥ مشاركًا تابعوا أحد المؤثرين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، لذلك تم استبعاد تلك الردود الخمسة التي لم تتابع أيا منهم.

نتائج الدراسة ـ كشفت النتائج أن الخصائص الشخصية للمؤثرين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تؤثر على نية الشراء لدى المستهلكين؛ كان للجاذبية والجدارة بالثقة والخبرة تأثيرات مباشرة كبيرة على نية الشراء لدى المستهلكين. كما توصلت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن أعلى الخصائص تأثيراً هي الجاذبية وأقلها تأثيراً هي الخبرة.

القيمة البحثية للدراسة — على الرغم من وجود العديد من الدراسات السابقة التي تم إجراؤها في بلدان أخرى فيما يتعلق بتأثير المؤثرين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على نية الشراء لدى العملاء، إلا أن هناك عدد قليل جدًا من الدراسات المماثلة في مصر وكانت معظم هذه الدراسات تختبر تأثير محتوى رسائل المؤثرين ولم تشمل خصائص المؤثر ودراسة (فايز، لبيب، وأبو النجا، ٢٠٢٢) شملت خصائص المؤثر، ولكن دون اختبارها وأوصت بإجراء اختبار إضافي في مصر. لذا فإن نتائج هذه الدراسة تضيف إلى الأدبيات الحالية من خلال سد هذه الفجوة وتوضيح دور خصائص المؤثر في التأثير على نية الشراء لدى المستهلكين في السوق المصري.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المؤثرون على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، نية الشراء لدى العملاء، المظهر الجسدي (الجاذبية)، الجدارة بالثقة (الصدق)، الخبرة