



Social Media Influencer Marketing and Brand Loyalty: An Empirical Study on the Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Loyalty

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Abstract – Social media has transformed the way businesses communicate with consumers and build long-term relationships with their target audiences. Among the various digital marketing strategies, social media influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most effective approaches for increasing brand awareness, consumer engagement, and brand loyalty. Influencers act as opinion leaders who use their credibility, expertise, and relationships with followers to influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. This research paper examines the relationship between social media influencer marketing and brand loyalty, focusing on how influencer credibility, authenticity, engagement, and trust affect consumers' emotional attachment and commitment toward brands. The study explores the role of influencers in shaping consumer perceptions and examines whether influencer-generated content contributes to stronger brand relationships. A conceptual framework is developed based on theories such as the Source Credibility Theory and Social Influence Theory. The research adopts a quantitative approach using survey methodology to analyze consumer responses toward influencer marketing activities. The findings suggest that influencer authenticity, perceived trustworthiness, and audience engagement significantly influence brand loyalty. Consumers are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward brands promoted by influencers they perceive as genuine and reliable. The study highlights the importance of selecting appropriate influencers who align with brand values and consumer expectations. It provides valuable insights for marketers seeking to improve digital marketing strategies through influencer partnerships. The research concludes that social media influencer marketing is not only an effective promotional tool but also a strategic mechanism for developing sustainable customer relationships and long-term brand loyalty.

Keywords – Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Brand Loyalty, Consumer Behavior, Digital Marketing, Customer Engagement.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology and social media platforms has significantly changed the marketing environment. Traditional marketing methods such as television advertisements, newspapers, and direct sales have gradually been complemented by digital strategies that allow companies to interact directly with consumers. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, and X have created new opportunities for brands to communicate with customers in more personalized and interactive ways.

One of the most influential developments in digital marketing is social media influencer marketing. Influencer marketing involves collaboration between brands and individuals who have established credibility, expertise, and a strong following on social media platforms. These influencers create content that promotes products or services while maintaining a personal connection with their audience. Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, influencers often appear more relatable and accessible, which increases consumer trust.

Modern consumers increasingly rely on online information before making purchasing decisions. Product reviews, recommendations, and experiences shared by influencers can strongly affect consumer perceptions. Followers often consider influencers as trusted sources of information rather than simply advertising channels. As a result, businesses are investing more resources in influencer partnerships to improve brand recognition and strengthen customer relationships.

Brand loyalty represents a consumer's commitment to repeatedly purchase and support a particular brand. Loyal customers provide long-term value to organizations because they are more likely to make repeat purchases, recommend products to others, and resist competitors' marketing efforts. In highly competitive markets, developing brand loyalty has become a major objective for businesses.

Social media influencer marketing has the potential to strengthen brand loyalty by creating emotional connections between consumers and brands. When influencers consistently share authentic experiences with products, followers may develop positive feelings toward the



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associated brands. However, the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends on various factors, including influencer credibility, authenticity, relevance, and the level of interaction between influencers and followers.

This research examines how social media influencer marketing affects brand loyalty and identifies the factors that contribute to successful influencer-brand relationships.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the influence of social media influencers on consumer brand loyalty.
2. To analyze the role of influencer credibility and authenticity in building consumer trust.
3. To study the relationship between influencer engagement and purchase intention.
4. To identify factors that make influencer marketing effective for brands.

Research Questions

1. Does influencer credibility influence brand loyalty?
2. How does influencer authenticity affect consumer trust?
3. Does consumer engagement with influencers improve brand relationships?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing involves collaboration between brands and influential individuals who promote products through social media platforms. Unlike traditional advertising, influencer marketing relies on social relationships and perceived personal recommendations. Researchers have highlighted that influencers act as opinion leaders who affect consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions through electronic word-of-mouth communication.

Influencer Credibility Theory

The credibility of an influencer is generally measured through:

- Expertise
- Trustworthiness
- Attractiveness

Highly credible influencers are more likely to persuade consumers because followers perceive their recommendations as reliable.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty refers to consumers' consistent preference and commitment toward a brand. It includes:

- Repeat purchase behaviour
- Emotional attachment
- Positive word-of-mouth
- Resistance to competitor offerings

Relationship Between Influencer Marketing and Brand Loyalty

Previous studies suggest that influencer marketing can strengthen brand loyalty by increasing:

- Brand awareness
- Consumer trust
- Emotional connection
- Customer engagement

When followers perceive influencers as authentic, they are more likely to develop favourable attitudes toward promoted brands.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a systematic framework that guides the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to address research objectives. In the present study, which investigates the impact of social media influencer marketing on consumer brand loyalty, a structured and empirical approach has been adopted to ensure reliability, validity, and accuracy of findings. This section outlines the research design, sampling techniques, data collection methods, measurement instruments, and analytical tools used in the study.

Research Design

The study employs a quantitative research design, which is appropriate for examining relationships between variables and testing hypotheses. Quantitative research allows for statistical analysis of data and helps in identifying patterns, correlations, and causal relationships. Given the objective of analyzing how influencer marketing factors such as credibility, trust, and engagement affect brand loyalty, a structured survey-based approach was considered most suitable.

The research is also descriptive and explanatory in nature. It is descriptive because it seeks to describe consumer perceptions and behaviors related to influencer marketing, and explanatory because it attempts to explain the relationship between independent variables (influencer credibility, trust, engagement) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty).

Research Approach

A deductive research approach has been used in this study. This approach begins with the development of hypotheses based on existing theories and literature, followed by empirical testing through data collection and analysis. The hypotheses formulated in this study aim to test the influence of influencer marketing variables on consumer brand loyalty.

Population and Sampling

The target population for this study includes social media users who actively engage with influencer content and have experience with online purchasing decisions influenced by such content. The study primarily focuses on individuals within the age group of 18 to 40 years, as this demographic is highly active on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook.

A sample size of 250 respondents was selected for the study. The sampling method used is convenience sampling,



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which involves selecting respondents who are easily accessible and willing to participate. Although this method may limit generalizability, it is widely used in exploratory and social media-related research due to its practicality and efficiency.

Efforts were made to ensure diversity in terms of gender, occupation, and educational background to improve the representativeness of the sample.

Data Collection Methods

The study relies on primary data collection, which was conducted using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed online through platforms such as Google Forms, social media groups, and email networks to reach a broad audience.

The questionnaire was divided into two main sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic information (age, gender, occupation, social media usage)
- **Section B:** Statements related to influencer marketing variables and brand loyalty

A five-point Likert scale was used to measure responses, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scaling method is widely used in behavioral research as it allows respondents to express varying degrees of agreement or disagreement.

Measurement of Variables

The study includes both independent and dependent variables:

Independent Variables:

1. **Influencer Credibility** – Measured through indicators such as expertise, authenticity, and attractiveness
2. **Trust** – Measured through perceived honesty, reliability, and transparency of influencers
3. **Engagement** – Measured through interaction levels such as likes, comments, and shares

Dependent Variable:

- **Brand Loyalty** – Measured through repeat purchase intention, brand preference, and willingness to recommend
- Each construct was measured using multiple items adapted from previous research studies to ensure validity and consistency.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure the quality of data, both reliability and validity tests were conducted:

- **Reliability:** Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess internal consistency of the scale items. A value above 0.7 was considered acceptable, indicating that the items reliably measure the constructs.
- **Validity:** Content validity was ensured by designing the questionnaire based on established literature. Construct validity was examined through factor analysis to confirm that items correctly represent their respective variables.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The following statistical techniques were applied:

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis was used to summarize demographic data and provide an overview of respondent characteristics. Measures such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution were calculated.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine whether variables such as credibility, trust, and engagement are positively associated with brand loyalty.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was employed to assess the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. This technique helps in identifying the most significant predictors of brand loyalty and quantifying their effects.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were tested using regression results and significance levels (p -values). A significance level of 0.05 was used as the threshold for accepting or rejecting hypotheses.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic Analysis

The collected responses were analyzed based on:

- Age
- Gender
- Social media usage frequency
- Preferred social media platforms

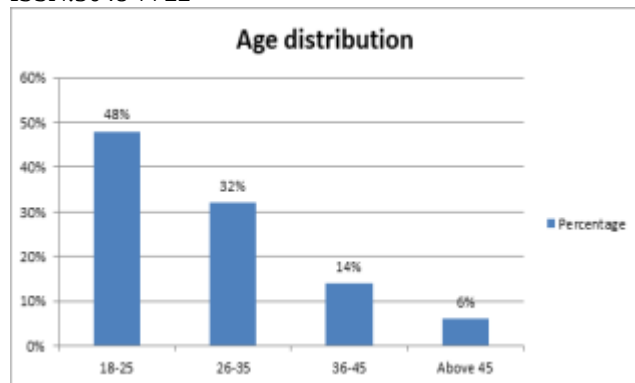
Age Distribution of Respondents

The respondents were categorized into different age groups to identify the dominant segment engaging with influencer marketing. The majority of respondents belonged to the 18–25 age group, followed by the 26–35 age group, indicating that younger individuals are more actively engaged with social media influencers.

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18–25	120	48%
26–35	80	32%
36–45	35	14%
Above 45	15	6%
Total	250	100%



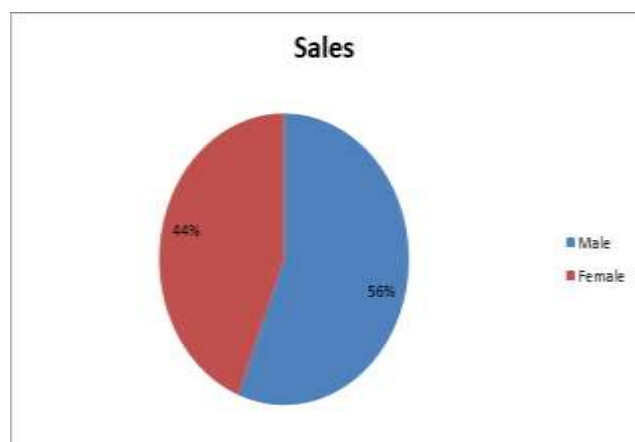
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**Interpretation:**

The data suggests that influencer marketing has a stronger impact on younger audiences, particularly those in the 18–35 age bracket. This group is more likely to consume digital content and interact with influencers regularly.

Gender Distribution

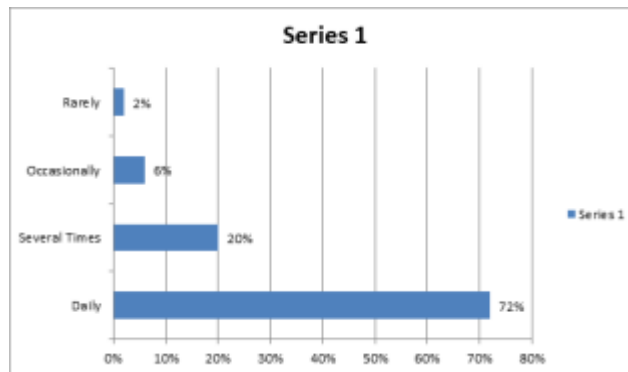
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	140	56%
Female	110	44%
Total	250	100%

**Interpretation:**

The sample shows a relatively balanced gender distribution, with a slightly higher proportion of male respondents. This balance ensures that the findings are not heavily biased toward a single gender group.

Social Media Usage Frequency

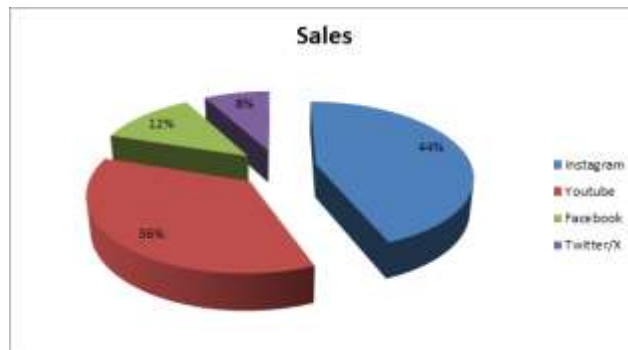
Usage Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	180	72%
Several times/week	50	20%
Occasionally	15	6%
Rarely	5	2%
Total	250	100%

**Interpretation:**

A significant majority of respondents use social media on a daily basis. This high level of engagement increases exposure to influencer content, making influencer marketing a powerful tool for brand communication.

Preferred Social Media Platforms

Platform	Frequency	Percentage
Instagram	110	44%
YouTube	90	36%
Facebook	30	12%
Twitter/X	20	8%
Total	250	100%

**Interpretation:**

Instagram and YouTube emerged as the most preferred platforms for influencer engagement. These platforms are highly visual and content-driven, making them ideal for influencer marketing strategies. Brands should prioritize these channels to maximize reach and engagement.

Influencer Credibility and Brand Loyalty

The majority of respondents agreed that influencers with genuine knowledge and transparent opinions increase their confidence in brands.

Influencer Authenticity

Consumers showed higher loyalty toward brands promoted by influencers who provide honest reviews rather than paid promotional content only.



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Engagement and Purchase Behaviour

Likes, comments, reviews, and influencer interactions were found to influence consumers' purchase decisions.

(Statistical tools such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, and reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha may be applied.)

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the collected data provides significant insights into the role of social media influencer marketing in shaping consumer brand loyalty. Based on the responses of 250 participants and subsequent statistical analysis using SPSS, several important findings have emerged regarding the influence of credibility, trust, engagement, and demographic factors.

One of the key findings of the study is that influencer credibility has a strong positive impact on brand loyalty. Respondents indicated that they are more likely to trust and follow recommendations from influencers who appear knowledgeable, authentic, and experienced in their respective domains. This suggests that credibility acts as a foundation for building consumer confidence, which ultimately translates into loyalty toward endorsed brands. The regression results further confirm that credibility is a statistically significant predictor of brand loyalty.

Another important finding is the role of trust in influencer marketing. The study reveals that trust significantly influences consumers' willingness to purchase products and remain loyal to brands. Influencers who are perceived as honest and transparent tend to create a deeper emotional connection with their followers. This aligns with relationship marketing theory, which emphasizes trust as a critical element in long-term consumer-brand relationships. The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between trust and brand loyalty, reinforcing its importance in digital marketing strategies.

The study also highlights the importance of consumer engagement with influencer content. Engagement, measured through likes, comments, shares, and interactions, was found to have a moderate to strong influence on brand loyalty. Highly engaging content not only captures attention but also encourages active participation, which enhances brand recall and emotional attachment. The findings indicate that consumers who frequently interact with influencer posts are more likely to develop a favorable attitude toward the promoted brand.

Demographic analysis provides additional context to these findings. The majority of respondents belong to the younger age group (18–35 years), which is highly active on social media platforms. This group demonstrated a higher level of responsiveness to influencer marketing compared to older respondents. Additionally, the high frequency of daily social media usage suggests that consumers are consistently exposed to influencer content, increasing the likelihood of brand influence. Platforms such as Instagram and YouTube

emerged as dominant channels, indicating that visual and video-based content plays a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior.

Furthermore, the study finds that influencer marketing is more effective when it appears natural and relatable rather than overly promotional. Respondents expressed skepticism toward influencers who frequently promote multiple brands without authenticity. This indicates that excessive commercialization can reduce trust and negatively impact brand loyalty.

In discussion, these findings emphasize that influencer marketing is not merely about visibility but about building meaningful relationships with consumers. Credibility and trust serve as key drivers of loyalty, while engagement acts as a reinforcing mechanism. Brands must carefully select influencers who align with their values and can authentically connect with their target audience.

In conclusion, the study confirms that influencer marketing significantly impacts consumer brand loyalty, with credibility, trust, and engagement being the most influential factors. These findings provide valuable implications for marketers aiming to design effective influencer campaigns in the digital age.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the impact of social media influencer marketing on consumer brand loyalty, with a specific focus on the roles of influencer credibility, trust, and engagement. Based on the analysis of primary data collected from 250 respondents and tested using statistical tools, the findings provide clear evidence that influencer marketing has a meaningful and measurable effect on consumer attitudes and long-term loyalty toward brands.

One of the most important conclusions drawn from the study is that influencer credibility acts as the foundation of effective marketing communication. Consumers are more inclined to trust influencers who demonstrate expertise, authenticity, and consistency in their content. When influencers are perceived as genuine and knowledgeable, their recommendations carry greater weight, which directly influences consumers' purchase decisions and brand preferences. This reinforces the idea that credibility is not optional but essential for successful influencer marketing campaigns.

Another key conclusion is the critical role of trust in building brand loyalty. The study confirms that trust significantly mediates the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer behavior. Consumers tend to develop loyalty toward brands that are endorsed by influencers they perceive as honest and transparent. Trust strengthens emotional connections and encourages repeat purchases, which are core components of brand loyalty. Therefore, maintaining ethical practices and transparency in influencer promotions is vital for sustaining consumer trust.



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The study also concludes that consumer engagement plays a reinforcing role in enhancing brand loyalty. High levels of interaction—such as likes, comments, and shares—indicate active consumer involvement with influencer content. This engagement not only improves brand visibility but also deepens consumer-brand relationships. Engaging content encourages participation and creates a sense of community, which further strengthens loyalty.

Demographic insights add further depth to the conclusion. The research shows that younger consumers, particularly those aged 18–35, are the most influenced by social media influencers. Their high level of daily social media usage increases their exposure to influencer content, making them more responsive to digital marketing strategies. Additionally, platforms such as Instagram and YouTube were identified as the most effective channels, emphasizing the importance of visual and video-based content in modern marketing.

However, the study also highlights that authenticity is more important than frequency of promotion. Over-commercialization and excessive endorsements can reduce influencer credibility and lead to consumer skepticism. This suggests that brands must adopt a balanced approach, prioritizing quality and relevance over quantity in influencer collaborations.

In conclusion, the research establishes that influencer marketing is a powerful tool for building brand loyalty when executed strategically. Credibility, trust, and engagement emerge as the key drivers that determine its success. For marketers, the implication is clear: selecting the right influencers, fostering genuine connections, and delivering authentic content are essential for achieving long-term consumer loyalty.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge in digital marketing by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of influencer marketing. It also offers practical insights for brands aiming to leverage social media influencers to strengthen customer relationships in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Suggestions / Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings of this study on the impact of social media influencer marketing on consumer brand loyalty, several strategic and practical recommendations can be proposed for marketers, brands, and influencers. These suggestions aim to enhance the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns and ensure long-term customer engagement and loyalty.

Firstly, brands should focus on selecting the right influencers based on credibility, authenticity, and relevance rather than merely considering follower count. Influencers who possess domain expertise and maintain a genuine connection with their audience are more likely to influence consumer perceptions positively. Careful evaluation of an

influencer's content style, audience demographics, and engagement rate is essential before forming collaborations.

Secondly, authenticity and transparency must be prioritized in influencer marketing campaigns. Consumers today are highly aware of promotional content and tend to distrust overly commercialized endorsements. Therefore, influencers should provide honest opinions and clearly disclose paid partnerships. Transparent communication helps in building trust, which is a key driver of brand loyalty identified in this study.

Another important recommendation is to encourage higher levels of audience engagement. Brands should design interactive campaigns that involve followers through comments, polls, contests, and live sessions. Engaging content not only increases visibility but also fosters emotional connections between consumers and the brand. Influencers should actively respond to audience queries and feedback to strengthen relationships.

The study also suggests that brands should target the appropriate demographic segment, particularly younger consumers aged 18–35 years, who are more active on social media and more responsive to influencer marketing. Understanding the preferences, behaviors, and expectations of this group can help in designing more effective and personalized campaigns.

In terms of platform strategy, brands should prioritize visually driven platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, which have been identified as the most influential channels. These platforms allow for creative storytelling, product demonstrations, and immersive content that can significantly impact consumer decision-making.

Additionally, it is recommended to avoid over-commercialization and excessive brand promotions. When influencers endorse too many products, their credibility may decline, leading to reduced trust among followers. A balanced approach, where promotional content is integrated naturally with regular posts, is more effective in maintaining authenticity.

Brands should also invest in long-term partnerships with influencers rather than one-time collaborations. Continuous association with a trusted influencer helps in reinforcing brand image and building consistent consumer trust over time. Long-term relationships also allow influencers to create more meaningful and in-depth content about the brand.

Furthermore, the use of micro-influencers should be encouraged, as they often have a smaller but more engaged and loyal audience. Micro-influencers are perceived as more relatable and trustworthy, which can lead to higher engagement rates and stronger brand connections.

Lastly, it is essential for brands to monitor and evaluate campaign performance using analytics tools. Metrics such



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as engagement rate, reach, conversion rate, and return on investment (ROI) should be regularly analyzed to assess effectiveness and make data-driven improvements.

In conclusion, a strategic focus on credibility, authenticity, engagement, and audience alignment can significantly enhance the success of influencer marketing initiatives and contribute to sustained brand loyalty.

Future Scope of the Study

While the present research provides valuable insights into the impact of social media influencer marketing on consumer brand loyalty, there are several avenues for future research that can further expand and strengthen understanding in this field.

Firstly, future studies can adopt a larger and more diverse sample size across different regions, cultures, and income groups. This would improve the generalizability of findings and help identify cultural differences in consumer responses to influencer marketing. Expanding the geographic scope beyond a single region or country would also provide a more global perspective.

Secondly, researchers can consider using a longitudinal research design instead of a cross-sectional approach. This would allow the study of changes in consumer attitudes and brand loyalty over time, especially as influencer marketing strategies continue to evolve rapidly. Long-term analysis can provide deeper insights into whether influencer-driven loyalty is sustainable or temporary.

Another important area for future research is the comparison between different types of influencers, such as mega-influencers, macro-influencers, micro-influencers, and nano-influencers. Examining how each category affects consumer trust, engagement, and loyalty can help brands make more informed decisions regarding influencer selection.

Future studies may also explore the role of emerging social media platforms such as short-video and live-streaming platforms. As digital trends shift, understanding how new formats like reels, shorts, and live commerce influence consumer behavior will be highly relevant.

Additionally, incorporating qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus group discussions, can provide deeper insights into consumer perceptions, motivations, and emotional responses toward influencer marketing. This would complement quantitative findings and offer a more holistic understanding.

Researchers can also investigate industry-specific impacts, such as influencer marketing in fashion, beauty, technology, or healthcare sectors. Consumer behavior may vary significantly across industries, and sector-focused studies can yield more targeted insights.

Finally, future research could include additional variables such as brand image, customer satisfaction, perceived value, and purchase intention to develop a more comprehensive model of consumer behavior influenced by social media marketing.

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