

17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Kadang-kadang	Tidak tahu	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Wanita	3	Ya	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Kadang-kadang	Tidak	Minimal 1 kali dalam dua minggu
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Kadang-kadang	Tidak	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Wanita	3	Ya	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Kadang-kadang	Tidak	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Wanita	3	Ya	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Ya	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Kadang-kadang	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Wanita	3	Ya	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Kadang-kadang	Ya	Lebih dari 1 kali dalam sebulan
21-24 Tahun	Pria	3	Kadang-kadang	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Ya	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Tidak	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan

17-20 Tahun	Wanita	3	Kadang-kadang	Tidak	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Tidak	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Pria	3	Tidak	Tidak	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Wanita	3	Kadang-kadang	Ya	Lebih dari 1 kali dalam sebulan
17-20 Tahun	Wanita	3	Ya	Ya	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan

INFLUENCER																						
NO	P 1	P 2	P 3	P 4	P 5	P 6	P 7	P 8	P 9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21	P22
1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	5	4	4	3	3	4	5	4	5	4
3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	2	5	2	3	2	4	3	3	4	2	3	2	5	3
5	3	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4
6	4	4	5	3	2	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	3	5
7	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	5
8	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
9	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3
10	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	3	4	5
11	3	2	5	5	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4
12	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

13	4	5	5	3	3	3	4	5	4	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	4
14	3	4	4	4	3	2	3	4	3	3	2	3	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	4
15	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4
16	3	4	5	5	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	5	4
17	3	3	4	4	2	2	4	4	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	3	3
18	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	4	1	1	2	2	2
19	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	2	1	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	2	2	2
20	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1
21	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1
22	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2
23	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
24	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
25	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
26	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2
27	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
28	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
29	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2
30	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1
31	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
32	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	3
33	3	2	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
34	1	5	5	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	4	3	3	4	2	4	1	4	5
35	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
36	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	5	5	4	3	5	4	3	4	5
37	3	4	5	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4

<i>DE-INFLUENCER</i>																						
NO	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P1 0	P1 1	P1 2	P1 3	P1 4	P1 5	P1 6	P1 7	P1 8	P1 9	P2 0	P2 1	P2 2
1	3	4	5	4	3	5	4	3	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	4	4	3
2	3	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
3	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	4
4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	3	3	4
5	2	1	5	5	4	2	1	2	2	1	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	2	4	1
6	2	2	5	5	5	1	1	3	2	2	5	4	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	3	3	3
7	4	2	4	5	4	2	2	2	2	2	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	1	4	4
8	1	2	4	4	3	1	1	1	2	2	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	1	4	1
9	2	2	5	5	5	2	1	2	2	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	1	1	1
10	3	3	2	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	4	4	2	3	4	3	3	2	3
11	4	2	5	5	4	4	5	1	1	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5
12	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
13	3	3	4	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
14	2	2	5	5	5	1	1	1	2	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
15	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	4
16	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	5
17	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	2	5	4
18	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
19	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
20	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2
21	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
22	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	4
23	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4

24	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
25	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
26	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	4
27	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
28	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
29	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
30	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4



Lampiran 3.1 Rincian Manipulasi Eksperimen

No	Kelompok Eksperimen	Jumlah Responden (N)	Jenis Perlakuan (Stimulus)	Deskripsi Stimulus	Durasi Video	Tujuan Manipulasi	Variabel yang Diukur	Instruksi untuk Responden	Catatan Kontrol
1	Kelompok Eksperimen 1	37 orang	Video Influencer (promotif)	Video menampilkan seorang <i>beauty influencer</i> bernama Nadia Tilem yang memberikan ulasan positif terhadap produk perawatan kulit tertentu. <i>Influencer</i> tersebut berbicara dalam gaya yang meyakinkan dan personal, dengan menonjolkan keunggulan produk, kandungan bahan aktif, pengalaman penggunaan pribadi, serta manfaat yang dirasakan seperti peningkatan kondisi kulit setelah dua minggu pemakaian. Visual video menampilkan <i>close-up</i> wajah <i>influencer</i> , potongan gambar produk, dan teks pendukung untuk memperkuat pesan promosi. Gaya penyampaian bersifat ringan, santai, dan persuasif sesuai karakteristik konten media sosial.	1 menit 54 detik	Menggambarkan bentuk pengaruh sosial informasional yang bersifat promotif dan persuasif, di mana individu cenderung menyesuaikan sikap dan persepsinya terhadap produk berdasarkan rekomendasi dari figur yang dianggap kredibel. Tujuannya untuk melihat sejauh mana pesan <i>influencer</i> dapat meningkatkan sikap positif, persepsi merek, kredibilitas, dan niat beli responden terhadap produk.	Sikap (<i>attitude</i>), Persepsi konsumen terhadap merek, Kredibilitas, <i>Trustworthiness</i> , dan Niat beli.	Responden diminta menonton video secara penuh tanpa interupsi, memperhatikan isi pesan, gaya penyampaian, dan kesan terhadap produk. Setelah penutaran selesai, responden mengisi kuesioner secara daring melalui <i>Google Form</i> sesuai persepsi mereka terhadap video yang ditayangkan.	Kondisi ruangan di kontrol (pencahayaan, suara, jarak pandang seragam). Pemutaran dilakukan satu kali di hadapan seluruh peserta. Responden dipastikan belum menonton video tersebut sebelumnya untuk menghindari bias familiaritas.

No	Kelompok Eksperimen	Jumlah Responden (N)	Jenis Perlakuan (Stimulus)	Deskripsi Stimulus	Durasi Video	Tujuan Manipulasi	Variabel yang Diukur	Instruksi untuk Responden	Catatan Kontrol
2	Kelompok Eksperimen 2	30 orang	Video <i>De-influencer</i> (edukatif)	Video menampilkan seorang <i>de-influencer</i> dengan karakter “Dokter Detektif” yang mengenakan topeng untuk menjaga anoninitas. Pembicara menyampaikan opini dan analisis produk secara objektif, menyoroti kandungan bahan, hasil uji laboratorium, serta kesesuaian klaim dengan standar BPOM. Pesan disampaikan dengan gaya edukatif dan informatif, bukan menjelekkan produk, melainkan mengajak audiens untuk lebih berhati-hati dalam memilih produk yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan kulit. Narasi menekankan pentingnya efektivitas dan nilai fungsional produk, dengan dukungan data sederhana di layar. Visual video menampilkan ilustrasi bahan aktif dan potongan teks informatif.	1 menit 43 detik	Menggambarkan bentuk pengaruh sosial informasional yang bersifat edukatif dan reflektif, di mana individu menyesuaikan penilaian terhadap produk berdasarkan informasi yang valid dan jujur. Tujuan manipulasi ini adalah untuk menguji bagaimana paparan pesan yang bersifat edukatif dan non-promotif memengaruhi persepsi dan niat beli dibandingkan dengan pesan promotif dari influencer.	Sikap (<i>attitude</i>), Persepsi konsumen terhadap merek, Kredibilitas, <i>Trustworthiness</i> , dan Niat beli.	Responden diminta menonton video secara penuh tanpa interupsi, memperhatikan isi pesan, gaya penyampaian, dan kesan terhadap produk. Setelah penutaran selesai, responden mengisi kuesioner secara daring melalui <i>Google Form</i> sesuai persepsi mereka terhadap video yang ditayangkan.	Kondisi ruangan dikontrol (pencahayaannya, jarak pandang seragam). Penutaran dilakukan satu kali di hadapan seluruh peserta. Responden dipastikan belum menonton video tersebut sebelumnya untuk menghindari bias familiaritas.

Hasil Uji Validitas

Pernyataan	r-Hitung	r-Tabel	P (Sig.)	Keterangan
P1	0,837	0,361	0,001	Valid
P2	0,814	0,361	0,001	Valid
P3	0,787	0,361	0,001	Valid
P4	0,781	0,361	0,001	Valid
P5	0,805	0,361	0,001	Valid
P6	0,79	0,361	0,001	Valid
P7	0,785	0,361	0,001	Valid
P8	0,833	0,361	0,001	Valid
P9	0,846	0,361	0,001	Valid
P10	0,785	0,361	0,001	Valid
P11	0,796	0,361	0,001	Valid
P12	0,777	0,361	0,001	Valid
P13	0,738	0,361	0,001	Valid
P14	0,805	0,361	0,001	Valid
P15	0,857	0,361	0,001	Valid
P16	0,847	0,361	0,001	Valid
P17	0,871	0,361	0,001	Valid
P18	0,864	0,361	0,001	Valid
P19	0,785	0,361	0,001	Valid
P20	0,827	0,361	0,001	Valid
P21	0,855	0,361	0,001	Valid
P22	0,855	0,361	0,001	Valid

Hasil Uji Reliabilitas

Jumlah Pernyataan	Cronbach's Alpha	Syarat	Keterangan
22	0,976	0,6	Reliabel

Skema Desain Eksperimen

Kelompok	Perlakuan (Stimulus)	Pengukuran
Eksperimen 1	X_1 = Video <i>Influencer</i>	O_1 (<i>post-test</i>)
Ekperimen 2	X_2 = Video <i>De-influencer</i>	O_2 (<i>post-test</i>)

Definisi Operasional Variabel

Variabel Penelitian	Definisi Operasional	Indikator
Sikap (<i>Attitude</i>)	Sikap (<i>attitude</i>) merupakan kecenderungan individu dalam memberikan penilaian positif maupun negatif terhadap suatu objek, yang tercermin melalui dimensi kognitif (pengetahuan dan keyakinan), afektif (perasaan dan emosi), serta konatif (niat atau kecenderungan berperilaku). Pembentukan sikap dipengaruhi oleh manfaat yang dirasakan, kepercayaan terhadap sumber informasi, kualitas informasi yang diterima, serta persepsi atas keuntungan yang diperoleh dari objek tersebut (Bhatt & Shiva, 2020; Kotler & Keller, 2021)	g. <i>Likeable</i> (Menyenangkan secara pribadi) h. <i>Good</i> (Berkepribadian baik) i. <i>Pleasant</i> (Menyenangkan saat berkomunikasi) j. <i>Cognitive Evaluation</i> (Penilaian Kognitif) k. <i>Emotional Response</i> (Respon Emosional) l. <i>Cognitive Dissonance</i> (Konflik Keyakinan / Pertentangan Sikap) (Batra & Stayman, 1990; Malthouse et al., 2007; Ohanian, 1990; Silvera & Austad, 2004)
Persepsi Konsumen terhadap Merek	Persepsi konsumen adalah penilaian subjektif individu terhadap reputasi, kualitas, keunikan, kesesuaian, dan transparansi informasi suatu merek produk perawatan kulit	d. <i>Brand Image</i> (Citra Merek) e. <i>Brand Reputation</i> (Reputasi Merek) f. <i>Perceived Quality</i> (Kualitas merek)

Variabel Penelitian	Definisi Operasional	Indikator
	setelah menerima paparan pesan dari <i>influencer</i> atau <i>de-influencer</i> (Lotulung et al., 2023).	(Alghiffari et al., 2022)
Kredibilitas <i>influencer</i>	Kredibilitas <i>influencer</i> dalam konteks pemasaran digital dapat diartikan sebagai tingkat kepercayaan audiens terhadap kompetensi, integritas, daya tarik, dan kesesuaian karakteristik pribadi <i>influencer</i> dalam menyampaikan informasi, merekomendasikan produk, serta memengaruhi perilaku konsumen. Kredibilitas ini terbentuk melalui persepsi konsumen mengenai sejauh mana <i>influencer</i> memiliki pengetahuan, pengalaman relevan, orisinalitas dalam penyampaian pesan, kesamaan karakteristik dengan audiens, serta intensitas interaksi yang dilakukan dengan pengikutnya (Barry et al., 2022)	g. <i>Authentic</i> (Autentik) h. <i>Dependable</i> (Dapat Diandalkan) i. <i>Genuine</i> (Tulus) j. <i>Honest</i> (Jujur) k. <i>Believable</i> (Meyakinkan) l. <i>Reliable</i> (Terpercaya) (Müller et al., 2018; Ohanian, 1990)

Variabel Penelitian	Definisi Operasional	Indikator
<i>Trustworthiness</i> (Kepercayaan pada Penyampai Pesan)	<i>Trustworthiness</i> adalah sejauh mana konsumen mempercayai integritas, motivasi non-komersial, niat baik, transparansi, dan konsistensi kejujuran penyampai pesan (baik <i>influencer</i> maupun <i>de-influencer</i>) dalam menyampaikan informasi produk (Elsantil et al., 2025; Sucidha, 2024).	d. <i>Believable Communicator</i> (Komunikator yang Meyakinkan) e. <i>Sincere</i> (Tulus) f. <i>Qualified</i> (Berkualifikasi) (Ohanian, 1990; Zogaj et al., 2021)
Niat Beli Konsumen	Niat beli konsumen adalah kecenderungan atau kemauan individu untuk membeli, mencari informasi, mencoba, merekomendasikan, atau merencanakan pembelian produk perawatan kulit setelah menerima pesan dari <i>influencer</i> atau <i>de-influencer</i> (Elhajjar & Itani, 2025)	d. <i>Purchase Likelihood</i> e. <i>Consideration Influence</i> f. <i>Word-of-Mouth / Recommend to Others</i> (Chetioui et al., 2020)

Face Validity

Variabel	Kuesioner Asli	Kuesioner Adaptasi
Sikap (<i>Attitude</i>)	8. Saya merasa nyaman melihat orang dalam video ini. 9. Saya menilai kepribadian orang dalam video tersebut positif. 10. Saya mudah memahami gaya komunikasi orang dalam video 11. Video ini memberikan informasi baru yang sebelumnya belum saya ketahui. 12. Video ini membuat saya merasa senang. 13. Video ini mempengaruhi penilaian saya terhadap produk menjadi positif. 14. Video ini membuat saya merasa kagum dengan produk yang ditampilkan.	8. Saya merasa nyaman melihat orang dalam video ini. 9. Saya menilai kepribadian orang dalam video tersebut objektif. 10. Saya mudah memahami gaya komunikasi orang dalam video ini. 11. Video ini memberikan informasi baru yang sebelumnya belum saya ketahui. 12. Video ini membuat saya merasa senang. 13. Video ini mempengaruhi penilaian saya terhadap produk menjadi positif. 14. Video ini membuat saya merasa kagum dengan produk yang ditampilkan.
Persepsi Konsumen terhadap Merek	6. Saya menilai merek produk perawatan kulit yang dibahas memiliki reputasi yang baik di kalangan konsumen. 7. Saya merasa kualitas produk perawatan kulit yang ditampilkan	4. Menurut saya, konten dari video membuat citra merek dari <i>skincare</i> yang dipromosikan <i>influencer</i> menjadi lebih positif. 5. Persepsi saya terhadap citra merek <i>skincare</i> yang dipromosikan

	dalam konten sesuai dengan harapan saya. 8. Saya percaya merek ini dapat memenuhi kebutuhan perawatan kulit saya sehari-hari. 9. Saya memandang merek ini memiliki keunggulan dibandingkan merek lain di kategori yang sama. 10. Saya menilai informasi mengenai merek ini disampaikan secara jelas dan transparan.	<i>influencer</i> meningkat setelah menonton video. 6. Menurut saya, citra merek <i>skincare</i> yang dipromosikan <i>influencer</i> tersebut memiliki kualitas yang baik.
Kredibilitas <i>influencer</i>	6. Saya percaya bahwa informasi yang disampaikan dalam konten tersebut dapat diandalkan 7. Saya menilai pesan yang diberikan dalam konten tidak dilebih-lebihkan atau menyesatkan. 8. Saya merasa penyampai pesan memberikan gambaran yang jujur mengenai kelebihan dan kekurangan produk. 9. Saya yakin konten yang disampaikan berdasarkan fakta, bukan hanya opini pribadi.	7. Menurut saya, <i>influencer</i> dalam video tampil secara alami dan tidak dibuat-buat. 8. Menurut saya, informasi yang disampaikan <i>influencer</i> dalam video konsisten dan sesuai dengan kenyataan. 9. Menurut saya, <i>influencer</i> dalam video memberikan rekomendasi dengan niat yang tulus, bukan hanya untuk keuntungan pribadi.. 10. Menurut saya, <i>influencer</i> dalam video secara terbuka

	10. Saya menilai pesan yang disampaikan konsisten dengan pengalaman saya atau orang lain.	menyampaikan informasi produk secara lengkap. 11. Menurut saya, informasi yang disampaikan <i>influencer</i> dalam video terasa logis dan masuk akal.. 12. Menurut saya, rekomendasi yang diberikan didasarkan pada pengalaman pribadi <i>influencer</i> dalam video.
Trustworthiness	6. Saya percaya pada integritas penyampai pesan dalam memberikan informasi produk. 7. Saya yakin penyampai pesan tidak hanya mengejar keuntungan pribadi. 8. Saya merasa penyampai pesan memiliki niat baik untuk membantu konsumen membuat keputusan yang tepat. 9. Saya menilai penyampai pesan transparan mengenai hubungan dengan merek produk. 10. Saya percaya penyampai pesan akan tetap jujur meskipun ada tekanan dari pihak lain.	5 Menurut saya, penjelasan yang diberikan oleh <i>influencer</i> dalam video dapat dipahami dengan baik. 6 Menurut saya, <i>influencer</i> dalam video menyampaikan informasi dengan niat yang tulus untuk membantu. 7 Menurut saya, <i>influencer</i> dalam video memiliki pengetahuan yang memadai tentang produk yang dibahas.

Niat Beli Konsumen	6. Saya tertarik untuk membeli produk perawatan kulit yang dibahas setelah menonton konten ini. 7. Saya berencana mencari informasi lebih lanjut tentang produk perawatan kulit tersebut. 8. Saya ingin mencoba produk perawatan kulit yang direkomendasikan dalam konten ini. 9. Saya berminat membeli produk ini dalam waktu dekat. 10. Saya akan merekomendasikan produk ini kepada teman atau keluarga.	4. Saya kemungkinan besar akan membeli produk setelah melihat video yang ditayangkan. 5. Saya akan mempertimbangkan untuk menggunakan produk seperti di video setelah melihat rekomendasi dari <i>influencer</i>. 6. Saya akan mempertimbangkan untuk membeli produk tersebut setelah melihat video yang ditayangkan.
----------------------------------	--	--

Lampiran 4.1 Profil Responden berdasarkan Usia

<i>Influencer</i>			<i>De-Influencer</i>		
Profil Responden berdasarkan Usia			Profil Responden berdasarkan Usia		
Usia	Jumlah	Persentase	Usia	Jumlah	Persentase
17-20 Tahun	36	94,60%	17-20 Tahun	28	93,30%
21-24 Tahun	1	5,40%	21-24 Tahun	2	6,70%
Total	37	100,00%	Total	30	100,00%

Responden berdasarkan Jenis Kelamin

<i>Influencer</i>			<i>De-Influencer</i>		
Profil Responden berdasarkan Jenis kelamin			Profil Responden berdasarkan Jenis kelamin		
Jenis Kelamin	Jumlah	Persentase	Jenis Kelamin	Jumlah	Persentase
Pria	16	43,20%	Pria	17	56,70%
Wanita	21	56,80%	Wanita	13	43,30%
Total	37	100,00%	Total	30	100,00%

Profil Responden berdasarkan Pendidikan Terakhir

<i>Influencer</i>			<i>De-Influencer</i>		
Profil Responden berdasarkan Semester			Profil Responden berdasarkan Semester		
Semester	Jumlah	Persentase	Semester	Jumlah	Persentase
3	36	97,30%	3	37	100,00%
5	1	2,70%	5	0	0,00%
7	0	0,00%	7	0	0,00%
Total	37	100,00%	Total	37	100,00%

Profil Responden berdasarkan Penggunaan Produk *Skincare* secara Rutin

<i>Influencer</i>			<i>De-Influencer</i>		
Profil Responden berdasarkan Penggunaan produk <i>skincare</i> secara rutin			Profil Responden berdasarkan Penggunaan produk <i>skincare</i> secara rutin		
Keterangan	Jumlah	Persentase	Keterangan	Jumlah	Persentase
Ya	21	56,80%	Ya	14	46,70%
Tidak	5	13,50%	Tidak	5	16,70%
Kadang-Kadang	11	29,70%	Kadang-Kadang	11	36,60%
Total	37	100,00%	Total	30	100,00%

Profil Responden berdasarkan Pengguna yang memperhatikan Kandungan Bahan Aktif dalam *Skincare* yang dipakai

<i>Influencer</i>			<i>De-Influencer</i>		
Profil Responden yang memperhatikan kandungan bahan aktif dalam skincare yang dipakai?			Profil Responden yang memperhatikan kandungan bahan aktif dalam skincare yang dipakai?		
Keterangan	Jumlah	Persentase	Keterangan	Jumlah	Persentase
Ya	23	62,20%	Ya	20	66,70%
Tidak	11	29,70%	Tidak	9	30,00%
Tidak Tahu	3	8,10%	Tidak Tahu	1	3,30%
Total	37	100,00%	Total	30	100,00%

Profil Responden berdasarkan Frekuensi Pembelian *Skincare* dalam Satu Tahun Terakhir

<i>Influencer</i>			<i>De-Influencer</i>		
Profil Responden berdasarkan Frekuensi pembelian <i>skincare</i> dalam satu tahun terakhir.			Profil Responden berdasarkan Frekuensi pembelian <i>skincare</i> dalam satu tahun terakhir.		
Keterangan	Jumlah	Persentase	Keterangan	Jumlah	Persentase
Minimal 1 kali dalam seminggu	1	2,70%	Minimal 1 kali dalam seminggu	0	0,00%
Minimal 1 kali dalam dua minggu	1	2,70%	Minimal 1 kali dalam dua minggu	2	6,70%
Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan	33	89,20%	Minimal 1 kali dalam sebulan	24	80,00%
Lebih dari 1 kali dalam sebulan	2	5,40%	Lebih dari 1 kali dalam sebulan	4	13,30%
Total	37	100,00%	Total	30	100,00%

Hasil Analisis Deskriptif

Variabel	Kelompok Responden	N	Standar Deviasi	Total Mean	Kategori Interval Mean
Sikap	<i>Influencer</i>	37	3,95963	27,3514	Tinggi
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	7,41077	19,6667	Sedang
Persepsi Konsumen terhadap Merek	<i>Influencer</i>	37	2,37637	11,7297	Tinggi
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	3,36035	6,8667	Rendah
Kredibilitas Influencer	<i>Influencer</i>	37	6,66081	17,4595	Sedang
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	4,75382	25,2333	Sangat Tinggi
Trustworthiness	<i>Influencer</i>	37	3,22714	9,4054	Sedang
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	2,35597	12,9667	Sangat Tinggi
Niat Beli Konsumen	<i>Influencer</i>	37	3,24754	9,1892	Sedang
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	3,14570	10,9667	Tinggi
Total Mean	<i>Influencer</i>				Sedang
	<i>De-Influencer</i>				Tinggi

Group Statistics Independent Samples t-Test

Group Statistics					
Variabel	Kelompok	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Sikap	<i>Influencer</i>	37	27,3514	3,95963	0,65096
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	19,6667	7,41077	1,35302
Persepsi Konsumen terhadap Merek	<i>Influencer</i>	37	11,7297	2,37637	0,39067
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	6,8667	3,36035	0,61351
Kredibilitas	<i>Influencer</i>	37	17,4595	6,66081	1,09503
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	25,2333	4,75382	0,86793
<i>Trustworthiness</i>	<i>Influencer</i>	37	9,4054	3,22714	0,53054
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	12,9667	2,35597	0,43014
Niat Beli Konsumen	<i>Influencer</i>	37	9,1892	3,24754	0,53389
	<i>De-Influencer</i>	30	10,9667	3,14570	0,57432

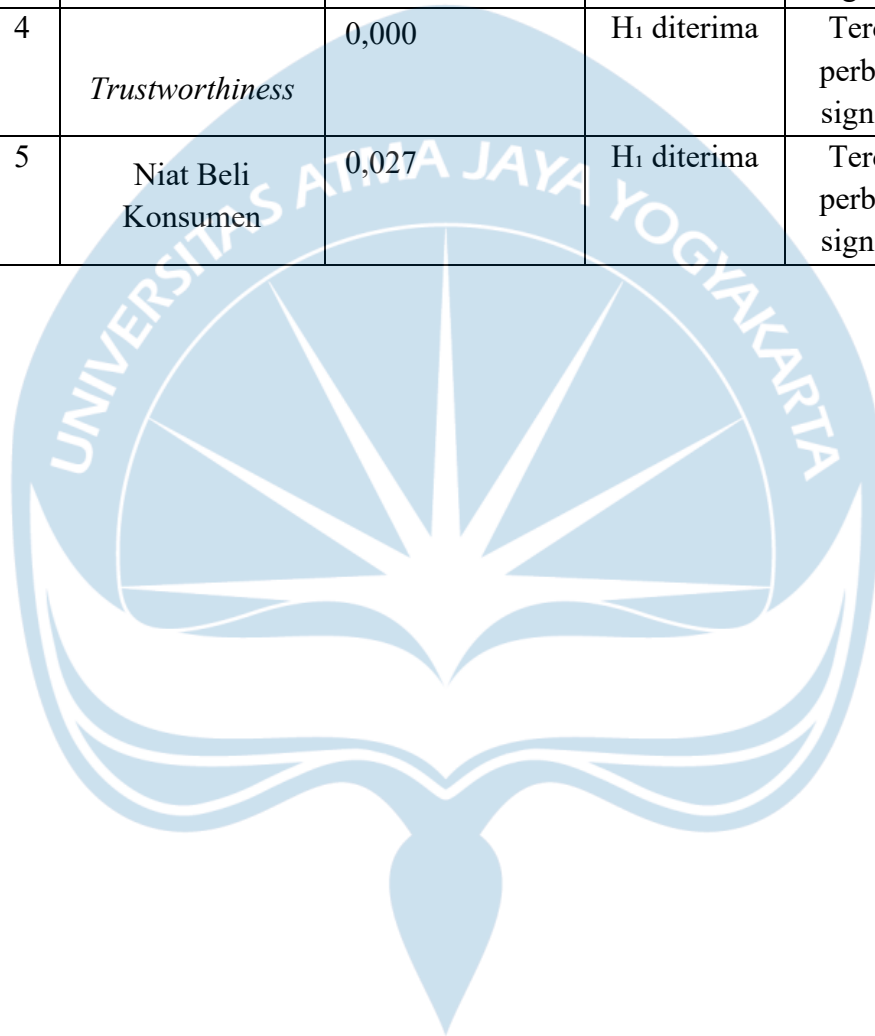
Gabungan Hasil Independent Samples t-Test

Kelompok Responden	Total Mean	Nilai t	df	Mean Difference	P-value / Sig. (Sig. 2-tailed)
<i>Influencer</i>	27,3514	(a) 5,118	42,160	7,68468	0,000
<i>De-Influencer</i>	19,6667			7,68468	0,000
<i>Influencer</i>	11,7297	(a) 6,686	50,586	4,86306	0,000
<i>De-Influencer</i>	6,8667			4,86306	0,000
<i>Influencer</i>	17,4595	(a) -5,564	64,057	-7,77387	0,000
<i>De-Influencer</i>	25,2333			-7,77387	0,000
<i>Influencer</i>	9,4054	(a) -5,214	64,361	-3,56126	0,000
<i>De-Influencer</i>	12,9667			-3,56126	0,000
<i>Influencer</i>	9,1892	(b) -2,259	65	-1,77748	0,027
<i>De-Influencer</i>	10,9667			-1,77748	0,027

Ringkasan Hasil Uji Independent Samples t-Test

No	Variabel	Nilai Sig. (2-tailed)	Keputusan Uji	Keterangan
1	Sikap (<i>attitude</i>)	0,000	H ₁ diterima	Terdapat perbedaan signifikan

2	Persepsi Konsumen terhadap Merek	0,000	H ₁ diterima	Terdapat perbedaan signifikan
3	Kredibilitas	0,000	H ₁ diterima	Terdapat perbedaan signifikan
4	<i>Trustworthiness</i>	0,000	H ₁ diterima	Terdapat perbedaan signifikan
5	Niat Beli Konsumen	0,027	H ₁ diterima	Terdapat perbedaan signifikan



The current issue and full text archive of this journal is available on Emerald Insight at:
<https://www.emerald.com/insight/1066-2243.htm>

Examining the impact of social media de-influencing on audiences

Internet Research

Samer Elhajjar

Business School, National University of Singapore, Singapore, Singapore, and

Omar S. Itani

Adnan Kassar School of Business, Lebanese American University, Beirut, Lebanon

Abstract

Purpose – This study investigates the effect of de-influencing and its related content on consumer behavior compared with influencing content. It considers the gender of de-influencers and consumers' varied reactions to distinct types of de-influencing.

Design/methodology/approach – Based on informational social influence theory, we conducted three experiments to investigate how consumers perceive and respond to de-influencing: the first explores consumer perception of social media de-influencers compared to influencers; the second examines the effect of de-influencers' gender and the last compares consumer attitude toward various types of de-influencer content.

Findings – Consumers find de-influencers more credible than "traditional" influencers. De-influencing messages significantly affect attitude and purchase intention. The de-influencing creator's gender does not affect brand attitude, perceived message effectiveness or perception. However, de-influencing video content influences attitudes toward brands and video effectiveness. Messages focusing on ethics and health elicit more negative perceived attitudes toward the brand.

Research limitations/implications – This pioneering research introduces "de-influence" as a new dynamic in social media marketing, revealing consumers' preference for authentic, skeptical content over traditional influencer promotions. This lays the foundation for future research on consumer behavior and brand perception in digital spaces.

Practical implications – Brands in trust-sensitive industries should embrace authenticity and engage with de-influencers to build trust, turn criticism into growth opportunities and align themselves with consumer value.

Originality/value – Our study represents pioneering research in the emerging field of de-influencing, filling gaps in the literature and offering a comprehensive contribution to social media research.

Keywords Social media, De-influencers, Influencers, Influencer marketing, De-marketing, De-influencing

Paper type Research paper

Received 10 April 2024
Revised 29 July 2024
31 October 2024
24 January 2025
Accepted 30 January 2025

1. Introduction

The social media landscape and its related content are evolving to embrace a new genre that inspires consumers to adopt a more mindful approach, encouraging them to reduce their consumption and embrace minimalism. This genre, termed "de-influence," aligns with the growing emphasis on de-marketing and sustainable marketing (Bareket-Bojmel *et al.*, 2020; Plazibat and Marunica, 2024), where the primary focus for brands and marketers is not merely on promoting consumption. De-influencing does not suggest what to buy; instead, it emphasizes what not to buy or what the best alternative is. This discourages viewers from buying overpriced, indulgent, and futile offerings driven by simulated needs. They are also discouraged from being influenced by the excessively materialistic aspects of influencer marketing and the related impulsive buying. De-influencers are dedicated to analyzing pseudoscientific assertions, fact-checking online trends, and criticizing deceptive marketing approaches through de-influencing.

De-influencing production is experiencing rapid growth, sparking the latest trends across various social media platforms and attracting ample engagement (Penttinen *et al.*, 2023). A recent CNN feature article suggests shifting attention away from traditional influencers and toward de-influencers (Karimi, 2023). This resonates with the heightened interest in de-influencing, as highlighted by TikTok. The #deinfluencing hashtag, with an impressive 1.5 billion views (as of March 2024), garnered most of these views within one year. Further, there were over 28,400 videos under the #deinfluencing hashtag on TikTok, many of which are



Internet Research
© Emerald Publishing Limited
e-ISSN: 2054-5657
p-ISSN: 1066-2243
DOI 10.1108/INTR-04-2024-0574

INTR

trending and amassing millions of views each. De-influencing helps consumers save money, limit unnecessary consumption, find more affordable alternatives, and contribute to the planet's well-being by promoting reduced purchases and consumption (Penttinen *et al.*, 2023; Plazibat and Marunica, 2024).

Notably, de-influencing extends beyond TikTok, with related content and hashtags on other social networks like Instagram and Facebook (Plazibat and Marunica, 2024). An illustrative example is the “anti-haul” movement, emerging as a counterpoint to the abundance of “haul” videos on YouTube. In these “anti-haul” videos, YouTubers elucidate why they choose not to purchase certain products, even if those products are widely acclaimed by their peers.

De-influencers challenge the norms of influencer marketing by exposing flaws, deceptive practices, and self-interest behind incentivized content, creating a key challenge to the authenticity and credibility of influencers (Lee and Johnson, 2022). When influencers increasingly prioritize brand partnerships and revenue over ethical principles, they risk losing trust and credibility with their audience (Jacobson and Harrison, 2022). De-influencers respond by dismantling the illusion of perfection that influencers often project, encouraging audiences to reflect critically on the content they consume, and questioning the authenticity of promotional messages (Audrezet *et al.*, 2020). This movement emerged as a direct reaction to the growing prevalence of inauthentic and misleading strategies within influencer culture.

While influencers typically rely on charm, charisma, and aspirational content to attract followers and secure brand collaboration, they are frequently criticized for prioritizing short-term profits over transparency, honesty, and consumer trust (Pedroni, 2023). Unlike influencers who promote consumerism, de-influencers emphasize transparency and highlight the financial and ecological costs of overconsumption. They advocate conscious, sustainable consumption, offering a counternarrative to the materialistic values often promoted by traditional influencer marketing.

The emergence of de-influencers aligns with the contemporary economic and environmental landscape, which grapples with the need for more mindful consumption and sustainable practices. As many marketing scholars advocate de-marketing and sustainable marketing (Bareket-Bojmel *et al.*, 2020), global issues such as inflation, climate change, and environmental degradation may be catalysts for the rise in de-influence. Inflation is an example that affects nations worldwide and potentially influences consumers to alter their consumption patterns (Velasco *et al.*, 2024). Further, consumers are increasingly mindful of the environmental consequences of their purchasing and consumption (Kautish and Sharma, 2020). Several individuals previously identified as “influencers” transitioned toward adopting a sustainable lifestyle, earning the title of “greenfluencers.” This group actively supports charitable causes by aiding partner organizations in collecting more donations (Pittman and Abell, 2021).

De-influencing can be understood through the informational social influence theory (Filieri, 2015), in which individuals rely on others' experiences, especially under uncertainty. By offering corrective information, de-influencers can encourage informed choices amid promotional saturation. Growing skepticism toward influencer marketing, especially during economic uncertainty (Dinh and Lee, 2022), motivates consumers to share insights into poor spending. In contrast to previous drivers of consumption, like aspirational lifestyles and envy (Lee and Eastin, 2021), de-influencing promotes rational, mindful, and utility-focused consumption in response to overconsumption and materialism during economic hardship.

The rise of de-influencing, distinct from influencer marketing, has been under-researched. This study uses three experiments based on informational social influence theory to investigate de-influencer content and its impact on consumers, thus contributing to understanding de-influencing and the role of de-influencers' gender.

2. Theoretical background and literature review

Social influence theory posits that individuals' psychological processes are affected by social influences. Deutsch and Gerard (1955) differentiated between these two types of social

influence. The first is normative social influence, defined as “an influence to conform with the positive expectations of another,” and the second is informational social influence, defined as “an influence to accept information obtained from another as evidence about reality” (p. 629).

Normative and informational social influences are determinants of the impact of social information and recommendations shared online (e.g. [Filieri, 2015](#)). While the former may be pertinent to the phenomenon of de-influencers, the latter is truly relevant in this context and is thus used as the theoretical framework in this study. Informational social influence is key to influencing individuals’ decisions and behaviors on digital channels ([Huang and Chen, 2006](#)). Individuals are generally prone to relying on information from others to reduce uncertainty and make informed decisions.

Information from external sources, such as de-influencers, significantly affects consumers’ confidence in making judgments and decisions ([Lee et al., 2011](#)). The delivered information creates an informational social influence that generates attitude change or resistance. Individuals’ opinions can change based on influential arguments or knowing others hold a certain opinion ([Nowak et al., 1990](#)). For example, online reviews influence individuals through the information they provide and the reviewers’ perspectives ([Book et al., 2018](#)).

Informational social influence entails accepting information from others to solve problems or better navigate aspects of the environment ([Lee et al., 2011](#)). Consumers are more susceptible to informational social influence when making judgments and are more uncertain about the correctness of their information ([Deutsch and Gerard, 1955](#); [Filieri, 2015](#)). Informational social influence is particularly impactful when consumers face time constraints, have limited knowledge, perceive substantial risk in their actions, or lack interest in making independent decisions ([Lee et al., 2011](#)). Consumers are likely to internalize helpful information to enhance their knowledge and to support them in making better purchase decisions. This process aids in selecting offerings that better meet their needs and increases their confidence in their decisions, leading to increased satisfaction and reduced dissonance (e.g. [Jang et al., 2012](#)).

The theory of social influence, particularly informational social influence, can support the exploration of the interrelationships between de-influencers and consumers’ cognitive and behavioral responses. It asserts that people embrace social influence by interpreting and deriving meaning from influencing agents’ characteristics and communication strategies (e.g. [DeShields et al., 1996](#)). Informational social influence is more likely to occur online, particularly in social commerce settings ([Hu et al., 2019](#)).

De-influencer content significantly affects consumer judgments and purchasing decisions, including critiques and alternative viewpoints ([Lee et al., 2011](#)). As external information sources, they offer critical insights that influence consumer beliefs and behaviors. By highlighting the pros, cons, and previously unconsidered factors, they facilitate more informed decision-making ([Kaplan and Miller, 1987](#)), exerting informational social influence.

In the cosmetics industry, de-influencers on TikTok and Instagram have compared luxury skincare products to affordable alternatives, emphasizing value and promoting economic routines. This has led many consumers to switch to budget-friendly, dermatologist-recommended products, prioritizing performance over branding ([Park and Hong, 2024](#)), prompting luxury brands to reconsider pricing and positioning ([Park and Hong, 2024](#)). This movement has also popularized “skinimalism,” promoting minimalist skincare and reducing overall spending in the beauty sector.

De-influencers exert significant informational social influence by providing evidence-based perspectives, helping consumers balance their personal preferences with social pressures (e.g. [Hazari et al., 2024](#)). As social learners, consumers rely on social information, making de-influencers’ insights on product desirability, functionality, and value particularly influential in shaping their purchasing decisions.

Individuals naturally seek information to make informed decisions ([Henningesen and Henningesen, 2003](#)). De-influencers appear to be a valuable source of information, offering unique insights into the potential drawbacks of products or services. Their compelling

INTR

arguments and evidence trigger a deep consumer analysis, encouraging information sharing (Li, 2013). De-influencers play a vital role in the decision-making process by challenging marketing narratives, uncovering hidden problems, and nurturing a transparent and skeptical consumer environment, thereby encouraging consumers to accept their informational social influence. Consequently, their influence becomes integral to consumers' evaluation process, enabling them to make informed decisions.

Informational social influence, driven by the desire for optimal decision-making through information gathering (Henningsen and Henningsen, 2003), is exemplified by de-influencers. They provide previously unavailable insights, often highlighting product risks and disadvantages and prompting deeper cognitive processing and reconsideration (Li, 2013). This central processing (Kaplan, 1989) influences consumer judgment via de-influencers' critical perspectives.

As an external source of information, de-influencers steer consumers toward new alternatives, prompting them to reexamine their beliefs and attitudes, potentially altering their existing behaviors (e.g. Li, 2013). Thus, the informational social influence exerted by de-influencers can significantly affect consumers' confidence in their beliefs and attitudes toward a product or service. Informational social influence processes affect immediate buying choices and long-term brand perception. Thus, understanding and leveraging informational social influence dynamics is crucial for brands aiming to effectively engage and resonate with their target audience in today's interconnected consumer landscape. Quantitative data detailing the outcomes of de-influencing campaigns remain limited; however, several key insights have emerged. De-influencing has swayed 69% of U.S. social media users, prompting more mindful consumption (Creditkarma, 2024).

De-influencers criticize traditional influencers for promoting materialism, aiming to demystify influencer marketing and advocate mindful consumption. Drawing on minimalism (Kang *et al.*, 2021), zero-waste living, and sustainable marketing (Kotler, 2011), they encourage reduced consumption, decluttering, eco-friendly choices, and greenwashing, promoting sustainable products and practices.

These philosophies are reflected in real-world campaigns that embody the core values of de-influencing. A notable example is the *#NoNewClothes* challenge, which illustrates how de-influencers encourage mindful consumption by confronting the fast fashion industry's promotion of excessive consumerism. De-influencers promote reduced clothing consumption through reuse, repair, and exchange, aligning with sustainable marketing principles by challenging fast fashion overproduction and its environmental and ethical costs. They encourage intentional purchasing, second-hand shopping, and upcycling while criticizing greenwashing.

De-influencers prioritize authenticity and transparency, openly sharing their challenges with mindful living to counter the idealized portrayals of reduced consumption. Some, termed "greenfluencers," support charitable causes (e.g. Pittman and Abell, 2021). Their primary goal is to promote awareness of alternative lifestyles that challenge excessive consumption and materialism, advocating sustainability, mindfulness, and ethical consumption through minimalism and zero-waste principles.

De-influencers offer practical guidance for adopting mindful consumption, reflected in hashtags like *#saveyourmoney*, *#antihaul*, *#deinfluencing*, and *#consciousconsumer*. They advise against unnecessary purchases, suggest alternatives, critique underwhelming products, and encourage critical reflection on consumption habits, thus promoting behavioral change toward sustainability and mindfulness.

De-influencers promote decreased consumption and underscore the importance of maintaining and repairing products to extend their lifespan. Consequently, they serve as advocates for reusing, reducing, and recycling. At the core of the de-influence model are the principles that "less consumption is preferable" and that "repairing and preserving products is a prudent strategy" (Peattie and Peattie, 2009). The de-influence model encourages reduced consumption, extends to anti-consumption, and moves toward less

materialism. Black and Cherrier (2010) show that anti-consumption is integral to sustainable living, often emphasizing the choice to opt for environmentally friendly alternatives. This underscores the considerable influence of anti-consumption on fostering sustainable consumption habits, as consumers retain substantial control by choosing not to consume (Black, 2010).

Internet Research

While influencer marketing remains prevalent, many creators embrace de-influencing to counter perceived over-commercialization and inauthenticity (Audrezet et al., 2020; Jacobson and Harrison, 2022). This trend reflects the desire for authenticity, weariness of sponsored content, and resistance to the mainstream influencer model (Ki et al., 2023), representing a novel social media content creation approach.

3. Hypothesis development

3.1 Consumer perception of de-influencers vs. influencers

Social media platforms offer public spaces for individuals to express their opinions and experiences on products and brands. Consumers may use comments, reviews, or complaints about a brand or product, often made by de-influencers, as social proof that the brand has shortcomings or issues (e.g. Tóth et al., 2022). Such information could influence their perception and increase skepticism or caution when interacting with a brand. Further, as suggested by de-influencers, they may seek more worthwhile alternatives to products and brands heavily promoted by influencers because of sponsorship and business motives.

De-influencers serve as a substantial source of informational social influence and provide consumers with alternative perspectives. They support consumers by balancing their personal preferences with social influences (e.g. Hazari et al., 2024). As social learners, consumers are highly susceptible to social influence and regularly learn about products and services through various channels, whether by actively seeking information or observing others' purchases and usage behavior.

According to cognitive dissonance theory, individuals typically change their perceptions and attitudes to alleviate cognitive discomfort (Metzger et al., 2020). Therefore, when recipients encounter de-influencing factors that encourage re-evaluating their initial perception or attitude toward a brand or product, they may mitigate this discomfort by positively interpreting the message (Liu et al., 2020). Further, they deliberate more thoughtfully on their choices rather than being primarily influenced by the affective states persuaded by the influencers. De-influencers advocate for transparency and critical thinking, challenging traditional influencer culture. Their authentic portrayals of mindful living, including shared struggles, foster greater viewer trust by avoiding conflicts of interest and dispelling notions of consumerist perfection.

De-influencers are acknowledged for scrutinizing conventional influencers. De-influencers may possess greater credibility owing to their apparent detachment from commercial interests (Audrezet et al., 2020). De-influencers respond to influencer marketing by raising awareness about their superficiality and shallowness. They bring forth reasoning and thought-provoking perspectives, addressing questions consumers may overlook when exposed to influencing content. Their content creation approach, marked by openness and transparency, is likely to enhance viewer trust and foster positive perception.

Recognized as challenging traditional influencers, de-influencers are considered more reliable because of their evident independence from commercial interests. According to Audrezet et al. (2020), respondents might find de-influencers more trustworthy as they prioritize their audience's best interests. In contrast, traditional influencers may be viewed as prioritizing financial gains and sponsorships. Hence, we formulate the following hypotheses for the first experiment:

- H1. Respondents exposed to messages from de-influencers show a more negative perceived attitude toward the brand than those exposed to messages from influencers.

INTR

H2. Respondents exposed to messages from de-influencers show a more positive perception toward the brand than those exposed to messages from influencers.

H3. Respondents consider de-influencers more credible than influencers.

H4. Respondents consider de-influencers more trustworthy than traditional influencers.

3.2 *The impact of content creators' gender*

Gender plays a key role in shaping individuals' perceptions and interactions with influencers on social media platforms. Regarding informational social influence, the effect of the gender of the informant or source has been documented (e.g. [Lee, 2003](#)). [Todd and Melancon \(2018\)](#) found that a female source affected perceived attractiveness, particularly among male viewers. However, they did not affect perceived trustworthiness while they explored the influence of the source's gender on social networking sites, particularly within live streaming on platforms like Twitch. [Hudders and De Jans \(2022\)](#) found that, as predicted by social identity theory, women felt a stronger connection to female influencers and had stronger parasocial interactions, brand attitudes, and engagement. In contrast, these effects were not observed among men. Accordingly, we formulate the following hypotheses for the second experiment:

H5. Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the brand vary with the gender of the de-influencer.

H6. Perceived message effectiveness varies with the gender of the de-influencer.

H7a. Perceived credibility of the de-influencer varies with the gender of the de-influencer.

H7b. Perceived trustworthiness of the de-influencer varies with the gender of the de-influencer.

H8. Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the video itself vary with the gender of the de-influencer.

3.3 *Impact of different de-influencing messages*

Consumers' awareness and interest regarding ethical, health, and social issues vary significantly (e.g. [Ferrell and Ferrell, 2021](#)). Some individuals have developed a deep understanding of these concerns and actively seek products and services that align with their values ([Jenkins, 2009](#)). They prioritize supporting businesses that commit to sustainability, fair labor practices, and community engagement. However, some consumers may have limited awareness of these issues and prioritize other factors when making purchasing decisions ([Carrington et al., 2014](#)). Thus, we formulate the following hypotheses:

H9. Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the brand are not equal among the four types of de-influence messages, namely addressing ethical issues related to the brand, highlighting the negative effects of the brand's products on health, addressing social concerns, and discussing all the brand's problems.

H10. Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the video are not equal among the four types of de-influence messages, namely addressing ethical issues related to the brand, highlighting the negative effects of the brand's products on health, addressing social concerns, and discussing all the brand's problems.

H11. The perceived effectiveness of the video is not equal among the four types of de-influence messages, namely addressing ethical issues related to the brand,

highlighting the negative effects of the brand's products on health, addressing social concerns, and discussing all the brand's problems. Internet Research

4. Overview of experiments

We conducted three experiments to explore how consumers perceive de-influencing messages and their subsequent impacts. These experiments were designed to provide a deeper understanding of how people react to de-influencers. The first experiment examined how consumers perceive social media de-influencers and their content differently from social media influencers. The second experiment investigated whether content effectiveness in a social media context is attributable to the de-influencing content or the social media de-influencer. The last experiment compared consumer attitudes toward different de-influencer content.

Graduate students ($N = 610$) from a business school in Singapore were recruited to participate in a comprehensive web-based experiment. Participants were instructed to access a designated web page to complete the study. Subsequently, they were randomly assigned to one of 10 study sets hosted on Google Forms.

Each of the 10 survey sets comprised two distinct sections. The initial section included questions designed to collect demographic information about participants. The subsequent section presents randomly generated video stimuli, followed by post-stimulus questions designed to assess various aspects, including attitude toward the video and the brand and purchase intention.

Each participant was exposed to a single real video that varied in type and content. The conditions and procedures for each survey set were consistent throughout the experiment, with samples ranging from 75 to 78 participants. Appendix 1 presents the details of the three experimental designs. The sample size for each experiment was determined based on practical considerations, including the availability of participants and the need to obtain a representative sample (Anderson *et al.*, 2017). We aimed to gather sufficient data to detect meaningful differences between the experimental conditions, ensuring the robustness and reliability of the findings. To ensure robustness, we conducted a power analysis using G*Power (Faul *et al.*, 2009). With a target power of 0.80, an alpha level of 0.05, and an expected medium effect size ($f = 0.25$), the required sample size per group was 64. Our sample size for each condition aligned with this calculation, ensuring sufficient power to detect meaningful effects.

Measurement items of the variables were adopted from prior studies (Appendix 2). This appendix provides a synopsis of the precise questions directed at respondents.

A video was used to enhance the experiment's realism and improve the work's veracity and believability. This approach aimed to replicate the experiences of individuals who consume social media content. Participants in each group were exposed to an actual video containing the designated message to ensure a more realistic and immersive setting. Other researchers used actual stimuli in social media research (e.g. Valsesia *et al.*, 2020). Actual stimuli can capture the essence of social media settings and reflect the content and messages users encounter (Valsesia *et al.*, 2020). This enhances study validity, as the findings can be more easily generalized to real-world social media experiences.

To mitigate the influence of social media channels and ensure a more neutral assessment of the content, we removed TikTok watermarks from the videos. By eliminating the prominent association with a specific platform, we aimed to create an environment where respondents could engage with the content without preconceived biases or perceptions. This approach enhances the authenticity of their reactions and provides a clear understanding of their attitude.

We selected Shein for our experiments because of its ethical controversies and heavy reliance on influencer marketing. Analyzing a brand criticized on social media offers insights into consumers' perceptions, brand reputation, and the effects of negative publicity. Shein's controversial image allows us to explore consumer decision-making, ethics, and the role of social media in shaping brand views. Shein invested in influencers to promote its products by providing compensation, discounts, and free items. Their marketing strategy provides an

opportunity to study the impact of influencer-driven content on consumer behavior and compare it with content designed to reduce influence.

In all experiments, we took several steps to control for the effects of potential confounding factors, such as the gender of the influencer or de-influencer, the type of product or brand discussed, and the specific content of the message. We selected influencers and de-influencers with similar social media followings and engagement rates to minimize perceived popularity and influence differences. The same brand, Shein, was discussed for all videos to maintain consistency across all conditions. Real videos from content creators were used to ensure authenticity. Although we did not create scripts, the focus of our messages remained consistent. Further, using survey questions, we controlled for the effects of several variables, such as familiarity with content creators. Participants rated content creators based on their perceived expertise and familiarity. These ratings helped ensure that any differences in the outcomes were not due to varying levels of familiarity with the content creators. The attractiveness, perceived expertise, and familiarity of content creators can significantly influence the effectiveness of de-influencing efforts. Attractiveness can enhance credibility and likability, making viewers more receptive to messages. Physically attractive individuals are often perceived as more competent and trustworthy (i.e. the “halo effect”; Gupta *et al.*, 2023). Consequently, attractive content creators might more successfully persuade their audiences to adopt more mindful and sustainable consumption behaviors. Perceived expertise plays a crucial role in the establishment of authority and trust. When content creators are viewed as knowledgeable and experienced, their opinions and recommendations carry more weight (Hussain *et al.*, 2024). Familiarity, however, can create a sense of connection and relatability. Viewers are more likely to trust and be influenced by content creators with whom they feel familiar, as familiarity can reduce perceived risk and increase comfort with the presented information (Copeland *et al.*, 2023). This sense of connection can enhance the impact of de-influencing messages, as audiences may feel that the content creator understands their challenges and provides realistic and applicable advice.

A pre-test was conducted with 71 participants to validate the manipulation of the de-influencing videos. Participants rated the suitability and understandability of the videos. Suitability refers to the extent to which a video aligns with the specific content type it is supposed to represent. Participants rated how well the videos matched the intended content type. Higher ratings indicated a stronger alignment between the video and content type.

Understandability represents the degree to which participants comprehend the video content. Participants rated how easily they understood the information presented in the videos. Higher scores denoted better comprehension of the video content. The mean scores were computed for both suitability and understandability for each video. These mean scores provided an overall assessment of how participants perceived the videos in terms of matching the intended content type and comprehensibility.

The pre-test results showed that the videos successfully represented their specific content types. Participants rated the videos with high mean scores for suitability (6.1), suggesting that the videos effectively matched the intended content types. Moreover, participants demonstrated a good understanding of the video content (6.4). This indicates that the information presented in the videos was clear and readily comprehensible to participants.

We included manipulation check questions in the experiments to confirm the validity of the manipulations using the experimental sample. These checks involved rating the understandability of video content. The results confirmed that participants reacted to the stimuli as expected, ensuring the validity of our experimental manipulations.

5. Experiment one

5.1 Experiment one: research design

The first experiment explored how consumers perceive social media de-influencers and their content compared to the content of social media influencers. We aimed to understand whether consumers have different views of the two parties.

A between-groups experimental design was used. Participants were randomly assigned to two groups (conditions): the social media de-influencing message group or the influencing message group. This study examined the differences in consumers' perceived attitudes toward the brand, the conveyed messages, and purchasing intention between de-influencers and influencers. By investigating these differences, we can gain insight into these contrasting approaches' varying effects and implications on consumer attitudes and behaviors. We used videos to examine consumer perception. Links to the videos used in this study can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0rxk06qDvCLFP9WDJGRY0_WILU0CsBB. Each video was precisely one minute long. Different content creators were selected as influencers and de-influencers. The videos varied only in message framing: one video featured a creator praising Shein, whereas the other featured a different creator criticizing Shein. This ensured that the focus was on message framing rather than the identity of the content creator. The videos were edited to maintain identical visual and audio quality.

The questions gathered participants' opinions on social media influencers, their online activities, and their perception of the Shein brand. Both groups completed the survey after watching the relevant videos, and their responses were collected and analyzed. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part aimed to gather general information about participants' viewpoints on social media influencers, their online activities, and their perception of the Shein brand. The second part focused on specific aspects of the experiment. It included questions that explored participants' perceptions of the credibility of the person featured in the video. These questions aimed to gauge how trustworthy and knowledgeable participants perceived the individual in the video to be.

Further, the questionnaire examined participants' purchasing intention to understand whether the video influenced their inclination to engage with the promoted brand. Participants' attitudes toward the message in the video were explored through a series of questions. This section aimed to measure participants' agreement or disagreement with the content presented in the video. It sought to determine whether participants found the message persuasive. Further, the questionnaire included questions related to participants' compliance with the messages in the video. The questionnaire also sought to measure participants' overall perception of Shein and their likelihood of engaging with the brand in the future.

5.2 Experiment one: results

Respondents exposed to the de-influencing message exhibited significantly more negative perceived attitudes toward the brand ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 1.23$, $n = 78$) than those exposed to the influencing message ($M = 4.52$, $SD = 1.41$, $n = 76$), $t_{(152)} = 2.2$, $p < 0.05$. The effect size (measured using Cohen's d) was 1.14, indicating significance. The pooled standard deviation was calculated as 1.32. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference in attitude between the groups was [1.09, 1.93]. Thus, **H1** is supported.

A significant difference was found in message perception between respondents exposed to the de-influencing message and those exposed to the influencing message; the former group showed more positive perception ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.14$, $n = 78$), $t_{(152)} = 2.4$, $p < 0.05$. The effect size (Cohen's d) was 0.86, indicating a large effect. The pooled standard deviation was calculated as 1.25. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference in perception was [0.23, 1.02]. These results support **H2**, indicating that de-influencing messages lead to more positive perceptions than influencing messages.

There was a disparity in the perceived credibility of the person in the video between de-influencers and traditional influencers ($t_{(152)} = 2.6$, $p < 0.05$), with respondents considering de-influencers to be more credible ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 1.2$, $n = 78$), supporting **H3**. The effect size (Cohen's d) was 0.88, indicating significance. Similarly, the perceived trustworthiness of the person in the video also significantly differed between de-influencers and traditional influencers ($t_{(152)} = 2.8$, $p < 0.05$), with respondents considering de-influencers to be more trustworthy ($M = 4.6$, $SD = 1.34$, $n = 78$), aligning with **H4**. The effect size for

trustworthiness was 0.64, indicating a medium effect. These results support H3 and H4, suggesting that de-influencers are perceived to be more credible and trustworthy than traditional influencers.

6. Experiment two

6.1 Experiment two: research design

Our first experiment aimed to compare de-influencers with traditional influencers and analyze their content. In our second experiment, we explored the effects of de-influencers' gender and content format, specifically the presence of audio and visual signals associated with de-influencers. Thus, the second experiment aimed to determine whether the effectiveness of a de-influencing message in a social media setting is owing to the gender and presence of the de-influencers who share it. This experiment aimed to investigate possible differences in effectiveness between female and male de-influencers. It also sought to identify the most effective type of video for delivering a de-influencing message. Participants were exposed to a de-influencing message featuring a male (Condition 1) or female (Condition 2) de-influencer.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two groups for the experiment. Each group was exposed to its respective de-influencing message or video. The two groups were exposed to identical messaging criticizing Shein's factory working conditions. By maintaining consistent content across both groups, we effectively controlled the messages and primarily focused on the gender of the content creator.

Group 1 participants were exposed to a female de-influencer, while Group 2 participants were exposed to a male de-influencer. Links to videos used in this study can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0rxk06qDvCLFP9WDJGRYo_WILU0CdsBB. Both male and female de-influencers delivered similar messages, criticizing Shein's factory working conditions. This allowed us to focus on the impact of the content creator's gender on perceived message effectiveness. We focused on negative message framing to align with the current de-influencing trend, which primarily emphasizes critical perspectives.

After exposure, participants' responses and attitudes were measured to assess the impact of the message. We employed various measures to assess participants' attitudes toward video content, the brand (Shein), and purchasing intention. These questions provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of de-influencing messages and the role of the de-influencer's gender in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors toward the brand.

6.2 Experiment two: results

The results of our second experiment support our prediction that de-influencing messages negatively affect respondents' perceived attitude toward the brand ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.10$). Respondents also positively perceived distinct types of de-influencing videos ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.20$). To explore the potential differences between videos, we conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA).

We performed several assumption checks to ensure the appropriateness of the ANOVA:

- (1) Normality: The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that the data were normally distributed across all groups ($p > 0.05$ for all conditions).
- (2) Homogeneity of Variances: Levene's test showed no significant differences in variances across groups ($p > 0.05$), supporting the assumption of equal variances.
- (3) Independence: We ensured that participants were independently assigned to each group through random allocation.

Since the assumptions were met, we proceeded with the ANOVA.

Interestingly, the gender of the de-influencer did not significantly influence respondents' perceived attitude toward the brand ($F_{(1,150)} = 10.5$, $p > 0.1$, $\eta^2 = 0.065$, 95% CI [0.00–0.14]),

its effectiveness ($F_{(1,150)} = 12.6, p > 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.078, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.01-0.16]$), their credibility perception ($F_{(1,150)} = 10.4, p > 0.1, \eta^2 = 0.065, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.00-0.14]$), their trustworthiness perception ($F_{(1,150)} = 9.6, p > 0.1, \eta^2 = 0.064, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.00-0.16]$), or their attitude toward the video itself ($F_{(1,150)} = 10.01, p > 0.1, \eta^2 = 0.063, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.00-0.13]$). Although the ANOVA did not indicate significant differences between the groups, we conducted Tukey's HSD post-hoc tests to explore potential pairwise differences. The post-hoc tests supported the absence of significant differences between the conditions (all p 's > 0.05), reinforcing the conclusion that the gender of the de-influencer did not affect participants' responses. Thus, [H5](#), [H6](#), [H7a](#), [H7b](#), and [H8](#) are rejected.

7. Experiment three

7.1 Experiment three: research design

Our first experiment compared de-influencers and traditional influencers by analyzing their content. The second experiment examined the impact of de-influencers' gender and content format on de-influencing perceived message effectiveness on social media. Our third study compared consumer attitudes toward the four types or focuses of de-influencing messages. The aim was to identify the most effective message types by examining their impact on consumer attitudes toward a brand. The four message types were ethical issues related to the brand, the negative effects of the brand's products on health, social concerns, and all the brand's problems.

We examined these four types of de-influencing messages. The purpose was to identify which issue had the most significant impact on consumer attitude toward a brand by comparing the effectiveness of each message type.

Participants were divided into four groups. Group 1 was exposed to a de-influencing message that focused on an ethical problem. Group 2 was exposed to a de-influencing message that focused on health issues. Group 3 was exposed to videos focusing on social issues. Group 4 was exposed to a video focusing on the brand's problems.

The first part of the questionnaire evaluated participants' viewpoints regarding social media influencers, their online behaviors, and their perception of the Shein brand. This segment of the questionnaire sought to gather information on participants' attitudes toward influencers, their frequency of engagement with influencer content, and their overall perception of the Shein brand. The second part of the questionnaire focused on the video participants were exposed to during the experiment. This section included questions related to participants' attitudes toward the message conveyed in the video, the perceived effectiveness of the message in influencing their opinions of the brand, and their overall perceived attitude toward the brand. These questions allowed researchers to gauge the impact of the specific de-influencing message on participants' attitudes and perceptions.

7.2 Experiment three: results

To assess the influence of different content types, we conducted an ANOVA. The content of the de-influence video significantly affected respondents' perceived attitude toward the brand ($F_{(3,300)} = 22.6, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.184, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.10-0.26]$). Specifically, respondents exposed to ethical and health issues in the message exhibited more negative attitudes than those exposed to the social message or the "all problems" message. Thus, [H9](#) is supported.

However, concerning respondents' attitude toward the message itself, the content of the de-influence video did not show a significant impact ($F_{(3,300)} = 16.3, p > 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.140, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.07-0.21]$). Thus, [H10](#) is rejected.

We observed a significant impact of the de-influence video's content on its overall effectiveness ($F_{(3,300)} = 13.9, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.122, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.05-0.20]$). Respondents exposed to ethical and health issues in the message found the de-influencing video more compelling. Thus, [H11](#) is supported. [Appendix 3](#) reports the results of our experiments.

8. General results from the experiments

In all three experiments, we surveyed participants regarding their attitudes toward influencers. The findings revealed that respondents generally held positive attitudes ($M = 4.1$; $SD = 1.3$) and perceived influencers as credible ($M = 3.58$; $SD = 1.4$). To assess their attitude toward de-influencers, we briefly described the de-influence concept: “*There are social media users who use their platform to criticize and negatively review brands or products. They often provide an opposing viewpoint to traditional influencers who promote and advertise products.*” Respondents generally displayed a positive attitude toward this category of social media users ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 1.12$).

Before being exposed to the de-influencing videos in the three experiments, respondents initially held a positive attitude toward Shein ($M = 4.16$; $SD = 1.34$). However, after video exposure, their attitude became negative ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.17$). To minimize any potential bias, we asked respondents if they were familiar with the person in the de-influencing video, and none of them knew the de-influencers.

An investigation into the impact of de-influencers on potential future engagements with Shein was also conducted in three experiments. Participants reported a mean negative impact score of 2.94 ($SD = 0.97$), suggesting that de-influencing has the potential to adversely affect brand engagement.

Before the de-influencing videos were presented in all three experiments, respondents expressed positive purchasing intention toward Shein ($M = 4.34$; $SD = 1.4$). However, after exposure to the de-influencing videos, their purchasing intention became negative ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.64$).

On average, participants strongly complied with the de-influencers’ videos ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.89$). This indicates a positive reception of the message and suggests that the video effectively conveyed its intended information. Participants’ perceptions of the de-influencers’ attributes were also examined. The data indicated that participants found the de-influencers trustworthy ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 0.72$) and knowledgeable ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.68$). Our findings also revealed that respondents exhibited a favorable attitude toward this form of messaging ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.31$).

9. Discussion

Respondents generally held positive views and perceived de-influencers as credible. This indicates that de-influencing, as presented to participants, was not met with adverse reactions but rather with a sense of respect and acknowledgment of the credibility of the content creators.

Our results also show that respondents exposed to de-influencing messages exhibited more negative perceived attitudes toward the brand than those exposed to influencing messages. This result aligns with previous research and provides further evidence that negative messaging and criticism on social media significantly influence consumers’ brand perception (Hayes *et al.*, 2021).

Our results indicate a shift in respondents’ perceived attitude toward the brand and purchasing intention after exposure to influential videos. After viewing the video, their attitudes and purchasing intentions became worse than their initial levels. This finding underscores the impact of de-influencing messages on consumers’ perception and decision-making processes. According to Kim *et al.* (2016), when individuals encounter negative comments, complaints, or unfavorable experiences shared by others, these experiences leave a lasting impact on their minds and brand perception. Consequently, this negative attitude can lead to a decline in trust, credibility, and overall favorability toward the brand. Consumers tend to trust the opinions and experiences their peers and acquaintances share, making de-influencing messages even more influential. When negative sentiments become widespread, they can undermine the brand’s painstaking efforts to establish itself as a reliable and reputable entity in the market. According to the social influence theory, individuals rely on information from credible sources to form attitudes and make decisions, particularly when they lack

complete information or are uncertain. The significant effect of the de-influencing messages on attitude and purchase intention indicates that consumers view these messages as valuable and persuasive. This shift suggests that de-influencers effectively alter consumer behavior by providing compelling reasons to reconsider purchase decisions. This shift in consumer behavior has key implications for marketers and businesses, highlighting the need to consider the potential impact of de-influencing messages on consumer attitudes and behaviors.

The results demonstrate that de-influencing content is perceived more positively than influencing content. The results also showed that respondents perceived de-influencers as more credible and trustworthy than traditional influencers. This outcome complements prior research emphasizing the importance of credibility and trust in social media communication (Lou and Yuan, 2019). De-influencers' authentic and critical approach may enhance consumers' perception of credibility and trustworthiness. Therefore, when individuals were exposed to messages urging them to stop buying or resist external influences, they responded more favorably than to messages encouraging them to make purchases or succumb to external influences. These findings have implications for social media and marketing. Social media platforms are powerful tools that influence consumer behavior. Companies and advertisers often employ strategies to encourage users to purchase or adopt specific viewpoints. However, there is growing concern regarding the adverse effects of excessive consumption and the potential manipulation of public opinion through social media. The de-influencing approach may resonate with individuals who value authenticity, critical thinking, and independent decision-making by encouraging them to question and challenge the pervasive influence of marketing messages. It is essential to consider the value and purpose of different messages in the social media landscape. While influence-driven messages may serve the interests of companies seeking to boost sales and profits (Hung *et al.*, 2022), de-influencing messages prioritize the well-being of individuals and society. Such messages may align with the values of those concerned with overconsumption, environmental sustainability, and ethical considerations.

While our findings suggest that de-influencing can be a powerful tool for consumer education and advocacy, it is essential to acknowledge the potential criticisms and limitations. Previous research has focused on content marketing (De Veirman *et al.*, 2017). However, de-influence content is not immune to biases. These biases may stem from personal preferences or the hidden agendas of content creators, which can affect message objectivity. Therefore, consumers must critically evaluate de-influencing messages and consider multiple perspectives before forming attitudes and making decisions. Further, there is a risk that de-influencing could inadvertently promote consumption through alternative means, such as encouraging consumers to switch to other products rather than reducing overall consumption. These complexities highlight the need for further research to understand the motivations behind de-influencing campaigns and their broader impacts on consumer behavior.

The gender of the de-influencers did not significantly influence perceived brand attitude, message effectiveness, or message perception. In today's digital landscape, where content is consumed across various platforms and formats, the creator's gender may not be as salient to audiences as other factors, such as the quality of the content, its relevance, or its authenticity (Jacobson and Harrison, 2022). Audiences may focus more on content than on the creator's gender. This finding aligns with the broader trend in digital media consumption, where the nature and substance of content take precedence over the identity of the content creator (Jacobson and Harrison, 2022). With the proliferation of content across social media, streaming platforms, and other digital channels, users have become more discerning and selective, prioritizing content that resonates with their values, interests, and needs. Moreover, the diverse and inclusive nature of digital platforms means that content from a wide array of creators is readily available, which further dilutes the impact of any single demographic factor. The global reach of social media and the democratization of content creation have enabled creators of all genders to meaningfully contribute to the digital landscape, making gender a less distinguishing characteristic when evaluating content.

INTR

Interestingly, the content of the de-influencing video significantly impacted respondents' perceived attitude toward the brand and the video's effectiveness. Messages emphasizing ethical and health issues resulted in more negative brand attitudes and higher effectiveness ratings. This finding suggests that de-influencing messages that focus on ethical and health concerns may be particularly potent in swaying consumer opinions and influencing their attitude. In contrast, the content of the de-influencing video did not significantly affect attitude toward the message itself. This result implies that consumers' reactions to de-influencing may be driven primarily by their impact on brand attitude rather than their perception of the message. Informational social influence theory posits that the relevance and quality of information play critical roles in influencing attitudes and behaviors. Content emphasizing ethical concerns and health issues may resonate more deeply with consumers' values and societal norms, leading to stronger reactions.

10. Theoretical implications

First, this study enriches the literature on social media marketing and consumer behavior through the lens of informational social influence theory by elaborating on "de-influencing."

Second, this study reveals that consumers perceive de-influencers' messages as more credible and trustworthy than the messages of traditional influencers. This finding suggests consumers are becoming more discerning, valuing authenticity and relatability over polished and sponsored content.

Third, this study enriches our understanding of consumer behavior in the digital age, influencer marketing dynamics, and brand management. Respondents exposed to de-influencing messages exhibited more negative perceived attitudes toward the brand than those exposed to influencing messages, underscoring the powerful influence of negative messaging and criticism in online spaces. Further, the observed shifts in respondents' attitudes and purchasing intentions after exposure to de-influencing videos provide valuable insights into consumer decision-making processes. Our research demonstrates that social media de-influencers negatively affect consumer purchasing behavior. This perspective can help fill a gap in the current literature, which often focuses on the positive aspects of influencer marketing.

11. Practical implications

Our findings have considerable implications for future marketing strategies. Businesses must prioritize authenticity and align their strategies with consumer values. As relatable and genuine content creators, de-influencers offer brands opportunities to engage constructively, thereby turning criticism into growth. For example, Mario Badescu Skin Care and E.L.F. Cosmetics provided critical feedback on TikTok by engaging with de-influencers, fostering trust, and demonstrating responsiveness to consumer concerns.

Collaborating with de-influencers known for providing unbiased reviews can enhance transparency and credibility, especially in the health, wellness, and sustainability industries. Such partnerships highlight a brand's commitment to improving and building consumer trust and loyalty. Brands facing backlash can rebuild trust by adopting transparent strategies like honest messaging, realistic testimonials, and user-generated content. Proactively addressing criticisms through corrections or constructive engagement further enhances reputation and customer relationships. De-influencers can also act as early warning systems for consumer dissatisfaction, helping brands develop proactive crisis management plans and align themselves with regulatory requirements, ultimately fostering long-term trust and engagement.

12. Research limitations and future research directions

Despite these valuable insights, this study has some limitations. The data collection focused on students in Singapore, limiting generalizability to other age groups and cultures. Future research

should include more diverse participants to enhance scope and validity. Further, focusing solely on Shein limits the applicability of our findings to other brands. Future studies could include multiple brands and segment consumers by prior attitude to clarify the varied responses to de-influencing. Finally, future research could explore whether de-influencing is a lasting or transient phenomenon and provide insights into its sustainability and long-term impact.

Internet Research

References

- Anderson, S.F., Kelley, K. and Maxwell, S.E. (2017), "Sample-size planning for more accurate statistical power: a method adjusting sample effect sizes for publication bias and uncertainty", *Psychological Science*, Vol. 28 No. 11, pp. 1547-1562, doi: [10.1177/0956797617723724](https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797617723724).
- Audrezet, A., de Kerviler, G. and Guidry Moulard, J. (2020), "Authenticity under threat: when social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 117, pp. 557-569, doi: [10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.07.008](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.07.008).
- Bareket-Bojmel, L., Grinstein, A. and Steinhart, Y. (2020), "Embrace the debate: goals, de-marketing overconsumption, and conflicting information", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 37 No. 11, pp. 1484-1497, doi: [10.1002/mar.21394](https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21394).
- Black, I. (2010), "Sustainability through anti-consumption", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 9 No. 6, pp. 403-411, doi: [10.1002/cb.340](https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.340).
- Black, I.R. and Cherrier, H. (2010), "Anti-consumption as part of living a sustainable lifestyle: daily practices, contextual motivations and subjective values", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 9 No. 6, pp. 437-453, doi: [10.1002/cb.337](https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.337).
- Book, L.A., Tanford, S., Montgomery, R. and Love, C. (2018), "Online traveler reviews as social influence: price is no longer king", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, Vol. 42 No. 3, pp. 445-475, doi: [10.1177/1096348015597029](https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348015597029).
- Carrington, M.J., Neville, B.A. and Whitwell, G.J. (2014), "Lost in translation: exploring the ethical consumer intention-behavior gap", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 67 No. 1, pp. 2759-2767, doi: [10.1016/j.jbusres.2012.09.022](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2012.09.022).
- Copeland, L., Lyu, J. and Han, J. (2023), "Does familiarity matter? Examining model familiarity in Instagram advertisements", *Journal of Internet Commerce*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 97-121, doi: [10.1080/15332861.2021.2011600](https://doi.org/10.1080/15332861.2021.2011600).
- Creditkarma (2024), "De-influenced anyone? In some cases, social media gives consumers the shopping ick", available at: <https://www.creditkarma.com/about/commentary/de-influenced-anyone-in-some-cases-social-media-gives-consumers-the-shopping-ick> (accessed 29 July 2024).
- De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V. and Hudders, L. (2017), "Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 36 No. 5, pp. 798-828, doi: [10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035](https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035).
- DeShields, O.W., Kara, A. and Kaynak, E. (1996), "Source effects in purchase decisions: the impact of physical attractiveness and accent of salesperson", *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 89-101, doi: [10.1016/0167-8116\(95\)00036-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-8116(95)00036-4).
- Deutsch, M. and Gerard, H.B. (1955), "A study of normative and informational social influences upon individual judgment", *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Vol. 51 No. 3, pp. 629-636, doi: [10.1037/h0046408](https://doi.org/10.1037/h0046408).
- Dinh, T.C.T. and Lee, Y. (2022), "I want to be as trendy as influencers'-how 'fear of missing out' leads to buying intention for products endorsed by social media influencers", *The Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 346-364, doi: [10.1108/JRIM-04-2021-0127](https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-04-2021-0127).
- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A. and Lang, A.-G. (2009), "Statistical power analyses using G*Power 3.1: tests for correlation and regression analyses", *Behavior Research Methods*, Vol. 41 No. 4, pp. 1149-1160, doi: [10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149](https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149).
- Ferrell, O.C. and Ferrell, L. (2021), "New directions for marketing ethics and social responsibility research", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 13-22, doi: [10.1080/10696679.2020.1860686](https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2020.1860686).

- Filieri, R. (2015), "What makes online reviews helpful? A diagnosticity-adoption framework to explain informational and normative influences in e-WOM", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 68 No. 6, pp. 1261-1270, doi: [10.1016/j.jbusres.2014.11.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2014.11.006).
- Gupta, P., Burton, J.L. and Costa Barros, L. (2023), "Gender of the online influencer and follower: the differential persuasive impact of homophily, attractiveness and product-match", *Internet Research*, Vol. 33 No. 2, pp. 720-740, doi: [10.1108/INTR-04-2021-0229](https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-04-2021-0229).
- Hayes, J.L., Brinson, N.H., Bott, G.J. and Moeller, C.M. (2021), "The influence of consumer-brand relationship on the personalized advertising privacy calculus in social media", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 55 No. 1, pp. 16-30, doi: [10.1016/j.intmar.2021.01.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2021.01.001).
- Hazari, S., Talpade, S. and Brown, C.O. (2024), "Do brand influencers matter on TikTok? A social influence theory perspective", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 271-289, doi: [10.1080/10696679.2023.2217488](https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2023.2217488).
- Henningesen, D.D. and Henningsen, M.L.M. (2003), "Examining social influence in information-sharing contexts", *Small Group Research*, Vol. 34 No. 4, pp. 391-412, doi: [10.1177/1046496403251933](https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496403251933).
- Hu, X., Chen, X. and Davison, R.M. (2019), "Social support, source credibility, social influence, and impulsive purchase behavior in social commerce", *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 297-327, doi: [10.1080/10864415.2019.1619905](https://doi.org/10.1080/10864415.2019.1619905).
- Huang, J.H. and Chen, Y.F. (2006), "Herding in online product choice", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 23 No. 5, pp. 413-428, doi: [10.1002/mar.20119](https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20119).
- Hudders, L. and De Jans, S. (2022), "Gender effects in influencer marketing: an experimental study on the efficacy of endorsements by same- vs. other-gender social media influencers on Instagram", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 128-149, doi: [10.1080/02650487.2021.1997455](https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2021.1997455).
- Hung, K., Tse, D.K. and Chan, T.H. (2022), "E-commerce influencers in China: dual-route model on likes, shares, and sales", *Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 51 No. 4, pp. 486-501, doi: [10.1080/00913367.2021.1990811](https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2021.1990811).
- Hussain, K., Nusair, K., Junaid, M. and Aman, W. (2024), "A two-actor model for understanding user engagement with content creators: applying social capital theory", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 156, 108237, doi: [10.1016/j.chb.2024.108237](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2024.108237).
- Jacobson, J. and Harrison, B. (2022), "Sustainable fashion social media influencers and content creation calibration", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 150-177, doi: [10.1080/02650487.2021.2000125](https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2021.2000125).
- Jang, S., Prasad, A. and Ratchford, B.T. (2012), "How consumers use product reviews in the purchase decision process", *Marketing Letters*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 825-838, doi: [10.1007/s11002-012-9191-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-012-9191-4).
- Jenkins, H. (2009), "A 'business opportunity' model of corporate social responsibility for small- and medium-sized enterprises", *Business Ethics: A European Review*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 21-36, doi: [10.1111/j.1467-8608.2009.01546.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8608.2009.01546.x).
- Kang, J., Martinez, C.M.J. and Johnson, C. (2021), "Minimalism as a sustainable lifestyle: its behavioral representations and contributions to emotional well-being", *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, Vol. 27, pp. 802-813, doi: [10.1016/j.spc.2021.02.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2021.02.001).
- Kaplan, M.F. (1989), "Task, situational, and personal determinants of influence processes in group decision making", *Advances in Group Processes*, Vol. 6, pp. 87-105.
- Kaplan, M.F. and Miller, C.E. (1987), "Group decision making and normative versus informational influence: effects of type of issue and assigned decision rule", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 53 No. 2, pp. 306-313, doi: [10.1037/0022-3514.53.2.306](https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.53.2.306).
- Karimi, F. (2023), "Forget the influencers. Here come the 'deinfluencers'", available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2023/06/11/us/deinfluencing-tiktok-trend-explained-ccc/index.html> (accessed 25 July 2024).
- Kautish, P. and Sharma, R. (2020), "Determinants of pro-environmental behavior and environmentally conscious consumer behavior: an empirical investigation from emerging market", *Business Strategy and Development*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 112-127, doi: [10.1002/bsd2.82](https://doi.org/10.1002/bsd2.82).

- Ki, C.-W., Chow, T.C. and Li, C. (2023), "Bridging the trust gap in influencer marketing: ways to sustain consumers' trust and assuage their distrust in the social media influencer landscape", *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, Vol. 39 No. 17, pp. 3445-3460, doi: [10.1080/10447318.2022.2097785](https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2022.2097785).
- Kim, S.J., Wang, R.J.-H., Maslowska, E. and Malthouse, E.C. (2016), "'Understanding a fury in your words': the effects of posting and viewing electronic negative word-of-mouth on purchase behaviors", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 54, pp. 511-521, doi: [10.1016/j.chb.2015.08.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.08.015).
- Kotler, P. (2011), "Reinventing marketing to manage the environmental imperative", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 75 No. 4, pp. 132-135, doi: [10.1509/jmkg.75.4.132](https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.75.4.132).
- Lee, E.-J. (2003), "Effects of 'gender' of the computer on informational social influence: the moderating role of task type", *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, Vol. 58 No. 4, pp. 347-362, doi: [10.1016/S1071-5819\(03\)00009-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1071-5819(03)00009-0).
- Lee, J.A. and Eastin, M.S. (2021), "Perceived authenticity of social media influencers: scale development and validation", *The Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, Vol. 15 No. 4, pp. 822-841, doi: [10.1108/JRIM-12-2020-0253](https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-12-2020-0253).
- Lee, S.S. and Johnson, B.K. (2022), "Are they being authentic? The effects of self-disclosure and message sidedness on sponsored post effectiveness", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 30-53, doi: [10.1080/02650487.2021.1986257](https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2021.1986257).
- Lee, M.K.O., Shi, N., Cheung, C.M.K., Lim, K.H. and Sia, C.L. (2011), "Consumer's decision to shop online: the moderating role of positive informational social influence", *Information and Management*, Vol. 48 No. 6, pp. 185-191, doi: [10.1016/j.im.2010.08.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2010.08.005).
- Li, C.-Y. (2013), "Persuasive messages on information system acceptance: a theoretical extension of elaboration likelihood model and social influence theory", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 264-275, doi: [10.1016/j.chb.2012.09.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2012.09.003).
- Liu, H., Jayawardhena, C., Osburg, V.-S. and Mohiuddin Babu, M. (2020), "Do online reviews still matter post-purchase?", *Internet Research*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 109-139, doi: [10.1108/INTR-07-2018-0331](https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-07-2018-0331).
- Lou, C. and Yuan, S. (2019), "Influencer marketing: how message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media", *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, Vol. 19 No. 1, pp. 58-73, doi: [10.1080/15252019.2018.1533501](https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2018.1533501).
- Metzger, M.J., Hartsell, E.H. and Flanagin, A.J. (2020), "Cognitive dissonance or credibility? A comparison of two theoretical explanations for selective exposure to partisan news", *Communication Research*, Vol. 47 No. 1, pp. 3-28, doi: [10.1177/0093650215613136](https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650215613136).
- Nowak, A., Szamrej, J. and Latané, B. (1990), "From private attitude to public opinion: a dynamic theory of social impact", *Psychological Review*, Vol. 97 No. 3, pp. 362-376, doi: [10.1037/0033-295X.97.3.362](https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.97.3.362).
- Park, Y.W. and Hong, P. (2024), "Mastering digital WOM: innovative strategies in Japan's cosmetic market", in *Cosmetics Marketing Strategy in the Era of the Digital Ecosystem: Revolutionizing Beauty in the New Market Frontier*, Springer Nature Singapore, Singapore, pp. 113-127.
- Peattie, K. and Peattie, S. (2009), "Social marketing: a pathway to consumption reduction?", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 62 No. 2, pp. 260-268, doi: [10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.01.033](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.01.033).
- Pedroni, M. (2023), "Two decades of fashion blogging and influencing: a critical overview", *Fashion Theory*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 237-268, doi: [10.1080/1362704X.2021.2017213](https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2021.2017213).
- Penttinen, V., Ciuchita, R. and Pedersen, S. (2023), "Impacts of# deinfluencing on social media", *Academy of Marketing Science World Marketing Congress*.
- Pittman, M. and Abell, A. (2021), "More trust in fewer followers: diverging effects of popularity metrics and green orientation social media influencers", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 56 No. 1, pp. 70-82, doi: [10.1016/j.intmar.2021.05.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2021.05.002).
- Plazibat, I. and Marunica, S. (2024), "The impact of artificial intelligence and the de-influencing trend on influencer marketing", *Economic and Social Development (Book of Proceedings)*, 110th International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social, Vol. 5, p. 75.

- Todd, P.R. and Melancon, J. (2018), "Gender and live-streaming: source credibility and motivation", *The Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 79-93, doi: [10.1108/JRIM-05-2017-0035](https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-05-2017-0035).
- Tóth, Z., Mrad, M., Itani, O.S., Luo, J. and Liu, M.J. (2022), "B2B eWOM on Alibaba: signaling through online reviews in platform-based social exchange", *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 104, pp. 226-240, doi: [10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.04.019](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.04.019).
- Valsesia, F., Proserpio, D. and Nunes, J.C. (2020), "The positive effect of not following others on social media", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 57 No. 6, pp. 1152-1168, doi: [10.1177/0022243720915467](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243720915467).
- Velasco, F., Itani, O.S. and Cajina, P. (2024), "Ecolabel persuasion effect across cultures: a comprehensive meta-analysis", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 41 No. 6, pp. 1190-1217, doi: [10.1108/IMR-10-2023-0293](https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-10-2023-0293).

References

- Batra, R. and Stayman, D.M. (1990), "The role of mood in advertising effectiveness", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 203-214, doi: [10.1086/208550](https://doi.org/10.1086/208550).
- Chattopadhyay, A. and Basu, K. (1990), "Humor in advertising: the moderating role of prior brand evaluation", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 27 No. 4, pp. 466-476, doi: [10.2307/3172631](https://doi.org/10.2307/3172631).
- Dodds, W.B., Monroe, K.B. and Grewal, D. (1991), "Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers' product evaluations", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 307-319, doi: [10.1177/002224379102800305](https://doi.org/10.1177/002224379102800305).
- Lafferty, B.A., Goldsmith, R.E. and Newell, S.J. (2002), "The dual credibility model: the influence of corporate and endorser credibility on attitudes and purchase intentions", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 1-11, doi: [10.1080/10696679.2002.11501916](https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2002.11501916).
- Malthouse, E.C., Calder, B.J. and Tamhane, A. (2007), "The effects of media context experiences on advertising effectiveness", *Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 36 No. 3, pp. 7-18, doi: [10.2753/joa0091-3367360301](https://doi.org/10.2753/joa0091-3367360301).
- Müller, O., Fay, M. and Vom Brocke, J. (2018), "The effect of big data and analytics on firm performance: an econometric analysis considering industry characteristics", *Journal of Management Information Systems*, Vol. 35 No. 2, pp. 488-509, doi: [10.1080/07421222.2018.1451955](https://doi.org/10.1080/07421222.2018.1451955).
- Ohanian, R. (1990), "Construction and validation of a scale to measure celebrity endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness", *Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 19 No. 3, pp. 39-52, doi: [10.1080/00913367.1990.10673191](https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1990.10673191).
- Peña-García, N., Gil-Saura, I., Rodríguez-Orejuela, A. and Siqueira-Junior, J.R. (2020), "Purchase intention and purchase behavior online: a cross-cultural approach", *Heliyon*, Vol. 6 No. 6, e04284, doi: [10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04284](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04284).
- Silvera, D.H. and Austad, B. (2004), "Factors predicting the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement advertisements", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 38 Nos 11/12, pp. 1509-1526, doi: [10.1108/03090560410560218](https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560410560218).
- Zogaj, A., Tschudin, D.K. and Olk, S. (2021), "Benefits of matching consumers' personality: creating perceived trustworthiness via actual self-congruence and perceived competence via ideal self-congruence", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 38 No. 3, pp. 416-430, doi: [10.1002/mar.21439](https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21439).

Table A1. Experiments designs

Experiment 1	Group 1 (n = 78)		Group 2 (n = 76)	
To compare how consumers perceive and respond to messages from de-influencers and influencers	Average Age 26.3 Female 51.28% Male 48.71% Exposed to de-influencer <i>Experiment Condition</i> Criticizing the brand Shein		Average Age 28.2 Female 55.26% Male 44.73% Exposed to influencer <i>Experiment Condition</i> Praising the brand Shein	
Experiment 2	Group 1 (n = 77)		Group 2 (n = 75)	
To assess the effects of a de-influence message in a social media context and investigate the role of the de-influencer	Average Age 27.5 Female 55.84% Male 44.51% Exposed to a male de-influencer <i>Experiment Condition</i> Focusing on the troubling working conditions at Shein Focusing on the worrisome working conditions at Shein		Average Age 28.8 Female 54.66% Male 45.33% Exposed to a female de-influencer <i>Experiment Condition</i>	
Experiment 3	Group 1 (n = 78)	Group 2 (n = 76)	Group 3 (n = 75)	Group 4 (n = 75)
To compare consumer attitudes toward four types of de-influence messages	Average Age 29.1 Female 57.69% Male 42.3% Exposed to a message focused on ethical issues <i>Experiment Condition</i> Explaining how Shein derives its design ideas from fashion designers	Average Age 27.7 Female 53.94% Male 46.05% Exposed to a message focused on health issues <i>Experiment Condition</i> Explaining how Shein items have a negative impact on consumers' health	Average Age 28.1 Female 57.33% Male 42.66% Exposed to a message focused on social issues <i>Experiment Condition</i> Explaining the impact of Shein's troubling working conditions on the workforce and society at large	Average Age 27.3 Female 56% Male 44% Exposed to a message focused on all combined issues <i>Experiment Condition</i> Explaining all Shein's problems

Source(s): Created by authors

Table A2. Measures

Variable	Source	Items
Perceived attitude toward the brand	Chattopadhyay and Basu (1990), Lafferty <i>et al.</i> , (2002)	- After watching the video, I have a favorable attitude toward Shein - After watching the video, I have a positive impression of Shein - After watching the video, I feel good about Shein
Consumers' purchase intention	Dodds <i>et al.</i> , (1991), Pena-García <i>et al.</i> , (2020)	- If the opportunity arises, I intend to buy from Shein - If given the chance, I can predict what I should buy from Shein in the future - I am likely to transact with Shein soon
Perceived credibility of the person in the video	Müller <i>et al.</i> , (2018), Ohanian (1990)	I consider the person in the video as - Authentic - Dependable - Genuine - Honest - Believable - Reliable
Perceived trustworthiness of the person in the video	Ohanian (1990), Zogaj <i>et al.</i> , (2021)	I consider the person in the video as - A believable communicator - Sincere - Qualified
Perceived attitude toward the person in the video	Silvera and Austad (2004), Ohanian (1990)	I consider the person in the video to be - Likeable - Good - Pleasant
Perceived message effectiveness	Batra and Stayman (1990), Malthouse <i>et al.</i> , (2007)	- The video made me think of Shein in a new way - The video provided me with information that I didn't know before - The video made me feel sad - The video made me feel disgusted - The video made me feel angry - The video made me feel surprised - The video made me question my beliefs about Shein

Note(s): Collected on a seven-point Likert scale from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree")

Source(s): Created by authors

Table A3. Results summary

H1: Respondents exposed to messages from de-influencers show a more negative perceived attitude toward the brand than those exposed to messages from influencers	Supported
H2: Respondents exposed to messages from de-influencers show a more positive perception toward the brand than those exposed to messages from influencers	Supported
H3: Respondents consider de-influencers more credible than influencers	Supported
H4: Respondents consider de-influencers more trustworthy than traditional influencers	Supported
H5: Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the brand vary with the gender of the de-influencer	Rejected
H6: Perceived message effectiveness varies with the gender of the de-influencer	Rejected
H7a: Perceived credibility of the de-influencer varies with the gender of the de-influencer	Rejected
H7b: Perceived trustworthiness of the de-influencer varies with the gender of the de-influencer	Rejected
H8: Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the video itself vary with the gender of the de-influencer	Rejected
H9: Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the brand are not equal among the four types of de-influence messages, namely addressing ethical issues related to the brand, highlighting the negative effects of the brand's products on health, addressing social concerns, and discussing all the brand's problems	Supported
H10: Respondents' perceived attitudes toward the video are not equal among the four types of de-influence messages, namely addressing ethical issues related to the brand, highlighting the negative effects of the brand's products on health, addressing social concerns, and discussing all the brand's problems	Rejected
H11: The perceived effectiveness of the video is not equal among the four types of de-influence messages, namely addressing ethical issues related to the brand, highlighting the negative effects of the brand's products on health, addressing social concerns, and discussing all the brand's problems	Supported

Source(s): Created by authors

Corresponding author

Samer Elhajjar can be contacted at: samer@nus.edu.sg

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:

www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com