

Validitas Diskriminan

Kriteria Fornell-Larck...		Cross Loadings		Rasio Heterotrait-Mon...	
	Kepercay...	Kesamaa...	Niat Beli	Reputasi ...	Sikap Ter...
KIF1	0.415	0.856	0.431	0.442	0.296
KIF2	0.372	0.833	0.450	0.366	0.291
KIF3	0.358	0.786	0.410	0.308	0.273
KIF4	0.506	0.847	0.499	0.418	0.301
KM1	0.852	0.474	0.525	0.425	0.395
KM2	0.796	0.337	0.440	0.307	0.343
KM3	0.850	0.428	0.513	0.409	0.356
KM4	0.815	0.402	0.451	0.336	0.359
KM6	0.817	0.428	0.528	0.372	0.379
KM7	0.810	0.413	0.554	0.364	0.410
NB1	0.577	0.489	0.868	0.413	0.472
NB2	0.521	0.512	0.869	0.427	0.429
NB3	0.492	0.421	0.861	0.366	0.377
NB4	0.522	0.450	0.863	0.374	0.430
RI1	0.327	0.394	0.334	0.846	0.305
RI3	0.455	0.431	0.461	0.924	0.339
SM1	0.381	0.278	0.407	0.326	0.814
SM2	0.366	0.288	0.413	0.324	0.851
SM3	0.400	0.315	0.430	0.270	0.856

Instagram live-streamings: how does influencer–follower congruence affect Gen Z trust, attitudes and intentions?

Souad Maghraoui and Lilia Khrouf

Souad Maghraoui is based at Institut Supérieur de Gestion de Sousse, University of Sousse, Sousse, Tunisia. Lilia Khrouf is based at Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Tunis, University of Manouba, Tunis, UK.

Abstract

Purpose – Influencer marketing is nowadays an essential practice for companies wishing to establish a rapprochement with its customers and gain their trust. Building close relationships can be fulfilled through Instagram live-streamings. Drawing upon equilibrium theory and brand extension theory, this paper aims to determine the effect of influencer–follower congruence on trust, attitudes and intentions in Instagram live-streamings.

Design/methodology/approach – A survey was carried out on a sample of 330 Generation Z Instagram users exposed to a live-streaming of an influencer promoting a clothing brand on Instagram. A PLS analysis was performed to validate the proposed model.

Findings – Results revealed that influencer–follower congruence in a live-streaming promotes followers' trust toward the brand. In addition, influencer reputation is found to reinforce this relationship. Moreover, results showed that brand trust mediates the effect of influencer–follower congruence on brand attitude. Besides, the latter turns out to be a mediator of the relationship between brand trust and followers' intentional reactions.

Research limitations/implications – The study has focused on one particular live-streaming as well as a particular influencer which reduces the generalizability of the results. Future research should therefore replicate the study with different stimuli. Furthermore, it would be interesting to manipulate influencer–follower congruence in an experiment to explore the effect of varying congruence levels on trust.

Practical implications – This paper highlights the importance of using live-streamings for brands, especially when Gen Z is targeted. This tool can be considered as very useful to establish a trust relationship with young consumers. Moreover, the study emphasizes on the importance of choosing influencers whose image is in line with that of their followers to establish close relationships with them and gain their trust. The findings also suggest that to further strengthen trust toward the influencer, the latter should benefit from a prior good reputation.

Originality/value – Despite abundance of research on communication strategies on Instagram, little has focused on live-streamings. Particularly, research on influencer–follower congruence is relatively rare. Thus, this study contributes to the understanding of the effects of influencer–follower congruence on followers of Instagram live-streamings and offers valuable theoretical and practical implications in this field.

Keywords Instagram, Live-streaming, Congruence, Influencer, Trust

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Nowadays, live-streaming as one of the emerging forms of social commerce represents one of the most popular online strategies (Zheng *et al.*, 2023) and one of the main sales channels for most brands (Sokolova and Kéfi, 2020). These are live synchronized real-time and interactive broadcasts between streamers and web users (Liu *et al.*, 2022). While often inviting reputed and liked influencers, live-streaming on social networks helps brands to win

Received 30 March 2024
Revised 6 June 2024
4 September 2024
Accepted 5 October 2024

more trust and adherence to sponsored brands (Hou *et al.*, 2021). Accordingly, going live on media improves the effectiveness of the message transmitted (Zheng *et al.*, 2023). Similarly, U-screen (2024) estimates that the live-streaming market recorded a growth of 20.6% between 2022 and 2023 and that internet users spent 548 billion hours on live-streaming using their mobile phone. They are the embodiment of a far-reaching phenomenon that needs to be explored (Mallipeddi *et al.*, 2021). On Instagram, live-streamings by influencers continue to grow (Chen and Yang, 2023). This undoubtedly results from Instagram's experience-sharing feature, instant information transmission or integration of virtual brand communities (Casaló *et al.*, 2017a). Similarly, proliferation of live shopping opportunities on this platform and the breadth of potential interactions it presents have largely contributed to the prominence of the live-streaming influencer phenomenon on Instagram (Hou *et al.*, 2021). On this platform, influencers generally master professional live-streaming features such as video sequencing filters and editing tools to promote the brand live to their followers. In cases where the latter integrate the image of these influencers and immerse themselves in their lifestyle, trust in the brand is further strengthened and the influential relationship within the brand's virtual community is more likely sustained (Hou *et al.*, 2021). In this regard, some studies have suggested that brand trust improves when the image of the streamers sponsoring the brand fits well that of their followers (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). This trust seems to prevail in cases where the followed influencers enjoy a good reputation (Qi and Cui, 2022). It is in this regard that some brands continually search for influencers perceived as credible, able to integrate the image, style and values specific to their brand's audience (Hu *et al.*, 2020).

Despite the abundance of work on brands' communication strategies on social networks, especially on Instagram (Kircaburun and Griffiths, 2018), few of them have focused on live-streamings in the marketing literature. Similarly, research dealing with the perceived congruence between the influencer and the follower is relatively scarce (Kim and Kim, 2021). Among these rare studies, that of Belanche *et al.* (2021) highlighted the interest of considering the influencer-follower congruence to build more brand trust and foster brand-friendly associations among Gen Z users on Instagram. Interestingly, it seems that the concept of congruence, which describes the extent to which followers and influencers are similar in terms of styles and values (Xu and Pratt, 2018), is decisive to establishing a trust relationship with the consumer (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). In this vein, Chen and Yang (2023) indicated that this congruence builds trust capital and strengthens the influencer-follower relationship. This is not without effect on the brand that the latter endorses. Moreover, by considering congruence as a form of match covering certain decisive elements, it is supposed to promote a favorable perception of the brand by multiplying positive associations with it. From a managerial point of view, it is probably a trigger capable of activating positive behavioral intentions in followers (Casaló *et al.*, 2017b). To better understand the effects of influencer-follower congruence on the reactions of followers to live-streamings, we appealed to equilibrium theory (Heider, 1946) and brand extension theory (Aaker and Keller, 1990), originally developed to explore individuals' reactions to congruence. Despite the existence of such relevant theories on the subject, few studies have so far focused on the attitudinal and intentional reactions of followers to live-streamings' influencer-follower congruence. This paper aims therefore to fill the gap.

This paper is an attempt to combine the interactions of three key elements: the influencer, the brand and the followers. It takes a closer look at influencer-follower congruence as a prelude to trust, and the attitudinal and intentional reactions of followers to the brand. Bearing on these pursuits, the paper starts with a presentation of the relevant theoretical and conceptual background. Then, it presents the data collection methodology and the results, concluding with a set of theoretical and managerial recommendations and implications. Finally, it discusses the limitations and future research avenues outlined by this study.

2. Conceptual background

Two theories can serve as theoretical underpinnings for this study. These are equilibrium theory (Heider, 1946) and brand extension theory (Aaker and Keller, 1990). Equilibrium theory (Heider, 1946) explains how consumers evaluate advertising information available on social networks. The latter, seeking to escape stress caused by dubious information sources, are expected to respond favorably to information sources that share their lifestyles and values. Applied to the context of social networking, this theory suggests that to preserve their cognitive and psychological balance, users of these networks tend to accept the source of information that has a certain cognitive coherence with their styles and values. It therefore seems quite expected that they will be more interested in the influencer whose image is congruent with themselves (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). This probably results in an extension of the effects recorded on the brand touted by the influencer who anticipates favorable consequences and therefore shows more permeability toward it (Dwinanda *et al.*, 2022). Thanks to this perpetual seek of coherence characterizing individuals, congruence between the influencer and the follower is therefore expected to be comforting for the latter who would probably perceive the presented brand as trustworthy. Besides, the influencer reputation should strengthen the effect of congruence on brand trust, maintaining the psychological equilibrium established between the follower, the influencer and the promoted brand. In parallel, brand extension theory states that attitudes and beliefs about one brand are transferred to the new brand, which is perceived as similar to the first. This transfer relates to, among other things, beliefs about brand trust. In other words, a consumer who is exposed to an unfamiliar brand, but perceives it to be similar to another they trust, will also trust the first brand. This phenomenon is known as brand transfer (Aaker and Keller, 1990). Extending the basic framework (Aaker and Keller, 1990) to brand alliances, the study of James (2006) revealed that congruence presents an element that is of particular importance for in alliance evaluations. Congruence turns out to be a determinant of consumer's attitudes and purchasing intentions (James, 2006). Thus, congruence between the influencer and the follower should increase trust toward the brand endorsed by the influencer. Indeed, the feelings of trust developed by the follower toward the influencer should be transferred to the brand they present in the live-streaming. Taken together, equilibrium theory (Heider, 1946) and brand extension theory (Aaker and Keller, 1990) allow us to expect that followers would feel more comfortable with live-streamings presented by the influencers in which they identify, especially when they are well-reputed. Such influencer-follower congruence would be able to generate feelings of trust toward the brand. The follower should then develop favorable attitudinal and intentional reactions toward the brand.

2.1 The effects of influencer-follower congruence on brand trust

By directly associating themselves with their favorite influencers via live-streamings, followers feel they have a personal and exclusive relationship with them (Lee *et al.*, 2021). In this regard, the question of congruence with followers emerges. Congruence denotes the adequacy between these two poles of the influence relationship (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). Influencer-follower congruence describes the way in which followers identify with the influencer, because of the perceived fit between influencer personality and their perceived consistency with followers' values and lifestyles (Xu and Pratt, 2018). Examining this phenomenon, Belanche *et al.* (2021) believe that influencers often focus on a segmented and specific audience to share similar interests, while the latter are considered "virtual friends" sharing the same norms and interests (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). Congruence thus seems to bring more consistency to the comments about the brand they endorse and give it more trustworthiness, which leads to greater trust (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). The latter refers to the belief that the consumer believes a source meets their specific needs without taking advantage of their indulgence (Román *et al.*, 2023). In particular,

brand trust refers to a belief in the authenticity and loyalty of a brand's publications on different web media (Tran and Strutton, 2020). It consists in adapted beliefs and emotional attachment of the consumer to the brand (Tang et al., 2021). To better understand the value of brand trust in the context of Instagram live-streaming strategy, trust transfer theory suggests that individuals trust content and brands if they are associated with or endorsed by sources, they deem appropriate in terms of style and values (Hu et al., 2019). Brand trust helps distinguish between fair and unfair brands (Amarullah et al., 2022). In a context of live-streamings on social media, brands are particularly concerned about the adequacy of their image, values and words with their target (Qi and Cui, 2022). This concern can be explained by the expected favorable effects of congruence on perceived loyalty (Tiago et al., 2023), reliability (Tran and Strutton, 2020) and judgements made by the follower (Reinikainen et al., 2020). Specifically, when the internet user perceives a message from an influencer whose image is in line with himself (or herself), brand trust would be greater (Román et al., 2023). In reality, consumers prefer information sources that are similar to them. This preference hides a search for informational consistency, as they feel more comfortable and easily process information from sources in which they identify (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). Such consistency allows followers to build and reaffirm their real self-image. This underlines the extent to which the perceived image and beliefs around a live-stream influencer impact brand trust (Román et al., 2023). Hence, the more these influencers are perceived congruent with followers' real selves, the more favorable emotions and beliefs are associated with the influencer sponsored the brand (Tiago et al., 2023). Then, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1. Influencer-follower congruence promotes brand trust in Instagram live-streamings.

On Instagram, most influencers' advice and recommendations, featured in direct live-streamings, are considered sincere when they mirror their audience (Belanche et al., 2021). This influencer-follower congruence promotes perceived sincerity, particularly when the influencer is popular and reputable in the marketplace (Lee et al., 2021). Reputation describes an influencer's image in the eyes of their followers, and their perception of their honesty, authenticity and credibility (Hu et al., 2020). Thus, reputation is an evaluation process that reflects beliefs or perceptions about a person, object or behavior (Ryu and Han, 2021). Influencer reputation has received so far little attention in influencer marketing literature despite its big influence on followers' behaviors (Shah et al., 2023). Indeed, an influencer's reputation is crucial for brands (Qi and Cui, 2022) and it seems to be fed by their content disseminated on social networking platforms (Ryu and Han, 2021). For live-streamings operated by follower-congruent influencers, these latter's reputation is likely to foster follower trust in them (Schouten et al., 2019). Moreover, influencer-congruent subscribers feel more confident when the influencer is well-reputed in their field of expertise (Belanche et al., 2021). Particularly, influencer reputation reduces uncertainty around the brand endorsed in live-streamings (Qi and Cui, 2022). It is to be expected, then, that followers of live-streaming influencers, judged to be in line with their self, will more readily grant their trust, especially, when these influencers are recognized and reputed on the market. This reputation reinforces the strength of the link between perceived congruence and brand trust. Taken together, these proposals allow formulating the following hypothesis:

H2. Influencer reputation promotes the effect of influencer-follower congruence on followers' brand trust in Instagram live-streamings.

2.2 Trust as a mediator between influencer-follower congruence and brand attitude

Little research has explored the mediator role of brand trust especially in social networks context. Nevertheless, from one side, it is admitted that influencer-follower congruence enhances brand trust (Belanche et al., 2021). From the other side, it is well established that the

followers who trust a brand, develop a more favorable attitude toward it (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2022). On these platforms, most brands are endorsed by influencers who attract a significant number of followers and have a recognized ability to influence them (Lou and Yuan, 2019). While embodying the role of opinion leaders in their fields of expertise (Farivar and Wang, 2022), they comfort their audience in their sponsored brand. When influencer–follower congruence is high, the follower recognize himself in the influencer and consequently trust him, generating more positive associations toward the brand presented. For followers, the live-stream influencer is a guarantee of the brand. Consequently, they naturally develop trust feelings which result in a positive evaluation of the endorsed brand (Pozharliev *et al.*, 2022). Trust could therefore play a mediating role between the of influencer–follower congruence and the follower's attitude toward the brand. Thus, brand trust felt by the followers is of critical importance in shaping favorable brand attitude (Lou and Yuan, 2019). This observation allows us to put forward the following hypothesis:

H3. Followers' brand trust mediates the effect of influencer–follower congruence on brand attitude in Instagram live-streamings.

2.3 Attitude as a mediator between brand trust and followers' behavioral intentions

On Instagram, the attitude forged toward the brand often establishes a control mechanism allowing the brand to be rewarded/sanctioned by its followers and a key indicator of followers' future intentions (Maghraoui *et al.*, 2022). On social networks, purchase intentions are considered as a subjective conscious plan of a user to buy a brand based on past experience. They also amount to the desires and plans developed to grant oneself this brand deemed loyal (Chen and Yang, 2023). This intention seems to be riper in the presence of a favorable attitude toward the promoted brand (Tran and Strutton, 2020). Indeed, a positive attitude toward a brand, which followers trust, activates the willingness to buy it (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). This observation was especially demonstrated in a study conducted with a sample Generation Z followers (Immanuel and Bianda, 2021). Lou and Yuan (2019) defend this postulate, indicating that followers' purchase intentions are conditioned by their brand attitude, which turns out to be dependent on the beliefs attributed to the latter as to its degree of sincerity and the extent to which it is deemed trustworthy. Furthermore, Immanuel and Bianda (2021) indicated that the follower's favorable attitude toward a brand resulting from a feeling of trust can encourage him/her to seek for information about the product, affecting thereby his/her priorities and encouraging him/her to purchase it. The following mediation hypothesis is therefore proposed:

H4. Followers' brand attitude mediates the effect of brand trust on shopping intention in Instagram live-streamings.

During live-streamings, followers can interact with influencers to learn about the brands being promoted, almost simulating a real face-to-face encounter (Qi and Cui, 2022). The latter, being experienced, presents the sponsored brands as a daily lifestyle routine (Belanche *et al.*, 2021) and rekindles in their followers the intention to imitate them by copying their lifestyles (Casaló *et al.*, 2017a). Followers thus follow the advice and opinions of these streamers perceived as a reference (Ibáñez-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021) and whose opinions present a rather subtle influence (Ibáñez-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021). Observing real behaviors on social media, especially when they are considered as hedonic, may encourage followers to imitate them (Sokolova *et al.*, 2024). In this vein, some previous research has found positive correlations between the attitude toward the brand touted by an influencer in reaction to its perceived trustworthiness and the intention of followers to imitate it (Casaló *et al.*, 2017b). Hence, the brand attitude developed toward a product presented in an Instagram live-streaming reflects the degree to which the consumer loves the brand and trusts it (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). By a mimicry effect, the trusted brand would be adopted by the follower. Particularly, imitation of an influencer occurs when followers

considers that they can do it and when they perceive a benefit performing it (Sokolova *et al.*, 2024). The following hypothesis is thus proposed:

H5. Followers' brand attitude mediates the effect of brand trust on intention to imitate the influencer in Instagram live-streamings.

The pro-brand attitude suggests that the brand is meeting the expectations of its consumers, and it is this belief that can stimulate the intention to recommend the brand (Jiménez-Castillo and Sánchez-Fernández, 2019). Specifically, when followers trust the brand, they tend to recommend it (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). Subscribing to this thesis, some previous studies have found positive correlations between attitude toward the brand touted by an influencer and intention to imitate them (Casakó *et al.*, 2017b). Hence, consumers who have perceived a brand as fair and who have developed favorable beliefs and emotions toward it are generally more likely to recommend it to other users. Indeed, the favorable attitude toward the brand predicts how much the consumer likes the brand and feels attached to the influencer representing it (Belanche, 2021). It is therefore quite expected that a positive brand attitude would lead to engage more with other community members by recommending the brand they already trust (Jiménez-Castillo and Sánchez-Fernández, 2019). Formally, the attitude of the internet user toward the promoted brand predicts its trustworthiness, which in turn should guide his intention to recommend it (or not) to other consumers. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

H6. Followers' brand attitude mediates the effect of brand trust on intention to recommend it to others in Instagram live-streamings.

Bearing on the above, we propose to test the following research model (Figure 1): perception (influencer-follower congruence) – affective and cognitive evaluation (trust/attitude) – behavioral intention (intention to buy/imitate/recommend), while integrating a moderating variable (influencer reputation).

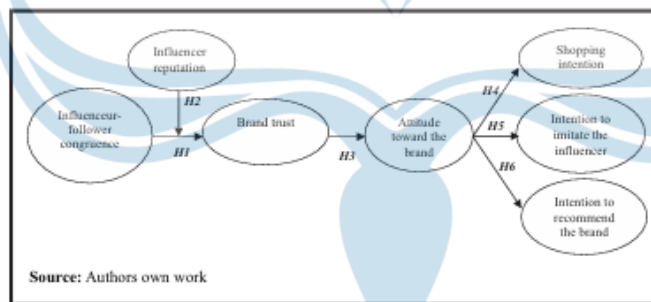
3. Methodology

To validate the proposed research model, a survey was conducted on a sample of Instagram users. They were exposed to a pre-selected live-streaming and then presented a questionnaire for feedback.

3.1 Choice of live streaming

A live-streaming in which an influencer promotes a product was selected for this study. As the reputation of the influencer is measured in this study, the selected influencer had to be a

Figure 1 Conceptual model



real influencer and not a fictional character and be sufficiently known by Instagram users. Similarly, we chose to use an influencer from the fashion industry, given the considerable size of this virtual community worldwide (Casaló *et al.*, 2020) and the number of Instagram-active retailers using live-streamings (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). Besides, fashion influencers are often solicited by companies to promote products and participate to their advertising campaigns (Farivar and Wang, 2022). To select the influencer, we asked 30 Instagram users to name a fashion influencer and the brand he/she live-streamed. Initially, we eliminated two of the names, as they were celebrities rather than influencers. Indeed, for a person to be considered an influencer, they must not have been a celebrity before starting an influencer profile on Instagram (Schouten *et al.*, 2019). In a second step, we selected the influencer most cited by respondents and the live-streamings he/she did for a clothing brand. The chosen influencer is a young woman that has 955 K followers, meaning that she is considered a macro-influencer (Conde and Casais, 2023). Thus, she can be considered as a proactive member of this community, with a sizeable number of followers. Indeed, the number of followers an influencer has can tell us something about the degree to which the latter is perceived as trustworthy (Sokciova and Kéfi, 2020). In the selected video, the influencer, wearing an outfit sold at a promotional price from the promoted brand, exalts its merits. The sequence lasts 52 s. Third, we made sure that the chosen influencer was indeed specialized in fashion, and that this influencer's opinions on several topics about clothes are respected by examining interactions with her followers on Instagram.

3.2 Survey and participants

The link to the questionnaire contained the selected live-streaming. This meant that respondents had to view it before answering the questions. In line with the recommendations of Pozharliev *et al.* (2022), a filter question was used to exclude responses of internet users who did not follow on Instagram the selected influencer. Knowledge of the influencer is actually crucial for this survey, as we are interested in her reputation. As it was done in previous studies related to a specific social media, the questionnaire was circulated among various social platforms (Abbadi *et al.*, 2024; Maghraoui and Khrouf, 2024). Indeed, some Instagrammers use Facebook or TikTok more often than Instagram. Thus, multiplying platforms of the questionnaire diffusion enable us to obtain a bigger number of respondents more rapidly. It was shared mainly on Instagram (88%), but also on other social media platforms like Facebook (7%) and TikTok (5%). The questionnaire included scales selected from literature based on their psychometric qualities and were adapted to the study's context (Frikha, 2019). In particular, we used Järvenpää *et al.* (2006) brand trust scale, and Gunnarsson *et al.*'s (2018) influencer trust scale. The Doney and Cannon (1997) scale was used to measure influencer reputation. To measure influencer-follower congruence, we used the Xu and Pratt's (2018) scale. Chattopadhyay and Basu's (1990) brand attitude scale and Casaló *et al.*'s (2020) intention to imitate scale were used. Finally, the intention to recommend the sponsored brand scale of Bigné *et al.* (2001) and the intention to purchase scale of Moon and Kim (2001) were used (Appendix 1). The five-point Likert-type was adopted for all scales to facilitate data collection (Frikha, 2019). These constructs were pretested with a sample of 100 respondents to check their unidimensionality and internal consistency.

Knowing that the influencer under study endorses clothing garments and that the clothing brand is exclusive to women, our sample is made up exclusively of female consumers who follow the selected influencer. Targeting exclusively women is even more relevant as Instagram is predominately female (Sanz-Bias *et al.*, 2019; Maghraoui *et al.*, 2022), especially for pages dealing with the selected product category (i.e. clothing) (Casaló *et al.*, 2017a). Besides, followers particularly tend to copy influencers' behaviors and adopt the products they endorse (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017), when the influencer is also a woman (Conde and Casais, 2023), like in this study. Furthermore, given that we are interested in Generation Z, participants' age ranged between 18 and 30. This appearance-concerned generation and therefore active in purchasing clothes on social media are

particularly keen on their shopping activity, and a sustained attachment to live-streamings (Li, 2023). Generation Z has also the particularity to be strongly impacted by the presence of influencers in social media (Immanuel and Bianda, 2021). Thus, a convenience sample of 330 respondents was obtained after eliminating 34 invalid questionnaires. The retained sample has various socio-demographic characteristics (Appendix 2).

3.3 Data analysis method

A structural equation method, in particular the PLS-SEM estimation method (SmartPLS4), was adopted. This method is particularly well-suited for complex models, i.e. including many constructs/indicators and relationships (Hair *et al.*, 2021) like in this study. It is also useful to expand models (Hair *et al.*, 2014). In this regard, our model extends two theories namely; Heider's (1946) equilibrium theory and Asker and Keller (1990) brand extension theory. These two theories, applied to influencer marketing in Instagram, enable us to extend the studied constructs in a live streaming context while taking into account influencer characteristics.

4. Results

4.1 Common method bias

As the data were collected from a single source, it was deemed appropriate to check for common method bias. Drawing on the recommendations of Podsakoff *et al.* (2003), to reduce this risk, we ensured that the questionnaire was administered anonymously. We then performed Harman's single-factor analysis on all the measured constructs. The principal component analysis pointed to a more than one single factor, implying that common variance bias has no detrimental effects on the results of the study.

4.2 Measurement model

The ρA coefficients (Table 1) are all above the threshold of 0.7 (Hair *et al.*, 2019), attesting to the good reliability of the used scales. Similarly, AVE coefficients are all well above 0.5 (Henseler *et al.*, 2016), proving that the scales have good convergent validity. Finally, to check discriminant validity, we referred to the HTMT matrix as recommended by Henseler *et al.* (2016). It shows the good discriminant validity of the constructs, as all coefficients are below 0.9, the threshold indicated by Hair *et al.* (2019).

4.3 Structural model

SRMR ($=0.06 < 0.08$) indicates that the model is well fitted (Henseler *et al.*, 2016). In addition, R^2 coefficients are mostly greater than or equal to the moderate threshold (0.25) (Abdul-Wahab *et al.*, 2022). A CV-PAT procedure (Sharma *et al.*, 2022), as well as a PLS Predict approach (Shmueli *et al.*, 2019) were undertaken to confirm the predictive power of the model. The PLS Predict approach reveal that all Q^2 Predict coefficients have a positive sign (Table 2). Similarly, prediction errors are not symmetrically distributed. Therefore, PLS-SEM MAE were compared with the LM MAE coefficients. Results confirm the model's predictive relevance, although it is considered as low, giving that few indicators have MAE coefficients lower than those of the LM (Shmueli *et al.*, 2019).

Results of CV-PAT procedure (Table 3) show that all PLS-SEM predictions are significantly lower than the naïve indicator averages (IA). However, PLS-SEM predictions are significantly higher than the linear model (LM) predictions. These findings confirm that the model has a certain predictive relevance (Sharma *et al.*, 2022).

A 5,000-iteration bootstrap was performed following the recommendations of Hair *et al.* (2019). Direct effects' results are presented in Table 4.

Constructs	Loadings	CR(μ A)	AVE	R	C	BT	A	II	IR	SI
<i>Influencer reputation (R)</i>		0.90	0.70		0.67	0.74	0.51	0.64	0.73	0.76
R1	0.583									
R2	0.943									
R3	0.936									
<i>Congruence (C)</i>		0.91	0.84			0.86	0.43	0.53	0.68	0.63
C1	0.934									
C2	0.933									
C3	0.885									
<i>Brand trust (BT)</i>		0.93	0.71				0.52	0.63	0.74	0.66
BT1	0.836									
BT2	0.876									
BT3	0.877									
BT4	0.861									
BT5	0.864									
BT6	0.833									
BT7	0.770									
<i>Brand attitude (A)</i>		0.94	0.88					0.71	0.48	0.51
A1	0.946									
A2	0.939									
A3	0.941									
<i>Intention to imitate (II)</i>		0.96	0.84						0.75	0.70
II1	0.931									
II2	0.961									
II3	0.968									
II4	0.900									
II5	0.832									
<i>Intention to recommend (IR)</i>		0.96	0.95							0.84
IR1	0.968									
IR2	0.971									
IR3	0.885									
<i>Shopping intention (SI)</i>		0.95	0.91							
SI1	0.959									
SI2	0.954									
SI3	0.955									

Source: Authors' own work

In line with the postulates of both Heider's (1946) equilibrium theory and Aaker and Keller's (1990) brand extension theory, the results reveal that influencer-follower congruence is a prelude to the development of favorable associations with the source in our case the brand to maintain the receiver's cognitive equilibrium. This seems particularly true in a live-streaming context, where followers prefer to connect with streamers who share their styles and preferences (Li, 2023). *H1* is therefore supported. Perceiving these influencers as congruent with oneself reduces dissonance and allows for casting more transparency and loyalty to the brands they represent (Casaló *et al.*, 2020). It is in this sense that influencer-follower congruence is seen as a prelude to brand trust (Lee *et al.*, 2021a). In a live-streaming context, this congruence reflecting the perceived fit of influencers with followers, comforts the latter (Tiago *et al.*, 2023) by revealing how trustworthy the brands they endorse are (Hou and Xu, 2023).

Furthermore, the results underline the moderating role of reputation in activating trust felt toward the source (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). Consequently, *H2* is supported. On Instagram, influencers' choice of collaborations with certain brands, as well as their actions and words

Constructs	R ²	Indicators	Q ² predict	PLS-SEM MAE	LM MAE
Attitude toward the brand (A)	0.25	A1	0.207	0.618	0.579
		A2	0.128	0.689	0.625
		A3	0.168	0.696	0.636
Intention to imitate the influencer (II)	0.47	II1	0.137	0.551	0.524
		II2	0.182	0.616	0.526
		II3	0.180	0.639	0.545
		II4	0.152	0.718	0.625
		II5	0.147	0.752	0.612
Intention to recommend the brand (IR)	0.21	IR1	0.158	0.781	0.542
		IR2	0.149	0.688	0.494
		IR3	0.169	0.694	0.488
Shopping intention (SI)	0.23	SI1	0.150	0.590	0.491
		SI2	0.146	0.610	0.510
		SI3	0.146	0.596	0.503
Brand trust (BT)	0.54	BT1	0.460	0.509	0.436
		BT2	0.513	0.375	0.345
		BT3	0.492	0.356	0.349
		BT4	0.435	0.370	0.334
		BT5	0.398	0.392	0.000
		BT6	0.401	0.371	0.321
		BT7	0.347	0.396	0.394

Notes: N.B – Values in italics represent those that satisfy PLS Predict conditions (Positive values for Q² Predict and PLS-SEM MAE values that are lower than LM MAE values)
Source: Authors' own work

Constructs	PLS loss	IA loss	t-value	p-value	PLS loss	LM loss	t-value	p-value
Attitude toward the brand (A)	0.653	0.787	4.384	0.000	0.653	0.561	3.072	0.002
Intention to imitate the influencer (II)	0.669	0.803	5.380	0.000	0.669	0.549	1.532	0.126
Intention to recommend the brand (IR)	0.903	1.083	7.049	0.000	0.903	0.428	6.434	0.000
Purchase intention (SI)	0.664	0.782	6.545	0.000	0.664	0.429	4.116	0.000
Brand trust (BT)	0.291	0.580	7.927	0.000	0.291	0.204	7.547	0.000
Overall	0.636	0.807	7.186	0.000	0.577	0.434	4.985	0.000

Notes: N.B – Values in italics represent those that satisfy CV-PAT conditions (PLS-SEM loss significantly lower than IA/LM loss)
Source: Authors' own work

Hypotheses	β	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
H1: C $\rightarrow$ IT	0.51	8.25	0.000	Supported
H2: R ² C $\rightarrow$ IT	0.10	2.25	0.024	Supported

Source: Authors' own work

forge their reputation on the market (Ryu and Han, 2021) and produce a kind of reinforcement of the status of the brand (Ibáñez-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021). Indeed, it seems that expertise, image and style of these live-streaming influencers forge the pillars of their reputation (Tiago *et al.*, 2023) and increase the credibility of endorsed brands in the eyes of their followers (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). More than any other attribute, it seems that the Instagram influencer's reputation conditions the effect of congruence on followers' brand trust.

To test *H3*, *H4*, *H5* and *H6* including mediating effects the procedure of [Hair et al. \(2014\)](#) was followed ([Table 5](#)).

First, the results show that congruence has a significant effect on attitude toward the brand. When brand trust is introduced as mediator, the effect of congruence on attitude toward the brand became insignificant. The calculated VAF proved that this mediation is full ($VAF > 80\%$). *H3* is therefore supported. Thus, our results prove that followers who felt that the live-streaming influencer was congruent with themselves, have expressed trust in the brand and tended more to appreciate it by developing a favorable attitude toward it ([Conde and Casais, 2023](#)). This result is consistent with social learning theory, which assumes that emotions experienced with an information source affect the receiver's perception and lead them to appreciate the source's content ([Bandura, 1977](#)). In this case, trust in the brands endorsed by streamers led them to be perceived as more authentic and reliable ([Pozhariev et al., 2022](#)). More generally, this trust fosters positive brand associations and attitudes ([Pozhariev et al., 2022](#)). It could therefore play a mediating role between congruence and the follower's attitude toward the brand ([Lou and Yuan, 2019](#)). Indeed, by participating in live-streamings, followers can post comments in real time, ask questions and interact live with the streamers. The latter provide instant reassurance, with their opinions and testimonials about the brand. This dynamic interaction casts a transparency on the relationship, fostering a feeling of closeness to the brand represented by a congruent influencer and leads the follower to appreciate it ([Conde and Casais, 2023](#)). The result is a more favorable attitude toward the brand.

Furthermore, findings show that brand attitude is a full mediator of the relationship between brand trust and shopping intention. The calculated variance accounted (VAF) indicated that mediation is full ($VAF > 80\%$). *H4* is thus supported. While associating themselves with different brands, influencers suggest the purchase of some of them by giving favorable reviews in live-streamings ([Castillo and Sánchez-Fernández, 2019](#)). These reviews try to comfort followers, seduce them and finally incite them to purchase the brand. For many people, the purchase intent of an Instagram brand endorsed by a live-stream influencer is an expression of acceptance and affection favorable to the brand and a way to compensate for its loyalty ([Spears and Singh, 2004](#)). This link seems almost systematic, given that followers who initially developed a brand trust continue to desire it in the future by passing through an attitudinal path ([Belanche et al., 2021](#)). Some studies even admit that consumers develop these purchase intentions because they wish to reward the loyal brand through actual purchase behavior as a token of their gratitude ([Chen and Yang, 2023](#)).

Findings also reveal that brand attitude is a partial mediator of the relationship between attitude toward the brand and intention to imitate the influencer ($20\% < VAF < 80\%$). By introducing the mediator, the effect of brand attitude on to imitate the influencer remains significant but decreases (β changed from 0.647 to 0.376). Moreover, this partial mediation is considered as complementary since the direct and the indirect effects have the same signs ([Zhao et al., 2010](#); [Hair et al., 2021](#)). *H5* is therefore supported. Indeed, as indicated by the similarity attraction principle in psychology, individuals are naturally attracted to

Table 5 Testing indirect effects

Mediation relationships	Total effect		Direct effect		Indirect effect		VAF (%)	Mediation	Supported
	β	t-value	β	t-value	β	t-value			
<i>H3</i> : C $\rightarrow$ BT $\rightarrow$ A	0.196**	3.002	0.030 ^{ns}	0.235	0.168**	4.007	84	Full mediation	Supported
<i>H4</i> : BT $\rightarrow$ A $\rightarrow$ SI	0.577**	6.820	0.080 ^{ns}	1.796	0.497**	5.796	86	Full mediation	Supported
<i>H5</i> : BT $\rightarrow$ A $\rightarrow$ II	0.648**	7.916	0.376**	5.096	0.273**	3.867	42	Complementary partial mediation	Supported
<i>H6</i> : BT $\rightarrow$ A $\rightarrow$ RI	0.714**	12.159	0.040 ^{ns}	0.764	0.674**	8.302	94	Full mediation	Supported

Notes: N.B. = **Significant at 1%; ns = not significant
Source: Authors' own work

those who share the same tastes and expectations, and tend to imitate them in their posture, style and behavior (Ladhari *et al.*, 2020). In this regard, a dynamic, spontaneous and unique mimicry mechanism gives followers the opportunity to identify with the streamers of their favorite brands to affirm and reflect their self-image (Belanche *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, followers are constantly on the lookout for advice from the influencers they like (Ladhari *et al.*, 2020). They are also attracted by the emotionally charged visual content promoted by the latter, since it enables them to draw inspiration from their style and copy their experience with brands (Casaló *et al.*, 2017a). The embodied attitude toward one's brands thus rekindles a kind of commitment to imitating these streamers and develops their image, behavior and taste (Ladhari *et al.*, 2020). Such commitment represents an ongoing search for self-approval and congruence with these influencers (Li and Peng, 2021). In particular, our study argues that brand attitude mediates the link between brand trust and the intention to imitate the Instagram live stream. The positive attitude toward a brand, which followers already trust, activates the willingness to imitate the source that represents it, in our case the live stream influencer (Belanche *et al.*, 2021).

Finally, we found that brand attitude is a full mediator of the relationship between brand trust and intention to recommend the brand. The calculated variance accounted (VAF) indicated that mediation is full (VAF > 80%). Consequently, H6 is supported. Hence, brand trust induces a favorable attitude toward the brand that stimulates the intention to recommend it to other social media users (Belanche, 2021). This intention to recommend shows commitment to the brand. It also highlights user empowerment (Gárgoles and Ambás, 2023). Indeed, influencers are now proven guides to the members of their community by recommending some brands or rejecting others. Subscribing to this perspective, Chen and Yang (2023) indicate that live-streaming influencer fans represent a valuable target for Instagram brands. Embodying the prominent role of brand ambassadors, they are able to engage other users through live recommendations. This is how followers of loyal brand develop favorable attitude and make accordingly tagging (@) or hashtag (#) intentions to focus similar content around the brand they trust and create a trend.

5. Conclusion

Rise of influencer marketing on Instagram seems to be due to the panoply of opportunities it offers, leading to a wide range of communication strategies, including live-streamings. The latter relies on live follower/influencer interactions and is considered as "a key growth driver for companies" (Yang *et al.*, 2024). It presents a powerful means of fostering trust on this platform and consequently inducing more favorable responses from its users (Zheng *et al.*, 2023). In particular, to succeed in their communication objectives in a context known by mistrust and skepticism, influencer-follower congruence seems vital (Chen and Yang, 2023). The results of our research underline this finding. Despite that, studies on Instagram live-streamings as a communication tool are still rare. Besides, few of them shed light on the influencer-follower congruence in spite of its crucial role in establishing a trusting relationship with the consumer (Kim and Kim, 2021). Hence, the originality of this study lies not only in highlighting the importance of Instagram live-streamings, but also that of the congruence between the influencer and the follower. This research contributed therefore to understanding its effect on brand trust and the resulting attitudinal and intentional reactions. Indeed, it has been proven that influencer-follower congruence in live-streamings promotes brand trust. This study also revealed the crucial role played by Instagram influencer reputation in reinforcing the positive relationship between influencer-follower congruence and brand trust. Similarly, results showed that brand trust mediates the effect of influencer-follower congruence on brand attitude. The latter was also proven to be a mediator of the relationships between brand trust and followers' intentional reactions. All these results have theoretical and managerial implications.

From a theoretical point of view, this study has a number of contributions. First, it is one of the few studies to shed light on the mechanisms of live-streaming influence on social

networking platforms. Despite the growing use of this communication tool, it has attracted little attention from researchers. In particular, this study has highlighted the importance of influencer–follower congruence during live-streamings. Although the concept of congruence has already been researched in the field of influencer marketing, influencer–follower congruence remains poorly understood. Second, this study shed light on the role of influencer–follower congruence in building brand trust. Indeed, our results have clearly shown the effect of congruence on trust, proving the merit of communicating on social networks (Khrouf and Frikha, 2021). Results then reveal that the dynamics of follower identification with a congruent live-streaming influencer's values, style and image increase adherence and the intention of future connection with the brand. Third, this study also proved that an influencer's reputation only reinforces the positive effect of congruence on trust. Although it has been established that influencer reputation removes follower uncertainty (Qi and Cui, 2022), the moderating role of reputation in the relationship between congruence and brand trust was previously poorly understood. Fourth, two important theories have been applied to the influencer marketing context: Heider's equilibrium theory (1946) and Aaker and Keller's (1990) brand extension theory. Applying them to this context has enabled us to gain a better understanding of the effect of influencer–follower congruence on consumer reactions during live-streamings.

From a management point of view, our study makes several contributions. First, it highlights the importance of live-streaming for brands wishing to reach their customers and to gain their trust. This is particularly true when the target audience belongs to Generation Z, which has the specificity of being highly receptive to live-streamings (Li, 2023). Brands are therefore encouraged to broadcast live-streamings on Instagram to establish a trust relationship with followers, especially when they belong to Generation Z. The use of live-streaming sessions seems to be particularly relevant when followers have a favorable prior brand attitude which could strengthen their trust in the influencer (Lin *et al.*, 2021). Second, our results raise awareness about the risk of choosing arbitrarily influencers in live-streamings. Indeed, the image of the chosen influencer should fit the profile of the brand's followers. It should be remembered that this study has shown that influencer–follower congruence fosters brand trust, thus favorably affecting followers' attitude toward the brand and their behavioral intentions. To ensure this congruence, it is essential for the brand to know its followers well. To this end, it seems crucial to first identify the unique characteristics of each target and to choose an influencer adapted to its specificities. In this regard, using a character-based persona sketching technique helps to map out the target's sociological origins, traits and psychology (Leban *et al.*, 2020). On Instagram, such profiling will serve as the basis for choosing the influencer and adapting their style to the image of their audience to enable less intrusive communication that inspires more trust and stimulates quickly the intention to imitate, purchase and recommend the brand. In the absence of congruent influencer profiles, AI-based technological solutions enable for a tailored design of virtual live-streamers and relevant customized content to improve relationships with and induce favorable responses to the brand (Zheng *et al.*, 2023). Whatever kind of influencer the company chooses (AI-based or human), managers are also recommended to pay a particular attention to the live-streaming's content by giving the main recommendations and guidelines to the influencer presenting the product. This helps avoid any slippage that may occur when the influencer is responsible for creating the content by himself (Tian and Frank, 2024). Finally, although the use of Instagram user profiling for influencer selection is crucial, companies should not resort to unethical practices (Chen and Yang, 2023; Yang *et al.*, 2024). For example, instead of choosing influencers on the bases of their popularity, they should do it relying on the consumer's best interest, particularly on the influencer's trustworthiness (Yang *et al.*, 2024; Tian and Frank, 2024). Moreover, the choice of influencers should also and necessarily take into account their reputation in the market. Indeed, our findings revealed that influencer reputation increases the effect of congruence on brand trust. In this regard, brands need to select influencers carefully, ensuring that they are credible, reliable and experts in their field. In concrete terms, it is vital to

find out about the social media track record of these influencers, and make sure they have not been the subject of scandals in the past. Continuous monitoring of an influencer's reputation means adhering to a set of requirements that monitor their expressive qualities, facial or body expressions and the type of speech they deliver. Such monitoring allows for anticipating critical scenarios where reputation could be compromised and where image restoration strategies are to be used. Besides, selecting influencers by ensuring their reputation helps preserve brand integrity and protect the customer from unscrupulous practices used by some influencers.

6. Limitations and future research avenues

Like all studies, this study has some limitations. First, the study has focused on one particular live-streaming. Although it was rigorously selected, the results are specific to this live-streaming. Moreover, the selected live-streaming endorses a specific product category: clothing. Further research should therefore validate our model on live-streamings promoting other product categories. In the same vein, it should be noted that the use of a particular influencer reduces the generalizability of the results, hence the need for further research using other influencers. Second, this study was conducted exclusively on a sample of female Instagram users as this social network attracts increasingly more women than men (Sanz-Blas *et al.*, 2019). However, future research should focus on both men and women and eventually compare these two populations in terms of behavior on Instagram. Third, in this study, influencer-follower congruence was operationalized through a measurement scale. Manipulating this variable in an experiment could shed further light on the effect of varying congruence levels on trust. Fourthly, further research could consider including other variables such as customer experience (Chen and Yang, 2023) or parasocial interaction with an influencer (Chung and Cho, 2017; Lin *et al.*, 2021) to enrich our understanding of Instagrammers' reactions to live-streaming sessions. In this vein, it was previously demonstrated that parasocial interaction between an influencer and an Instagrammer is a significant predictor of source trustworthiness and purchase intention (Lin *et al.*, 2021). Meanwhile, Gong and Li (2017) showed that celebrity-product congruence mediates the effect of parasocial interaction on endorsement effectiveness (attitudes and purchase intention). Finally, it is suggested to opt for a random sample rather than a convenience one to reduce sampling bias and to better the generalizability of results.

References

- Aaker, D.A. and Keller, K.L. (1990), "Consumer evaluations of brand extensions", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 54 No. 1, pp. 27-41.
- Abbad, O., Khrouf, L. and Maghraoui, S. (2024), "Quand les réels envahissent Instagram: effet de mode ou efficacité avérée?", *21st Tunisian Marketing Association Conference*, Hammamet, Tunisia.
- AbdulWahab, H.K., Tao, M., Tandon, A., Ashfaq, M. and Dhir, A. (2022), "Social media celebrities and new world order. What drives purchasing behavior among social media followers?", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Elsevier, Vol. 68 No. C, p. 103076.
- Amarullah, D., Handriana, T. and Maharudin, A. (2022), "E-wom credibility, trust, perceived risk, and purchase intention in the context of E-Commerce: moderating role of online shopping experience", *Jurnal Ekonomi Bisnis Dan Kewirausahaan*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 61-83.
- Bandura, A. (1977), "Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change", *Psychological Review*, Vol. 84 No. 2, pp. 191-215, doi: 10.1037/0033-295x.84.2.191.847061.
- Belanche, D., Casalo, L.V., Flavián, M. and Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2021), "Understanding influencer marketing: the role of congruence between influencers, products and consumers", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 132, pp. 186-195.
- Bigné, J.E., Sánchez, M.I.S. and Sánchez, J. (2001), "Tourism image, evaluation variables and after purchase behaviour: inter-relationship", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 22 No. 6, pp. 607-616.

- Casakó, L.V., Flavián, C. and Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2017a), "Antecedents of consumer intention to follow and recommend an Instagram account", *Online Information Review*, Vol. 41 No. 7, pp. 1046-1063.
- Casakó, L.V., Flavián, C. and Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2017b), "Understanding consumer interaction on Instagram: the role of satisfaction, hedonism, and content characteristics", *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, Vol. 20 No. 6, pp. 369-375.
- Casakó, L.V., Flavián, C. and Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2020), "Influencers on Instagram: antecedents and consequences of opinion leadership", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 117, pp. 510-519.
- 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.
- Chen, N. and Yang, Y. (2023), "The role of influencers in live streaming E-Commerce: influencer trust, attachment, and consumer purchase intention", *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp. 1601-1618.
- Chung, S. and Cho, H. (2017), "Fostering parasocial relationships with celebrities on social media: implications for celebrity endorsement", *Psychology & Marketing*, Vol. 34 No. 4, pp. 481-495.
- Conde, R. and Casas, B. (2023), "Micro, macro and mega-influencers on Instagram: the power of persuasion via the parasocial relationship", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 158, p. 113708.
- Djalarova, E. and Rushworth, C. (2017), "Exploring the credibility of online celebrities' Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of young female users", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 68, pp. 1-7.
- Doney, P.M. and Cannon, J.P. (1997), "An examination of the nature of trust in buyer-seller relationships", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 61 No. 2, pp. 35-51.
- Dwinanda, B., Syarifuddin, F.A., Hudaili, and Hendriana, E. (2022), "Examining the extended advertising value model: a case of TikTok short video ads", *Mediterranean Journal of Social & Behavioral Research*, Vol. 6 No. 2, pp. 35-44.
- Dwivedi, R.K., Pandey, M., Vashisht, A., Pandey, D.K. and Kumar, D. (2022), "Assessing behavioral intention toward green hotels during COVID-19 pandemic: the moderating role of environmental concern", *Journal of Tourism Futures*, Vol. Ahead of print No. Ahead of print.
- Farivar, S. and Wang, F. (2022), "Effective influencer marketing: a social identity perspective", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 67, p. 103026.
- Frikha, A. (2019), *Measurement in Marketing: Operationalization of Latent Constructs*, co-Edition ISTE-Wiley, London UK-Hoboken, USA.
- Gárgoles, P. and Ambás, G. (2023), "The power of consumers on social media: a case study of balenciaga's crisis communication", in Sabatini, N., Sádaba, T., Tos, A., Neri, V. and Cantoni, L. (Eds), *Fashion Communication in the Digital Age, Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics*, Springer, Cham, pp. 3-13.
- Gong, W. and Li, X. (2017), "Engaging fans on microblog: the synthetic influence of parasocial interaction and source characteristics on celebrity endorsement", *Psychology & Marketing*, Vol. 34 No. 7, pp. 720-732.
- Gunnarsson, L., Postnikova, A. and Folkestad, A. (2018), "Maybe influencers are not worth the hype an explanatory study on influencers' characteristics with perceived quality and brand loyalty", *Bachelor Thesis*, Linnaeus University, Sweden.
- Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M. and Sarstedt, M. (2014), *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*, Sage Publications.
- Hair, J.F., Risher, J.J., Sarstedt, M. and Ringle, C.M. (2019), "When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM", *European Business Review*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 2-24.
- Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N.P. and Ray, S. (2021), *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) Using R A Workbook*, Springer, Cham.
- Henseler, J., Hubona, G.S. and Ray, P.A. (2016), "Using PLS path modeling in new technology research: updated guidelines", *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, Vol. 116 No. 1, pp. 2-20.
- Hou, J., Shen, H. and Xu, F. (2021), "A model of livestream selling with online influencers", *Social Science Research Network*, available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3896924 (accessed 30 January 2024).

- Hu, H., Zhang, D. and Wang, C. (2019), "Impact of social media influencers' endorsement on application adoption: a trust transfer perspective", *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, Vol. 47 No. 11, pp. 1-12.
- Hu, L., Qi, M., Han, S. and Li, Y. (2020), "Understanding followers' stickiness to digital influencers: the effect of psychological responses", *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 54, p. 102169.
- Ibáñez-Sánchez, S., Flavián, M., Casaló, L.V. and Belanche, D. (2021), "Influencers and brands successful collaborations: a mutual reinforcement to promote products and services on social media", *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 469-486.
- Immanuel, D.M. and Bianda, A.H.S. (2021), "The impact of using influencer on consumer purchase intention with attitude towards influencer and brand attitude as mediator", *Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen*, Vol. 19 No. 4, pp. 766-781.
- James, D.O. (2006), "Extension to alliance: Aaker and Keller's model revisited", *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 15-22.
- Järvenpää, S.L., Tractinsky, N. and Saarinen, L. (2006), "Consumer trust in an internet store: a cross-cultural validation", *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 1-18.
- Jiménez-Castillo, D. and Sánchez-Fernández, R. (2019), "The role of digital influencers in brand recommendation: examining their impact on engagement, expected value and purchase intention", *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 49 No. C, pp. 366-376.
- Khrouf, L. and Frikha, A. (2021), "Websites' hue-context congruence as a vector of trust and behavioral intentions", *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, Vol. 18 No. 7, pp. 1515-1536.
- Kim, D.Y. and Kim, H.Y. (2021), "Influencer advertising on social media: the multiple inference model on influencer-product congruence and sponsorship disclosure", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 130, pp. 405-415.
- Kircaburun, K. and Griffiths, M.D. (2018), "Instagram addiction and the big five of personality: the mediating role of self-liking", *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 158-170.
- Ladheri, R., Massa, E. and Skandrani, H. (2020), "YouTube vloggers' popularity and influence: the roles of homophily, emotional attachment, and expertise", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 54, p. 102027.
- Leban, M., Thomsen, T.U., Von Wallpach, S. and Voyer, B.G. (2020), "Constructing personas: how high-net-worth social media influencers reconcile ethicality and living a luxury lifestyle", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 169 No. 2, pp. 225-239.
- Lee, H.M., Kang, J.W. and Namkung, Y. (2021), "Instagram users' information acceptance process for food-content", *Sustainability*, Vol. 13 No. 5, p. 2638.
- Li, Y. (2023), "Why does gen Z watch virtual streaming VTuber anime videos with avatars on twitch?", *Online Media and Global Communication*, Vol. 2 No. 3, pp. 379-403.
- Li, Y. and Peng, Y. (2021), "Influencer marketing: purchase intention and its antecedents", *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 39 No. 7, pp. 960-978.
- Lin, C.A., Crowe, J., Pierre, L. and Lee, Y.-K. (2021), "Effects of parasocial interaction with an instafamous influencer on brand attitudes and purchase intentions", *Journal of Social Media in Society*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 55-78.
- Liu, J., Rasidi, M.H., Lee, Y.L. and Said, I. (2022), "Watching TikTok live streaming: a data collection for public life study in Hulong", *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, Vol. 17 No. 6, pp. 1773-1780.
- 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.
- Maghraoui, S. and Khrouf, S. (2024), "Cyberaddiction to TikTok during the covid-19 pandemic", *Spanish Journal of Marketing*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print, pp. 27-41.
- Maghraoui, S., Khrouf, L. and Frikha, A. (2022), "Suspicion of manipulation on Instagram is the consumer being duped", *International Journal of Technology Marketing*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 204-219.

- Mallipeddi, R., Jansakiraman, R., Kumar, S. and Gupta, S. (2021), "The effects of social media content created by human brands on engagement: evidence from Indian general election 2014", *Information Systems Research*, Vol. 32 No. 1, pp. 212-237.
- Moon, J. and Kim, Y. (2001), "Extending the TAM for a world-wide-web context", *Information & Management*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 217-230.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Lee, J.Y. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2003), "Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 88 No. 5, pp. 879-903.
- Pozharliev, R., Rossi, D. and De Angeis, M. (2022), "Consumers' self-reported and brain responses to advertising post on Instagram: the effect of number of followers and argument quality", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 56 No. 3, pp. 922-948.
- Qi, D. and Cui, X. (2022), "The influence and moderating effect of trust in streamers in a live streaming shopping environment", *JUS7C*, Vol. 52 No. 2, pp. 6-12.
- Reinikainen, H., Munnukka, J., Mäty, D. and Luoma-Aho, V. (2020), "You really are a great big sister" – parasocial relationships, credibility, and the moderating role of audience comments in influencer marketing", *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 36 Nos 3/4, pp. 279-298.
- Román, S., Riquelme, I.P. and Iacobucci, D. (2023), "Fake or credible? Antecedents and consequences of perceived credibility in exaggerated online reviews", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 156, p. 113466.
- Ryu, E.A. and Han, E. (2021), "Social media influencer's reputation: developing and validating a multidimensional scale", *Sustainability*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 631-649.
- Sanz-Blas, S., Buzova, D. and Miquel-Romero, M.J. (2019), "From Instagram overuse to instastress and emotional fatigue: the mediation of addiction", *Spanish Journal of Marketing - ESIC*, Vol. 23 No. 2, pp. 143-161.
- Schouten, A., Janssen, L. and Verspaget, M. (2019), "Celebrity vs. Influencer endorsements in advertising: the role of identification, credibility, and product-endorser fit", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 258-281.
- Shah, S.A., Shoukat, M.H., Jamal, W. and Ahmad, M.S. (2023), "What drives followers-influencer intention in influencer marketing? The perspectives of emotional attachment and quality of information", *Sage Open*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 1-15.
- Sharma, P.N., Liengaard, B.D., Hair, J.F., Sarstedt, M. and Ringle, C.M. (2022), "Predictive model assessment and selection in composite-based modeling using PLS-SEM: extensions and guidelines for using CVPAT", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 57 No. 6, pp. 1662-1677.
- Shmueli, G., Sarstedt, M., Hair, J.F., Cheah, J.-H., Ting, H., Vaithilingam, S. and Ringle, C.M. (2019), "Predictive model assessment in PLS-SEM: guidelines for using pls-predict", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 53 No. 11, pp. 2322-2347, doi: [10.1108/EJM-02-2019-0189](https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-02-2019-0189).
- Sokolova, K. and Kéfi, H. (2020), "Instagram and YouTube bloggers promote it, why should I buy? How credibility and parasocial interaction influence purchase intentions", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 53, p. 101742.
- Sokolova, K., Vessal, S.R. and Perez, C. (2024), "Home cooking in the digital age: when observing food influencers on social media triggers the imitation", *Psychology & Marketing*, Vol. 41 No. 5, pp. 1152-1171.
- Spears, N. and Singh, S. (2004), "Measuring attitude toward the brand and purchase intentions", *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 53-66.
- Tang, L., Omar, S.T., Bolong, J. and Zawawi, M.W.J. (2021), "Influence of TikTok usage to ward positive emotion and relationship", *International Conference on Communication and Media*, Vol. 10 No. 36, pp. 272-280.
- Tiago, M.T.B., Santiago, J.K. and Tiago, F. (2023), "Mega or macro social media influencers: who endorses brands better?", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 157, p. 113606.
- Tian, Y. and Frank, B. (2024), "Optimizing live streaming features to enhance customer immersion and engagement: a comparative study of live streaming genres in China", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 81, p. 103974.
- Tran, G.A. and Strutton, D. (2020), "Comparing email and SNS users: investigating e-servicescape, customer reviews, trust, loyalty and E-WOM", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 53, p. 101782.

Xu, X. and Pratt, S. (2018), "Social media influencers as endorsers to promote travel destinations: an application of self-congruence theory to the Chinese generation Y", *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 35 No. 7, pp. 958-972.

Yang, G., Chaiyasoonthorn, W. and Chaveesuk, S. (2024), "Exploring the influence of live streaming on consumer purchase intention: a structural equation modeling approach in the Chinese E-commerce sector", *Acta Psychologica*, Vol. 249, p. 104415.

Zhao, X., Lynch, J.-G. and Chen, Q. (2010), "Reconsidering Baron and Kenny: myths and truths about mediation analysis", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 197-206.

Zheng, S., Chen, J., Liao, J. and Hsin, L.H. (2023), "What motivates users' viewing and purchasing behavior motivations in live streaming: a stream-streamer-viewer perspective", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 72, p. 103240.



Appendix 1

Table A1 Scales' items

Construct	Items label
Influencer reputation (Doney and Cannon, 1997)	R1-This influencer is well-known R2-This influencer has a bad reputation in the market R3-This influencer has a good reputation
Influencer trust (Gunnarson et al., 2018)	IT1-I trust the influencer's opinion IT2-I think the influencer shares her honest opinion IT3-I trust the influencer's knowledge about the product she endorses IT4-I trust the influencer's messages more than one coming from a brand
Brand trust (Järvenpää et al., 2006)	BT1-This brand is trustworthy BT2-This brand wants to be known as the one that keeps promises and commitments BT3-I hope this brand keeps my best interests in mind BT4-I find it necessary to be careful with this brand BT5-This brand has more to lose than to gain by not keeping its promises BT6-The actions of this brand correspond to my expectations BT7-This brand doesn't care about serving people
Intention to imitate the influencer (Casaló et al., 2020)	I11-I would feel comfortable dressing as shown in the pictures of this influencer I12-I would not hesitate to take into account the suggestions of this influencer I13- I find myself in the live streamings shared by this influencer I14- I would feel secure in following the suggestions about clothing made by this influencer I15-I would rely on the recommendations about clothing made by this influencer
Intention to recommend the brand (Bigné et al., 2001)	IR1-I will recommend this brand to other people IR2-I will say positive things about this brand to other people IR3-I will encourage friends and relatives to buy this brand
Influencer-follower congruence (Xu and Pratt, 2018)	C1-The influencer has a good match with this brand C2-The compatibility between the influencer and the brand is high C3-The alignment between the influencer and the brand is high C4-The congruence between the influencer and the brand is high
Brand attitude (Chattopadhyay and Basu, 1999)	A1-This brand is good A2-I like this brand A3-This brand is nice
Intention to purchase (Moon and Kim, 2001)	SI1-I would definitely buy this brand from Instagram in the near future SI2-I intend to buy this brand on Instagram in the near future SI3-It is likely that I will buy this brand on Instagram in the near future SI4-I plan to buy this brand on Instagram in the near future

Source: Authors' own work

Appendix 2

Table A2 Demographics	
Characteristics	Frequencies (%)
Age	27.3
Between 18 and 20	35.8
Between 20 and 25	37
Between 25 and 30	
Profession	16.7
Pupil	31.2
Student	14.5
Worker/craftsman	24.2
Employee	11.8
Liberal profession	1.5
Unemployed	
Number of years of Instagram use	33
Less than 1 year	44.5
Between 1 and 3 years	22.4
More than 3 years	
Average duration of Instagram usage per week	20.3
Less than once a week	39.1
Once a week	18.5
Between 2 and 3 times per week	22.1
More than 3 times a week	
Source: Authors' own work	

Corresponding author

Lilia Khrouf can be contacted at: lilia.khrouf@esct.uma.tn

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

Lampiran 6 Turnitin

SKRIPSI_MELGY CHEN_220326986.docx			
ORIGINALITY REPORT			
11%	10%	10%	6%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
1	e-journal.uajy.ac.id Internet Source	4%	
2	Souad Maghraoui, Lilia Khrouf. "Instagram live-streamings: how does influencer-follower congruence affect Gen Z trust, attitudes and intentions?", Young Consumers, 2024 Publication	1%	
3	Muhammad Dhafin Syah, Osly Usman, Nofriska Krissanya. "Pengaruh Kepercayaan Merek, Persepsi Kualitas, dan Promosi Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Serta Dampaknya Pada Kepuasan Konsumen di Kalangan Gen-Z (Studi Pada Digital Out of Home Advertising Mobile Led)", LANCAH: Jurnal Inovasi dan Tren, 2024 Publication	1%	
4	eprints.undip.ac.id Internet Source	1%	
5	dspace.uui.ac.id Internet Source	<1%	

6	Submitted to Universitas Islam Indonesia Student Paper	<1 %
7	etheses.uin-malang.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %
8	Submitted to Sultan Agung Islamic University Student Paper	<1 %
9	digilib.uin-suka.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %
10	Submitted to Universitas Diponegoro Student Paper	<1 %
11	Submitted to Viimsi Gümnaasium Student Paper	<1 %
12	Latifah Wulandari Asbaruna. "Peran Kepercayaan Merek Halal dalam Memediasi Pengaruh Religiusitas Islam terhadap Niat Pembelian Kosmetik Halal", Jurnal Dimamu, 2025 Publication	<1 %
13	Puput Ayu Lestari, Alifah Ratnawati. "Pengaruh Social Media Marketing, Customer Experience, dan Online Customer Riview terhadap Repurchase Intention dengan Trust sebagai Variabel Intervening pada Wardah", RIGGS: Journal of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Business, 2025 Publication	<1 %

14	repositorybaru.stieykpn.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %
15	Qian Wang, Xixi Li, Xiangbin Yan. "Uncovering the power of influencer-product congruence in live e-commerce: an impression management lens and gender difference", <i>Industrial Management & Data Systems</i> , 2025 Publication	<1 %
16	Submitted to LPPM Student Paper	<1 %
17	Submitted to Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Indonesia Student Paper	<1 %
18	Submitted to STIE Perbanas Surabaya Student Paper	<1 %
19	repository.umsu.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %
20	Submitted to De Montfort University Student Paper	<1 %
21	Iyut Nury Ency Hutagalung, Anita Maharani, Joko Rizkie Widokarti. "Analisis Segmentasi Pasar terhadap Preferensi Perguruan Tinggi Swasta di Kabupaten Tapanuli Utara dengan Kelompok Referensi sebagai Mediator", <i>Jurnal EMT KITA</i> , 2025 Publication	<1 %

22	smkmedia.sch.id Internet Source	<1 %
23	Submitted to Universitas Negeri Jakarta Student Paper	<1 %
24	journal.yrpioku.com Internet Source	<1 %
25	repository.fe.unj.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %
26	repository.radenfatah.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %
27	text-id.123dok.com Internet Source	<1 %
28	Submitted to Universitas Pertamina Student Paper	<1 %
29	eprints.stiebankbpdjateng.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %
30	repository.uinsaizu.ac.id Internet Source	<1 %

Exclude quotes Off
Exclude bibliography On

Exclude matches < 25 words