

Social Media and Celebrity Endorsement in Prêt-Fashion Marketing: A Systematic Review of Consumer Behaviour Research

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Abstract

Purpose: This systematic review synthesizes empirical research on social media celebrity endorsements and influencer marketing in the prêt-fashion industry, examining their impact on consumer behavior, purchase intentions, and brand loyalty.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, a comprehensive search across multiple databases identified 831 papers. After deduplication (606 unique records), title and abstract screening (225 papers), and full-text assessment (73 papers), 30 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015 and 2026 were included and analyzed using thematic synthesis.

Findings: Instagram dominates fashion influencer marketing. Source Credibility Theory and Parasocial Interaction Theory emerged as the most robust frameworks, while the Stimulus-Organism-Response model demonstrated methodological versatility. Influencer trustworthiness, attractiveness, and parasocial relationships consistently predict purchase intentions and brand loyalty, with micro-influencers showing stronger engagement and relational impact.

Research Limitations/Implications: The review is limited to English-language, peer-reviewed articles and shows a geographic concentration in Asian markets, which may affect generalizability. Future research should explicitly focus on cross-cultural comparative studies, adopt longitudinal and experimental designs to capture causal and long-term effects, examine platform-specific dynamics on emerging media such as TikTok and YouTube Shorts, and explore evolving areas including sustainability-driven influencer marketing, artificial intelligence (e.g., virtual influencers and algorithmic curation), and potential negative outcomes such as influencer fatigue and consumer skepticism.

Practical Implications & Originality: Fashion marketers should prioritize authentic and trustworthy micro-influencers to enhance consumer engagement and long-term brand relationships. This review provides one of the first integrated syntheses of social media celebrity endorsements in the prêt-fashion sector, highlighting key theoretical gaps and future research opportunities.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Celebrity Endorsement, Influencer Marketing, Purchase Intention, Brand Loyalty, Masstige Fashion.

Introduction

The digital transformation of fashion marketing has fundamentally altered brand-consumer communication and purchase decisions. Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, have emerged as the dominant platform in fashion influencer marketing because of their highly visual nature, strong engagement features, and effectiveness in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase behavior (De Veirman et al., 2017; Casaló et al., 2020). The prêt-à-porter fashion segment has been particularly responsive to influencer marketing strategies, as these products align with the fast-paced, visually oriented nature of social media content.

Celebrity endorsement has evolved from conventional media into a nuanced and interactive phenomenon in the digital age. Social media influencers, from mega celebrities to micro influencers, now shape fashion consumption through authentic, relatable content that blurs the boundaries between advertising and personal expression (De Veirman et al., 2017). Despite the proliferation of research on social media influencer marketing, the literature remains fragmented across disciplines. There is a lack of systematic synthesis specifically addressing the prêt-fashion context, where the intersection of trend sensitivity, visual aesthetics, and social identity makes fashion influencer marketing particularly potent.

This systematic review addressed three research questions.

- What are the dominant theoretical frameworks used to explain the effects of celebrity endorsements on social media fashion marketing?
- What are the key influencer and content characteristics that drive consumer behavior outcomes in prêt-fashion contexts?
- What methodological patterns and gaps exist in the current research?

By synthesizing empirical evidence from 30 peer-reviewed studies (2015 to 2026), this review provides fashion marketers and researchers with an integrated understanding of how social media celebrity endorsements influence consumer behavior in the fashion industry.

Theoretical Foundations

The literature on social media celebrity endorsements in fashion marketing draws on multiple theoretical traditions, each offering distinct explanatory mechanisms while also revealing tensions and complementarities. This section critically evaluates the dominant frameworks by comparing their conceptual robustness, empirical support, and applicability to the prêt-fashion context.

Source Credibility Theory

Source Credibility Theory (SCT), originating from Hovland et al. (1953), posits that message effectiveness depends on the perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness of the source.

In the fashion influencer context, SCT has demonstrated strong empirical support: studies consistently show that influencer credibility dimensions, particularly trustworthiness and attractiveness, significantly predict purchase intentions (Kapoor et al., 2018; Schouten et al., 2020). SCT's parsimony and operationalizability of SCT make it highly applicable to influencer marketing. The three-dimensional structure (expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness) aligns well with consumer evaluations of fashion influencers, where visual appeal and perceived authenticity are paramount. Empirical studies have confirmed that trustworthiness is the strongest predictor of purchase intentions in fashion contexts, surpassing expertise (Audrezet et al., 2020). However, SCT has notable gaps when applied to social media. First, it was developed for one-way communication (e.g., television advertising) and does not account for the interactive and relational nature of social media (De Veirman et al., 2017). Second, SCT treats credibility as a static attribute of the source, ignoring how it is dynamically constructed through ongoing interactions, content quality, and platform affordances. Third, the theory does not explain why credibility influences behavior, it lacks a motivational or cognitive processing mechanism, limiting its explanatory depth (Vrontis et al., 2021). Compared to Parasocial Interaction Theory (discussed below), SCT is more focused on source attributes but less attentive to the relational dynamics that characterize influencer-follower interactions. While SCT excels at predicting which influencer characteristics matter, it is less effective at explaining how these characteristics translate into consumer behavior through the psychological processes.

Theory of Planned Behaviour

According to Ajzen (1991), the theory of planned behavior (TPB) posits that behavioral intentions are shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In fashion influencer marketing, according to Purwanto (2021), TPB has been used to model how influencer endorsements shape attitudes and norms, which in turn predict purchase intentions. TPB's comprehensive structure of TPB captures the multiple pathways through which

influencer marketing operates. Subjective norms are particularly relevant in fashion contexts, where social comparison and peer influence are strong. Studies show that influencer endorsements enhance perceived social norms around fashion consumption, especially among younger consumers. Despite its predictive power, the TPB has been criticized for being overly general and lacking specificity in digital marketing contexts (Jin et al., 2019). The theory does not differentiate between types of influencers (e.g., celebrities vs. micro influencers) or platforms (Instagram vs. TikTok), limiting its ability to generate actionable insights for fashion marketers. Additionally, the TPB assumes rational, deliberative decision-making, which may not fully capture the impulsive, emotion-driven nature of fashion purchases on social media (Festinger, 1954). The TPB is more comprehensive than the SCT in explaining the cognitive pathways from influencer exposure to purchase behavior; however, it is less parsimonious and harder to operationalize. While SCT focuses narrowly on source attributes, TPB integrates attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs, offering a richer but more complex explanatory framework. However, TPB's generality of TPB means that it lacks the contextual specificity needed to address the unique features of social media fashion marketing, such as visual aesthetics, content virality, and parasocial relationships.

Parasocial Interaction Theory

Parasocial Interaction (PSI) Theory, explained by Horton and Wohl (1956), describes one-sided relationships in which media consumers develop emotional bonds with media figures. In social media contexts, PSI has been extended to explain how followers form intimate, quasi-personal relationships with influencers, which in turn drives engagement and purchase intentions (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019). PSI Theory is uniquely suited to social media environments, where influencers cultivate intimacy through frequent, informal, and personalized content (Ki and Kim, 2019). Empirical studies confirm that parasocial relationships significantly mediate the effect of influencer credibility on purchase intentions, particularly in fashion contexts where identity expression and

aspiration are central (Lee and Watkins 2016). The PSI also explains why micro-influencers, despite their lower reach, often achieve higher engagement because their perceived authenticity and relatability foster stronger parasocial bonds (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). However, PSI Theory has conceptual ambiguities. The distinction between parasocial interaction (momentary engagement with content) and parasocial relationships (enduring emotional bonds) is often conflated in empirical studies, leading to measurement inconsistencies (Labrecque et al., 2013). Additionally, studies conducted by Chung and Cho's (2013) PSI does not specify which influencer or content characteristics foster parasocial relationships, requiring integration with other frameworks (e.g., SCT) to generate actionable insights. PSI Theory offers the most comprehensive account of the relational mechanisms underlying influencer marketing, surpassing both SCT and TPB in explaining emotional engagement and loyalty. However, it is less effective at predicting initial purchase intentions (where credibility and attitudes dominate) and more relevant for understanding sustained engagement and brand loyalty (Ki et al., 2020). The PSI and SCT are complementary. SCT explains which influencer attributes attract attention, whereas PSI explains how ongoing interactions convert attention into loyalty.

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model

The S-O-R model, adapted from environmental psychology Mehrabian and Russell (1974), posits that external stimuli (e.g., influencer content) trigger internal organismic states (e.g., emotions, attitudes), which in turn drive behavioural responses (e.g., purchase intentions). In fashion influencer marketing, the S-O-R model has been used to model how content characteristics (stimulus) influence consumer emotions and attitudes (organism), leading to purchase behavior (response) (Xiao et al., 2022). The flexibility of the S-O-R model allows researchers to integrate multiple theoretical constructs (e.g., credibility, PSI, attitudes) within a unified framework. This eclecticism is valuable for capturing the multifaceted nature of influencer marketing, where content quality, influencer attributes, and consumer psychology interact.

Empirical studies using the S-O-R model have identified key stimuli (e.g., content authenticity and visual aesthetics) and organismic states (e.g., trust and emotional arousal) that mediate influencer effects. However, the theoretical eclecticism of S-O-R is also a weakness. The model is a meta-framework rather than a substantive theory, offering little guidance on which stimuli, organismic states, or responses are most relevant in specific contexts (Bagozzi, 2000). This has led to inconsistent operationalization across studies, limiting comparability and cumulative knowledge building. Additionally, S-O-R assumes a linear, unidirectional process that ignores feedback loops and dynamic interactions that characterize social media environments (Hoffman & Novak, 2018). S-O-R is methodologically versatile but theoretically shallow compared to SCT, TPB, and the PSI. It functions as an organizing framework that accommodates constructs from other theories but does not generate novel predictions or insights. Researchers often use S-O-R to structure their models while drawing substantive hypotheses from SCT, TPB, or PSI.

Social Comparison Theory

Social Comparison Theory (SCT), as explained by Festinger (1954), suggests that individuals evaluate themselves by comparing themselves with others, particularly those perceived as similar or aspirational. In fashion contexts, influencers serve as comparison targets, shaping consumers' self-perceptions and consumption desires (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016). Social comparison is highly relevant to fashion marketing, where identity construction and status signaling are the central motivations. Influencers who are perceived as "aspirational yet attainable" (for example, micro influencers) may trigger upward social comparisons that motivate purchase behavior without inducing envy or self-threat. Despite its conceptual relevance, Social Comparison Theory remains underexplored in fashion influencer literature. Few studies explicitly test social comparison mechanisms, and those that do often conflate them with related constructs (for example, identification and PSI). The theory also lacks specificity regarding when and for whom social comparisons lead to positive (motivating) or negative

(demotivating) outcomes (Vogel et al., 2014). Social Comparison Theory offers a complementary lens to PSI, focusing on self-evaluation rather than emotional bonding. However, its underdevelopment in the current literature limits empirical support. Future research should integrate social comparison with PSI and SCT to provide a more comprehensive account of influencer effects.

Integrated Theoretical Framework

The research indicates that influencer marketing impacts prêt-à-porter (ready-to-wear) in multiple ways. The S-O-R model shows how people process influencer stimuli in a certain order; PSI shows how emotional relationships work; TPB shows how attitudes and norms affect a person's decision to buy; source credibility sets the stage for convincing communication; and Social Comparison Theory shows how people are motivated by wanting to be like others. No single hypothesis can perfectly explain how influencer marketing operates. Instead, many models work together to explain how customers behave in different situations.

Theoretical Framework for Social Media Celebrity Endorsement in Fashion Marketing

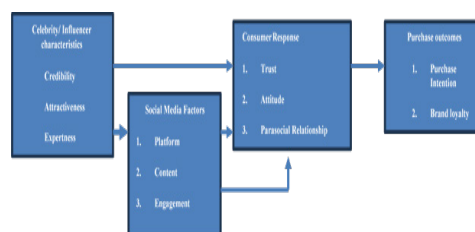


Figure (1) which illustrates proposed theoretical framework for social media celebrity endorsement in fashion marketing synthesizes the five theoretical perspectives and their relationships with consumer behaviour outcomes.

Methodology

Search Strategy

This systematic review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). A comprehensive search was conducted across multiple databases, including Scopus, Web

of Science, Google Scholar, EBSCO, ProQuest, and PubMed. The search strategy combined keywords related to social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube), celebrity endorsement (influencer marketing, celebrity endorser, social media influencer), the fashion industry (prêt-à-porter, ready-to-wear, masstige fashion brand), and consumer behavior (purchase intention, brand loyalty, consumer engagement).

The search string used was ‘social media’ OR ‘Instagram’ OR ‘Facebook’ OR ‘TikTok’ OR ‘YouTube’ AND ‘celebrity endorsement’ OR ‘influencer marketing’ OR ‘social media influencer’, AND ‘fashion’ OR ‘prêt-à-porter’ OR ‘ready-to-wear’ OR ‘apparel’

AND ‘purchase intention’ OR ‘brand loyalty’ OR ‘consumer behavior’ OR ‘consumer engagement’ The search was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published in English between January 2015 and March 2026.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The Conditions for inclusion or exclusion were that the research examined the support of social media influencers or influencer marketing within the fashion and clothing sector, employing either empirical, quantitative, or a combination of both methodologies. Peer-reviewed journals must publish articles and make them available in their entirety to the public. Studies that did not use social media, qualitative research that was the only item, book chapters, meeting papers, articles published in languages other than English, and pieces produced before 2015 were excluded.

Study Selection Process

Identification: A total of 831 papers were identified through database searches.

Deduplication: 225 duplicate records were removed, leaving 606 unique papers.

Title/abstract screening: A total of 606 papers were screened by title and abstract, with 381 excluded as irrelevant, leaving 225 papers for further review.

Full-text assessment: 225 papers were assessed for eligibility through full-text review. A total of 152 studies were excluded for the following reasons.

- Not focused on fashion industry (n = 58)
- Not examining social media platforms (n = 34)
- Not peer-reviewed (n = 27)
- Conceptual/theoretical without empirical data (n = 33)

Final inclusion: Following the eligibility assessment, 73 studies met the inclusion criteria. A second-stage selection was then conducted to identify studies for in-depth analysis based on methodological quality, theoretical relevance, contextual fit to the fashion domain, and recency or citation impact. Based on this evaluation, the top 30 studies were selected for inclusion. The remaining 43 studies were excluded from the detailed analysis due to lower relevance or rigor but were retained for general reference.

Data Extraction and Analysis

Data were extracted from the 30 included studies using a standardized extraction form covering

Bibliographic information (authors, year, journal) à Study context (country, platform, fashion segment) à Methodology (design, sample size, data collection method, analysis technique) à Theoretical framework(s) à Key variables (independent, dependent, mediators, moderators) à Main findings à Limitations.

Thematic synthesis was used to analyse the extracted data which involved below listed steps

- Coding findings from each study
- Developing descriptive themes
- Generating analytical themes that address the research questions.
- Two researchers independently coded a subset of studies to ensure reliability, and discrepancies were resolved through discussion.

The quality assessment approach was based on multiple criteria, including methodological rigor, theoretical grounding, contextual relevance to the fashion domain, and recency or citation impacts. This approach is justified given the diversity of research designs and analytical methods in influencer marketing studies, which makes the use of a single, standardized checklist less suitable. Instead, a flexible, context-sensitive evaluation framework allows for a more comprehensive assessment of both scientific quality and practical relevance. This

method is consistent with prior systematic reviews in marketing and social media research, where multidimensional evaluation criteria have been commonly adopted. The inclusion of independent coding further strengthened the reliability and reduced potential bias in the study selection, thereby enhancing the overall validity of the review.

Findings

Descriptive Overview of Included Studies

The 30 studies looked at the years 2015 to 2026; however, they were mostly on the years following 2020. Covid'19 accelerated digital commerce, implying that research on influencer marketing has expanded rapidly. Most of the research was conducted in Asian countries, namely, Indonesia (n = 9), India (n = 4), and Thailand (n = 3). Three were from the Middle East, two from Sri Lanka, and four from the West.

Only one individual from TikTok and one from YouTube were examined in this study. Instagram was the most popular platform (n=22), followed by Social Media settings in general (n=6). Most studies used survey-based methodologies,

employing either multiple regression analysis (n=8) or structural equation modeling (SEM; n=18), with a predominance of quantitative techniques (n=26). Only three studies employed both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, and none of them did. Most studies were conducted on young adults or college students, and the number of participants in the sample ranged from 100 to 650.

The five theories were the Source Credibility Theory (n = 18), Theory of Planned Behavior (n=12), Parasocial Interaction Theory (n=11), and Social Comparison Theory (n= 5). Fourteen studies used several theories. Finally, the range of sample sizes reveals that most studies (40%) utilized groups with between 101 and 300 respondents, which is what one would expect from a scientific study that used SEM methodologies. However, the fact that several studies had relatively small groups (100 or fewer replies, or 20%) raises questions about the universality of the conclusions and the solidity of the statistics. These variations in sample size highlight the need to employ better ways to collect data in future studies on fashion consumer behavior and the effectiveness of celebrity marketing.

Table 1 Summary of the Characteristics of the 30 Included Studies

Category	Subcategory	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Publication Year	2020–2026 (Recent Growth Phase)	26	86.7%
	2015–2019	4	13.3%
Methodology	Quantitative	26	86.7%
	Mixed Methods	3	10.0%
	Qualitative	0	0.0%
	Not Specified	1	3.3%
Geography	Indonesia	9	30.0%
	India	4	13.3%
	Thailand	3	10.0%
	Middle East	3	10.0%
	Sri Lanka	2	6.7%
	Western Countries	4	13.3%
	Other/Not Specified	5	16.7%
Platform	Instagram	22	73.3%
	General Social Media	6	20.0%
	TikTok	1	3.3%
	YouTube	1	3.3%

Sample Size	≤100	6	20.0%
	101–300	12	40.0%
	301–600	8	26.7%
	>600	4	13.3%
Theory	Source Credibility Theory	18	60.0%
	Theory of Planned Behaviour	12	40.0%
	Parasocial Interaction	11	36.7%
	S-O-R Framework	8	26.7%
	Social Comparison Theory	5	16.7%
	Multiple Frameworks Used	14	46.7%

Key Empirical Findings

Influencer Credibility and Source Characteristics

Source Credibility Theory has been widely applied across 18 studies to explain how influencer characteristics shape consumer behavior, with trustworthiness (β range: 0.23 to 0.67), attractiveness (β range: 0.18 to 0.54), and expertise (β range: 0.15 to 0.48) identified as significant predictors of purchase intention and brand attitude. Among these, trustworthiness consistently emerges as the most influential factor, particularly when reinforced by familiarity and authenticity. Kapoor et al. (2018) confirm the significance of all three dimensions, while Schouten et al. (2020) highlight reliability as the strongest determinant of consumer response. However, influencer effectiveness varies by type and context; for example, celebrity influencers exert stronger attitudinal influence among Generation Z (Aw & Chuah, 2021), whereas micro-influencers, especially in terms of perceived reliability, play a more critical role in fostering brand loyalty in emerging markets such as Indonesia (Schouten et al., 2020). Overall, credibility effects are amplified when influencer content is perceived as authentic rather than commercially driven.

Parasocial Relationships and Consumer Engagement

Parasocial relationships (PSRs) serve as a central mechanism linking influencer attributes to consumer outcomes, with 11 studies demonstrating their impact on purchase intention, engagement, and loyalty. Evidence shows that PSRs mediate the influence of credibility on purchase intention (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019), with stronger effects

observed among highly involved consumers. Rather than directly driving loyalty, PSRs operate through customer engagement, which enhances brand loyalty (Ki & Kim, 2019). The strength of these effects is context-dependent: higher brand interaction intensifies PSR-driven purchase responses, while PSRs are particularly influential for non-expert influencers, suggesting that relational closeness can compensate for lower perceived expertise (Hwang and Zhang, 2018). In summary, credibility initiates trust and attention, whereas PSRs sustain deeper engagement and long-term relational outcomes (Ki et al., 2019; Ki et al., 2020).

Content Characteristics and Platform Dynamics

Content characteristics particularly informativeness, entertainment value, and visual aesthetics play a significant role in shaping consumer engagement and purchase intentions. Leban and Voyer (2020) identified these three dimensions as key drivers of content value, all of which positively influence consumer responses. Instagram's visual-centric architecture makes it especially effective for fashion marketing, with high-quality visual content strongly predicting engagement and purchase intention. Additionally, content consistency and aesthetic coherence enhance self-brand connection and purchase behavior, while the combined effect of high-quality content and celebrity endorsement further strengthens purchase intention, particularly in sustainable fashion contexts (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019).

Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms

The reviewed studies highlight several mediating and moderating mechanisms that shape the

effectiveness of influencer marketing. Attitudinal responses and trust function as key intervening variables linking influencer characteristics to behavioral outcomes (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Belanche et al., 2021). Other mediators, such as self-brand connection and brand perception, further explain how influencer communication translates into consumer action (Ferchaud et al., 2018). Simultaneously, moderating factors, including product involvement, fashion consciousness, and brand interaction, condition the strength of these relationships, with higher levels generally intensifying consumer responses (Tripopsakul et al., 2025; Lee & Watkins, 2016).

Brand-Related Outcomes

Beyond immediate purchase intentions, influencer marketing significantly shapes broader brand-related outcomes, including loyalty, perception, and knowledge. Brand loyalty emerges as a key indicator of long-term effectiveness, often driven by engagement-based relational pathways (Schouten et al., 2020). Purwanto (2021) suggests that influencer type also plays a role, with celebrity influencers generating stronger attitudinal and behavioral responses among younger audiences and significantly influencing purchase interest in specific fashion segments, such as hijab apparel. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that influencer marketing extends beyond transactional effects to build enduring consumer–brand relationships.

Figure 2 presents an integrated consumer behavior model showing the pathway from celebrity/influencer endorsement through psychological processes to purchase behavior, including key moderating factors.

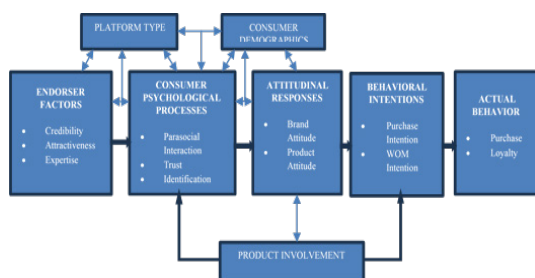


Figure 2 Celebrity Endorsement to Purchase Behaviour Model

Discussion

Theoretical Contribution

This review advances the understanding of influencer marketing in prêt-à-porter contexts by demonstrating that no single theoretical framework sufficiently explains consumer responses; rather, a multitheoretical integration is required. The findings collectively suggest that influencer marketing operates through a combination of credibility-based persuasion, attitudinal processing, relational dynamics, and motivational comparison mechanisms. In particular, the interplay between Source Credibility Theory and parasocial interaction theory highlights a shift from traditional persuasion models toward relationship-driven influence, where trust initiates attention and relational bonds sustain engagement over time.

A key theoretical contribution lies in positioning parasocial relationships as a defining characteristic that differentiates social media influencer marketing from traditional celebrity endorsements. Unlike conventional models that emphasize one-way communication, influencer marketing involves ongoing, interactive, and perceived personal relationships, necessitating the expansion of existing advertising theories to incorporate relational and engagement-based constructs.

The review further identifies content characteristics, such as authenticity, informativeness, and entertainment value, as critical boundary conditions shaping influencer effectiveness. Their integration into existing frameworks represents an important advancement, as prior theories have largely underemphasized content-level dynamics. Additionally, the findings reveal that consumer responses are contingent on contextual moderators, including product involvement, fashion consciousness, and cultural setting, indicating that the effects of influencer marketing are neither uniform nor universally generalizable. Importantly, the distinction between short-term behavioral outcomes and long-term relational outcomes suggests that credibility-driven mechanisms primarily influence purchase intention, whereas sustained engagement processes underpin brand loyalty, pointing to the need for more nuanced, multi-stage theoretical models.

Methodological Patterns and Gaps

The existing body of research is characterized by a strong reliance on quantitative, cross-sectional survey designs, most of which employ structural equation modelling. While this approach provides robust statistical validation of the proposed relationships, it offers limited insight into the underlying psychological and experiential processes driving consumer behavior. The predominance of cross-sectional data further constrains causal inference, raising questions about the temporal stability of influencer marketing effects. The sample composition presents another limitation, with a heavy dependence on student populations, thereby restricting generalizability to broader consumer segments. Moreover, the concentration of studies within specific geographic and platform contexts, particularly Asian markets and Instagram, limits the external validity of the current findings. This narrow focus also obscures platform-specific dynamics, as different social media environments may facilitate distinct forms of engagement and influence.

The variation in reported effect sizes across studies suggests the presence of unexamined moderating variables, indicating that the current models may be underspecified. Furthermore, the limited use of experimental, longitudinal, and qualitative methodologies constrains a deeper understanding of the causal mechanisms, temporal evolution, and interpretive dimensions of consumer responses.

Geographic and Cultural Considerations

The geographic concentration of studies in South and Southeast Asian markets reflects both the rapid expansion of social media-driven fashion consumption and the accessibility of digitally engaged populations. However, this concentration also highlights a critical gap in cross-cultural validation. Cultural differences in collectivism, celebrity perception, and social identity formation may significantly influence consumers' responses to influencer marketing. The stronger observed effects in emerging markets may be attributed to higher social media engagement, aspirational consumption patterns, and cultural prominence of celebrity figures. In contrast, more individualistic societies may

exhibit weaker relational attachments to influencers, potentially reducing the effectiveness of parasocial mechanisms. These patterns underscore the need for culturally adaptive theoretical models and context-specific marketing strategies rather than assuming the universal applicability of existing frameworks.

Implications for Theory and Practice

Theoretical Implications

These findings indicate the need to move beyond isolated theoretical frameworks toward more integrated models that capture the interaction between credibility, relational, and contextual mechanisms in influencer marketing. The varying roles of parasocial relationships across influencer types suggest that existing theories must be refined to better explain how expertise and relational closeness jointly shape consumer responses. Furthermore, the distinction between purchase intention and brand loyalty highlights that influencer marketing operates as a multi-stage process in which immediate behavioral outcomes differ from long-term relational effects. This calls for a stronger theoretical differentiation between short-term persuasion and sustained brand relationships. The observed cultural variability also challenges the universal applicability of predominantly Western-based theories, emphasizing the need for cross-cultural validation and theoretical expansion. Academically, future model development should incorporate mediating and moderating variables, such as trust, authenticity, and platform characteristics, to enhance explanatory power and contextual relevance.

Managerial Implications

From a practical standpoint, the findings provide clear guidance for influencer marketing strategies. Brands should prioritize trustworthiness and authenticity over follower count when selecting influencers because credibility plays a more significant role in shaping consumer behavior. Despite their smaller reach, micro-influencers are particularly effective in fostering engagement and long-term loyalty because of their stronger relational connections with their audiences. Content strategies should emphasize authenticity, allowing influencers creative freedom to maintain their unique voice, as overly commercialized messaging can

reduce consumer trust. Long-term collaborations are more effective than one-time campaigns in building parasocial relationships and sustaining engagement over time. Additionally, platform-specific strategies are essential; visually oriented platforms require high-quality aesthetic content, while short-form video platforms benefit from more informal and entertaining approaches. A balanced influencer portfolio that combines the reach of macro influencers with the engagement strength of micro influencers can help brands achieve both awareness and loyalty objectives.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This review has several limitations. The exclusive focus on English-language peer-reviewed journal articles may have excluded relevant research from other sources, potentially introducing publication bias. The geographic concentration of studies further limits the generalizability of the findings, while the rapidly evolving nature of social media raises concerns about the temporal relevance of earlier studies.

- Future research can further advance the understanding of influencer marketing by addressing emerging theoretical, methodological, and contextual gaps.
- Studies should prioritize cross-cultural comparative studies to identify universal versus context-specific mechanisms.
- Longitudinal designs are also needed to capture the evolution of influencer effects over time, while experimental approaches can strengthen causal inference.
- Expanding research on emerging platforms, such as TikTok and YouTube Shorts, is critical for understanding platform-specific dynamics.
- Qualitative and mixed-methods approaches can provide deeper insights into consumer experiences and meaning-making processes.
- Emerging areas such as sustainability-oriented influencer marketing and the role of artificial intelligence, including algorithmic content curation and virtual influencers, represent important directions for future research.
- Greater attention should also be paid to potential negative outcomes, such as influencer fatigue, skepticism, and adverse social comparison effects.

- From an academic perspective, future research should focus on developing and validating standardized measurement scales for key constructs, such as authenticity, parasocial interaction, and influencer credibility, to enhance the consistency and comparability of studies.
- Scholars should integrate multiple theoretical perspectives, including source credibility, parasocial interaction, and consumer engagement theories, to build more comprehensive and robust models that better explain influencer marketing effectiveness.

Conclusion

This systematic review synthesizes empirical research on social media celebrity endorsement and influencer marketing in the prêt-fashion industry, addressing three research questions: dominant theoretical frameworks, key influencer and content characteristics, and methodological patterns and gaps. The key findings highlight that source Credibility Theory and Parasocial Interaction Theory provide the most robust explanations for influencer marketing effects, with trustworthiness and parasocial relationships consistently predicting purchase intentions and brand loyalty. Micro influencers demonstrate superior engagement rates compared to mega influencers, and content authenticity is as important as visual quality of the content. Instagram dominates research and practice, whereas emerging platforms such as TikTok remain underexplored. Future research should focus on longitudinal designs, cross-cultural studies, behavioral data, qualitative and mixed methods, and examination of emerging platforms (TikTok, YouTube shorts). Attention to negative outcomes (influencer fatigue, skepticism, social comparison-induced envy) and sustainability-oriented influencer marketing is also needed. This review provides the first integrated synthesis of social media celebrity endorsements, specifically in the prêt-fashion sector, offering a foundation for future research and actionable insights for fashion marketers navigating the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

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