The influence of social media influencers on students' decisions to purchase events: a case study of students of Bournemouth University.

A dissertation

By

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In partial completion of the award of MSc Tourism Management

I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted is wholly the work of
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Abstract

This study examines the impact of social media influencers on students' purchasing behaviours, particularly their likelihood to purchase event tickets. The research focuses on five key aspects of influencer marketing: influencer-brand partnerships, influencer expertise, influencer attractiveness and likability, perceived trustworthiness of influencers, and the overall credibility of influencers while five research questions and five hypotheses were raised for the study. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study and the data for the study were gathered through questionnaire using google form. By analysing these factors, the study aims to understand how influencers can effectively drive ticket sales among student populations. The findings reveal significant relationships between each of these factors and students' purchasing decisions, providing valuable insights for event organizers and marketers seeking to leverage influencer marketing strategies. The results show the importance of selecting influencers who not only have a strong following but also possess qualities that resonate with their target audience, ultimately influencing students' intentions and behaviours. It was thud recommended among others that influencers should prioritize authenticity and transparency in their content creation efforts. This recommendation is directed towards influencers to ensure that they maintain genuine relationships with their followers by openly disclosing partnerships and creating authentic content. Marketers should recognize the diverse range of attributes that influence consumer behaviour when selecting influencers. This recommendation applies to marketers who need to consider factors beyond attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness when choosing influencers. Businesses should leverage data analytics tools to gain deeper insights into consumer preferences and behaviour in response to influencer content. This recommendation is for businesses and marketers who need to analyse metrics to refine their influencer marketing strategies.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The widespread usage of social media platforms has led to the integration of influencer marketing as a vital element in contemporary marketing strategies. The contemporary customer, who values authenticity, customization, and peer recommendations, frequently finds it difficult to connect with traditional advertising approaches. Influencer marketing has become a powerful tool for connecting companies with their target audiences in reaction to this change in consumer preferences.

Social media influencers have become powerful figures in marketing, capable of shaping consumer behaviours and preferences. Among young adults, particularly students, influencers play a pivotal role in decision-making processes. This study investigates how various attributes of social media influencers such as their partnerships with brands, expertise, attractiveness, likability, trustworthiness, and overall credibility affect students' likelihood to purchase event tickets. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for event organizers and marketers aiming to harness the influence of social media to boost attendance and engagement. By exploring the relationships between these influencer characteristics and students' purchasing intentions, this research aims to provide actionable insights into effective influencer marketing strategies in the context of event promotion.

1.1 Background to the Study

The marketing industry has experienced a significant shift due to the fast expansion of social media platforms. Social media marketing has become a key technique in digital marketing due to the growing user base on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter (Alrwashdeh et al., 2020; Nofal et al., 2022). Marketing managers have acknowledged social

media platforms as essential mediums for accomplishing diverse corporate objectives and strategies (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Influencers, who are regular people who have earned online recognition for their knowledge in specialized areas, have become critical in endorsing items or services during this era of digitalization (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Influencer marketing has become more popular as a key component of marketing communications strategies for businesses in many product categories (Aramburu & Pescador, 2019). Businesses strive to expand their consumer base and foster enduring relationships with customers by employing influencer marketing techniques (Aramburu & Pescador, 2019). Consumers typically place faith in and readily embrace the perspectives of influencers they choose to follow (Gomes, Marques, & Dias, 2022). The trust and acceptability of influencers have enabled them to become powerful players in customers' purchase decisions. The proliferation of influencers on social media platforms has opened up new avenues for companies to engage with their target audience in more authentic and impactful ways (Campbell & Farrell, 2020; Haenlein et al., 2020). It is becoming more and more crucial for marketing professionals and scholars to comprehend the determinants that impact the effectiveness of influencer marketing (Vrontis et al., 2021). Influencers' qualities, including their trustworthiness, experience, and the quality of the information they offer, heavily influence the efficiency of influencer marketing efforts (Vrontis et al., 2021).

Kurdi et al. (2022) discovered that these characteristics have a substantial impact on customers' brand attitudes and their intentions to make a purchase. Brand attitude is an important concept in the study of consumer behaviour because it has a direct influence on customers' intentions to purchase and their actual buying actions (Park, Jeon, & Sullivan, 2015; Singh & Banerjee, 2018). A favorable brand perception can result in higher sales, but an unfavorable perception might discourage prospective buyers and damage the brand's image (Reinikainen et al., 2021).

Within the domain of social media marketing, customer behaviour has experienced notable transformations in the process of making purchase choices (Jin et al., 2019). Modern customers exhibit a higher level of discernment and take into account several elements when evaluating advertising messages sent by marketers (Lamberton and Andrew, 2016; Teng et al., 2014). Social media influencers have emerged as influential individuals who impact consumer purchasing decisions, since consumers rely on platforms and influencer recommendations to make well-informed choices (Abdulláh et al., 2020; Casalóa et al., 2020).

Influencers possess a distinct capacity to establish emotional bonds with their audience by creating genuine, pertinent, and motivating material (Hudson and Thal, 2013; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). Aligned with brand values, their personalities may transform them into influential brand ambassadors, exerting an impact on the purchase intentions of their followers (Hudson and Thal, 2013; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017).

The impact of social media influencers on students' purchasing decisions for events has been a significant focus of research in the fields of marketing and consumer behaviour. Influencers have a significant impact on changing the preferences and decisions of students, especially among the younger age group that is actively using social media platforms. Their profound understanding of followers' interests and preferences, as well as their trustworthiness and ability to provide captivating material, positions them as significant individuals in influencing event attendance choices.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

In today's digital age, social media influencers have become powerful figures capable of shaping consumer preferences and driving their purchasing behaviour, particularly among students who are active users of social media platforms. However, while the impact of

influencers on consumer behaviour is widely acknowledged, there remains a need to understand the specific factors that contribute to their influence on students' decisions to attend events. This is the reason why this study tends to explore the relationship between social media influencers and students' decisions to attend and purchase events, by examining the various factors that contributes to this influence and its implications for businesses and marketers.

1.3   Aim and Objectives of the study

The primary aim of the study is to examine the influence of social media influencers on students' decisions to purchase events.". Specifically, the study

1. investigate the impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.
2. explore how the perceived expertise of influencers affects students' intention to purchase tickets.
3. investigate the impact of influencer attractiveness and likability on students' willingness to purchase tickets.
4. assess the influence of perceived trustworthiness and authenticity of influencers on students' likelihood of purchasing tickets.
5. measure the credibility of social media influencers and its impact on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

1.4   Research Questions

1. How do influencer-brand partnerships influence students' perceptions of event endorsements and their willingness to purchase tickets?
2. To what extent does the perceived expertise of influencers influence students' perceptions of event quality and relevance?

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3. How does the attractiveness and likability of influencers influence students' attitudes towards event endorsements?

4. How do students perceive the trustworthiness and authenticity of influencers, and how does this perception affect their willingness to purchase event tickets?

5. How does the credibility of influencers, encompassing expertise, trustworthiness, and authenticity, influence students' decisions to purchase event tickets?

1.5   Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

2. Expertise of influencers has no significant relationship with student's intention to purchase tickets.

3. Influencer attractiveness and likability has no significant relationship with students' willingness to purchase tickets.

4. There is no significant influence of perceived trustworthiness of influencers on students' likelihood of purchasing tickets.

5. Credibility of social media influencers has no significant relationship with students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

1.6 Structure of Thesis

Chapter one of the study provided the background, including the introduction, rationale, aims and objectives, and research questions. Chapter two reviewed relevant literature related to the study. Chapter three detailed the methodology used for the research. Chapter four presented and discussed the findings, while chapter five concluded the study and offered recommendations

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews literature that relates to variables found in social-media influencers and students' decisions to purchase events. The literature was carried out under conceptual framework, empirical review and as well as theoretical framework.

2.1   Conceptual Framework

2.1.1   Concept and Meaning of Social-media

Digital networks and programmes that make it easier for people to share ideas and information are referred to as social-media (Tufts, 2023). Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are prominent social-media networks (Dollarhide, 2023). The landscape of social-media is rapidly changing, and during the past decade, the prominence of social-media networks has surged dramatically. The global number of social-media users reached 4.76 billion in January 2023, according to DataReportal's 2022 data, and this number continues to increase. This is the reason behind the increased popularity of social-media marketing. Social-media marketing refers to the use of social-media networks by businesses for the purpose of promoting and selling their products and services. Nowadays, several firms employ influencer marketing as a popular approach to promoting their goods and services to clients.

Approximately over two decades ago, namely in 1997, a platform called Six Degrees introduced the initial authentic social networking website. To be more exact, Six Degrees was the first platform to encompass all the essential elements of a social networking site. As per Ortiz-Ospina (2019), these attributes enable users to generate and distribute content, engage with other users, and maintain their own accounts. Undoubtedly, social-media has become an integral component of our everyday existence. The DataReportal (2022), written by Simon

Kemp (2022), states that the typical individual uses social media every day for two hours and twenty-one minutes. Despite its seemingly insignificant nature, it is important to consider that this calculation encompasses all users of social-media. Now, let's analyse the everyday duration of time that Youth students allocate to social-media. Teenagers between the ages of 13 and 18 spent eight hours and forty-nine minutes a day on social media on average, according to The Healthy Journal (2023).

Social networking offers several benefits. Individuals have the ability to engage in communication with their acquaintances and relatives through the use of social-media networks. Social-media enables the effortless establishment and maintenance of connections with others who share common interests, regardless of geographical location. It is also straightforward to search for and obtain up-to-date information. Moreover, the process of creating a social networking account is rather straightforward. The only essential tool required is your smartphone. Although social-media has its advantages and serves as a useful tool, research suggests that there are also disadvantages associated with its use. Studies suggest that social-media usage might have a detrimental impact on mental well-being. According to Robinson and Smith (2023), there is an increasing prevalence of depression, addiction, anxiety, and low self-esteem. The World Health Organisation (2022) states that false information on social media may be upsetting and detrimental to one's general and mental health. The deleterious impact of social-media on physical well-being is escalating. According to Gambini (2022), using electronics for extended periods of time while seated might cause back discomfort and headaches, among other health problems.

2.1.1 The notion of an influencer on social media

According to Peltola (2019), social media influencers (SMIs) are regular people who have set up social media accounts with the purpose of exerting influence over the behaviour of their

followers. They are social-media users who have gained renown for their expertise and proficiency in a specific subject. These individuals possess substantial and devoted audiences who closely scrutinise their perspectives (Stubb, 2019) due to their consistent dissemination of personal opinions and life narratives on their preferred social-media networks, often centred around subjects pertaining to products and brands (Gillin, 2008).

De Veirman and colleagues (2017) used the term "social-media influencers" to describe those who have acquired a substantial number of followers on social-media. Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, and Freberg (2011) argue that these individuals form a distinct group of opinion leaders or impartial endorsers who use social-media to sway the opinions of their audience. These are social-media content makers that employ blogging, vlogging, or short-form content production to share information about certain companies in an effort to garner notoriety and a following. Some networks that fall within this category are Instagram, Twitter, SnapChat, and Facebook. They share features with more conventional opinion leaders, including being responsive to messages, embracing the position of discussant, and commanding respect and influence from their followers. Furthermore, they are esteemed as dependable experts on style and decorum in several domains (Laurell, 2014).

2.1.2 Influencers' influence on consumers and brands

Social networking sites are increasingly becoming vital elements of a communication plan and a valuable asset for the average consumer. As stated by Mangold and Faulds (2009), social-media will have a substantial impact on integrated marketing strategies in the future. This is because firms are recognising that customers are not only engaging directly with brands on social-media but also discussing brands with each other. These findings indicate that social-media influencers play a significant role in the advertising and marketing industries, where the power of online word-of-mouth is immeasurable (Stubb, 2019).

In reality, influencers serve as the crucial connection between a firm and its customers. It is well recognised that positive customer reviews, particularly those found on social-media networks, may have a significant impact on influencing others to buy a product (Emad, 2018). Influencers possess a substantial social-media following and reputation due to their transparency and candour with customers (Buyer, 2016). This is the factor that contributes to the trend's popularity and effectiveness. Influencers possess a distinctive capacity to connect with certain communities that were previously inaccessible, whereas conventional marketing usually focuses on broader audiences (Ledbetter, 2017).

Although a corporation may not have complete authority over its online communication, the authentic voice of an influencer and the trust that customers have in that individual become deeply embedded in the brand through the interactive dialogue facilitated by social-media networks. The reputation that social-media influencers help businesses develop fosters corporate loyalty and facilitates direct relationships with important consumers (Matic and Booth, 2011; Glucksman, 2017).

The extent of an influencer's network may be indicated by the number of followers they possess (De Veirman et al., 2017). Greater audience engagement leads to increased interest in the account and its content (ibid.). Companies are interested in this because they believe that an influencer becomes more competent as their number of followers increases (Conick, 2018). Influencers with a huge following are regarded as popular by clients (De Veirman et al., 2017). Customers find it easier to adhere to and heed the recommendations of influencers due to the pervasive "popularity" that has been deeply rooted in their thoughts (Cialdini, 2017). Marketing communications and electronic word-of-mouth spread rapidly across broad audiences (De Veirman et al., 2017).

However, possessing a substantial number of followers does not automatically ensure that an influencer is perceived as trustworthy by their audience or is a viable match for organisations (Moore, Yang, and Kim, 2018; Conick, 2018). In addition, it fails to generate engagement from followers, as seen by the lack of likes, shares and comments (De Veirman et al., 2017). Conik (2018) and Hall (2016) have found that brand engagement tends to be greater when using microinfluencers compared to big influencers. According to Hall (2016), 82% of individuals would follow the guidance of microinfluencers. In addition, while having a substantial number of followers is important, it does not ensure their active and dedicated participation, which would be advantageous for companies (Hall, 2016). This principle also applies to the degree of popularity among influencers. This does not establish the influencer's standing as an opinion leader. De Veirman et al. (2017) found that these factors have a substantial influence on consumer attitudes and conduct.

2.1.3 The notion of influencer marketing

Social-media and digital environments have significantly transformed the methods through which advertising engages with customers (Kumar & Gupta, 2016). Businesses recognise that partnering with social-media influencers may assist them in reaching untapped audiences who have the potential to become customers (Childers et al., 2018). Influencers marketing, as described by Brown and Hayes (2008), refers to the strategic practice of finding and using prominent individuals to assist in a brand's marketing endeavours by persuading potential consumers. It might serve as a valuable method of electronic word-of-mouth.

Followers may engage in the everyday experiences, thoughts, emotions, and behaviours of influencers through social-media. Brand marketers engage with influencers to incentivize them to endorse their goods through various means such as providing product samples for evaluation, organising exclusive events for their participation, or offering direct compensation. The

objective of this technique is to enhance the recognition and image of the brand among the extensive audience of influencers. Influencer marketing refers to a contemporary kind of advertising (De Veirman et al., 2017). Influencer marketing, as stated by the authors of the book Influencer Marketing for Dummies, is the strategic practice of convincing well-known online personalities to share sponsored material, including brand messages, with their followers (Sammis, Lincoln, & Pomponi, 2016).

Influencer marketing stands out due to its emphasis on the active participation of real individuals. The Internet, especially social-media networks, has empowered individuals to become experts or build influential groups. Entities such as media firms, politicians, athletes, huge brands, and periodicals are no longer the exclusive wielders of influence (Sammis, Lincoln, & Pomponi, 2016).

Influencer marketing is based on the idea that when an influencer spreads information, their audience is motivated to engage in a certain course of action. A minuscule action might entail the straightforward act of attentively seeing and memorising a brand name, which has the potential to lead to brand recognition, familiarity, and further acquisition in the future. An action can occur immediately, like commenting on a sponsored blog article or spreading the word about an influencer's message to their network on other social media platforms. Sometimes, a viewer could be persuaded to click the "Buy Now" link in order to get an item that has been carefully examined. Each of these routines might be improved by an influencer marketing campaign. In 2016, Sammis, Lincoln, and Pomponi worked together. One such example is the watch company Daniel Wellington, which often partners with social media influencers to increase brand awareness and promote favourable word-of-mouth.

2.1.4 Event Marketing

Event marketing is gaining recognition as a promotion accelerator, in contrast to traditional marketing communication methods. Traditional media is experiencing diminishing effectiveness due to excessive clutter, escalating expenditures, and declining efficiency. This has led to opportunities for event marketing (Gupta, 2003). Event marketing allows a firm to strategically target an audience and stand out from traditional advertising by creating or enhancing an image through a connection with a specific event. This approach not only reinforces the product or service but also aims to increase sales. Event marketing is a kind of communication that aims to engage the intended audience via experiential events, with the goal of promoting a company's marketing message (Drengner, Gaus, & Jahn, 2008). Event marketing is seen as a very successful technique in the modern company landscape. The marketing strategy and methods have undergone significant transformations, as newer networks are being utilised to advertise the brand and its product offers to clients (Kottler & Keller, 2012). According to Jackson (2013), utilising events as a means of managing relationships is considered a strategic manoeuvre. Jackson's study explores how certain events might cultivate ties with stakeholders. According to Braggs (2006), events provide marketers with an excellent opportunity to enhance their relationships with significant consumers. Goldblatt (2002) suggests that event managers should utilise word-of-mouth recommendations and consumer loyalty to enhance their customer connections. Additionally, they should employ event marketing strategies to develop a robust rapport with the target audience.

2.1.5 Promoting sponsored content using marketing strategies

Influencer marketing is commonly executed through influencer endorsements and paid content (Evans et al., 2017). Sponsored content, as defined by Carolina, refers to anything that is supported by a brand or corporation and disseminated by social-media influencers. Influencer

endorsement is the practice of using social media influencers' reputable standing to spread business content. According to Mutum and Wang (2010), sponsored posts are composed of user-generated content that contains message endorsing a sponsored brand. Bloggers engage in the analysis and critique of many products and services, expressing their opinions and perspectives. Examples include food, restaurants, beauty products, or virtual activities. Marketers frequently provide bloggers a direct monetary incentive or an indirect reward, such free gifts, to incentivize the creation of sponsored content (Lu, Chang, & Chang, 2014).

Influencers that comply with influencer marketing regulations are required to declare any sponsorships in their posts if they have a personal, professional, family, or financial connection with a firm. The source of this information is the Federal Trade Commission for the year 2019. Written disclaimers or text labels used in sponsored media are known as sponsorship disclosures. Their main purpose is to notify viewers that a message is promotional (Cain, 2011).

2.1.6 Characteristics of the Young student

Students are currently experiencing a multitude of rapid changes in their lives. According to Benson and Elder (2011), they are experiencing an increase in autonomy and self-esteem. Youth student are progressively desiring independence and authority over their own lives. Adults possess more extensive chances than teenagers to exercise independent judgement, especially in matters pertaining to personal issues (Wray-Lake, Crouter, and McHale, 2010; Daddis & Smetana, 2005). Young students could have to start managing money from sources other than their family, which could relieve them of some of their parents' financial supervision (Palan et al., 2010).

Research has indicated that young students are driven by a need for notoriety and style, are aware of their own image, exhibit a strong sense of inquisitiveness, and want to observe and

document even the smallest changes in fashion. Li (2013) For them, prioritising a satisfying life that affords them flexibility and freedom in their lifestyle is of utmost importance. As such, they may be categorised as ardent supporters of the newest goods to hit the market.

Youthful consumers exhibit a greater inclination towards curiosity, seeking to understand the causes behind events, the mechanics of processes, and the possibilities for future actions. Advancements in information technology have expanded people's access to information about items, enabling them to make more informed purchasing decisions. According to Animalz (2018), 23% of millennials like to conduct research before making any purchases. A further notable characteristic is the preference of young students to make online purchases rather than visiting brick-and-mortar establishments. Based on a survey, a majority of their purchases, namely sixty percent, are currently conducted through online networks. The main factor contributing to this is the presence of user reviews, which are submitted by individuals with diverse personal tastes, technical expertise, product knowledge, and usage scenarios. Consequently, this data can be significant for a broad spectrum of customers (Chen & Xie, 2008), with pricing ranking second in importance (Digital Commerce, 2019).

2.1.7 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention, which has been extensively studied in the marketing field of marketing, is closely associated with customers' purchasing behaviours (Ali et al., 2020). Furthermore, several theoretical frameworks (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) have been used to elucidate customers' purchase intentions and the associated factors. According to these beliefs, purpose explains why individuals are eager to accept various actions. When buyers initially see the goods, it triggers their inclination to make a purchase, ultimately leading to their actual acquisition of the item (Haque et al., 2015). The literature has identified two distinct categories of customers in the context of online shopping. The first category of customers is referred to

as goal-oriented consumers, as they research things carefully before making a purchase. The second category consists of people who make purchases without any preexisting biases or assumptions (Brata et al., 2017). Within the scope of this study, we use the term "online buy intention" to describe young individuals' inclination to make online purchases.

2.2   Empirical Overview

According to a poll conducted by Sann-Ryu (2020), clients consistently choose to make online purchases on a specific social-media platform due to its numerous perceived advantages. Customers are attracted to that platform because of their strong affinity, ability to establish a deep bond, and sense of connection to it. Multiple studies indicate that a consumer's engagement with a company on social-media has an impact on their likelihood to make future purchases, influenced by the information and content that the brand publishes. This engagement eventually fosters the establishment of trust. The purpose and application of social-media marketing activities across a number of enterprises and industries has been the subject of research.

According to a study conducted by Ardy Wibowo (2020), social-media marketing efforts and customer experiences influence the quality of connections and modify consumer behaviour. Social-media consistently exerts a substantial influence on individuals' lives and facilitates businesses in effectively connecting with their customers, hence promoting the formation of relationships (Kietzmann, 2011).

Elisabeta's (2014) research indicates that women have a higher propensity than men to make online purchases, with a specific preference among individuals aged 25 to 29, especially for technology products. Over 50% of the population frequently accesses social-media networks, with the majority of individuals possessing Facebook profiles. The quality of materials

provided by businesses has an impact on customers' perceptions and knowledge of a brand (Amal Dabbous, 2019). As per Venus Jin's (2019) study, consumers have a tendency to gravitate towards influencers who are trustworthy and capable of providing precise information. Social-media influencer marketing has many risks because it may mislead the audience if the information or content does not meet the stated standards or criteria (Colin Campbell, 2020).

Nowadays, companies may communicate with consumers through a number of social-media networks and forums. The interaction between corporations and their clients is developing, with social-media and public relations playing a crucial role. Businesses structure their consumer marketing communications across multiple product categories, identifying informed influencers who can reach a larger audience. This will also lead to a change in the customers' buying patterns as well (Sama, 2019).

Ryu (2020) highlights that consumers develop strong bonds with social-media networks, leading to continued engagement and purchases through the platform. This suggests that students, who are heavy users of social-media, may be influenced by the content and information shared by influencers on these networks when making decisions about purchasing event tickets.

Wibowo (2020) emphasizes the impact of social-media marketing activities on customer experience and behaviour. As students engage with brands and influencers on social-media, the quality of their experience and the relationships formed may influence their decisions regarding event purchases.

Ioanăs (2014) reveals the preference for online buying among young adults, particularly for electronic goods, and the frequent use of social-media networks among this demographic. This

suggests that social-media influencers could play a significant role in shaping the awareness and purchasing decisions of students, especially if they are active on networks like Facebook.

Jin (2019) underscores the importance of trust and authenticity in influencer marketing. Students are more likely to follow influencers who they perceive as trustworthy, indicating that influencers with genuine connections and authentic content may have a greater impact on students' event purchasing decisions.

Sama (2019) discusses how companies strategically select influencers who can engage larger audiences and change buying behaviour. This implies that influencers with expertise and a strong presence on social-media networks could effectively sway students' decisions regarding event purchases. Overall, these studies highlight the multifaceted role of social-media influencers in influencing students' decisions to purchase events, emphasizing factors such as trust, authenticity, expertise, and the quality of the relationship between consumers and brands.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The basis of this study is the source credibility theory, initially proposed by Hovland et al. (1954), which examines the impact of social-media influencers on students' purchasing decisions regarding events. The concept posits that an influencer's credibility traits, such as their physical attractiveness, trustworthiness, and knowledge, exert a substantial influence on how their followers perceive and embrace the content they offer (Ohanian, 1990). These attributes are significant in determining the efficacy of celebrity endorsements because individuals are more inclined to be persuaded by a product or brand they perceive as reliable. Evans et al. (2017), Sokolova and Kefi (2020), Wang et al. (2017), and Weismueller et al. (2020) repeatedly demonstrated a correlation between online purchase intention and the trustworthiness of influencers. This correlation aligns with the purpose of the current study. These studies emphasise that attributes such as attractiveness, reliability, and expertise

significantly impact the probability of celebrity endorsement, as defined by Ohanian (1990) in terms of influencer traits. Choosing dependable influencers for product endorsements is essential, as marketing specialists have emphasised that an influencer's attributes and attractiveness greatly affect their capacity to stimulate sales (Saima & Khan, 2021; Bergkvist and Zhou (2016), Makgosa (2010), and Winter and Krämer, 2014).

Attractiveness	**Trustworthiness**	**Expertise**
Attractive	Dependable	Expert
Classy	Honest	Experinced
Beautiful	Reliable	Knowledgeable
Elegant	Trustworthy	Qualitifed
Sexy	Sincrere	Skilled
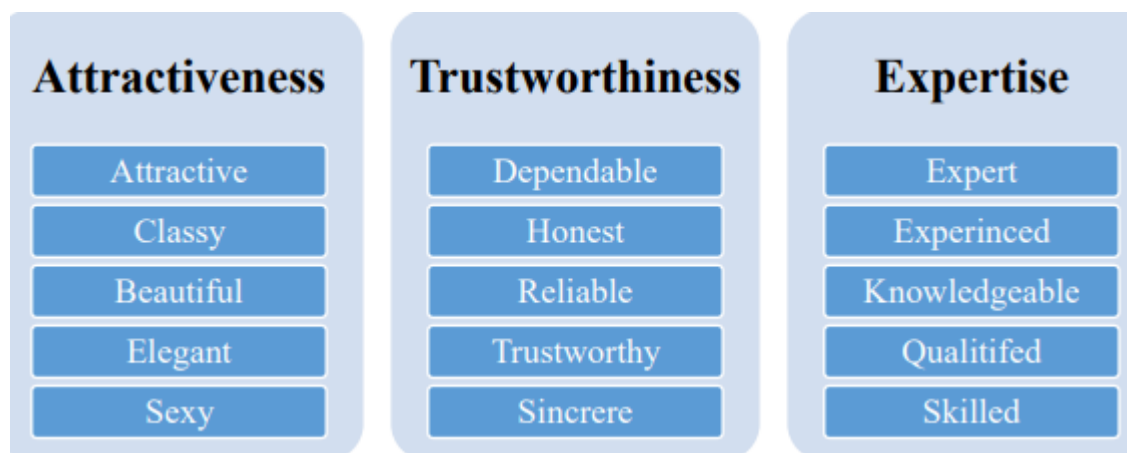
Figure 1: The Three Dimensions of Influencer Credibility (Adapted from: Ohanian, 1990)

<center>**CHAPTER THREE**</center>

<center>**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**</center>

3.0   Introduction

The chapter will outline the research approach for collecting the necessary data for the study. The researcher will provide an in-depth explanation of the study's methodology and arrangement. This chapter concludes by mentioning the limits and ethical issues. Sim and Wright (2000) define methodology as the overall approach taken in a piece of research. It specifically refers to the broad guidelines for inquiry that form the foundation of a study's underlying theoretical and philosophical presumptions.

3.1 Research Philosophy and approach

This chapter's central idea is the research philosophy that underpins the investigation. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) describe research philosophy as the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. We used a positivist approach for this investigation. According to Bell, Bryman, and Harley (2019), positivism is an objectivist-based epistemological position. Trustworthy knowledge can only come from observable occurrences, as stated by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009). Sekaran and Bougie (2016) argue that researchers can use positivist philosophy to discover truth, predict outcomes, and exert control over these truths.

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), the positivist method involves operating within an observable social reality and producing generalizations that resemble laws of nature, much like those found in the scientific and physical sciences. In a positivist paradigm, gathering data frequently entails using survey techniques or observation of phenomena (Bell, Bryman, and Harley, 2019). Furthermore, positivist research aims to be impartial toward values while

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keeping the researcher apart from the facts (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), positivism uses a logical research methodology, concentrating on theories that are testable experimentally within predefined research frameworks. "The logic of positivist social science is deductive, mirroring that of experimental research in the physical sciences," Bell, Bryman, and Harley (2019). This dissertation's study follows a deductive methodology, starting with the well-established idea of source trustworthiness put forth by Ohanian (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009).

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), explanatory research examines the causal links between variables. This method aims to clarify the relationships between different elements in a particular situation or issue (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). The purpose of the current study is to look at how social media influencers affect students' choices to attend Bournemouth events. It also aims to investigate how students' consumption patterns are shaped by social media influencers. Since the goal of the study is to shed light on the links between variables like purchase intention, conspicuous consumption, and credibility, it is consistent with an explanatory approach.

3.2   Quantitative Research: A Deductive Perspective

There is an intrinsic connection between a deductive technique and a quantitative approach (Greener, 2008). According to Bryman and Bell (2015), an objectivist perspective on social reality, a deductive reasoning process, the collection of numerical data, and a natural science methodology are the hallmarks of quantitative research. Numerical data is the foundation of quantitative research, which also stresses the application of statistical analysis to investigate correlations between variables (Dudovskiy, 2019). Since the current study uses positivism and a deductive approach and seeks to investigate relationships that can be tested statistically,

quantitative data collection and analysis are considered the most appropriate approaches (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009; Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2019).

3.2.1 Justification for using Quantitative research

Quantitative research has numerous benefits, making it an invaluable tool for scholars. First of all, it makes use of statistical data analysis, which conserves resources and time (Bryman, 2001). By emphasizing numerical data and figures, quantitative research improves the study's scientific rigor (Bryman, 2001). Researchers can expedite the process of interpreting results by employing statistical software such as SPSS to evaluate data in an effective manner (Gorard, 2001; Connolly, 2007).

The scientific foundation of quantitative research makes generalization easier. Larger groups can benefit from extrapolating findings from interactions with one group (Williams and May, 1998). For example, examining how students are taught to solve problems in a particular classroom might reveal larger social trends and patterns (Shank and Brown, 2007; Cohen and Morrison, 2011).

Replicability is another important advantage of quantitative research. The utilization of hypothesis testing guarantees well-defined protocols and goals, facilitating the uniform replication of research (Lichtman, 2013). According to Shank and Brown (2007), this quality raises the legitimacy of study findings and encourages trust in their dependability.

Furthermore, control and study groups may be used in quantitative research, which makes it easier to compare various variables (Johnson and Christensen, 2012). By comparing results across groups, researchers may evaluate the efficacy of different treatments or instructional strategies.

Last but not least, quantitative research minimizes biases in data collection and analysis by encouraging researcher detachment (Denscombe, 1998). Researchers can guarantee

impartiality in their readings and findings by keeping a distance from participants (Muijs, 2004; Lichtman, 2006; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2009). Additionally, by maintaining respondent anonymity, this detachment contributes to the validity of the study findings.

3.3   Research Design

To carry out this study effectively, a strong research strategy is necessary in order to carry out this study in an effective manner. Yin (2003) states that researchers can employ any technique for explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory research. For this investigation, researchers typically choose to use a survey in conjunction with a deductive approach. Surveys are well-known and frequently used in business research, especially when addressing who, what, and how many questions (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Participants in a survey answer questions on specific subjects, and researchers then describe their responses (Jackson, 2011).

Surveys efficiently gather large volumes of data from a large population (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Descriptive and inferential statistics can be used to examine the quantitative data gathered through this tactic. Furthermore, survey data is essential for clarifying the connections between variables and offers insightful information for additional research (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009).

Therefore, we consider the survey approach the most suitable for this investigation due to its effectiveness in gathering data and ability to produce quantitative insights into variable correlations.

In addition, this study will take a mono-method quantitative approach, producing numerical data using a single data gathering method. The reliability and validity of the study's conclusions are increased by this simplified technique, which guarantees consistency and clarity in the data collection and analysis procedures.

3.4   Data Collection Method

The choice of a proper data-gathering technology plays a key role in research methodology. Although there are a number of quantitative methods available but the questionnaire is the most well-known and often-used tool in the survey approach (Donley and Grauerholz, 2012; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009; Dudovskiy, 2019). One benefit of using questionnaires is that they can quickly and effectively collect a lot of data, especially when standard questions are used (Robson, 2002). Compared to qualitative approaches like in-depth interviews, they are especially well-suited for explanatory investigations and demand less expertise and sensitivity (Jankowicz, 2005).

Students who are active on Instagram are the target audience for this self-administered internet-mediated quiz. This strategy eliminates the time limits related to conventional data collection methods and guarantees accessibility to the student population because the study is checking their decision to purchase event (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Four short sections will make up the questionnaire's framework, which aims to keep respondents interested and avoid tiredness.

3.4.1   Questionnaire

The questionnaire will begin with a brief introduction and details on ethical approval before moving on to demographic data in order to weed out individuals who are not qualified. We gathered demographic data such as age, education, gender, and work status in the following section to analyse respondents' judgments across demographic groups.

The last section covers the factors and goals of the research. Social media influencers' impact on students' event purchase decisions, the key elements of their effectiveness, and the characteristics of Bournemouth students most influenced by them are explored. The study

tested the questionnaire to make sure it is clear and reduces misunderstandings. The questionnaire items were inspired and taken from the following literatures:

Measurements of study construct Expertise (Chetioui, et al. (2019) and Ohanian (1990)., Attractiveness (Wiedmann and Mettenheim (2020) and Jansom and Pongsakornrungsilp (2021), Trustworthiness (Ohanian (1990) and Wiedmann and Mettenheim (2020), Purchasing Behaviour (Chetioui, et al., (2019), Attitude towards the brand (Chetioui, et al., 2019; Belanche, et al., 2021) Google Forms is a cost-effective application that simplifies the conversion of data into Excel spreadsheets. This technology will be used to assist in data collection.

3.5   Data Analysis

The statistical program SPSS was used to analyse the gathered data and identify any causal links between the variables (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). The frequency counts and percentage where used to analyse the demographic information of the respondents. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyse the data collected for all the hypotheses stated. The validity and trustworthiness of the study's conclusions are guaranteed by this methodical approach to data collection and analysis.

3.6   Ethical Consideration

Research projects broadly classify ethical concerns into five categories: participant damage, privacy invasion, lack of informed consent, discrimination, and voluntariness (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Hammersley and Traianou, 2012). The researchers closely adhered to the University of Bournemouth's ethical principles to ensure this study complies with ethical standards.

Participants can choose to stop participating at any time and are encouraged to contact the researcher or supervisor with any questions or concerns. Before the research commences, participants will receive crucial information about the questionnaire and the study. They will get assurances that participation is entirely optional and that there will be no repercussions if they decide to withdraw their agreement at any point. To mitigate any ethical difficulties, participants will have to agree to these agreements before the research can begin (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

To protect participant confidentiality, the researcher will handle all gathered information anonymously. Only the researcher will have access to the participant's personal information, and their names will not be linked to their answers. With this precaution, participants' privacy will be safeguarded, and their data will be kept private for the duration of the study. This study aimed to preserve the integrity of the research while giving participants' rights and well-being top priority by abiding by certain ethical principles and standards.

3.7   Limitation of the Study

Although the goal of this research is to provide insightful information on how social media influencers impact students' decisions to purchase events, it is important to recognize that there may be limitations that restrict the study's breadth and depth.

The one-method approach used, quantitative research with a questionnaire, restricts the study. Although this method works well for finding correlations between variables and emphasizing trends, it might not fully represent the intricate interplay between the experiences and viewpoints of participants (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009; Beiske, 2002). Comparatively, qualitative research aims to provide a thorough grasp of people's views and histories by delving into the depth of their experiences within their unique situations (Spencer et al., 2003).

The study might be able to get around this restriction by using a mixed-methods strategy that combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Researchers can triangulate data from several sources using mixed methods' comprehensive framework, which leads to a more thorough knowledge of the studied phenomenon (Greener, 2008; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). With this method, researchers would be able to delve more deeply into the underlying causes and incentives behind students' decisions to buy events, which would enhance the study and provide insightful information that goes beyond the quantitative results.

<div align="center">

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

</div>

4.1   Introduction

This section provides the findings and discussion on the influence of social media influencers on students' decisions to purchase events using the students of Bournemouth University as a case study. The demographic information was presented with frequency and percentage table, the research questions were answered with mean and standard deviations while the hypotheses were tested with regression analysis using analysis of variance (ANOVA) as presented below.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	98	48.3
Male	90	44.3
Prefer not to say	15	7.4
Age range		
Below 20 years	25	12.3
21-30 years	67	33.0
31-40years	80	39.4
41 years and above	31	15.3
Academic Level		
Diploma	34	16.7
Undergraduate	48	23.6
Bachelors'	43	21.2
Masters'	58	28.6
PhD	20	9.9
Employment Status		
Self Employed	56	27.6
Employed part-time	53	26.1
Student	66	32.5
Unemployed	22	10.8
Other (please specify)	6	3.0
Household Income Annually		
Less than £20,000	75	36.9
£20,000 - £40,000	56	27.6

£40,000 - £60,000	27	13.3
£60,000 - £80,000	25	12.3
£80,000 and above	20	9.9
Ethnicity		
White	90	44.3
Black or African American	44	21.7
Asian	34	16.7
Hispanic or Latino	22	10.8
Other (please specify)	13	6.4
Total	203	100.0

The demographic information presented in Table 1 encompasses various aspects of the surveyed population, providing insights into their gender distribution, age range, academic level, employment status, household income, and ethnicity.

Gender distribution reveals a slight predominance of females, comprising 48.3% of the sample, while males account for 44.3%. A notable portion, 7.4%, preferred not to disclose their gender.

Regarding age, the majority falls within the range of 21-40 years, with 33.0% aged 21-30 years and 39.4% aged 31-40 years. Those below 20 years constitute 12.3%, while individuals aged 41 years and above comprise 15.3% of the respondents.

In terms of academic attainment, the sample exhibits a diverse educational background, with the highest proportion holding a Master's degree (28.6%), followed closely by Undergraduates (23.6%) and Bachelor's degree holders (21.2%). Diplomas represent 16.7%, while 9.9% hold a Ph.D.

Employment status indicates a varied workforce, with students forming the largest segment at 32.5%, followed by self-employed individuals (27.6%) and those employed part-time (26.1%). Unemployed individuals constitute 10.8%, with a small percentage (3.0%) categorized as 'Other.'

Household income distribution shows a range of income brackets, with the highest proportion earning less than £20,000 annually (36.9%). Income brackets of £20,000 - £40,000, £40,000 - £60,000, and £60,000 - £80,000 represent 27.6%, 13.3%, and 12.3% respectively, while those earning £80,000 and above constitute 9.9%.

Ethnicity displays a diverse representation, with the majority being White (44.3%), followed by Black or African American (21.7%), Asian (16.7%), and Hispanic or Latino (10.8%). A small percentage (6.4%) identifies with other ethnicities.

Overall, the data reflects a heterogeneous population in terms of demographic characteristics, highlighting the importance of considering various factors when analysing and interpreting the findings of the study.

4.2   Response to Research Questions Using Descriptive Statistic

Table 2: Influencer brand partnership

SN	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I do trust brands advertised by social media influencers I follow	203	2.94	1.320
2	Social events recommended by brand influencers are more reliable	203	3.35	1.227
3	I have positive perception about brands endorsed by influencers	203	3.33	1.209
4	I have favorable opinions about the brands advertised by social media influencers	203	3.52	1.092

Table 2 provides insight into the credibility of influencer brand partnerships, gauging respondents' attitudes and perceptions toward brands endorsed by social media influencers.

The mean scores offer a glimpse into the average level of agreement or trust among the surveyed individuals regarding each item.

For Item 1, the data suggests a moderate level of trust, with respondents indicating that they do trust brands advertised by social media influencers they follow, as evidenced by a mean score of 2.94 and a standard deviation of 1.320.

Item 2 reveals a slightly higher level of trust, with respondents expressing the belief that social events recommended by brand influencers are more reliable, illustrated by a mean score of 3.35 and a standard deviation of 1.227.

Similarly, Item 3 indicates a positive perception among respondents regarding brands endorsed by influencers, with a mean score of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 1.209.

Finally, Item 4 shows the highest level of trust among the surveyed population, with respondents holding particularly favorable opinions about brands advertised by social media influencers, as reflected in a mean score of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 1.092.

In summary, the data suggests that respondents generally exhibit trust and positive perceptions toward brands promoted by social media influencers, with varying degrees of agreement across the items assessed.

Table 3: Expertise of influencer

SN	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
5	The social media influencer I follow is/are experts in their field	203	3.70	1.157
6	The social media influencers I follow have great knowledge about their field	202	3.47	1.316
7	The social media influencers I follow explain products through every perspective	202	3.44	1.249
8	The social media influencers I follow provide references based on their expertise	203	3.47	1.078

Table 3 look into the perceived expertise of influencers among respondents, assessing their opinions regarding various aspects of influencers' knowledge and credibility within their respective fields.

The mean scores provide an indication of the average level of agreement or perception among the surveyed individuals regarding each item.

Item 5 suggests a high level of perceived expertise, with respondents generally considering the social media influencers they follow as experts in their field, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 1.157.

Item 6 reveals a slightly lower but still substantial level of perceived knowledge, with respondents indicating that influencers have great knowledge about their field, reflected in a mean score of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 1.316.

Similarly, Item 7 highlights respondents' perceptions that influencers offer comprehensive product explanations from various perspectives, with a mean score of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 1.249.

Lastly, Item 8 indicates that influencers are perceived to provide references based on their expertise, with a mean score of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 1.078.

Overall, the data suggests that respondents generally view the influencers they follow as knowledgeable and credible within their fields, with varying degrees of agreement across the items assessed.

Table 4: Attractiveness of influencer

SN		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
9	The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are charismatic	203	3.67	1.031
10	The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are good-looking	203	3.74	1.137
11	The make-up social media influencer(s) I follow is/are beautiful/handsome	203	3.43	1.353
12	The lifestyle of social media influencer(s) I follow is/are attractive	203	3.51	1.127

Table 4 explores the perceived attractiveness of influencers among respondents, assessing their opinions regarding various aspects of influencers' appeal and charisma.

The mean scores offer insights into the average level of agreement or perception among the surveyed individuals regarding each item.

Item 9 indicates a high level of perceived charisma among influencers, with respondents generally considering the social media influencers they follow as charismatic, as reflected in a mean score of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 1.031.

Item 10 suggests a similarly high level of perceived physical attractiveness, with respondents indicating that the influencers they follow are good-looking, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 1.137.

For Item 11, respondents perceive make-up influencers as beautiful or handsome, although the mean score of 3.43 and the relatively higher standard deviation of 1.353 suggest some variability in respondents' opinions on this aspect.

Lastly, Item 12 highlights that the lifestyle portrayed by influencers is perceived as attractive, with a mean score of 3.51 and a standard deviation of 1.127.

Overall, the data suggests that respondents generally view the influencers they follow as charismatic and physically attractive, with varying degrees of agreement across the items assessed. However, perceptions of beauty among make-up influencers may exhibit more variability among respondents.

Table 5: Trustworthiness of influencers

SN	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
13	The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are dependable	203	3.44	1.085
14	The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are honest	203	3.63	1.047
15	The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are reliable	203	3.57	1.210
16	The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are sincere	203	3.26	1.299

Table 5 investigates the perceived trustworthiness of influencers among respondents, evaluating their opinions regarding various aspects of influencers' reliability and honesty.

The mean scores provide insights into the average level of agreement or perception among the surveyed individuals regarding each item.

Item 13 suggests that influencers are perceived as dependable, with respondents generally considering the social media influencers they follow to be reliable, as reflected in a mean score of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 1.085.

Item 14 indicates a high level of perceived honesty among influencers, with respondents indicating that the influencers they follow are honest, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 1.047.

Similarly, Item 15 suggests that influencers are perceived as reliable, with respondents expressing trust in the influencers they follow, as reflected in a mean score of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 1.210.

For Item 16, respondents perceive influencers as sincere, although the mean score of 3.26 and the relatively higher standard deviation of 1.299 suggest some variability in respondents' opinions on this aspect.

Overall, the data suggests that respondents generally view the influencers they follow as dependable, honest, and reliable, with varying degrees of agreement across the items assessed. However, perceptions of sincerity may exhibit more variability among respondents.

Table 6: Influencer Credibility

SN	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
17	I most frequently have intentions to purchase products advertised by the social media influencers I follow	203	3.24	1.244
18	I generally recommend products and/or services advertised by the social media influencers I follow	203	3.43	1.121
19	If I were shopping for a brand, the likelihood I would buy this brand recommended by a social media celebrity is high	203	3.52	1.175
20	The probability I would consider buying this brand recommended by a social media celebrity is high	203	3.77	1.190

Table 6 presents data on the credibility of influencers among respondents, focusing on their intentions and likelihood of purchasing products endorsed by social media influencers they follow.

The mean scores offer insights into the average level of agreement or intention among the surveyed individuals regarding each item.

Item 17 indicates that respondents frequently intend to purchase products advertised by the social media influencers they follow, with a mean score of 3.24 and a standard deviation of 1.244.

Item 18 suggests that respondents generally recommend products and/or services advertised by influencers they follow, as reflected in a mean score of 3.43 and a standard deviation of 1.121.

Similarly, Item 19 reveals that respondents express a high likelihood of purchasing brands recommended by social media celebrities, with a mean score of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 1.175.

For Item 20, respondents indicate a high probability of considering buying brands recommended by social media celebrities, with a mean score of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 1.190.

Overall, the data suggests that respondents generally perceive influencers as credible sources for product recommendations, with varying degrees of agreement across the items assessed. Additionally, there appears to be a strong intention among respondents to purchase products endorsed by influencers they follow.

Table 7: Decisions to purchase social events

SN		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
21	I am more likely to attend a social event if it is endorsed by a social media influencer I follow	203	3.23	1.324
22	The recommendations of social media influencers influence my decision to purchase social event tickets	203	3.52	1.149
23	I trust the opinions of social media influencers when deciding which social events to attend	203	3.46	1.127
24	Social media influencers play a significant role in shaping my preferences for social events	203	3.53	1.174
25	I am more likely to explore and consider attending social events that are frequently promoted by influencers	202	3.61	1.185
26	I have purchased social event tickets specifically because they were recommended by social media influencers	203	3.18	1.332

Table 7 examines respondents' decisions to purchase social events, focusing on the influence of social media influencers on their choices.

The mean scores offer insights into the average level of agreement or influence among the surveyed individuals regarding each item.

Item 21 suggests that respondents are more likely to attend a social event if it is endorsed by a social media influencer they follow, with a mean score of 3.23 and a standard deviation of 1.324.

Item 22 indicates that the recommendations of social media influencers influence respondents' decisions to purchase social event tickets, as reflected in a mean score of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 1.149.

Similarly, Item 23 reveals that respondents trust the opinions of social media influencers when deciding which social events to attend, with a mean score of 3.46 and a standard deviation of 1.127.

For Item 24, respondents perceive social media influencers as playing a significant role in shaping their preferences for social events, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 1.174.

Item 25 suggests that respondents are more likely to explore and consider attending social events that are frequently promoted by influencers, with a mean score of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 1.185.

Lastly, Item 26 indicates that some respondents have purchased social event tickets specifically because they were recommended by social media influencers, with a mean score of 3.18 and a standard deviation of 1.332.

Overall, the data suggests that social media influencers play a significant role in influencing respondents' decisions to purchase social event tickets, with varying degrees of agreement across the items assessed.

4.3   Test of hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

Table 8: Analysis of impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.603[a]	.364	.361	.63830

a. Predictors: (Constant), influencer brand partnership

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	46.814	1	46.814	114.902	.000[b]
	Residual	81.892	201	.407		
	Total	128.705	202			

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events
b. Predictors: (Constant), influencer brand partnership

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.633	.173		9.448	.000
	influencer brand partnership	.545	.051	.603	10.719	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events

The analysis of the data reveals a significant impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets. The correlation coefficient of 0.603 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This means that as influencer-brand

partnerships increase, there is a corresponding increase in the likelihood of students deciding to purchase event tickets.

The model summary provides further insight, with an R Square value of 0.364, suggesting that approximately 36.4% of the variance in students' purchase decisions can be attributed to the influence of these partnerships. The adjusted R Square value, which accounts for the number of predictors in the model, is slightly lower at 0.361, indicating a still significant proportion of explained variance. The standard error of the estimate, at 0.63830, gives an indication of the average distance between the observed values and the regression line, showing the model's fit.

The ANOVA table supports the model's significance, showing a regression sum of squares of 46.814 and a residual sum of squares of 81.892, culminating in a total sum of squares of 128.705. The F-value of 114.902, with a p-value of 0.000, strongly indicates that the regression model is statistically significant, thus rejecting the null hypothesis that there is no significant impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

Examining the coefficients reveals that the constant, or intercept, is 1.633, representing the predicted value of students' purchase decisions when influencer-brand partnerships are absent. The coefficient for influencer-brand partnerships is 0.545, indicating that for each unit increase in the partnership score, the likelihood of purchasing event tickets increases by 0.545 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.603 further highlights the strong influence of the predictor on the dependent variable.

The t-value of 10.719 and the corresponding p-value of 0.000 reinforce the significance of the relationship, confirming that the impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' purchase decisions is not due to random chance.

In conclusion, the data robustly supports the assertion that influencer-brand partnerships significantly influence students' decisions to purchase event tickets. The rejection of the null

hypothesis is clear, demonstrating a meaningful and positive impact that these partnerships have on the purchasing behaviour of students.

H$_{02}$: Expertise of influencers has no significant relationship with student's intention to purchase tickets.

Table 9: Analysis of influencers relationship with student's intention to purchase tickets.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.594[a]	.353	.350	.64364

a. Predictors: (Constant), expertise of influencer

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.437	1	45.437	109.680	.000[b]
	Residual	83.268	201	.414		
	Total	128.705	202			

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events
b. Predictors: (Constant), expertise of influencer

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.136	.223		5.096	.000
	expertise of influencer	.649	.062	.594	10.473	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events

The analysis of the second hypothesis, which posits that the expertise of influencers has no significant relationship with students' intention to purchase tickets, yields compelling results.

The correlation coefficient of 0.594 indicates a moderate positive relationship, suggesting that as the perceived expertise of influencers increases, so does the likelihood of students intending to purchase event tickets.

From the model summary, the R Square value is 0.353, which means that 35.3% of the variance in students' purchase decisions can be explained by the influencers' expertise. The adjusted R Square value is slightly lower at 0.350, still indicating a substantial portion of explained variance. The standard error of the estimate, at 0.64364, indicates the typical distance between the observed values and the regression line, further assessing the model's accuracy.

The ANOVA table supports the model's significance with a regression sum of squares of 45.437 and a residual sum of squares of 83.268, leading to a total sum of squares of 128.705. The F-value of 109.680, coupled with a p-value of 0.000, strongly suggests that the model is statistically significant, thus rejecting the null hypothesis that the expertise of influencers has no significant relationship with students' intention to purchase tickets.

Examining the coefficients, the constant or intercept is 1.136, representing the predicted intention to purchase tickets when the perceived expertise of influencers is zero. The coefficient for the expertise of influencers is 0.649, indicating that for each unit increase in the perceived expertise of influencers, the likelihood of students intending to purchase tickets increases by 0.649 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.594 further underscores the substantial influence of the predictor on the dependent variable.

The t-value of 10.473 and the corresponding p-value of 0.000 confirm the significance of the relationship, showing that the effect of influencers' expertise on students' purchase intentions is statistically significant and not due to random chance.

In conclusion, the data strongly supports the assertion that the expertise of influencers has a significant relationship with students' intention to purchase event tickets. The null hypothesis

is clearly rejected, demonstrating that the perceived expertise of influencers positively influences students' purchasing intentions.

H03: Influencer attractiveness and likability has no significant relationship with students' willingness to purchase tickets.

Table 10: Analysis of influencer attractiveness and likability has relationship with students' willingness to purchase tickets.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.614[a]	.377	.374	.63173

a. Predictors: (Constant), attractiveness

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	48.489	1	48.489	121.499	.000[b]
	Residual	80.217	201	.399		
	Total	128.705	202			

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events
b. Predictors: (Constant), attractiveness

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.040	.221		4.714	.000
	attractiveness	.664	.060	.614	11.023	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events

The analysis of the third hypothesis, which asserts that influencer attractiveness and likability have no significant relationship with students' willingness to purchase event tickets, provides

insightful findings. The correlation coefficient of 0.614 indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship, suggesting that higher levels of influencer attractiveness and likability are associated with an increased willingness among students to purchase event tickets.

The model summary reveals an R Square value of 0.377, meaning that 37.7% of the variance in students' decisions to purchase event tickets can be explained by the attractiveness and likability of influencers. The adjusted R Square is slightly lower at 0.374, indicating that even after adjusting for the number of predictors, the model still explains a substantial portion of the variance. The standard error of the estimate is 0.63173, representing the average distance between the observed values and the predicted values from the regression model.

The ANOVA table further supports the model's significance. The regression sum of squares is 48.489, while the residual sum of squares is 80.217, leading to a total sum of squares of 128.705. The F-value of 121.499, with a corresponding p-value of 0.000, indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. This means the null hypothesis, which states that influencer attractiveness and likability have no significant relationship with students' willingness to purchase tickets, is rejected.

Examining the coefficients provides additional insights. The constant, or intercept, is 1.040, which represents the predicted willingness to purchase tickets when the attractiveness and likability of influencers are rated as zero. The coefficient for influencer attractiveness is 0.664, indicating that for each unit increase in the attractiveness and likability of influencers, the likelihood of students purchasing tickets increases by 0.664 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.614 underscores the strong influence of the predictor on the dependent variable.

The t-value of 11.023 and the associated p-value of 0.000 further confirm the significance of this relationship, demonstrating that the effect of influencer attractiveness and likability on

students' willingness to purchase tickets is statistically significant and not due to random variation.

In conclusion, the data robustly supports the assertion that influencer attractiveness and likability significantly impact students' willingness to purchase event tickets. The null hypothesis is clearly rejected, indicating that higher perceived attractiveness and likability of influencers positively influence students' purchasing decisions.

H_{04}: **There is no significant influence of perceived trustworthiness of influencers on students' likelihood of purchasing tickets.**

Table 11: Analysis of influence of perceived trustworthiness of influencers on students' likelihood of purchasing tickets.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.610a	.372	.369	.63396

a. Predictors: (Constant), Trustworthiness of influencers

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	47.921	1	47.921	119.233	.000b
	Residual	80.784	201	.402		
	Total	128.705	202			

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events
b. Predictors: (Constant), Trustworthiness of influencers

Coefficientsa

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.

		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.173	.211		5.561	.000
	Trustworthiness of influencers	.648	.059	.610	10.919	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events

The analysis of the fourth hypothesis, which suggests that there is no significant influence of perceived trustworthiness of influencers on students' likelihood of purchasing tickets, yields insightful results. The correlation coefficient of 0.610 indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship, suggesting that as the perceived trustworthiness of influencers increases, so does the likelihood of students deciding to purchase event tickets.

The model summary shows an R Square value of 0.372, indicating that 37.2% of the variance in students' purchase decisions can be explained by the trustworthiness of influencers. The adjusted R Square value is slightly lower at 0.369, which still represents a substantial proportion of explained variance. The standard error of the estimate is 0.63396, reflecting the average distance between the observed values and the predicted values from the regression model.

The ANOVA table provides further evidence of the model's significance. The regression sum of squares is 47.921, while the residual sum of squares is 80.784, resulting in a total sum of squares of 128.705. The F-value of 119.233, coupled with a p-value of 0.000, indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. This finding leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant influence of perceived trustworthiness of influencers on students' likelihood of purchasing tickets.

Examining the coefficients provides additional insights. The constant, or intercept, is 1.173, representing the predicted likelihood of purchasing tickets when the perceived trustworthiness of influencers is zero. The coefficient for the trustworthiness of influencers is 0.648, indicating that for each unit increase in the perceived trustworthiness, the likelihood of students

purchasing tickets increases by 0.648 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.610 underscores the strong influence of trustworthiness on the dependent variable.

The t-value of 10.919 and the associated p-value of 0.000 further confirm the significance of this relationship, demonstrating that the effect of influencer trustworthiness on students' likelihood to purchase tickets is statistically significant and not due to random variation.

In conclusion, the data strongly supports the assertion that the perceived trustworthiness of influencers significantly influences students' likelihood of purchasing event tickets. The null hypothesis is clearly rejected, indicating that higher perceived trustworthiness of influencers positively impacts students' purchasing decisions.

H05: Credibility of social media influencers has no significant relationship with students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

Table 12: Analysis of credibility of social media influencers relationship with students' likelihood to purchase event tickets.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.632ᵃ	.400	.397	.61983

a. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer Credibility

ANOVAᵃ

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.483	1	51.483	134.003	.000ᵇ
	Residual	77.223	201	.384		
	Total	128.705	202			

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events
b. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer Credibility

Coefficientsᵃ

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	1.240	.194		6.403	.000
	Influencer Credibility	.626	.054	.632	11.576	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Decisions to purchase social events

The analysis of the fifth hypothesis, which posits that the credibility of social media influencers has no significant relationship with students' likelihood to purchase event tickets, reveals significant findings. The correlation coefficient of 0.632 indicates a strong positive relationship, suggesting that higher credibility of influencers is associated with an increased likelihood of students purchasing event tickets.

The model summary provides a clear picture of the model's effectiveness. With an R Square value of 0.400, it shows that 40% of the variance in students' decisions to purchase event tickets can be explained by the credibility of social media influencers. The adjusted R Square value of 0.397, which adjusts for the number of predictors in the model, still reflects a substantial proportion of explained variance. The standard error of the estimate is 0.61983, indicating the average distance between the observed values and the predicted values from the regression model.

The ANOVA table supports the statistical significance of the model. The regression sum of squares is 51.483, and the residual sum of squares is 77.223, leading to a total sum of squares of 128.705. The F-value of 134.003, with a p-value of 0.000, strongly suggests that the model is statistically significant. This means the null hypothesis, which asserts that the credibility of social media influencers has no significant relationship with students' likelihood to purchase tickets, is rejected.

Examining the coefficients provides further insights. The constant, or intercept, is 1.240, representing the predicted likelihood of purchasing tickets when the credibility of influencers is zero. The coefficient for influencer credibility is 0.626, indicating that for each unit increase

in perceived credibility, the likelihood of students purchasing tickets increases by 0.626 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.632 underscores the strong influence of credibility on the dependent variable.

The t-value of 11.576 and the associated p-value of 0.000 confirm the significance of this relationship, showing that the effect of influencer credibility on students' likelihood to purchase tickets is statistically significant and not due to random chance.

In conclusion, the data robustly supports the assertion that the credibility of social media influencers significantly impacts students' likelihood to purchase event tickets. The null hypothesis is clearly rejected, indicating that higher perceived credibility of influencers positively influences students' purchasing decisions.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1   Discussion

Hypothesis one shows that influencer-brand partnerships significantly impact students' likelihood to purchase event tickets. Influencers who praise a brand without disclosing their partnership are likely to come across as enthusiastic about it (Audrezet et al. 2018). However, if the influencer has been paid to promote the brand in a post, revealing a sponsored partnership may give followers the impression that the influencer is not passionate about the company. However, although influencers frequently fail to disclose—possibly because of presumptions that undermine their apparent passionate authenticity—disclosing a partnership might benefit transparent authenticity, which is a distinct kind of authenticity. Most customers are probably aware that influencers who write about a brand without mentioning a partnership may or may not be sponsored. Thus, customers might question the sponsorship of a post that seems "non-sponsored" but actually features a brand. If readers do conclude that this piece is paid, they could also conclude that the influencer made an effort to hide the sponsorship. On the other hand, a brand-featured post that includes a disclosure eliminates any possibility that the influencer is working in conjunction with the brand. Therefore, people will perceive an influencer's post as more openly genuine when they disclose anything.

Hypothesis two shows that expertise of influencers has a significant relationship with students' intention to purchase tickets. The Fitriani et al. (2023) research, titled "The Effect of Influencer Attractiveness and Expertise on Purchase Increasing Intention with Brand Image as an Intervening Variable," yielded consistent results. The research was conducted in Yogyakarta. This study investigates influencers' knowledge and attractiveness, as well as how they affect brand perception and purchase intent. The survey group included 100 people who utilize social

media, are at least 15 years old, and have watched Scarlett Whitening brand endorsement broadcasts. According to the study's findings, an influencer's competence and beauty have a major beneficial impact on a brand's perception.

Hypothesis three shows that influencer attractiveness and likability significantly impact students' willingness to purchase tickets. This discussion is relevant to Masuda et al.'s 2022 article, "Impacts of Influencer Attributes on Purchase Intentions in Social Media Influencer Marketing: Mediating Roles of Characterizations." The study was conducted in Seoul, Korea, and Japan. This study investigated and considered three characteristics—trustworthiness, perceived expertise, and parasocial relationships—as well as three personal attributes—attitude homophily, physical beauty, and social attractiveness—as antecedents of purchase intention. They used 313 participants as a sample of the public, specifically those who have purchased goods or services after seeing influencers' YouTube ads. The study's findings show that parasocial interactions significantly boost purchase intention compared to other features and have a positive correlation with three personal traits. Therefore, they can conclude that parasocial connections significantly influence followers' behavioral intentions, including their intention to make a purchase.

Hypothesis four shows that Perceived trustworthiness of influencers significantly influences students' likelihood of purchasing tickets. Chekima et al. (2020) discovered that trust influences attitudes toward products. In a similar vein, trust has an impact on product attitude, according to Nafees, Cook, Nikolov, & Stoddard (2021) and Hmoud et al. (2022), who studied Jordanian customers. Not all research, though, has produced the same findings. For example, Dhun & Dangi (2022) found no evidence of a substantial correlation between brand attitude and trust. When choosing endorsers and creating successful marketing campaigns, businesses must comprehend how influencer trustworthiness affects brand attitude.

Hypothesis five shows that credibility of social media influencers significantly impacts students' likelihood to purchase event tickets. Tis is related to the study of Van-Tien Dao, Nhat Hanh Le, Ming-Sung Cheng, and Chao Chen (2014) confirmed in their study that advertising value, based on how credible, informative, and entertaining consumers thought the commercial was, significantly impacted consumers' purchase intentions. Casaló et al. (2020) have identified the quality, creativity, and distinctiveness of postings as critical criteria in the development of opinion leadership in the context of influencer marketing. Djafarova & Rushworth (2017) also found that the quality of the postings heavily influences consumers' decisions to follow digital influencers. Regular social media posts from influencers have both educational and entertaining value (Lou & Yuan, 2019). The material's informational value can influence followers' reactions to branded posts. Furthermore, the impact of influencer information quality on purchase intention has been the subject of several empirical studies, with differing degrees of success. In the Jordanian market (Hmoud et al., 2022), Influencer information quality significantly influenced buy intent in the Jordanian market (Hmoud et al., 2022; Gomes et al., 2022).

5.1.1 Influencer-brand partnerships significantly impact students' likelihood to purchase event tickets

Influencer-brand partnerships leverage the established trust and connection influencers have with their audience to promote products or services. For students, who are often active on social media and influenced by trends and peer opinions, the endorsement of an event by a trusted influencer can significantly boost their interest and willingness to purchase tickets. When an influencer collaborates with a brand, their followers, who view them as credible and relatable, are more likely to engage with the promoted content. This effect is particularly strong among students who may see these influencers as role models. The statistical analysis from the study shows a significant positive relationship, indicating that effective influencer-brand partnerships

can drive ticket sales for events. This underscores the importance for event organizers to strategically select influencers who align with their brand values and appeal to their target audience.

5.1.2 The expertise of influencers has a significant relationship with students' intention to purchase tickets

The perceived expertise of an influencer enhances their credibility and the trust their audience places in their recommendations. For students, an influencer's expertise, particularly in relevant fields such as music, entertainment, or specific event genres, plays a crucial role in their decision-making process. When influencers demonstrate knowledge and insight about the events they promote, students are more likely to believe in the value of attending such events. This relationship is validated by the study, which shows a significant positive correlation between influencer expertise and students' purchasing intentions. Influencers who are considered experts are seen as more authentic and reliable, making their endorsements more persuasive. Therefore, events aiming to attract student attendees should prioritize collaborations with influencers who are perceived as knowledgeable and authoritative in their respective domains.

5.1.3 Influencer attractiveness and likability significantly impact students' willingness to purchase tickets

The attractiveness and likability of influencers are powerful factors in shaping students' perceptions and behaviours. Attractive influencers tend to capture more attention and engagement on social media, while likability fosters a sense of connection and trust. For students, who often look up to influencers as trendsetters, these qualities can greatly influence their purchasing decisions. The study demonstrates a significant impact of influencer attractiveness and likability on students' willingness to buy event tickets. This suggests that

influencers who are not only visually appealing but also relatable and personable can effectively drive ticket sales. Event organizers should consider these traits when selecting influencers to ensure they resonate well with their target student demographic. Attractive and likable influencers are more likely to create compelling, shareable content that generates buzz and motivates students to attend events.

5.1.4 Perceived trustworthiness of influencers significantly influences students' likelihood of purchasing tickets

Trustworthiness is a critical factor in the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Students are more likely to act on recommendations from influencers they perceive as honest and transparent. When an influencer is seen as trustworthy, their audience believes that their endorsements are genuine and not solely motivated by financial gain. The study highlights a significant positive influence of perceived trustworthiness on students' likelihood of purchasing event tickets. This finding underscores the need for influencers to maintain authenticity and transparency to build and sustain trust with their followers. Event organizers should collaborate with influencers who have a track record of trustworthy behaviour and clear communication. By doing so, they can enhance the perceived credibility of their event promotions and increase ticket sales among students who value authenticity.

5.1.5 Credibility of social media influencers significantly impacts students' likelihood to purchase event tickets

The overall credibility of social media influencers, encompassing factors like expertise, trustworthiness, and authenticity, plays a crucial role in influencing students' purchasing decisions. Credible influencers are perceived as reliable sources of information, making their endorsements highly persuasive. The study indicates a strong positive relationship between influencer credibility and students' likelihood to purchase event tickets. This suggests that

students are more inclined to buy tickets for events promoted by influencers they deem credible. Credibility encompasses an influencer's consistency, authenticity, and alignment with their audience's values. For event organizers, this means selecting influencers who are not only popular but also maintain a high level of credibility. By partnering with credible influencers, event promotions are more likely to resonate with students and drive higher ticket sales.

5.2 Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of the influence of social media influencers on students' decisions to purchase event tickets provides significant insights into the different consumer behaviour in the digital age. Contrary to initial hypotheses, the findings reject several assumptions, highlighting the complex interplay between influencer characteristics and consumer purchasing intentions.

Firstly, the study unveils the substantial impact of influencer-brand partnerships on students' likelihood to purchase event tickets, challenging the assumption (H01) that these partnerships have minimal influence. The results underscore the pivotal role of influencer collaborations in shaping consumer decisions, indicating that students are significantly swayed by the endorsements and recommendations made by influencers they follow. This emphasizes the importance of strategic partnerships between brands and influencers in driving ticket sales for events, as these collaborations serve as potent tools for reaching and engaging target audiences effectively.

Furthermore, the study elucidates the nuanced influence of various attributes associated with influencers on students' intention to purchase tickets. The perceived expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and credibility of influencers all demonstrate significant relationships with consumer behaviour, indicating that these factors play pivotal roles in shaping purchasing decisions. Students are not merely passive recipients of influencer content but actively assess

and respond to the perceived characteristics of influencers when making purchasing decisions. This highlights the multifaceted nature of influencer influence and underscores the importance of cultivating and maintaining positive perceptions of influencers among target audiences.

Moreover, the findings of the study align with previous research, providing further validation of the impact of influencer attributes on consumer behaviour. Studies by Fitriani et al. (2023) and Masuda et al. (2022) corroborate the significance of influencer competence, attractiveness, and trust in shaping brand perception and purchase intent, reinforcing the robustness of the findings.

In conclusion, the study emphasizes the substantial influence that social media influencers wield over students' decisions to purchase event tickets. As influencer marketing continues to evolve and proliferate, businesses and marketers must recognize the intricate interplay between influencer characteristics and consumer behaviour. By understanding the underlying mechanisms driving consumer responses to influencer content and leveraging the perceived attributes of influencers effectively, businesses can develop more targeted and impactful marketing strategies in the ever-expanding realm of social media influence. This necessitates a strategic approach to influencer partnerships and content creation, guided by a deep understanding of consumer preferences and behaviour in the digital landscape.

5.3   Recommendations

Based on the insights gained from the analysis of the influence of social media influencers on students' decisions to purchase event tickets, several recommendations can be proposed for businesses, marketers, and influencers looking to optimize their strategies in this area:

1. **Strategic Influencer Partnerships:** This recommendation is primarily for businesses and marketers who seek to collaborate with influencers to promote their events. They should carefully select influencers whose audience demographics align with their target

market for events. For instance, for a concert or festival event, working with local or student influencers who have a reputable fan base is great. Ask them to produce interesting content about the advantages of attending the event, such as YouTube vlogs, TikTok videos, or Instagram stories. Offer free tickets, exclusive merchandise, exclusive coupons, or early bird discounts via the influencer's channel. This expands the event's potential audience and also increases credibility and perceived value of the event.

2. **Authentic Content Creation:** Influencers should prioritize authenticity and transparency in their content creation efforts. This recommendation is directed towards influencers to ensure that they maintain genuine relationships with their followers by openly disclosing partnerships and creating authentic content.

3. **Diverse Influencer Attributes**: Marketers should recognize the diverse range of attributes that influence consumer behaviour when selecting influencers. This recommendation applies to marketers who need to consider factors beyond attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness when choosing influencers.

4. **Data-Driven Insights**: Businesses should leverage data analytics tools (Google Analytics, Eventbrite Analytic, SurveyMonkey.) to gain deeper insights into consumer preferences and behaviour in response to influencer content. This recommendation is for businesses and marketers who need to analyse metrics to refine their influencer marketing strategies.

Businesses will have a thorough grasp of the demographics, tastes, and behaviours of their target audience using data analytics. With the use of this knowledge, they can better customise their event experiences, message, and content to appeal to attendees and increase engagement and conversion rates.

Additionally, businesses may more precisely gauge the success of their event marketing initiatives thanks to data-driven insights. Businesses can assess the performance of various marketing channels and approaches by using metrics such as lead generation, attendance figures, and social media participation. This allows for the ongoing development and optimisation of event strategy.

5. **Long-Term Relationships:** Both businesses and influencers can benefit from building long-term relationships. This recommendation is for businesses and influencers who should cultivate ongoing partnerships based on mutual trust and collaboration.

   Building long-lasting relationships with influencers can help businesses get consistent exposure for their brands. Consistent cooperation, as opposed to occasional marketing, increases consumer familiarity and trust, which eventually boosts sales and brand loyalty. Furthermore, by maintaining continuous connections, companies can utilise influencers' perspectives to enhance their marketing tactics, guaranteeing significance and resonance with their intended demographic.

   Influencers will gain from establishing long-lasting relationships with companies in a similar manner. Influencers who have long-term collaborations benefit from a steady income stream that offers stability and financial security. Extended partnerships additionally facilitate influencers' comprehension of the businesses they promote, allowing them to produce more genuine and captivating material that appeals to their audience.

6. **Integrated Marketing Approach:** Influencer marketing should be integrated seamlessly into broader marketing campaigns apart from social media. This recommendation is for businesses and marketers who need to align influencer activities with other marketing initiatives by introducing multiple marketing channels to form one cohesive strategy. To begin, using popular student social media platforms like

Instagram and TikTok can help create compelling content and event buzz. Email marketing, including personalized offers and reminders, can reach students directly.

Also, collaboration with influencers and campus ambassadors can help increase credibility and reach. Furthermore, using internet marketing and search engine optimization guarantees that the event appears in search results, whereas content marketing via blogs and videos provides useful information and stimulates interest. On-campus advertising, such as posters, leaflets, and interactive booths, draws attention in high-traffic locations. Hosting pre-event activities or giveaways can help increase participation and excitement.

This multi-channel approach assures a consistent message and maximizes reach, creating a buzz that connects with students, eventually increasing ticket sales and event participation.

7. **Experimentation and Adaptation**: Businesses and influencers should remain agile and open to experimentation by trying to explore other areas of influencing. This recommendation is for both businesses and influencers who need to continuously monitor trends, test new approaches, and adapt strategies based on feedback and insights.

For example, influencers and businesses can test out different pricing systems, advertising channels, or event themes. Businesses could experiment with multiple price points to find the best one that maximizes income and attendance. Then the total revenue from each price point can be calculated by comparing the number of tickets sold at each point. Determine the price point that strikes a balance between affordability and profitability based on the data available then increase the amount of funds going to the most successful channels.

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APPENDIX

Dear Respondent,

Study Information on **"The influence of social media influencers on students' decisions to purchase events." Case study- Students of Bournemouth University.**

You are being invited to participate in a study for a Post Graduate dissertation being undertaken by **Ebuka Shola Muoneke**, a Tourism Management student at Bournemouth University, England. It is critical that you understand the research's purpose and what it will entail. Before determining whether or not to participate, carefully read the following information and, if you'd like, discuss it with others. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to ask.

The purpose of the study is to identify the influence of social media influencers on students' decisions to purchase events.

You are being invited to complete an online questionnaire about your views on this topic.

Confidentiality

Your identity will be kept private, and no personal data, including your name or address, will be gathered. Participants' responses will remain confidential and will only be used for this study. My Drive will serve as a safe location for all study data storage. This file will not be accessible to anyone else. I will remove all data within three months of submitting my dissertation.

If you are interested in taking part, please read the statements below to consent to participate.

- I confirm that I have read the study information. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions. Any questions have been answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason
- I am 18 or over

Please tick the appropriate option.

Demographic Information

1. Gender
    Male   [ ]   Female   [ ]   prefer not to say [ ]
2. Age range: Below 20 years   [ ] 21-30 years [ ]31-40years [ ]   41 years and above
    [ ]
3. Academic Level

    Diploma [ ] Under Graduate [ ] Bachelors' [ ] Masters' [ ] PhD [ ]

4. Employment Status: Self Employed [ ]   Employed part-time   [   ] Student [   ]

    Unemployed [ ] Other (please specify) [ ]

5. Household Income Annually:
    a. Less than £20,000 [ ]
    b. £20,000 - £40,000 [ ]
    c. £40,000 - £60,000 [ ]
    d. £60,000 - £80,000 [ ]
    e. £80,000 and above [ ]
6. Ethnicity:
    a. White [ ]
    b. Black or African American [ ]
    c. Asian [ ]
    d. Hispanic or Latino [ ]
    e. Other (please specify) [ ]

Please select the items that best applies to your opinion from Strongly Disagreed to Strongly Agreed

Expertise of influencer

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The social media influencer I follow is/are experts in their field					
The social media influencers I follow have great knowledge about their field					
The social media influencers I follow explain products through every perspective					
The social media influencers I follow provide references based on their expertise					

Attractiveness of influencer

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are charismatic					
The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are good-looking					
The make-up social media influencer(s) I follow is/are beautiful/handsome					
The lifestyle of social media influencer(s) I follow is/are attractive					

Trustworthiness of influencers

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are dependable					
The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are honest					
The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are reliable					
The social media influencer(s) I follow is/are sincere					

Influencer Credibility

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I most frequently have intentions to purchase products advertised by the social media influencers I follow					
I generally recommend products and/or services advertised by the social media influencers I follow					
If I were shopping for a brand, the likelihood I would buy this brand recommended by a social media celebrity is high					

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The probability I would consider buying this brand recommended by a social media celebrity is high					
If I were going to purchase a product, I would consider buying this brand recommended by a social media celebrity					

Influencer Credibility

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I do trust brands advertised by social media influencers I follow					
Brands recommended by social media influencers are more reliable					
I have positive perception about brands endorse by influences					
I have favorable opinions about the brands advertised by social media influencers					

Students' decisions to purchase events

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am more likely to attend an event if it is endorsed by a social media influencer I follow					
The recommendations of social media influencers influence my decision to purchase event tickets					
I trust the opinions of social media influencers when deciding which events to attend					
Social media influencers play a significant role in shaping my preferences for events					
I am more likely to explore and consider attending events that are frequently promoted by influencers					

I have purchased event tickets specifically because they were recommended by social media influencers					

Thank you for your participation! Your input is greatly appreciated.