



ISSN 2809-929X (Print)  
ISSN 2809-9303(Online)

# Journal of Social Commerce

Vol. 3 No. 4, 2023 (Page: 214-226)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56209/jommerce.v3i4.132>

## Digital Influencers and Their Effect on Brand Perception and Loyalty

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### Article History

Submitted: 21 March 2023,  
Revised: 19 October 2023,  
Accepted: 13 November  
2023

### Keywords

Digital Influencers  
Brand Image  
Brand Association  
Influencer Authenticity

### Abstract

This quantitative research examines the impact of digital influencers on brand image and brand attitude, with particular focus on influencer credibility. Based on a survey of 500 respondents, the study uses correlation analysis, regression analysis, analysis of variance and covariance analysis to determine the effects of influencer credibility, perceived brand image, and brand loyalty. This research shows that perception of brands has significant positive relationship with influencer credibility and credibility alone can be used to predict brand perception. Further, the proposed influencer credibility-have a direct effect on brand loyalty, which is over and above the effect through brand perception, which in turn has a proposed positive and significant mediating effect between credibility and loyalty. The study also establishes that, there is a disparity in the impact of different influence towards brand loyalty. The study minimizes the threat of confounding variables such as the frequency of social media usage thereby providing a clear idea of the factors that affect brand results. These research endeavors add further knowledge to the already existent literature on influencer marketing based on the details that denote the way through which influencer credibility influences the consumer behaviors in addition to offering some real-life strategies for marketers.

## Introduction

In the modern world of Internet and social media, the position of digital influencers becomes one of the critical factors that define the consumer behavior and the interaction between the brand and the customer. Digital influencers who use social media to communicate with the targeted audiences are important enablers between brands and the consumers (De Veirman et al., 2017). Since the channel owners gain a significant following and receive a large authority in specific fields, it is critical to study how they influence brand association and consumer loyalty for both theoretical research and practical marketing.

The dominance of SWs can be associated with the emergence of social media platforms including Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok that have enabled a level of engagement that has not been witnessed before (Freberg et al., 2011). Through such platforms, influencers have

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been able to foster highly interactive audiences through which they are able to influence the perceived attitude and behaviour of the followers (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019; Jin et al., 2019). In this respect, influencing factors considered by the consumers are legitimacy or credibility and attractiveness of influencers, which influence the acceptance of endorsement by the audiences (Lou & Yuan, 2019). For example, Lou & Yuan (2019) assured that, while influencers are widely affecting the consumer attitudes and brand perceptions, it is crucial to investigate how the specifics of influencers may influence the formation of brand image and brand loyalty.

Brand perception defined as the manner in which consumers evaluate a brand depending on the multiple contacts and appeals has been shifted by digital influencers (Schouten et al., 2020). These individuals act as key opinion moulders determining the perception of other people in the community through the content they endorse (Liu, 2022). For instance, Schouten et al. (2020) examined how influencers influence brand attitudes and concluded that influencer endorsement can modify consumer's perceptions about brands in as much as it makes brands more visible and credible. Expert credibility, which is the extent a consumer is knowledgeable and trustworthy in an influencer, further improves the perceived value and image of the associated brands (Erdogan, 1999). In the light of the findings, Hwang & Zhang (2018) argue that it is the influencers' capacity to generate appealing content that has a positive effect on brand image. Hence, in a bid to make a contribution to the existing body of knowledge, this paper seeks to explain the process through which influencers cause shifts in consumers' attitudes towards brands.

Brand loyalty that is the consumers' willingness to use the same brand or product is also another vital area that is impacted on by digital influencers (Alalwan, 2018; Wielki, 2020). Hence, influencers help to build brand loyalty due to the engagement of an emotional connection with people (Khamis et al., 2017; Delbaere et al., 2021; Pinto & Paramita, 2021). Through the interaction that social media bring, there is usually increased brand attachment and loyalty among the audiences because the influencers are easily accessible (Kim & Ko, 2012). Current literature has indicated that when follower value: organizational identification is higher, then there is increased likelihood of follower's brand identification being high as well (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). The purpose of this research shall be to establish how and to what effect digital influencers influence brand loyalty, and which variables moderate this connection.

Although, there is quite a lot of literature available on the use of digital influencers and their usefulness in the context of brand promotion, more detailed and qualitative research into the particular impact that the use of these influencers can bring to the brand reputation and customer loyalty. For example, although some early articles have explored the overall influence of social media influencer marketing (Akar & Topçu, 2011), more recent works have sought to unravel the process by which influencers influence the consumers in different settings. Furthermore, since social media platforms and marketing with help of influencers are still developing the research should consider introducing new trends and their impact into the topic (Marwick, 2015). To this end, this study proposes the following research questions: On what occasions can brands collaboratively engage with digital influencers effectively, and in what manner? More specifically, this study seeks to pioneer an understanding of how digital influencers can support current retail marketing approaches, thus filling in the above-mentioned gaps in the literature.

Among the shifts in the recent sphere of digital marketing, the role of digital influencers in consumers' choices has attracted much interest. However, there exists a research gap of how these influencers are influencing the perception of the brand and the level of consumers' brand commitment. Social media channels through which Digital influencers normally relay

information to the consumer directly affect how brands are perceived in relation to the loyalty level of the customers. While brands continue to invest more into influencer marketing, the efforts of the influencers on the audiences remain somewhat Calculable and Unlockable. The issue emerges from the real research void regarding the manner in which digital influencers influence brand attitudes and behaviour. This particular research aims to fill this gap by undertaking a meta-analysis of the existing literature with a focus on the effects of various categories of digital influencers on consumers' perceptions and behaviours towards brands. These points therefore bring the goal of the study as wanting to provide step by step guide and framework on how marketers can effectively communicate with influencers and manage their partnerships with them.

## Methods

In the context of the current research, a quantitative research approach was adopted with a view of increasing the level of rigour in the analysis of the impact of digital influencers on brand perception and loyalty. A stratified random sampling technique was employed in the study, in order to draw a sample that was a true reflection of the target population. The strata were defined in relation to demographic criterion including age, gender and frequency of social media use, all of which are relevant to the context of the current research on digital influencers. This approach was adopted with a view of getting a wide range of opinion and as a way of making sure that the sample used was representative of the larger population of the social media users. The last sample ranged from 500 participants of an online panel of social media users, which allowed to conduct a statistical analysis.

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure key variables: analysed the impact on brand perception and brand loyalty as well as the perceived credibility of digital influencers. Brand Perception comprised of items relating to perception of the participants towards brands promoted by the promotees. It used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". Brand Loyalty focused on the level of brand endorsement that the participant had for brands they followed or interacted with on the social media platforms. It also employed a 5-Likert scale. Influencer Credibility evaluated participants' level of agreement with statements measuring credibility of digital influencers such as perceived expertise, perceived trustworthiness and perceived attractiveness. The questionnaire which was used for the study was developed from other scales from past research the use of this method was considered reliable and valid.

To guarantee the validity reliability of the instrument fifty participants not from the sample provided were used in the pilot study. It was a pilot study in that it was used to assess the validity of the questions as well as the appropriateness of the items used and the viability of the final questionnaire in providing the data that was intended to be gathered. Some recommendations which I received were incorporated in order to enhance the readability and accuracy of the instrument. Regarding construct validity, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used whereby, the items in each section of the questionnaire were expected to load on the intended factors. The content validity was checked through the peers review, from the academics and practitioners in the area of marketing and social media, where the questions were checked for their relevance and inclusiveness. The reliability was checked through finding Cronbach's alpha for all the scales used and all the coefficients obtained were above 0. It also had an Cronbach's Alpha total value of 0,70 which according to Sharma (2016), is an acceptable value for internal consistency.

Descriptive statistics namely mean standard deviation and frequency distribution were employed to describe the participants ages and their responses to each of the items in the questionnaires. In an attempt to test the study hypotheses, Pearson correlation coefficients were used in an effort to compare the correlation between the perceived credibility of the selected digital influencers and brand perception and correlation between brand perception and brand loyalty. Such analysis enabled determination of the nature and direction of these relations. The research used multiple regression analysis to establish the relationship between the credibility of digital influencers and brand perception and the first and second order brand loyalty. This method enabled the analysis of which of the components of credibility of the influencer (for instance, expertise or trustworthiness) results in the differences in brand perception and loyalty. Through a series of analysis of variance (ANOVA), it was an aim to examine the possible differences in brand perception and brand loyalty across various demographic variables and levels of influencer credibility including age and gender. This made it possible with the help of analysis to establish if these factors had any impact on the dependent variables. Given the possibility of confounding variables (for instance, how often consumers use social media), ANCOVA was used to analyse the relationship between influencer credibility and brand attitude and posited brand attitude. By using this method, it was easier to get the potential impact of the 'recommended' digital influencers when bearing in mind the influence of covariates. T-test: The two-sample t-test was used in order to compare the overall significance of the means of brand perception and brand loyalty for two groups of people that have somehow been influenced by micro-influencers compared to macro-influencers. Such conclusion allowed analysing the impact of various types of influencers on customer perceptions.

## Results and Discussion

The findings suggest that the participants' attitude towards brands promoted by digital influencers is mostly positive.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Brand Perception

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Overall Brand Image	3.85	0.74	1.00	5.00
Trustworthiness of the Brand	3.92	0.69	1.50	5.00
Brand Quality	3.78	0.82	1.00	5.00
Brand Relevance	3.80	0.76	2.00	5.00

The mean scores gathered for overall brand image which was  $M = 3.85$  and trustworthiness of the brand that was  $M = 3.92$  show that the brands are perceived positively and more importantly viewed as being trustworthy. The standard deviations are somewhat small, thus ensuring that there is fair consistency among the respondents in terms of these kinds of perceptions. The maximum and minimum values proved that although majority of the participants have positive perception towards the brand, there exists variability in the participants' perception towards the brand.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Brand Loyalty

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Purchase Frequency	3.72	0.78	1.00	5.00
Repeat Purchase Intent	3.85	0.70	2.00	5.00
Emotional Connection with Brand	3.88	0.73	2.00	5.00
Brand Preference	3.75	0.80	1.00	5.00

The level of brand loyalty condition ranges from moderate and high among the participants. Mean scores of the purchase frequency ( $M = 3.72$ ) and repeat purchase intention ( $M = 3.85$ ) revealed that the respondents would somewhat commit to repurchase and had 'a positive attitude with the brand. This may be an indication of a fair level of test reactivity, small standard deviations suggest consistent responses. This means that the gains differ from the losses since the participants' commitment cannot be at the same level.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Influencer Credibility

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Expertise of Influencer	4.05	0.65	2.00	5.00
Trustworthiness of Influencer	4.10	0.60	2.50	5.00
Attractiveness of Influencer	3.85	0.70	2.00	5.00

Participants' evaluation of digital influencers as credible regarding expertise:  $M = 4.05$   $SD = .95$ ; trustworthiness:  $M = 4.10$   $SD = .96$ . The standard deviations are low comparing to means which point that while giving their scores, the respondents are more or less agreed on the high credibility level of influencers. The last credibility dimension that is rated is the attractiveness of influencers and is the lowest with a mean score of 3.85 but still favorable meaning that while the attractiveness of influencers is important, it is not as significant as the expertise and trustworthiness of influencers.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix

Variable	Brand Perception	Brand Loyalty	Influencer Credibility
Brand Perception	1.000	0.65**	0.72**
Brand Loyalty	0.65**	1.000	0.58**
Influencer Credibility	0.72**	0.58**	1.000

Note:  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed)

The following is the correlation coefficient matrix and from this matrix we get the following values of correlation; The analysis established a positive significant relationship between brand perception and influencer credibility which was  $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0$ . There was a significant positive relationship between brand perception and brand loyalty which offers a coefficient value of 0.65, a P value of less than 0.01. Furthermore, an analysis of the results obtained for the research hypotheses revealed a moderate positive correlation where brand loyalty is related to influencer credibility ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results have suggested positive relationship between these variables and are useful for the further analysis.

Table 5. Regression Analysis for Brand Perception and Influencer Credibility

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Constant	2.50	0.30		8.33	0.00
Influencer Credibility	0.50	0.05	0.72	10.00	0.00

$R^2 = 0.52$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.51$

The quantitative analysis looks at the influence that influencer credibility has on brand perception. The findings indicate that perceivers' influencer credibility has a moderate, positive effect on brand perception ( $B = 0.50$ ;  $\beta = .72$ ;  $p < .001$ ). The  $R^2$  of value 0 means that all difference in measurement on the y-axis can be explained by the measurement on the x-axis. 52 suggests that influencer credibility predicts about 52 percent of the variability of the brand perception. These findings show a decent level of explanatory ability that means, the enhancement of influencer credibility results in the enhancement of brand perception.

Table 6. Regression Analysis for Brand Loyalty and Brand Perception

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Constant	1.80	0.28		6.43	0.00
Brand Perception	0.40	0.07	0.65	5.71	0.00

$R^2 = 0.42$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.41$

The regression analysis aims to measure the impact of brand perception towards brand loyalty. The findings suggest that brand perception gives a significant impact towards brand loyalty ( $B = 0.40$ ,  $\beta = 0.65$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The  $R^2$  value achieving 0.42 implies that brand perception is accountable for 42% of the variation in brand loyalty. c shows that the actual perception of the brand results to increased consumers' Brand Loyalty.

Table 7. Regression Analysis for Brand Loyalty and Influencer Credibility (Controlling for Brand Perception)

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Constant	1.60	0.35		4.57	0.0001
Influencer Credibility	0.30	0.07	0.45	4.29	0.0001
Brand Perception	0.35	0.06	0.55	5.83	0.0001

$R^2 = 0.48$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.46$

In this regression analysis, the level of brand perception is being held constant so as to understand the impact that credibility of the influencer has on the brand loyalty. The analysis shows that brand perception reduces the effect of influencer credibility, but still it is a highly significant determinant of brand loyalty ( $B = 0.30$ ,  $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Based on the pre-study analysis, the authors report an  $R^2$  value of 0.48 shows that the overall model of the study accounted for 48 percent of the total variance of brand loyalty and both influencer credibility and brand perception had direct influence on this variance. This means that, apart from the aspect of brand perception, influencer credibility greatly contributes to brand loyalty.

Table 8. ANOVA for Brand Perception Across Different Levels of Influencer Credibility

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	23.45	2	11.725	18.75	0.000
Within Groups	124.80	497	0.251		
<b>Total</b>	<b>148.25</b>	<b>499</b>			

The F ratio for the influence of the credibility of the influencer is statistically significant,  $F(2, 497) = 18$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . ADVERTISING. Difference between Test scores in the GPA of Early College students ( $H1 = 75$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). However, to clearly state that influencer credibility influences brand perception, the F-value employed was relatively large, and, consequently, the p-value obtained was statistically significant at  $0.0 < 0.05$ . Further analysis using post-hoc tests (for instance, Tukey's HSD) will be required to ascertain between which groups there are firm significant differences.

Table 9. ANOVA for Brand Loyalty Across Different Types of Influencers

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	18.90	3	6.300	15.40	<0.001
Within Groups	138.20	496	0.279		
<b>Total</b>	<b>157.10</b>	<b>499</b>			

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results also reveals the influence of the type of influencer on the brand loyalty ( $F_{3, 496} = 15$ , revealed that patients taking the supplements had higher rates of fat absorption: 40% overall and  $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, one can infer that macro and micro influencers perform different outcomes on the brand loyalty. More degrees of differences can be found between given influencer types which requires post-hoc comparisons.

Table 10. ANCOVA for Brand Loyalty with Brand Perception as a Covariate

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Influencer Credibility	21.50	1	21.500	29.45	<0.001
Brand Perception	19.20	1	19.200	26.10	<0.001
Error	161.30	494	0.326		
<b>Total</b>	<b>202.00</b>	<b>497</b>			

The analysis of ANCOVA reveals that influencer credibility moderates brand loyalty in the predicted manner,  $F(1, 494) = 29.45$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and brand perception in specific, remained robust,  $p < 0.05$ , even when we controlled for brand perception. Another covariate, brand perception too greatly influences brand loyalty ( $F(1,494) = 26.10^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The partial eta-squared values (not presented in the present tables) would also give further information about the effect sizes. The findings articulated in this paper established that influencer credibility still plays a considerable role in brand loyalty after the inclusion of brand perception.

Table 11. ANCOVA for Brand Perception with Social Media Usage Frequency as a Covariate

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Influencer Credibility	22.30	1	22.300	32.10	<0.001
Social Media Usage	8.50	1	8.500	12.00	<0.001
Error	126.45	497	0.254		
<b>Total</b>	<b>157.25</b>	<b>499</b>			

The ANCOVA analysis also shows that credibility of the influencer has a significant impact with the perception on the brand ( $F(1, 497) = 32.10$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) with a higher usage frequency of social media, even after the effects of social media had been statistically removed. The covariate, social media usage frequency also impacts brand perception,  $F(1, 497) = 12$ . Strengthening relative to baseline compared with control (WMD, 13; 95%CI, 11-15;  $p < 0.001$ ). This implies that once a brand collaborates with an influencer, there is a stable impact that it has on the perception of the brand regardless of the interference of the frequency of use of platforms to account for interference of reception of brand messages.

The results presented here show that there is high and significant positive relationship between credibility of the influencer and the perceived brand image ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $t = 6.075$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). This coincides with other research done on the influence of credibility on the attitude that consumers have for brands (Ohanian, 1990; Lou & Yuan, 2019). The regression analysis further substantiates the results of the tests and the findings that influencer credibility is a strong determinant of brand perception ( $B = 0.50$ ,  $\beta = 0.72$ ,  $t = 10.690$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and the model accounts for 52% of the general variance in brand perception. This corresponds with current research that underlines an important impact on perceived expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness of the influencers in changing brand perceptions (Freberg et al., 2011; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

The relevance of these conclusions is well aligned with the theoretical propositions on source credibility, in particular with the assertion that the higher the credibility level of the source



indicating a particular brand, the better the attitudes consumers develop toward this brand (Eisend, 2010; Lim et al., 2017; Erkan & Evans, 2018; Hwang & Zhang, 2020; Tafesse & Wood, 2021). Therefore, our findings add to this line of research by offering evidence that upholds influencer credibility as a significant factor that defines brand perception, to some extent, as supported by prior studies.

The relationship between influencer credibility and brand loyalty, in this case, was moderate but significant ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); furthermore, the subsequent regression analysis revealed that while controlling for brand perception, influencer credibility also predicted brand loyalty ( $B = 0.30$ ,  $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This result supports previous research showing that high-quality influencer marketing can enhance a more profound consumer commitment (Casaló et al., 2018; Wiesel et al., 2011). The present research enriches the understanding of the impact of credibility on the customer loyalty by arguing that although the brand credibility has been shown to have a central role, the credibility of influencers plays an independent role in driving customer loyalty. In addressing this gap this research seeks to explain the effect of influencer credibility on consumer loyalty. That is why our work can be seen as filling the gap in prior research which did not distinguish between brand perception and brand loyalty.

Previous work mainly concentrated on the extent to which brand attitude works as a moderating variable in the relationship between influencer credibility and consumer intentions, without giving considerable attention to the direct effect on brand commitment. Succeeding work fills this gap by demonstrating that the degree of influencer credibility has a direct positive impact on brand loyalty, even when controlling for the variable of brand perception (Jin & Muqaddam, 2019; Lee & Kim, 2020; Stubb et al., 2019; Kim & Kim, 2021; Ladhari et al., 2020). Such complex knowledge can contribute to the establishment of more effective procedures on how to take advantage of the authorities of influencers in strengthening brand loyalty among customers.

The results found also show moderate positive relationship between brand perception and brand loyalty; the correlation coefficient value is 0.65 and is significant at  $p < 0.01$ , while the regression analysis values are also significant which confirms that a positive perception of the brand results into brand loyalty ( $B = 0.40$ ,  $\beta = 0.65$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This goes a long way in supporting the existing theory that attitude toward the brand have a positive influence on consumer's brand loyalty (Keller, 1993; Oliver, 1999). Our study builds on this by showing that brand perception fully mediates the influence of perceived influencer credibility on brand loyalty. It shows the mediated relationship between influencer credibility and loyalty via the effect on the perception of the brand; this is something that earlier studies have not taken into account because they have shown directly related variables only, ignoring mediating variables (Xiao et al., 2018; Erkan & Evans, 2018; Tafesse & Wood, 2021; Pöyry et al., 2019; de Vries et al., 2017). Such a mediation analysis shows that brand perception acts as a mediator between influencer credibility and brand loyalty. This finding agrees with the theory of reasoned action by Ajzen and Fishbein, based on the fact that attitude has a strong effect on behavioral intent. Thus, our study goes beyond just showing how influencer credibility influences consumer loyalty by establishing brand perception as a mediator.

The analysis of variance returns leads to significant levels concerning brand loyalty depending on the type of influencer ( $F(3, 496) = 15.40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) providing the evidence that the type of influencer (micro, macro, other) is shifting consumer loyalty. This is consistent with literature indicating that diverse influencer categories can lead to diverse effects in consumer behaviour (De Veirman & Tuk, 2017; Marwick, 2015). The current study extends this literature by examining loyalty as an outcome of different types of influencers and offers a finer grained account of how different characteristics of influencers affect consumers' engagement.



Prior research pre established the consequences of influencers without making distinctions between the two groups of influencers. We can also state that marketing strategies regarding influencers as newcomers (e.g., micro-influencers vs. macro-influencers) result in different patterns of brand loyalty. For example, while micro-influencers, because of their perceived authentic connection with their followers, may result in stronger brand loyalty compared to influencers with more extensive but not as many close connections with their followers (Abidin, 2016; Kay et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2020; Martínez-López et al., 2020; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

As there is shown the table, the ANCOVA findings reveal that while controlling brand perception, influencer credibility remains a significant factor affecting brand loyalty ( $F(1,494) = 29. , p = 0. 001$ ) and that brand opinion is influenced by how frequently one uses social media ( $F(1, 497) = 12. 00, p < 0. 001$ ) for FOS, however, the egocentric cooperation depleted condition resulted in significantly greater concealment of correct responses compared to the control condition,  $t(34) = 3. 84, p < 0. 05$ . This shows that the effect of credibility and perception is not invariant to other factors but rather highly resistant to being swayed by them, which is a strong feature of this study in capturing all the factors that may affect brand results. Earlier works fail to manage these alternative variables, making the findings more simplistic in the pros and cons of influencer marketing (Hwang & Zhang, 2018; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019; Schouten et al., 2020; Martínez-López et al., 2020). To some extent, this study improves upon previous work that has not included these covariates in order to model the associations of influencer credibility with perceived brand attributes, brand attitude, and brand commitment. This methodological stringency helps to eliminate such external factors as specific uses of social networks as extraneous variables, so the credibility of our findings is as valid as possible. This is different from previous studies that did not control for such factors, thus offering a better perspective of how influencer credibility has both a direct and moderation effect on consumer behavior intention (Cheung et al., 2017; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

## Conclusion

The current piece of research establishes strong support from the empirical evidence to confirm the proposition that brand credibility of the digital influencer and the perceived image of the brand play an intermediary role in creating brand loyalty. The study found that influencer credibility has a positive relationship with brand perception, a closer analysis of the connection can only attest to the fact that the influencer credibility dependent variable remains a strong indicator of the independent variable, brand perception. Additionally, the fact that influencer credibility has an independent effect on brand loyalty when brand perception is held constant is more than enough reason to confirm the ability of credibility to influence consumer loyalty. The study also supports the mediating influence of brand perception on the impact of influencer credibility on brand loyalty; it shows that a positive brand perception has a positive impact on brand loyalty. Further, the differences in the effect of distinct influencer categories on the brand attitude imply that marketers should not overlook the features of the influencers they select. In addition, by minimising third-variable bias in this study, that is, frequency of social media usage influences the response rate to credibility of the influencer and thereby affecting the perception of brand, this study provides a clearer picture. These findings not only support and enrich the theories of source credibility and consumer behavior but also guide the practicing marketers who are looking forward to using digital influencers as a key in their marketing strategies.

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