

“Trust dynamics of virtual influencers: Exploring their influence on fashion purchase decisions”

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TRUST DYNAMICS OF VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS: EXPLORING THEIR INFLUENCE ON FASHION PURCHASE DECISIONS

Abstract

This study seeks to investigate the role of an influencer's credibility, personality congruence, and engagement on consumer trust and the role of such trust on purchasing propensity in the global fashion industry. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire (online) from 326 followers of fashion influencers from India in a span of 2 months, adopting a purposive sampling technique. The analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The results and findings show that Influencer Credibility, Personality Congruence, and Virtual Influencer Engagement have a direct impact on the trust of shoppers, and Trust has a strong mediating impact on Purchase Intention. However, Influencer Credibility with path coefficient ($\beta = 0.821$) influences the Purchase Intention the most. Trust is significantly influenced by both Influencer Credibility ($\beta = 0.541$, $t = 13.969$, $p < 0.001$) and Virtual Influencer Engagement ($\beta = 0.176$, $t = 7.451$, $p < 0.001$). Trust also served as a critical mediator, positively affecting Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.473$, $t = 2.958$, $p = 0.003$). This study bridges the gap that has so far received less attention, the trust factor in virtual influencers. This research thus contributes to marketers and brands making use of virtual influencer strategies by analyzing the antecedents of trust and its consequences on purchase intentions.

Keywords

virtual influencers, trust dynamics, fashion, purchase decisions, social media influence, virtual brand ambassadors, credibility, personality congruence, engagement

JEL Classification

M31, M37

INTRODUCTION

The past decade has witnessed how social media has become an integral part of people's daily lives, which has led to easy access and sharing of information. This escalation in the use of social media has profoundly affected the consumers' behavior and their decision-making process (Chen et al., 2023; Jamal et al., 2023). Consumers' trust in virtual communication and acceptance of information has grown tremendously over the last decade (McFarlane & Samsioe, 2020). Besides, in a survey, it was found that 92% of consumers trust virtual campaigns with influencers more than traditional marketing tactics (Sharma et al., 2024). Consumers now give more weightage to the opinions of virtual influencers than the companies' advertisement campaigns while evaluating a product (Jha et al., 2023). Social media influencers are third-party endorsers who have a substantial number of followers, and they regularly post certain content or feeds on social media that are viewed in large numbers (Behl & Jain, 2023). Virtual influencers are also seen as micro-celebrities (Fan et al., 2023). As per the report, 75% of fashion brands consider influencer marketing as one of their marketing strategies, and 47% of the brands choose to run influencer campaigns with micro and nano influencers as it is more budget-efficient and effective (Tiwari et al., 2024).

The fashion industry has been using celebrity endorsements as its core marketing strategy. This shift of marketing from traditional to virtual has led to influencer marketing as a core marketing strategy, especially for the fashion and lifestyle industry. The growth in the number of influencers and their popularity has reshaped the world of marketing. Higher return on investment, increased trustworthiness, better audience engagement, and real-time response from users have made influencer marketing more desirable. Brands are now recognizing and acknowledging the role of influencers in social media platforms (Jha et al., 2023). They are reaching out to influencers, as it is one of the best ways to reach the desired segment of the audience, targeting, and positioning. However, one challenge that remains constant for companies is to find the right influencer for their product or service who has the strongest impact on their desired target audience (Pop et al., 2022).

Despite many attempts to understand the role of fashion influences on consumers' purchase behavior, there remains a significant dearth of studies on the role of influence credibility, personality unity, and engagement on consumer trust and, finally, its impact on purchase intention in the global fashion industry. This study of virtual influences in the fashion industry is crucial due to their rising prominence and unique impact on consumer behavior. Specifically, the present study tries to answer the following: 1: How do virtual influencer characteristics and engagement influence consumer trust? 2: How does trust influence the purchase intentions of consumers in the fashion industry? This study investigates the role of influencer characteristics and engagement on trust. Lastly, the mediating role of trust would be probed to look into how it is perceived as an intermediary between characteristics such as credibility, personality congruence, and engagement in a virtual influencer and their effects on consumer purchase intentions.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

In online purchases, the credibility of influencers plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior and purchase intentions. Influencers' credibility, encompassing traits such as attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise, prominently affects consumers' purchase behavior (Rodrigo & Mendis, 2023). Credibility not only influences purchase decisions but also has an impact on the effectiveness of the campaign (Garg & Bakshi, 2024). Moreover, the perceived credibility of an influencer also has an impact on the message shared by that influencer, which hinges on the level of trustworthiness of the influencer (Janssen et al., 2022). The emergence of virtual influencers has shifted the paradigm in influencer marketing, offering a potent tool for increasing brand salience and attracting social media users, particularly Gen Y and Gen Z (Angmo & Mahajan, 2024). Indeed, the credibility of influencers, whether virtual or real, is a critical factor in the success of influencer marketing campaigns (Cohen et al., 2022). Trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness are key components

that influence credibility and, in turn, influence consumer behavior and purchase decisions in the virtual marketing landscape (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2023).

The alignment among the influencer's personality, the brand's personality, and the consumer's self-concept are essential for virtual marketing (Arief et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2023). This process involves self-congruence, which occurs when an influencer's characteristics are compatible with those of the buyer themselves or those that aim to appeal to them in case they have an ideal sense of self (Alboqami, 2023). It is further noted that such conformity goes a long way towards building a relationship between consumers and brands, hence affecting their attitudes toward products and their buying behavior (Alboqami, 2023; Belanche et al., 2021). Furthermore, in terms of how customers regard products, this variance can also affect their opinion about them (Gonzalez-Cavazos et al., 2023; Mann et al., 2022). Cooper et al. (2023) also emphasize the role of brand image constancy throughout its life cycle, as well as maintaining connections between the customer and his/her values. In conclusion, ensuring congruence between influencer personality, brand personality,

and consumer self-concept is essential in virtual marketing (Madadi et al., 2024). This level of correspondence may lead to positive shifts in their outlooks regarding buying goods from certain companies, thus increasing loyalty to these stores in the long run, even after encountering similar ones (Khan & Fatma, 2023).

Influencers in virtual marketing will play a very significant role in influencing and shaping consumers' trust and purchase intention towards fashion products (Pop et al., 2022). Influencer marketing thrives on the active engagement of influencers with their followers within virtual communities (van der Harst & Angelopoulos, 2024). The effectiveness of influencer marketing depends largely on the connections and relationships established between influencers and their followers, as well as their interactive engagements (Shah et al., 2020). Alboqami (2023) explains how the value homophily of virtual influencers as sources of messages can engage consumers, leading to a positive consumer response. According to Majczak (2023), social media influencers are considered powerful due to the desire of consumers to copy them. Li et al. (2023), and Yang (2024) say that customer engagement is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that influences value creation for both customers and organizations in the virtual marketing environment. Kim et al. (2023) and Teresa Borges-Tiago et al. (2023) stated that brands, on understanding the dynamics of the influencer-follower relationship, the trustworthiness of virtual influencers, and mechanisms that drive the effectiveness of influencer marketing, would thus be in a better position to leverage their influencer engagements in a strategic manner in the marketing efforts toward better consumer purchase decisions.

Among the factors affecting purchase intention within the virtual market, trust is relatively important (Jin et al., 2021). Recent research shows that customer trust influences purchase intention in connection with online purchasing behavior (Canguende-Valentim & Vale, 2023). Moreover, studies have highlighted the role of trust as a mediator and moderator in online shopping, emphasizing its importance in shaping purchase decisions (Jin et al., 2021). Website quality has been found to positively influence trust, leading to a higher purchase intention. The influence of social

interaction, including trust, on purchase intention in social commerce has been explored, underscoring the significance of trust in driving consumer behavior (Kumar et al., 2021). Garg and Bakshi (2024) have also examined how social media influencers, through their characteristics, can affect consumers' attitudes and, subsequently, their purchase intentions, highlighting the role of trust in this process. According to Kim et al. (2023), trust in a virtual influencer measures until the point the consumer believes the opinion leader's word and considers his advice as honest and trustworthy. In this way, the consumers' purchase intention will increase.

This study seeks to investigate how virtual influencer credibility, personality congruence, and virtual influencer engagement affect the consumer's trust and whether that credibility extends to purchase intentions toward fashion products (Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model).

Thus, based on the above literature, we can posit that:

- H1a: The credibility of virtual influencers positively affects the trust on virtual influencers.*
- H1b: The credibility of virtual influencers affects the purchase intention towards fashion products*
- H2a: The personality congruence of virtual influencers positively affects the trust on the virtual influencer.*
- H2b: The personality congruence of virtual influencers positively affects the purchase intention towards fashion brands.*
- H3a: Virtual influencers' engagement has a positive effect on trust towards the virtual influencer.*
- H3b: The engagement of virtual influencers has a positive impact on purchase intention toward the fashion brand.*
- H4: Trust in virtual influencers positively affects the purchase intention towards fashion brands.*

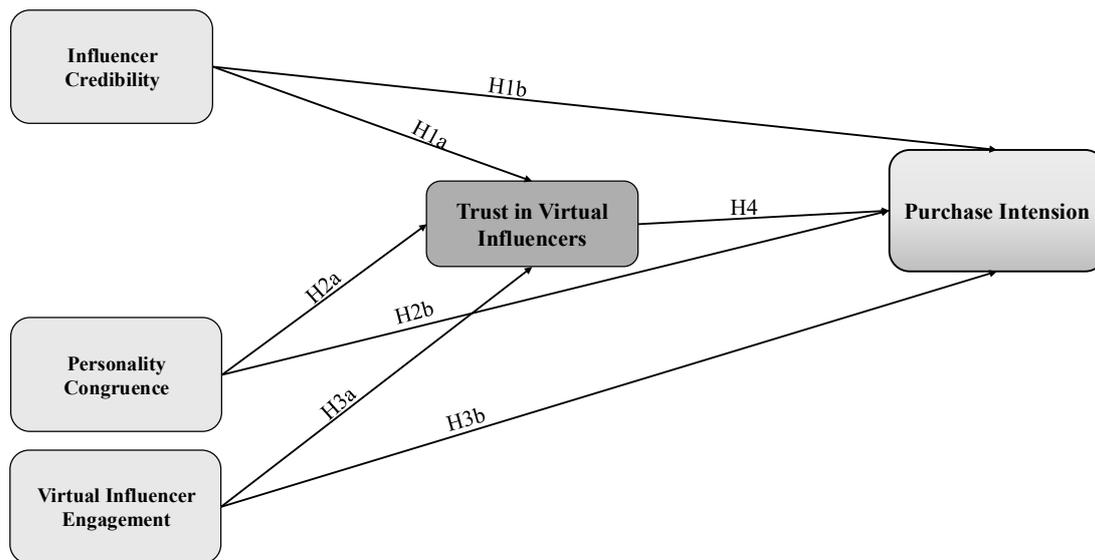


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model

2. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive study was conducted based on a survey conducted at the customer level of various social networking site users who have experienced the impact of virtual influencers on the fashion industry. The survey conducted garnered the data from 326 respondents, which is sufficient considering the complexity of the model and the items in the questionnaire, thereby ensuring the robustness of the result. The data were collected using purposive sampling, as the study required the selection of participants who followed virtual influencers and their recommendations for purchase decisions. Within the context of influencer marketing, purposive sampling is commonly used within studies regarding niche audiences: followers of a specific influencer (Simay et al., 2023). Due to the population being very specific in nature, a non-probability sample often becomes the most proper choice for getting a unique insight (Ghosh & Islam, 2023; Mehta et al., 2023). Structured questionnaire was adapted. It consisted of close-ended questions that were directed to check the influence of virtual influencers on consumers' purchase intention in the fashion industry. The researcher adopted the survey method, which was conducted in online mode, to collect quantitative data, which was in a span of 2 months. The survey questionnaire form was distributed to the respondents, and the only prerequisite was that they should actively follow virtual fashion influencers on social media to mitigate potential non-response bias. Data were solicited through social media and email outreach. Besides,

we sent the same to academic networks and appropriate forums where we thought professionals related to the industries might be interested in participating. Participation was strictly by choice, and no incentive was provided. It was conducted as a survey over four weeks between June and August 2024. Besides, informed consent was obtained from the respondents to address ethical considerations.

As presented in Table 1, the questionnaire included 16 items to assess the five constructs, which were identified through a rigorous review of the literature. The five constructs were identified from the previously developed scales and were tailored to the specific context of the present study. The self-administered questionnaire had two sections. Section 1 included five pivotal constructs: Virtual Influencer Credibility (IC), Personality Congruence (PC), Virtual Influencer Engagement (VIE), Trust (T), and Purchase Intention (PI).

The items and questions for the various constructs of the study were derived from the literature and modified as needed. Section 2 of the instrument aimed to extract respondents' profiles through four closed-ended questions that captured their demographic characteristics. The questionnaire used a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (7)," as recommended by Joshi et al. (2015). Before implementation, the questionnaire was subjected to validation by the subject experts to ensure its relevance.

Table 1. Constructs and indicators

| Constructs | No: of items | References |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Influencer Credibility (IC) | 4 | Rodrigo and Mendis (2023), landscape (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2023) |
| Personality Congruence (PC) | 3 | Arief et al. (2023), Chen et al. (2023), Alboqami (2023, Cooper et al. (2023) |
| Purchase Intention (PI) | 3 | Jin et al. (2021), Garg and Bakshi (2024), Kim et al. (2023) |
| Trust (T) | 3 | Jin et al. (2021), Garg and Bakshi (2024), Kim et al. (2023) |
| Virtual Influencer Engagement (VIE) | 3 | Pop et al. (2022), van der Harst and Angelopoulos (2024), Kim et al. (2023), Teresa Borges-Tiago et al. (2023) |

Table 2 displays the demographic profile of the participants. A total of 326 respondents' information was used for the analysis, wherein 46 % were male and 54% were females. The sample encompassed individuals across all age groups; however, the major focus of the study was the respondents from the age group of 21-30; almost 60% of the respondents came from this age group.

Table 2. Respondents' profile

| Construct | Profile | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 195 | 46% |
| | Female | 176 | 54% |
| | Prefer not to say | 0 | 0% |
| Qualification | Bachelor's degree | 127 | 39% |
| | Master's degree | 156 | 48% |
| | Other | 46 | 14% |
| Age | 18-20 | 5 | 5% |
| | 21-25 | 95 | 29% |
| | 26-30 | 104 | 32% |
| | 31-35 | 68 | 21% |
| | Above 35 | 42 | 13% |
| Total | | 326 | 100% |

Therefore, the data collected were analysed using PLS SEM, since it is considered a very robust platform for exploratory studies. According to Cheung et al. (2022) and Mican and Sitar-Taut (2024), PLS SEM will effectively display the direct and indirect effects of the independent variables. It is also considered superior to regression analysis in detecting mediation effects; thus, Jordão et al. (2020) and Zulfiqar et al. (2023) applied it in the study. PLS-SEM can deal with complex structural cause-effect models, even with a great number of constructs and indicators. This comprehensive nature of the analysis allows for an exploration of the relationships among identified constructs and hence makes way for testing and validating the model proposed. The use of the PLS-SEM will further add strength and credibility to the study, allowing subtle understanding and clarity of factors that influence the trust and purchase intention of the buyer.

3. RESULTS

PLS-SEM was used to establish a relationship between the variables. The analysis involved the formation of the outer model and inner model. The outer model also called the measurement model, is established to test the reliability and validity of the indicators of the variable constructs. For the reliability testing of the indicators, outer loadings are assessed, and Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are done for the construct reliability

After conducting reliability testing, the validity testing is done using construct validity, for which AVE (Average Variance Extracted) and discriminant validity are measured using the HTMT ratio (heterotrait-monotrait ratio). Further, the structural strength of the model convergent validity and discriminant validity is examined. Factor loadings are extracted, followed by an assessment of convergent validity Cronbach's alpha, rho A (reliability coefficient), Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) to investigate the validity of the constructs. Table 3 presents the outer loadings of all reflective indicators with all of the loadings above 0.70.

Table 3. Outer loadings of the indicators

| Indicators | Outer loadings |
|------------|----------------|
| IC1 | 0.792 |
| IC2 | 0.865 |
| IC3 | 0.826 |
| IC4 | 0.746 |
| P1 | 0.821 |
| P2 | 0.955 |
| P3 | 0.955 |
| PC1 | 0.792 |
| PC2 | 0.799 |
| PC3 | 0.784 |
| T1 | 0.875 |
| T2 | 0.804 |
| T3 | 0.696 |
| VI1 | 0.767 |
| VI2 | 0.761 |
| VI3 | 0.792 |

The results of Table 4 confirmed the convergent validity with Cronbach’s alpha value above 0.70 (Cheung et al., 2024), Composite Reliability above 0.07, and AVE above 0.05 (Hair et al., 2020)

In order to show the discriminant validity, the square root of AVE should be above the inner correlation of the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 5 presents the summary of the discriminant validity of the constructs. Table 6 presents the heterotrait-monotrait ratio, which is under 0.90, confirming a good fit of discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015).

Once the measurement model was assessed for its preciseness and accuracy, the next step was to check the strength of the structural model. As recommended by Henseler et al. (2016), the model fit indicators were estimated before evaluating the path coefficients using SRMR criteria (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual). The model is considered acceptable when SRMR is set to zero, and its value ranges between 0.08 and 0.10 to avoid model misspecification (Hu & Bentler,

1998). The model for the study presented a .083 SRMR value, which represents a good model fit.

To check the multicollinearity between the independent variables, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was analyzed. The criteria for VIF value are below 5, but it is recommended to be below 3 to eliminate any possibility of a multicollinearity problem (Hair et al., 2020). For the given model, all VIF values extracted were below the recommended value of 3.

To evaluate the significance of the structural model, as suggested by Hair et al. (2020), non-parametric bias corrected bootstrapping approach in Smart PLS with subsamples of 5,000 and 95% bias-corrected CI was used. Table 7 presents the results of hypothesis testing, wherein all the hypotheses are supported by p-values < 0.05, which indicates the positive influence between the variables tested.

It was found that influencer credibility, personality congruence, and virtual influencer engagement

Table 4. Convergent validity analysis

| Variable | Cronbach’s alpha | Composite reliability (rho_a) | Composite reliability (rho_c) | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Influencer Credibility (IC) | 0.791 | 0.814 | 0.864 | 0.616 |
| Personality Congruence (PC) | 0.858 | 0.759 | 0.77 | 0.528 |
| Purchase Intention (PI) | 0.896 | 0.895 | 0.937 | 0.832 |
| Trust (T) | 0.703 | 0.718 | 0.836 | 0.632 |
| Virtual Influencer Engagement (VIE) | 0.873 | 0.887 | 0.817 | 0.598 |

Table 5. Discriminant validity Fornell-Larcker criteria

| Variable | Influencer Credibility | Personality Congruence | Purchase Intention | Trust | Virtual Influencer Engagement |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Influencer Credibility | 0.785 | | | | |
| Personality Congruence | 0.616 | 0.727 | | | |
| Purchase Intention | 0.923 | 0.393 | 0.912 | | |
| Trust | 0.774 | 0.55 | 0.668 | 0.795 | |
| Virtual Influencer Engagement | 0.549 | 0.639 | 0.513 | 0.71 | 0.773 |

Table 6. Discriminant validity heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) matrix table

| Variable | Influencer Credibility | Personality Congruence | Purchase Intention | Trust | Virtual Influencer Engagement |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Influencer Credibility | | | | | |
| Personality Congruence | 0.68 | | | | |
| Purchase Intention | 0.658 | 0.534 | | | |
| Trust | 0.652 | 0.856 | 0.837 | | |
| Virtual Influencer Engagement | 0.719 | 0.771 | 0.634 | 0.897 | |

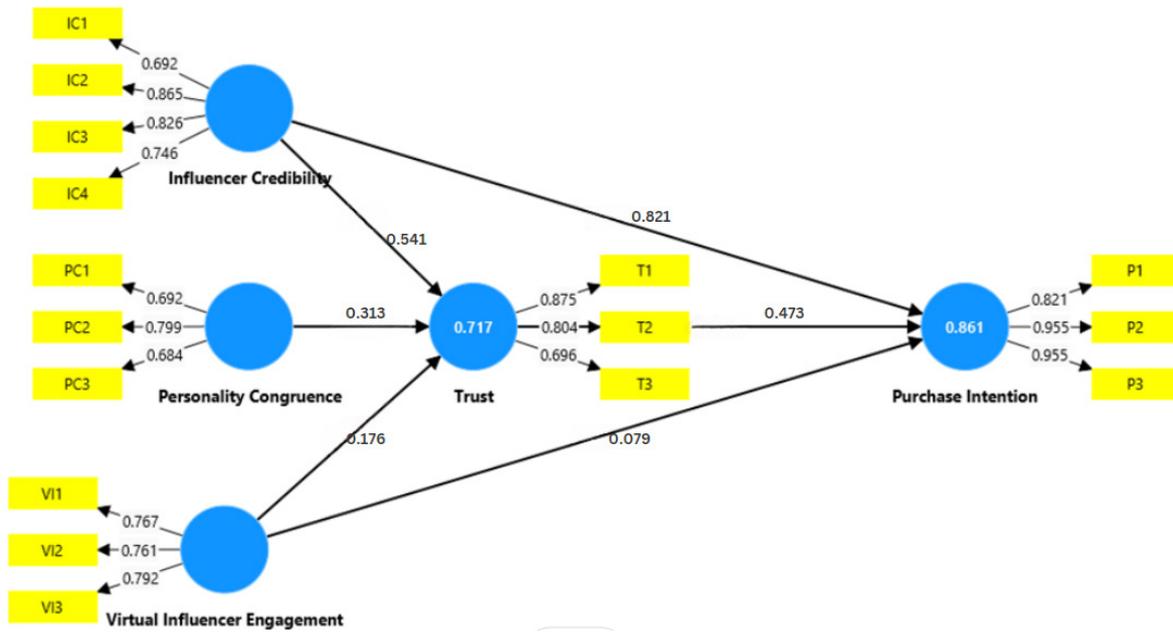


Figure 2. Path analysis: SEM model

Table 7. Path coefficients, t-values, p-values

| Variables | Path coefficients | t-statistics | p-values | Result |
|--|-------------------|--------------|----------|----------|
| Influencer credibility → Purchase Intention | 0.821 | 28.688 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Influencer Credibility → Trust | 0.541 | 13.969 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Personality Congruence → Trust | 0.313 | 1.196 | 0.032 | Accepted |
| Trust → Purchase Intention | 0.473 | 2.958 | 0.003 | Accepted |
| Virtual Influencer Engagement → Purchase Intention | 0.079 | 2.125 | 0.034 | Accepted |
| Virtual Influencer Engagement → Trust | 0.176 | 7.451 | 0.000 | Accepted |

Table 8. Specific indirect effect

| Variables | Path coefficients | t-statistics | p-values | Result |
|--|-------------------|--------------|----------|----------|
| Virtual Influencer Engagement → Trust → Purchase Intention | -0.065 | 2.816 | 0.005 | Accepted |
| Influencer Credibility → Trust → Purchase Intention | -0.093 | 2.921 | 0.004 | Accepted |
| Personality Congruence → Trust → Purchase Intention | -0.010 | 0.989 | 0.023 | Accepted |

have a direct impact on the trust of shoppers. Trust has a strong mediating impact on the Purchase Intention of the buyers. However, Influencer Credibility with path coefficient ($\beta=0.821$) influences the purchase intention the most.

Also, Virtual Influencer Engagement with $\beta = 0.176$ and 0.079 seems to have a very low influence on the trust and purchase intention of the buyers.

In Table 8, we can see the mediation effect, wherein the independent variables are mediated by the trust variable towards the dependent variable, the Purchase Intention of the buyers. It is seen that trust positively mediates the impact of Influencer

Credibility, Personality Congruence, and Virtual Influencer Engagement on the Purchase Intention of the buyers.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study vividly portray the complex dynamics taking place between virtual influencers and consumer behavior within the fashion industry. According to the data gathered, there was a mixed perception of the credibility of virtual influencers, with a big share of respondents harboring skepticism about their authenticity, which is also mentioned by Jin et al. (2019). The results of

the path analysis reveal several significant relationships between key variables affecting trust and purchase intention. Influencer credibility has a strong and highly significant positive impact on purchase intention (path coefficient = 0.821, $t = 28.688$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, influencer credibility significantly enhances trust (coefficient = 0.541, $t = 13.969$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the higher the credibility, the higher the trust, and the lower the credibility, the lower the trust in such influencers. A huge reason for this skepticism is the artificial nature of such influencers and generalized concerns about the reliability of their endorsement. This finding is in line with the study done by Abu Shanab and Shoheib (2021). While virtual influencers may draw a sizeable following, convincing such followers to drive their purchase decisions based on the endorsements calls for some strategic effort, which is in line with the study done by Tiwari et al. (2024). After analyzing purchase intentions, it was found that virtual influencers were moderately effective in offering consumer interest toward purchasing fashion products, which is also supported by Bevan-Dye and Motaung (2023). They have the potential to create awareness and interest, but

the ability to really drive a purchase inclination sounds limited (Anastasiadou et al., 2019; Ma & Coelho, 2024).

The findings of this study underline the three major tenets of virtual influencer marketing: credibility, engagement, and strategic integration. Focusing on these areas would enable the use of virtual influencers to improve marketing efforts and really drive consumer behavior in the fashion industry. This study provides evidence that consumer influence on credibility, personality congruence, connection, belief, and purchase decisions depend on complex dynamics. Connected to this, the direct consequences of TVI can be seen in personality congruence and engagement in the process of building up trust with consumers. Hence, it can be said that Virtual Influencer Reliability is the prime factor if society perceives virtual influencers as reliable. Knowing this and having a really great relationship between PC and TVI, one might realize that the construction of the virtual influencer according to the persona is among the biggest drivers for trust building and, thus, leading to the wanted effect called TVI. In view of this, brands need to focus on and communicate the authenticity of the virtual influencers to be on a more even footing (Tse et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research revolves around virtual fashion influencers and various antecedents like personality congruence, virtual influencer engagement and influencer credibility their impact on trust leading to purchase intention. There is a relationship between influencers' customer purchasing intentions and trust in influencers, consistent with prior research by Tiwari et al. (2024). The most crucial component in this relationship is the virtual influencer's credibility. This complements earlier research examining the impact of virtual influencer awareness on customer confidence. Regarding the relationship between trust in virtual influencers and purchase intention, it is possible to conclude that virtual influencer credibility, personality congruence, and virtual influence engagement all favor purchase intention. Again, it turns out that virtual influencer credibility is the most crucial factor influencing this association. Third, there was a question about the relationship between influencer trust and buy intention. This study found that trust had a favourable effect on purchasing intention. This study is suitable for marketers and brands, and it proposes that one should focus on virtual influencers who can portray credibility by depicting a personality that goes hand in hand with the brand's image to increase reliance. The formation of long-term relationships with influencers instead of campaigns promotes increased relationships with consumers. Active engagement through interactive content builds a strong relationship between followers and brands, which increases purchase intention. Moreover, they must leverage data-based analytics to identify influencers who can effectively support them and always be a part of omnichannel strategies for better reach. Influencer marketing necessarily needs transparency, built on trust in the consumer and as an ethical approach towards marketing, thus driving purchases.

There are a few limitations to this study that we must face. Primarily, the size of the sample and the socio-demographic composition of respondents could limit inferences made from this study beyond it. Future studies should aim to cover a more extensive and different range of respondents, ensuring thus a better representation of results emerging from it. Other possible future directions may involve looking into the psychology behind consumer trust toward and engagement with virtual influencers, in turn sharpening their utility in advertisement campaigns.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Suchita Jha.

Data curation: Richa Chaudhary, Bharti Shukla.

Formal analysis: Suchita Jha.

Funding acquisition: Richa Chaudhary, Bharti Shukla.

Investigation: Suchita Jha, Richa Chaudhary.

Project administration: Suchita Jha.

Resources: Richa Chaudhary, Bharti Shukla.

Software: Bharti Shukla.

Supervision: Suchita Jha.

Visualization: Bharti Shukla.

Writing – original draft: Suchita Jha, Bharti Shukla.

Writing – review & editing: Suchita Jha, Richa Chaudhary, Bharti Shukla.

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