White Rose Research Online

eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk
Universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York

Deposited via The University of Sheffield.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/220594/

Version: Published Version

Article:
Pandit, A., McLeay, F., Zaveri, M.M. et al. (2024) Continued engagement intention with social media influencers: the role of experience. Internet Research, 35 (7). pp. 1-29. ISSN: 1066-2243

https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-12-2023-1105

Reuse
This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licence. This licence allows you to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon the work, even commercially, as long as you credit the authors for the original work. More information and the full terms of the licence here:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

Takedown
If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
University of Sheffield
UNIVERSITY of York

The current issue and full text archive of this journal is available on Emerald Insight at:
https://www.emerald.com/insight/1066-2243.htm

Continued engagement intention with social media influencers: the role of experience

Ameet Pandit
Marketing and Tourism Group, Newcastle Business School, College of Human and Social Futures, The University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia
Fraser McLeay
Sheffield University Management School, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK
Moulik M. Zaveri
Department of Marketing, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia
Jabir Al Mursalin
Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia, and
Philip J. Rosenberger III
Marketing and Tourism Group, Newcastle Business School, College of Human and Social Futures, The University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia and
Marketing and Tourism Group, College of Human and Social Futures, The University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia

Received 3 December 2023
Revised 29 April 2024
21 July 2024
13 October 2024
Accepted 14 October 2024

Abstract

Purpose – The emergence of social media platforms has revolutionized how brands develop partnerships with social media influencers (SMIs). However, users are seeking more meaningful engagement with SMIs, and little is known about how brands can shift their focus from transient engagements to continued engagement that builds long-term brand–consumer relationships. Extant research has provided inconsistent findings regarding consumer engagement behavior. To address this knowledge deficit, we contribute to the consumer engagement literature by developing and testing a conceptual model that explores and explains the relationships between the factors that influence continued engagement intention (CEI), a form of behavioral intention.

Design/methodology/approach – A literature review was conducted to identify gaps and develop a theoretically informed conceptual model and hypotheses. Survey data from 604 Instagram SMI followers were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling using SmartPLS 3.3.3 to assess the structural model relationships and conduct *post hoc* analysis.

Findings – The findings suggest that it is important to positively influence consumer responses to elicit CEI. Furthermore, homophily attitudes toward SMIs moderate the relationship between SMI experience and CEI.

Practical implications – Brands must work with SMIs to create positive SMI experiences and develop CEI. Furthermore, SMIs should focus on brands that fit their lifestyles to enhance homophily attitudes and forge CEI.

Originality/value – This study contributes to the literature by combining social exchange and flow theories to develop and test a holistic framework for examining CEIs regarding SMIs and brands. The findings show that creating positive SMI experiences benefits brands seeking CEI.

Keywords Continued engagement intention, Consumer experience, Homophily attitudes, Luxury fashion, Social media influencers

Paper type Research paper

© Ameet Pandit, Fraser McLeay, Moulik M. Zaveri, Jabir Al Mursalin and Philip J. Rosenberger III. Published by Emerald Publishing Limited. This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this licence may be seen at http://creativecommons.org/licences/by/4.0/legalcode

This research has been supported by a Faculty Grant from the Newcastle Business School, University of Newcastle, Australia.

Internet Research
Vol. 35 No. 7, 2025
pp. 1-29
Emerald Publishing Limited
1066-2243
DOI 10.1108/INTR-12-2023-1105

1. Introduction

Social media influencers (SMIs) are widely recognized as online opinion leaders (Geng *et al.*, 2024). However, their potential role in enhancing brand performance remains under-researched (Sánchez-Fernández and Jiménez-Castillo, 2021). The global value of SMI marketing is estimated at US$1.64 billion and is expected to grow in the coming years (Statista, 2023). Brands are increasingly turning to SMIs to engage consumers (Aw *et al.*, 2022) by posting branded content, opinions, recommendations, and experiences to drive post-engagement through views, likes, comments, shares, visibility, virality, and persuasion (Sheng *et al.*, 2024). For instance, PewDiePie garnered over 322 million views on YouTube in a single month (Rohde and Mau, 2021). Social media creates opportunities for interactions among SMIs, brands, and consumers for entertainment, hedonic experiences, and economic rewards (Jahn and Kunz, 2012). However, creating and maintaining a long-term engaging experience is challenging for many brands (Giakoumaki and Krepapa, 2020). Research on technology acceptance suggests that understanding users' engagement behavior is more important than their adoption because it exemplifies long-term use beyond initial adoption (Kim *et al.*, 2013). Thus, brands need to create continued engagement between users and SMI by enhancing their experiences to ensure the long-term usage of their products beyond the initial adoption.

Consumer engagement (CE) refers to the interaction between a consumer as an engagement subject and a focal engagement object (Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014; Hollebeek and Macky, 2019), such as SMI. The cognitive and emotional absorption experienced by consumers through CE with a focal object such as SMIs (Brodie *et al.*, 2013) is anticipated to influence outcomes such as ongoing search behavior and repurchase intentions (Cheung *et al.*, 2021), word-of-mouth (WOM) (De Oliveira Santini *et al.*, 2020; Wang and Lee, 2020), sharing intention, and recommendations. Recognizing the interactive nature of CE has become more crucial (Sheng *et al.*, 2024), especially when users experience fatigue when repeatedly exposed to substantial volumes of information SMIs and brands (Bright *et al.*, 2015), often opting to disengage when overwhelmed by excessive content in their social media feeds (Bright and Logan, 2018). Typically, 51% of users scroll past posts from SMIs in their feeds (Carter, 2023). Instagram engagement rates have decreased from 1.67% in 2020 to 1.18% in 2022 (Amoyo, 2022). Thus, there is a distinct lack of understanding of what drives consumers' continued engagement with SMIs (Dolan *et al.*, 2019; Pezzuti *et al.*, 2021), and few studies have investigated the drivers that affect continued engagement activities (Vander Shee *et al.*, 2020). Moreover, as firms increasingly leverage influencers for promotional activities, it is imperative to comprehend the dynamics of CE with SMIs (Pradhan *et al.*, 2023). However, the results of extant research provide contrasting positive, negative, insignificant, and significant findings between CE and its outcomes (Beckers *et al.*, 2018), emphasizing a lack of consistency in the results (De Oliveira Santini *et al.*, 2020). For example, some studies indicate a strong relationship between CE and WOM (Halaszovich and Nel, 2017), whereas other studies observe a weak relationship (Badrinarayanan *et al.*, 2015). Research has been inconsistent regarding the relationship between content-related antecedents (e.g. hedonic and informative content) and CE behavior (Kefi and Maar, 2020; Kulikovskaja *et al.*, 2023; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014). To address this knowledge deficit, we contribute to the CE literature in this study by developing and testing a conceptual model that explores and explains the relationships between the factors that influence continued engagement intention (CEI), a form of behavioral intention (Hepola *et al.*, 2020) in the SMI context. Various theories have examined continued engagement intentions, such as the theory of planned behavior (Madden *et al.*, 1992) and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003).

In this study, we adopted a theory-integration approach by integrating the flow theory and social exchange theory to advance the understanding of CEI in the SMI context. Furthermore, several studies have focused on homophily attitudes in the context of social media. For example, Ladhari *et al.* (2020) focused on the three dimensions of homophily (i.e. attitude, values, and appearance) of SMIs. In the luxury fashion context, Lee and Watkins (2016) revealed a strong positive effect of parasocial interaction determined by attitude on luxury brand perceptions and purchase intention.

Luxury brands have been slower to adopt social media channels (Hughes *et al.*, 2019), given their desire for exclusivity (Chandon *et al.*, 2016). Despite this initial reluctance, such brands now regularly use social media (Kim and Ko, 2012), where platforms such as Instagram offer opportunities for visual extensions of benefits to luxury fashion brands (Filieri *et al.*, 2023). Luxury fashion brands, such as Louis Vuitton, Burberry, and Calvin Klein, live stream content from the catwalk via social channels (Plangger *et al.*, 2021), which has allowed these brands to strengthen consumer–brand engagement (Dhaoui, 2014).

However, there is a limited understanding of luxury brands and the effectiveness of marketing efforts on social media platforms (Oc *et al.*, 2023), and CEI research in the luxury domain is also limited (Giakoumaki and Krepapa, 2020). Moreover, there is a commonly held belief that the luxury sector has not experienced substantial advantages from social media, given the distinctive traits of luxury brands, such as exclusivity, scarcity, and prestige, which run counter to social media's emphasis on widespread accessibility (Zha *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, personalized physical interactions and services offered in brick-and-mortar stores, integral to the luxury shopping experience, are difficult to replicate online (Hoang *et al.*, 2022). This study examines the factors that drive continued engagement between SMIs and consumers to address these knowledge gaps and to understand the factors that elicit positive consumer responses in the context of luxury goods on Instagram.

Many brands prefer Instagram as their marketing communication platform owing to its 1.3 billion monthly active users, with 79% of marketers considering Instagram an important part of their campaigns (Santora, 2022). Instagram provides the context for this research because it is the preferred social media platform for luxury fashion brands and consumers (Santora, 2022). In the luxury space, Chiara Ferragni, an Italian blogger and fashion designer, has 27.7 million Instagram followers and 755,000 X/Twitter followers (DePino, 2023). However, studies on the use of SMIs by luxury brands remain scarce despite the number of luxury brands that now use social media (Athwal *et al.*, 2019). To address these shortcomings, we develop and test a conceptual framework that examines consumers' experiences with SMIs and how these experiences influence CEI. We also examine the influence of homophily attitudes toward SMIs on the relationship between these experiences and CEI and investigate the impact of CEI on consumer responses.

Accordingly, this study contributes significantly to the literature in several key respects. First, we focus on the challenges brands face in creating CEI and the drivers of CEI (Yuan and Lou, 2020). Second, we contribute to the growing but scarce literature on SMI and luxury branding marketing by responding to calls for further research on how SMIs can foster CEI (Hughes *et al.*, 2019). Third, we examined the relationship between CEI and consumer responses, including purchase intention, intention to share, and adoption of the SMI recommendations. SMI-related consumer behavior and the mechanisms enabling positive behavioral response formation can be considered complex phenomena that cannot be explained by a single theory-driven model (Basha *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, we developed and tested a holistic conceptual framework by drawing on a theory-integration approach (Cheung *et al.*, 2022) that combines social exchange theory (SET) and flow theory.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1 Continued engagement intention

Scholars have been focusing on the concept and drivers of CE for several years (Pradhan *et al.*, 2023; Wang and Huang, 2023), which can be considered a form of behavioral intention (Hepola *et al.*, 2020). Thus, CEI can be conceptualized as a set of measurable consumer intentions in response to content posted on social media by SMIs (Barger *et al.*, 2016). CEI is an important factor in enhancing the interactions between consumers and brands in a social media context. CEI contributes to enhanced consumer outcomes such as self-brand connection, heightened empowerment, value co-creation (Giakoumaki and Krepapa, 2020), brand attachment and loyalty (Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014), and consumer–brand relationships (Pansari and Kumar, 2017). Table 1 summarizes the selected studies that focus on engagement and behavioral outcomes from a social media perspective.

Table 1. Selected studies that focus on engagement and behavioral outcomes

Study	Main theories	Antecedents	Moderators	Mediators	Outcomes
This manuscript	Flow theory Social exchange theory (SET)	Consumer experience with Social Media Influencer	Attitudes toward SMI	Continued engagement intention	Recommendation adoption Purchase intention Sharing intention
Cheung *et al.* (2020)	Social media marketing Consumer–brand engagement Brand knowledge	Social media marketing		Consumer–brand engagement	Brand awareness Brand image
Ibáñez-Sánchez *et al.* (2022)	Associative network memory model	Collaboration of the influencer with a renowned vs non-renowned brand	Service vs product		Attitude toward the message Purchase intention Intention to search for information Credibility of the influencer
Koay *et al.* (2020)	S-O-R model	Perceived social media activities	Co-creation behavior	Brand experience	Customer-based brand equity
Leite and Baptista (2022)	Consumer–influencer relationship Influencer–brand meaning transfer Consumer–brand relationship	Intimate self-disclosure		Parasocial relationship Source credibility Brand trust	Purchase intention
Sánchez-Fernández and Jiménez-Castillo (2021)	Emotional attachment	Emotional attachment Perceived information value		Perceived influencer Positive word-of-mouth (WOM)	Positive WOM Intention to purchase recommended brands
Waqas *et al.* (2021)	Consumer culture theory	Openness to experience		Branded content experience	Consumer engagement with branded content
Yu and Yuan (2019)	Brand attributes Brand experience Brand attachment Brand trust	Utilitarian value Hedonic value		Brand experience Brand attachment Brand trust	Value equity Brand equity Relationship equity

Source(s): Authors' own work

However, SMI–brand partnerships also have disadvantages. For instance, SMIs and brands are subject to "cancel culture" (Jones *et al.*, 2022). Cancel culture refers to the act of "canceling" someone, which involves rejecting, ignoring, and publicly opposing their views or actions. It often entails depriving individuals of time and attention and even impeding their ability to sustain a livelihood (Goldsbrough, 2020). SMIs and their branded content can be scrutinized in detail. Thus, any missteps in terms of an SMI's conduct or posts can lead to a drop in followers and their being "canceled," which means the SMI would lose lucrative brand-partnership opportunities (Wei *et al.*, 2022). The lucrative nature of these partnerships has prompted several SMIs to resort to unethical methods to amass followers and exert their influence (Tsapatsoulis *et al.*, 2019). This includes tactics such as spoofing or stealing content from more popular profiles or deceiving followers who believe they are engaging with legitimate accounts (Marwick and Boyd, 2011). Furthermore, if their followers realize that

commercial motivations drive an SMI's involvement with a brand, it can have negative effects on the SMI's trustworthiness and reputation (Singh *et al.*, 2020). Consequently, any negative publicity for an SMI can put a brand at risk of being "guilty by association," leaving it vulnerable to any criticism that the SMI may face (Pantano, 2021). Brands want to focus on developing long-term interactions beyond initial ones (Chen *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, we posit that CEI is a better indicator of engagement than a conventional approach (Chen *et al.*, 2020), where CEI allows brands to create, maintain, and develop long-term relationships with consumers and, thus, build long-term competitive advantage (See, 2018) as opposed to singular engagement platforms (Roy, 2016). There are value-added benefits to brands and SMIs that affect CEI (Chae *et al.*, 2002; De Moor *et al.*, 2010; Kim and Han, 2011; Pihlström, 2007). These value-added benefits could be social, utilitarian, or hedonically driven and could serve user needs (Revels *et al.*, 2010) and encourage CEI (Lee and Kim, 2010). For example, SMIs, by holding Gucci handbags or wearing Prada on their social media posts, can illustrate a hedonic-driven lifestyle. Consequently, CEI has emerged as a pivotal metric for marketers, offering insights into whether consumers will maintain their relationship with a brand (Kwon *et al.*, 2014).

2.2 Role of social media influencers and consumer experiences

Social media has changed how brands create and distribute content and how they communicate with and among consumers (Tsai and Men, 2013). Brands are aware of the potential benefits of cooperating with SMIs (Munnukka *et al.*, 2019), including enhanced brand attitudes and perceptions and increased purchase intention (Lee and Watkins, 2016) and engagement (Sheng *et al.*, 2024). This study focuses on consumers who follow SMIs (i.e. SMI followers) to better understand the relationship between consumers' SMI experiences and their CEI for a specific SMI. Following Prentice *et al.* (2019), we conceptualize the SMI experience as a higher-order construct consisting of affective, intellectual and sensory experience dimensions evoked in consumers' interactions with an SMI. In the context of Instagram, SMI experiences are evoked by a range of sensory experiences through SMI-created texts, visuals, colors, sounds, and videos. Sensory brand cues have the capacity to be presented in profoundly emotional terms, thereby potentially evoking more intense affective responses (Tafesse, 2016), that is, affective experiences. Intellectual experiences occur when SMIs provoke thoughts, stimulate curiosity, and influence problem-solving abilities, that is, cognitive processing (Prentice *et al.*, 2019). Brand posts that leverage media-rich and interactive capabilities to foster a comprehensive brand experience are more likely to attract heightened CE (Tafesse, 2016). Homophily attitudes toward SMIs can be formed based on whether consumers perceive that SMIs think, behave, and are like them in many respects (Ladhari *et al.*, 2020). Thus, SMIs seek to develop and maintain meaningful consumer interactions by enhancing consumers' experiences (see Table 2) and homophily attitudes toward the SMI.

The experiences and homophily attitudes toward an SMI will determine the extent of engagement consumers are likely to have with an SMI, potentially leading to purchase intention, sharing, and recommendations. We use SET in parallel with flow theory to provide a conceptual underpinning for examining the role of SMI experiences and homophily attitudes toward SMI in cultivating CEI and consumer responses.

2.3 Social exchange theory (SET)

SET represents an interdependent relationship between the SMI and the follower, based on the principles of reciprocity and rewarding actions initiated by the SMI (Cortez and Johnston, 2020). Users commence and maintain relationships with positive exchange interactions (e.g. positive experiences and CEI), resulting in expected rewards such as financial benefits, friendships, and emotional satisfaction interactions (Lambe *et al.*, 2001). For example, 61% of consumers have engaged with brands on social media in exchange for an incentive (Wiley, 2022). Users engage and interact with SMI, believing they will benefit from sharing and

Table 2. Synthesis of social media influencer (SMI) literature

Study	Study area (yes = ✓) Experiences	Attitudes	Engagement behavior	Adoption of the SMI recommendation	Purchase intention	Sharing intention	Main theory	Country/ Context
This manuscript	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Flow theory Social Exchange Theory (SET)	Australia
Barry and Graça (2018)		✓	✓				Incongruity theory Superiority and Relief theory	US
Barta *et al.* (2023)	✓				✓		Stimuli-Organism-Response (SOR)	Spain
Carlson *et al.* (2019)	✓		✓		✓		Customer perceived value/benefit framework	China
Chen *et al.* (2021)		✓	✓				Parasocial identification	China
Dinh and Lee (2022)					✓		Meaning-transfer model	US
Florenthal (2019)		✓					Uses and gratifications (U&G) theory Technology acceptance model (TAM)	Generation Y and Z
Giakoumaki and Krepapa (2020)			✓				Brand engagement in self-concept	Luxury
Hudders and De Jans (2022)		✓	✓				Meaning-transfer model	Gender
Jiménez-Castillo and Sánchez-Fernández (2019)			✓		✓		Media dependency theory	Spain
Kim and Kim (2020)		✓			✓		SET	US
Sánchez-Fernández and Jiménez-Castillo (2021)					✓		Social influence theory	Spain
Seeler *et al.* (2019)	✓						Experience	New Zealand/ Industry

(*continued*)

Table 2. Continued

Study	Study area (yes = ✓) Experiences	Attitudes	Engagement behavior	Adoption of the SMI recommendation	Purchase intention	Sharing intention	Main theory	Country/ Context
Shan *et al.* (2020)		✓	✓		✓		Source credibility model Source attractiveness model	China
Tafesse and Wood (2022)			✓				Social influence theory	Indonesia
Vrontis *et al.* (2021)		✓	✓		✓		Antecedents-Consequences logic	US

Source(s): Authors' own work

exchange (Shiau and Luo, 2012). Usually, if the SMI provides a benefit to a user (e.g. a positive experience), the user will reply in kind by engaging in positive reciprocating actions (Whitener *et al.*, 1998), such as CEI (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2017), and eventually enhance positive consumer responses.

2.4 Flow theory

Flow theory can help explain the factors that influence consumer experience (Novak *et al.*, 2000). Flow is a cognitive state that enhances a consumer's experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) because of the heightened level of concentration, energy, and focus when engaging in a very specific activity (Novak *et al.*, 2000), such as interacting with SMIs. This leads to high enjoyment, involvement, and concentration, making an activity interesting, gratifying, and compelling (Hyun *et al.*, 2022). For example, a positive experience with SMI allows followers to experience flow, which leads to CEI and positive consumer responses. The SMI experience is so enjoyable that followers lose track of time and become cognitively locked into watching the SMI (Kim *et al.*, 2020), resulting in CEI. Thus, the flow theory is appropriate for examining the impact of SMI experiences on consumer responses. In line with this discussion, we propose our conceptual model (Figure 1).

3. Hypothesis development

3.1 Consumers' experience with social media influencers and their continued engagement intention

Consumer experiences with SMIs on various platforms constitute intricate interactions involving SMI-generated texts, visuals, colors, sounds, and videos, collectively shaping sensory experiences (Rose *et al.*, 2012). These experiences, both tangible (e.g. features of a luxury handbag) and intangible (e.g. the emotional resonance of owning a luxury brand handbag; Ong *et al.*, 2018), contribute to overall consumer perception. Consumers actively engage in the cognitive, affective, and sensory processing of information derived from these brand-post interactions, forming lasting impressions in their memory (Rose *et al.*, 2012).

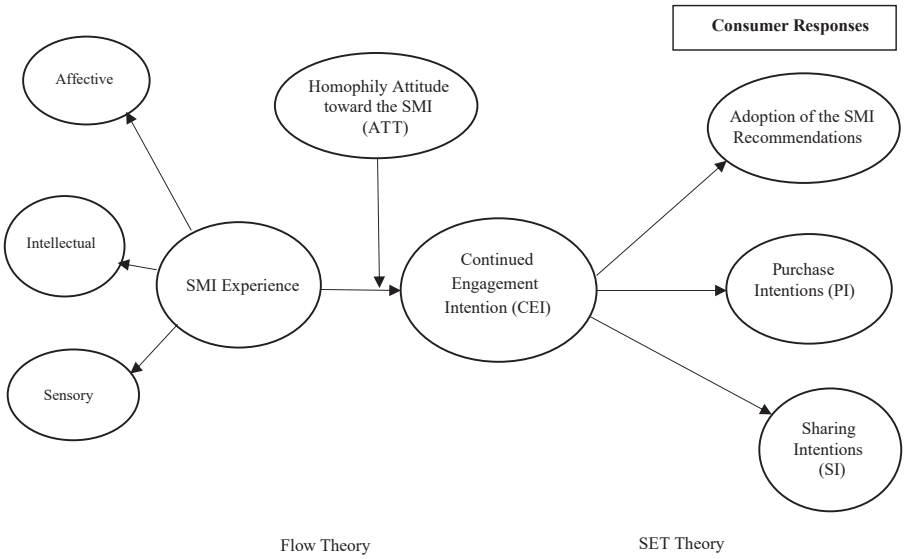

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Consequently, SMIs serve as pivotal conduits for brand interactions, potentially influencing the determination of positive consumer experiences (Buzeta *et al.*, 2020). A flow experience in social media is characterized by a consumer's cognitive state featuring a seamless sequence of responses, intrinsic enjoyment, loss of self-consciousness, and self-reinforcement during network navigation (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). Thus, a flow experience can explain how consumers will likely spend more time than they intend on SMI-related content.

A positive sensory flow experience triggered by SMIs will likely evoke favorable emotions, feelings, and sentiments that constitute affective experiences. Simultaneously, intellectual flow experiences unfold as SMIs prompt thoughtful consideration, stimulate curiosity, and influence consumers' problem-solving abilities through cognitive processing (Prentice *et al.*, 2019). Thus, a positive flow experience can be important in discerning continued engagement with SMIs. Based on flow theory, we posit that a positive SMI experience fosters CEI with SMIs, thereby shaping ongoing interactions. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H1. SMI experience has a positive effect on consumers' CEI with SMIs.

Purchase intention is a direct indicator of eventual purchasing actions (Adelaar *et al.*, 2003) and is an "individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand" (Spears and Singh, 2004, p. 56). In the context of SET, purchase intention denotes the intention to act favorably in response to information stimuli related to a brand or product (Kim and Johnson, 2016). However, recent studies have found that potential consumers are inclined to purchase a product promoted by SMI (Kemp, 2023). Given that flow is a cognitive condition that is intrinsically enjoyable and creates a very favorable experience (Novak *et al.*, 2000), it leads to CEI and the intention to purchase (Hossain *et al.*, 2018; Liu and Shiue, 2014). Therefore, individuals with a high CEI are more inclined to purchase. This suggests that followers who are deeply connected or exhibit a sense of attachment to an SMI are more likely to engage in purchasing behavior than those with lower attachment (Sokolova and Kefi, 2020). We posit that consumers exposed to luxury brands promoted by SMIs are more likely to purchase them owing to continued engagement with a brand's SMI. Therefore, we hypothesize as follows:

H2. CEI has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention.

Moreover, SMI marketing relies heavily on the spread of branded content being shared with SMI followers' network of friends and family on social media platforms. The ability to share content, gain higher brand exposure, and acquire more brand followers is the central tenet of SMI marketing. Sharing intention refers to the retransmission of information generated by others, where content is shared in its original form beyond the reach of the current followers of the original poster, thereby developing a new level of exposure and new SMI followers (Kwak *et al.*, 2010). For example, the unique features of Instagram facilitate users' sharing of information with others by tapping on the heart symbol to show "love" for the posts made by other users or "sharing" by commenting on the post or sharing the post with other users privately by tapping the send icon. Sharing intention manifests when the SMI's followers perceive that the posts are worth sharing with friends and family, resulting in their ability to view the posts (Chen and Lee, 2014). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H3. Consumers' CEI has a positive effect on their sharing intention.

The adoption of an SMI recommendations is the process whereby the SMI's followers intentionally engage with information use (Cheung *et al.*, 2008) and consider the brand(s) recommended by the SMI based on the post (Rietveld *et al.*, 2020). The information presented to SMI followers increases their brand knowledge, making purchasing decisions easier (Filieri *et al.*, 2015). However, excessive repetition can be detrimental when followers perceive sameness in SMI content. Notably, 47% of consumers worldwide experience fatigue from repetitive SMI content, leading them to be less inclined to follow SMI recommendations (Concannon, 2023). Thus, followers who are deeply connected to the influencer look for

recommendations compared with those with lower levels of attachment (Sokolova and Kefi, 2020). If an SMI's followers believe the posts are reliable, they are more likely to adopt the SMI's recommendations (Filieri *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, we hypothesize that the more SMI followers engage with an SMI, the more likely they will be to follow the SMI's recommendations.

H4. Consumers' CEI has a positive effect on their adoption of SMI recommendations.

3.2 The moderating role of homophily attitudes toward the social media influencer

Homophily is "the degree to which people who interact are similar in beliefs, education, social status, and the like" (Eyal and Rubin, 2003, p. 80). The concept of homophily suggests that individuals prefer associating with others they perceive as sharing similar values and status (Lazarsfeld and Merton, 1954). This tendency influences how people seek opinions, respond to content, and react to content generated by SMIs (Chu and Kim, 2011; Ismagilova *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, consumers are more likely to be influenced by recommendations from SMIs and purchase the products or brands (Ladhari *et al.*, 2020) that share similarities with them (Ismagilova *et al.*, 2020). Homophily attitude reflects the extent to which a person perceives that another person shares his or her attitudes (thinks, behaves, is similar, is like) (Ladhari *et al.*, 2020). Perceiving a more homophily attitude (McGuire, 1985) creates feelings of connection, affection, and passion toward the SMI. Thus, understanding consumer homophily attitudes toward SMIs is crucial for comprehending the impact of SMI experiences on CEIs and the resulting consumer responses. We propose that if consumers have a favorable homophily attitude toward the SMI, they are more likely to intend to engage with it continually, which would then lead to positive consumer responses. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H5. The influence of the SMI experience on CEI is moderated by consumers' homophily attitudes toward the SMI.

3.3 Mediating effect of continued engagement intention on consumer responses

The influence of CEI on consumer responses, such as purchase intention, sharing intention, and adoption of the SMI recommendations, is based on flow theory and SET, whereby CEI mediates the relationship between positive experiences and consumer responses. We propose that if the SMI experience is positive, consumers will likely continue to engage with SMI. This will lead to positive consumer responses, such as the intention to share, purchase, and adopt the SMI's recommendations. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H6a. SMI experience has a positive effect on consumers' sharing intention through mediation by CEI.

H6b. SMI experience has a positive effect on consumers' adoption of the SMI recommendations through mediation by CEI.

H6c. SMI experience has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention through mediation by CEI.

4. Method

After obtaining institutional ethics approval, we tested the proposed hypotheses using data from an online survey of 604 Australian respondents. We first discuss the measurement items and the development of the survey instrument. Next, we discuss the sampling and data analysis procedures.

4.1 Measurement items and survey instrument

We adopted multi-item scales from marketing literature as measures for the constructs of the study (see Table 3). SMI experience is a multidimensional construct that is reflective-formative in nature (Jarvis *et al.*, 2003). We drew upon items from Prentice *et al.* (2019) to measure the three SMI experience dimensions—affective, intellectual, and sensory. These dimensions explain how consumers are likely to spend more time than they intended to with the SMI-related content to evoke favorable emotions, feelings, and sentiments, constituting affective experiences. CEI was measured as the degree of intended future engagement with the SMI's posts (Högberg *et al.*, 2019). The items for CEI were adapted from Högberg *et al.* (2019). We define purchase intention as an individual's conscious plan to make an effort to

Table 3. Measurement items and loadings

Measurement items	Mean	SD	Loadings
Affective experience (AffExp)			
I am having a strong emotion for this Instagram influencer	4.539	1.447	0.916
This Instagram influencer induces feelings and sentiments	4.758	1.436	0.904
This Instagram influencer is an emotional brand	4.438	1.466	0.824
Intellectual experience (IntExp)			
The posts from this Instagram influencer engaged me in a great deal of thinking	4.485	1.513	0.879
The posts from this Instagram influencer stimulate my curiosity and problem-solving	4.425	1.539	0.905
The posts from this Instagram influencer make me think	4.457	1.522	0.887
Sensory experience (SenExp)			
This influencer makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses	4.886	1.480	0.880
I find the influencer interesting in a sensory way	4.848	1.446	0.911
This Instagram influencer appeals to my senses	4.689	1.449	0.909
Continued engagement intention (CEI)			
I will gladly continue following this Instagram influencer	4.586	1.526	0.912
I will visit this Instagram influencer's profile more frequently rather than less frequently	4.373	1.549	0.925
I will actively look for posts from this Instagram influencer on luxury fashion brands	4.434	1.543	0.910
Purchase intention (PurInt)			
My likelihood of purchasing from the brands endorsed by this Instagram influencer is high	4.452	1.565	0.919
The probability that I will consider buying the brands endorsed by this Instagram influencer is high	4.483	1.539	0.930
My willingness to buy brands endorsed by this Instagram influencer is high	4.495	1.557	0.913
Adoption of SMI recommendation (RecAdo)			
This Instagram influencer's posts make it easier for me to make a purchase decision	4.570	1.524	0.891
I will accept the recommendations made by this Instagram influencer while making purchases	4.566	1.580	0.910
This Instagram influencer's posts contribute to my knowledge of brands	4.869	1.469	0.865
Sharing intention (ShaInt)			
The post of this Instagram influencer is worth sharing with others	4.573	1.541	0.916
I will recommend posts of this Instagram influencer to others	4.455	1.609	0.939
I wish my friends and relatives would watch the posts of this Instagram influencer	4.184	1.560	0.889

Note(s): For SmartPLS, weighting scheme = factor, iteration = 1,000, complete bootstrapping with 5,000 bootstrapping samples, test type = two-tailed. Indicators are anchored at 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*

Source(s): Authors' own work

purchase a brand. The items for purchase intention were adapted from Fritz *et al.* (2017). The adoption of recommendation is when the SMI's followers intentionally engage with information use (Cheung *et al.*, 2008) and consider the brand(s) recommended by the SMI based on the post (Rietveld *et al.*, 2020). The measures were adapted from Filieri *et al.* (2015). The measures of sharing intention, which is the retransmission of information generated by others, where the content is shared in its original form beyond the reach of the current followers, were adopted from Chen and Lee (2014). Homophily attitude has been characterized as the extent to which a person perceives that another person shares his or her attitudes toward the SMI (Ladhari *et al.*, 2020). To measure homophily attitude toward the SMI, we adopted items from Ladhari *et al.* (2020). All measurement items used a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Several control variables, such as gender, income, educational qualifications, and frequency of Instagram access, were also included to account for respondent heterogeneity (Carlson *et al.*, 2021). We also incorporated a three-item marker variable, socially desirable responses, to test for potential common method variance (Donavan *et al.*, 2004).

Three screening questions qualified respondents for the survey: those less than 18 years old, those not having an Instagram account, and those not interested in luxury brands were screened out. To test respondent attentiveness, we included a check question based on the SMI profile shown. Those who failed to answer the check question correctly were excluded.

Following an approach similar to that of Delbaere *et al.* (2020) and Belanche *et al.* (2021), we focused on popular fashion influencers on Instagram. Respondents were randomly shown one of two images of Instagram SMIs (one male and one female with a similar number of followers). For our SMIs, we selected Instagram accounts in the fashion industry with many followers who were growing in popularity (Casaló *et al.*, 2020). The Instagram SMI profiles noted the luxury brands they endorsed and the number of followers and featured a styled photo with several comments posted by their followers (see Table 4).

The survey instrument was pre-tested using 60 respondents to ensure the interpretability of the questions, survey flow, validity, and integrity of the survey instrument. The full survey was administered once the survey instrument was deemed sound.

Table 4. Instagram profiles

Ali Gordon (@aligordon)	Elle Ferguson (@elle_ferguson)
736K followers Endorses luxury brands such as Hugo Boss, Ralph Lauren, and Tod's.	683K followers Endorses luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton, Prada, Dior, and Spell.

Source(s): Authors' own work

4.2 Data collection and sample profile

We administered an online survey using an online panel from a reputable commercial market research company. The survey yielded 604 complete Australian responses with the following characteristics: 66% female (34% male) respondents, with an average annual income of AU $50,001 to 100,000, and an average age of 27–36 years. In terms of the highest level of education, 32.1% held a bachelor's degree, whereas 6.5% held a postgraduate certificate, 11.1% a master's degree, and 2.5% a PhD/doctorate). In terms of the frequency of Instagram usage, 77.6% of respondents indicated that they logged in to their respective Instagram accounts five times or more per week, with 22.4% logging in less than five times a week (see Table 5).

4.3 Data analysis and results

We followed the data analysis procedure used in previous studies with multidimensional reflective-formative constructs in the path model (Merz *et al.*, 2018). First, we analyzed the reliability and validity of the measurements for all constructs in the proposed path model (MacKenzie *et al.*, 2011). Next, we examined whether evidence of common method bias affected the responses, statistically tested the significance of the hypothesized structural model relationships, and examined the mediating effect of continued engagement intention on consumer responses. Finally, we assessed the moderation effect of homophily attitudes on the relationship between SMI experience and CEI.

Table 5. Demographic profile of respondents

	Percent
Age	
18–26 years old	31.3
27–36 years old	34.8
37–46 years old	19.7
47–56 years old	9.6
Above 56 years old	4.6
Total	100
How often do you log into your Instagram account?	
≥5 times/week	77.6
<5 times/week	22.4
Total	100.0
Highest level of education completed	
Less than year 12 (e.g. school certificate)	6.6
Year 12 (e.g. high school certificate)	16.6
TAFE (e.g. certificate, diploma)	24.7
Bachelor's degree	32.1
Postgraduate certificate	6.5
Master's degree	11.1
PhD/Doctorate	2.5
Total	100.0
Income per year	
0–AU$50000	26.7
AU$50001–AU$100000	45.4
AU$100001–AU$150000	20.0
Above AU$150000	7.9
Total	100.0

Source(s): Authors' own work

We conducted partial least squares-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 3.3.3 (Ringle *et al.*, 2015) to evaluate the measurement model and estimate and assess the structural model relationships, including the moderating and mediating effects. First, PLS-SEM offers more reliable estimations with greater precision when the path model includes both reflective and formative constructs with many measurement items (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Next, an analysis of normality indicated that most variables in this study were not normally distributed. PLS-SEM does not make any assumptions regarding the normality of the data and can produce good results when the data distributions are non-normal (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Finally, PLS-SEM is a causal-predictive approach to SEM that produces useful estimates when a study aims to predict dependent variables (Carlson *et al.*, 2021). As this study aimed to predict purchase intention, adoption of the SMI recommendations, and sharing intention of consumers from their experience with the SMI, we used PLS-SEM because this method would offer important estimates regarding the predictive quality of the model.

4.4 Reliability and validity of the measures

4.4.1 Assessment of social media influencer experience measurement model. The measurement model of SMI experience follows the Type II reflective-formative hierarchical component modeling approach using the repeated-indicator approach (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Following Hair *et al.*'s (2017) hierarchical guidelines for assessing the measurement model of SMI experience, we first assessed the reliability and validity of the lower-order constructs (i.e. affective, intellectual, and sensory experience) and subsequently examined the higher-order construct (i.e. SMI experience). The results indicate the reliability of the lower-order constructs (see Tables 6 and 7): the item loadings for all reflective measures of the lower-order constructs exceeded 0.708, and the Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability scores exceeded 0.70. Moreover, all the average variance extracted (AVE) scores exceeded 0.50, and all the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio values were below 0.90 (see Table 6), indicating that convergent validity and discriminant validity had been achieved (Hair *et al.*, 2019).

For the formative higher-order construct, SMI experience, the outer weights of the lower-order constructs were meaningful in size (0.365, 0.364, and 0.373, for affective, intellectual, and sensory experience, respectively) and significant ($p < 0.001$; see Table 6). These results indicate that all lower-order constructs are significant and contribute almost equally to the formation of the higher-order construct (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, the variance inflation factor (VIF) values for intellectual and sensory experience were less than 3, and for affective experience, less than 5, indicating that the measurement model did not suffer from

Table 6. Social media influencer experience: reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity statistics

Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE	VIF	Discriminant validity (HTMT)			First-order weights and significance (*p*-value)
						AffExp	*IntExp*	*SenExp*	
Affective experience (*AffExp*)	0.857	0.866	0.913	0.779	3.466				0.365 (0.000)
Intellectual experience (*IntExp*)	0.869	0.871	0.920	0.793	2.358	0.866			0.364 (0.000)
Sensory experience (*SenExp*)	0.883	0.887	0.928	0.810	2.734	0.757	0.755		0.373 (0.000)

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 7. Endogenous variables: reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity statistics

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE	Discriminant validity (HTMT) *CEI*	*PurInt*	*RecAdo*	*ShaInt*
CEI	0.904	0.904	0.940	0.839				
PurInt	0.910	0.910	0.944	0.848	0.852			
RecAdo	0.867	0.874	0.919	0.790	0.877	0.892		
ShaInt	0.902	0.905	0.939	0.837	0.894	0.838	0.900	

Note(s): For SmartPLS, weighting scheme = factor, iteration = 1,000, complete bootstrapping with 5,000 bootstrapping samples. CEI = Continued Engagement Intention, PurInt = Purchase Intention, RecAdo = adoption of SMI recommendation, ShaInt = Sharing Intention
Source(s): Authors' own work

multicollinearity (Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001). Hence, this analysis supports the reliable and valid measurement of SMI experience as a higher-order formative construct.

The reliability and validity of the variables, CEI, purchase intention, adoption of the SMI recommendations, sharing intention (see Table 7), and homophily attitude toward SMI (see Table 8), were assessed following the guidelines of Hair *et al.* (2019). The outer loadings of all corresponding reflective indicators exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.708; all the Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability scores exceeded 0.70, and all the AVE scores exceeded 0.50, indicating the reliability and convergent validity of the measures. The reliability and validity analysis results showed that both reliability and convergent validity were achieved for the moderating variable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.913, rho_A = 0.914, and composite reliability = 0.945), which was greater than the minimum threshold of 0.70, while the AVE = 0.852 was greater than 0.50. All the HTMT ratios were less than or equal to 0.90, indicating that the constructs were empirically distinct from each other (Henseler *et al.*, 2015).

4.4.2 Assessment of common method variance. We employed several techniques to test for potential common method variance. First, following the partialling out a marker variable technique, we examined the changes in path coefficients and R^2 values of the endogenous constructs after including the marker variable in the path model (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). The results (see Table 9) indicate that the path coefficients and R^2 values both changed very slightly owing to the inclusion of the marker variable, indicating that estimates are not affected by common method variance (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Second, we estimated the correlations between the marker variable and all other constructs in the path model (Lindell and Whitney,

Table 8. Measurement model assessment and reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity statisticsfor the moderator attitude homophily

Measurement model assessment for the moderator attitude homophily Measurement items	Mean	SD	Loadings
I think this Instagram influencer thinks like me	3.67	1.65	0.922*
I think this Instagram influencer behaves like me	3.64	1.69	0.940*
I think this Instagram influencer is like me	3.48	1.80	0.907*

	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE	HTMT ratio *INFEXP*	*CEI*	*PurInt*	*RecAdo*	*ShaInt*
Attitude homophily	0.913	0.914	0.945	0.852	0.538	0.552	0.617	0.589	0.628

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 9. Test for potential common method variance

Partialling out of a marker variable technique							
	Path coefficient			Construct	R^2 original	R^2 with marker	Change
Path	Original	With marker	Change	*CEI*	0.589	0.590	−0.001
CEI → *PurInt*	0.773	0.770	0.003	INFEXP	1.000	1.000	0.000
CEI → *RecAdo*	0.779	0.779	0.000	*PurInt*	0.598	0.600	−0.002
CEI → *ShaInt*	0.808	0.804	0.004	*RecAdo*	0.607	0.607	0.000
INFEXP → *CEI*	0.768	0.766	0.002	*ShaInt*	0.653	0.655	−0.002

Partialling of a marker variable technique			
Variable pair	Correlation coefficient	*t*-statistic	*p*-values
INFEXP–CMVMarker	0.065	1.371	0.085
CEI–CMVMarker	0.080	1.773	0.038
PurInt–CMVMarker	0.105	2.200	0.014
RecAdo–CMVMarker	0.062	1.322	0.093
ShaInt–CMVMarker	0.113	2.398	0.008

Note(s): For SmartPLS, weighting scheme = factor, iteration = 1,000, complete bootstrapping with 5,000 bootstrapping samples, test type = two-tailed. *INFEXP* = Influencer experience, *CEI* = continued engagement intention, *PurInt* = purchase intention, *RecAdo* = adoption of SMI recommendation, *ShaInt* = sharing intention, *CMVMarker* = the marker variable (socially desirable responding)
Source(s): Authors' own work

2001). All correlation coefficients were less than 0.30 (see Table 9), which implies that the constructs in the path model were not significantly related to the marker variable, and common method variance was not a concern in this study (Lindell and Whitney, 2001). Finally, we examined the VIF values of all constructs. The low VIF scores (<5) also support the notion that the study was not seriously affected by common method variance (Kock, 2015).

4.5 Path analysis and hypothesis testing

4.5.1 Assessment of the structural model. We began the assessment of the structural model using the SmartPLS bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 bootstrapping samples and the bias-corrected and accelerated bootstrap (BCa) method (Hair *et al.*, 2017) to examine the standardized path coefficient (β), *t*-values, *p*-values, and f^2 effect size. The results presented in Table 10 show that SMI experience has a significant and positive influence on CEI, with a large

Table 10. Path analysis and hypothesis testing results

Path	Standardized estimate (β)	Standard deviation (*SD*)	*t*-values (β/*SD*)	*p*-values	*f*-square (effect size)	Outcome
INFEXP → CEI	0.768	0.025	31.093	0.000	1.434	H1: Supported
CEI → *PurInt*	0.773	0.023	33.082	0.000	1.486	H2: Supported
CEI → *RecAdo*	0.779	0.022	34.840	0.000	1.545	H3: Supported
CEI → *ShaInt*	0.808	0.018	45.118	0.000	1.880	H4: Supported

Note(s): For SmartPLS, weighting scheme = path, iteration = 1,000, complete bootstrapping with 5,000 bootstrapping samples, test type = two-tailed. *INFEXP* = influencer experience, *CEI* = continued engagement intention, *PurInt* = purchase intention, *RecAdo* = adoption of SMI recommendation, *ShaInt* = sharing intention. *f*-square effect size: 0.005 = small, 0.01 = medium, 0.025 = large
Source(s): Authors' own work

f^2 effect size (β = 0.768; t = 31.093; p = 0.000; f^2 effect size = 1.434). Similarly, the results also indicate that CEI has a significant and positive influence on purchase intention (β = 0.773; t = 33.082; p = 0.000; f^2 effect size = 1.486), adoption of SMI recommendations (β = 0.779; t = 34.840; p = 0.000; f^2 effect size = 1.545) and sharing intention (β = 0.808; t = 45.118; p = 0.000; f^2 effect size = 1.880). Thus, these results support H1, H2, H3, and H4.

Next, we examined the variance in the endogenous variables explained by the model (R^2), which is a key criterion for assessing the quality of the structural model in PLS-SEM (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Henseler *et al.* (2015) described an R^2 value of more than 0.67 as substantial, more than 0.33 as moderate, and more than 0.19 as weak. Our results indicate that the model has moderate explanatory power for all the endogenous variables because it accounts for 59% (R^2 adjusted = 0.588) of the variance of CEI, 60% (R^2 adjusted = 0.597) of the variance of purchase intention, 61% (R^2 adjusted = 0.606) of the variance of adoption of SMI recommendations, and 65% (R^2 adjusted = 0.652) of the variance of sharing intention. Moreover, because all R^2 values were less than 0.90, it can be concluded that the model did not suffer from overfitting (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, we applied the $PLS_{predict}$ procedure with 10 folds and 10 repetitions to evaluate the predictive performance of the model (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The results show that the $Q^2_{predict}$ values for the indicators of all endogenous variables are larger than 0 (minimum $Q^2_{predict}$ = 0.359; maximum $Q^2_{predict}$ = 0.513). Moreover, by comparing the root mean squared error values produced in the PLS-SEM analysis with those produced by the naive LM benchmark model, we found that in most cases, PLS-SEM produced smaller values than the naive LM estimations. Hence, from these results, we conclude that the model offers excellent predictive performance (Hair *et al.*, 2019).

4.5.2 Moderation analysis. To test the moderation effect (Hair *et al.*, 2019), we followed the PLS-SEM moderation analysis procedure by examining the significance of the interaction term (i.e. SMI experience × homophily attitude toward SMI). As presented in Table 11, the interaction term had a significant negative effect on CEI (effect = −0.066; t = 2.115; p = 0.034), meaning that with a more favorable homophily attitude toward SMI, the effect of SMI experience on CEI decreased. Conversely, with a less favorable homophily attitude toward SMI, the effect of SMI experience on CEI increased. Overall, these results empirically support H5 and affirm that homophily attitude toward SMI has a significant negative effect on the relationship between SMI experience and CEI.

4.5.3 Mediation analysis. As part of the mediation analysis, we evaluated the significance of both direct and indirect effects using the PLS bootstrapping procedure (Hair *et al.*, 2017). The results presented in Table 12 show that the direct effect of SMI experience on purchase intention (0.256; t = 5.28; p = 0.000) and the indirect effect of SMI experience on purchase intention through CEI (0.443; t = 12.176; p = 0.000) were both significant. Therefore, this result empirically supports the notion that CEI partially mediates the relationship between SMI experience and purchase intention. Moreover, because both effects are positive, we can conclude that mediation is complementary (Zhao *et al.*, 2010). Similarly, we found that both

Table 11. Moderation analysis

Significance of the interaction term Interaction term	Original effect	*SD*	*t*-value	*p*-value
INFEXP * *attitude* homophily→*CEI*	−0.066	0.032	2.115	0.034

Note(s): For SmartPLS, weighting scheme = path, iteration = 1,000, complete bootstrapping with 5,000 bootstrapping samples, test type = two-tailed. *INFEXP* = influencer experience, *CEI* = continued engagement intention, *PurInt* = purchase intention, *RecAdo* = adoption of SMI recommendation, *ShaInt* = sharing intention, *Attitude homophily* = attitude toward influencer. Modeling of the interaction term = two-stage approach. * indicates that the loadings are significant at $p < 0.000$

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 12. Significance analysis of direct and indirect effect

Relationship	Direct effect	95% CI of the direct effect	*t*-values	*p*-values	Indirect effect (moderated by *CEI*)	95% CI of the indirect effect	*t*-values	*p*-values	Evidence of mediation effect?
INFEXP → PurInt	0.256	[0.166,0.354]	5.280	0.000	0.443	[0.369–0.510]	12.176	0.000	Yes, complementary mediation
INFEXP → RecAdo	0.294	[0.198,0.402]	5.630	0.000	0.425	[0.343–0.501]	10.725	0.000	Yes, complementary mediation
INFEXP → ShaInt	0.268	[0.179,0.359]	5.887	0.000	0.462	[0.397–0.528]	13.743	0.000	Yes, complementary mediation

Note(s): For SmartPLS, weighting scheme = path, iteration = 1,000, complete bootstrapping with 5,000 bootstrapping samples, test type = two-tailed. CI = confidence interval, *INFEXP* = influencer experience, *CEI* = continued engagement intention, *PurInt* = purchase intention, *RecAdo* = adoption of SMI recommendation, *ShaInt* = sharing intention. Estimates are made using the latent variable of the constructs
Source(s): Authors' own work

the direct effect of SMI experience on sharing intention (0.268; $t = 5.887$; $p = 0.000$) and the indirect effect of SMI experience on sharing intention through CEI (0.462; $t = 13.743$; $p = 0.000$) were positive and significant. Conversely, both the direct effect of SMI experience on the adoption of the SMI recommendations (0.294; $t = 5.63$; $p = 0.000$) and the indirect effect of SMI experience on the adoption of the SMI recommendations through CEI (0.425; $t = 10.725$; $p = 0.000$) were also positive and significant. Therefore, the results empirically support that CEI represents complementary mediation of the relationship from SMI experience to purchase intention, sharing intention, and the adoption of the SMI recommendations.

5. Discussion and theoretical implications

Despite the increasing role that SMIs play in working with luxury brands to generate CE, the factors influencing CEI in the SMI context and related outcomes remain under-researched. A brand–SMI collaboration may not always be successful owing to many reasons, such as the prevalence of cancel culture (Jones *et al.*, 2022), SMI misconduct (Wei *et al.*, 2022), unethical behavior (Tsapatsoulis *et al.*, 2019), negative motivations (Singh *et al.*, 2020), or influencer fatigue (Bright *et al.*, 2015). However, our study shows CEI can be a key factor in facilitating long-term relationships between SMIs and consumers, in which engagement is behavior-based and stretches beyond brand purchase. Furthermore, our results suggest that CEI is beyond intention—consumers are engaged and will drive future behavior (Kim *et al.*, 2013).

Moving beyond the theory of planned behavior (Madden *et al.*, 1992) and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003), and drawing on SET and flow theory, we developed and tested a new conceptual framework and examined the relationship between consumers' experiences with an SMI and their CEI with a luxury brand. We also investigated the moderating role of homophily attitudes toward SMIs. Our study shows that brands should focus on long-term interactions beyond initial interactions (Chen *et al.*, 2020), which may create value for consumers and subsequently drive involvement and loyalty (See, 2018). We also examined the mediating role of CEI on the relationship between SMI experience and consumer responses, such as adoption of SMI recommendations, purchase intention, and sharing intention. Our findings suggest that consumers' SMI experience has positive effects on their CEI with a brand. This result suggests that because consumers have a positive experience with SMI, they forge a stronger relationship with that SMI and are less likely to defect from that relationship (Kwon *et al.*, 2014).

Moreover, CEI has a positive mediation effect on the relationship between the SMI experience, their adoption of the SMI recommendations, and their sharing and purchase intention. CEI plays a critical role in consumer responses, such as the intention to purchase or share and the adoption of the SMI recommendations. Our data also suggest that the homophily attitude toward the SMI moderates the relationship between the SMI experience and CEI. Interestingly, the strength of the influence of SMI experience on CEI decreases when a consumer possesses a more positive homophily attitude toward an SMI. Therefore, consumers may demonstrate some level of CEI owing to their more positive homophily attitude toward an SMI, irrespective of their SMI experience. Collectively, our findings show that creating positive SMI experiences benefits brands that seek continued engagement with their consumers. This research addresses calls for research by adding to the scarce literature on SMI marketing on how SMIs can foster CEI and the resulting outcomes.

6. Managerial implications

SMIs have become integral to brands' online marketing strategies that attempt to enhance consumers' CEI. This study provides two important managerial implications in the context of luxury brands. First, we present some notable implications for practitioners planning to implement SMI marketing strategies. Brand managers must focus on developing long-term

relationships that could be positively affected by consumers' positive experiences with SMIs. Marketers can attempt to ensure that all the information and content provided by SMIs are relevant to consumers. Thus, a key objective for marketing practitioners should be working in partnership with SMIs to create positive SMI experiences (e.g. intellectual, affective, and sensory experiences) to foster CEI. Second, SMIs should focus on brands that fit their lifestyles and values (Kim and Kim, 2020) to increase CEI, enhance consumers' homophily attitudes toward them (Belanche *et al.*, 2021) and forge a stronger relationship with their followers. In the context of luxury brands, SMIs that focus on the newest trends, high-fashion styles, and desirable lifestyles are likely to exert a positive influence on consumer homophily attitudes to impress, delight, and attract audiences (Yan *et al.*, 2023), leading to CEI, which, in turn, can have significant positive effects on consumer responses. For example, Balenciaga collaborated with Fortnite, allowing players to acquire digital outfits mirroring real-life Balenciaga fashion through a virtual boutique (Duggal, 2022).

7. Limitations and future research directions

This study is cross-sectional in its design, and it comes with several limitations, which, in turn, present opportunities for future research. First, this cross-sectional study was limited to the use of Instagram in Australia. Future studies could replicate this study in other contexts using different social media platforms, such as Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), or TikTok, in other countries and longitudinally to assess the generalizability of the model. As this study focuses on Australian Instagram users interested in luxury brands, this can limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts or social media users with different interests. The choice of social media platforms may indicate different experiences with SMIs and consumer responses. This study analyzed followers' perceptions of and responses to two SMIs in the luxury market. Thus, caution should be exercised when generalizing these results. Future studies could examine SMIs who present different characteristics and audiences with different profiles to ensure the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the focus of the study was limited to luxury brands because they have become a widespread phenomenon in social media marketing. In addition, the study did not consider respondents' nationalities and cultural backgrounds (Nikolinakou and Phua, 2024). Lastly, from a theoretical perspective, future studies could examine the consequences of CEI on other consumer responses, such as brand commitment and brand loyalty.

References

Adelaar, T., Chang, S., Lancendorfer, K.M., Lee, B. and Morimoto, M. (2003), "Effects of media formats on emotions and impulse buying intent", *Journal of Information Technology*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 247-266, doi: 10.1080/0268396032000150799.

Amoyo, K. (2022), "Are influencers canceled? A deep dive into influencer fatigue", *Spiralytics*, available at: https://www.spiralytics.com/blog/influencer-fatigue/ (accessed 11 April 2024).

Athwal, N., Istanbulluoglu, D. and McCormack, S.E. (2019), "The allure of luxury brands' social media activities: a uses and gratifications perspective", *Information Technology and People*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 603-626, doi: 10.1108/itp-01-2018-0017.

Aw, E.C.-X., Tan, G.W.-H., Chuah, S.H.-W., Ooi, K.-B. and Hajli, N. (2022), "Be my friend! Cultivating parasocial relationships with social media influencers: findings from PLS-SEM and fsQCA", *Information Technology and People*, Vol. 36 No. 1, pp. 66-94, doi: 10.1108/itp-07-2021-0548.

Badrinarayanan, V.A., Sierra, J.J. and Martin, K.M. (2015), "A dual identification framework of online multiplayer video games: the case of massively multiplayer online role playing games (MMORPGs)", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 68 No. 5, pp. 1045-1052, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2014.10.006.

Barger, V., Peltier, J.W. and Schultz, D.E. (2016), "Social media and consumer engagement: a review and research agenda", *The Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, Vol. 10 No. 4, pp. 268-287, doi: 10.1108/JRIM-06-2016-0065.

Barry, J.M. and Graça, S.S. (2018), "Humor effectiveness in social video engagement", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, Vol. 26 Nos 1-2, pp. 158-180, doi: 10.1080/10696679.2017.1389247.

Barta, S., Belanche, D., Fernández, A. and Flavián, M. (2023), "Influencer marketing on TikTok: the effectiveness of humor and followers' hedonic experience", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 70, 103149, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.103149.

Basha, N.K., Aw, E.C.X. and Chuah, S.H.W. (2022), "Are we so over smartwatches? Or can technology, fashion and psychographic attributes sustain smartwatch usage?", *Technology in Society*, Vol. 69, 101952, doi: 10.1016/j.techsoc.2022.101952.

Beckers, S.F., Van Doorn, J. and Verhoef, P.C. (2018), "Good, better, engaged? The effect of company-initiated customer engagement behavior on shareholder value", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 46 No. 3, pp. 366-383, doi: 10.1007/s11747-017-0539-4.

Belanche, D., Casaló, L.V., Flavián, M. and Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2021), "Understanding influencer marketing: the role of congruence between influencers, products and consumers", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 132, pp. 186-195, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.067.

Bright, L.F. and Logan, K. (2018), "Is my fear of missing out (FOMO) causing fatigue? Advertising, social media fatigue, and the implications for consumers and brands", *Internet Research*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 1213-1227, doi: 10.1108/intr-03-2017-0112.

Bright, L.F., Kleiser, S.B. and Grau, S.L. (2015), "Too much Facebook? An exploratory examination of social media fatigue", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 44, pp. 148-155, doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.11.048.

Brodie, R.J., Ilic, A., Juric, B. and Hollebeek, L. (2013), "Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: an exploratory analysis", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 66 No. 1, pp. 105-114, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.07.029.

Buzeta, C., De Pelsmacker, P. and Dens, N. (2020), "Motivations to use different social media types and their impact on consumers' online brand-related activities (COBRAs)", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 52 No. 1, pp. 79-98, doi: 10.1016/j.intmar.2020.04.004.

Carlson, J., Rahman, M.M., Taylor, A. and Voola, R. (2019), "Feel the VIBE: examining value-in-the-brand-page-experience and its impact on satisfaction and customer engagement behaviours in mobile social media", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 46, pp. 149-162, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2017.10.002.

Carlson, J., Rahman, S.M., Rahman, M.M., Wyllie, J. and Voola, R. (2021), "Engaging Gen Y customers in online brand communities: a cross-national assessment", *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 56, 102252, doi: 10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102252.

Carter, A. (2023), "Why audiences are tired of influencers—and how to thrive anyway", Ragan PRDaily, available at: https://www.prdaily.com/influencer-fatigue/ (accessed 12 April 2024).

Casaló, L.V., Flavián, C. and Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2020), "Be creative, my friend! Engaging users on Instagram by promoting positive emotions", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 130, pp. 416-425, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.02.014.

Chae, M., Kim, J., Kim, H. and Ryu, H. (2002), "Information quality for mobile Internet services: a theoretical model with empirical validation", *Electronic Markets*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 3846-46, doi: 10.1080/101967802753433254.

Chandon, J.L., Laurent, G. and Valette-Florence, P. (2016), "Pursuing the concept of luxury: introduction to the JBR special issue on 'luxury marketing from tradition to innovation'", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 69 No. 1, pp. 299-303, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.08.001.

Chen, T. and Lee, H.-M. (2014), "Why do we share? The impact of viral videos dramatized to sell: how microfilm advertising works", *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol. 54 No. 3, pp. 292-303, doi: 10.2501/jar-54-3-292-303.

Chen, J.S., Tsou, H.T., Chou, C.Y. and Ciou, C.H. (2020), "Effect of multichannel service delivery quality on customers' continued engagement intention: a customer experience perspective", *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, Vol. 32 No. 2, pp. 473-494, doi: 10.1108/apjml-12-2018-0508.

Chen, K.J., Lin, J.S. and Shan, Y. (2021), "Influencer marketing in China: the roles of parasocial identification, consumer engagement, and inferences of manipulative intent", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 20 No. 6, pp. 1436-1448, doi: 10.1002/cb.1945.

Cheung, C.M.K., Lee, M.K.O. and Rabjohn, N. (2008), "The impact of electronic word-of-mouth: the adoption of online opinions in online customer communities", *Internet Research*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp. 229-247, doi: 10.1108/10662240810883290.

Cheung, M.L., Pires, G. and Rosenberger, P.J. (2020), "The influence of perceived social media marketing elements on consumer–brand engagement and brand knowledge", *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 695-720, doi: 10.1108/apjml-04-2019-0262.

Cheung, M.L., Guilherme, D.P., Rosenberger, P.J. III, Leung, W.K.S. and Salehhuddin, S.M.N. (2021), "The role of consumer-consumer interaction and consumer-brand interaction in driving consumer-brand engagement and behavioral intentions", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 61, 102574, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102574.

Cheung, M.L., Leung, W.K., Cheah, J.H. and Ting, H. (2022), "Exploring the effectiveness of emotional and rational user-generated contents in digital tourism platforms", *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 152-170, doi: 10.1177/13567667211030675.

Chu, S.C. and Kim, Y. (2011), "Determinants of consumer engagement in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in social networking sites", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 47-75, doi: 10.2501/ija-30-1-047-075.

Concannon, L. (2023), "Influencer fatigue: are we done with influencers?", *Meltwater*, available at: https://www.meltwater.com/en/blog/influencer-fatigue (accessed 11 April 2024).

Cortez, R.M. and Johnston, W.J. (2020), "The coronavirus crisis in B2B settings: crisis uniqueness and managerial implications based on social exchange theory", *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 88, pp. 125-135, doi: 10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.05.004.

Cropanzano, R., Anthony, E.L., Daniels, S.R. and Hall, A.V. (2017), "Social exchange theory: a critical review with theoretical remedies", *The Academy of Management Annals*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 479-516, doi: 10.5465/annals.2015.0099.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990), "Literacy and intrinsic motivation", *Dædalus*, Vol. 119 No. 1, pp. 115-140.

De Moor, K., Berte, K., De Marez, L., Joseph, W., Deryckere, T. and Martens, L. (2010), "User driven innovation? Challenges of user involvement in future technology analysis", *Science and Public Policy*, Vol. 37 No. 1, pp. 5161-61, doi: 10.3152/030234210x484775.

De Oliveira Santini, F., Ladeira, W.J., Pinto, D.C., Herter, M.M., Sampaio, C.H. and Babin, B.J. (2020), "Customer engagement in social media: a framework and meta-analysis", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 48 No. 6, pp. 1211-1228, doi: 10.1007/s11747-020-00731-5.

Delbaere, M., Michael, B. and Phillips, B.J. (2020), "Social media influencers: a route to brand engagement for their followers", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 38 No. 1, pp. 101-112, doi: 10.1002/mar.21419.

DePino, F. (2023), "15 Luxury influencers creating a stir in their fields", *Media Boom*, available at: https://mediaboom.com/news/luxury-influencers/ (accessed 11 April 2024).

Dhaoui, C. (2014), "An empirical study of luxury brand marketing effectiveness and its impact on consumer engagement on Facebook", *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, Vol. 5 No. 3, pp. 209-222, doi: 10.1080/20932685.2014.907605.

Diamantopoulos, A. and Winklhofer, H.M. (2001), "Index construction with formative indicators: an alternative to scale development", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 38 No. 2, pp. 269-277, doi: 10.1509/jmkr.38.2.269.18845.

Dinh, T.C.T. and Lee, Y. (2022), "I want to be as trendy as influencers': how 'fear of missing out' leads to buying intention for products endorsed by social media influencers", *The Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 346-364, doi: 10.1108/jrim-04-2021-0127.

Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Frethey-Bentham, C., Fahy, J. and Goodman, S. (2019), "Social media engagement behavior: a framework for engaging customers through social media content", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 53 No. 10, pp. 2213-2243, doi: 10.1108/ejm-03-2017-0182.

Donavan, D.T., Brown, T.J. and Mowen, J.C. (2004), "Internal benefits of service-worker customer orientation: job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 68 No. 1, pp. 128-146, doi: 10.1509/jmkg.68.1.128.24034.

Duggal, R. (2022), "Are multisensory experiences the next Frontier of building brands in the metaverse?", *Forbes*, available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2022/05/10/are-multisensory-experiences-the-next-frontier-of-building-brands-in-the-metaverse/?sh=3a32e1f82885 (accessed 12 April 2024).

Eyal, K. and Rubin, A.M. (2003), "Viewer aggression and homophily, identification, and parasocial relationships with television characters", *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, Vol. 47 No. 1, pp. 77-98, doi: 10.1207/s15506878jobem4701_5.

Filieri, R., Alguezaui, S. and McLeay, F. (2015), "Why do travelers trust TripAdvisor? Antecedents of trust towards consumer-generated media and its influence on recommendation adoption and word of mouth", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 51, pp. 174-185, doi: 10.1016/j.tourman.2015.05.007.

Filieri, R., Acikgoz, F. and Du, H. (2023), "Electronic word-of-mouth from video bloggers: the role of content quality and source homophily across hedonic and utilitarian products", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 160, 113774, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113774.

Florenthal, B. (2019), "Young consumers' motivational drivers of brand engagement behavior on social media sites: a synthesized U&G and TAM framework", *The Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, Vol. 13 No. 3, pp. 351-391, doi: 10.1108/jrim-05-2018-0064.

Fritz, K., Schoenmueller, V. and Bruhn, M. (2017), "Authenticity in branding: exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 51 No. 2, pp. 324-348, doi: 10.1108/ejm-10-2014-0633.

Geng, R., Chen, X. and Wang, S. (2024), "Wear in or wear out: how consumers respond to repetitive influencer marketing", *Internet Research*, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 810-848, doi: 10.1108/intr-01-2022-0075.

Giakoumaki, C. and Krepapa, A. (2020), "Brand engagement in self-concept and consumer engagement in social media: the role of the source", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 37 No. 3, pp. 457-465, doi: 10.1002/mar.21312.

Goldsbrough, S. (2020), "Cancel culture: what is it, and how did it begin?", *The Telegraph*, 30 July, available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/music/what-to-listen-to/cancel-culture-did-begin/ (accessed 6 April 2024).

Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M. and Sarstedt, M. (2017), *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM)*, 2nd ed., Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Hair, J.F., Risher, J.J., Sarstedt, M. and Ringle, C.M. (2019), "When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM", *European Business Review*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 2-24, doi: 10.1108/ebr-11-2018-0203.

Halaszovich, T. and Nel, J. (2017), "Customer-brand engagement and Facebook fan-page 'Like'-intention", *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 120-134, doi: 10.1108/jpbm-02-2016-1102.

Henseler, J., Ringle, C.M. and Sarstedt, M. (2015), "A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 43 No. 1, pp. 115-135, doi: 10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8.

Hepola, J., Leppäniemi, M. and Karjaluoto, H. (2020), "Is it all about consumer engagement? Explaining continuance intention for utilitarian and hedonic service consumption", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 57, 102232, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102232.

Hoang, D., Kousi, S. and Martinez, L.F. (2022), "Online customer engagement in the post-pandemic scenario: a hybrid thematic analysis of the luxury fashion industry", *Electronic Commerce Research*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 1401-1428, doi: 10.1007/s10660-022-09635-8.

Hoffman, D.L. and Novak, T.P. (1996), "Marketing in hypermedia computer-mediated environments: conceptual foundations", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 60 No. 3, pp. 50-68, doi: 10.1177/002224299606000304.

Högberg, J., Ramberg, M.O., Gustafsson, A. and Wästlund, E. (2019), "Creating brand engagement through in-store gamified customer experiences", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 50, pp. 122-130, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.05.006.

Hollebeek, L.D. and Macky, K. (2019), "Digital content marketing's role in fostering consumer engagement, trust, and value: framework, fundamental propositions, and implications", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 45 No. 1, pp. 27-41, doi: 10.1016/j.intmar.2018.07.003.

Hollebeek, L.D., Glynn, M.S. and Brodie, R.J. (2014), "Consumer brand engagement in social media: conceptualization, scale development, and validation", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 149-165, doi: 10.1016/j.intmar.2013.12.002.

Hossain, M.S., Zhou, X. and Rahman, M.F. (2018), "Examining the impact of QR codes on purchase intention and customer satisfaction on the basis of perceived flow", *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, Vol. 10, 1847979018812323, 10.1177/1847979018812323.

Hudders, L. and De Jans, S. (2022), "Gender effects in influencer marketing: an experimental study on the efficacy of endorsements by same-vs other-gender social media influencers on Instagram", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 128-149, doi: 10.1080/02650487.2021.1997455.

Hughes, C., Swaminathan, V. and Brooks, G. (2019), "Driving brand engagement through online social influencers: an empirical investigation of sponsored blogging campaigns", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 83 No. 5, pp. 78-96, doi: 10.1177/0022242919854374.

Hyun, H., Thavisay, T. and Lee, S.H. (2022), "Enhancing the role of flow experience in social media usage and its impact on shopping", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 65, 102492, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102492.

Ibáñez-Sánchez, S., Flavián, M., Casaló, L.V. and Belanche, D. (2022), "Influencers and brands successful collaborations: a mutual reinforcement to promote products and services on social media", *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 469-486, doi: 10.1080/13527266.2021.1929410.

Ismagilova, E., Slade, E., Rana, N.P. and Dwivedi, Y.K. (2020), "The effect of characteristics of source credibility on consumer behaviour: a meta-analysis", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 53, 101736, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.005.

Jahn, B. and Kunz, W.H. (2012), "Does social media matter for marketing? The effects of social media engagement on the consumer-brand relationship", in Arnold, T.J. and Sheer, L.K. (Eds), *AMA Summer Educators' Conference Proceedings*, American Marketing Association, Vol. 23, p. 384.

Jarvis, C.B., MacKenzie, S.B. and Podsakoff, P.M. (2003), "A critical review of construct indicators and measurement model misspecification in marketing and consumer research", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 199-218, doi: 10.1086/376806.

Jiménez-Castillo, D. and Sánchez-Fernández, R. (2019), "The role of digital influencers in brand recommendation: examining their impact on engagement, expected value and purchase intention", *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 49, pp. 366-337, doi: 10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2019.07.009.

Jones, S., Cronin, J. and Piacentini, M.G. (2022), "Celebrity brand break-up: fan experiences of para-loveshock", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 145, pp. 720-731, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.03.039.

Kefi, H. and Maar, D. (2020), "The power of lurking: assessing the online experience of luxury brand fan page followers", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 117, pp. 579-586, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.08.012.

Kemp, A. (2023), "Nearly 90% of consumers no longer trust influencers, new study finds", *The Drum*, available at: https://www.thedrum.com/news/2023/06/06/nearly-90-consumers-no-longer-trust-influencers-new-study-finds (accessed 11 April 2024).

Kim, B. and Han, I. (2011), "The role of utilitarian and hedonic values and their antecedents in a mobile data service environment", *Expert Systems with Applications*, Vol. 38 No. 3, pp. 2311-2318, doi: 10.1016/j.eswa.2010.08.019.

Kim, A.J. and Johnson, K.K. (2016), "Power of consumers using social media: examining the influences of brand-related user-generated content on Facebook", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 58, pp. 98-108, doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2015.12.047.

Kim, M. and Kim, J. (2020), "The influence of authenticity of online reviews on trust formation among travelers", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 59 No. 5, pp. 763-776, doi: 10.1177/0047287519868307.

Kim, A.J. and Ko, E. (2012), "Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 65 No. 10, pp. 1480-1486, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.10.014.

Kim, Y.H., Kim, D.J. and Wachter, K. (2013), "A study of mobile user engagement (MoEN): engagement motivations, perceived value, satisfaction, and continued engagement intention", *Decision Support Systems*, Vol. 56, pp. 361-370, doi: 10.1016/j.dss.2013.07.002.

Kim, B., Yoo, M. and Yang, W. (2020), "Online engagement among restaurant customers: the importance of enhancing flow for social media users", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, Vol. 44 No. 2, pp. 252-277, doi: 10.1177/1096348019887202.

Koay, K.Y., Ong, D.L.T., Khoo, K.L. and Yeoh, H.J. (2020), "Perceived social media marketing activities and consumer-based brand equity: testing a moderated mediation model", *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, Vol. 33 No. 1, pp. 53-72, doi: 10.1108/apjml-07-2019-0453.

Kock, N. (2015), "Common method bias in PLS-SEM: a full collinearity assessment approach", *International Journal of E-Collaboration*, Vol. 11 No. 4, pp. 1-10, doi: 10.4018/ijec.2015100101.

Kulikovskaja, V., Hubert, M., Grunert, K.G. and Zhao, H. (2023), "Driving marketing outcomes through social media-based customer engagement", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 74, 103445, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103445.

Kwak, H., Lee, C., Park, H. and Moon, S. (2010), "What is Twitter, a social network or a news media?", in Rappa, M., Jones, P., Freire, J. and Chakrabarti, S. (Eds), *WWW '10: Proceedings of the 19th International Conference on World Wide Web*, Association for Computing Machinery, pp. 591-600.

Kwon, E.S., Kim, E., Yongjun, S. and Yun Yoo, C. (2014), "Brand followers", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 33 No. 4, pp. 657-680, doi: 10.2501/ija-33-4-657-680.

Ladhari, R., Massa, E. and Skandrani, H. (2020), "YouTube vloggers' popularity and influence: the roles of homophily, emotional attachment, and expertise", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 54, pp. 1-11, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.102027.

Lambe, C.J., Wittmann, C.M. and Spekman, R.E. (2001), "Social exchange theory and research on business-to-business relational exchange", *Journal of Business-To-Business Marketing*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 1-36, doi: 10.1300/j033v08n03_01.

Lazarsfeld, P.F. and Merton, R.K. (1954), "Friendship as a social process: a substantive and methodological analysis", *Freedom and Control in Modern Society*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 18-66.

Lee, H.H. and Kim, J. (2010), "Investigating dimensionality of multichannel retailer's crosschannel integration practices and effectiveness: shopping orientation and loyalty intention", *Journal of Marketing Channels*, Vol. 17 No. 4, 281312, doi: 10.1080/1046669x.2010.512859.

Lee, J.E. and Watkins, B. (2016), "YouTube vloggers' influence on consumer luxury brand perceptions and intentions", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 69 No. 12, pp. 5753-5760, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.171.

Leite, F.P. and Baptista, P.D.P. (2022), "The effects of social media influencers' self-disclosure on behavioral intentions: the role of source credibility, parasocial relationships, and brand trust", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 295-311, doi: 10.1080/10696679.2021.1935275.

Lindell, M.K. and Whitney, D.J. (2001), "Accounting for common method variance in cross-sectional research designs", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 86 No. 1, pp. 114-121, doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.86.1.114.

Liu, H.J. and Shiue, Y.C. (2014), "Influence of Facebook game players' behavior on flow and purchase intention", *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, Vol. 42 No. 1, pp. 125-133, doi: 10.2224/sbp.2014.42.1.125.

MacKenzie, S.B., Podsakoff, P.M. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2011), "Construct measurement and validation procedures in MIS and behavioral research: integrating new and existing techniques", *MIS Quarterly*, Vol. 35 No. 2, pp. 293-334, doi: 10.2307/23044045.

Madden, T.J., Ellen, P.S. and Ajzen, I. (1992), "A comparison of the theory of planned behavior and the theory of reasoned action", *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 3-9, doi: 10.1177/0146167292181001.

Marwick, A. and Boyd, D. (2011), "To see and be seen: celebrity practice on Twitter", *Convergence*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 139-158, doi: 10.1177/1354856510394539.

McGuire, W. (1985), "Attitudes and attitude change", in Gardner, L. and Elliott, A. (Eds), *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Vol. 2, New York, pp. 233-346.

Merz, M.A., Zarantonello, L. and Grappi, S. (2018), "How valuable are your customers in the brand value co-creation process? The development of a customer co-creation value (CCCV) scale", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 82, pp. 79-89, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.08.018.

Munnukka, J., Maity, D., Reinikainen, H. and Luoma-aho, V. (2019), "'Thanks for watching': the effectiveness of YouTube vlog endorsements", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 93, pp. 226-234, doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2018.12.014.

Nikolinakou, A. and Phua, J. (2024), "Do human values find genuine expression on social media platforms? The influence of human values on millennials' social media activities", *Internet Research*, Vol. 34 No. 2, pp. 538-562, doi: 10.1108/intr-03-2022-0182.

Novak, T., Hoffman, D. and Yung, Y.-F. (2000), "Measuring the customer experience in online environments: a structural modeling approach", *Marketing Science*, Vol. 19 No. 1, pp. 22-42, doi: 10.1287/mksc.19.1.22.15184.

Oc, Y., Plangger, K., Sands, S., Campbell, C.L. and Pitt, L. (2023), "Luxury is what you say: analyzing electronic word-of-mouth marketing of luxury products using artificial intelligence and machine learning", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 40 No. 9, pp. 1704-1719, doi: 10.1002/mar.21831.

Ong, C.H., Lee, H.W. and Ramayah, T. (2018), "Impact of brand experience on loyalty", *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*, Vol. 27 No. 7, pp. 755-774, doi: 10.1080/19368623.2018.1445055.

Pansari, A. and Kumar, V. (2017), "Customer engagement: the construct, antecedents, and consequences", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 45 No. 3, pp. 294-311, doi: 10.1007/s11747-016-0485-6.

Pantano, E. (2021), "When a luxury brand bursts: modelling the social media viral effects of negative stereotypes adoption leading to brand hate", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 123, pp. 117-125, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.09.049.

Pezzuti, T., Leonhardt, J.M. and Warren, C. (2021), "Certainty in language increases consumer engagement on social media", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 53 No. 1, pp. 32-46, doi: 10.1016/j.intmar.2020.06.005.

Pihlström, M. (2007), "Committed to content provider or mobile channel? Determinants of continuous mobile multimedia service use", *JITTA: Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 1-23.

Plangger, K., Hao, J., Wang, Y., Campbell, C. and Rosengren, S. (2021), "Exploring the value of shoppable live advertising: liveness and shoppability in advertising media and future research avenues", *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol. 61 No. 2, pp. 129-132, doi: 10.2501/jar-2021-008.

Podsakoff, N., MacKenzie, S., Lee, J. and Podsakoff, N. (2003), "Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 885 No. 5, pp. 879-903, doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879.

Pradhan, D., Kuanr, A., Anupurba Pahi, S. and Akram, M.S. (2023), "Influencer marketing: when and why gen Z consumers avoid influencers and endorsed brands", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 40 No. 1, pp. 27-47, doi: 10.1002/mar.21749.

Prentice, C., Wang, X. and Loureiro, S.M.C. (2019), "The influence of brand experience and service quality on consumer engagement", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 50, pp. 50-59, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.04.020.

Revels, J., Tojib, D. and Tsarenko, Y. (2010), "Understanding consumer intention to use mobile services", *Australasian Marketing Journal*, Vol. 18 No. 2, pp. 7480-80, doi: 10.1016/j.ausmj.2010.02.002.

Rietveld, R., Van Dolen, W., Mazloom, M. and Worring, M. (2020), "What you feel, is what you like influence of message appeals on customer engagement on Instagram", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 49 No. 1, pp. 20-53, doi: 10.1016/j.intmar.2019.06.003.

Ringle, C., Da Silva, D. and Bido, D. (2015), "Structural equation modeling with the SmartPLS", *Brazilian Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 56-73, doi: 10.5585/remark.v13i2.2717.

Rohde, P. and Mau, G. (2021), "It's selling like hotcakes': deconstructing social media influencer marketing in long-form video content on YouTube via social influence heuristics", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 55 No. 10, pp. 2700-2734, doi: 10.1108/ejm-06-2019-0530.

Rose, S., Clark, M., Samouel, P. and Hair, N. (2012), "Online customer experience in e-retailing: an empirical model of antecedents and outcomes", *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 88 No. 2, pp. 308-322, doi: 10.1016/j.jretai.2012.03.001.

Roy, A. (2016), *Customer Engagement: Contemporary Issues and Challenges*, in Brodie, R.J., Hollebeek, L.D. and Conduit, J. (Eds), Routledge, New York, NY.

Sánchez-Fernández, R. and Jiménez-Castillo, D. (2021), "How social media influencers affect behavioural intentions towards recommended brands: the role of emotional attachment and information value", *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 37 Nos 11-12, pp. 1123-1147, doi: 10.1080/0267257x.2020.1866648.

Santora, J. (2022), "Key influencer marketing statistics you need to know for 2022", *Influencer Marketing Hub*, available at: https://influencermarketinghub.com/influencer-marketing-statistics (accessed 6 April 2022).

See, S.F. (2018), "Tourists' continued engagement intentions towards smart tourism technologies: applying stimulus-organism-response paradigm", in Gursoy, D., Deesilatham, S. and Piboonrungroj, P. (Eds), *Conference proceedings: 8th Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Marketing and Management (AHTMM) Conference*, Emerald Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, pp. 739-754.

Seeler, S., Lück, M. and Schänzel, H.A. (2019), "Exploring the drivers behind experience accumulation: the role of secondary experiences consumed through the eyes of social media influencers", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 41, pp. 80-89, doi: 10.1016/j.jhtm.2019.09.009.

Shan, Y., Chen, K.J. and Lin, J.S. (2020), "When social media influencers endorse brands: the effects of self-influencer congruence, parasocial identification, and perceived endorser motive", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 39 No. 5, pp. 590-610, doi: 10.1080/02650487.2019.1678322.

Sheng, J., Lee, Y.H. and Lan, H. (2024), "Parasocial relationships with micro-influencers: do sponsorship disclosure and electronic word-of-mouth disrupt?", *Internet Research*, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 849-867, doi: 10.1108/intr-12-2021-0903.

Shiau, W.L. and Luo, M.M. (2012), "Factors affecting online group buying intention and satisfaction: a social exchange theory perspective", *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 28 No. 6, pp. 2431-2444, doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2012.07.030.

Singh, J., Crisafulli, B. and Xue, M.T. (2020), "'To trust or not to trust': the impact of social media influencers on the reputation of corporate brands in crisis", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 119, pp. 464-480, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.03.039.

Sokolova, K. and Kefi, H. (2020), "Instagram and YouTube bloggers promote it, why should I buy? How credibility and parasocial interaction influence purchase intentions", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 53, 101742, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.011.

Spears, N. and Singh, S.N. (2004), "Measuring attitude towards the brand and purchase intentions", *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 53-66, doi: 10.1080/10641734.2004.10505164.

Statista (2023), "Most popular luxury brands on social media worldwide as of May 2022, by social media audience size (in millions)", available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1256796/luxury-brands-with-most-followers-on-social-media/ (accessed 6 April 2024).

Tafesse, W. (2016), "An experiential model of consumer engagement in social media", *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, Vol. 25 No. 5, pp. 424-434, doi: 10.1108/jpbm-05-2015-0879.

Tafesse, W. and Wood, B.P. (2022), "Social media influencers' community and content strategy and follower engagement behavior in the presence of competition: an Instagram-based investigation", *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 406-419, doi: 10.1108/jpbm-02-2022-3851.

Tsai, W.H.S. and Men, L.R. (2013), "Motivations and antecedents of consumer engagement with brand pages on social networking sites", *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 76-87, doi: 10.1080/15252019.2013.826549.

Tsapatsoulis, N., Anastasopoulou, V. and Ntalianis, K. (2019), "The central community of Twitter ego-networks as a means for fake influencer detection", *Proceedings: 2019 IEEE International Conference on Dependable, Autonomic and Secure Computing, International Conference on Pervasive Intelligence and Computing, International Conference on Cloud and Big Data Computing, International Conference on Cyber Science and Technology Congress (DASC/PiCom/CBDCom/CyberSciTech)*, IEEE, pp. 177-184.

Vander Shee, B.A., Peltier, J. and Dahl, A.J. (2020), "Antecedent consumer factors, consequential branding outcomes and measures of online consumer engagement: current research and future directions", *The Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, Vol. 14 No. 2, pp. 239-268, doi: 10.1108/jrim-01-2020-0010.

Venkatesh, V., Morris, M.G., Davis, G.B. and Davis, F.D. (2003), "User acceptance of information technology: toward a unified view", *MIS Quarterly*, Vol. 27 No. 3, pp. 425-478, doi: 10.2307/30036540.

Vrontis, D., Makrides, A., Christofi, M. and Thrassou, A. (2021), "Social media influencer marketing: a systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, Vol. 45 No. 4, pp. 617-644, doi: 10.1111/ijcs.12647.

Wang, P. and Huang, Q. (2023), "Digital influencers, social power and consumer engagement in social commerce", *Internet Research*, Vol. 33 No. 1, pp. 178-207, doi: 10.1108/intr-08-2020-0467.

Wang, T. and Lee, F.Y. (2020), "Examining customer engagement and brand intimacy in social media context", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 54, 102035, doi: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102035.

Waqas, M., Salleh, N.A.M. and Hamzah, Z.L. (2021), "Branded content experience in social media: conceptualization, scale development, and validation", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 56 No. 1, pp. 106-120, doi: 10.1016/j.intmar.2021.07.001.

Wei, X., Chen, H., Ramirez, A., Jeon, Y. and Sun, Y. (2022), "Influencers as endorsers and followers as consumers: exploring the role of parasocial relationship, congruence, and followers' identifications on consumer-brand engagement", *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 269-288, doi: 10.1080/15252019.2022.2116963.

Whitener, E.M., Brodt, S.E., Korsgaard, M.A. and Werner, J.M. (1998), "Managers as initiators of trust: an exchange relationship framework for understanding managerial trustworthy behavior", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 513-530, doi: 10.5465/amr.1998.926624.

Wiley, K. (2022), "12 great Instagram giveaway examples (brands + influencers)", *Statusphere*, available at: https://brands.joinstatus.com/examples-of-instagram-giveaways (accessed 13 April 2024).

Yan, M., Kwok, A.P.K., Chan, A.H.S., Zhuang, Y.S., Wen, K. and Zhang, K.C. (2023), "An empirical investigation of the impact of influencer live-streaming ads in e-commerce platforms on consumers' buying impulse", *Internet Research*, Vol. 33 No. 4, pp. 1633-1663, doi: 10.1108/intr-11-2020-0625.

Yu, X. and Yuan, C. (2019), "How consumers' brand experience in social media can improve brand perception and customer equity", *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, Vol. 31 No. 5, pp. 1233-1251, doi: 10.1108/apjml-01-2018-0034.

Yuan, S. and Lou, C. (2020), "How social media influencers foster relationships with followers: the roles of source credibility and fairness in parasocial relationship and product interest", *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 133-147, doi: 10.1080/15252019.2020.1769514.

Zha, T., Aw, E.C.X., Dastane, O. and Fernando, A.G. (2023), "Social media marketing for luxury brands: parasocial interactions and empowerment for enhanced loyalty and willingness to pay a premium", *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, Vol. 41 No. 8, pp. 1138-1161, doi: 10.1108/mip-05-2023-0192.

Zhao, X., Lynch, J.G. Jr and Chen, Q. (2010), "Reconsidering Baron and Kenny: myths and truths about mediation analysis", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 197-206, doi: 10.1086/651257.

Corresponding author
Fraser McLeay can be contacted at: fraser.mcleay@sheffield.ac.uk

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:
www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: **permissions@emeraldinsight.com**