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The Impact of Digital Influencers on Purchase Intention for High- Involvement vs Low- Involvement Products

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ABSTRACT

Title: “The Impact of Digital Influencers on Purchase Intention for High-Involvement vs Low-Involvement Products”

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The rise of social media has revolutionized marketing, with digital influencers playing a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior. This study examines the impact of digital influencers on purchase intention, considering the moderating effect of product engagement level—distinguishing between high-engagement and low-engagement products. Using a quantitative research approach, data was collected through an online survey, analyzing the responses of 209 participants. The study investigates how intrinsic factors of digital influencers (knowledge and experience, and trustworthiness) and extrinsic factors (quality and quantity of content) affect consumers' purchasing decisions. The results reveal that digital influencers significantly impact purchase intention, with influencers' trustworthiness emerging as the strongest predictor, regardless of the level of product involvement. Knowledge and experience, however, play a more substantial role in the purchase intention of high-involvement products. In addition, content quality and quantity positively influence purchase intention but do not show significant results based on product involvement levels.

These conclusions contribute to the literature on influencer marketing, highlighting the differential effects of digital influencers' attributes on different product categories. From a management perspective, brands should prioritize influencer credibility over content frequency when selecting influencers. In addition, the marketing of high-involvement products should focus mainly on the influencer's experience and knowledge, while trust remains a key factor in all types of products.

Keywords: Digital Influencers, influencer marketing, High-involvement product, Low-involvement product, Purchase Intention, Social media

SUMÁRIO

Título: “O impacto dos Influenciadores Digitais na Intenção de Compra de Produtos de Elevado Envolvimento vs Produtos de Baixo Envolvimento”

Autor: Maria César

A ascensão das redes sociais revolucionou o marketing, com os influenciadores digitais a desempenharem um papel crucial na formação do comportamento do consumidor. Este estudo analisa o impacto dos influenciadores na intenção de compra, considerando o efeito moderador do envolvimento do produto - distinguindo entre produtos com elevado e com baixo envolvimento. Utilizando uma abordagem de investigação quantitativa, os dados foram recolhidos através de um questionário online, onde foram analisadas 209 respostas. O estudo investiga a forma como os fatores intrínsecos (conhecimento e experiência, e confiança) e extrínsecos (qualidade e quantidade de conteúdo) afetam as decisões de compra dos consumidores. Os resultados revelam que os influenciadores digitais têm um impacto significativo na intenção de compra, a confiança é o fator mais significativo, independentemente do envolvimento do produto. O conhecimento e a experiência, no entanto, desempenham um papel mais substancial na intenção de compra de produtos de elevado envolvimento. Além disso, a qualidade e a quantidade do conteúdo influenciam positivamente a intenção de compra, mas não apresentam resultados significativos com base no envolvimento do produto.

Estas conclusões contribuem para a literatura sobre marketing de influenciadores, destacando como os atributos dos influenciadores digitais afetam diferentes categorias de produtos. Para as marcas, a credibilidade do influenciador deve prevalecer em detrimento da frequência dos conteúdos quando selecionam os influenciadores. Além disso, o marketing de produtos de elevado envolvimento deve centrar-se principalmente na experiência e nos conhecimentos do influenciador, enquanto a confiança continua a ser um fator-chave em todos os tipos de produtos.

Palavras-Chave: Influenciadores Digitais, Marketing de Influência, Produto de Alto Envolvimento, Produto de Baixo Envolvimento, Intenção de Compra, Redes Sociais

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GLOSSARY

RQ: Research Questions

H: Hypotheses

ELM: Elaboration Likelihood Model

CLT: Central Limit Theorem

FOMO: Fear of Missing Out

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Social media platforms have emerged at an impressive rate over the years and are now widely used by companies. Many companies have invested significant money and time in improving their social media marketing campaigns to reach consumers better and engage with their audience (Alalwan, 2018).

Amid this fast digital evolution, some people have developed a large group of followers on social media, who follow them and what they say, and in some cases, what they do (Vrontis et al., 2021). COVID-19 has accelerated certain technologies, requiring brands to overcome some obstacles with new strategies (Francisco et al., 2021). To continue engaging with their target audience, most brands intensified the use of social media. According to Francisco et al. (2021), this period allowed for more significant interaction between brands and consumers due to social media and digital influencers, who have been valuable for brands in recommending products and influencing consumers' purchase decisions.

Since then, companies started to recognize the value of digital influencers in reaching out to consumers. As a result, brands understood that they must carefully choose the right digital influencer based on various factors, including the type of content, the frequency with which they publish, the relationship between the influencer and their followers, and if they know how to connect the influencer's lifestyle and values to the endorsed product (Vrontis et al., 2021). However, in addition to these influencer characteristics, other studies have demonstrated the significance of psychological factors in understanding the impact of a digital influencer on a consumer's purchasing behavior.

A brand's impact on consumers fosters an emotional connection, making them feel that the brand is an essential part of their identity (Xuan et al., 2023). According to Cabeza-Ramírez et al. (2022), the trustworthiness of influencers directly impacts purchase intention by reducing the perceived risk associated with the influencer's recommendations. Furthermore, the most successful influencer marketing strategies involve authentic, knowledgeable influencers who understand how to connect emotionally with their audience (Vrontis et al., 2021). One conclusion shared by these authors is that Product Involvement is one of the most important factors in understanding the effectiveness of digital influence.

1.2. Problem Statement

Nowadays, consumers increasingly believe what they see on the Internet, and digital influencers' opinions guide them. However, the characteristics of the goods, especially the differentiation between low and high-involvement products, can significantly affect how customers interact with and react to influencer marketing. Low-involvement products involve quicker, more impulsive purchasing decisions, whereas high-involvement products typically require more consumer investment, both economically and mentally.

Despite the wide availability of studies on digital influencers and influencer marketing, limited research has been conducted into the factors influencing consumers depending on the product's involvement level. This study addresses the lack of a comprehensive understanding of how digital influencers impact consumer decision-making differently for high- and low-involvement products. By investigating the psychological dynamics behind influencer marketing and the role of content type, frequency, and influencer marketing strategies, this study aims to provide valuable insights into how digital influencers can more effectively influence consumer choices across multiple product categories.

More specifically, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do digital influencers impact consumers' decision-making regarding high-involvement products (like electronics and cars) versus low-involvement products (like snacks and household products)?

The primary goal of this research question is to distinguish the impact of digital influencers on various levels of product involvement.

RQ2: How does the knowledge and expertise of a digital influencer impact a consumer's choice of a high-involvement or low-involvement product?

This research question aims to understand whether knowledge and expertise are significant for both types of products. We expect more specialized and technical knowledge of the product to be required for a high-involvement product, while the knowledge level may differ for a low-involvement product.

RQ3: Does the type or frequency of content influencers share affect consumers' purchasing decisions differently for high or low-involvement products?

This research question aims to understand how digital influencers' different types of content (tutorials, videos, photos, etc.) influence consumers' purchasing decisions regarding different levels of product involvement. We also want to understand if the frequency of content posted affects consumers' decisions and if it differs for high- and low-involvement products.

1.1. Relevance

While much research has been conducted on digital influencers, little is known about how psychological factors (e.g., trust, credibility, involvement) differ between high-involvement and low-involvement products. This study will help us better understand how influencer marketing works differently across product categories, providing new insights into consumer decision-making.

From a managerial perspective, the study provides marketers with practical guidance in selecting the right influencer based on product type (high vs. low involvement). It enables companies to understand how influencer attributes influence consumer decisions, making it easier to create targeted influencer campaigns.

1.4 Dissertation Outline

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter begins with an introduction that discusses the dissertation's topic and some information about digital influencers, specifically the rise of social media and the role of digital influencers in consumer decision-making. On this basis, we define our research objectives and outline the research questions that will guide this study.

The following chapter is a literature review in which we gather information from existing research on digital influencers, influencer marketing, purchase intention, Influencing factors of Digital Influencers, and product involvement. This section analyzes previous studies, identifying gaps and limitations and providing the foundation for our hypotheses.

The third chapter outlines the methodology for this study, including the specific studies conducted, the data collection methods, and the data analysis techniques. The fourth chapter presents the results of the quantitative analysis, which contains all the information needed to present and interpret the proposed hypotheses. The fifth chapter is the conclusion, which summarizes our research's main findings and discusses our study's limitations. The final two chapters contain a list of references and appendices.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Digital Influencers

The emergence of digital influencers is not recent. Digital influencers started by expressing their thoughts and opinions on personal blogs before moving on to social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, where they reached a wider audience and had a more significant impact (Hudders et al., 2021). According to Freberg et al. (2011), digital influencers represent a third-party endorsement that measures the behavior of consumers and their audience through blogs and other social media. Digital influencers may operate as intermediaries, content distributors, and content producers, among other roles (Borchers, 2019). All these roles serve as communication strategies, allowing them to influence people's lives and decisions more.

Recently, the number of influencers has increased as people become more involved in creating and consuming content. In July 2024, there were 5.45 billion Internet users worldwide, representing 67.1% of the world's population. Of this, around 63% were social media users (Statista, 2024).

However, influencer marketing is not new. Even in the 18th century, businesses employed individuals to promote their brands and attract potential customers (Laszkiewicz & Kalinska-Kula, 2023). This historical precedent highlights how modern digital influencers are part of a long-standing tradition of third-party endorsements. Over the years, digital influencers have become increasingly essential to the growth of brands (Leung et al., 2022). Instagram is the social media platform most used by digital influencers because it allows information to reach followers quickly, making an impact and building a community (Casaló et al., 2020). Nowadays, through Instagram, digital influencers can create a private chat with followers who want to participate, where they share more exclusive content from their daily lives, allowing followers to connect more quickly with influencers.

As consumers become more informed/knowledgeable and skeptical of traditional marketing methods, it becomes more difficult for companies to attract and influence them (Leung et al., 2022). According to previous research, marketers identify some very important factors when selecting a digital influencer, such as the number of followers, the influencer's relevance, and the type of content they publish, but the most important and relevant factor for consumers is the trust they transmit in what they say, as well as mutual trust (Uzunoglu & Misci Kip, 2014).

2.2. Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing, mainly digital influencer marketing, has rapidly expanded (Carter, 2016). It is the practice of compensating influencers for publishing information on social networks to promote products or services, increasing brand awareness (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). In this way, influencer marketing facilitates the segmentation of consumers with shared interests and opinions, enabling digital influencers to attract specific audience groups and allowing brands to promote products more effectively to a specific audience (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Additionally, digital influencers' reach extends beyond their direct followers, as content sharing and word-of-mouth marketing amplify their influence within broader social networks (Kay et al., 2020).

Celebrities are frequently used as digital influencers to increase brand awareness, as their established credibility fosters consumer trust and increases the persuasiveness of marketing messages, ultimately impacting their purchasing behavior (Spry et al., 2011). Beyond celebrities, digital influencers can include vloggers, bloggers, and social media users who have gained popularity through their publications (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). These influencers are often categorized as micro and nano influencers who, despite having smaller followings, typically achieve higher engagement and relatability with their audiences (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Campbell & Farrell, 2020).

Unlike traditional celebrities, whose fame stems from external industries (e.g., film, music), digital influencers build their reputation within social media. As a result, influencers often establish a stronger sense of authenticity and relatability with their audience (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Most digital influencers specialize in a specific area, such as "healthy living, travel, food, lifestyle, beauty, or fashion," which makes consumers more likely to trust and follow the recommendations of an influencer who is most closely related to the brand's domain (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Although influencer marketing has proved effective for many companies, it requires many resources, and it is difficult to evaluate the results of digital influencers afterward (Leung et al., 2022). Furthermore, brands must be cautious when selecting an influencer to represent them, as the influencer must reflect the values and characteristics that the brand desires to communicate to consumers (de Veirman et al., 2017).

To choose the best influencer, brands must understand how digital influencers affect consumer behavior (Vrontis et al., 2021). In other words, it is important to understand what factors are relevant to consumers and make them follow the recommendations of digital influencers regarding their consumption behaviors.

2.3. Purchase intention

According to Dodds et al. (1991), Purchase Intention refers to a consumer's likelihood or willingness to buy a specific product or service. It reflects the consumer's conscious plan to purchase based on factors like perceived value, need, and attitude toward the product.

According to Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior study, purchase intention increases when norms, attitude, and perceived behavioral control correlate positively. The author also states that buying behavior occurs when consumers act on their instincts while being influenced by behavioral control. If the perceived control is higher, the consumer's intentions may have turned into actual actions.

Research on digital influencers' impact on consumers' purchase intention has examined various factors, including the influencers' credibility, trustworthiness, and expertise (Weismueller et al., 2020). These attributes influence consumer perception, reducing purchase risk and increasing confidence in the promoted product. Purchase intention can be utilized to measure the results of brands' investments in influencer marketing (Kay et al., 2020). Understanding the factors that lead to purchase intention is important for brands and businesses as they develop marketing strategies, consumer engagement plans, and conversion rate optimization (Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani, 2023).

Today's generation is very informed and comfortable with technology and innovative products, so they are likelier to base their purchase intention on recommendations from digital influencers (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2022).

2.4. Influencing Factors of Digital Influencers

According to Katz's two-step flow theory (1957), consumers are more influenced by opinion leaders, who spread the word to a larger audience, than by mass media itself. In Digital Marketing, influencers act as opinion leaders, shaping consumer attitudes and purchase behavior. The author defines opinion leaders based on three aspects: competence, which refers to the opinion leaders' knowledge and expertise of the issues; characteristics and interests,

which allow consumers to identify with them; and social positioning, which refers to being connected to the community and accessible to consumers.

The accessibility of digital influencers is a key characteristic that fosters audience engagement and identification (de Veirman et al., 2017). Influencers who have become well-known only for their social media activities are perceived as more approachable and accessible to consumers. They frequently share personal content and engage directly with their followers, creating a sense of familiarity and trust (de Veirman et al., 2017). This increases the likelihood of consumers identifying with influencers and being influenced by their characteristics and values (Casaló et al., 2020).

Digital Influencers update their social media profiles with content related to their field of expertise, attracting consumers who are interested in that particular topic. To differentiate themselves and encourage consumers to identify with them even more, they personalize their content with aesthetic and personality touches that positively impact consumers (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

According to Hovland & Weiss (1951), the source's credibility impacts the audience's opinion and is determined by expertise and trustworthiness. When a digital influencer demonstrates knowledge about the product they recommend to consumers, their followers become more enthusiastic and recommend that others follow the influencer (Casaló et al., 2020). This suggests that consumers are more easily persuaded when they consider that the person they follow is specialized and has the required expertise (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). According to Djafarova & Rushworth's (2017) qualitative analysis of Instagram users, consumers' trust in celebrity recommendations for branded products stems from their knowledge and expertise.

The lack of trust is the most difficult challenge for those working online, such as brands and digital influencers. Maintaining consumer loyalty and trust is becoming increasingly complex, so strategies must be developed to ensure consumers believe what influencers say (Leal et al., 2024). The study of Cabeza-Ramírez et al. (2022) concluded that the perceived trustworthiness of digital influencers positively influences consumers' purchase intentions. The trust that digital influencers convey through their social media content encourages consumers to follow their recommendations. While expertise reflects an influencer's knowledge of the product, trustworthiness pertains to their recommendations' perceived honesty and authenticity

(Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Consumers may trust influencers without viewing them as experts, particularly for lifestyle-oriented endorsements.

H1: *The intrinsic factors of digital influencers (knowledge and expertise, and trustworthiness) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.*

Digital influencers significantly impact consumers who strongly need to belong and want to be socially accepted and included (Escalas & Bettman, 2017). Hence, the more they publish and are active on social media, the more consumers feel that they know the influencers and the stronger their emotional connection with them, resulting in increased trust (Leung et al., 2022).

On the other hand, it is important to analyze other criteria by which companies and brands select influencers, such as how frequently they publish, the type of content they share, and the number of followers (Leung et al., 2022). These strategic factors that distinguish digital influencers also directly impact consumers.

The frequency with which opinion leaders publish on social media is essential for them to stand out (Casaló et al., 2020). The more they publish, the more credible they are, and the more consumers trust what they say. Furthermore, if digital influencers want to be recognized by consumers as experts about what they discuss, they should post on social media more frequently to establish a reputation in the community (Leal et al., 2024; Casaló et al., 2020). On the other hand, the quality and type of content published are also important for digital influencers to differentiate from others, the quality of the content published on social networks has been important in establishing the reputation of users who may later become digital influencers (Leal et al., 2024). The type of influencer-shared content on social media, such as videos, photos, or reels on Instagram, is critical in determining whether or not to follow a profile (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

Finally, the number of followers reflects the size and popularity of the digital influencer's audience. This factor is one of the key considerations for brands when choosing a digital influencer to represent their products, as a more significant number of followers can boost the reach of the audience through word of mouth (de Veirman et al., 2017).

H2: *The extrinsic factors of digital influencers (content quality and content quantity) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.*

Despite analyzing the different factors that digital influencers use to impact consumer behavior, we still do not understand influencers' impact on consumers according to product involvement.

2.5. Product Involvement

Product involvement refers to the degree of personal relevance, interest, and perceived importance a consumer assigns to a product (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Higher involvement is associated with extensive decision-making, while lower involvement typically involves habitual or impulsive purchasing behavior. The construct of "product involvement" has been previously examined in consumer behavior research, and various dimensions have been proposed to categorize the nature of consumer engagement with products. For instance, Warrington & Shim (2000) identifies three key aspects of involvement: (1) intensity, which refers to a person's level of cognitive and emotional investment; (2) direction, which is the motivation that a product can convey to the consumer; and (3) persistence, which indicates how long the intensity of involvement persists.

Buchholz & Smith (1991) highlight that product involvement influences consumer behavior and response by determining whether a purchase is driven by rational evaluation or impulsive behavior. On the other hand, Haynes et al. (1994) realized that involvement is determined by the perceived importance of an object to a person (product involvement), related to consumers' needs, values, or occasional interests (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Involvement is an activity (vs. a product), indicating process involvement. According to Radder & Huang (2008), low-involvement products are part of the consumer's daily routine, have a lower price than other products, are less durable, and are unimportant to consumers (Chavadi et al., 2024). Furthermore, deciding on a low-involvement product is more straightforward and requires less effort (Zaichkowsky, 1985). This type of product carries low perceived risk (Zaichkowsky, 1985; Radder & Huang, 2008) as they typically have lower prices and serve functional, habitual needs, leading to automatic purchasing decisions with limited brand loyalty (Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani, 2023).

Contrarily, high-involvement products require significant deliberation, as they are associated with high prices, durability, and symbolic or psychological value (Radder & Huang, 2008). These products involve high-risk perceptions on various levels, including psychological, social, and operational (Chavadi et al., 2024). Given their complexity, consumers engage in extensive information search and evaluation before purchasing high-involvement products (el Hedhli et al., 2021). They need to know the characteristics and specificities of those products in order to

make sound and informed decisions (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Hence, high-involvement products require extensive research, and consumers take longer to evaluate their options (Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani, 2023).

Examples of high-involvement products are electronics, automobiles, and real estate, which are problematic and expensive purchases, necessitating detailed information (el Hedhli et al., 2021; Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani, 2023). For some researchers, clothing is also considered a high-involvement product because consumers buy clothes for satisfaction, to improve their image, and, most importantly, because they have symbolic meaning (Radder & Huang, 2008). On the other hand, there is the example of coffee regarding low-involvement products. Coffee is a product that consumers are less likely to be influenced to purchase by external influences (Radder & Huang, 2008). Likewise, when consumers buy shampoo or toilet cleaners, they also purchase a product with low involvement, in which detailed information is less important than product attractiveness and likability (el Hedhli et al., 2021). It is a more straightforward choice, and consumers are not concerned about the final decision (Chavadi et al., 2024).

The distinction between high- and low-involvement products is critical for marketing strategy. High-involvement products benefit from rational appeals, detailed product specifications, and expert endorsements as consumers seek to minimize perceived risks (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016). In contrast, low-involvement products rely more on frequent exposure, emotional advertising, and impulse-driven marketing techniques (Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani, 2023). Understanding these distinctions allows brands to tailor communication strategies that align with consumer decision-making processes.

2.6. Factors influencing the purchase of low-involvement vs. high-involvement products

Customers consider various factors when purchasing a product, depending on their level of involvement. The study of Yilmaz et al. (2011) examines how the source's credibility, which includes trust and expertise (Hovland & Weiss, 1951), influences consumer behavior. Consumer decision-making is strongly influenced by product involvement, particularly regarding the perceived credibility of information sources. According to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981), high-involvement purchases trigger the central processing route, where consumers carefully evaluate message content, source expertise, and trustworthiness. In contrast, low-involvement purchases activate the peripheral processing route, where consumers rely on superficial cues, such as attractiveness, humor, or brand familiarity (Yilmaz et al., 2011).

For low-involvement products, peripheral cues, such as catchy advertisements or emotional appeals, exert a more decisive influence than detailed product specifications or expert endorsements (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). Therefore, the credibility of the message's source is secondary. For example, consumers purchasing chewing gum or shampoo are more influenced by the message's attractiveness than the source's credibility. As a result, knowledge and trust levels are also lower for this type of product. Conversely, high-involvement product purchases, such as smartphones or automobiles, require detailed product comparisons, consumer testimonials, and credible endorsements due to higher perceived risk and investment (Chavadi et al., 2024). The source's credibility is important in consumers' decision-making process for this product type (Yilmaz et al., 2011).

2.7. Digital Influencers and Product Involvement

Having reviewed how digital influencers influence consumers and what factors influence purchase intention based on the type of product involvement, it is relevant to assess if there is any relationship between these two variables. According to the literature, the effectiveness of influencer marketing is contingent on the level of product involvement, as consumer decision-making processes differ across product categories. Research suggests that influencers who provide in-depth product reviews, expert opinions, and educational content for high-involvement products are more effective as they help reduce perceived risk (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2022). In contrast, influencers leveraging aesthetic appeal, product placement, and frequent social media exposure for low-involvement products generate greater consumer engagement (Chavadi et al., 2024). The study conducted by Cabeza-Ramírez et al. (2022) and Xuan et al. (2023) concluded that brands looking to invest in influencer marketing should select an influencer based on the level/type of product involvement.

High-involvement products are important to consumers, so the message that digital influencers must convey requires more relevant information highlighting the products' features. Digital influencers can increase their credibility and consumer confidence in high-involvement products by soliciting reviews from trusted sources and using personalized marketing messages (Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani, 2023).

H1.1: *The positive effect that knowledge and expertise have on the consumer's purchase intention is higher for high-involvement products.*

H1.2: *The positive effect that Trustworthiness has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for high-involvement products.*

In the case of low-involvement products, digital influencers do not need to convey a detailed message. However, they should focus more on visible content, eye-catching images, and product attractiveness (Chavadi et al., 2024). According to Kapitan & Silvera (2016), consumers are more likely to connect with the message's source (digital influencers) in the case of low-involvement products. In contrast, with high-involvement products, consumers have a pre-existing connection with the brand and product.

The ELM proposed by Petty & Cacioppo (1981) provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the role of source credibility—including that of digital influencers—in shaping consumer attitudes and behavior. The model distinguishes between two cognitive processing routes: the central route, where consumers engage in systematic evaluation of message content, and the peripheral route, where decisions are influenced by heuristic cues such as attractiveness, familiarity, or emotional appeal. Research suggests that high-involvement products trigger central route processing, making message credibility and influencer expertise critical determinants of persuasion (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2022). Consequently, brands should strategically align product selection with an influencer's credibility and domain of expertise to enhance consumer trust and message effectiveness. For low-involvement products, consumers are more likely to rely on peripheral cues, such as visual appeal, frequency of exposure, and influencer relatability, rather than in-depth product details (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981; Yilmaz et al., 2011). While expertise remains valuable, it plays a lesser role in decision-making than engagement-driven factors such as aesthetics, informal endorsements, and frequent content dissemination (el Hedhli et al., 2021). Understanding these distinctions enables brands to tailor influencer selection and content strategies based on the involvement level of their target products.

H2.1: *The positive effect that content quality has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for low-involvement products.*

H2.2: *The positive effect that content quantity has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for low-involvement products.*

Social media engagement and perceived influencer credibility are key moderators in the relationship between digital influencers and product involvement (Xuan et al., 2023). When

consumers are more engaged with a brand, they are more likely to be influenced by brand content posted by digital influencers. In the study by Chavadi et al. (2024), the authors conclude that endorsement from sources (such as digital influencers) significantly impacts consumers looking for low-involvement products, as these decisions tend to be more impulse-driven. On the other hand, consumers considering high-involvement products are more influenced by a message that contains greater informational depth, relying on detailed product analyses, technical specifications, and third-party validation before making a purchase decision (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016) since these are not products purchased daily. Unlike low-involvement, these consumers are less susceptible to superficial endorsements and require highly credible influencers who can provide in-depth insights and trustworthy recommendations (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2022).

2.7.1. Addressing gaps in existing research

Product involvement is essential for influencer marketing to be effective and profitable for brands (Xuan et al., 2023). Existing literature discusses the impact of digital influencers on consumer behavior, but it frequently fails to differentiate between high and low-involvement products. Despite the growing literature on digital influencer marketing, few studies have thoroughly examined how influencer attributes (e.g., expertise, trustworthiness) and content formats (e.g., videos, product demonstrations, lifestyle integration) impact consumer decision-making across different levels of product involvement. Existing research often treats digital influencers as a homogeneous category without distinguishing how their impact varies depending on product complexity, consumer risk perception, and cognitive processing routes (Radder & Huang, 2008; Chavadi et al., 2024). Furthermore, while trust is widely recognized as an important factor in influencer marketing, its relative importance across high and low-involvement products remains underexplored. By addressing these gaps, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of influencer marketing, highlighting how different factors influence the purchase of high- and low-involvement products and offering insights for brands, marketers, and researchers seeking to optimize influencer-driven promotional strategies for different product categories.

2.8. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

This study aims to determine digital influencers' impact on consumers' purchase intentions for different product involvement levels: high and low involvement. Based on previous research in the literature review, we assume that intrinsic factors related to the characteristics of the influencers (Knowledge and Expertise, and Trustworthiness) impact consumers' behavior. On

the other hand, extrinsic factors related to content and social presence (content quality and content quantity) also influence consumers' purchasing decisions. These factors are assumed to impact the purchasing intentions of digital influencers' followers positively. Our literature review also highlighted that, depending on the type of product involvement, certain factors are more important to consumers before making a purchase. Furthermore, consumers are more influenced depending on the product type and how digital influencers deliver the message.

Based on what was previously said, we formulate the following Hypotheses:

H1: The intrinsic factors of digital influencers (Knowledge and Expertise, and Trustworthiness) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.

H1.1: The positive effect that Knowledge and Expertise have on the consumer's purchase intention is higher for high-involvement products.

H1.2: The positive effect that Trustworthiness has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for high-involvement products.

H2: The extrinsic factors of digital influencers (Content Quality and Content Quantity) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.

H2.1: The positive effect that Content Quality has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for low-involvement products.

H2.2: The positive effect that Content Quantity has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for low-involvement products.

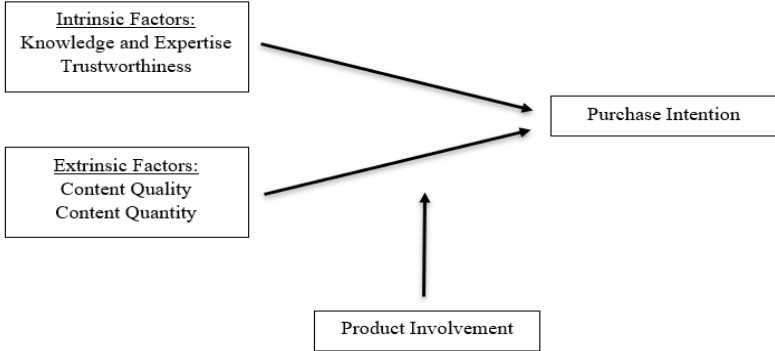


Figure 1- Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains our methodological approach after reviewing the literature and secondary data. The primary goal of this study is to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses presented in Chapter 2. Secondary data were collected from other studies and academic articles on digital influencers and their influence on consumer purchase intentions.

We provide a detailed description of the methodological approach used in the data collection and analysis processes hereafter.

3.1. Research Approach

A quantitative survey approach was chosen because it allows for statistical analysis of relationships between variables identified during the Literature Review, ensuring the generalizability of findings, as referred to by Creswell (2003). Qualitative methods were considered less suitable for capturing broad consumer trends. Moreover, quantitative methodology allows for accurate data measurement and consistency of results.

The data were collected using an online survey, allowing us to reach a larger sample in a shorter period. The questionnaire was created using Qualtrics software. The survey was anonymous, ensuring that participants provided sincere answers.

We attempted to reach as many people as possible who follow digital influencers and may have been influenced by them to purchase products. The questionnaire was available on social media platforms: WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook. To minimize self-selection bias, efforts were made to distribute the survey across diverse social media groups targeting different demographics. The estimated time to complete the questionnaire was 6 minutes, and the study was administered to people who use social media and watch content promoted by digital influencers. The questionnaire was published online on December 6 and was available until December 20. It was available in Portuguese and English to reach more people of different nationalities (the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1).

After collecting the data, we used IBM SPSS V28 software to analyze it statistically and test the formulated hypotheses.

3.2. Data Collection

The main purpose of our study was to assess how digital influencers affect consumers' purchase intentions for high- or low-involvement products. Participants were recruited through social

media, and a non-probability convenience sampling method was used. While this method is cost-effective and allows access to a broad audience, it may limit the generalizability of findings.

The target audience was people of all ages who use social media and consume content created by digital influencers. Our sample size was 308 responses, as we wanted at least 100 valid responses per type of product involvement (low and high).

The survey questionnaire was divided into eight parts: Introduction, Social Media, Digital Influencer, Knowledge and Expertise, Trustworthiness, Content Quality, Content Quantity and Purchase Intention. To ensure that respondents met the requirements for our study, we asked two screening questions at the beginning. First, we inquired whether the participants used social media. If participants did not use social media or preferred not to respond, they were directed to the end of the survey. We then asked if they followed digital influencers or content creators on social media and if they did not or were not sure, they were directed to the end.

Following these questions, participants were randomly assigned one type of product (low or high involvement) and asked to answer questions about influencers' Knowledge and Expertise, Trustworthiness, Content Quality, Content Quantity, and, finally, Purchase Intention.

3.3. Measures

Defining the dependent and independent variables was necessary to test the hypotheses. Thus, our model's independent variables were the intrinsic factors (Knowledge and Expertise, and Trustworthiness) and extrinsic factors (Content Quality and Content Quantity). Product Involvement (high or low) was a moderating variable, and finally, the dependent variable was Purchase Intention.

The questionnaire included approximately 4-5 questions per independent variable. Halfway through the questionnaire, before the participants answered the questions related to the independent and dependent variables, they came to a block where they randomly assigned low or high involvement. Based on the product involvement they were given, they then had to answer the following questions. The questionnaire included 22 questions in total with closed-answer to simplify data analysis. Each section of the questionnaire included a brief introduction to help participants understand the types of questions they could anticipate, and the language was simple. The responses were based on a Likert scale (1932). Throughout the questionnaire,

respondents were required to rate their level of agreement with the statements on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1, "Strongly Disagree," to 7, "Strongly Agree."

The outline of the measures used can be found in Table 1.

Variables		Scale	Items	Source	Cronbach Alpha
Influencing Factors	Knowledge and Expertise	7-Point Likert Scale	4	Nafees et al., (2020) Lee et al., (2020)	0,85
	Trustworthiness	7-Point Likert Scale	4	Nafees et al., (2020) Lee et al., (2020)	0,92
	Content Quality	7-Point Likert Scale	5	Casaló, (2020)	n.a
	Content Quantity	7-Point Likert Scale	4	Casaló, (2020)	n.a
Purchase Intention		7-Point Likert Scale	5	Ko et al., (2024) Balaban, (2022)	0,98
Product Involvement		7-Point Likert Scale	-	Balaban, (2022)	0,89

Table 1- Operational Model

3.4. Data Analysis

SPSS software version 28 was used to analyze the data. The internal consistency of the variables was first tested to see if there were statistically significant differences and if we could move forward with the study. For that purpose, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for each construct to assess the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement scales. After assessing the significance of the four variables, their normal distribution, and the collinearity of our data, we proceeded to the hypotheses testing. Multiple linear regressions were conducted to examine the impact of intrinsic factors (Knowledge and Expertise, and Trustworthiness) and extrinsic factors (Content Quantity and Content Quality) on consumers' purchase intention for a product advertised by a digital influencer. In addition to the multiple linear regressions, moderations analysis were also carried out with the PROCESS v4.1 macro model (Hayes, 2020) to measure the interaction of the independent variables with purchase intention and the level of product involvement, low or high involvement.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we analyze the survey results. We describe how the data was prepared and then characterize the sample. Then, we test the hypotheses and determine the relationships between the influencing factors of digital influencers, product involvement, and purchase intention.

4.1. Data Preparation

After completing the questionnaire in Appendix 1, we received 308 responses, with only 25 being incomplete, resulting in 283 complete answers. Of these responses, 11 were removed because the participants did not use social media. Then, 53 participants were excluded because they did not follow or were unsure whether they followed digital influencers. This left us with 219 answers. The next step was to analyze the answers to the two attention questions throughout the quiz.

We eliminated eight answers based on these two questions, resulting in 211 valid responses. Outliers exceeding the critical threshold ($p < 0.001$) were eliminated using the Mahalanobis distance to ensure more realistic results and a more robust analysis. The Mahalanobis distance was found to be between [0.432; 25.697] with p -values < 0.001 (Appendix 2). As a result, we found two multivariate outliers (these were cases ID 147 (MAH=25.697; $p=0.0001$) and ID 35 (MAH=21.643; $p=0.0006$), which were removed from the database, going from 211 responses to an analysis of 209 cases.

4.2 Assumptions

4.2.1. Reliability Measures

The five constructs used in this study were initially validated through the existing literature. Nonetheless, validating the constructs by analyzing their internal consistency was necessary, and this was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The results are shown in the table below, along with the Corrected Item-Total Correlation of each item and Cronbach's Alpha value without considering the item in the construct.

Constructs and corresponding items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
Knowledge and Expertise (4 items)			0,690
<i>Digital influencers that I follow are experts about the contents they publish</i>	,503	,606	
<i>Digital Influencers that I follow are qualified to talk about this type of products (think about the product you chose)</i>	,556	,568	
<i>I would be more likely to buy that specific type of product if the digital influencer was knowledgeable about it</i>	,394	,671	
<i>The knowledge and expertise of the influencer about that type of products would impact my decision to buy the product</i>	,451	,641	
Trustworthiness (4 items)			0,757
<i>Digital influencers that I follow are trustworthy</i>	,496	,736	
<i>A digital influencer's honest opinion on the positive and negative aspects of such product would impact my confidence to purchase it</i>	,595	,677	
<i>I trust influencers whose content seems authentic and genuine.</i>	,638	,658	
<i>An influencer's reputation for trustworthiness would make me feel more comfortable to purchase that product</i>	,502	,726	
Content Quality (5 items)			0,835
<i>It would be important for me that the influencers I follow published high quality contents about that product</i>	,681	,789	
<i>High-quality images and videos shared by digital influencers about that product would increase my interest in such product</i>	,685	,788	
<i>If Digital influencers provided detailed information about that product, it would give me more confidence to purchase it</i>	,573	,819	
<i>Visually appealing content improves my chances of making a purchase decision (about that product).</i>	,595	,813	
<i>It would be important for me that the influencers I follow published original and innovative content about that product</i>	,645	,799	
Content Quantity (4 items)			0,911
<i>A high quantity of publications on the social media accounts of the influencers I follow about that product would increase my chances to buy it</i>	,777	,892	
<i>The frequency with which digital influencers would publish content about that product, would increase my likelihood to buy such product</i>	,850	,867	
<i>Digital influencers who consistently post about a product increase my interest in that product</i>	,824	,876	
<i>I would prefer that product (over other ones) if the influencers I follow frequently posted content about it</i>	,745	,903	
Purchase Intention (5 items)			0,894
<i>I would like to try that product if it was promoted by digital influencers that I follow</i>	,712	,878	
<i>I have the intention to buy that product if it is promoted by digital influencers that I follow</i>	,819	,853	
<i>I would get informed about where I could buy that product if it was promoted by digital influencers that I follow</i>	,681	,884	
<i>I would buy that product if it was promoted by digital influencers that I follow</i>	,833	,849	
<i>I would recommend that product to others based on a digital influencer's content.</i>	,686	,888	

Table 2- Internal consistency of the constructs under study

The results show that Knowledge and Expertise ($\alpha=0.690$) have questionable internal consistency but are very close to acceptable. Trustworthiness ($\alpha=0.757$) has acceptable internal consistency, and Content Quality ($\alpha=0.835$) and Purchase Intention ($\alpha=0.894$) have good internal consistency. Content Quantity ($\alpha=0.911$) has excellent internal consistency, the highest of all the constructs under study.

All the Cronbach's alpha values without any of the items included are lower than the actual Cronbach's alpha of the construct, which indicates that the corresponding items contribute to improving the respective internal consistency, and no item should be deleted. As a result of this internal consistency analysis, the constructs were considered validated, and their scores were calculated for each participant. The results are shown in the table below.

Construct	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge and Expertise	1,50	7,00	4,76	1,094
Trustworthiness	2,75	7,00	5,43	0,865
Content Quality	2,00	7,00	5,39	0,960
Content Quantity	1,00	7,00	4,49	1,368
Purchase Intention	1,40	7,00	4,79	1,125

Table 3- Descriptions of the constructs

We can see that Trustworthiness is the variable for which participants have the highest and most homogeneous scores on average (M=5.43; SD=0.865), ranging from 2.75 to 7.00, followed by Content Quality (M=5.39; SD=0.960), which ranges from 2.00 to 7.00. Content Quantity is the variable with the lowest and most heterogeneous scores on average (M=4.49; SD=1.368), with scores ranging from 1.00 to 7.00. Knowledge and Expertise have an average score of 4.76 (SD=1.094) and Purchase Intention of 4.79 (SD=1.125). The table below shows the correlations between the five constructs under study.

	Trustworthiness	Content Quality	Content Quantity	Purchase Intention
Knowledge and Expertise	,449***	,573***	,472***	,549***
Trustworthiness		,505***	,441***	,593***
Content Quality			,442***	,524***
Content Quantity				,637***

*** Significant for $p < 0,001$

Table 4- Correlation between constructs (N=209)

All the correlations are positive, indicating that all the constructs vary in the same direction. The correlations are significant and moderately intense, ranging from 0.442 for the relationship between Content Quality and Content Quantity to 0.637 for the relationship between Content Quantity and Purchase Intention. It should be noted that all the constructs are significantly related to Purchase Intention.

4.2.2. Normality Diagnosis

The normal distribution of the constructs was checked using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality, as the sample size exceeded 50 cases. A p-value greater than 0.05 was considered indicative of the assumption of normal distribution of the construct. Appendix 3 shows that all the constructs have p-values of less than 0.05. However, as this is a large sample ($N > 30$) and all the constructs have $|Asymmetry| < 3$ and $|Kurtosis| < 7$, according to the Central Limit Theorem (CLT), it is considered that there are no serious deviations from normality. The distributions can be considered approximately normal.

4.2.3. Multicollinearity

It is essential to investigate multicollinearity in our data because it has a direct impact on the results' reliability and interpretability. We analyzed multicollinearity separately to determine whether there was multicollinearity between constructs.

	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		
Knowledge and Expertise	,598	1,673
Trustworthiness	,670	1,494
Content Quality	,581	1,722
Content Quantity	,694	1,440

Table 5- Multicollinearity between constructs

The VIF values are less than 5 and Tolerance > 0.100 , which means our model does not have multicollinearity, and we can proceed with the hypothesis testing.

4.3. Sample Characterization

The sample of respondents in this study is primarily males (56.5%), 42.5% of females, and 1.0% non-binary/third gender. In terms of age, the sample of respondents is characterized by youth, with 52.6% of participants aged between 18 and 24 and 25.8% between 25 and 34. The respondents had education levels ranging from incomplete compulsory schooling to a PhD; the most frequent qualification for almost half of the sample (47.8%) was a bachelor's degree. There were also 25.8% of respondents with a high school graduate and 22.0% with a Master's degree. In short, a total of 95.6% have higher education. Of the four participants with other qualifications, two said they had an Associate's degree, and the other two were Technical School. Looking at the employment situation, 69.9% of the participants are working, of which

half (50.7%) have full-time jobs, 5.3% part-time, and 13.9% are student workers. Around a quarter of the sample comprises respondents who are studying (23.4%). Analysis of the sample by income shows that around half (48.8%) earn no income or less than €1,000. That is, 20.6% have no income, 14.8% earn less than €500, and 13.4% between €500 and €1,999. The most frequent situation among the participants is an income between 1000€ and 1499. The participants were from four continents: 77.0% from Europe, 16.3% from Africa, 4.8% from America, and 1.9% from Asia. The most significant proportion (64.1%) came from Portugal, while 14.8% came from South Africa.

Concerning the questions in the first block of the questionnaire on Social Media, most respondents (88.5%) use social networks daily. The most frequent use of social media is between 1 and 2 hours daily (32,5%). In addition, Instagram is the social network most used by the participants, namely 88.0%. TikTok follows this with 53.1%, Facebook with 36.4%, and Twitter with 33%. Entertainment is the content most frequently viewed by participants on social networks (82.3%), followed by lifestyle, viewed by 73.2%, and educational by 62.2%.

Regarding consumption habits, around half of the participants, 52.2%, rarely buy things they see on social media, 8.1% never buy, and 34.4% often buy things they see on social media.

Regarding digital influencers, 43.1% of participants search for promotional content daily, and 32% do so frequently. Of the 209 participants, 124 have already bought products because of content viewed by digital influencers. The most purchased products were clothes and footwear (70.2%), followed by makeup and skincare products (52.4%) and fashion accessories (43.5%).

Finally, regarding the level of product involvement, 48.8% of participants answered the questionnaire referring to low-involvement products and 51.2% to high-involvement products. Appendix 4 contains detailed information on sample characterization.

4.4. Hypotheses Test

We used the parametric T-test for independent samples to compare two independent samples (High involvement vs. Low involvement products) regarding a quantitative variable (Purchase Intention). For this purpose, the assumptions of normal distribution per sample (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for $N > 50$) and homogeneity of variances (Levene's test) were validated. The samples show an approximately normal distribution, to the extent that despite the rejection of normality by the KS test ($p < 0.001$), for large samples ($N > 30$), there are no serious departures from normality ($|Sk| < 3$ and $|Ku| < 7$). There was also a homogeneity of variance between the

samples ($p > 0.05$). In the T-test, $p < 0.05$ shows differences between Low and High-involvement products (Appendix 5).

The results in Table 6 show that respondents with low product involvement have an average purchase intention of 5.04 (SD=0.987), and those with high product involvement have an average purchase intention of 4.54 (SD=1.196).

These results are statistically significant ($t(207)=3.295$; $p < 0.001$), and it can be said that respondents with low-involvement products have a higher purchase intention than those with high-involvement ones.

	Product Involvement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Purchase Intention	Low	102	5,04	0,987	3,295	<0,001
	High	107	4,54	1,196		

Table 6- Purchase intention by level of Product Involvement

H1: *The intrinsic factors of digital influencers (Knowledge and Expertise, and Trustworthiness) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.*

A multiple linear regression model was carried out to assess whether the intrinsic factors of digital influencers, Knowledge and Expertise, and Trustworthiness, are significant predictors of consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.

Before testing the hypothesis, we confirmed that the assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression were met (Appendix 6). The relationship between the predictors, i.e., the independent variables (Trustworthiness and Knowledge and Expertise) and the dependent variable (Purchase Intention), shows a positive linear relationship. It was also necessary to confirm the non-autocorrelation of the residuals by checking the Durbin-Watson interval (1.953), which confirmed that the residuals are independent. The absence of multicollinearity was also verified. The independent variables do not have high correlations with each other, VIF <5 and Tolerance >0.01. Finally, the normality of the distribution of the residuals can be considered, and Homoscedasticity can be verified by the Residuals with constant variance (see the graphs in Appendix 6).

The results of the hypothesis test are shown in Table 7 and in Figure 2, where it can be seen that a statistically significant model was obtained ($F_{(2, 206)}=84.942$; $p<0.001$), which explains 44.7% of the variation in Purchase Intention ($R^2_{\text{Adjust}}=0.447$).

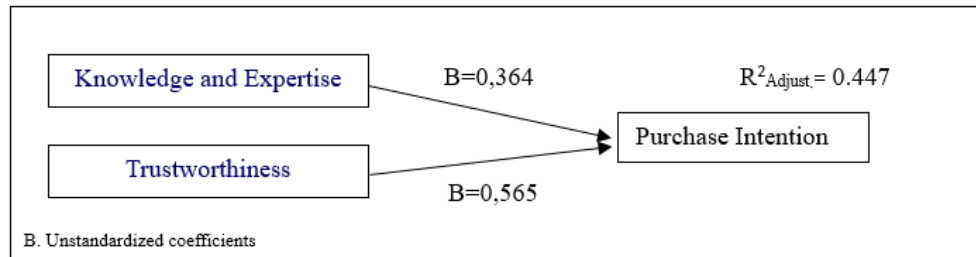


Figure 2- Regression model of intrinsic factors of digital influencers over consumers' purchase intentions

Intrinsic factors	Coefficients		t	Sig.
	Unstandardized B	Standardized Beta		
(Constant)	-0,012		-0,031	0,975
Knowledge and Expertise	0,364	0,354	6,125	<0,001
Trustworthiness	0,565	0,435	7,533	<0,001
	$R^2_{\text{Adjust}}=$ 0,447			
	$F_{(2, 206)}=$ 84,942	$p<0,001$		

Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 7- Regression model of intrinsic factors of digital influencers over consumers' purchase intentions

Regarding the intrinsic factors, Knowledge and Expertise are statistically significant predictors of purchase intention ($B=0.364$; $t=6.125$; $p<0.001$), positively impacting it. A one-unit increase in digital influencers' Knowledge and Expertise score leads to a 0.364 increase in consumers' purchase intention.

Trustworthiness also proved to be a statistically significant predictor of purchase intention ($B=0.565$; $t=7.533$; $p<0.001$), positively impacting it. A one-unit increase in the Trustworthiness score of digital influencers leads to a 0.565 increase in consumers' purchase intention. It can also be seen that Trustworthiness ($b=0.435$) is the intrinsic factor with the most significant impact on purchase intention (Knowledge and Expertise $b=0.354$).

Hypothesis 1 is therefore validated, and it can be said that the intrinsic factors of digital influencers (Knowledge and Expertise, and Trustworthiness) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.

H1.1 *The positive effect that Knowledge and Expertise have on the consumer's purchase intention is higher for high-involvement products.*

A moderation analysis was carried out using the PROCESS v4.1 macro (Hayes, 2020) to assess whether the level of product involvement (moderating variable) affects the relationship between the Knowledge and Expertise of digital influencers (independent variable) and consumers' purchase intention (dependent variable).

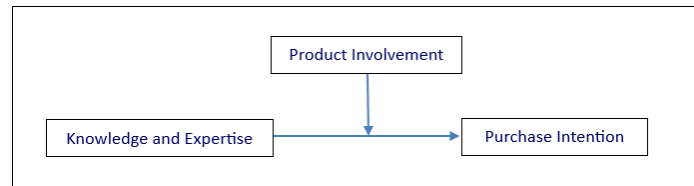


Figure 3- Moderation of level of product involvement over the effect of knowledge and expertise on purchase intention

The results are presented in Table 8 and Figure 4, showing that the regression model explains 36.7% ($R^2=0.3670$) of the variation in consumers' purchase intention, which is statistically significant ($F_{(2, 206)}=39.6217$; $p<0.001$). While Knowledge and Expertise did not emerge with a significant effect on consumers' Purchase Intention ($B=0.0804$; $t=0.4093$; $p=0.6828$), product involvement had a significant negative effect on purchase intention ($B=-0.4921$; $t=-3.8646$; $p=0.0001$), indicating that high involvement products had lower purchase intentions than low involvement products. We can see this in the image below, where the High Involvement Products line is below the Low Involvement Products line.

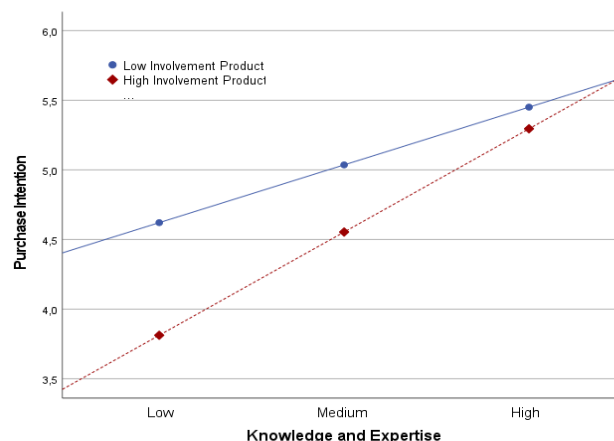


Figure 4- Moderation of the level of product involvement in the relationship between knowledge and expertise and purchase intention

Intrinsic factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	5,5182	0,1986	27,7789	<0,001
Knowledge and Expertise (VI)	0,0804	0,1965	0,4093	0,6828
Product Involvement ¹	-0,4921	0,1247	-3,8646	0,0001
Interaction K&E * PI	0,2988	0,1170	2,5540	0,0114
Low Involvement ¹	0,3792	0,0911	4,1612	<0,001
High Involvement	0,6780	0,0734	9,2417	<0,001
	R ² =	0,3670		
	F _(3, 205) =	39,6217	p<0,001	N=209

1. Reference category (1) Low Involvement Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 8- Regression of knowledge and expertise over purchase intention moderated by product involvement

Analyzing the interaction between Knowledge and Expertise and product involvement provides relevant data on the moderation effect. The statistically significant relationship (B=0.2988; t=2.5540; p=0.114) shows that the level of product involvement significantly moderates the effect of the digital influencer's Knowledge and Expertise on consumers' purchase intention. As can be seen in Figure 4, the effect of Knowledge and Expertise on purchase intention is higher when the product is a high involvement one (B=0.6780; t=9.2417; p<0.001) (vs B=0.3792; t=4.1612; p<0.001 for low involvement products).

As a result, **Hypothesis 1.1 is confirmed**, namely that the positive effect of Knowledge and Expertise on the consumer's purchase intention is more significant for high-involvement products.

H1.2 *The positive effect that Trustworthiness has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for high-involvement products.*

To assess whether the level of product involvement (moderating variable) affects the relationship between the trustworthiness of digital influencers (independent variable) and the purchase intention of consumers (dependent variable), Multiple Linear Regression, using the PROCESS v4.1 macro (Hayes, 2020) (Figure 5), was used to moderate the relationship.

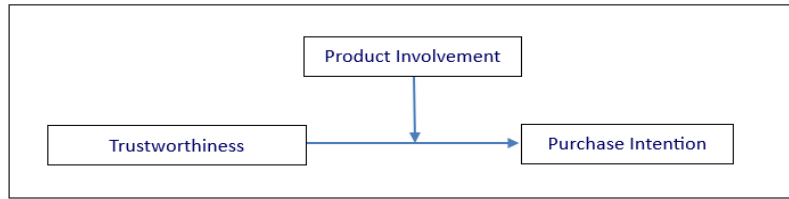


Figure 5- Moderation of the level of product involvement over the effect of trustworthiness on purchase intention

The results are presented in Table 9 and Figure 6, showing that the model explains 36.7% ($R^2=0.3954$) of the variation in consumers' purchase intention, and this value is statistically significant ($F_{(3, 205)}=44.6942$; $p<0.001$). The Trustworthiness of digital influencers has a significant positive effect on consumers' purchase intention ($B=0.6383$; $t=2.8648$; $p=0.0046$), meaning that the higher the influencer's trustworthiness, the higher the consumer's purchase intention. The level of product involvement has a significant negative effect on purchase intention ($B=-0.46.16$; $t=-3.7851$; $p=0.0002$), indicating that high-involvement products have a lower purchase intention than low-involvement products.

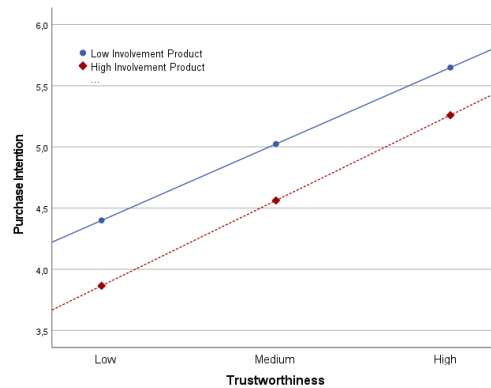


Figure 6- Moderation of the level of product involvement in the relationship between Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention

Intrinsic factors	Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	5,4856	0,1942	28,2479	<0,001
Trustworthiness (VI)	0,6383	0,2228	2,8648	0,0046
Product Involvement ¹	-0,4616	0,1219	-3,7851	0,0002
Interaction Trust * PI	0,0836	0,1412	0,5916	0,5548
$R^2 = 0,3954$				
$F_{(3, 205)} = 44,6942$ $p < 0,001$ $N = 209$				
1. Reference category (1) Low Involvement		Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention		

Table 9- Regression of trustworthiness over purchase intention moderated by product involvement

Analysis of the interaction between Trustworthiness and Product Involvement indicates that it is not statistically significant ($B=0.0836$; $t=0.5916$; $p=0.5548$), showing that the level of product involvement does not moderate the effect of digital influencers' trustworthiness on consumers' purchase intention. As seen in Figure 6, the effect of Trustworthiness on Purchase Intention is undifferentiated according to low or high product involvement (parallel low and high product involvement lines).

Hypothesis 1.2 is not confirmed insofar as the positive effect of Trustworthiness on consumers' purchase intention is not different or more significant for high-involvement products.

H2: *The extrinsic factors of digital influencers (content quality, content quantity) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.*

A multiple linear regression model was also used to assess whether the extrinsic factors of digital influencers, content quality and content quantity, are significant predictors of consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.

Before validating the hypotheses, we verified the Multiple Linear Regression Assumptions (Appendix 7). We confirmed a linear positive relationship between the predictors, i.e., the independent variables (Content Quality and Content Quantity) and the dependent variable (Purchase Intention). We also confirmed the non-autocorrelation of the residuals by checking the Durbin-Watson interval (1.804), which confirms their independence. The absence of multicollinearity was also verified: the independent variables do not have high correlations with each other, with $VIF < 5$ and $tolerance > 0.01$. Finally, the normality of the residuals' distribution can be considered a normal distribution, and homoscedasticity can be verified by the residuals with constant variance (see the graphs in the Appendix 7).

The results of the hypothesis test are shown in Table 10, where it can be seen that a statistically significant model was obtained ($F_{(2, 206)}=94.767$; $p<0.001$), which explains 47.4% of the variation in Purchase Intention ($R^2_{Adjust}=0,474$).

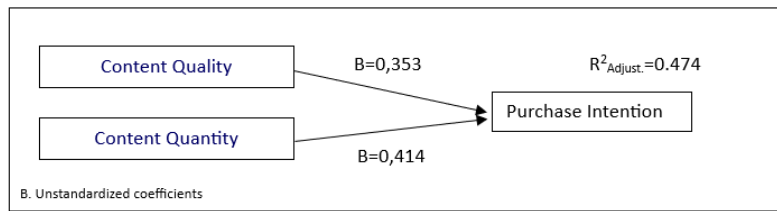


Figure 7- Regression model of extrinsic factors of digital influencers over consumers' purchase intentions

Extrinsic factors	Coefficients		t	Sig.	
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1,026	0,326		3,144	0,002
Content Quality	0,353	0,066	0,301	5,375	<0,001
Content Quantity	0,414	0,046	0,504	8,990	<0,001
	R ² Adjust=	0,474			
	F(2, 206)=	94,767	p<0,001		

Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 10- Regression model of extrinsic factors of digital influencers over consumers' purchase intentions

Regarding extrinsic factors, Content Quality is a statistically significant predictor of purchase intention ($B=0.353$; $t=5.375$; $p<0.001$), positively impacting it. A one-unit increase in the Content Quality score leads to a 0.353 increase in consumers' purchase intention.

Content Quantity also proved to be a statistically significant predictor of purchase intention ($B=0.414$; $t=8.990$; $p<0.001$), positively impacting it. A one-unit increase in the Content Quantity score leads to a 0.414 increase in consumers' purchase intention. It can also be seen that Content Quantity ($b=0.504$) is the extrinsic factor with the most significant impact on purchase intention (Content Quality $b=0.301$).

These results thus **validate hypothesis 2**, which states that the extrinsic factors of digital influencers (content quality and content quantity) positively impact consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.

H2.1 *The positive effect that content quality has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for low-involvement products.*

In order to assess whether the level of product involvement (moderating variable) has an effect on the relationship between content quality (independent variable) and purchase intention

(dependent variable), a moderation was carried out using multiple linear regression with the PROCESS v4.1 macro (Hayes, 2020) (Figure 8).

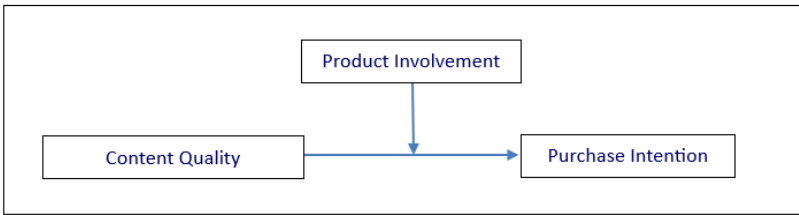


Figure 8- Moderation of the level of product involvement over the effect of content quality on purchase intention

The results are presented in Table 11, showing that the model explains 32.9% ($R^2=0.3209$) of the variation in consumer purchase intention, which is statistically significant ($F_{(3, 205)}=32.2833$; $p<0.001$).

We found that the extrinsic factor content quality had no significant effect on consumers' purchase intention ($B=0.3756$; $t=1.6459$; $p=0.1013$). However, product involvement had a significant negative effect on purchase intention ($B=-0.4629$; $t=-3.5807$; $p=0.0004$), indicating that high-involvement products have lower purchase intentions than low-involvement products.

Intrinsic factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	5,4888	0,2059	26,6619	<0,001
Content Quality (VI)	0,3756	0,2282	1,6459	0,1013
(PI) Product Involvement ¹	-0,4629	0,1293	-3,5807	0,0004
Interaction Content QL * PI	0,1448	0,1371	1,0561	0,2921
$R^2 = 0,3209$				
$F_{(3, 205)} = 32,2833$		$p < 0,001$	$N = 209$	

1. Reference category (1) Low Involvement Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 11- Regression of content quality over purchase intention moderated by product involvement

Analysis of the interaction between Content Quality and Product Involvement indicates that it is not statistically significant ($B=0.1448$; $t=1.0561$; $p=0.2921$), revealing that the level of product involvement does not moderate the effect of the digital influencer's content quality on consumers' purchase intention.

Hence, **hypothesis 2.1 is not confirmed**, as the positive effect that content quality has on consumers' purchase intention is not different or more significant for low-involvement products.

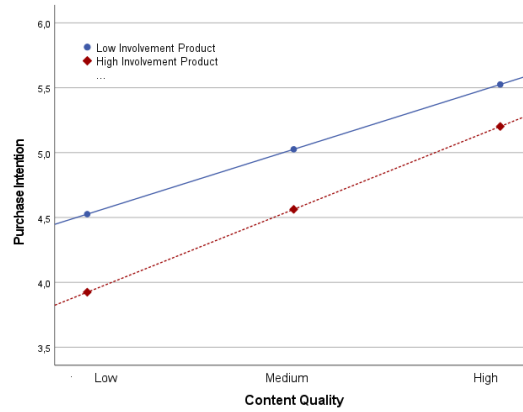


Figure 9- Moderation of the level of product involvement in the relationship between content quality and purchase intention

H2.2: *The positive effect that content quantity has on consumers' purchase intention is higher for low-involvement products.*

To assess whether the level of product involvement (moderating variable) affects the relationship between content quantity (independent variable) and purchase intention (dependent variable), a multiple linear regression was performed using the PROCESS v4.1 macro (Hayes, 2020) (Figure 10).

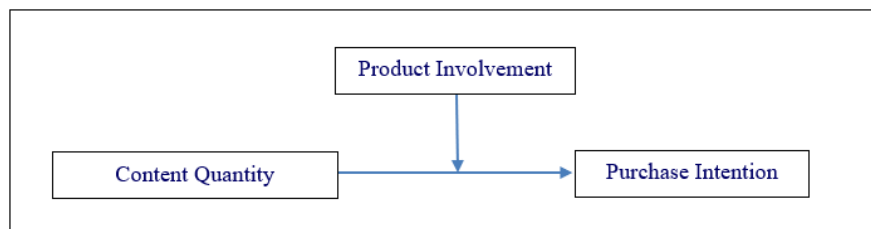


Figure 10- Moderation of the level of product involvement over the effect of content quality on purchase intention

The results are presented in Table 12, showing that the model explains 45.35% ($R^2=0.4535$) of the variation in consumer purchase intention, which is statistically significant ($F_{(3, 205)}=56.7092$; $p<0.001$).

The extrinsic factor Content Quantity significantly affects consumers' purchase intention ($B=0.3144$; $t=2.2059$; $p=0.0285$), meaning the higher the content quantity, the higher the purchase intention. Moreover, product involvement significantly affects purchase intention ($B=-0.4578$; $t=-3.9481$; $p=0.0001$), indicating that a high-involved product has a lower purchase intention than a low-involved product, as we can see in Figure 11.

Intrinsic factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	5,4815	0,1846	29,6860	<0,001
Content Quantity (VI)	0,3144	0,1425	2,2059	0,0285
(PI) Product Involvement ¹	-0,4578	0,1159	-3,9481	0,0001
Interaction Content QL * PI	0,1292	0,0861	1,5014	0,1348
R ² =		0,4535		
F(3, 205) =		56,7092	p < 0,001	N = 209

1. Reference category (1) Low Involvement Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 12- Regression of content quantity over purchase intention moderated by product involvement

Analysis of the interaction between Content Quantity and Product Involvement indicates that it is not statistically significant (B=0.1292; t=1.5014; p=0.1348). This reveals that the level of product involvement does not moderate the effect of content quantity on consumers' purchase intention.

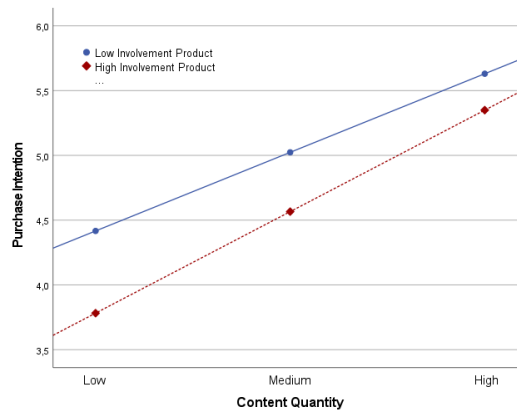


Figure 11- Moderation of the level of product involvement in the relationship between content quantity and purchase intention

Hypothesis 2.2 is therefore not confirmed, as the positive effect that content quantity has on consumers' purchase intention is not different or greater for low-involvement products.

Hypotheses	Results	Key Findings
H1: The intrinsic factors of digital influencers (knowledge and expertise, and trustworthiness) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.	Significant and Validated	Trustworthiness ($\beta = 0.435$, $p < 0.001$) has the strongest effect
H1.1: The positive effect that knowledge and expertise have on the consumer's purchase intention is greater for high involvement products.	Significant and Validated	Effect stronger for high involvement ($B=0.6780$; $t=9.2417$; $p<0.001$)
H1.2: The positive effect that trustworthiness has on the consumer's purchase intention is greater for high involvement products.	Not significant	No significant moderation effect ($p = 0.5548$)
H2: The extrinsic factors of digital influencers (content quality, content quantity) have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to purchase the product advertised by the influencer.	Significant and Validated	Content quantity ($\beta = 0.504$, $p < 0.001$) has the strongest effect
H2.1: The positive effect that content quality has on the consumer's purchase intention is greater for low involvement products.	Not significant	No significant effect ($p = 0.1013$)
H2.2: The positive effect that content quantity has on the consumer's purchase intention is greater for low involvement products.	Not significant	No significant effect ($p = 0.1348$)

Table 13- Hypotheses Results

4.5 Results Discussion

RQ1: *How do digital influencers impact consumers' decision-making regarding high-involvement products (like electronics and cars) versus low-involvement products (like snacks and household products)?*

While the literature review identified that multiple extrinsic and intrinsic factors of digital influencers influence consumers' purchase intentions, statistical results of our study (H1 and H2) revealed that among them, only Knowledge and Expertise significantly impacted high-involvement product purchases. This aligns with previous research indicating that high-risk purchases require strong credibility from the influencer (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2022), but contradicts Chavadi et al.'s (2024) assertion that content quality should also play a role. This suggests that while content quality may remain relevant, it is overshadowed by influencer expertise in the context of high-risk, complex decision-making. Furthermore, the findings of our study suggest that purchase intention tends to be lower for high-involvement products,

possibly because consumers are more reluctant to make substantial financial commitments (higher perceived financial risk), and also due to higher functional risks, requiring higher cognitive effort in decision-making (Zaichkowsky, 1985). In contrast, low-involvement products require a simpler decision, demanding less deliberation, and leading to faster and more impulsive purchases (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016). In this way, it would be important for marketers to take into account the knowledge and expertise of digital influencers, as consumers of high-involvement products consider that the message of trust conveyed by their knowledge of the products is the most significant factor in their purchase intention, which is in line with Cabeza-Ramírez et al. (2022).

We could not verify the impact of content quality and quantity for low-involvement products, a factor identified in the literature review by Chavadi et al, (2024), Casaló et al. (2020) and Petty & Cacioppo (1981). Further research should investigate whether content quality and quantity affects purchase decisions differently across product categories. Based on our findings, when promoting low-involvement products, marketers should consider other factors when choosing influencers to promote products, such as their social recognition.

RQ2: *How does the knowledge and expertise of a digital influencer impact a consumer's choice of a high-involvement or low-involvement product?*

Based on the literature review, to assess the credibility of digital influencers, we had to test knowledge, expertise, and trustworthiness (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). Knowledge and expertise, as well as trustworthiness, all proved to have a positive impact on purchase intention. Trustworthiness is the intrinsic factor that had the greatest impact on consumers' purchase intention, making it the most important factor in the purchasing decision.

Yet, knowledge and expertise also significantly impact purchase intention; this effect is more substantial for high-involvement products, suggesting that consumers rely on the influencer's expertise when making expensive or complex purchasing decisions. This aligns with the theory of Yilmaz et al. (2011) regarding the level of expertise and knowledge of influencers in impacting consumers' purchase intention of high-involvement products. To promote high-involvement products, it is important to partner with a digital influencer with high knowledge and expertise because the greater the knowledge, the more people will buy. For low-involvement products, the knowledge and expertise of the digital influencer are not as important; whether an influencer has low or high expertise, the product purchase intention will

not increase exponentially. These results also validate Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani's theory (2023), which explains that consumers trust a high-involvement product through recommendations from credible sources.

According to Petty & Cacioppo's ELM Theory (1981), consumers who buy high-involvement products tend to follow a central cognitive route of information processing, i.e., they carry out a detailed analysis with reliable sources before making a decision. This means that the expertise and knowledge of the influencer become important, as consumers want grounded and technical information on more complex and high-risk products. The study confirms this theory by confirming hypothesis 1.1. As indicated by Yilmaz et al. (2011), expertise reduces uncertainty in decision-making, making it a decisive factor for products that require more significant cognitive effort.

For low-involvement products, specialized knowledge remains important but it is less critical than in the case of high-involvement products. Instead, consumers react to influencers based on entertainment value, confirming previous studies by Radder & Huang (2008) and Leal et al. (2024).

On the other hand, trustworthiness was not found to have a significantly stronger effect on high-involvement products, indicating that, while trust is important, it is not the main factor to consider when consumers choose between high and low-involvement products. According to the literature review (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2022), trust in digital influencers directly impacts purchase intention, regardless of the products being high or low-involvement. Thus, the impact of influencers' trust on consumers is not connected to low or high-involvement products, whether skincare and snacks or cars and smartphones, all require the influencer to transmit trust to consumers. Furthermore, as high-involvement products require more analysis and research before making a purchase, consumers may prioritize the influencer's expertise and knowledge more than their trustworthiness.

In conclusion, trustworthiness remains relevant but is not a differentiating factor for high-involvement products. On the other hand, knowledge and expertise differentiate digital influencers who can better guide more complex decisions. Consumers need more technical information and detailed reviews to reduce risk perception.

RQ3: *Does the type or frequency of content influencers share affect consumers' purchasing decisions differently for high or low-involvement products?*

Content quantity and quality significantly impact consumers' purchase intentions, with content quantity being the most influential external factor. Frequent posts received positive consumer feedback across all product categories, highlighting the importance of consistency in influencer success.

However, regarding product involvement, neither content quantity nor content quality had a statistically significant impact on purchase intention among low involvement products, contradicting hypotheses 2.1 and 2.2. These results contradict Chavadi et al's theory (2024) since low-involvement products are not affected by more visible and frequent content. Regarding the impact of the amount of content shared by digital influencers on social media which was identified by Casaló et al. (2020) and Leal et al. (2024) in the literature review, no statistically strong relationship was identified, so the frequency of an influencer's publications has no impact on the purchase intention of consumers of low-involvement products. Radder & Huang (2008) also suggested that low-involvement products require less cognitive processing to make easier and quicker choices, but the results here suggest that consumers are not necessarily persuaded by the influencer's well-produced content alone.

These findings also contradict Petty & Cacioppo's (1981) theory since we could not prove that consumers are more attracted by the message that influencers pass on than by the credibility of the message. Hence, low-involvement products may be affected by other factors not linked to digital influencers, such as the convenience of the product or the familiarity consumers have with the brand. When consumers like the brand, they are more likely to be influenced by the content shared by the digital influencer.

Marketers should consider that the quantity and the quality of an influencer's content do not impact consumers' purchase intention for low involvement products. However, when choosing a digital influencer, their knowledge, expertise, and factors external to the brand are much more valuable and may be more important than the content published. Consumers shopping for a low-involvement product may already prefer certain brands in these categories, making the influencer's content less influential. In addition, impulse purchases may not be significantly driven by influencer content alone, but by other factors such as discounts, trends, and product availability, and these factors may play a more important role

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Main Findings and Conclusions

This study assessed the impact of digital influencers on consumers' purchase intention, across high and low-involvement products. We concluded that, although influencers are important in shaping consumer behavior, their impact varies depending on the product type.

The results suggest that intrinsic factors (trustworthiness, knowledge, and expertise) and extrinsic factors (quality and quantity of content) positively impact purchase intention. However, their effects do not differ significantly depending on whether product involvement is high or low, except for Knowledge and Expertise.

Knowledge and Expertise emerged as the only factor significantly influencing high-involvement purchases, indicating that consumers rely on credible, expert-driven recommendations for complex decision-making (Yilmaz et al., 2011; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). The study also highlights the significance of trustworthiness, which was found to be a universal determinant of purchase intention across all product types, suggesting that trust remains the most significant factor influencing consumers' decisions and serves as a baseline requirement for influencer effectiveness, whether they are promoting low or high-involvement products. In this way, brands must understand that the most crucial factor in product disclosure to consumers is the trust that influencers convey to them. In addition, the literature review showed that high-involvement products are more expensive and carry a higher risk than low-involvement products. Decisions regarding the purchase of low-involvement products tend to be simpler and quicker, which can sometimes result in impulsive purchases where neither the message nor the influencer content has any effect.

Our findings challenge existing theories on content quality and quantity, which were not found to significantly impact purchase intention for either product category. A possible explanation is that content-related factors may act as secondary reinforcers rather than primary drivers of purchase decisions, particularly when brand familiarity or price sensitivity plays a dominant role.

We can conclude that, in addition to the characteristics of the influencers and to the quality and quantity of their content, there may be external factors such as the market, social recognition of the product's trendiness, and FOMO (fear of missing out) that influence consumers purchase decisions regardless of the type of product. Therefore, from a strategic point of view, it is also

important for brands to consider other important factors that can be examined, such as the brand's reputation, product prices, and consumer needs that could impact how a digital influencer influences us.

5.2. Academic Implications

By offering insights into how digital influencers impact purchasing decisions depending on product involvement levels, this study advances the fields of consumer behavior and digital marketing. The study adds to the limited body of research that distinguishes between the effects of influencers on high and low-involvement products.

Unlike previous research that assumed a uniform effect of influencer credibility, our findings suggest that Knowledge and Expertise are primary drivers for high-involvement purchases, while Trustworthiness remains a stable predictor across all product types (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2022; Yilmaz et al., 2011). This challenges existing conceptualizations that assume product involvement acts as a strict moderator of influencer effectiveness.

Moreover, this study introduces a new perspective on content strategy effectiveness, as neither content quality nor content quantity significantly impacted consumer purchase intention. This contradicts Leal et al. (2024) and Chavadi et al. (2024) and suggests that influencer content alone may not be sufficient to drive conversions, particularly in high-involvement product categories. These findings open new avenues for research on alternative engagement mechanisms (e.g., live interactions, influencer-brand partnerships, long-form storytelling) and their potential role in shaping consumer behavior.

5.3. Managerial Implications

The findings of our study provide actionable insights for businesses and marketers aiming to optimize their influencer marketing strategies. Namely, it demonstrates that trustworthiness is the most important component of influencer effectiveness, independent of product involvement level.

Furthermore, given that knowledge and expertise are crucial for high-involvement products, brands should prioritize collaborations with influencers who demonstrate domain-specific expertise, such as tech reviewers for electronics or automotive specialists for car-related campaigns (Ojinnaka & Hezarkhani, 2023). Conversely, for low-involvement products, while trust remains important, influencer selection should focus on audience engagement levels and authenticity rather than deep product knowledge (Casaló et al., 2020).

Additionally, because our results challenge the common assumption that content quantity directly enhances influencer effectiveness, marketers should move beyond frequency-driven content strategies and instead, invest in data-driven influencer selection, evaluating audience alignment and conversion rates rather than only engagement metrics.

Finally, given that trustworthiness is the only universal influencer trait, brands should ensure that the influencers they work with maintain high ethical standards, transparent sponsorship disclosures, and a consistent brand-aligned image in order to preserve consumer confidence.

5.4. Limitations and Further Research

This study has limitations that should be addressed in future research, even though it offers valuable insights into how digital influencers affect consumer decision-making.

The first limitation concerns methodology, specifically the scales used to measure the variables in our model. We used pre-existing scales from prior research, which may not have fully captured all relevant dimensions of influencer credibility or product involvement. Future research could develop tailored measures to better assess the nuances of influencer marketing strategies across different types of products and consumer contexts. Second, while the survey sample included respondents from multiple countries, most respondents were from Europe, particularly Portugal, and do not represent the population of social media users and digital influencers at a cross-cultural level. Hence, we cannot appreciate the cultural and demographic differences that may affect how other demographic groups behave regarding purchasing intention. Future studies should adopt a more geographically diverse sample and assess how cultural factors that impact consumers' purchase intentions when influenced by digital influencers compare across various markets. Another limitation was that this study was based on quantitative methodology only and may not have captured the psychological and emotional factors influencing consumer behavior. Future research should combine quantitative and qualitative analysis. Additionally, our study did not distinguish between different types of digital influencers—micro-influencers, content creators, virtual influencers created by artificial intelligence, and macro influencers, such as celebrities, which may exert different levels of influence on consumer trust and decision-making. Future studies can address the differences between the various types of influencers and investigate how these influencer types perform across different product involvement categories and how they may affect consumers.

Lastly, our study was limited to four factors related to digital influencers that could impact consumers. This may have limited our study because, according to the literature review and our results, only one of the factors impacted high-involvement products. Future research could look more closely at other factors related to digital influencers that affect high and low-involvement products.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Survey

English ▾

Block 0: Introduction

Dear Participant, This research is part of a **Master's Thesis in Management** with a focus on Strategic Marketing at the Católica Lisbon School of Business and Economics.

This study takes **5 to 7 minutes** to complete. It is important that you answer all the questions truthfully in order to achieve the objectives of this study. All your answers will remain **anonymous and confidential**. Remember that there are no right or wrong questions.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact:
s-mmcesar@ucp.pt.
Thank you for your cooperation!

Maria César

Block 1: Social Media

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

How often do you use Social Media?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Few times a month
- Rarely

What is your average daily usage?

- Less than 30 minutes
- 30 minutes to 1hour
- 1 hour to 2 hours
- 2 hours to 3 hours
- More than 3 hours

Which social networks do you use the most?

- Instagram
- Twitter
- Facebook
- TikTok

Other (please specify):

What kind of content do you usually see on social media?

- Lifestyle
- Entertainment
- Educational
- Hauls/Unboxings
- New Trends
- Other (please specify):

How often do you buy something you've seen on social media?

- Very frequently
- Frequently
- Rarely
- Never

Block 2: Digital Influencers

Digital Influencers are individuals who have built a substantial following on social media platforms by creating and sharing content focused on specific areas, such as lifestyle, fashion, beauty, travel, cooking, or fitness. They often collaborate with brands to promote products to their audience.

Based on this definition, do you follow any content creators/digital influencers on social media?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

How often do you come across promotional content from digital influencers (e.g. product reviews, hauls, brand-generated content...)?

- Every day
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Have you ever bought a product influenced by content

you saw from a digital influencer?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

If yes, what type of product did you buy? (you can select more than one answer)

- Clothes and footwear
- Fashion accessories
- Make-up and skin care products
- Food
- Books
- Electronics (mobile phones, computers, phones...)
- Other (please specify):

Block 3

To guarantee the quality of the survey, select number "4".

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Block 4 - Involvement of the Product

Please consider the following definition of **high-involvement product**:

High-involvement products require significant thought, research, and decision-making time/efforts due to their high cost, personal importance, or long-term impact. Some *examples* could be cars, houses, major home appliances and expensive electronics like computers and smartphones.

Consider the following **3 examples** of high-involvement products: **a laptop, a smartphone** and a **high-end wristwatch**. Think about and choose one of these examples that you could consider buying.

Answer the following questions with your chosen product in mind.

Please consider the following definition of **low-involvement product**:

Low-involvement products are routine purchases that require minimal effort or thought, often inexpensive and

purchased frequently.
Some *examples* could be toothpaste, snacks, cosmetics, and basic household items.

Consider the following **3 examples** of low-involvement products: **chocolate, protein snack** and a **shampoo**. Think about and choose one of these examples that you could consider buying.

Answer the following questions with your chosen product in mind.

Block 5: Knowledge and Expertise

Imagine that one of the influencers you follow on social media publishes one or more pieces of content about the product you chose earlier.

On a scale from 1 to 7 where 1= *Strongly disagree* and 7= *Strongly agree*, please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the statements below, always bearing in mind the **influencer** and the **product** you have chosen.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Digital influencers that I follow are experts about the contents they publish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital Influencers that I follow are qualified to talk about this type of products (think about the product you chose)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be more likely to buy that specific type of product if the digital influencer was knowledgeable about it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strong agree
The knowledge and expertise of the influencer about that type of products would impact my decision to buy the product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Block 6: Trustworthiness

On a scale from 1 to 7 where 1= *Strongly disagree* and 7= *Strongly agree*, please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the statements below, always bearing in mind the **influencer** and the **product** you have chosen, when applicable.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strong agree
Digital influencers that I follow are trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strong agree
A digital influencer's honest opinion on the positive and negative aspects of such product would impact my confidence to purchase it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I trust influencers whose content seems authentic and genuine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
An influencer's reputation for trustworthiness would make me feel more comfortable to purchase that product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Block 7: Content Quality

On a scale from 1 to 7 where 1= *Strongly disagree* and 7= *Strongly agree*, please indicate to what extent you agree

with each of the statements below, always bearing in mind the **influencer** and the **product** you have chosen.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
It would be important for me that the influencers I follow published high quality contents about that product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High-quality images and videos shared by digital influencers about that product would increase my interest in such product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
If Digital influencers provided detailed information about that product, it would give me more confidence to purchase it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visually appealing content improves my chances of making a purchase decision (about that product).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
It would be important for me that the influencers I follow published original and innovative content about that product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Block 8

This is an attention check, please select "Somewhat Agree".

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Block 9: Content Quantity

On a scale from 1 to 7 where 1= *Strongly disagree* and 7= *Strongly agree*, please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the statements below, always bearing in mind the **influencer** and the **product** you have chosen.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
A high quantity of publications on the social media accounts of the influencers I follow about that product would increase my chances to buy it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The frequency with which digital influencers would publish content about that product, would increase my likelihood to buy such product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital influencers who consistently post about a product increase my interest in that product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I would prefer that product (over other ones) if the influencers I follow frequently posted content about it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Block 10: Purchase Intention

On a scale from 1 to 7 where 1= *Strongly disagree* and 7= *Strongly agree*, please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the statements below, always bearing in mind the **influencer** and the **product** you have chosen.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I would like to try that product if it was promoted by digital influencers that I follow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the intention to buy that product if it is promoted by digital influencers that I follow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would get informed about where I could buy that product if it was promoted by digital influencers that I follow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I would buy that product if it was promoted by digital influencers that I follow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would recommend that product to others based on a digital influencer's content.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Block 11: Demographics

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer not to say

What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 or older

What is your country of citizenship?

What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

- Less than High School
- High school graduate
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- PhD
- Other (please specify):

What is your current occupation?

- Employed full time
- Employed part time
- Unemployed
- Student worker
- Retired
- Student
- Disabled

What is your monthly gross income?

- No income
- Less than 500€
- 500€ - 999€
- 1000€ - 1499€
- 1500€ - 1999€
- 2000€ - 2499€
- 2500€ - 2999€
- More than 3000€

Appendix 2 – Multivariate Outliers

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Std. Residual	-2,084	2,219	,000	,988	211
Mahal. Distance	,432	25,697	4,976	4,099	211
Prob MAH	,0001	0,9944			211

a. Dependent Variable: ID

Prob MAH					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	,0001	1	,5	,5	,5
	,0006	1	,5	,5	,9
	,0030	1	,5	,5	1,4
	,0040	1	,5	,5	1,9
	...				
	,9882	1	,5	,5	99,1
	,9920	1	,5	,5	99,5
	,9944	1	,5	,5	100,0
Total		211	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 3 – Test of normality of distribution of constructs

	Tests of Normality			Skewness	Kurtosis
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a				
	Statistic	df	Sig.		
Knowledge and Expertise	,090	211	<,001	-,359	-,186
Trustworthiness	,115	211	<,001	-,616	,235
Content Quality	,100	211	<,001	-,884	1,007
Content Quantity	,097	211	<,001	-,569	-,190
Purchase Intention	,078	211	,004	-,575	,433

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Appendix 4 – Sample Characterization

Figure A. Distribution of the sample by gender

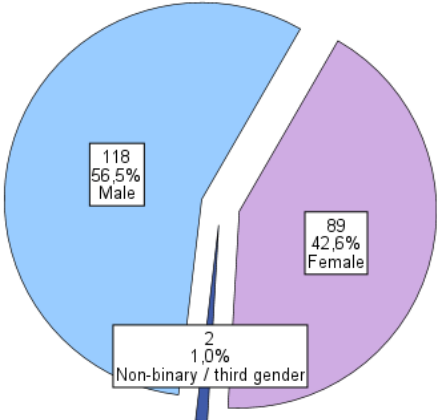


Figure B. Distribution of the sample by age group

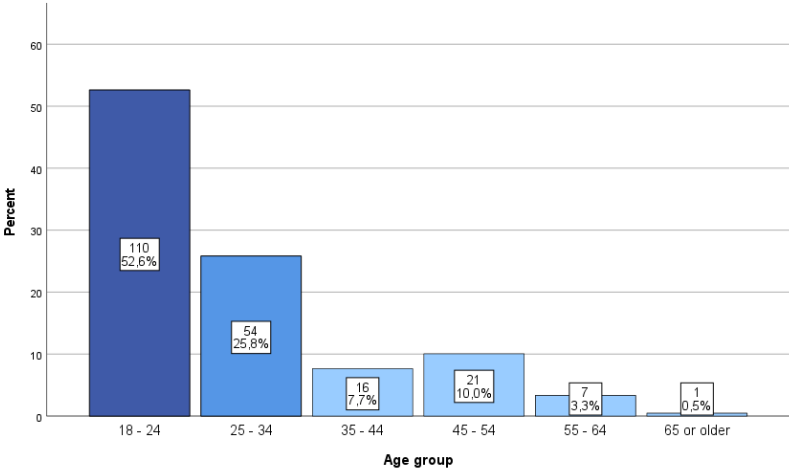


Figure C. Distribution of the sample by level of education

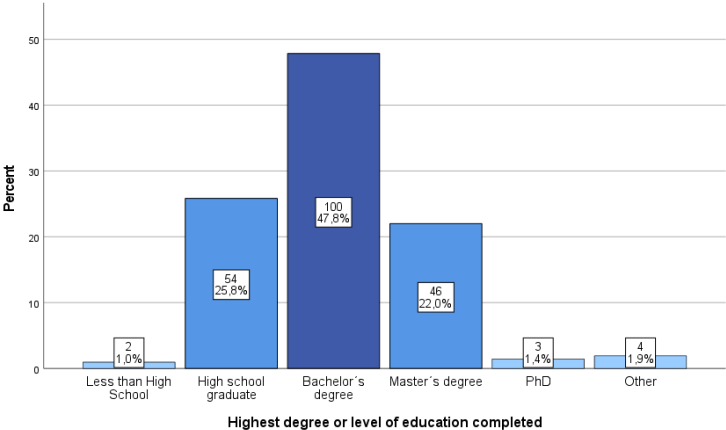


Figure D. Distribution of the sample by employment situation

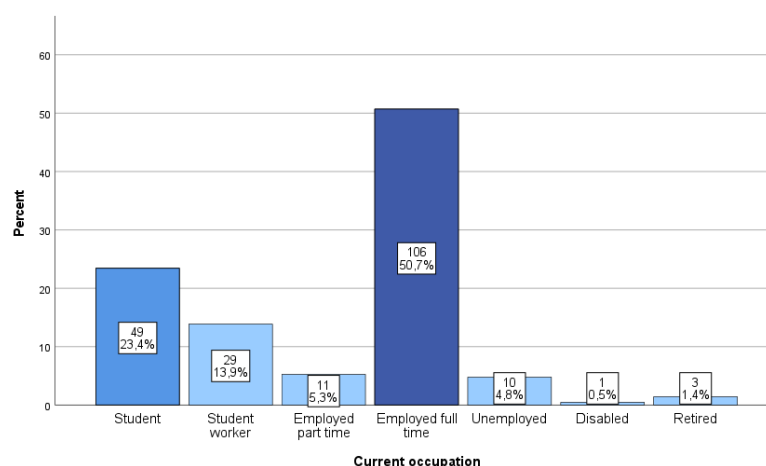


Figure E. Distribution of the sample by monthly income

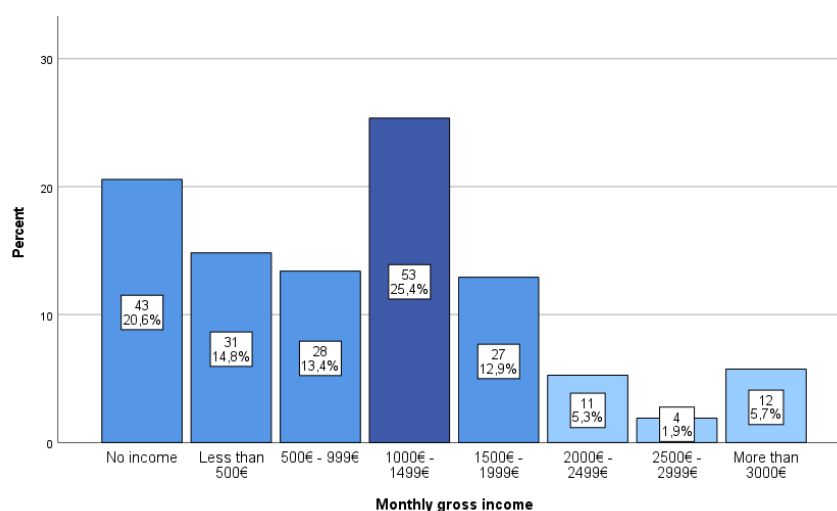


Figure F. List of respondents' countries

Continent/Country	Frequency	Percentage
Europa	161	77,0
Portugal	134	64,1
Poland	10	4,8
France	3	1,4
Germany	3	1,4
Greece	3	1,4
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2	1,0
Turkey	2	1,0
Latvia	2	1,0
Sweden	1	,5
Estonia	1	,5
Africa	34	16,3
South Africa	31	14,8
Zimbabwe	2	1,0
Nigeria	1	,5
América	10	4,8

Mexico	5	2,4
Canada	3	1,4
Chile	2	1,0
Asia	4	1,9
India	2	1,0
Kazakhstan	1	,5
China	1	,5
Total	209	100,0

Figure G. Distribution of frequency of use of social networks

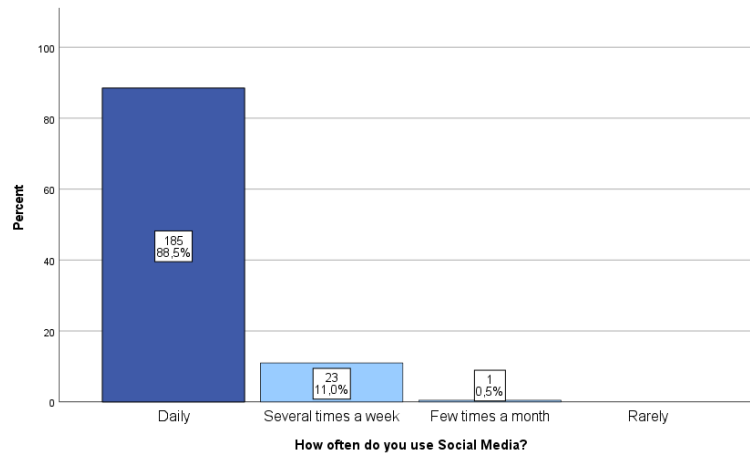


Figure H. Average daily usage of social media

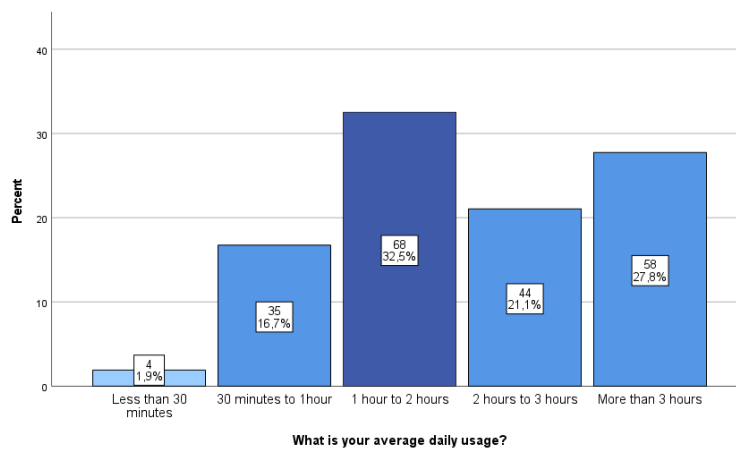


Figure I. Social networks most used

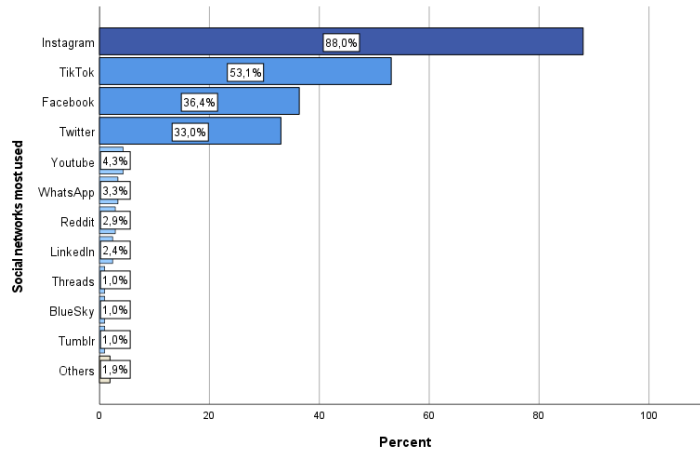


Figure J. Kind of content usually seen on social media.

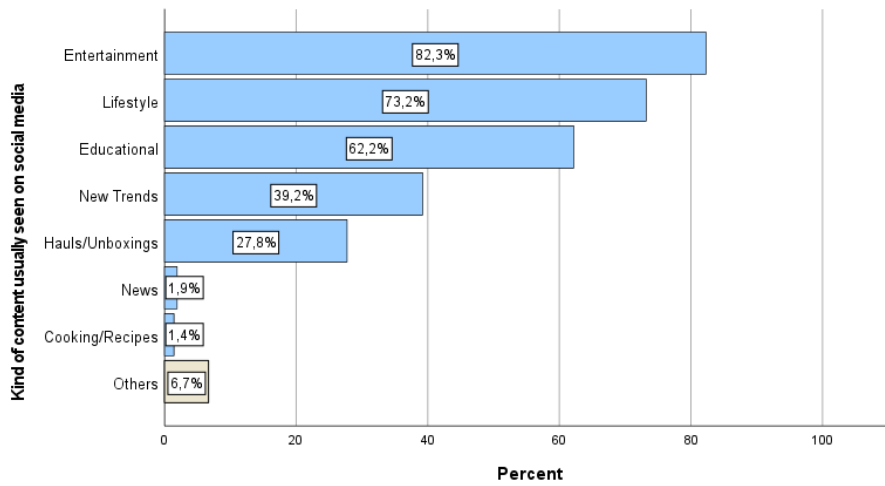


Figure K. How often do you buy something you've seen on social media?

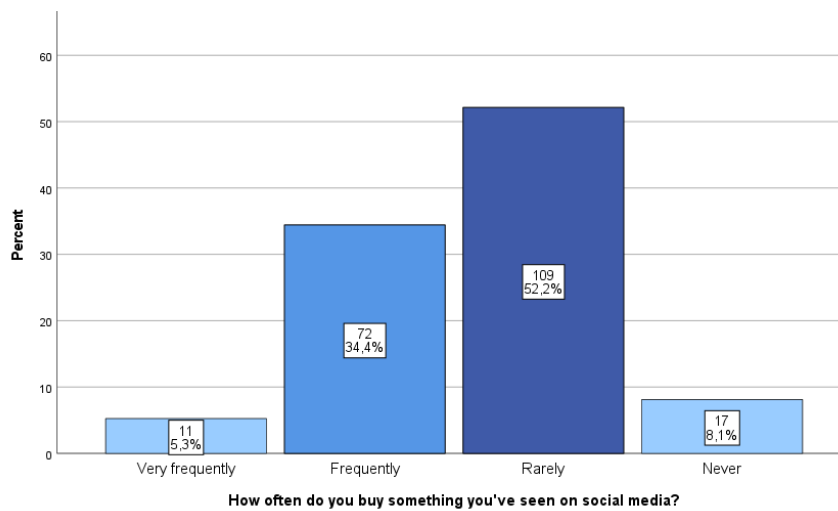


Figure L. To follow any content creators/digital influencers on social media

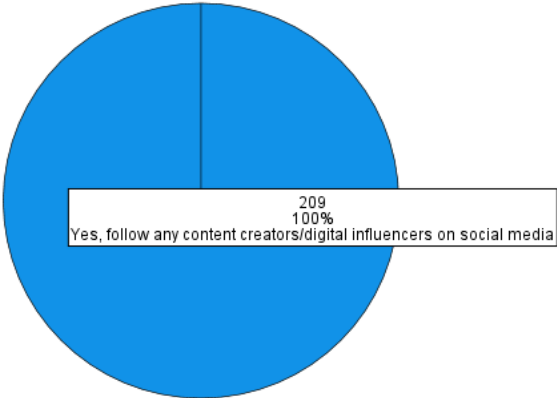


Figure M. Frequency of search for promotional content from digital influencers (e.g. product reviews, hauls, brand-generated content...)?

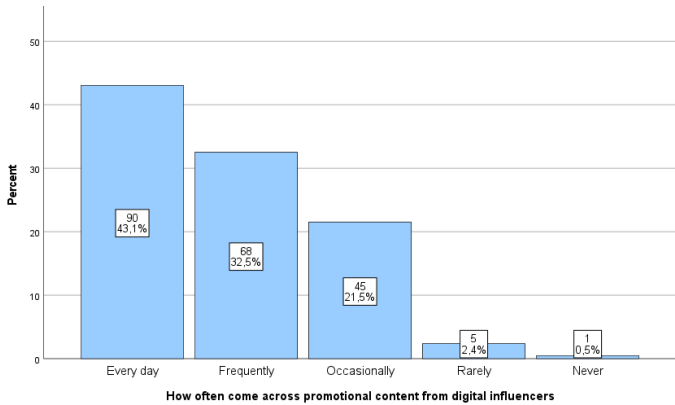


Figure N. Buy a product influenced by content seen by a digital influencer.

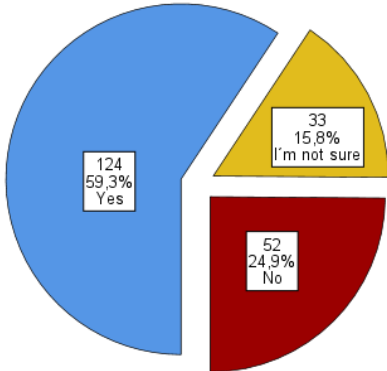


Figure O. Type of products bought influenced by content seen from a digital influencer

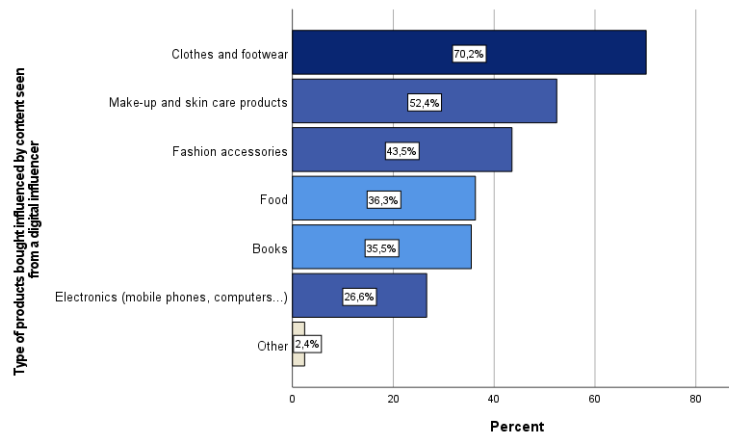
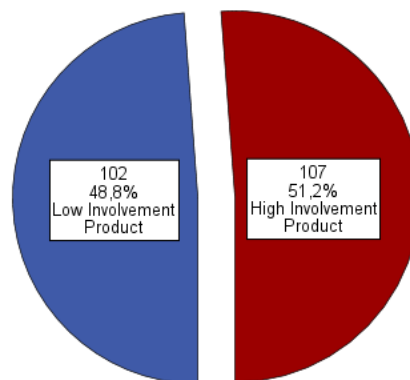


Figura X. Level of involvement of products presented to participants



Appendix 5 - Assumptions Parametric Test

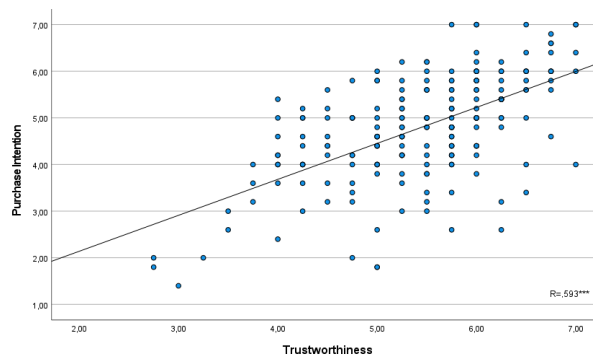
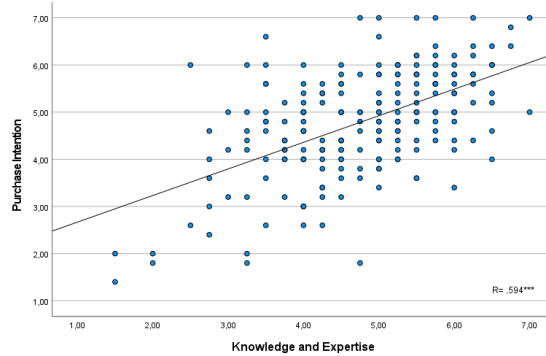
Product Involvement	Tests of Normality			Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	df	Sig.		
Purchase Intention Low	,090	102	,039	-,521	,862
High	,082	107	,072	-,359	-,108

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
Purchase Intention	Equal variances assumed	3,504	,063

Appendix 6 - Assumptions H1

Linear relationship between predictors and dependent variable



No autocorrelation of residuals and absence of collinearity between independent variables

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,672 ^a	,452	,447	,83660	1,953

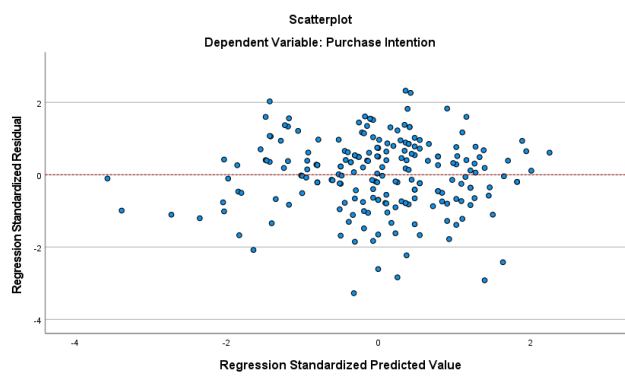
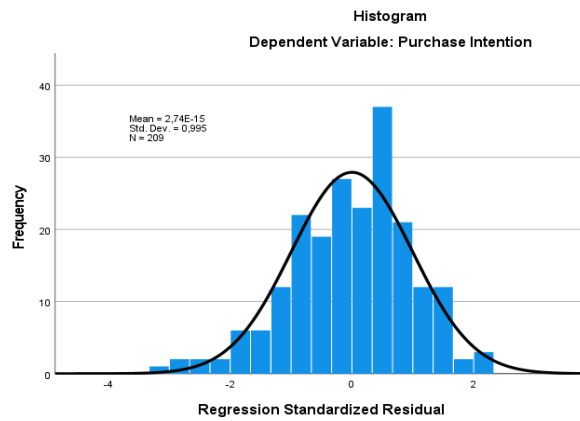
a. Predictors: (Constant), Trustworthiness, Knowledge and Expertise

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Knowledge and Expertise	,799	1,252
	Trustworthiness	,799	1,252

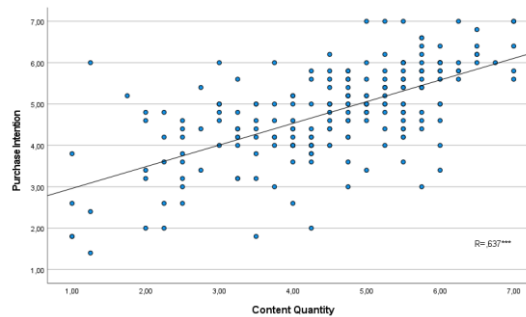
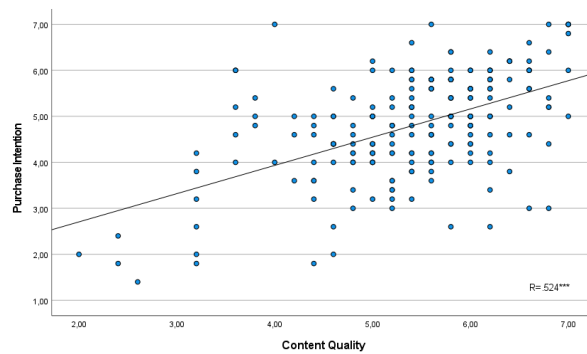
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Normality of distribution of Residuals and Homoscedasticity



Appendix 7 - Assumptions H2

Linear relationship between predictors and dependent variable



No autocorrelation of residuals and absence of collinearity between independent variables

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,692 ^a	,479	,474	,81556	1,804

a. Predictors: (Constant), Content Quantity, Content Quality

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1	Content Quality ,804	1,243
	Content Quantity ,804	1,243

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Normality of distribution of Residuals and Homoscedasticity

