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Trends in Influencer Marketing: A Bibliometric Analysis and Future Directions

Hamit Erdoğan[1, 2], Burcu Mucan Özcan[3]

ABSTRACT

Influencer marketing is one of the trending research topics in marketing. In this context, this study aims to bibliometrically evaluate the work published by academics about influencer marketing. Bibliometric analysis was applied to 1584 English articles in the Scopus database containing the subject title of influencer marketing and its synonyms. The data were analyzed under four headings—information of published articles, citation analysis, word cloud and author information—through the R program version 4.2.2. Additionally, the Voyant Tools text analysis program was used in some analyses. The research results will provide a detailed report on English articles in the Scopus database regarding influencer marketing between 2002 and 2022. It is thought that the research results will provide a general guide for future studies on influencer marketing.

Keywords: *Influencer Marketing, Social Media, Bibliometric Analysis.*

Influencer Pazarlamasındaki Eğilimler: Bibliyometrik Bir Analiz ve Geleceğe Yönelik Öneriler

ÖZET

Influencer pazarlaması, pazarlama alanındaki trend araştırma konularından biridir. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma akademisyenler tarafından influencer pazarlaması hakkında yayınlanan çalışmaları bibliyometrik olarak değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Scopus veri tabanında yer alan ve influencer pazarlaması konu başlığı ve eş anlamlılarını içeren 1584 İngilizce makaleye bibliyometrik analiz uygulanmıştır. Veriler, R programının 4.2.2 sürümü aracılığıyla yayın bilgileri, atıf analizi, kelime bulutu ve yazar bilgileri olmak üzere dört başlık altında analiz edilmiştir. Ayrıca bazı analizlerde Voyant Tools metin analiz programı kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları, 2002-2022 yılları arasında Scopus veri tabanında yer alan influencer pazarlaması ile ilgili İngilizce makalelerin odağında bibliyometrik analiz kullanarak bir özet sunulması amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarının influencer pazarlaması konusunda gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalar için genel bir rehber niteliği taşıyacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Influencer Pazarlaması, Sosyal Medya, Bibliyometrik Analiz.*

[1] Corresponding Author: hamit.erdogan@ogr.sakarya.edu.tr
[2] CoHE 100/2000 Doctoral Scholarship Student, Sakarya University, Graduate School of Business, Department of Business Administration, Sakarya, Türkiye, ORCID: 0000-0003-4545-2695
[3] Assoc. Prof. Dr., Manisa Celal Bayar University, Faculty of Business Administration, Department of Business Administration, Manisa, Türkiye, ORCID: 0000-0002-6499-4660

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1. INTRODUCTION

The advent of the Internet and its evolution over time have changed both businesses and customers. With the widespread use of the internet and especially social media, internet media has not only made it faster to access information and content but also transformed it into a platform that enables people to become their own publishers. According to Nielsen, 92% of consumers trust influencer marketing more than traditional advertising tools. This trust in influencer marketing will continue to play an important role in marketing activities to reach consumers in 2022 and beyond (Nizri, 2022). According to an article published by Harvard Business Review (2022), influencer marketing has reached $16.4 billion, and more than 75% of brands have allocated a dedicated budget for this marketing (Leung et al., 2022). For example, a report that looks at how many people an influencer reaches, engages with, and has followers highlights 10 travel influencers with between 1-4 million followers who are making a lot of money; these influencers can earn up to $31,000 per piece of content they share, - that can add up to $1.6 million a year by posting sponsored content once a week (Wallace, 2018). In this context, the most important examples of advertising and marketing activities on the internet are people who have been described as "internet phenomena" until recently and now "social media influencers".

Consumers are influenced by a salesperson or a friend who tells them about the benefits of a product through word-of-mouth. Today, these people have been replaced by social media influencers (SMIs), and most of the influence comes from them (Burns, 2021). According to the definition of Lou & Yuan (2019), Social media influencers are people who have a certain number of followers on one or more social media sites and influence those followers. The concept of influencers started in 2005 with blogs and continued with other social media sites such as YouTube, Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram (Ye et al., 2021; Borchers, 2019). Various platform-to-platform terms for social media users can be found on digital platforms such as bloggers (Uzunoğlu & Misci Kip, 2014), vloggers (Filieri et al., 2023), YouTubers (Miranda et al., 2021), and influencers (Lee et al., 2021). Boerman (2020) stated that “influencers are classified as micro influencers with up to 10,000 followers, meso influencers with between 10,000 and 1 million followers, and macro influencers with more than 1 million followers”. This article considers every user who has influence on online platforms and refers to them as an influencer (Kay et al., 2020).

An influencer is a content or idea producer who has an ability in a certain field and has created a significant follower community by producing various content for his followers on social media sites (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Influencers' content has two goals: one of them is to increase followers' purchase intention, another is to increase knowledge or interest of the product (Kay et al., 2020). When a follower receives a post from an influencer, whether a product or a subject, it can create positive feelings toward the follower and more special communication between the follower and influencer. Therefore, sooner or later, this relationship ends with a buying situation. Influencer marketing creates deeper connections with consumers than traditional marketing. According to Statista Market Insights (2023), marketers have more demand for this area because influencer ads are better in terms of

organic engagement and return on investment. The figures show the images. For example, influencer advertising campaigns are projected to reach US$30.81 billion in 2023, and the increase in ad spending in 2023 is expected to reach 17.0%. Another leading platform for influencer marketing is Instagram. For these reasons, companies have focused more on social media influencers in recent years.

There is no doubt that influencer marketing is not only a hot topic for business but has also led to an increase number of studies conducted on social media influencers (Campbell & Farrell, 2020; Hudders & Lou, 2022; Kay et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2021; Tanwar et al., 2022; Lou & Yuan, 2019). To systemize and synthesize the current body of knowledge, the current study aims to fill this gap by using a different approach utilizing bibliometric analysis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Opinion leaders or social media celebrities who gather around a considerable number of followers on social media sites and direct their ideas and behaviors are called influencers (Mucan Özcan & Erdoğan, 2020). According to Levin (2020) an influencer is defined as a person or group of people who have the ability to influence someone else's behavior, opinion and purchasing decision in a significant way. The concept of influencer also includes legal entities ("Greenpeace", "WWF" etc.), groups and communities ("9gag", "wallstreetbets" etc.), and traditional celebrities (models, movie stars, etc.) with social media accounts (Erdoğan & Özer Çizer, 2021).

Influencers are divided into twelve categories, four based on the number of followers and eight based on content (Santora, 2024). These are:

a) According to the number of followers:
    a. Nano influencers: Influencers with a highly engaged following of 1K-10K.
    b. Micro influencers: Highly engaged influencers with 10K-100K followers who specialize in a specific niche content.
    c. Macro influencers: Influencers with a large following with low engagement between 100K-1M.
    d. Mega or celebrity influencers: Influencers with 1M+ followers.
b) Content or niche-based influencers:
    a. Gaming influencers: Influencers producing content related to games.
    b. Sports and fitness influencers: Influencers producing content related to various sports and fitness.
    c. Bloggers and vloggers: The two most popular types of influencers are macro or mega influencers, depending on the number of followers. Influencers who produce content through blogs and vlogs.
    d. Photographers: Influencers who produce content related to photography.
    e. Travel: They are influencers who produce travel-related content.
    f. Beauty: They are influencers who produce beauty-related content such as beauty tips, product reviews, how-tos, etc.

g. Fashion: They are influencers who produce fashion-related content. They have a wide range of products.
h. Parenting: Influencers who produce content related to parenting.

Influencers need exposure for the content they publish on social media to gain fame and followers, while social media platforms need to attract user audiences through the content produced by influencers, so influencer marketing and social media concepts are interconnected concepts (Haenlein et al., 2020). Influencer marketing is the activities of communicating the message that a brand wants to convey in order to achieve its goals through influencers with the right target audience (Levin, 2020). The concept of influencer marketing is similar to the use of celebrities to promote a product or service in traditional mass media such as radio, television, newspapers and magazines. Here, celebrities are replaced by influencers and traditional mass media are replaced by digital mass media.

In recent years, many studies on influencer marketing have been studied in light of positive trends towards influencer marketing. In 2010, Volo's study examined Bloggers' tourist experiences, which is one of the first studies to evaluate the tourist experiences and analyze their effect on the decision-making process of potential tourists. Another example is Freberg's and his colleague's study in 2011 focused on better understanding the perceived personalities of social media influencers. Similar studies on sponsored content, disclosures, and digital consumer attitudes toward SMIs have been conducted by (Hsu et al., 2013; Shen 2014; Weiss 2014). Booth & Matic (2011), in their study "Mapping and leveraging influencers in social media to shape corporate brand perceptions", tried to define these new people as "influencers". In 2014, another study by Uzunoğlu & Misci Kip examined the bloggers about brand communications.

Djafarova & Rushworth (2017) showed that celebrities on Instagram influence the purchase behavior of young female users. Coates et al. (2019) studied the effects of social media influencer marketing on children's food consumption. Similarly, De Veirman et al. (2019) presented a review of studies on influencer marketing which is targeting children.

As the number of studies in the literature increases, the number of studies on bibliometric analyses and literature reviews has begun to increase. One of the first bibliometric analyses was conducted by Chang et al. (2020) in the "Social Sciences Citation Index" and "Sciences Citation Index Expanded" database for the 20 years between January 2000 and December 2019. About influencer marketing 154 peer-reviewed academic publications were published in the last three years (2018-2020) in the Scopus database (Hudders et al. 2021). Hudders and his colleagues study also found that studies in the field of influencer marketing have increased gradually in recent years. Abhishek & Srivastava's study (2021) provides a detailed analysis in this area which is analyzed by the VOSviewer and Biblioshiny packages. Another leading study was studied by Ye et al. (2021). In their study, "The value of influencer marketing for business: a bibliometric analysis and managerial implications", they used similar analyses to give an outline of the existing influencer marketing field.

This study aims to give a bibliometric brief on the English-language marketing studies issued in the Scopus database between 2002 and 2022. In this way, this study will provide a perspective on what previous researchers have done and how bibliometric studies have developed in the field of influencer marketing. The results were visualized using the Biblioshiny Bibliometric database via the R program version 4.2.2. "The bibliometrix R package (http://www.bibliometrix.org) provides a set of tools for quantitative research in bibliometrics and scientometrics" (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). According to Donthu et al. (2021), well-performed bibliometric studies can create solid foundations for advancing a field in new and meaningful ways; It enables and empowers scholars to (1) "obtain a single-point overview", (2) "identify knowledge gaps", and (3) "derive novel ideas for investigation", and (4) to "position their contributions to the field". To understand the influence of the influencer marketing literature and for contributions to this field, this study will offer a bibliometric analysis that can be a useful pathway for future researchers.

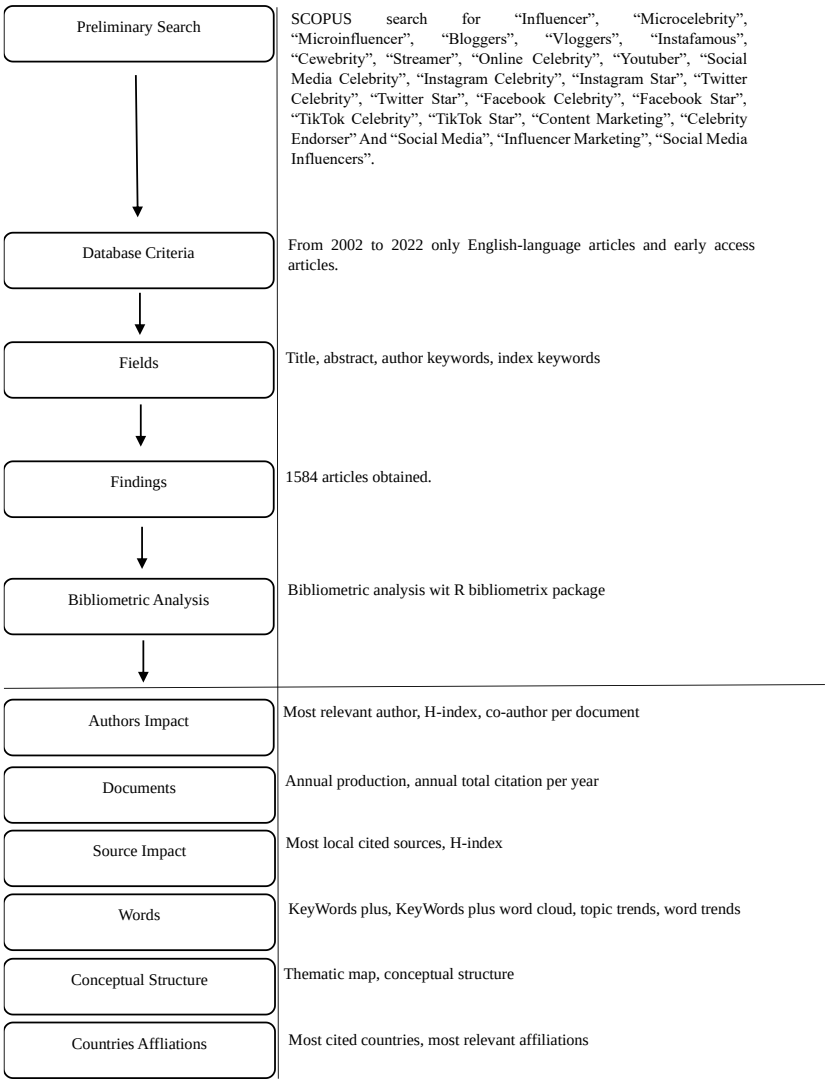
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data collection

Coined by Pritchard (1969), "bibliometrics is a set of statistical data analysis tools that researchers can use to examine publication patterns in a field" (Ye et al., 2021). Compared to peer review, which has a limited research scope, bibliometric methods are easy to use to examine an unlimited number of publications and scale from micro to macro level (Wallin, 2005). We used bibliometric analysis in this study, as many researchers like Ye et al. (2021), Tanwar et al. (2022), and Guo et al. (2019) do. We followed the framework suggested by Aria & Cuccurullo (2017) and Tanwar et al. (2022).

The search results were limited to 1584 English-language articles published in the fields of business, management, and accounting between 2002 and 2022. The data obtained were visualized in the publication information, citation analysis, word cloud, and author information categories using the Biblioshiny bibliometric database in the R program. In addition, the Voyant tools program was used for text analysis. The data were taken from the Scopus database on 16.01.2023. The limitation of this research is that the Scopus database contains only articles published in English between 2002 and 2022. The progress of the first results is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Initial Results Refining Process



3.2. Findings

The study consists of 1584 articles about influencer marketing published between 2002 and 2022. A total of 1584 articles were published from 530 different sources. The average number of citations per publication is 19,39, with 2,65 coauthors per publication; the number of keywords in KeyWords Plus is 1506, and the number of authors' keywords is 4756.

Table 1. Main Information About Influencer Marketing

Years	**2002-2022**
Article	1584
Sources (Journal, Book etc.)	530
KeyWords Plus	1506
Avarage Citations Per Document	19,39
Co-Authors Per Document	2,65
Author Keywords	4756

Figure 2. Number Of Articles Published About Influencer Marketing (Years)

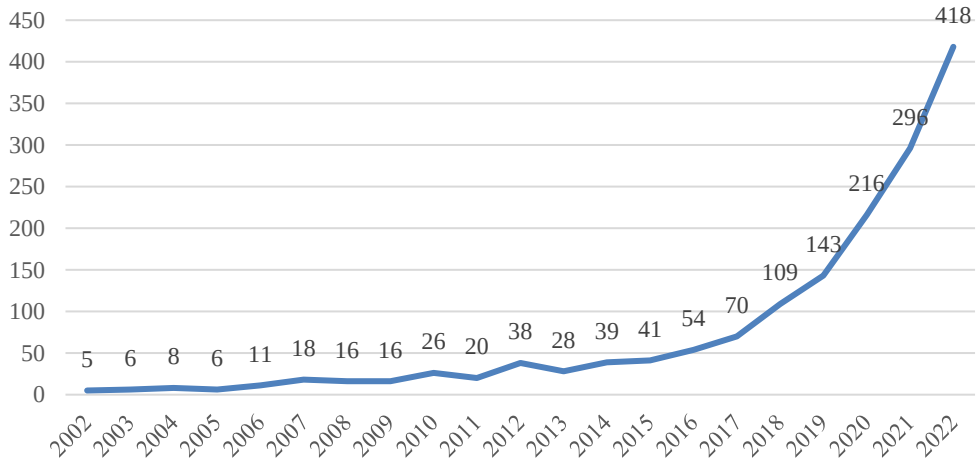
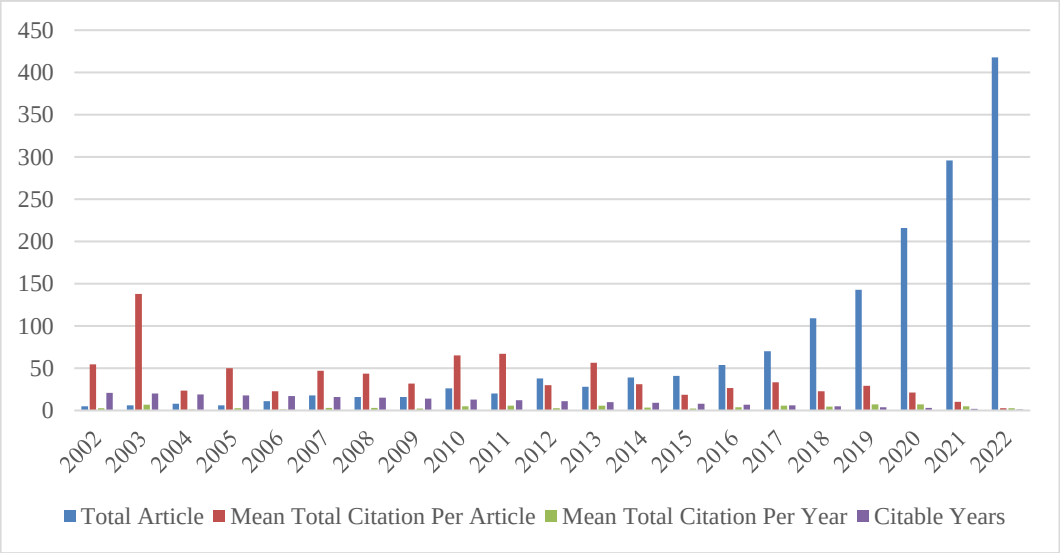


Figure 2 shows the number of articles on influencer marketing between 2002 and 2013 was closest to that of the previous year. Since 2013, the number of articles has increased regularly. In this context, interest in influencer marketing has increased over the years in the academic field. This increase is because social media sites have become more enabling influencer marketing campaigns, influencers have become professional businesses, and professional agencies specializing in influencer marketing have become widespread. Childers et al. (2019) also emphasized that the billion-dollar influencer market is a new area that affects strategic decision-making processes and that effective implementation activities need a change in the agency process.

According to Figure 3, the highest average number of citations was reached in 2003. From this point of view, it can be said that there is an inverse proportion between the increase in the number of articles and the average number of citations per article.

Figure 3. Citation Per Year

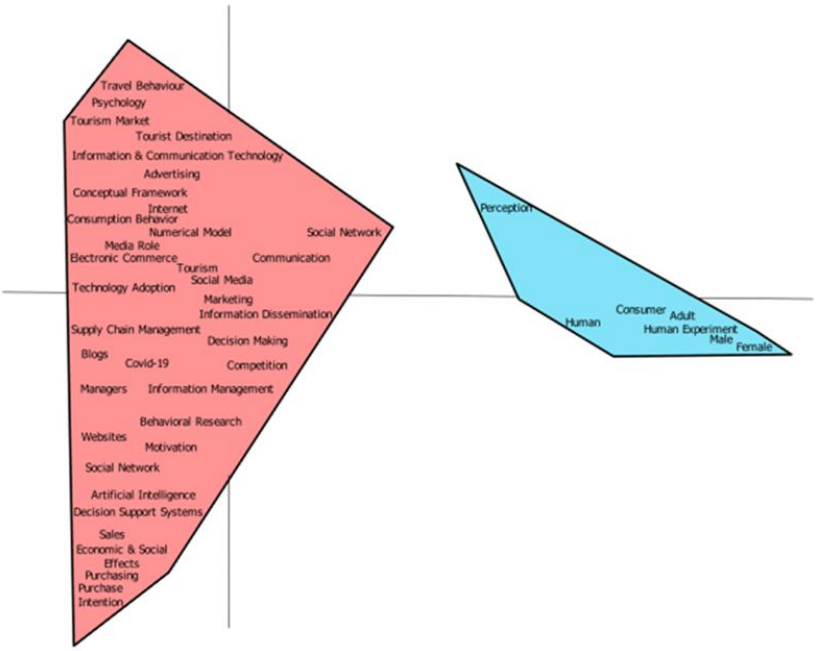


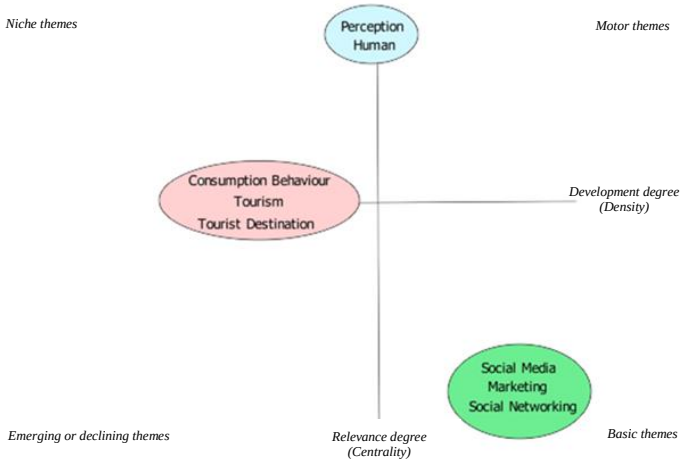
The KeyWords Plus data refers to words or phrases that do not appear in the title of an article but appear frequently in its references. “Based upon a special algorithm that is unique to Clarivate databases, KeyWords Plus enhances the power of cited reference searching by searching across disciplines for all the articles that have cited references in common” (Clarivate.com, 2022).

The keyword cloud called KeyWords Plus in Figure 4 is composed of the keywords of the article, the titles and the information obtained from the word groups in the article. First, the 50 most used words were downloaded as Excel data, and first, the names of the countries were extracted. Then, the scientific research concepts "survey", "theoretical study", "design", "methodology", "approach", "empirical analysis", and the words “structural equation modeling” were used. Additionally, the same or synonymous words were combined. The created word cloud was visualized on the WordItOut website. In this context, the most frequently used words in the field of influencer marketing are social media, marketing, social network, consumption behavior, electronic commerce, internet, decision making, and sales. In addition, the words human, sustainable development, perception, tourism and tourist destination stand out. Based on the word cloud, studies in the field of influencer marketing have focused on the purchase intentions, decision making, tourism, sustainable development, marketing and consumer behavior of social media users.

Figure 4. Keywords Plus Cloud

Figure 5. Conceptual Structure Map and Thematic Map





The conceptual structure map shows the relationships between concepts and keywords in the studies. Words that have a relationship together are included in the common word network (Khare & Jain, 2022). When factor analysis is applied to the KeyWords Plus word cloud, a 2-group conceptual structure map, as shown in Figure 5, is obtained. In the resulting conceptual structure map, as shown in Figure 4, various country names and scientific research terms are sorted and then visualized in the Krita drawing program.

In the conceptual structure map, human characteristics such as “human”, “consumer” and “perception” are included as a theme in the blue group, and it can be said that the concepts under this theme are frequently studied together. In addition, this theme is located far from the center of the conceptual structure map. In this context, it can be said that the concepts under this theme are less studied. When the red group is examined, it is seen that the concepts that are related to each other and studied together are clustered in a single group in a large and wide way in the center and near the center of the conceptual structure map. Although the red group is clustered in a single piece, it is related to more than one research subset. These subsets can be classified as “tourism and travel”, “marketing”, “social media”, “behavior”, “purchasing”, “decision support systems”, and “supply chain”. In addition, the concepts of “tourism”, “marketing”, “social media”, “electronic commerce”, “communication” and “information dissemination” are the most important concepts in the conceptual structure map of the red group. It can be said that these concepts are the basic concepts used in influencer marketing (for example, the concept of influencers emerges as a result of communication and information dissemination activities through social media sites and they use electronic commerce and marketing activities to influence the masses) and they are often worked together. Furthermore, as we move away from the center of the conceptual structure map, relatively less studied concepts can be found.

According to Khare & Jain (2022), a thematic map shows how the concepts and vocabulary of a particular field are organized and developed over a period of time. It also helps to

identify sub-areas within a research field. In this context, the layout of the thematic map is divided into four:

a) Basic themes: Basic themes are underdeveloped themes that are highly relevant to a single area. These themes are high in centrality but have major themes that are not fully developed and have potential for future research.
b) Motor themes: These are advanced themes and are used to create and organize a working topic in the field.
c) Niche themes: These themes have high density but low centrality. They are of marginal importance for areas with internal connections but negligible external connections.
d) Emerging or declining themes: These themes have low levels of density, interest and relevance.

In the thematic map, features such as "perception" and "human" are included in the blue group as a specific and niche theme in a small and dense dimension far from the center of the thematic map. In this context, it can be said that this theme has a newly emerging or less studied topic in the field. In the red group, the themes of "consumption behaviour", "tourism", "tourist destination" are among the large-sized niche and emerging or declining themes near the center of the thematic map. Although this group has the characteristics of two themes, it can be said to be a dense and central theme. In the green group, the themes "social media", "marketing", "social networking" are far from the center of the thematic map. The theme represents simple themes that are large in size and highly relevant to influencer marketing. These themes represent the main topics that have high potential from a central point of view but are not sufficiently developed in the field. In this context, it can be argued that there is a growing potential for future research.

According to the analysis of keyword trends in the world for 1584 articles in Figure 6, the frequency of use of words in the fields of organization and management in 2008, in the field of humans in 2010, in blogs in 2012, in information and dissemination in 2014, and in supply chain management in 2017; in 2018, managers, retailing, and websites; in 2019, social networks, females, the internet, sales, and humans in 2020; and in the fields of social media, marketing, and social networking (online) in 2021. In addition, in 2022, studies in the field of COVID-19, purchasing and deep learning came to the forefront. The years with the highest distributions are 2020 and 2021, and when the words used in these years are examined, it can be deduced that the trend is sales and marketing activities for social media users.

Figure 6. Keyword Trends in the World (Years Med)

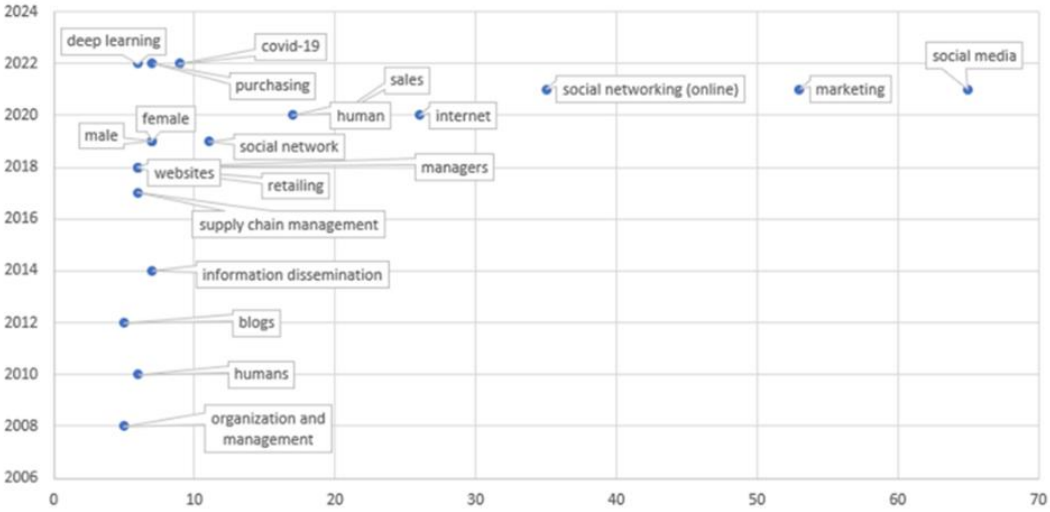
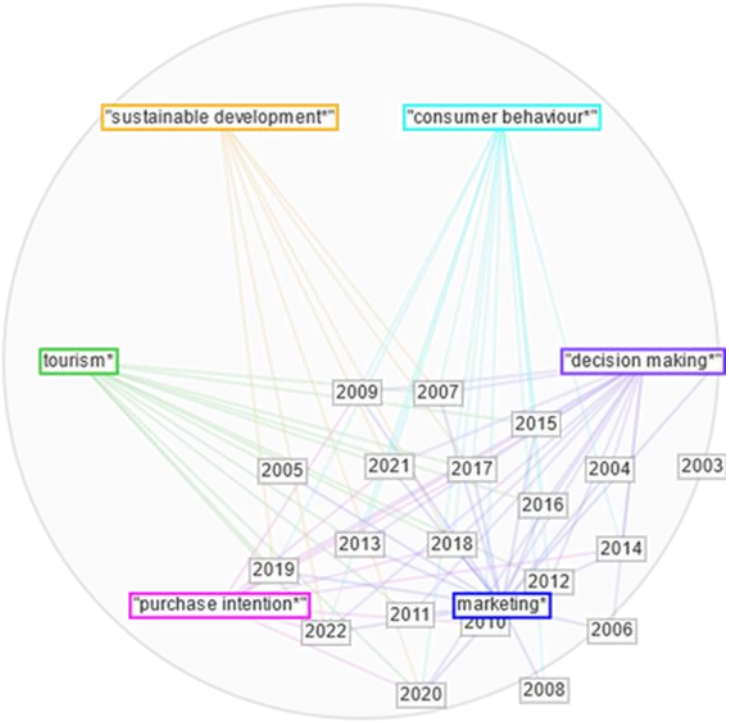
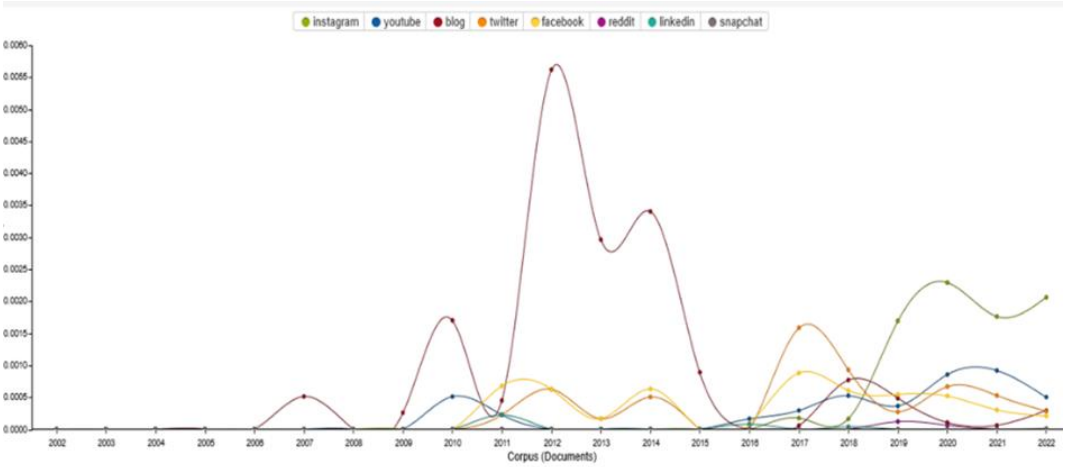


Figure 7. Word Trends in the World According to the Voyant Tools Review Tool



The title, abstract, author keywords and index keywords of 1584 articles were separated by year for text analysis and visualized via the Voyant Tools program. Voyant Tools "is a web-based text reading and analysis environment" (Sinclair & Rockwell, 2016). The words purchase intention, decision making, tourism, sustainable development, marketing and consumer behavior inferred in Figure 4 are visualized as mandala in the Voyant Tools Review Tool in Figure 7. Looking at the mandala, it is seen that the studies carried out over the years have focused on marketing. In addition, studies have focused on purchase intentions in recent years.

Figure 8. Social Media Site Trends in the World According to the Voyant Tools Review Tool



In the 1584 included articles, certain social media sites were searched on Voyant Tools to determine which social media sites the researchers focused on. While the number of studies on Instagram and Reddit has increased in recent years, the number of studies on other social media sites has increased and decreased irregularly.

Table 2. Impact of Resources Used

Source	h-index	TC	NP
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	21	1654	33
Journal of Business Research	20	1821	36
International Journal of Advertising	15	1760	43
Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing	15	582	28
Public Relations Review	14	934	32
Psychology and Marketing	11	497	19
European Journal of Marketing	10	301	20
Journal of Advertising	10	433	17

Journal of Marketing Management	10	576	19
Journal of Product and Brand Management	10	347	15

*TC: Total Number of Citations **NP: Total Number of Articles

In Table 2 and Table 3, the h-index is used to analyze the publication sources and the influence of the authors. According to Imran et al. (2018), the h-index measures the productivity and citation effectiveness of publications. As shown in Table 2, in the field of influencer marketing, the "International Journal of Advertising" has the journal with the greatest number of publications with 43 articles, “Journal of Business Research” has the highest number of citations with 1821, and "Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services” has the highest h-index. Since the publication citations and h-indexes of these three journals are close to each other, they are considered to be the most effective journals in the field of influencer marketing. According to the h-index of the authors in Table 3, L. Hudders is the author with the highest h-index, with 12 articles and 1052 citations and a 9 h-index. C. Lou is the second most cited author, with an 8 h-index, 14 articles and 748 citations.

Table 3. Author Impact

Author	**h-index**	**TC**	**NP**
L. Hudders	9	1052	12
C. Lou	8	748	14
S. De Jans S	5	259	5
S. Ibáñezsánchez	5	367	5
Sv. Jin	5	387	6
D. Belanche	4	89	4
C. Campbell	4	298	6
Lv. Casaló	4	348	4
M. De Veirman	4	874	4
M. Flavian	4	89	4

*TC: Total Number of Citations **NP: Total Number of Articles

Table 4 contains the most cited articles. In addition, studies were included in the bibliography. The most cited publication Kumar et al. (2010) received 772 citations. Other studies include De Veirman et al. (2017) 625, Basuroy et al. (2003) 541, Lou & Yuan (2019) 508, Malthouse et al. (2013) 471, Freberg et al. (2011) 415, Katona et al. (2011) 374, Schouten et al. (2020) 340, J. E. Lee & Watkins (2016) 315, and Sabate et al. (2014) 302.

Table 4. Most Cited Article Studies

Article Name	TC
Undervalued or Overvalued Customers: Capturing Total Customer Engagement Value	772
Marketing Through Instagram Influencers: The Impact of Number of Followers and Product Divergence on Brand Attitude	625
How Critical Are Critical Reviews? The Box Office Effects of Film Critics, Star Power, And Budgets	541
Influencer Marketing: How Message Value and Credibility Affect Consumer Trust Of Branded Content On Social Media	508
Managing Customer Relationships in The Social Media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House	471
Who Are the Social Media Influencers? A Study of Public Perceptions of Personality	415
Network Effects and Personal Influences: The Diffusion of an Online Social Network	374
Celebrity vs. Influencer Endorsements in Advertising: The Role of Identification, Credibility, and Product-Endorser Fit	340
YouTube Vloggers' Influence on Consumer Luxury Brand Perceptions and Intentions	315
Factors Influencing Popularity of Branded Content in Facebook Fan Pages	302

*TC: Total Number of Citations

Table 5. Most Cited Countries

Country	Total Citiation	Average Article Citations
USA	9139	30,67
United Kingdom	2620	24,26
China	1285	14,44
Australia	1176	22,19
Germany	1159	26,34
Belgium	1052	70,13
Spain	1031	29,46
India	1023	10,23
France	962	48,10
Netherlands	860	66,15

In Table 5, the countries with the most cited studies on influencer marketing are the USA, with 9139 citations; the United Kingdom, with 2620 citations; China, with 1285 citations; and Australia, with 1176 citations.

Table 6. Universities by Number of Articles

Universities	Articles
Ghent University	21
Griffith University	18
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	18
University Of Florida	17
University Of Georgia	14

Bina Nusantara University	13
Nanyang Technological University	13
Northwestern University	13
University Of North Texas	13
Hong Kong Baptist University	10

According to Table 6, Ghent University in Belgium has the greatest number of publications, with 21 articles, when considering the universities that publish in the field of influencer marketing.

At the beginning, the increased popularity of this new marketing paradigm also reflected a sharp increase in the number of publications (Ye et al. 2021; Tanwar et al. 2022; Vrontis et al. 2021; Chang et al. 2020). A comparison of the results of similar studies revealed some similarities and differences between the studies. One of the studies titled “Social Media Influencer Research: A Biometric Analysis” Chang et al. (2020) addressed 237 articles published in the SSCI and SCIE databases between January 2000 and December 2019. The author used the word "influencer" and its synonyms (such as this study) in other social networks while searching the databases. In both studies, the number of articles increased over the years, and the most widely used keyword was social media. Generally, the results of the two studies differed, as the study included 237 articles in the SSCI and SCIE databases.

A similar article named “Influencers and Social Media: State of the Art and Bibliometric Analysis” by Fernandez-Prados et al. (2021) was analyzed in the Scopus database as "influencer" and "social media" and reached 817 studies. The authors searched for all studies up to 2021 and included all documents (articles, book chapters, conference papers, etc.) in their study. In this study, in addition to taking influencer as a general name, other words related to influencer were included, resulting in 1584 articles. In both studies, it was determined that there was an increase in studies about influencers. While the study focuses on the fields of publication (computer science, social science, etc.), this study is limited to articles in the field of business management and accounting. Again, according to the trend and keyword analysis, the words “social media”, “social network”, “marketing”, and “merce” (we combined them as e-commerce) overlap in the two studies, but only there are differences according to year. The author stated that, as in this study, the Instagram platform has come to the forefront in recent years. In addition, the USA came to the forefront in both articles. Similarly, in both studies, it was determined that the University of Ghent in Belgium did the most work in the field. The most influential writer in both fields is L. Hudders. In addition, M. De Veırman is an important author in both studies. While the author used VOSviever in his analysis, we used the R Biblioshiny package program and the Voyant Tools Review Tool. The differences between the two studies are limited to 1584 English articles in the field of business management and accounting, which

include the word influencer and its equivalent meanings, written between 2002 and 2022. This is the main reason for the difference between the two studies.

"Mapping the İnfluence Of Influencer Marketing: A Bibliometric Analysis" Abhishek & Srivastava (2021) addressed 168 articles published in the Scopus database through October 2020. The authors used the VOSviewer and Biblioshiny package programs together. The author used the words influencer and "social media" or "IM" and "social media" while searching Scopus databases. L. Hudders and M. De Veırman are important authors, although the degree of importance is different in both studies. According to the author, the USA is the country that publishes the most. The USA is the most cited country in this study. In both studies, social media, social networking, marketing and the internet are the most frequently used words. The studies differed from each other because the number of articles reviewed differed. The "The Value of Influencer Marketing for Business: A Bibliometric Analysis and Managerial Implications" Ye et al. (2021) adressed 387 articles published in the Scopus database from 1960 to July 2020. Similarly, both studies analyzed the keywords in the Scopus database by searching for synonyms related to the word "influencer". The authors used the BibExcel program for data analysis. Although the h-index and rankings of both articles are different, the "Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services", "Journal of Business Research", "International Journal of Advertising", and "Journal of Marketing Management" are among the most influential journals. In both studies, L. Hudders was the most influential author. In both studies, "social media" was one of the most frequently used words. Since the numbers of papers examined by both studies differ, the findings also differ.

4. CONCLUSION

One of the main contributions of this research is to conduct a bibliometric analysis of the Scopus database to identify trends between 2002 and 2022. A bibliometric analysis was applied to 1584 English articles on influencer marketing through the R program. These analyses were analyzed under the subheadings of publication, citation, word, author and cross-country collaboration between 2002 and 2022. The 1584 articles analyzed were published in 530 different sources, with an average of 19.39 citations per publication and 2.65 authors per publication. The number of articles increased steadily over the years and reached its highest level in 2022.

Moreover, as a result of the factor analysis, the conceptual structure map was divided into two groups and the thematic map into three groups. These maps can provide researchers with a clear pathway to identify trends, gaps, new ideas or different areas in the literature. For example, the themes of "social media", "marketing", "social networking" within a simple theme and "consumption behaviour", "tourism", "tourist destination" within niche and emerging or declining themes can be associated with the subsets of the red-colored conceptual group in accordance with their themes in the conceptual structure map. With the help of this study, some research gaps can be identified. For example, the themes of "perception" and "human" within a niche theme can be associated with the blue conceptual

group “human”, “consumer” and “perception”. These concepts have been understudied both structurally and thematically. In addition, the word trends obtained by text analysis method can also provide an idea to researchers who will work in the field.

Research trends and the importance of social media platforms have changed over the years. Therefore, researchers and managers should follow these trends and platforms to learn more about influencer marketing. Future researchers can examine different perspectives and conduct different analyses of influencer marketing. For example, the impact of influencers created by artificial intelligence, which has become increasingly popular recently, could be studied. Also, new social media platforms can have an impact on consumers and can be seen as a research tool for researchers.

This study is limited to 1584 English articles obtained through the Scopus database on 16.01.2023. It is foreseen that studies conducted after this date may cause various differences in the analysis and different findings may be obtained. Therefore, in future studies, different databases such as Web of Science, publications or articles in English or non-English literature, as well as other publications such as proceedings and books can be included and analyzed.

Statement of Research and Publication Ethics

In all processes of the article, the principles of research and publication ethics of the Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Journal of Social Sciences were followed.

Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

The authors contributed equally to the study.

Declaration of Interest

The author has no conflict of interest with any person or organization.

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