

Research Article | Araştırma Makalesi

The Role of Online Resource Reliability of Social Media Influencers on Purchasing Behavior

Sosyal Medya Fenomenlerinin Online Kaynak Güvenirliklerinin Satın Alma Davranışı Üzerindeki Rolü



Ayşe YAVUZ (Ph.D.)
Selçuk University, Faculty of Communication
Konya/Türkiye
aysehumayilmaz@hotmail.com



Mehmet Nejat ÖZÜPEK (Prof. Dr.)
Selçuk University, Faculty of Communication
Konya/Türkiye
nejatozuppek@hotmail.com

Başvuru Tarihi | Date Received: 01.08.2024
Yayına Kabul Tarihi | Date Accepted: 27.12.2024
Yayınlanma Tarihi | Date Published: 30.01.2025

Yavuz, A., & Özüpek M. N. (2025). The Role of Online Resource Reliability of Social Media Influencers on Purchasing Behavior. *Erciyes İletişim Dergisi*, 12(1), 29-51 <https://doi.org/10.17680/erciyesiletisim.1526479>

Abstract

Technological developments have paved the way for social media platforms to offer new opportunities to their users and to be used in various areas of social life. The opportunities provided by these platforms have led certain individuals to gain fame. These individuals, known as social media influencers, increase their follower count by producing diverse content and use their fame to engage in advertising and marketing activities. At the same time, they collaborate with brands, influencing their followers' purchasing decisions. This field research, conducted with 923 participants over the age of 18 from across the country who actively use social media, examined the role of social media influencers' online source reliability in shaping individuals' purchasing behavior. The research was designed in the quantitative research model. Data were collected through online questionnaires, to analyze data T-Test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis are used. The study found that individuals follow between 2 and 5 influencers. Participants consider the product recommendations of influencers, primarily due to price advantages, because they share entertaining videos and useful information. Moreover, the sub-dimensions of Online Source Reliability—Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, and Online Self-Presentation—were found to influence individuals' purchasing behavior, while Expertise had no effect.

Keywords: Social Media Influencer, Influencer Marketing, Online Resource Reliability, Consumer Purchase, Online Self-Presentation.

Öz

Teknolojik gelişmeler, sosyal medyanın kullanıcılarına yeni olanaklar sunmasına ve sosyal düzende pek çok alanda kullanılmasına zemin hazırlamıştır. Gelişen sosyal medya platformlarının sağladığı imkânlar bu mecralarda birtakım kişilerin ün kazanmasına yol açmıştır. Sosyal medya fenomeni olarak isimlendirilen bu kimseler, sosyal ağlarda pek çok türde içerik üreterek takipçi sayılarını arttırmakta sahip oldukları ün ile reklam ve pazarlama faaliyetlerinde bulunmaktadırlar. Aynı zamanda markalarla iş birliği içerisinde girerek takipçilerinin satın alma kararlarına etki edebilmektedir. Ülke genelinden 18 yaşının üzerinde olup sosyal medyayı aktif kullanan 923 katılımcı üzerinde yürütülen bu saha araştırmasında sosyal medya fenomenlerinin çevrim içi kaynak güvenilirliklerinin bireylerin satın alma davranışı üzerindeki rolü incelenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda, bireylerin ortalama üç saati sosyal medyada geçirdiği ve 2-5 kişi aralığında sosyal medya fenomenini takip ettiği tespit edilmiştir. Katılımcılar, eğlenceli videolar ve yararlı bilgiler paylaştığı için takip ettikleri fenomenlerin ürün tavsiyelerini daha çok fiyat avantajı nedeniyle dikkate almaktadırlar. Ayrıca sosyal medya fenomenlerine yönelik Çevrim İçi Kaynak Güvenilirliği alt boyutlarından Çekicilik, Güvenilirlik ve Çevrim İçi Benlik Sunumu'nun bireylerin satın alma davranışı üzerinde etkisi olduğu, ancak Yetkinlik faktörünün herhangi bir etkisinin bulunmadığı saptanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya Fenomeni, Fenomen Pazarlama, Online Kaynak Güvenilirliği, Satın Alma Davranışı, Çevrim İçi Benlik Sunumu.



Introduction

Social media platforms, digital media, or new media, are known for their versatility, interactivity, and engagement, and can be used on mobile devices without time or location constraints. Online communication and digital environments greatly influence the lives of young individuals and have become prominent not only for personal use but also in areas such as economics, commerce, and politics (Ito et al., 2009). Technological progress and industrial development in modern societies have triggered a digital transformation (Ronzhina et al., 2021). Social media platforms, a valuable source of target audience information for businesses and brands, now provide opportunities to access key insights about potential customers.

Consumer purchasing behavior, which may seem like a single action, is actually a long-term process that requires in-depth knowledge and analysis (Mucuk, 2012). In today's world, psychological and environmental factors, not just physiological needs, play a significant role in determining product preferences and purchasing behaviors. In the current economic environment, where many brands and products are introduced, consumers have the freedom to choose from a wide range of products.

Social media influencers have emerged as powerful figures in influencing their followers' product preferences and shaping their purchasing behaviors (More & Lingam, 2017). Social media influencers, particularly prominent in the marketing field, attract the attention of audiences across many areas, including education, fashion, psychology, sociology, and even health. As a result, they have become the subject of numerous studies in both domestic and international literature. Similarly, this study, using surveys—a primary quantitative method frequently employed in social sciences—focuses on the role of social media influencers in consumer purchasing behaviors. The main aim of the research is to determine the strength and direction of influence that online resource reliability has on purchasing behavior. Current studies focusing on influencer usage often position purchasing behavior as the dependent variable. However, research treating influencers' online source credibility as an independent variable is relatively scarce in the literature. Furthermore, no large-scale studies have been conducted at the national level, encompassing a broad population and sampling data from neighborhoods, villages, towns, districts, and cities. Thus, this study carries an original quality.

Social Media and Social Media Influencers

At its most basic, social media is understood as online applications that allow people to share ideas, content, experiences, feelings, and media with each other (Tobin & Braziel, 2008). Many different perspectives exist regarding the etymological and ontological structure of social media. However, in academic disciplines, the focus is on the impact of social media on society and individuals (Eraslan & Çakıcı Eser, 2015). With the rise of social media, the effectiveness of communication and interpersonal relationships in societies has changed significantly (Ngai et al., 2015, p. 33). The Cambridge Dictionary defines a social media influencer as 'a person who can influence many people through traditional media or social media, impacting or changing how people behave' (Cambridge, 2022). Social media influencers, who gather likes and followers through the content they create on platforms like Snapchat, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, possess the power to influence the opinions and behaviors of the masses, much like opinion leaders. Their advice, especially when they have expertise in a specific category or product, is often considered by their followers (Veissi, 2017). This advice can influence consumer

behaviors such as purchasing decisions, brand awareness, and loyalty (More & Lingam, 2017). These influencers attract the attention of their followers and increase their popularity through the content they share on social networks. As a result, they enter into agreements with brands, earning profits through their reputation and content. They create engaging content to increase their followers' interest and admiration, maintain constant communication, and manage their social media accounts with great care (Marwick & Boyd, 2011). Recently, they have been used extensively in marketing strategies, especially for promoting sales and increasing brand recognition (Arayess & Geerts, 2017).

Influencer marketing on social media platforms creates a more direct, organic, and large-scale channel between brands and consumers (Glucksman, 2017). Influencers act as a bridge between consumers and brands, and they gain trust and influence through open, honest, and genuine communication with their followers (Barbara et al., 2024). They are also successful in reaching niche audiences that traditional marketing often overlooks. Unlike traditional celebrities, social media influencers are more accessible and maintain strong communication with their followers (Can & Koz, 2018). Standing out among billions of internet users, social media influencers attract attention and lead trends. With their content and the narratives they create, they have significant influence over audiences in many areas. For this reason, they are considered today's digital opinion leaders (Uzunoglu & Kip, Brand communication through digital influencers: Leveraging blogger engagement, 2014).

Online Resource Reliability

The Source Credibility Model originates from the study by Hovland et al., (1953), where "trustworthiness" and "expertise" were initially identified as the foundational factors of source credibility (Ohanian, 1990). In contemporary times, the collaboration of marketing sectors with social media influencers, rather than traditional celebrities, has transformed how people engage with sources. Consequently, the classical source credibility model does not fully meet current needs. To address this emerging requirement, Djafarova and Trofimenko developed the online source credibility model through their study (2018).

Their research, conducted with 38 active female Instagram users aged 21-35 in Russia, identified four general categories and validated the model for contemporary use. According to Djafarova and Trofimenko, the dimensions of online source credibility are Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Expertise, and Online Self-Presentation (2018).

Trustworthiness: The trustworthiness dimension, the first aspect of the source credibility model, pertains to the trust placed in individuals who express positive opinions about a product and the acceptance level of the message conveyed (Ohanian, 1990). Consumers who perceive a source as trustworthy are more likely to believe the information provided, which can influence their brand attitudes and even purchase intentions (Avcı & Yıldız, 2019). When a source is perceived as trustworthy, the message has the power to alter attitudes (Onurlu et al., 2022). Factors such as the perceived honesty, sincerity, expertise of information sources, and the validity of the disseminated information determine the value of the information derived from the source (Uğurhan & Yaşar, 2021).

Expertise: The expertise dimension, the second aspect of the source credibility model, concerns the perception of the message source as a reliable authority based on knowledge, skills, and particularly experience. Expertise is specifically a dimension perceived by the message recipients or followers (Avcı & Yıldız, 2019). The perception

of the information source's adequacy regarding the product shapes attitudes (Onurlu et al., 2022). The perceived relevance or expertise of influencers regarding the product they promote facilitates its acceptance by consumers (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

Attractiveness: The third dimension, attractiveness, primarily refers to physical appearance. While attractiveness may have various definitions, its most immediate connotation is the physical traits that foster positive first impressions (Onurlu et al., 2022). For influencers, attractiveness encompasses not just physical but also social appeal. Messages from an attractive source are more likely to be accepted (Yıldız, 2021; Ali & Temizkan, 2022). The influence of attractiveness extends beyond appearance to include the feelings and perceptions it evokes among followers. This attribute enables followers to more readily adopt the information and ideas presented (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2017)

Online Self-Presentation: The concept of self-presentation, a significant dimension of online source credibility, involves individuals adapting their personality traits to fit their environment. This can be seen as wearing a "mask" to behave in a manner consistent with how they want to be perceived (Goffman, 2016). Online self-presentation refers to how individuals present themselves on social media platforms. Here, individuals strive to align their self-presentation with how they wish to be perceived by society (Özdemir & Yıldırım, 2019). For instance, influencers highlight aspects of themselves they want others to know about (Onurlu et al., 2022)

Changing Consumption and Consumer Concepts

The concept of consumption has an interdisciplinary nature. Due to this, it has been defined in various ways and assessed from different perspectives in each discipline. Considered one of the most basic human actions since the dawn of existence, consumption encompasses the essential conditions for the survival of all living beings. Early definitions include terms like 'waste, destruction, spending, accumulation' (Featherstone, 2013). These terms highlight the negative and abstract aspects of consumption. However, consumption is a compulsory action for humans, both psychologically and physiologically, from the moment of existence and continuing throughout life (Solak , 2020). Another definition explains consumption as the mobilization of material and moral values to meet a need, regardless of whether that need is legitimate or not (Torlak, 2016).

In the socialization process of the 21st century, media phenomena and shopping centers are regarded as the most significant actors influencing the characteristic structure of society and individual behavior. The media propagates the illusion that consuming specific products will lead to enhanced feelings of well-being and happiness. While this perception ensures the continuity of consumption, it has recently emerged as a key element in the socialization process (Silier, 2011). Modern marketing approaches differ from traditional ones by focusing on consumers' desires and needs, aiming to influence their purchasing behaviors. The transition to an information society, driven by technological advancements, has made knowledge-based marketing increasingly important. Moreover, as the concept of digitalization gains dominance across all societal domains, marketing activities have begun to digitalize as well. Consequently, modern marketing has evolved into a transitional phase that synthesizes traditional and contemporary methods, incorporating both internet and social media channels (Babacan & Onat, 2002).

Through modern marketing activities, efforts are made to identify consumer tendencies and their positive and negative attitudes toward brands. Businesses leverage digital

opportunities to communicate messages to target audiences and shape their marketing strategies based on the feedback received (Yurdakul, 2006). In this context, the importance of digital marketing activities—providing greater benefits at lower costs for businesses—is undeniable. Furthermore, in the highly competitive landscape of today's free market, digital marketing plays a crucial role in enabling businesses to differentiate themselves (Bulunmaz, 2016).

Purchasing Behavior

The activity defined as purchasing encompasses the behavioral, mental, and emotional responses of consumers throughout the processes of acquiring, utilizing, and disposing of products and services (Kardes et al., 2011). Individuals purchase numerous products throughout their lives to sustain themselves within the social framework. The products they buy vary significantly in terms of price and usage. When purchasing these goods and services, consumers exhibit diverse behaviors. Analyzing these behaviors requires understanding how consumers allocate resources such as time, labor, and money. Businesses are eager to understand and influence consumer behaviors during the purchasing process, as successfully affecting and increasing sales relies on this knowledge (Akturan, 2007).

In today's highly competitive environment, businesses frequently leverage technology and social media platforms to connect with customers. Research indicates that consumers often seek opinions from social media users who have previously experienced a product before making a purchasing decision, aiming to form impressions based on those experiences. At this stage, individuals are influenced not only by acquaintances who have tried the product and user reviews but also by social media influencers—referred to as “key opinion leaders”—who possess diverse areas of expertise. Social media serves not only to inform consumers about new products and facilitate their selection but also plays a crucial role in easing the purchasing process following the decision-making phase. Consumers now enjoy the convenience of purchasing desired products online, unrestricted by time or location.

The hypotheses of the study, framed within the context provided, are stated as follows:

- H1: Online source reliability affects individuals' purchasing behavior.
- H1a: Influencer attractiveness has an impact on purchasing behavior.
- H1b: Influencer trustworthiness has an impact on purchasing behavior.
- H1c: Influencer expertise of the influencer has an impact on purchasing behavior.
- H1d: Online self-presentation has an impact on purchasing behavior.

Method

Within the scope of the study, the relationship between the sub-dimensions of online source credibility of social media influencers and individuals' purchasing behavior was examined using a relational research design and statistical techniques. The data for the study were collected through an online survey. Balcı states that for a research population exceeding one million, a sample size of 384 units or more is required to represent the population with a 95% confidence level (α) and a 5% margin of error (2004, p. 95). The research was conducted among individuals over 18 years old who use social media and follow at least one social media influencer, with 923 participants taking part in the study. The purposive sampling technique was applied, including users who follow at least one social media influencer. The survey consisted of four sections. The first section included

descriptive questions about the participants. In the second and third sections, a 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree.” The second section featured a 25-item online source credibility scale adapted from the study conducted by Djafarova and Trofimenko (2018), which itself was based on Ohanian’s source credibility scale (1990). The third section included 10 questions related to purchasing behavior. The purchase scale was developed based on the scale by Martins et al. (2019). The survey form, grounded in these two scales, was structured to align with the objectives of the study. In the fourth and final section, questions aimed at identifying the demographic characteristics of the participants were included. To ensure the validity of the scales and survey, a pilot study was conducted with a group of 70 participants. This test, not intended for data collection, aimed to identify statements that participants found difficult to understand or that did not contribute to the research. Additionally, the reliability analysis of the scales used in the study yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient (α) of 0.966, indicating a high level of reliability for the scales employed.

Ethics Committee Permission

Within the framework of the decision taken during the meeting by Selçuk University Faculty of Communication Scientific Ethics Review Committee dated 25/07/2023 and numbered 2023/17; the study does not contain any ethical issues.

Findings

Demographic Variables

Table 1. Sample Profile (N=923)

Demographic Variables	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	570	61.8
	Male	353	38.2
	Total	923	100.0
Age	18-22	161	17,4
	23-27	169	18.3
	28-32	196	21.2
	33-36	180	19,5
	37-41	112	12.1
	42 and above	105	11.4
	Total	923	100.0
Educational Status	Primary Education	45	4,9
	High school	197	21,3
	Associate Degree	87	9,4
	Postgraduate degree	197	21,3
	Total	923	100.0
Residence	Neighborhood	96	10,4
	Village	30	3.3
	Small Town	19	2.1
	Town	7	0.8
	District	226	24.5
	Province	545	59
	Total	923	100.0

Demographic Variables	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Profession	Student	195	21.1
	Civil servant	356	38.6
	Retired	18	2,0
	Worker	98	10.6
	Freelancer	62	6.7
	Housewife	179	19.4
	Other	15	1.6
	Total	923	100.0
Monthly Income	8500 TL and below	194	21,0
	between 8501 TL and 16000 TL	177	19.2
	between 16001 TL and 24000 TL	148	16.0
	between 24001 TL and 28000 TL	309	33.5
	28001 TL and above	95	10.3
	Total	923	100.0

When examining the general profile of the participants, it is evident that women make up a larger percentage than men. The participants, the vast majority of whom are civil servants, are predominantly between the ages of 28 and 32. Additionally, those residing in provincial centers and with a monthly income between 24,001 TL and 28,000 TL also constitute the majority of the participants. Lastly, the percentage of individuals with high school and graduate education levels is notably high. Detailed data on the sample profile are presented in Table 1.

Data on Social Media Usage and Influencer Following

Table 2. Social Media Usage Frequency

Time Frame	Frequency	Percentage
Less than an hour	126	13.7
2 – 4 hours	540	58.5
5-7 Hours	187	20,3
8 – 10 hrs	49	5,3
11 Hours and over	21	2.3
Total	923	100.0

When examining the frequency of social media use among the participants, it can be stated that the predominant usage is between 2 and 4 hours per day.

Table 3. Number of Influencers Followed

Number Range	Frequency	Percentage
One person	148	16.0
2-5 people	399	43.0
6-9 people	162	17.6
10-13 people	79	8.6
14 and above	135	14,6
Total	923	100.0

Participants were asked how many social media influencers they followed. In the study conducted on those who follow at least one social media influencer, it was found that the majority follow between 2 and 5 influencers (53.0%).

Table 4. Reason for Following Social Media Influencers

Reason for Following Influencers	Frequency	Percentage
Shares fun videos	662	23,9
Shares useful information	648	23,4
Notifies me about new products and services	565	20,4
My curiosity about their lifestyle and sharings	353	12,7
We have something in common with the influencer	261	9,4
Distributes discount vouchers and sweepstakes promotion	164	5,9
The fact that the influencer is a role model	116	4,2
Total	2769	100.0

Individuals follow social media influencers for different reasons, similar to their purposes for using social media. Participants were asked a question with seven options regarding their reasons for following social media influencers. They were allowed to select up to three options. Therefore, the total number of responses exceeds the total number of participants. Among the multiple-choice answers, the most frequently selected response from 662 participants was “Shares fun videos” (23.9%).

Table 5. Social Media Platforms Where Influencers Are Followed

Follow-up Status of Influencers	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	YouTube	Pinterest	TikTok	Blog
Strongly Disagree	628	465	109	254	608	678	642
	68%	50.4%	11.8%	27,5%	65.9%	73,5%	69 6
Disagree	94	133	42	96	103	83	87
	10.2%	14.4%	4.6%	10.4%	11.1%	9.0%	-9.4%
Neither agree or disagree	80	131	112	156	102	69	104
	8.7%	14.2%	12.1%	16.9%	11.1%	7.5%	11.3%
Agree	88	123	350	276	79	58	63
	9,5 %	13.3%	37.9%	29.9%	8.6%	6,3%	6.8%
Strongly Agree	33	71	310	141	31	35	27
	3.6%	7.7%	33.6%	15.3%	3.4%	3.8%	2.9%
Total	923	923	923	923	923	923	923
Average	100%	100%	100%	100.0%	100%	100.0%	100%
	1.70	2.14	3.77	2.95	1.72	1,58	1.64

Social media influencers operate on many social media platforms. The dynamics, usage characteristics, and user profiles of each platform differ. For this reason, influencers’ styles and content vary according to the social media platform. In this context, participants were asked which social media platform they preferred to follow influencers using a five-point Likert-type scale. They were asked to rate their tendency to follow social media influencers on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, TikTok, and blog platforms as follows: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree. The frequency and percentage values of these responses are categorized in Table 5. Additionally, the mean values of these responses were calculated. The option

with the highest average value indicates the platform with the highest participation among the participants. Upon examining the responses, it is evident that individuals primarily follow social media influencers on Instagram.

Table 6. *Purchasing Behavior on the Advice of Influencers*

Replies	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	443	48,0
No	480	52
Total	923	100.0

Participants were asked whether they had purchased any products based on the recommendations of the influencers they followed. As a result of the answers given to this question, which constitutes the main problem of the research, 443 of the individuals participating in the study answered “Yes” (48.0%), while 480 answered “No” (52.0%). Considering these data, nearly fifty percent of the participants acknowledge that there is an influencer effect on purchasing behavior.

Table 7. *Acquisition Action and Gender Crosstab*

Demographic Variable	Yes	No	Total
Female	358	212	570
	80.8%	44.2%	61.8%
Male	85	268	353
	19.2%	55.8%	38.2%
Total	443	480	923
	100%	100%	100%

As seen in Table 7, women (80.8%) who engage in purchasing behavior upon the recommendation of an influencer have a higher percentage than men (19.2%). Based on this data, it can be concluded that female participants tend to buy products more than male participants when advised by influencers. It has been observed that women’s consumption perceptions and purchase intentions on social media are higher than those of men.

Table 8. *Reason for Purchase Made with the Suggestion of Influencer*

Reason for Purchase	Frequency	Percentage
Price advantage	679	24.5
Usefulness and functionality	554	20.0
Reliability and quality	505	18.2
Easy to access	493	17,8
Trendiness	311	11,2
Number of followers and likes	227	8.2
Total	2769	100.0

Multiple answers were allowed in the question asked to participants regarding the reasons for their purchasing behavior based on the recommendation of the influencer they followed. Evaluating these responses, it is observed that the “Price advantage” option has the highest percentage (679 people). The collaboration of social media influencers with certain brands and the distribution of discount codes through the links they share can encourage followers to purchase those products.

Explanatory Factor Analysis

In the study, explanatory factor analysis was applied to the questions about social media influencers. Factor analysis is a method that helps to reveal a smaller number of unrelated variables by evaluating variables that are related to each other in an event with x number of variables (Saraçlı, 2011). In simpler terms, factor analysis can be described as explaining a complex phenomenon with fewer variables (Altunışık et al., 2017). Explanatory factor analysis was performed on the scale consisting of 22 items to reveal the sub-dimensions of social media influencers' online source reliability. According to the analysis, it was determined that the scale consisted of 4 dimensions. In the analysis of the scale items, the lowest factor load was accepted as 0.545.

Table 9. Explanatory Factor Analysis to Determine the Sub-Factors of Online Resource Reliability.

Factors	Factor Load	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alfa	Eigenvalue
Attractiveness Factor		60.400	.603	13.288
Social media influencers have their own style	.998			
Social media influencers are impressive	.840			
Social media influencers are charismatic	.835			
Trustworthiness Factor		5.568	.946	1.225
Social media influencers provide accurate information	0.846			
Social media influencers are sincere	.798			
Social media influencers are honest	.783			
Social media influencers make constructive criticisms	.777			
Social media influencers are respectful	.764			
Social media influencers are trustworthy	.725			
Social media influencers share informative content	.613			
Expertise Factor		4.572	0.935	1.006
Social media influencers are experts in their relevant fields.	.943			
Social media influencers are qualified people	.927			
Social media influencers are experienced in their relevant fields.	.851			
Social media influencers have knowledge in their relevant fields.	.835			
Social media influencers share original content	.691			
Social media influencers are competent (follows up-to-date information)	.545			
Online Self-Presentation Factor		4.392	.891	.966
Social media influencers share consistent-accurate information/content	.854			
Social media influencers post regularly	.812			
Social media influencers respond to my questions/communicate with me	.764			
Social media influencers have strong social ties (They have a wide social network)	.705			

Factors	Factor Load	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alfa	Eigenvalue
Social media influencers serve good intentions (social responsibility, etc.)	.684			
Social media influencers produce high-quality content	.669			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample adequacy criterion: .970 Average Chi-Square: 1.863 Degree of Freedom: 231 Significance: .000 Variance Explained: 74.932% Cronbach's Alpha: .966				

The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy value of .970 indicates that the sample size is sufficient regarding the suitability of the data set for Explanatory Factor Analysis. Additionally, the significant Bartlett's test value ($p = .000$) reveals that the data come from a multivariate normal distribution (Akgül & Çevik, 2003). As a result of the analysis, four motivations with an eigenvalue greater than 1 explain 74.93 percent of the total variance. The Trustworthiness level of the scale (Cronbach's Alpha = .966) is quite satisfactory (Ural & Kılıç, 2006).

The first factor that emerges from the factor analysis is Attractiveness. This motivation indicates that social media influencers are charismatic and impressive and possess a unique style; it alone has the capacity to explain 60.40 percent of the total variance. The eigenvalue of this motivation is greater than 1, and the reliability ratio (.603) is also quite satisfactory.

The second factor is the trustworthiness factor. This factor emphasizes that social media influencers are sincere, honest, respected individuals who provide accurate information. The trustworthiness factor accounts for 5.56 percent of the total variance, with a trustworthiness coefficient of .946.

Expertise is another sub-dimension of online resource reliability. It highlights that social media influencers are experts and experienced, as well as share original content. The contribution of the expertise factor to the total variance is 4.57 percent, with a reliability coefficient of .935.

The final factor, Online Self-Presentation, primarily focuses on the content shared by social media influencers. It includes statements indicating that the influencers share consistent and accurate information, post regularly, maintain content quality, and engage in active communication with their followers. This factor accounts for 4.39 percent of the total variance, with a reliability coefficient of .891.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression analysis is performed to reveal the effect relationship between a dependent variable and an independent variable (Sofyalıoğlu & Kartal, 2011). In the study, simple linear regression analysis was performed to analyze the effect of online source reliability on purchasing behavior.

Table 10. *The Effect of Online Resource Reliability on Purchasing Behavior*

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	t	p	F	Model (p)	R	R ²
Purchasing Behavior	Online source reliability	.458	5.162	.000	150.809	.000	.630	.397

Considering the Beta coefficient of the independent variable, the t value, and the level of significance met by the F value, it can be said that the Online Source Reliability Model has a statistically significant effect on purchasing behavior ($F = 150.809$; $p = .000 < 0.05$). Online source reliability explains 39.7% of the total variance. In addition, the positive correlation coefficient (R) indicates that this effect is positive. Therefore, it can be stated that as the online source reliability of social media influencers increases, purchasing behavior will also increase. The hypothesis “*H1- Online source reliability has an effect on individuals’ purchasing behavior*” was accepted.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis is a statistical method for analyzing the relationship between two variables when there is one dependent variable (outcome) and multiple independent variables (factors affecting the outcome). In order to test the hypotheses created within the framework of the research, multiple linear regression analysis was performed between the online source reliability sub-dimensions and purchasing variables for social media influencers. Findings related to the hypothesis tests are shown in Table 11.

Table 11. *The Effect of Factors on Purchasing Behavior*

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Std. Error	Beta	t	p	Tolerance	VIF	Reg. R ²
	Fixed	0,458	,089		5.162	.000			
Purchasing Behavior	Attractiveness	0,194	.040	.163	4.835	.000	.575	1.739	0.394
	Trustworthiness	0.357	0.051	.388	6.938	.000	0.210	4.763	
	Expertise	-0.117	.051	-.135	-2.312	,121	.191	5.223	
	Online Self-Presentation	0,244	,046	.272	5.261	.000	.246	4.068	
F value=150.809 / Model Sig.= 0.000									

According to the adjusted R² value in Table 9, the independent variables “Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Expertise, and Online Self-Presentation” explain 39.4% of the variable ‘purchasing.’ As reflected in the table, influencer attractiveness ($\beta=0.194$; $p=0.000$), influencer trustworthiness ($\beta=0.357$; $p=0.000$), and the online self-presentation of the influencer ($\beta=0.244$; $p=0.000$) have a positive and significant effect on purchasing behavior. The expertise factor ($\beta = -0.117$; $p=,121$) has no significant effect on the dependent variable. Accordingly, H1a - influencer attractiveness has an effect on purchasing behavior, H1b - influencer credibility has an effect on purchasing behavior, and H1d - the hypothesis that online self-presentation has an effect on purchasing behavior has been accepted. H1c - the hypothesis that the expertise of the influencer has an effect on purchasing behavior was rejected as a result of multiple linear regression analysis.

Conclusion

Social media influencers are individuals who can maintain a close relationship with their followers in a niche community. These individuals have a different and more significant impact on their followers than ordinary users. In recent years, brands have

spent considerable sums of capital to influence consumers' attitudes, behaviors, and decisions through influencer marketing. There are numerous a substantial proportion of consumers attach significance to the opinions of influencers and incorporate them into their purchasing decisions (Kemeç & Yüksel , 2021). The advantages of influencer marketing, including high return on investment, trustworthy content, interaction with relevant followers, and real-time reactions from consumers, have contributed to its popularity. Consequently, influencers have emerged as highly effective intermediaries for reaching consumers (Mabkhoth et al., 2022). In this context, the study was conducted on 923 individuals who follow at least one social media influencer across the country to ascertain the role of online source credibility in influencing individuals' purchasing behavior.

A review of the demographic data reveals that the majority of participants are women, aged 28-32 years, employed in civil service, and have a monthly income between 24001 TL and 28000 TL. Furthermore, the majority group also includes individuals residing in provincial centers and those who have completed high school and/or obtained a graduate degree. The mean duration of social media use per day is approximately three hours. The primary motivation for the sample group, who typically follow two to five influencers, is the sharing of entertaining and useful videos by said influencers. Among the participants who prefer to follow social media influencers, 48.0 percent had previously made a purchase with the recommendation of the influencer, accepting this guidance primarily due to the price advantage. The female participants demonstrated a greater proclivity to engage in purchasing behavior influenced by phenomenon recommendations than their male counterparts. The data obtained are consistent with the findings of previous studies in the literature, including those by (Deneçli , 2015; Saldamlı & Özen , 2019). Furthermore, it can be posited that female participants tend to exhibit greater satisfaction with the content of social media influencers than their male counterparts. Moreover, in accordance with the regression analysis, the source credibility of the phenomenon has a positive and significant impact on purchase behavior. Four sub-factors of online source credibility have been identified. The results of the research are in accordance with the hypothesis that attractiveness, reliability, and online self-presentation have a positive effect on purchase behavior, while expertise has no effect.

The present study examines the impact of online source credibility on consumer purchasing behavior. The hypotheses were tested empirically in accordance with the research design and research model. The results of the analysis demonstrated that hypothesis H1, which states that "online source reliability affects individuals' purchasing behavior," was supported. This finding is consistent with the results of numerous studies in the literature, including those by (Kolcuoğlu, 2018; Özbek, 2018; Saltık, 2018; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Rebelo, 2017; Armağan & Gürsoy, 2017; Yıldız, 2022; Özdemir & Pirtini, 2022; Onurlubaş, 2023; Sarıoğlu, 2023; Mutluer, 2024; Altın, 2024; Livdumlu & Ünsalan, 2024). In their research, Uzunoğlu and Kip (2014) conducted in-depth interviews and argued that the most significant advantage of influencers is that they are perceived as trustworthy. In their study Sharma et al., (2022) asserted that the credibility of social media influencers has a significant impact on purchasing behavior. Rathnayake and Lakshika investigated the influence of social media influencers' credibility on purchase intention, with a specific focus on the beauty industry. Their findings indicated that influencer credibility plays a significant role in shaping purchase decisions. In their study, Karataş and Eti (2022) underscored the pivotal role of phenomenon credibility

in consumer purchase decisions. In addition, Altın's study on "mother consumers" corroborates the assertion that phenomena exert a profound influence on purchase intention (2024). In light of the findings corroborated by other studies in the literature, the impact of the influencer that brands seek to engage with on consumer purchasing behavior hinges on the extent to which it is perceived as reliable. The analysis yielded the conclusion that influencer attractiveness affects purchasing behavior. The H1a hypothesis was also confirmed. This result appears to align with the findings of previous studies (Evans et al., 2017; Avcı & Yıldız, 2019; Weismueller et al., 2020; Samia & Khan, 2020; Akdeniz & Uyar; İri, 2022). In their research on YouTubers, Eru et al. (2018) asserted that the attractiveness of YouTubers has a positive effect on purchase intention. Moreover, the attractiveness dimension of source credibility has been demonstrated to exert a more pronounced influence on purchase behavior than other sub-dimensions, a finding that is corroborated by prior research (Eisend & Langner, 2010).

The trustworthiness of influencers has been demonstrated to exert a significant influence on consumer purchasing behavior. The hypothesis (H1b) is therefore accepted. This finding is supported by previous studies (Karahan, 2022; Onurlu et al., 2022; Tunalı, 2022; Güneş et al., 2022; Özdemir & Pirtini, 2022; Ekşi et al., 2022; Yıldız, 2022; Çakır, 2022). In a 2019 study, Avcı and Yıldız demonstrated that consumers develop positive attitudes toward brands promoted by phenomena they perceive as trustworthy and intend to purchase. The manner in which individuals present themselves online has been demonstrated to influence purchasing behavior. The H1d hypothesis was accepted. Nevertheless, this finding differs from those reported in other studies in the literature. Akdoğan (2019) posits that online self-presentation has no impact on purchase intention. The expertise of the influencer in question has been found to exert an influence on purchasing behavior. The hypothesis proposed in H1c is therefore rejected. The finding that the expertise factor does not have a significant effect on consumers' purchase intention is consistent with the findings of Avcı & Yıldız (2019) and Sarıoğlu (2023). The findings indicate that consumers prioritize attractiveness, credibility, and online self-presentation characteristics over the expertise of influencers in shaping their purchase behavior. The results of the study indicate that source credibility is a crucial factor in phenomenon marketing. When consumers perceive the source as attractive and reliable, which are two sub-dimensions of source credibility, their purchasing behavior is likely to be positively influenced. Upon evaluation of the findings, it can be concluded that phenomena have a notable influence on purchase behavior.

The study offers both theoretical and empirical insights, thereby contributing to the existing literature on the subject. From a theoretical standpoint, the study effectively tests the theory of source credibility (Ohanian, 1990), which is a significant topic in the field of influencer marketing. In light of the findings, it is recommended that brands allocate greater resources to social media marketing, with a particular focus on influencer marketing. However, it is essential to consider the credibility of the online sources utilized by influencers throughout this process.

References

- Akdeniz , P. C., & Uyar, K. (tarih yok). Tüketicilerin Satın Alma Niyetlerinde Sosyal Medya Fenomenleri ile Kurulan Parasosyal Etkileşimin Rolü. *Erciyes Akademi*, 4(35), s. 1669-1688.
- Akdoğan, K. (2019). Sosyal Medya Fenomenlerinin Satın Alma Davranışı Üzerine Etkisi. *Yozgat Bozok Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi*.
- Akgül, A., & Çevik, O. (2003). *İstatistiksel Analiz Teknikleri*. Ankara: Emek Ofset.
- Akto, G. (2018). Bütünleşik Pazarlama İletişimi Aracı Olarak Sosyal Medyanın Kullanılması. *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi*.
- Akturan , U. (2007). Tüketici Davranışlarına Yönelik Araştırmalarda Alternatif bir Araştırma. *İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 6(11), 237-252.
- Akyazı, E., & Ateş, D. (2012). Kültürel Kimlik Farkındalığı Yaratmada Sosyal Ağların Rolü: Manav Türkleri Üzerinde Bir Araştırma. T. Kara, & E. Özgen içinde, *Sosyal Medya Akademi: İletişim, Pazarlama İletişimi, Ağ Toplumu, Teknoloji* (s. 173-194). İstanbul: Beta Basım Yayım Dağıtım.
- Ali, A. A., & Temizkan, V. (2022). Instagram Fenomenlerinin Sahip Olduğu Özelliklerin Markaya Yönelik Tutum ve Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisi. *Business And Management Studies An International Journal*, 2(10), s. 740-756.
- Altın, S. (2024). The Mediating Role of Brand Trust between Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention of Mother Consumers: A Path Analysis. *Fiscaoeconomia*, 8(2), s. 441-458.
- Altunışık , R., Özdemir, Ş., & Torlak , Ö. (2017). *Pazarlama İlkeleri ve yönetimi* . İstanbul: Beta Basım Dağıtım .
- Arayess, S., & Geerts, D. (2017). The Netherlands · Social Media Advertising: How to Engage and Comply. *European Food and Feed Law Review*, 12(6), 529-531.
- Armağan , E., & Gürsoy , Ö. (2017). Research On The Effect Of Using Celebrity Endorsement in Advertisements On Purchasing Decisions of Consumers. *Press Academia Procedia*(3), 1043-1057.
- Armağan, E. A., & Doğaner, M. C. (2018). "Fenomen Pazarlaması: Youtube Güzellik Vloggerları Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *1st International Congress of Political Economic and Financial Analysis 2018 (PEFA'18)*.
- Avcı, İ., & Yıldız, E. (2019). Fenomenlerin Güvenilirlik, Çekicilik ve Uzmanlık Özelliklerinin Marka Tutumu, Satın Alma Niyeti ve Elektronik Kulaktan Kulağa Pazarlama Üzerindeki Etkileri: Instagram Örneği. *Kocaeli Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 2(38), s. 85-107.
- Avcılar, M. Y., & Açar, M. F. (2017). Sosyal medya reklamlarında ünlü desteği kullanımı: mikro-ünlülerin yükselişi. *15. Uluslararası Türk Dünyası Sosyal Bilimler Kongresi*. Komrat, Moldova.
- Babacan , M., & Onat, F. (2002). Postmodern Pazarlama Perspektifi. *Ege Akademik Bakış Dergisi*, 2(1), 11 - 20.

- Barbara , K. V., Jaewoo, P., Anneleen , V. K., & Maggie, G. (2024). How and when do virtual influencers positively affect consumer responses to endorsed brands? *Journal of Business Research*(183), s. 114-863.
- Bayındır, M., Büktel , M., & Yılmaz, K. (2017). Influencer'ın Hatırı Kaç Yıl Sürer. *Campaign Dergisi*(69), s. 22-24.
- Bruns, A., & Bahnisch, M. (2009). *Social Media: Tools for User-Generated Content Social Drivers behind Growing Consumer Participation in User-Led Content Generation*. Australia: Smart Services CRC.
- Bulunmaz, B. (2016). Gelişen Teknolojiyle Birlikte Değişen Pazarlama Yöntemleri ve Dijital Pazarlama. *TRT Akademi Dijital Medya Sayısı*, 1(2), 350-365.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2002). Faktör Analizi: Temel Kavramlar Ve Ölçek Geliştirmede Kullanım. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Yönetimi*(32), 470-48.
- Cambridge,D.(2022).05.17.2022tarihindehttps://dictionary.cambridge.org/tr/s%C3%B6zl%C3%BCk/ingilizce/ adresinden alındı
- Can, S., & Koz, K. (2018). Sosyal Medyada Tüketici Onaylı Pazarlama: Instagram Örneği. *Kurgu*, 26(3), 444 - 457.
- Canöz, K., Gülmez , Ö., & Eroğlu , G. (2020). Pazarlamanın Yükselen Yıldızı Influencer Marketing: Influencer Takipçilerinin Satın Alma Davranışını Belirlemeye Yönelik Bir Araştırma. *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Meslek Yüksekokulu Dergisi*, 23(1), s. 73-91.
- Çabuk, S., & Nakiboğlu, B. (2005). Tüketici Davranışı Araştırmalarında Bir Yolculuk Ve Değişen Tüketici. *Pazarlama İletişimi*, 4(14), 50-63.
- Çakır, Ö. H. (2022). Influencer Pazarlamasının Tüketici Güvenine Etkisi: Fitness Sektörü Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *Anasay*(19), s. 119-135.
- Çinkay, B. (2017). Sosyal Medya Pazarlamasında Ünlü Onaylayanların Tüketici Algısı Ve Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerine Etkisi. *Kahramanmaraş Sütçüimam Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimle enstitüsü, yayımlanmamış Doktora Tezi*.
- Deneçli , C. (2015). Reklamlarda Ünlü Kullanımında Cinsiyetin Marka İmajı Üzerindeki Etkisi. *Öneri Dergisi*, 11(44), 337-350.
- Dijafarova, E., & Trofimenko, O. (2018). 'Instafamous' - Credibility and Selfpresentation of Micro-Celebrities on Social Media. *Information, Communication & Society*, 22(10), 1432-1446.
- Djafarova, E., & Rushworth, C. (2017). Exploring the Credibility of Online Celebrities' Instagram Profiles in Influencing the Purchase Decisions of Young Female Users. *Computers in Human Behavior*(68), 1-7.
- Doğan, H. (2002). Postmodern Toplumda Değişen Tüketici Rollerini. *Pazarlama Dünyası Dergisi*(6), 58-64.
- Eisend , M., & Langner, T. (2010). Immediate and delayed advertising effects of celebrity endorsers' attractiveness and expertise. *International Journal of Advertising*, 4(29), s. 527-546.

- Ekşi , O., Cesur, Z., & Yavuzyılmaz, O. (2022). Algılanan Sosyal Medya Pazarlaması'nın Gösterişçi Tüketim Üzerine Etkisi'nde Influencer Pazarlamasının Aracılık Rolü. *Balkan ve Yakın Doğu Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 8(2), s. 71-82.
- Eraslan , L., & Çakıcı Eser, D. (2015). *Sosyal Medya Toplum Araştırma : Sosyal Medya Sosyolojisine Giriş*. İstanbul: Beta Basım Yayım Dağıtım.
- Ertuğrul , İ., & Deniz, G. (2018). 4.0 Dünyası: Pazarlama 4.0 ve endüstri 4.0. *Bitlis Eren Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 7(1), 158-170.
- Eru , O., Çelik, K. I., Çelik , S., & Cop, R. (2018). Kaynak Olarak YouTuber'a Güvenilirliğin ve Marka Güveninin Gençlerin Satın Alma Niyetine Etkisi. *Ekonomik ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 14(2), 219-237.
- Evans, N. J., Phua, J., Lim, J., & Jun, H. (2017). Disclosing Instagram influencer advertising: the effects of disclosure language on advertising recognition, attitudes, and behavioral intent. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 17(2), s. 138-149.
- Frisby, D. (2012). *Modernlik Fragmanları Simmel, Kracauer ve Benjamin'in Eserlerinde Modernlik Teorileri*. İstanbul: Metis Yayınları.
- Featherstone, M. (2013). *Postmodernizm ve Tüketim Kültürü*. (M. Küçük, Çev.) İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Goffman, E. (2016). *Günlük Yaşamda Benliğin Sunumu*. (B. Cezar, Çev.) İstanbul: Metis Yayıncılık.
- Grafström, J., Jakobsson, L., & Wiede, P. (2018). The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumers' Attitudes: A Qualitative Study on What Reasons Affect Millennials'. *Attitudes by Influencer Marketing in Sweden, Jönköping University International Business School*. Marketing Management Tez Çalışması.
- Gülner, B., & Balcı, Ş. (2011). *Yeni Medya ve Kültürleşen Toplum*. Konya: Literatür Yayınları
- Glucksman, M. (2017). The Rise of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Lifestyle Branding: A Case Study of Lucie Fink. *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 8(2), 77-87.
- Güneş, E., Ekmekçi, Z., & Taş, M. (2022). Sosyal Medya Influencerlarına Duyulan Güvenin Satın Alma Öncesi Davranış Üzerine Etkisi: Z Kuşağı Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *Türk Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 6(1), s. 163-183.
- Güneş, K. D. (2006). Yeni Dünya Düzeninde Pazar Odaklı Kaynaklar Yaklaşımıyla Rekabet Stratejisi Modeli ve Bir Model Önerisi. *Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yayımlanmamış Doktora Tezi*.
- Hamel, G., & Prahalad, C. K. (1996). *Geleceği Kazanmak*. (Z. Dicle, Çev.) İstanbul: İnkılap Kitapevi.
- Hovland , C. I., Janis, L., & Kelley, H. H. (1953). *Communication and Persuasion*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- İri, R. (2022). Sosyal Medya Fenomenlerinin Pazarlama Faaliyetlerine Yönelik Tutum Ölçeği: Geçerlik ve Güvenirlik Araştırması. *Gazi İktisat ve İşletme Dergisi*, 3(8), s. 513-532.

- Ito, M., Horst, H., Bittanti, M., Boyd, D., Stephenson, B., Lange, P., . . . Robinson, L. (2009). *Living and Learning with New Media: Summary of Findings from the Digital Youth Project*. Cambridge: The MIT Press (The Massachusetts Institute of Technology).
- Jahnke, M. (2018). *Influencer Marketing*. Hamburg: Springer Gabler.
- Jargalsaikhan, T., & Korotina, A. (2016). *Jönköping University. Master Thesis in Business Administration*. .
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 1(53), 59-68.
- Karahan, M. O. (2022). Reklamlarda Ünlü Desteği Algısının Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisinde Marka Sadakati ve Marka Güvenilirliğinin Aracılık Etkisi. *Business-Management Studies: An International Journal*, 3(10), s. 835-857.
- Karataaş, M., & Eti, H. S. (2022). Dijital Pazarlama Çağında Instagram Fenomenlerinin Tüketici Satın Alma Davranışlarına Etkisi. *AJIT-e: Academic Journal of Information Technology*, 13(50), s. 184 - 219.
- Kardes, F. R., Cline, T. W., & Cronley, M. L. (2011). *Consumer behavior: Science and practice*. Ohio: Cengage Learning.
- Kemeç, U., & Yüksel, H. F. (2021). The Relationships among Influencer Credibility, Brand Trust, and Purchase Intention: The Case of Instagram. *Journal of Consumer and Consumption Research*, 1(13), s. 159-193.
- Khonk, K. W., & Wu, Y. L. (2013). Measuring the Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Behavioural Intentions: A Study of Malaysian Consumers. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*.
- Kolcuoğlu, A. R. (2018). Instagram'da Nüfuz Pazarlaması (Influencer Marketing) ve Doğal Reklamlar Üzerine Betimleyici Bir Araştırma. *Akdeniz Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Halkla İlişkiler ve Tanıtım Ana Bilim Dalı Yayınlanmış Yüksek Lisans Tezi*.
- Köse, G., & Yeygel, Ç. S. (2019). Markaların Dijital Pazarlama Çağında Tüketicileri Etkileşime İkna Etme Yolları: Influencer Pazarlama ve İçerik Pazarlamasına İlişkin Kavramsal Bir Çalışma. *Kocaeli Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*(38), s. 205 - 222.
- Lisichkova, N., & Othman, Z. (2017). *The impact of influencers on online purchase intent, Master Thesis*. Business Administration.
- Lisichkova, N., & Othman, Z. (2017). The impact of influencers on online purchase intent, Master Thesis. Business Administration.
- Livdumlu, D., & Ünsalan, M. (2024). Influencerların (Online Etkileyici) Kaynak Güvenilirliği Boyutlarının Sosyo-Demografik Değişkenler Açısından İncelenmesi. *Erciyes Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*(67), s. 89-97.
- Mabkhot, H., Isa, N. M., & Mabkhot, A. (2022). The influence of the credibility of social media influencers on the consumers' purchase intentions: Evidence from Saudi Arabia. *Sustainability*, 14(191), s. 12323.
- Malik, G., & Gupha, A. (2014). Impact of Celebrity Endorsements and Brand Mascots on Consumer Buying Behavior. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 2(27), 128-143.

- Martins, J., Costa, C., Oliveira, T., Gonçalves, R., & Branco, F. (2019). How Smartphone Advertising Influences Consumers' Purchase Intention. *Journal of Business Research*(94), 378-387.
- Marwick, A., & Boyd, D. (2011). To See and Be Seen: Celebrity Practice on Twitter. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 7(2), 139-158.
- More, J. S., & Lingam, C. (2017). A SI model for social media influencer maximization. *Applied Computing and Informatics*, 15(2), 102-108.
- Mucuk, İ. (2012). *Pazarlama İlkeleri*. İstanbul: Türkmen Kitabevi .
- Mutluer, E. Ö. (2024). Z Kuşağının E- Perakende Aracılığıyla Hazır Giyim Ürünleri Satın Alma Eğilimleri. *Uluslararası Akademik Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 10(16), s. 47-57.
- Naumanen, E., & Pelkonen, M. (2017). Celebrities of Instagram - What Type of Content Influences Followers' Purchase Intentions and Engagement Rate? *Master of Science*. Aalto University.
- Ngai, E. W., Spencer, T. S., & Karen, M. K. (2015). Social Media Research: Theories, Constructs, and Conceptual Frameworks. *International Journal of Information Management*, 35(1), 33-44.
- Odabaşı, Y., & Barış, G. (2003). *Pazarlama İletişim Yönetimi*. İstanbul: Mediacat Yayınları.
- Ohanian, R. (1990). Construction And Validation Of A Scale To Measure Celebrity Endorsers' Perceived Expertise, Trustworthiness, And Attractiveness. *Journal of advertising*, 19(3), 39-52.
- Onurlu, Ö., Bilgiseven, B., & Bilgili, S. (2022). Influencerın Kaynak Güvenilirliğinin Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerine Etkisinde Marka Güveninin Aracı Rolü (Annelere Yönelik Bebek Bakım Ürünleri Üzerine Araştırma). *Atatürk Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 2(36), s. 165-174.
- Onurlubaş, E. (2023). Hazır Giyim Sektöründe Influencerların Marka İmajı ve Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisi: Z Kuşağı Örneği. *Journal of Textiles and Engineer*, 30(130), s. 148-157.
- Özbek, M. B. (2018). The Affect of Phenomenon Marketing on Purchasing Decisions. *Institute of Social Sciences Masters Of Business* . Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi.
- Özdemir, B., & Yıldırım, G. (2019). Dijitalleşen İletişim Ortamlarında Kimlik İnşası ve Benlik Sunumu: İletişim Fakültesi Öğrencileri Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *Yeni Medya Elektronik Dergisi*, 3(3), s. 178-191.
- Özdemir, S., & Pirtini, S. (2022). Online Satın Alma Sürecinde Sürü Davranışının Kaynak Güvenilirliğine Etkisi Üzerine Kavramsal Bir Çalışma. *ETÜ Sentez İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*(10), s. 29-50.
- Özutku, F., Çopur, H., İltar, K., Sığın, İ., & Arı, Y. (2014). *Sosyal Medyanın ABC'si*. İstanbul: Alfa Basım.
- Purva, G., Arpanda, K. K., & Yogeshe, D. (2022). The evolution of social media influence - A literature review and research agenda. *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights*, 2(2), s. 100-116.

- Rathnayake, R. A., & Lakshika, V. G. (2022). Impact of Social Media Influencers Credibility on the Purchase Intention: Reference to the Beauty Industry. *Asian Journal of Marketing Management*, 2(1), s. 103-137.
- Rebelo, M. (2017). *How Influencers` Credibility On Instagram is Perceived By Consumers And Its Impact On Purchase Intention*. Católica Lisbon Bvsiness&Economics.
- Ritzer, G. (2011). *Büyüsü Bozulmuş Dünyayı Büyülemek*. İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları .
- Ronzhina, H., Kodyurina , I., Voronina , A., Igishev, K., & Loginova, N. (2021). Digitalization of Modern Education: Problems and Solutions. *International Journal of Emerging Technology in Learning*, 4(16), 122-135.
- Ryan, D. (2014). *Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing Strategies for Engaging the Digital Generation*. Kogan Page.
- Saldamlı, A., & Özen , F. (2019). Yiyecek içecek işletmelerinde tüketici satın alma kararında hatırlı pazarlamanın etkisi. *Journal of Tourism Theory and Research*, 5(2), 327-399.
- Saltık, Y. E. (2018). Ürün yerleştirmede yeni bir alan: Influencer Marketing Sosyal Medyada Influencer Annelerin Takipçileri Tarafından Değerlendirilmesine Yönelik Bir Araştırma. 2. *Uluslararası İletişimde Yeni Yönelimler Konferansı: Eğlence ve Ürün Yerleştirme*, (s. 268-279).
- Samia, M. I., & Khan, M. A. (2020). Effect of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Consumers Purchase Intention and the Mediating Role of Credibility. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 4(27), s. 503-523.
- Saraçlı, S. (2011). Faktör analizinde yer alan döndürme metotlarının karşılaştırmalı incelenmesi üzerine bir uygulama. *Düzce Üniversitesi Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 1(3), 22-26.
- Sarıoğlu , C. İ. (2023). Influencer Kaynak Güvenilirliği ve Marka Tutumunun Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisi. *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 12(2), s. 912-937.
- Sertoğu, A. E., Çatlı, O., & Korkmaz, S. (2013). Examining the effect of endorser credibility on the consumers' buying intentions: an empirical study in Turkey. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 1(4), 66-77.
- Sharma, M., Sahai, P., & Singh, V. K. (2022). Social Media Influencers Credibility on Purchase Behaviour Through Lens of Brand Engagement. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(2), s. 11288-11298.
- Silier, Y. (2011). *Oburluk Çağı - Felsefe ve Politik-Psikoloji Denemeleri*. İstanbul: Yordam Kitap.
- Sofyalıoğlu, Ç., & Kartal, B. (2011). Çok Değişkenli İstatistiksel Analiz Teknikleri. A. Şahin, & B. Kartal içinde, *Pazarlama Araştırması* (s. 223-400). İstanbul : Lisans Yayınları .
- Solak , C. (2020). *Tüketim Kültürü Ekseninde Türk Romanında Mirasyedi Tipinin Gelişimi: 1875-1928*. Konya : Çizgi Kitabevi Yayınları .
- Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being, Global Edition, 12th Edition*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Taşkın, E. (2009). *Pazarlama Esasları: Temel Pazarlama İlke ve Uygulamaları*. İstanbul: Türkmen Kitabevi.

- Tavşancıl , E. (2002). *Tutumların Ölçülmesi ve SPSS ile Veri Analizi*. Ankara: Nobel Yayıncılık.
- Tobin, J., & Braziel, L. (2008). *Social Media is a Cocktail Party: Why You Already Know The Rules of Social Media Marketing*. Cary, N.C. CreateSpace.
- Torlak, Ö. (2016). *Tüketim - Bireysel Eylemin Toplumsal Dönüşümü*. Konya : İnkılap Yayınevi.
- Tunalı, S. B. (2022). Bir Reklam Aracı Olarak Sosyal Etkili Kişilerin (influencer) Kullanımı Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *Atatürk İletişim Dergisi*(23), s. 9-16.
- Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Social Media Marketing*. New York: Sage.
- Uğurhan, Y. Z., & Yaşar, İ. H. (2021). Fenomene ve Sponsorlu İçeriğe İlişkin Güvenin Marka Farkındalığı Üzerindeki Etkisinde Parasosyal İlişkinin Aracı Rolü: Youtube Özelinde Bir İnceleme. *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(10), s. 1789-1811.
- Ural, A., & Kılıç, İ. (2006). *Bilimsel Araştırma Süreci ve SPSS İle Veri Analizi*. Ankara: Detay Yayıncılık.
- Uzunoğlu , E., & Kip, S. M. (2014). Brand communication through digital influencers: Leveraging blogger engagement. *International Journal of Information Management*, 8(2), s. 259-282.
- Uzunoğlu, E., & Kip, S. M. (2014). Brand communication through digital influencers: Leveraging blogger engagement. *International Journal of Information Management*, 34(5), 592-602.
- Veissi, İ. (2017). Influencer Marketing on Instagram. *Bachelor's Thesis Finlandiya: HaagaHelia, University of Applied Sciences*.
- Wang, S. W., & Scheinbaum, A. C. (2017). Enhancing Brand Credibility Via Celebrity Endorsement : Trustworthiness Trumps Attractiveness and Expertise. *Journal of advertising research*, 1(58), s. 1-42.
- Weismueller, J., Harrigan, P., Wang, S., & Soutar, G. N. (2020). Influencer Endorsements:How Advertising Disclosure and Source Credibility Affect Consumer Purchase İntention. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 28(4), s. 160-170.
- Yıldız, S. Y. (2022). Instagram Influencerlarının Cinsiyetine Göre Tüketici Profillerinin Belirlenmesi. *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 4(23), s. 943-953.
- Yurdakul, N. B. (2006). *Bütünleşik Pazarlama İletişimi*. Ankara: Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık.

The Role of Online Resource Reliability of Social Media Influencers on Purchasing Behavior

Ayşe YAVUZ (Ph.D.)

Mehmet Nejat ÖZÜPEK (Prof. Dr.)

Extended Abstract

The proliferation of internet technologies has led to increased access to these technologies and enhanced social media usage among individuals. Social media platforms provide an unlimited source of communication and information, and their capabilities extend beyond uniform communication channels to a variety of purposes. Influencer Marketing, which is gaining traction in Turkey and globally, has emerged in this context. Social media influencers, who have gained fame on these platforms, produce various types of content, increase their follower counts, and engage in advertising and marketing activities based on their popularity. The trend of social media influencers represents a new area for businesses and brands in advertising and marketing, while also serving as a lucrative avenue for influencers. Offering a more intimate interaction environment compared to traditional marketing methods, influencer marketing continues to thrive by providing opportunities for discovering new target audiences, enhancing brand and product awareness, and improving brand loyalty and sales.

This research aims to investigate the impact of the online source reliability of social media influencers on individuals' purchasing behavior. To achieve this, data were collected through an online survey from 923 participants aged 18 and above, who actively use social media across Turkey. The data were analyzed using the SPSS software. Given that the scales demonstrated normal distribution, parametric tests were employed for statistical evaluations.

In the sample, there was a higher proportion of female participants than male, with civil servants making up the largest percentage. Additionally, the majority of respondents were in the 28-32 age range and held undergraduate degrees. Most participants resided in urban centers and had salaries ranging from 24,001 TL to 28,000 TL. Analysis of social media usage frequency revealed that most participants used 2-4 social media platforms, with the primary reason for use being the follow-up of current issues. Participants typically followed between 2-5 influencers, primarily due to the entertaining videos and useful information shared by these influencers. Consequently, content related to Culture-Art-Entertainment emerged as the most followed category.

Data indicate that consumers are influenced by online reviews from other users. Among those who primarily follow influencers on Instagram, user comments were identified as the most impactful factor affecting their consumption habits when purchasing products or services. Nearly half of the participants (48.0%) reported having purchased a product or service based on an influencer's recommendation, with price advantages cited as a key reason, especially among female respondents.

The analysis revealed four sub-dimensions of Online Source Reliability related to social media influencers. The first factor, Attractiveness, contributed the most to the explained variance, followed by Trustworthiness, Expertise, and Online Self-Presentation. Among these factors, Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, and Online Self-Presentation were found

to significantly affect individuals' purchasing behavior, while Expertise showed no effect. This finding aligns with previous literature (Kolcuoğlu, 2018; Özbek, 2018; Saltık, 2018; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Rebelo, 2017; Armağan & Gürsoy, 2017; Çinkay, 2017; Jargalsaikhan & Korotina, 2016).

Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis indicated that the Online Resource Reliability Model has a statistically significant effect on purchasing behavior, with a positive correlation coefficient (R) suggesting that increased source reliability among social media influencers correlates with enhanced purchasing behavior. This finding resonates with similar studies in the literature (Çinkay, 2017; Lisichkova & Othman, 2017; Naumanen & Pelkonen, 2017; Avcılar & Açar, 2017; Armağan & Doğaner, 2018; Grafström et al., 2018; Eru et al., 2018; Malik & Gupha, 2014; Khonk & Wu, 2013; Sertoğu et al., 2013).

Future research may focus on examining the effects of multiple independent variables, identifying and integrating different factors affecting source reliability into the model, and concentrating on the influencer effect within specific domains. Additionally, similar studies could be conducted across different socioeconomic participant groups and businesses.

Keywords: Social Media Influencer, Influencer Marketing, Online Resource Reliability, Consumer Purchase, Online Self-Presentation.

Bu makale **intihal tespit yazılımlarıyla** taranmıştır. İntihal tespit edilmemiştir.

This article has been scanned by **plagiarism detection softwares**. No plagiarism detected.

Bu çalışmada "**Yükseköğretim Kurumları Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Yönergesi**" kapsamında uyulması belirtilen kurallara uyulmuştur.

In this study, the rules stated in the "**Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive**" were followed.

Yazarların çalışmadaki katkı oranları eşittir.

The authors' contribution rates in the study are equal.

Çalışma kapsamında herhangi bir kurum veya kişi ile **çıkar çatışması** bulunmamaktadır.

There is no **conflict of interest** with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

Etik Kurul İzni | Ethics Committee Permission

Within the framework of the decision taken during the meeting by Selçuk University Faculty of Communication Scientific Ethics Review Committee dated 25/07/2023 and numbered 2023/17; the study does not contain any ethical issues.

Selçuk Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Bilimsel Etik Değerlendirme Kurulu'nun 25/07/2023 tarihli toplantısında alınan 2023/17 sayılı karar çerçevesinde çalışma etik açıdan bir sakınca içermemektedir.