

# Impact of Social Media Influencers on Purchase Intention Towards Apparels: The Perspective of Lovely Professional University Students

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**Abstract:** *The dynamic landscape of social media within the apparel industry has evolved over the years due to advancements in technology. This study investigates the multiple aspects of social media in the apparel industry, with a focus on its role as an advertising tool used by companies to establish a strong presence on social media platforms. It examines the two main factors, the credibility and attractiveness of social media influencers, on the purchase intention of Lovely Professional University students towards apparel. The findings highlight that different elements of credibility and attractiveness both have a positive and significant impact on the purchase intention of the consumers at Lovely Professional University. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of the purchase intention of consumers within the specific context of Lovely Professional University.*

**Keywords:** Social media, apparel industry, advertising, influencers, credibility, attractiveness, purchase intention

## 1. Introduction

The fashion industry has a rich history spanning centuries and has always been a very important part of people's lives. Clothing has served as more than a necessity as individuals use it to construct their identity and express themselves. The fashion industry has grown over the years. According to Statista in 2022, the global apparel market was calculated to be 1.53 trillion U.S dollars. It is important to note that the revenue generated from women's clothing is higher than children's or men's apparel. The global apparel industry has continued to evolve, encompassing mass-produced street styles and expensive designer clothing showcased on runways. There has been a surge in the usage of social media with the increase in users and online platforms which has significantly impacted the fashion landscape as people are shifting from traditional shopping to e-commerce to save time and money. The Internet has become a valuable source for its users to stay on trend and elevate their styles as they can get easy access to fashion content and fashion influencers (Srivastava, 2023). Traditional advertisement tactics are no longer effective, and current consumers tend to be affected by their networks, which has led to the emergence of new forms of advertisement and terms of marketing (Nam and Dân, 2018). The growth of social media as a marketing tool has given rise to viral marketing, a well-designed strategy using social media, videos, and person-to-person methods to create noise and generate consumers' interest in the product or service (Yeo et al., 2020). Viral marketing has gained popularity over the years and the research by Trivedi (2017) showed a significant relationship between viral marketing messages and consumers' purchase decisions in apparel products.

One of the most prominent forms of viral marketing is influencer marketing, where brands collaborate with individuals who influence a specific target audience, to promote their brands and services. Influencer marketing is an extension of the "word-of-mouth" concept, focusing on professionally crafted social media content to build

relationships with the audience which may be helpful for brands to turn their audience into loyal customers by gaining their trust (Sudha and Sheena, 2017). Influencer marketing involves creating messages to enhance brand value, with a focus on the dynamics of the influencers likely to align with a brand providing value to their influence (Nam and Dân, 2018). Influencers post appealing photos and videos usually modelled by themselves. A 'like' on the post can change to a sale in mere seconds as a purchase link or buy button is available for users (Sinha et al., 2021).

The existing body of research in the field of social media influencers' impact on consumers' purchase decisions reveals several gaps that require further exploration. First and foremost, while prior studies by Yeo et al., 2020 and Sinha et al., 2010 have shed light on the broader implications of social media marketing, there is a lack of understanding of the unique dynamics of influencer marketing. Furthermore, though a study by Yeo et al., 2020 shed light on factors like credibility, customer involvement, entertainment, and purchase intention of viral marketing, there is a lack of in-depth understanding in exploring the variables which effect influencer marketing. This brings about the need to conduct a detailed examination to enhance user engagement and the preferences of consumers within this specific context.

Cultural diversity within influencer marketing is another unexplored area. The study by Chu et al., 2010 explored the attitude of college-educated youths towards global brands through surveys in China and the United States, while the study by Nam and Dân, 2010 focused on Ho Chi Minh City to analyse the impact of social media marketing on consumers. The studies have failed to address the impact of social media influencers on consumers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Considering India's rich cultural diversity, the impact of social media influencers on purchase intention may vary so exploration of cultural diversity becomes important. The study by Abdullah et al., 2010 investigated five different features that play a role in influencing Instagram users' purchase intention of consumers in the

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fashion industry. The study found likeability to have the highest correlation however, there is also a vital gap in assessing whether the influence of social media influencers results in short-term trends or fosters long-term brand loyalty. Additionally, though studies by Nam and Dân, 2010, Ajitha et al., 2019, and Abdullah et al., 2010, have focused on different variables affecting the purchase intention of consumers, there is no detailed assessment of the impact of different types of content, including endorsements, user-generated content, and brand advertisements, on consumers' purchase intention in the context of the apparel industry.

## 2. Literature Review

This literature review provides an in-depth examination of the relationship between social media influencers and consumer purchase intentions in apparel, centred around three key variables: frequency of influencer content consumption, influencer credibility, Attractiveness, and their direct impact on purchase intentions.

Firstly, the review explores the frequency aspect, elucidating how regular exposure to influencer-generated content on social media platforms shapes consumer behaviour. It examines how repeated interactions with influencer content influence consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and likelihood to engage with apparel products, thereby impacting their purchase intentions. Studies highlighting the correlation between increased exposure and heightened purchase intent are central to this discussion.

Secondly, the review delves into influencer attractiveness as a significant determinant influencing consumer behaviour. It explores how an influencer's physical attractiveness, personality, and lifestyle portrayed through social media platforms affect consumers' perceptions and their likelihood to align with influencer-endorsed apparel products.

Thirdly, the review delves into influencer credibility as a pivotal factor affecting consumer decisions. It investigates the elements contributing to an influencer's credibility, such as expertise, authenticity, and trustworthiness. By synthesizing research findings, it delineates how credibility acts as a driving force behind consumers' inclination to align their purchase decisions with influencer recommendations or endorsements within the apparel domain.

Lastly, the review focuses on the crux of the relationship—the impact of these variables on purchase intentions. It synthesizes empirical evidence showcasing how the frequency of exposure to influencer content and the perceived credibility of influencers significantly influence consumers' intentions to purchase apparel products. It highlights the mediating role of these variables in shaping consumer attitudes and behavioural intentions, emphasizing their significance in the decision-making process.

### 2.1 Social Media Influencers and Platforms

Social media influencers are defined as the channel of communication for the brand and the consumers. Nurhandayani (2019) stated that compared to Gen Z, Millennials have greater influence as they are loyal to the brand. Abeysekara, (2016) found that most of the users who

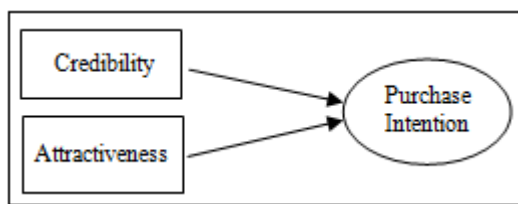
participate are female and Facebook is the platform that people use more and has a great impact on consumer purchase as well as social media influencers and their description of the post is attracting the consumer. (Karishma) mentioned that social media has become an imperative part of life, almost half of the world uses social media in their daily lives. The role of social media also increased during the pandemic as well and social media is used as a marketing tool to promote products and services. Saravanakumar (2012) said that social media has become the method of statement in the 21st century, enabling us to express our beliefs, ideas, and manners in a new way. The way of message has a huge impact on corporations, where they realize that without social media and marketing strategy, the brand can't stand in the market.

Wolny (2013) found that Word of mouth is expanded virtually including the context of specific brands and brands that influence the consumer to engage in eWOM on Facebook and Twitter. High brand commitment and fashion involvement motivate people to talk about the brand. Based on Nash (2019) social media is not only for sourcing that motivates their consumer decision-making process, but also these platforms are ever more increasing impact on consumers decision making. Consumers actively use social media for inspiration and information regarding high-street fashion retailers. Dobre (2021) said that Consumer spends more time on social media, and brands can take advantage of this opportunity to better serve and communicate with their followers. Millennials and Generation Z, luxury brands are compatible with social media apps as marketing channels. Even in the case of inadequacy, managers can still use the facilities of digital technologies to depict exclusivity, emotions, and sensory experiences specific to luxury.

### 2.2 Purchase Intention of Consumer

According to Sook Fern Yeo (2020), The Internet helps marketers or a company to promote to many audiences at a low cost. And it is an efficient way to conduct viral marketing. He believes it is essential to understand how the quality of viral marketing messages can affect customers' purchase intentions. Based on (Ao) Social media influencers have moderate to high purchase intentions of consumers. Shan (2018) said similarity and familiarity have a high impact on purchase intention towards fashion apparel Instagram users. Sharma (2020) said that the consumer-brand relationship has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention through social media, more satisfaction and commitment are observed towards specific brands which indicates strong purchase intention among consumers. Lim (2017) based on this theory credibility was insignificant, but product match is significant with purchase intention and customer attitude. According to Ruth's theory Accessibility and affordability a game changer, and the use of social media is a growing phase among youngsters. According to (Irfan UI Haque et al., 2023) Marketers have long sought to determine the impact of social media influencers on their target audience by examining the purchase choices of customers impacted by them. Purchase intention refers to a person's intentional decision to acquire a specific brand or product (Spears & Singh, 2004; Goyal, 2014). According to Hausman and Siekpe (2009),

advertising elements in marketplaces influence purchase decisions. Consumers will review material based on their past experiences, preferences, and recommendations from others. Chi et al. (2011) recommends evaluating alternatives before making buying decisions. Previous research indicates a favourable correlation between social media influencers and purchase intention (McCormick, 2016; Lisichkova & Othman, 2017). However, Johansen & Guldvik (2017) found no beneficial effect of influencer marketing on purchase intention when evaluated on blog content. Numerous research has looked at the link between social media influencers and customer purchase intentions. Scholars say that social media influencers have the power to affect customers' opinions of products, instil a feeling of authenticity, and connect the influencer to the audience. As a result, these characteristics boost customer purchase intention (Li et al., 2019; Jin & Ryu, 2020).



### 2.3 Source of Frequency

In social media influencer marketing, frequency refers to how frequently customers connect with influencers' material. The more frequently consumers are exposed to influencer material, the greater the impact on their purchasing intentions. Existing research indicates that increased exposure to influencer material is associated with a higher chance of making a purchase (Huang & Chen, 2021; Cho et al., 2018). To understand the effect of frequency on purchase intention, it is necessary to investigate the underlying psychological mechanisms. According to research, regular exposure to influencer material builds familiarity and trust, increasing the legitimacy and persuasiveness of the influencer's recommendations (Gao et al., 2021; Lee & Watkins, 2016). This repeated reinforcement strengthens the influencer's power to alter customer behaviour. While the impact of social media influencers on purchase intention is well known, the literature also emphasizes several obstacles and disputes. Concerns about authenticity, disclosure of sponsored content, and influencer saturation may reduce the favourable impact of frequency on purchase intention (Bolot et al., 2018; Jin et al., 2019). As the area evolves, future studies should look at the moderating factors that may alter the link between frequency and purchase intention. Furthermore, research into the significance of various platforms, content kinds, and the different impacts of macro and micro-influencers can help to provide a more nuanced picture of the dynamics at play.

### 2.4 Source of Credibility

Ohanian created the Ohanian Model of source credibility in 1991. Corina (2006) found that this approach effectively communicates the persuasiveness of a message to a target segment based on the source's attributes. Sertoglu et al. (2014) assess social media influencer credibility on three dimensions: knowledge, attractiveness, and trustworthiness,

particularly in the advertising process. This study measures the perception of the purchase intention towards apparel where social media plays the role of a great platform to connect the marketer to their target audience through social media influencers. Simply put, the hypothesis states that customers are more engaged when the source advertises itself as reputable. Because credible sources may influence consumers' views, attitudes, and opinions (Rebelo, 2017). Furthermore, it is successful when the influencer is attractive, trustworthy, and knowledgeable, or a mix of the three (Ohanian, 2013).

#### 2.4.1 Expertise

Expertise is described as a great degree of knowledge or competence. This variable refers to the endorser's perceived expertise, experience, and talents in promoting items. Influencers may have greater competence than manufactured spokespersons (Van der Walder et al., 2009). Alba and Hutchinson (2007) found that social media influencers effectively performed product-related activities by referring to their knowledge. SMI may generate a trustworthy and innovative statement for a business or product to capture people's attention. According to Silvera and Austad (2004), credible influencers with increased competence, trustworthiness, and attractiveness lead to higher buy intentions among target groups. According to Kassoway (2015), influencers' posts on businesses and goods on social media are more credible and trustworthy than paid sponsorship commercials. According to Kassoway (2015), influence is a long-term relationship between social media influencers and customers that plays a crucial role in today's technology-driven industry. SMI builds trust with consumers by sharing credible information and engaging in expertise-based interactions (Chun et al., 2018).

#### 2.4.2 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the endorser's credibility, honesty, and integrity. Furthermore, trustworthiness refers to how objectively the receivers evaluate the source. (Van der Walder et al., 2009:104). According to Erdogan (1999, p. 298), trustworthiness encompasses credibility, honesty, integrity, and competence, indicating an endorser's knowledge, experience, or talents. According to Kim et al. (2018), influencers must be trustworthy to effectively influence their followers.

#### 2.4.3 Likeability

Cheung et al. (2014) found that consumers who have similar personalities with SMIs are more likely to purchase things they use in their everyday lives and have shared on social media. According to Uzunoflu & Kip (2014), Abidin (2016), and Forbes (2016), a well-known SMI has a stronger effect on customer product decisions because of their perceived likability. According to Forbes (2016), customers typically view SMIs as role models.

### 2.5 Source of Attractiveness

Weismueller et al. (2020) used the source credibility and attractiveness models to assess the persuasiveness of social media influencers on various platforms. This study demonstrates how both models use influencers as effective keys on online communication platforms. Endorsing

messages has a greater favourable impact on recipients than company-created advertising. Pornpitakpan (2004) found that an endorser's trustworthiness and beauty in three categories had a favourable relationship with purchase intention. Attractiveness, a complex concept that includes physical appeal, likability, and relatability, is critical to the success of influencer marketing. According to research, beautiful social media influencers are more likely to capture and engage their audience, resulting in a good connection with the endorsed items or companies (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017; Lee & Watkins, 2016). The literature discusses numerous psychological mechanisms by which beauty increases purchase intention. Attractive influencers are viewed as more trustworthy, pleasant, and credible, resulting in a favourable transfer of effect toward promoted items (Lu et al., 2019; Jin & Ryu, 2020). This transmission of happy feelings can improve buyers' overall perception of the garment, raising their willingness to buy. Within the concept of beauty, a contrast is sometimes established between physical appeal and relatability. While physically appealing influencers may draw attention, relatable influencers who share characteristics with their audience can develop a deeper and more real relationship (Khamis et al., 2017; Lee & Watkins, 2016). Future studies might explore deeper into the complex interplay between these beauty aspects and their respective impacts on purchase intention. Despite the beneficial effects of beauty, experts underline the need for ethical issues in influencer marketing. Authenticity, a fundamental factor in customer trust, might be jeopardized if influencers are thought to be advocating items merely for financial benefit. Achieving a balance between appeal and authenticity is critical for retaining customer trust and sustaining long-term beneficial impacts on purchase intention. Future studies should look at the moderating factors that affect the link between attractiveness and purchasing intention. Furthermore, researching the impact of various social media platforms, cultural differences, and the potential market saturation of attractive influencers may give marketers useful information about how to maximize their influencer marketing tactics.

### 3. Research Methodology and Objectives

#### 3.1 Objectives

The following are the objectives framed to study the impact of social media influencers on purchase intentions towards apparel among the students at Lovely Professional University:

- 1) To assess the impact of social media influencers' credibility on the apparel purchase intention of LPU students.
- 2) To assess the impact of the attractiveness of the social media influencers on the apparel purchase intention of LPU students.

#### 3.2 Research Methodology

Research Methodology refers to a system of models, procedures and techniques adopted to conduct research studies. It includes all the framework and procedures used by researchers to gather, analyse, and interpret data to address the objectives and research questions. It provides a structured approach which involves the selection of appropriate data collection methods, sampling techniques and data analysis, among other components and helps ensure the reliability and validity of the research (Panneerselvam & R, 2014). This chapter introduces the research methodology for this paper which includes the sampling technique and size, data source, and tools used for data interpretation.

#### 3.3 Sampling Technique and Size

Sampling is the process of selecting individuals from within a population to estimate the characteristics of the entire population. Its advantages lie in faster and cost-efficient data collection (Singh et al, 2014). The sample size is said to be adopted by researchers when they are unable to conduct a study on the entire population due to time constraints and communication problems (Kalu & F., 2019).

There are different types of sampling techniques which include, purposive, random and quota sampling. For this study, a simple random sampling technique has been used where an online survey was conducted on the students at Lovely Professional University. In this method, each unit has the chance of being a part of the study and promotes unbiased and better estimates for analysis (Singh et al, 2014).

**Size:** An online survey consisting of 31 questions was sent out randomly and a total of 202 responses were received. There were 76 respondents from the North, 46 from the South, 11 from the East, 6 from the West, 2 from the Central region, 32 from North-East India, and 29 from foreign countries. In terms of gender, there were 103 females and 96 males and 3 who preferred not to state their gender. Based on their education, there were 72 undergraduates, 96 postgraduates, and 11 Ph.D. Scholars

#### 3.4 Data Source

The data for the research to study the impact of social media influencers on purchase intention towards apparel was conducted through the primary method of data collection. Primary data collection is a method where data is collected first hand either through online surveys, paper surveys or interviews (Mazhar et al, 2021). An online form consisting of 27 statements was circulated to Lovely Professional University students. There were 8 statements under Credibility, 7 under Attractiveness, 8 under Purchase Intention, and 4 under Frequency.

Variables	Statements	Authors
Credibility	Cred_1: I think the social media influencers I follow are trustworthy.	Kalu, F., 2019
	Cred_2: The social media influencers I follow have knowledge about the fashion items which are advertised.	
	Cred_3: The social media influencers I follow are experts in the field of using fashion items which are advertised.	
	Cred_4: I believe that the fashion influencers I follow are credible.	
	Cred_5: I believe that fashion influencers' advertising is a good reference for purchasing products	Chetioui et al., 2020
	Cred_6: The fashion influencers I follow have great knowledge	
	Cred_7: I consider fashion influencers as a reliable source of information and discovery	
	Cred_8: I find purchasing products/services advertised by fashion Influencers I follow to be worthwhile.	
Attractiveness	Attrac_1: I am influenced by the creative skills of social media influencers	Kalu, F., 2019
	Attrac_2: I think social media influencers should be attractive.	Ki et al., 2019
	Attrac_3: I find the content of social media influencers attractive.	
	Attrac_4: I find the content of social media influencers good-looking.	
	Attrac_5: I find the content of social media influencers visually appealing	Trivedi, J.P., 2018
	Attrac_6: For the latest trends in fashion, I follow beautiful celebrity influencers on digital media platforms.	
	Attrac_7: For the latest trends in fashion, I follow elegant celebrity influencers on digital media platforms.	
Purchase Intention	PI_1: I have many apparel products in my cart promoted by social media influencers.	Challita, C. (2021)
	PI_2: I try to buy styles that are similar to those of social media influencers.	Rebelo, M. F. (2017)
	PI_3: It is likely that I will buy the products promoted by the social media influencers.	
	PI_4: I am willing to buy the products promoted by social media influencers.	Yaacob et al., 2018
	PI_5: I will buy a product online if the influencer I like starts endorsing it.	Castillo et al., 2019
	PI_6: I would purchase a brand based on the advice I am given by the influencers I follow.	
	PI_7: I will be willing to engage with the brand if many influencers are reviewing its items.	Chiewcharnsuwan, T. (2019)
	PI_8: I intend to recommend the fashion items social media influencers advertise to other people	Chun et al., 2018

### 3.5 Tools

The data collected was analysed using the statistical software AMOS for Measurement and Structural model and Tableau for visualising the data.

- **AMOS:** AMOS, an abbreviation for Analysis of Moments Structures, is a software that implements Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). It has many techniques which include a general linear model and common factor analysis. In this study, AMOS serves two main purposes: the measurement model and the structural model. The measurement model is used to assess the accuracy and model fit of the data collected, while the structural model is used to determine the relationship between various variables (Arbuckle et al, 1999).

## 4. Data Interpretation and Analysis

### 4.1 Measurement Model

The measurement model is a model that specifies how the observed variables depend on the unobserved, or latent variables. The current model has three distinct measurement models that is, credibility, purchase intention, and attractiveness.

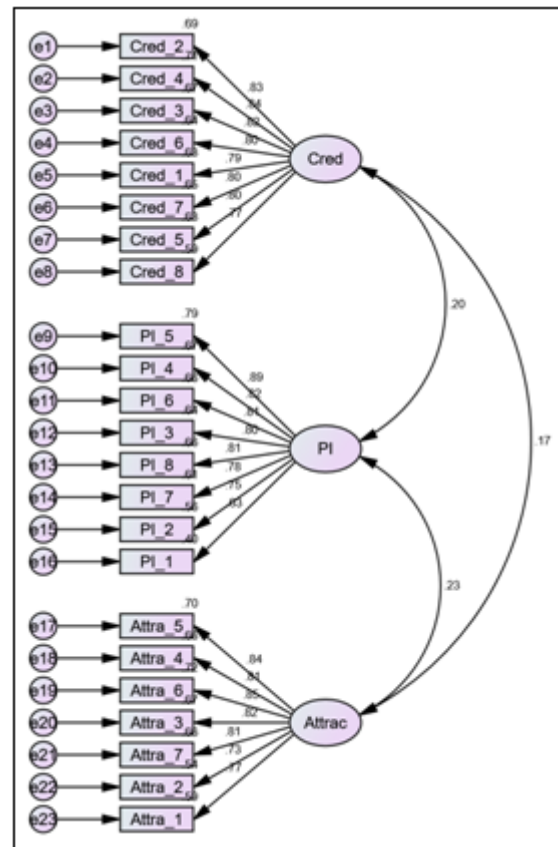


Figure 1

The diagram is labelled as credibility (Cred), purchase intention (PI) and attractiveness (Attrac). The value displayed above each of the variables indicates the reliability estimates for all the individual subtests.

**Table 1**  
**Model Fit Measures**

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	503.386	--	--
DF	227	--	--
CMIN/DF	2.218	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.920	>0.95	Acceptable
SRMR	0.064	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.078	<0.06	Acceptable

**Cutoff Criteria for fit indexes in covariance analysis as per Hu and Bentler, 1999**

Measure	Terrible	Acceptable	Excellent
CMIN/DF	>5	>3	>1
CFI	<0.90	<0.95	>0.95
SRMR	>0.10	>0.08	<0.08
RMSEA	>0.08	>0.06	<0.06

CMIN/DF is one of the ways to measure the fitness level of a model, resulting from chi-square statistics divided by the degree of freedom (Mesra et al, 2020). Findings show the CMIN/DF value as 2.218 which indicates that the model is an excellent fit.

**Table 2: Model Validity Measures**

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Cred	Attrac	PI
Cred	0.937	0.652	0.042	0.938	0.807		
Attrac	0.928	0.649	0.055	0.931	0.168*	0.806	
PI	0.929	0.623	0.055	0.937	0.204**	0.235**	0.789

**References**

Significance of Correlations

+ P< 0.100

\*P< 0.050

\*\*P< 0.010

\*\*\*P< 0.001

Note: Threshold taken from ‘Cutoff Criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis by Hu, L., Bentler, P.M. (1999)

The most used criterion to assess the degree of shared variance between the latent variables of the model is Fornell-Larker (1981). According to this, the convergent validity of the measurement model can be assessed using Composite Reliability(CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Alarcón et al, 2015) where,

- The CR values for Credibility, Attractiveness and Purchase Intention are 0.937, 0.928 and 0.929 respectively and any model having values above 0.7 is considered very good (Alarcón et al, 2015).
- AVE measures the level of differences captured by a construct versus the level due to measurement error. The AVE values for Credibility, Attractiveness and Purchase Intention are 0.652, 0.649 and 0.623 respectively and any model having values above 0.7 is considered very good while models having values at the level of 0.5 are considered acceptable(Alarcón et al, 2015).

The Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) is used to establish discriminant validity and is a validity measure that is the maximum value of all square correlations between a construct and other constructs. Since the values of the three variables are 0.042, 0.055 and 0.055 respectively, which is smaller than AVE, the model is valid (Jalo et al, 2024).

The Comparative Fit Index is an incremental fit index which produces values between 0-1 (Cangur et al, 2015). The higher values indicate a good fit. The CFI is 0.920 which indicates that the model is acceptable.

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) allows for assessing the magnitude of discrepancies to measure the model fit and is the difference between the observed correlation and the model-implied correlation matrix. A model with SRMR <0.08 is a well-fit model and larger values indicate that the model needs to be modified(Cangur et al, 2015). The SRMR for this is 0.064 which indicates that the model is excellent.

The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation Index (RMSEA) denotes the model and is the difference between the observed covariance matrix per degree of freedom and the hypothesized covariance matrix (Chen& F, 2007). A model with RMSEA <0.06 is a well-fit model while a model failing to fall between the range of 0.08 and 0.10 indicates a fit which is neither good nor bad (Cangur et al, 2015).

The Maximum Reliability (MaxR(H)) measures the internal consistency of the scale and is used to estimate the degree to which items in a scale co-vary. Since the values of the three variables are 0.938, 0.931 and 0.937 respectively, and higher than CR value, the model is reliable. The MaxR(H) values are always greater than Composite Reliability (Uslu & Ergün, 2021).

Based on the findings from **Table 1 and Table 2**, it can be concluded that the model is fit and reliable.

**Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

**Table 3**

		Estimate	P
Cred_8	<-- Cred	.769	***
Cred_7	<-- Cred	.804	***
Cred_6	<-- Cred	.800	***
Cred_5	<-- Cred	.796	***
Cred_4	<-- Cred	.841	***
Cred_3	<-- Cred	.819	***
Cred_2	<-- Cred	.833	***
Cred_1	<-- Cred	.795	***
Attr_7	<-- Attrac	.815	***
Attr_6	<-- Attrac	.847	***
Attr_5	<-- Attrac	.839	***
Attr_4	<-- Attrac	.814	***
Attr_3	<-- Attrac	.820	***
Attr_2	<-- Attrac	.733	***
Attr_1	<-- Attrac	.768	***
PI_8	<-- PI	.811	***
PI_7	<-- PI	.783	***
PI_6	<-- PI	.810	***

			Estimate	P
PI_5	<--	PI	.886	***
PI_4	<--	PI	.820	***
PI_3	<--	PI	.801	***
PI_2	<--	PI	.747	***
PI_1	<--	PI	.632	***

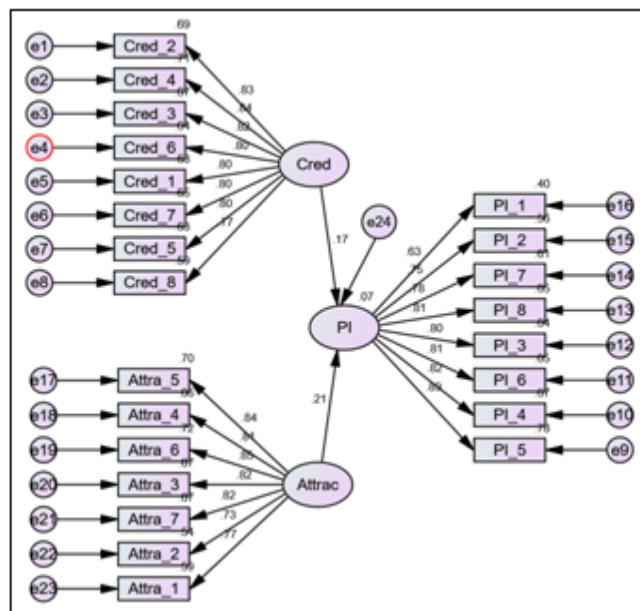
**Table 3** shows the standardized regression weight estimates of all the different variables to measure the correlation coefficient and understand how a change in the independent variable can influence or impact the dependent variable.

- The variables (Cred\_1 to Cred\_8) are coefficients which represent the estimated impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable “Cred”. The coefficients (.769, .804, .800, .796, .841, .819, .833, .795) indicate a strong and positive relationship between each Cred variable with the dependent variable “Cred” as the values are all greater than 0.5.
- Similarly, the variables (Attrac\_1 to Attrac\_7) represent the values which are the estimated impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable “Attrac”. The coefficients (.815, .847, .839, .814, .820, .733, .768) are all greater than 0.5 and indicate a strong and direct relationship between each Attrac variable and the dependable variable “Attrac”.
- The variables (PI\_1 to PI\_8) also indicate the estimated impact of each variable on the dependent variable “PI”. The coefficients (.811, .783, .810, .886, .820, .801, .747, .632) are all greater than 0.5 which indicates a strong and positive relationship between each PI variable with the dependent variable “PI”.

**Table 3** also represents the regression weights of all the variables where the P-value is \*\*\*, which is 0. The P-value lies between 0 to 1 and so the impact is significant.

**4.2 Structural Model**

The structural model is a model that specifies how the latent variables are related to each other. The parameter estimates of a structural model are affected by the identification constraints while the standardized estimates on the other hand are not affected by the identification constraints.



**Figure 2**

The diagram showcases the impact of all the variables (Cred\_1 to Cred\_8 on Cred, Attrac\_1 to Attrac\_7 on Attrac, PI\_1 to PI-8 on PI, PI on Cred and PI on Attrac). The values above each variable indicate the level of relationship among all the variables.

**Table 4**  
**Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

			Estimate	P
PI	<--	Cred	.172	.019
PI	<--	Attrac	.209	.005
Cred_2	<--	Cred	.833	***
Cred_4	<--	Cred	.841	***
Cred_3	<--	Cred	.819	***
Cred_6	<--	Cred	.799	***
Cred_1	<--	Cred	.796	***
Cred_7	<--	Cred	.804	***
Cred_5	<--	Cred	.795	***
Cred_8	<--	Cred	.769	***
PI_5	<--	PI	.885	***
PI_4	<--	PI	.818	***
PI_6	<--	PI	.809	***
PI_3	<--	PI	.800	***
PI_8	<--	PI	.809	***
PI_7	<--	PI	.781	***
PI_2	<--	PI	.745	***
PI_1	<--	PI	.630	***
Attrac_5	<--	Attrac	.837	***
Attrac_4	<--	Attrac	.815	***
Attrac_6	<--	Attrac	.847	***
Attrac_3	<--	Attrac	.821	***
Attrac_7	<--	Attrac	.815	***
Attrac_2	<--	Attrac	.733	***
Attrac_1	<--	Attrac	.766	***

Similarly, **Table 4** shows the standardized regression weight estimates of all the different variables to measure the correlation coefficient of the variables with each other.

- The estimated value to measure the correlation between PI and Cred, and PI and Attrac are 0.172 and 0.2019 respectively. As they are both positive, they suggest a positive relationship where an increase in variable Cred is associated with a 0.172 unit increase in the dependent variable "PI".
- The variables (Cred\_1 to Cred\_8) represent the estimated impact of all the variables on the dependent variable "Cred". The coefficients are (.833, .841, .819, .799, .796, .804, .795, .769) which indicates a strong, positive, and direct relationship as the values are all greater than 0.5. It proves that an increase in one variable can affect a dependent variable.
- The variables (PI\_1 to PI\_8) represent the estimated impact of all the variables on the dependent variable "PI". The coefficients are (.885, .818, .809, .800, .809, .781, .745, .630) indicating a strong, positive, and direct relationship as the values are all greater than 0.5.
- The variables (Attrac\_1 to Attrac\_7) represent the estimated impact of all the variables on the dependent variable "Attrac". The coefficients are (.837, .815, .847, .821, .815, .733, .766). Since the values are all greater than 0.5, it indicates a strong, positive, and direct relationship where an increase in one variable can affect a dependent variable.

**Table 4** also represents the regression weights where the P-values are .019, .005 and \*\*\*, which is 0. Since all the values lie between 0 to 1, they are highly statistically significant.

## 5. Conclusion and Discussions

The study explores the impact of Social Media Influencers (SMI) on the purchase intentions of Lovely Professional University (LPU) students towards apparel. It was conducted to assess the impact of Social Media Influencers' Credibility and Attractiveness on the Purchase Intention of LPU students towards apparel as well as to investigate the frequency with which LPU students purchase apparel on the recommendation of Social Media Influencers. It considers various elements that consumers observe or are influenced by, in the content presented by social media influencers. According to the analysis results from the survey conducted on 202 participants, the consumers considered elements like expertise, knowledge, trustworthiness, creativity, beauty, trends, and visually appealing content of social media influencers, which were borrowed from prior studies, to have a very significant impact on their purchase intentions while deciding on apparel. The Credibility and attractiveness of the social media influencers had a positive and direct relationship with the Purchase Intention of Lovely Professional University students. This research adds to the body of literature by showcasing the influence of social media Influencers on purchase intention. The findings carry significant implications which are discussed below.

### 5.1 Implications

The research on the impact of Social Media Influencers (SMIs) on purchase intention towards apparel offers several contributions. It contributes to the studies by Chun et al, 2018 and Lê Giang Nam, H. T. D., 2018, by extending the

scope of its application beyond Instagram users to encompass social media users in general. Additionally, it includes a diverse user base, avoiding the confinement of the participants to just one geographical area.

While Sudha and Sheena, 2017 shed light on the impact of influencers on the consumer decision process, they did not dive into the importance of different elements of SMIs that attract consumers. This research complements the study by Yeo et al, 2020, which focused on different elements of viral marketing affecting consumers' purchase intention on apparel, by adding in-depth knowledge on the different variables.

The result of this study aligns with the findings of Ki et al, 2019 and Chetioui et al, 2020, where participants considered the credibility of SMIs and fashion influencers to have a positive and significant influence on their purchase intention. It is important to note that the above-cited studies focused particularly on the consumers' desire to mimic SMIs and the attitude of consumers towards fashion influencers.

Similarly, the findings of Kalu & F., 2019 proved that participants regarded the elements of beauty, such as physical attractiveness and the style of SMIs, as very important factors in attracting consumers within the apparel industry. However, it is important to note that the above-cited study was focused only on a limited set of elements of SMIs and from the perspective of Irish male millennials. As a result, there was a need for research that encompasses gender diversity to acquire deeper insights into the influence of SMIs on consumers. This study fulfills that need.

This research holds significance as it gives insight into the diverse factors of Social Media Influencers that consumers consider during the formation of their purchase intention. Furthermore, it solidifies the significance of the credibility and attractiveness of Social Media Influencers within the apparel industry, displaying their crucial role in attracting consumers. Considering the results of this study, the marketers of the apparel industry can utilize SMIs in their campaigns to enhance brand visibility, and revenue and influence the purchase intention of consumers in India.

### 5.2 Scope of Future Research and Limitations

This research is an attempt to understand the diverse elements of Social Media Influencers that help LPU students, who are from diverse geographical areas, form their purchase intention in the apparel industry. However, there is a need to understand the impact of SMIs on a wider audience of India through a more diverse sample size. It can be done by deciding on a sample size for each of the states in India, as each state has their own unique culture which could yield different results. Furthermore, a study can also be conducted to check and compare the impact and influence of local versus foreign SMIs as there is the emergence of many global fashion brands. This could contribute significantly and aid foreign brands in successfully entering the Indian market.

Furthermore, studies by Chun et al., 2018 and Rathee et al, 2021 examined the impact of SMIs on the purchase intention



of Instagram users, along with the usage of YouTube for social media marketing. In contrast to the studies, the current research generalises its findings in terms of social media. While the studies provide invaluable insights, a more in-depth study on each social media such as Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest, and Facebook is essential. By doing so, future researchers and marketers can understand user behaviour on different platforms and strategically design marketing campaigns to attract diverse user bases.

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