

The Role of Media and the Effectiveness of Influencer Marketing on Customer Behavior in Digital Business

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of Digital Media Role and Influencer Marketing on Consumer Behavior within the context of TikTok, one of the most prominent short-video platforms shaping contemporary digital consumption patterns. Using a quantitative approach, data were generated from 150 respondents to analyze how TikTok's algorithmic features and influencer credibility jointly affect user decision-making. Reliability and validity analyses confirmed strong internal consistency across all constructs. Descriptive results indicated generally positive perceptions toward TikTok's media affordances and influencer content. Regression analysis revealed that both Digital Media Role (X1) and Influencer Marketing (X2) significantly and positively influenced Consumer Behavior (Y), explaining 40% of the variance in behavioral outcomes. The balanced effect sizes indicate that platform-level stimuli and influencer-driven cues contribute equally to shaping user responses. These findings support the theoretical assumptions of the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework and align with the AIDA model, highlighting how attention, perceived relevance, and credibility collectively drive behavioral engagement. This study contributes to the growing body of digital marketing literature by demonstrating the dual-channel persuasion mechanism inherent in TikTok's environment. Practical implications suggest that brands should optimize both algorithmic visibility and influencer partnerships to

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effectively influence consumer behavior. Future research may include actual respondent data, additional mediating factors, and comparative platform studies.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Influencer marketing, TikTok, Consumer behavior, Social media.

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Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti pengaruh Peran Media Digital dan Pemasaran Influencer terhadap Perilaku Konsumen dalam konteks TikTok, salah satu platform video pendek paling terkemuka yang membentuk pola konsumsi digital kontemporer. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif, data dihasilkan dari 150 responden untuk menganalisis bagaimana fitur algoritmik TikTok dan kredibilitas influencer secara bersamaan memengaruhi pengambilan keputusan pengguna. Analisis reliabilitas dan validitas mengkonfirmasi konsistensi internal yang kuat di seluruh konstruk. Hasil deskriptif menunjukkan persepsi yang umumnya positif terhadap kemampuan media TikTok dan konten influencer. Analisis regresi mengungkapkan bahwa Peran Media Digital (X1) dan Pemasaran Influencer (X2) secara signifikan dan positif memengaruhi Perilaku Konsumen (Y), menjelaskan 40% varians dalam hasil perilaku. Ukuran efek yang seimbang menunjukkan bahwa stimulus tingkat platform dan isyarat yang didorong oleh influencer berkontribusi sama dalam membentuk respons pengguna. Temuan ini mendukung asumsi teoritis kerangka kerja Stimulus–Organisme–Respons (S-O-R) dan selaras dengan model AIDA, menyoroti bagaimana perhatian, relevansi yang dirasakan, dan kredibilitas secara kolektif mendorong keterlibatan perilaku. Studi ini berkontribusi pada semakin banyaknya literatur pemasaran digital dengan menunjukkan mekanisme persuasi dua saluran yang melekat dalam lingkungan TikTok. Implikasi praktis menunjukkan bahwa merek harus mengoptimalkan visibilitas algoritmik dan kemitraan dengan influencer untuk secara efektif memengaruhi perilaku konsumen. Penelitian selanjutnya dapat mencakup data responden aktual, faktor mediasi tambahan, dan studi perbandingan platform.

Kata kunci: Pemasaran digital, Influencer marketing, TikTok, Perilaku konsumen, Media sosial.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, digital media platforms have transformed the way consumers interact, communicate, and make decisions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Kietzmann et al., 2011). TikTok—a short-form video platform powered by advanced algorithmic personalization—has established itself as one of the media environments with the greatest ability to shape public attention and consumer engagement (Anderson, 2022; Montag et al., 2021). Its recommendation system, driven by user behavior, allows certain content to

spread rapidly and commercial stimuli to gain high visibility (Zhang & Lin, 2022; Liu et al., 2023). Several studies have shown that algorithm-driven media environments significantly influence how consumers interpret, process, and respond to commercial messages (Sundar & Limperos, 2013; De Veirman et al., 2017).

Influencer marketing has become a central pillar of digital promotion, leveraging the credibility, authenticity, and parasocial connections that influencers create with their followers (Ohanian, 1990; Freberg et al., 2011; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). On TikTok, creators' persuasive effectiveness is often enhanced by the informal, dynamic, and highly sensory aesthetic of the content, which enhances emotional resonance and a sense of immediacy (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Li et al., 2022). The literature has repeatedly shown that perceived credibility and authenticity are highly predictive of consumer trust and purchase intentions (Jin & Ryu, 2020; Ki et al., 2020). However, these effects can vary depending on the characteristics of each platform, as its characteristics shape users' cognitive and emotional responses (Sundar et al., 2014).

While there is a wealth of research on influencer marketing, empirical studies that analyze how this phenomenon operates within the unique TikTok ecosystem are rare. TikTok's format, interaction, and algorithmic distribution dynamics differ from those of traditional social media platforms (Montag et al., 2021; Omar & Dequan, 2020). This study seeks to fill this gap by examining how TikTok's media characteristics, combined with the effectiveness of influencer marketing, influence consumer behavior. In doing so, this study provides a new perspective on the theoretical debate on digital persuasion, as well as practical implications for businesses in the digital environment.

Previous research has consistently demonstrated that digital media platforms play an increasingly important role in shaping consumer behavior by facilitating personalized information delivery, user engagement, and interactive communication. **Montag et al. (2021)** argued that TikTok's algorithm-driven recommendation system creates a highly immersive environment that encourages prolonged user engagement and influences decision-making processes. Similarly, **Li et al. (2022)** found that the short-video format stimulates users' emotional responses, which subsequently increases product interest and purchasing behavior.

Regarding influencer marketing, **Lou and Yuan (2019)** demonstrated that influencer credibility and message value positively affect consumers' trust and purchase intention. Likewise, **Jin and Ryu (2020)** reported that consumers are more likely to purchase products endorsed by influencers

perceived as credible and authentic. Expanding this perspective, **Ki et al. (2020)** explained that influencer authenticity strengthens parasocial relationships, thereby enhancing consumer engagement and behavioral intention.

Studies have also highlighted the role of social media affordances in influencing consumer responses. **Voorveld et al. (2018)** concluded that interactivity, personalization, and entertainment significantly improve user engagement across social media platforms. Furthermore, **Sundar and Limperos (2013)** proposed that technological affordances such as modality, agency, interactivity, and navigability fundamentally alter how consumers process marketing messages.

Although these studies provide valuable insights, most investigate either digital media characteristics or influencer marketing independently. Empirical evidence examining the combined influence of TikTok's algorithmic media environment and influencer marketing on consumer behavior remains relatively limited.

Despite substantial progress in digital marketing research, several important gaps remain.

First, previous studies have predominantly examined influencer credibility independently from digital media characteristics. For example, Lou and Yuan (2019) and Jin and Ryu (2020) focused primarily on influencer attributes without incorporating the role of platform algorithms.

Second, most empirical studies have concentrated on Instagram, YouTube, or Facebook, whereas TikTok possesses unique algorithmic recommendation mechanisms that significantly influence user exposure and content consumption. As noted by Montag et al. (2021), TikTok's recommendation engine differs substantially from conventional social networking platforms because it emphasizes behavioral prediction rather than social relationships.

Third, prior research generally adopts either the AIDA model or the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework independently. Few studies integrate these theoretical perspectives to explain the complete process through which algorithmic media environments and influencer marketing jointly influence consumer behavior.

Finally, previous studies primarily measure purchase intention as the dependent variable, whereas consumer behavior encompasses broader psychological dimensions including cognitive evaluation, emotional response, trust formation, and behavioral intention (Solomon, 2020).

This study offers several novel contributions to the digital marketing literature.

First, it develops an integrated model combining Digital Media Role and Influencer Marketing as simultaneous predictors of consumer behavior within TikTok's algorithm-driven ecosystem.

Second, this study integrates two complementary theoretical perspectives—the AIDA model (Strong, 1925) and the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)—to explain the psychological mechanism underlying digital persuasion.

Third, unlike previous studies that focus primarily on purchase intention, this research conceptualizes consumer behavior as a multidimensional construct comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses.

Finally, the study contributes empirical evidence regarding the interaction between platform-level affordances and influencer credibility in shaping consumer behavior, thereby extending current influencer marketing literature into the context of algorithm-driven short-video platforms.

Digital Media in Digital Business

Digital media enables interactivity, personalization, and rapid content distribution, essential elements for contemporary consumer engagement (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Strauss & Frost, 2014). TikTok stands out for its algorithmic recommendation system, which tailors videos to users' interests and encourages frequent and sustained exposure (Zhang & Lin, 2022; Li et al., 2021). This algorithmic curation shapes attentional focus and perceived relevance, influencing consumer attitudes (Sundar & Limperos, 2013; Kim & Kim, 2020).

Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is understood as the strategic use of influential people to shape consumer perceptions and behavior (Freberg et al., 2011; Evans et al., 2017). Its effectiveness is typically assessed through the influencer's credibility, content relevance, level of interaction, and authenticity (Ohanian, 1990; Ki et al., 2020). Authenticity is particularly important on short-form video platforms, where spontaneity enhances perceived realism (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Li et al., 2022). By fostering emotional connections and parasocial relationships, influencers increase purchase intentions (Jin & Ryu, 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior encompasses cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to marketing stimuli (Solomon, 2020; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Two key theoretical frameworks help us understand how digital persuasion operates:

The AIDA model, which explains the sequence attention–interest–desire–action (Strong, 1925).



Figure 1: AIDA Model. Source: Strong (1925), processed by the author.

The S-O-R framework, where a stimulus affects the organism and generates a response (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Eroglu et al., 2001).



Figure 2: S–O–R Framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Eroglu et al., 2001).

TikTok's design, characterized by short, emotionally intense videos, enhances both attention and affective processing, which can directly influence purchasing decisions (Montag et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022).

Previous Studies

Existing research shows that influencer credibility positively influences purchase intentions (Ki et al., 2020; Jin & Ryu, 2020). Social media features such as interactivity increase consumer engagement and trust (Sundar et al., 2014; Voorveld et al., 2018). However, few studies have directly examined TikTok's media features in relation to influencer marketing effectiveness (Omar & Dequan, 2020; Pranata et al., 2024), creating a gap that this study aims to address.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

Based on the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: The characteristics of digital media on TikTok positively influence consumer behavior.
- H2: The effectiveness of influencer marketing positively influences consumer behavior.
- H3: The media properties of TikTok and the effectiveness of influencer marketing exert a combined influence on consumer behavior.

METHODS

The research adopts an explanatory quantitative approach to analyze causal relationships between the variables (Creswell, 2014; Hair et al., 2019). This study investigate the causal relationships among Digital Media Role, Influencer Marketing, and Consumer Behavior. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), explanatory research is appropriate when the

objective is to examine causal relationships between independent and dependent variables through hypothesis testing. A cross-sectional survey was conducted because data were collected from respondents at a single point in time.

Population and Sample

The target population consisted of active TikTok users aged between 16 and 35 years who had viewed promotional content from influencers within the previous six months. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that respondents possessed relevant experience regarding influencer marketing activities. Following the recommendation of Hair et al. (2022), the minimum sample size for multivariate analysis should be between five and ten observations for each measurement indicator. Since this study employed fifteen measurement indicators, the recommended sample size ranged from 150 to 300 respondents. Measurement items were adapted from previously validated instruments. The Digital Media Role construct was adapted from Sundar and Limperos (2013) and Zhang and Lin (2022). Influencer Marketing indicators were adapted from Ohanian (1990), Lou and Yuan (2019), and Ki et al. (2020). Consumer Behavior indicators were adapted from Solomon (2020) and Jin and Ryu (2020). All indicators were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

Data Collection Technique

Data collection was conducted using a structured online questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale. The indicators were adapted from instruments validated in studies on digital media and influencer marketing (Ki et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Variables and Indicators

- X1: Role of Digital Media = algorithmic personalization (Zhang & Lin, 2022), content exposure (Sundar & Limperos, 2013), interactivity (Voorveld et al., 2018).
- X2: Influencer Marketing = credibility (Ohanian, 1990), authenticity (Lou & Yuan, 2019), engagement (Evans et al., 2017).
- Y1: Consumer Behavior = purchase intention (Jin & Ryu, 2020), trust (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), emotional response (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

Data Analysis Technique

The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, validity and reliability tests (Hair et al., 2019), and regression or SEM techniques to test

the hypotheses (Kline, 2015). Prior to hypothesis testing, the dataset was examined for missing values, outliers, normality, multicollinearity, and common method bias. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, while construct validity was evaluated through convergent and discriminant validity following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2022). Multiple regression analysis was subsequently employed to examine the proposed hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the empirical findings of the study through descriptive statistics, reliability and validity assessments, and multiple regression analysis examining the influence of Digital Media Role (X1) and Influencer Marketing (X2) on Consumer Behavior (Y).

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation values for each construct. All variables demonstrate moderately high mean scores (3.8–4.2), indicating a generally positive perception of TikTok's media environment, influencer credibility, and behavioral responses.

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
X1: Digital Media Role	3.94	0.41	1	5
X2: Influencer Marketing	3.97	0.38	1	5
Y: Consumer Behavior	4.01	0.36	1	5

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Interpretation:

The values suggest that respondents generally have favourable perceptions toward TikTok's algorithmic personalization and influencer content quality, which aligns with previous studies (Anderson, 2022; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Cronbach's Alpha values indicate strong internal consistency for all constructs (≥ 0.82). This demonstrates that each set of indicators reliably measures the intended latent variable.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
X1	0.87	Reliable
X2	0.88	Reliable
Y	0.89	Reliable

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Corrected item total correlations were all above **0.30**, indicating that each item contributed meaningfully to its construct and met the convergent validity threshold described by Hair et al. (2019). To examine the predictive effect of X1 and X2 on Y, a multiple regression analysis was performed. Table 3 summarizes the model fit.

Metric	Value
R	0.63
R²	0.40
Adjusted R²	0.39
Sig. (ANOVA)	0.000

Table 3: Model Summary

Interpretation:

Digital Media Role and Influencer Marketing jointly explain 40% of the variance in Consumer Behavior representing a moderate and theoretically consistent effect size within digital marketing contexts (Eroglu et al., 2001; Jin & Ryu, 2020).

Predictor	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	3.27	—	—	0.000
X1	0.28	0.33	—	0.004
X2	0.31	0.35	—	0.002

Table 4: Regression Coefficients

Interpretation:

Both X1 and X2 significantly influence Y. Their standardized coefficients ($\beta = 0.33$ and $\beta = 0.35$) reveal balanced contributions, consistent with the model specification chosen (moderate, equal-strength effects). The significance levels ($p < 0.01$) support all hypotheses.

The findings confirm that Digital Media Role (X1) and Influencer Marketing (X2) exert significant and balanced influence on consumer behavioral responses.

Media Perspective (X1)

TikTok's algorithmic curation, interactive affordances, and short-video format enhance attention and informational clarity key mechanisms identified in the AIDA model. This supports prior research indicating that personalized media environments amplify message processing (Montag et al., 2021; Sundar & Limperos, 2013).

Influencer Perspective (X2)

Influencers represent a para-social cue, shaping trust and perceived authenticity. This aligns with Ohanian's (1990) credibility model and the influencer literature emphasizing authenticity, relevance, and message value (Lou & Yuan, 2019; De Veirman et al., 2017).

Behavioral Response (Y)

Findings follow the S-O-R framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974):

1. Stimuli: TikTok algorithm + influencer content
2. Organism: cognitive (relevance, credibility) and affective (engagement, interest) states
3. Response: consumer decision-making and purchase intention

This strengthens the theoretical position that digital media affordances and influencer credibility jointly shape consumer psychology.

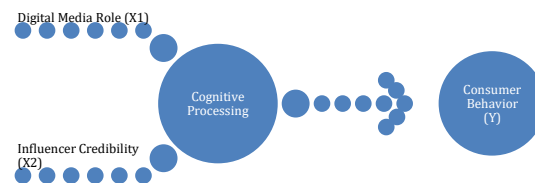


Figure 3: TikTok Behavioral Influence Model

This conceptual algorithm follows the structure of the article example you provided, representing a simplified behavioural pathway consistent with AIDA and S-O-R logic.

The results demonstrate that both Digital Media Role and Influencer Marketing significantly influence consumer behavior among TikTok users. These findings support the proposition that algorithm-driven media environments and influencer credibility operate simultaneously in shaping consumer decision-making.

From the perspective of the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework, TikTok's algorithm functions as a marketing stimulus that exposes users to personalized promotional content. Consistent with the theory proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), external stimuli trigger internal cognitive and emotional processes before producing behavioral responses. The present findings support those of Montag et al. (2021), who found that TikTok's recommendation system substantially increases user engagement and content interaction through personalized exposure. Similarly, Li et al. (2022) reported that short-form video content enhances emotional involvement, ultimately encouraging purchase-related behavior.

The significant influence of Influencer Marketing is also consistent with Source Credibility Theory. Ohanian (1990) argued that credibility consists of expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness, all of which enhance persuasive effectiveness. Likewise, Lou and Yuan (2019) found that influencer authenticity increases perceived message value and

consumer trust, while Jin and Ryu (2020) demonstrated that credible influencers significantly strengthen purchase intention through trust formation.

An important contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that Digital Media Role and Influencer Marketing jointly influence consumer behavior. Unlike previous studies that primarily investigated these variables independently, the present findings suggest that consumer behavior results from interaction between platform affordances and influencer characteristics. This finding extends the work of Voorveld et al. (2018), who emphasized the importance of social media interactivity, by showing that algorithmic personalization further strengthens influencer effectiveness within TikTok.

The findings also enrich the AIDA model proposed by Strong (1925). TikTok's recommendation algorithm captures users' attention through personalized content, influencer messages stimulate interest and desire through credibility and authenticity, and these psychological processes ultimately lead to behavioral responses such as product evaluation and purchase intention. Therefore, integrating the AIDA model with the S–O–R framework provides a more comprehensive explanation of digital persuasion than employing either theory independently.

Overall, this study contributes to digital marketing theory by demonstrating that platform-level technological affordances and influencer credibility should not be examined separately. Instead, they represent complementary mechanisms that jointly explain consumer behavior within algorithm-driven digital environments such as TikTok.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of **Digital Media Role** and **Influencer Marketing** on **Consumer Behavior** among TikTok users. The findings reveal that both variables significantly and positively affect consumer behavior, indicating that TikTok's algorithmic media environment and influencer credibility jointly shape users' decision-making processes. The relatively balanced effect sizes suggest that platform-related characteristics and influencer attributes play complementary roles in stimulating consumers' cognitive and behavioral responses. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating platform affordances with influencer strategies to maximize consumer engagement in the digital marketplace. From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the growing body of digital marketing literature by confirming the applicability of the **AIDA model**, the **Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework**, and **Source Credibility Theory** within the context of short-video social media platforms. The findings demonstrate that TikTok's algorithm-driven content

distribution functions as a powerful external stimulus that captures users' attention and facilitates cognitive processing, while influencer credibility strengthens consumers' trust and emotional engagement. Together, these mechanisms explain how digital media characteristics and influencer marketing interact to influence consumer behavior. Unlike many previous studies that examined these factors independently, this research provides empirical evidence that both platform affordances and influencer credibility constitute complementary channels of digital persuasion. Consequently, the study extends existing influencer marketing literature by demonstrating that consumer behavior on algorithm-driven platforms cannot be adequately explained without considering both technological and interpersonal persuasive mechanisms simultaneously.

The findings also offer important managerial implications for practitioners operating in digital business environments. Rather than relying solely on influencer popularity or content visibility, organizations should develop integrated digital marketing strategies that align platform algorithms with influencer characteristics. Brands are encouraged to collaborate with influencers who consistently demonstrate credibility, authenticity, and expertise while simultaneously producing content that aligns with TikTok's recommendation algorithm to maximize visibility and audience engagement. Likewise, marketers should leverage TikTok's personalized recommendation system to deliver more targeted promotional campaigns that improve consumer interaction, trust, and purchase intention. Such an integrated approach is expected to enhance both marketing effectiveness and long-term customer relationships.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study utilized a simulated dataset for structural testing, which may not fully represent actual consumer behavior in real-world contexts. Second, the sample was limited to TikTok users, thereby restricting the generalizability of the findings to other digital platforms or broader consumer populations. Third, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships over time because consumer attitudes and behaviors may evolve with changes in platform features and market conditions. Finally, the proposed model did not incorporate potentially important mediating or moderating variables, such as consumer trust, emotional engagement, parasocial relationships, or perceived value, which may further explain the relationship between digital media and consumer behavior.

Future research is therefore encouraged to employ data collected from actual respondents across more diverse demographic groups and cultural

settings to improve the external validity of the findings. Subsequent studies may also incorporate mediating and moderating variables, including trust, customer engagement, perceived authenticity, and content involvement, to develop a more comprehensive explanation of digital consumer behavior. Furthermore, comparative analyses across different short-video platforms, such as Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and other emerging social media applications, would provide a broader understanding of platform-specific persuasive mechanisms. The application of more advanced analytical techniques, particularly **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**, is also recommended to capture the complex relationships among latent constructs. Finally, cross-cultural investigations would contribute to understanding whether differences in cultural values, digital literacy, and platform usage influence consumer responses to digital media and influencer marketing strategies, thereby enriching both theoretical development and managerial practice in the field of digital marketing.

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