



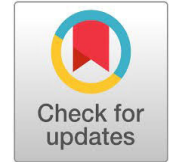
Content list available at:
<https://journals.carc.com.pk/index.php/CRISS/issue/view/9>

CARC Research in Social Sciences

Journal homepage : journals.carc.com.pk



Social Media Influencers as Catalysts: A Study on Parasocial Relationships and their Impact on Shaping Online Buying Intentions and Behaviors



Ahmer Safwan¹ & Dr. Shahzad Ali²

¹ Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication, Virtual University of Pakistan

² Professor, Institute of Media and Communication Studies, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: April 20, 2024
 Revised: June 20, 2024
 Accepted: June 23, 2024
 Published: June 30, 2024

Keywords:

Celebrity endorsement
 Online buying intention
 Parasocial relationship
 Social media influencer
 Technology-oriented products

ABSTRACT

In the context of Pakistan, where social media is increasingly integrated into daily life, social media influencers emerge as catalysts for consumer behavior. They are trying their best to build trust among their followers or viewers to strengthen the psychological ties, influencing their buying decisions for technology-oriented (smartphone & IT-based) products. Therefore, the present study aims at analyzing the impact caused by the parasocial relationship of consumers with their influencers on online buying intentions and behaviors. The population of the study was the students of three public sector universities from Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad, ages ranged from 18-45 years. Keeping in view the specific criteria, a purposive sampling technique was utilized to select participants from a population. A total of 174 individuals have participated in a survey and filled out a questionnaire. The findings suggest that parasocial relationships have played a significant role in influencing consumer's online buying intentions and behaviors. Furthermore, parasocial ties have been crucial in moving participants toward buying products endorsed or promoted by the influencers they followed. Overall, this study sheds light on the transformative role of social media influencers in the Pakistani market, highlighting the importance that parasocial connections have in influencing online consumer engagement and purchase decisions regarding smartphones and IT based products in general.

Copyright © 2024 CARC Research in Social Sciences. Published by Center for Advocacy Research & Communication – Pakistan. This is an open access article licensed under CC BY:

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)

INTRODUCTION

The technological evolution of internet and ICTs has broadened the dynamics of communication through which people ties and interact with another on social networking sites (SNS), exchange information at more ease and form different relationships with peers and influencers (Wallace, Buil & Chernatony, 2017). In context of marketing, SNS have been effective all over the world for both, customers and the marketers in certain perspectives such as developing

and maintaining relationships with customers as well as delivering creative messages through utilizing interactive features of new media platforms (Gu & Ye, 2013; Hudson, Roth, Madden & Hudson, 2015). With evolving chains of interactivity in attempt to influence mindsets and behaviors, social media influencers (SMIs) or micro celebrities are being considered by the marketers in their policy makings as they build community of their fans to whom SMIs play essential role of word of mouth (WoM) and opinion leaders (de Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017).

On the global foot points, SMIs trend in Pakistan has been increased for the last few years since adoption of smartphones and new media technologies has become convenient for the masses (Khan, 2019). The larger fan base of SMIs and their contents attract social media users especially young generation of Pakistan which transform into psychological bonding of consumers with SMIs in the result of encounter of users' cognitive factors and longer interactions with influencers (Taillon, Mueller, Kowalczyk

*Corresponding author:

Ahmer Safwan, Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication, Virtual University of Pakistan
 e-mail: ahmer.safwan@vu.edu.pk

How to Cite:

Safwan, A., & Ali, S. (2024). Social Media Influencers as Catalysts: A Study on Parasocial Relationships and their Impact on Shaping Online Buying Intentions and Behaviours. *CARC Research in Social Sciences*, 3(2), 198-205.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58329/criss.v3i2.121>

& Jones, 2020). Most of the time users develop such psychological bonding which is based on their emotions and micro celebrities remain unaware of this bonding, this one-sided attachment with SMIs is known as Para-social relationship (PSR) between social media consumers and influencers (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Bloggers, Vloggers or content creators of Pakistan are gaining tremendous popularity among virtual communities and attracting huge brands and marketers to be their endorsers regardless of the content they are making (Bradri, 2019).

Influencer marketing is the emerging concept and now it is being considered as essential technique for advertisers in the changing business dynamics especially in the ecommerce around the globe in general and Pakistan in particular. During the recent years, there can be noticed significant growth of micro celebrities or vloggers in Pakistan which gained popularity among social media users through presenting their viewpoints regarding different issues or disclosing their routine chunks of life in the community of their followers across various social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube etc. (Siddiqui, 2021) the present study has designed which aims at analyzing factors involved in developing para-social relationships (hereafter PSR) with SMIs and their subsequent impact on consumer's online purchase intention and behavior of technology-oriented products in Pakistan. Although, there have been many studies about developing PSR with SMIs along with the perspective of e-marketing, but these studies bear several theoretical and methodological limitations in their own context. For instance, Kim and Song (2016) established positive impact of self-disclosure on Para-social interaction (hereafter PSI) and argued its further impact on PSR (Audrezet, de Kerviler & Guidry Moulard, 2018),

The online buying intentions and behaviors have been studied by many scholars in terms of traditional and non-traditional advertising (Ali, Safwan & Hassan, 2022; Djafarova & Rushworth 2017; Kim & Song, 2015) which can also be witnessed in the thorough and systematic review study (Safwan & Ahmed, 2021), however, its application with the concept of SMI is very limited in the studies that reflect a significant gap behind the present study. Another gap of the study is linked with the theoretical dimension as the overall framework has been designed with application of theory of reasoned action. There have been several studies on the impact of PSR i.e. Kim et al. (2015) investigated impact of PSR on offline purchase intention in general while Yuan and Lou (2020) argued about impact of PSR on creating interest towards product. In light of the above viewpoints, it can be noticed that no research study has examined impact of PSR on online purchase intention and behavior of consumers which may yield significant contribution towards as suggested by Yuan and Lou (2020) in their recommendation of future research. Therefore, another dimension of the study has designed to evaluate impact of PSR on online purchase intention and behavior in context of technology-oriented products of consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

PSR has an essential significance for persuading

consumers according to the will of a celebrity or influencer that they follow on social media platforms. It has been argued that SMIs do not only affect the audience which is aware of influencer marketing but also the inexperienced consumers (de Veirman et al., 2017). These findings were found similar to the study of Colliander and Erlandsson (2015) in which they have attached PSI theories with the Knowledge-Persuasion Model. It was found that SMIs were seen as communicating promotions to their followers when PSRs on social media platforms were viewed through the lens of marketing. SMIs played a significant role in persuading consumers for buying their endorsed brand. It is pertinent to mention that PSRs between users and their SMIs are a new phenomenon in the domain of marketing research. If PSR theory facilitates comprehension of friendship-like meaning transfer, the celebrity endorsement literature can support to broaden an understanding of the drives of PSR (Kirvesmies, 2018).

The perceived credibility of influencer also has a significant role in formulating PSR between users and SMIs. Giles (2002) argued that the authenticity of influencer is the one predictor of para-social relationships. The literature of psychology and marketing reflects that celebrity authenticity may be understood as the SMI is true to himself or herself (Ilicic & Webster, 2016). The credibility of social media influencer persuades individuals for buying products. For instance, Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) explored the impact of celebrity endorsement on the purchase intention of Instagram users and the results divulged that SMIs had a greater impact on the purchase intention of consumers in comparison to the role of traditional celebrities. Their study has referred SMIs as "non-traditional celebrities" which they argued turned to be more credible to influence consumers. However, the relevancy of influencer cannot be ignored when it comes to influencer marketing (e.g. SMI). Several studies have indicated that the impact of influencer's endorsement is more significant if both, the SMI and a product, are congruent that can be achieved when the influencer is relevant to the endorsement (McCormick, 2016; Till & Busler, 2000).

Similarly, the other studies have divulged that products and influencer congruent is also effective in a social media context as Cunningham and Bright (2012) argued that social media athletes-product congruence has been more effective in shaping the favorable attitude of consumers towards the product and the endorser. These authors assumed that consumers knew their celebrities beforehand which formulated their attitudes positively. However, the celebrities were unknown to the consumers, respondents have viewed the image of celebrities and the product as congruent and their attitude towards the advertisement and the product as positive. Thus, it has been argued that an unrealistic relationship between the unfamiliar endorser and the brand can make the advertisement authentic among the viewers (McCormick, 2016).

The development of PSR, in general, has been investigated by several scholars and it has been argued that loneliness leads people for having PSRs (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2008; Wang, Fink & Cai, 2008). Para-social relationships and traditional relationships have significant

differences but consumers who break either social or para-social relationships, face traumatic conditions and in both cases, another person or mass media play a tremendous role in voiding a gap left by the previous relationship (Cohen, 2003). This is supported by Schiappa, Allen and Gregg (2007) who also found that cancellation of television show lost the PSR with the person and this traumatic loss was the same as losing real-life relationship but it reflects similarities between real social relationship and PSR in the context of loss which creates a sense of loneliness among the people.

Online buying or e-shopping falls under the category of e-commerce through which individuals can get products or services from advertisers through the internet and websites. Online buying got greater popularity among internet users (Bourlakis, Papagiannidis & Fox, 2008). Today, products can be found easily on the internet by using particular keywords and many efforts are being exerted by e-marketers so that shipping can be done across international borders. That is why, worldwide trend of online buying drastically boosted in the last few years (Faqih, 2013; Vazquez & Xu, 2009; Wann-Yih & Ching-Ching, 2015). It reflects that the internet has become a significant platform that instigates individuals for online buying of products (Comegys, Hannula & Väisänen, 2006). The instigation towards online buying is linked with the image of the company because it produces a positive effect on buying (Klaus, 2013). People are mostly inclined towards those online stores which save their time and money (Guzzo, Ferri & Grifoni, 2016).

The theoretical framework regarding the major dependent variables is related to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) which was advanced by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) and according to them, it's a cognitive theory that facilitates to develop a conceptual framework in the studies which aim to predict human behavior in a specific context. Therefore, this theory has been used for developing a framework of the present study in which factor of PSR has been linked to buying intention and behavior. The application of TRA has postulated that PSR will have a significant impact on online purchase intention and behavior of individuals.

Research Questions

- Does the PSR with social media influencers impact the online buying intention of consumers?
- Does the PSR with social media influencers impact the online buying behavior of consumers?

Hypothesis

- PSR with social media influencers will have a significant impact on the online buying intention of consumers

Table 1

Sample Demographics

Demographics	Count	Percent
Gender		
Male	99	56.9
Female	75	43.1
Age Group		

- PSR with social media influencers will have a significant impact on the online buying behavior of consumers

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHOD

The research design of the study was quantitative. Quantitative research design is often based on the positivist method which deals with a deductive approach. This approach starts with a theory and moves towards testing assumptions (theoretical postulations) by obtaining some empirical data in the form of numeric scores (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The research method of the study was a survey that was done through online mode.

Population & Sample

Keeping in view the purpose of the study, the population was the students of public sector universities in Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad. These were included the University of the Punjab, the University of Karachi, and the International Islamic University, Islamabad. All the enrolled BS and M.Phil students of Business administration, Psychology, Computer science/IT, Commerce, and Media & Communication studies were considered a population and their ages ranged from 18 to 44 years. Based on a population related to the specified criteria, the purposive sampling technique was utilized to select participants, and a total of 112 students were selected through this technique.

Questionnaire

Data was collected through the questionnaire which was distributed to students through online mode (Google form). It was forwarded to various Facebook groups of 3 public sector universities and students were requested to fill out the questionnaire with some instructions related to their following any social media influencer and belonging to the specified departments. The respondents were also informed about the meaning of technology-oriented products (smartphones or IT-based) briefly so that the element of informed participation could be ensured. The questionnaire was designed after the reviewing relevant literature thoroughly. The constructs of para-social relationship were measured with items given by Rosaen and Dibble (2015), items for the online buying intention were adopted from Spears and Singh (2004), and Rausch and Kopplin's (2021) study was used to measure the construct of online buying behavior of technology-oriented products.

The obtained responses from the questionnaire were entered into SPSS and statistical tests including correlations and regression analysis were applied to measure the cause-and-effect relationship along with its strength between independent and dependent variables.

RESULTS & FINDINGS

18 to 25	121	69.5
25 to 35	33	19.0
35 to 45	20	11.5
Department		
Communication/Media Studies	59	33.9
Business Administration	43	24.7
Psychology	26	14.9
Computer Science/IT	15	8.6
Commerce	31	17.8

n=174

The above table describes the sample demographics. Out of the total sample of 174, more than half the majority were males and 43.1% were females. Concerning the age group, more than two-thirds majority of participants belong to young adulthood while 19% were aged between 25-35 years. Only 11.5% of participants were aged between 35-

45 years. The third marker variable was the department of participants which reflects that one-third majority belong to media and communication studies while the second highest majority of participants in this category were from business administration.

Table 2
Reliability Analysis

Variables	Measurement	Items	Cronbach α
Para-Social Relationships with social media influencers	5-point Likert scale	11	0.855
Online buying intention of technology-oriented products	5-point Likert scale	4	0.814
Online buying behavior of technology-oriented products	5-point Likert scale	4	0.801

The above table demonstrates the reliability scores of the measures. Para-social relationships consisted of five items with $\alpha=.85$, the online buying intention of technology-oriented products comprised four items, and the reliability

scores were calculated $\alpha=.81$. The last dependent variable of the study, online buying behavior was also measured with four items having reliability score of $\alpha=.80$.

Table 3
Descriptives of the items related to users' PSR with Social Media Influencer (SMI)

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
look forward to see my SMI posts	43 24.7	64 36.8	6 3.4	39 22.4	22 12.6
My SMI is a natural, down-to-earth person	31 17.8	90 51.7	6 3.4	42 24.1	5 2.9
Following another page if started by my SMI	44 25.3	93 53.4	6 3.4	24 13.8	7 4.0
Understanding of SMI about the things as per my desire	60 34.5	103 59.2	2 1.1	5 2.9	4 2.3
Reading stories on other platforms of my SMI	19 10.9	90 51.7	7 4.0	54 31.0	4 2.3
Miss my SMI when he/she does not post in time	67 38.5	62 35.6	7 4.0	29 16.7	9 5.2
I'd like to meet my SMI in person	30 17.2	128 73.6	1 6	13 7.5	2 1.1
Sad feelings if something happens with my SMI	48 27.6	91 52.3	8 4.6	20 11.5	7 4.0
Liking to hang out with my SMI if get a chance	70 40.2	79 45.4	5 2.9	16 9.2	4 2.3
Desire to be friends if my SMI was in my neighborhood	56 32.2	100 57.5	2 1.1	10 5.7	6 3.4
My SMI would fit well in my group of friends	118 67.8	42 24.1	5 2.9	6 3.4	3 1.7

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

The above table demonstrates the frequency of responses related to the PSR of social media users with their followed influencers. Concerning the first item, cumulatively 61.5%

of respondents agreed that they look forward to seeing posts of their SMIs while 35% of participants disagreed with the statement. The overwhelming majority of participants

considered their SMIs as natural and down-to-earth and one-third majority of the participants have denied this aspect. The third statement was related to the intention of following another page if started by their SMIs, almost 80% of respondents agreed with this statement while 18% of participants disagreed cumulatively. Only 6(3.4%) individuals were found answering neutral or undecided.

Surprisingly, 94% of participants answered that their SMI truly understands the technology-oriented products that they are desirous to know and very few respondents have been found to disagree and undecided to this aspect. The two-third majority of the total sampled individuals has agreed that they will read stories of their SMIs even if they find them on other social media platforms while almost one-third majority have disagreed with this statement. The majority (almost 66%) of participants have answered that they start missing their SMI if don't get some update or post in time and almost 38(21.9%) participants have disagreed with it. Only 7(4.0%) were found who could not decide their

stance and responded neutral. The desire to meet with the following SMI on social media in person got a significantly positive response as more than 90% of respondents agreed with this statement which reflects the followers' affection for their SMIs.

This aspect can be validated by the next statement in which an overwhelming majority of participants responded that they feel sad if something happens to SMI and 27(15.5%) individuals disagreed with this statement. The responses were similar regarding the desire to hang out with the followed SMI if get the chance for it as 85.6% of participants have agreed with this aspect cumulatively. Out of the total sampled participants, 32.2% strongly agreed and 57.5% agreed that there could have been a bond of friendship if their SMI had lived in the neighborhood. The last statement was related to the compatibility of their SMI in the group of friends and more than 80% of individuals answered that the SMI would fit well in their group of friends a very few participants 8(5.1%) have disagreed with this statement.

Table 4

Descriptives of the items for Online buying Intention of technology-oriented products

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
I would like to buy tech. products through online platforms that my SMI presents in his/her post/videos	33 19.0	102 58.6	2 1.1	21 12.1	16 9.2
I feel that I already have an intention for online buying of tech. products that my SMI presents in his/her post/videos	24 13.8	85 48.9	6 3.4	44 25.3	15 8.6
I am interested in online buying of tech. products that my SMI presents in his/her post/videos	39 22.4	103 59.2	2 1.1	26 14.9	4 2.3
I would search and look for online buying of tech. products that my SMI presents in his/her post/videos	69 39.7	66 37.9	3 1.7	33 19.0	3 1.7

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

Table 4 describes the frequency of responses related to the online buying intention of consumers for technology-oriented products. The overwhelming majority of participants have agreed that they would like to buy those products that are presented by their SMI in posts/videos while 21.3% of respondents have disagreed. Almost 63% of individuals have responded that they feel like they already have an intention to buy a particular product presented by the SMI in his/her post or video whereas almost 34% of

participants have denied this aspect. Similarly, more than 80% of respondents feel interested in online buying of technology-oriented products presented by their followed SMI(s), and the overwhelming number of participants will search and look for the online buying of technology-oriented products discussed by their SMI(s). The overall responses reflect that individuals will benefit from the expertise and reviews of their SMI(s) to make informed buying decisions.

Table 5

Descriptives of the items for Online buying behavior of technology-oriented products.

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
I choose to buy tech. products through online websites	33 19.0	102 58.6	2 1.1	21 12.1	16 9.2
I buy tech. products online if I think their quality is comparable	24 13.8	85 48.9	6 3.4	44 25.3	15 8.6
I buy tech. products online even if they are expensive	39 22.4	103 59.2	2 1.1	26 14.9	4 2.3
When buying tech. products online, I pay attention that they are sustainable	69 39.7	66 37.9	3 1.7	33 19.0	3 1.7

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

The above table demonstrates the frequency of responses related to the online buying behavior of technology-oriented products. The results show that the overwhelming majority of participants choose to buy tech. products through online mode but it's linked with the aspect that individuals go for buying if the quality of those products is

comparable as 62.7% of participants have agreed with this statement cumulatively. Similarly, 81.6% of respondents have answered that they buy the tech. products online even if they are expensive. However, their sustainability is a factor that is considered by the individuals and the overwhelming majority of total participants have agreed

with this statement.

Table 6
Mean scores, standard deviations, and correlations between variables

No.	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1.	Para-Social Relationships with social media influencers	7.23	1.82	1		
2.	Online buying intention of technology-oriented products	7.58	1.79	.138**	1	
3.	Online buying behavior of technology-oriented products	5.32	1.13	.147*	.231*	1

** p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

Table 6 depicts the mean scores, standard deviations of variables, and the correlations between them. The independent variable of para-social relationships is

positively correlated with dependent variables of online buying intention and online buying behavior of technology-oriented products.

Table 7
Effect of PSR with social media influencers on online buying intention.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	
1	(Constant)	22.810	1.203		18.962	.000
	PSR	.024	.161	.011	.148	.031

Dependent Variable: Online buying intention F= 1.809, R²= .220

The regression analysis in Table 7 revealed that the PSR with social media influencers had caused a 22% change in online buying intention. The findings divulged that the para-social relationship with social media influencers has

positively affected the online buying intention of social media users as the value was calculated as (β=.024, P<0.05, t=.148) which supported hypothesis 1 of the study.

Table 8
Effect of PSR with social media influencers on online buying behavior

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	
1	(Constant)	23.754	1.259		18.873	.000
	PSR	.102	.161	.048	.630	.029

Dependent Variable: Online buying behavior F=2.397, R²= .289

Table 8 describes that PSR with social media influencers has caused a 28% change in the online buying behavior of participants, and the finding of regression analysis was found as (β=.102=P<0.05, t=.630). Hence, hypothesis 4 of the study that predicted the significant impact of PSR with social media influencers on the online buying behavior of consumers has been approved.

between PSR of consumers with social media influencers, online buying intention, and online buying behavior. Through a comprehensive analysis, the positive impact of PSR with social media influencers have been demonstrated on both online buying intentions and behaviors. This highlights the pivotal role social media influencers play in guiding consumer decisions in the digital landscape. As social media continues to evolve as a powerful marketing platform, understanding and leveraging parasocial relationships can offer businesses invaluable insights into consumer behavior and preferences. Moving forward, marketers and brands can utilize this knowledge to effectively engage with audiences, foster meaningful connections, and ultimately drive online sales of technology oriented and other similar smartphones and IT based products. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on social media marketing and consumer behavior, providing valuable implications for practitioners and academicians in the similar domain.

Discussion

With a rapidly growing online population, especially among the youth, social media platforms serve as prominent channels for engagement and influence. Pakistani consumers often develop strong parasocial relationships with social media influencers, considering them trusted sources of information and inspiration since the dramatic increased in v-logging has witnessed in the recent years. This phenomenon significantly impacts online buying intentions and behaviors, as evidenced by the growing trend of influencer-led marketing campaigns and collaborations with brands.

CONCLUSION

The present study unfolds cause and effect relationship

Conflict of Interests

The authors has declared that no competing interests exist.

References

- Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1980). *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior* (1st ed.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Pearson.
- Ali, S., Safwan, A., & Hassan, AA. (2022). Public Perception and Attitude towards Transit Advertisement as Outdoor Media Platform: Investigating Age and Gender-based Associations. *Annals of Social Sciences and Perspective*, 3(2), 283-295.
<https://doi.org/10.52700/assap.v3i1.127>
- Audrezet, A., de Kerviler, G., & Guidry Moulard, J. (2018). Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 557–569.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.07.008>
- Bourlakis, M., Papagiannidis, S., & Fox, H. (2008). E-consumer behavior: Past, present and future trajectories of an evolving retail revolution. *International Journal of E-Business Research*, 4(3), 64–67.
- Bradri, C. (2019, May 21). Pakistani Influencers Who Are Making The Most Out of Influencer Marketing. Retrieved November 25, 2021, from
<https://bradri.com/blog/pakistani-influencers-who-are-making-the-most-of-influencer-marketing/>
- Cohen, J. (2003). Parasocial Breakups: Measuring Individual Differences in Responses to the Dissolution of Parasocial Relationships. *Mass Communication and Society*, 6(2), 191–202.
https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327825mcs0602_5
- Colliander, J., & Erlandsson, S. (2013). The blog and the bountiful: Exploring the effects of disguised product placement on blogs that are revealed by a third party. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(2), 110–124.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2012.730543>
- Comegys, C., Hannula, M., & Väisänen, J. (2006). Longitudinal comparison of Finnish and US online shopping behaviour among university students: The five-stage buying decision process. *Journal of Targeting, Measurement & Analysis for Marketing*, 14(4), 336–356.
- Cunningham, N., & Bright, L. F. (2012). The Tweet Is in Your Court: Measuring Attitude Towards Athlete Endorsements in Social Media. *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications*, 4(2), 73–87.
- de Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798–828.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035>
- 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.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.11.009>
- Faqih, K. M. S. (2013). Exploring the influence of perceived risk and internet self-efficacy on consumer online shopping intentions: Perspective of technology acceptance model. *International Management Review*, 9(1), 67–77.
- Giles, D. C. (2002). Parasocial Interaction: A Review of the Literature and a Model for Future Research. *Media Psychology*, 4(3), 279–305.
https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532785xmep0403_04
- Gu, B., & Ye, Q. (2013). First Step in Social Media: Measuring the Influence of Online Management Responses on Customer Satisfaction. *Production and Operations Management*, 23(4), 570–582.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.12043>
- Guzzo, T., Ferri, F., & Grifoni, P. (2016). A model of e-commerce adoption (MOCA): Consumer's perceptions and behaviours. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 35(3), 196–209.
- Horton, D., & Wohl, R. (1956). Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction. *Psychiatry*, 19(3), 215–229.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00332747.1956.11023049>
- Hudson, S., Roth, M. S., Madden, T. J., & Hudson, R. (2015). The effects of social media on emotions, brand relationship quality, and word of mouth: An empirical study of music festival attendees. *Tourism Management*, 47, 68–76.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.09.001>
- Ilicic, J., & Webster, C. M. (2016). Being True to Oneself: Investigating Celebrity Brand Authenticity. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(6), 410–420. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20887>
- Khan, S. (2019, December 5). Become a successful social media influencer. Biggest trends for 2020! Retrieved November 25, 2021, from
<https://bradri.com/blog/become-a-successful-social-media-influencers-from-pakistan/>
- Kim, H., Ko, E., & Kim, J. (2015). SNS users' para-social relationships with celebrities: social media effects on purchase intentions. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science*, 25(3), 279–294.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21639159.2015.1043690>
- Kim, J., & Song, H. (2016). Celebrity's self-disclosure on Twitter and parasocial relationships: A mediating role of social presence. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 62, 570–577.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.083>
- Kirvesmies, T. (2018). *Parasocial relationships between gen z and social media endorsers* (Master dissertation). University of Tampere, Finland. Retrieved January 01, 2022, from
<https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/103291>
- Klaus, P. (2013). New insights from practice. *International Journal of Market Research*, 55(6), 829–850.
- McCormick, K. (2016). Celebrity endorsements: Influence of a product-endorser match on Millennials attitudes and purchase intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 32, 39–45.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2016.05.012>

- Rausch, T. M., & Kopplin, C. S. (2021). Bridge the gap: Consumers' purchase intention and behavior regarding sustainable clothing. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 278, 123882. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.123882>
- Rosaen, S. F., & Dibble, J. L. (2015). Clarifying the Role of Attachment and Social Compensation on Parasocial Relationships with Television Characters. *Communication Studies*, 67(2), 147–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2015.1121898>
- Safwan, A., & Ahmed, A. (2021). Online media advertising and buying behavior of consumers: A systematic review. *Pakistan Journal of Media Sciences*, 2(2), 41–70.
- Schiappa, E., Allen, M., & Gregg, P. B. (2007). Parasocial relationships and television: A meta-analysis of the effects. In Preiss, R. W., Gayle, B. M., Burrell, N., Allen, M., & Bryant, J. (Eds.). *Mass Media Effects Research: Advances through meta-analysis* (pp. 301–314). Routledge.
- Siddiqui, Q. (2021, June 25). Why is Vlogging Growing in Pakistan? Retrieved November 21, 2021, from <https://hubdaily.net/entertainment/why-is-vlogging-in-pakistan-growing-among-boys-and-girls/>
- Spears, N., & Singh, S. N. (2004). Measuring Attitude toward the Brand and Purchase Intentions. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 26(2), 53–66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2004.10505164>
- Spitzberg, B. H., & Cupach, W. R. (2008). Fanning the Flames of Fandom: Celebrity Worship, Parasocial Interaction and Stalking. In Meloy, J. R., Sheridan, L., & Hoffmann, J. (Eds.). *Stalking, Threatening, and Attacking Public Figures: A Psychological and Behavioral Analysis* (p. 287). Oxford University Press.
- Taillon, B. J., Mueller, S. M., Kowalczyk, C. M., & Jones, D. N. (2020). Understanding the relationships between social media influencers and their followers: the moderating role of closeness. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 29(6), 767–782. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jpbm-03-2019-2292>
- Till, B. D., & Busler, M. (2000). The Match-Up Hypothesis: Physical Attractiveness, Expertise, and the Role of Fit on Brand Attitude, Purchase Intent and Brand Beliefs. *Journal of Advertising*, 29(3), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2000.10673613>
- Vazquez, D., & Xu, X. (2009). Investigating linkages between online purchase behaviour variables. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 37(5), 408–419.
- Wallace, E., Buil, I., & de Chernatony, L. (2017). Consumers' self-congruence with a "Liked" brand. *European Journal of Marketing*, 51(2), 367–390. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejm-07-2015-0442>
- Wang, Q., Fink, E. L., & Cai, D. A. (2008). Loneliness, Gender, and Parasocial Interaction: A Uses and Gratifications Approach. *Communication Quarterly*, 56(1), 87–109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01463370701839057>
- Wann-Yih, W. U., & Ching-Ching, K. E. (2015). An online shopping behavior model integrating personality traits, perceived risk, and technology acceptance. *Social Behavior & Personality: an international journal*, 43(1), 85–97.
- Yuan, S., & Lou, C. (2020). How Social Media Influencers Foster Relationships with Followers: The Roles of Source Credibility and Fairness in Parasocial Relationship and Product Interest. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 20(2), 133–147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2020.1769514>