



Reframing Consumer Transformation in the Digital Participatory Ecosystem: Integrating Viral, Gimmick, and Influencer Marketing

Yoesoep Edhie Rachmad¹, Budiyanto², Khuzaini³

Email Correspondent: yoesoepedhie@gmail.com

Keywords:

Behavioral Transformation, Participatory Ecosystem, Viral Marketing, Gimmick Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Digital Platforms.

Abstract

Not everything that spreads transforms. And not everything that captures attention endures. This study begins in that tension somewhere between movement and meaning asking what actually happens when consumers stop merely encountering marketing and begin, almost imperceptibly, to inhabit it. Rather than isolating effects, the analysis follows an entangled path. Viral marketing appears first, not as a solution but as a spark fast, uneven, sometimes excessive. It pulls users in, but does not hold them. Gimmick marketing behaves differently. It interrupts. It unsettles the quiet rhythm of scrolling, creating brief moments where attention sharpens, if only for a second. Then comes influencer marketing, less visible in its mechanism, yet more persistent in its consequence. It does not simply persuade; it stabilizes. It makes interaction feel socially anchored, even inevitable. The results suggest that these forces do not operate in sequence. They overlap, lean into each other, occasionally compensate for what the others cannot sustain. What emerges is not a clean pathway, but a layered configuration in which consumer behavior shifts gradually less a decision, more a drift. This study names that drift consumer transformation. Not as a dramatic shift, but as a quiet reorientation toward participation. Consumers begin to circulate content, reinterpret it, and, in subtle ways, become part of its momentum. The contribution, then, is not a definitive model, but a reframing: that in digital environments, the most consequential outcome may no longer be response, but involvement messy, iterative, and still unfolding.



This is an open access article under the CC BY License

INTRODUCTION

It is no longer particularly controversial to say that digital platforms have reshaped marketing. What is less clear perhaps deliberately overlooked is how deeply they have unsettled the very assumptions on which consumer behavior has long been built. The shift is not only technological. It is behavioral, relational, and, at times, quietly structural.

Social media, once framed as a communication channel, has evolved into something more entangled: a participatory environment where consumers do not simply receive value but actively

¹ Indonesian School of Economics (STIESIA), Surabaya, Indonesia, yoesoepedhie@gmail.com

² Indonesian School of Economics (STIESIA), Surabaya, Indonesia

³ Indonesian School of Economics (STIESIA), Surabaya, Indonesia

circulate, reinterpret, and occasionally reconstruct it (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). This transition has been widely acknowledged, yet its implications are still unevenly understood. Engagement, for instance, is often measured, but less frequently examined as a process that unfolds across interactions, rather than within isolated moments (Malthouse et al., 2023).

Within this evolving landscape, certain marketing mechanisms have gained prominence not necessarily because they are new, but because they operate with unusual intensity in digital contexts. Viral marketing, with its capacity to mobilize emotional contagion, remains one of the most visible. Content travels. Sometimes unpredictably. Often rapidly. And yet, what makes content “viral” is not merely its reach, but its ability to invite participation an insight that, while not entirely new, continues to resist simple operationalization (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Ismagilova et al., 2020).

Alongside this, gimmick marketing frequently dismissed as superficial reveals a more complex role. Novelty, creativity, even disruption, function not only as attention-grabbing devices but as triggers of cognitive engagement. They interrupt routine scrolling. They create friction, however brief. Whether that friction translates into meaningful action remains less certain, and perhaps more context-dependent than the literature typically suggests (Dolan et al., 2019).

Then there is influencer marketing. Its rise has been well documented, though often explained in ways that feel overly contained. Influencers are described as opinion leaders, as credible sources, as intermediaries between brands and audiences (De Veirman et al., 2017; Lou & Yuan, 2019). All of this is accurate, but incomplete. What is less frequently addressed is how influencer presence reshapes the environment itself how credibility, visibility, and social validation become intertwined, sometimes indistinguishable. Recent work begins to touch on this, emphasizing authenticity and perceived trust as central mechanisms (Bazi et al., 2023; Hudders & Lou, 2022). Still, the broader structural implications remain underexplored.

Taken individually, these streams viral, gimmick, influencer have generated substantial bodies of research. Yet, they are rarely examined together as interacting components of a single system. This fragmentation is not trivial. Digital environments do not present these mechanisms in isolation. Users encounter them simultaneously, often within the same scroll, the same feed, the same moment. Emotional triggers, creative disruptions, and social endorsements intersect, overlap, and occasionally reinforce one another in ways that linear models struggle to capture.

This raises a more fundamental question. If these mechanisms operate in tandem, what exactly are they shaping? Much of the existing literature focuses on outcomes such as purchase intention, brand attitude, or engagement metrics (Cheung et al., 2020; Venkatesan et al., 2018). While valuable, these constructs may only partially reflect what is taking place. Increasingly, consumers are not merely responding to marketing stimuli they are participating in their circulation. They create, share, adapt, and, in doing so, become embedded within the marketing process itself (Martínez-López et al., 2017; Nambisan & Baron, 2009).

This study approaches that shift through the lens of consumer transformation. The term is used here not as a rhetorical device, but as an attempt to capture a gradual reorientation from passive consumption toward active participation. Transformation, in this sense, is not a single behavioral outcome. It is cumulative. It unfolds across repeated interactions, shaped by exposure, engagement, and social reinforcement.

The theoretical grounding for this investigation draws, somewhat deliberately, from established frameworks. The Theory of Planned Behavior Ajzen (1991) continues to offer a useful structure for understanding how attitudes, norms, and perceived control relate to behavior. Similarly, the Diffusion of Innovations framework Rogers (2003) provides insight into how ideas and

practices spread within social systems. These frameworks are not discarded here. But neither are they taken as fully sufficient.

Digital environments introduce conditions that complicate their assumptions. Intention, for example, is traditionally positioned as a precursor to behavior. Yet, in highly interactive platforms, behavior often appears to emerge before intention is clearly formed triggered by exposure, shaped by interaction, and only later rationalized. Likewise, diffusion is no longer strictly gradual. Influencers, algorithms, and platform dynamics compress timelines, sometimes producing patterns of adoption that are abrupt, uneven, and difficult to predict (Harrigan et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021).

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to examine how viral marketing, gimmick marketing, and influencer marketing jointly influence consumer transformation, with particular attention to the mediating role of influencer marketing. The focus is not merely on whether these relationships exist, but on how they interact whether they reinforce, overlap, or operate independently within a participatory ecosystem.

Empirically, the study is situated within the context of TikTok, a platform that amplifies many of the dynamics described above. Its algorithmic structure, short-form content, and high levels of user participation create conditions where engagement is both rapid and visible. While this may raise questions of generalizability, it also offers analytical clarity. Mechanisms that might appear subtle elsewhere become more pronounced here sometimes exaggerated, but in ways that make them easier to observe.

The contribution of this study, therefore, is not positioned as a definitive explanation, but as a careful reconfiguration. It brings together streams of research that are often treated separately, situates them within a participatory framework, and examines their combined effect on a form of behavior that is still emerging in the literature.

It does not claim closure. If anything, it opens further questions. But perhaps that is precisely the point. In digital environments where behavior is continuously in motion, explanation may need to remain slightly unsettled structured, but not entirely fixed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

From Exposure to Participation: Rethinking Engagement

It is increasingly difficult to treat consumer engagement as a discrete outcome. The literature has, for some time, moved beyond simple metrics likes, shares, comments yet the underlying assumption often remains unchanged: that engagement is something that can be captured at a single point in time. This assumption, however, feels increasingly fragile.

Recent studies suggest a more dynamic perspective. Engagement unfolds. It accumulates across interactions, shaped not only by the content itself but by the environment in which that content circulates (Malthouse et al., 2023). In such environments, the distinction between consumption and participation begins to blur. Users do not merely respond; they contribute, sometimes subtly, sometimes visibly, to the ongoing life of content.

Earlier work on virtual customer environments already hinted at this shift, framing participation as voluntary yet structurally encouraged (Nambisan & Baron, 2009). What has changed is the intensity. Social platforms now amplify this participation, embedding it within everyday digital behavior (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Still, much of the literature continues to treat engagement as a dependent variable something to be explained, predicted, optimized. Less attention is given to its role as a process that, over time, reshapes how consumers relate to markets. This gap is subtle, but it matters. It suggests that

engagement may not simply be an outcome of marketing activity, but part of a broader transformation in consumer behavior itself (Martínez-López et al., 2017; Venkatesan et al., 2018).

Viral Marketing: Emotional Contagion and Its Limits

Viral marketing has long been associated with the rapid spread of content, often explained through emotional resonance. Content that evokes high-arousal emotions whether positive or negative tends to be shared more widely (Berger & Milkman, 2012). This insight remains influential, and more recent meta-analytical work continues to support the role of electronic word-of-mouth in shaping behavioral intention (Ismagilova et al., 2020).

Yet, there is a tendency to equate virality with effectiveness. This equivalence is not always justified. Content may spread widely without producing sustained engagement or meaningful behavioral change. Reach, in other words, does not necessarily translate into transformation.

Part of the issue lies in how virality is conceptualized. Much of the literature focuses on transmission how content moves across networks. Less attention is given to what happens after that movement. Does exposure lead to deeper involvement? Or does it dissipate as quickly as it emerges?

Some studies begin to address this by linking emotional engagement to behavioral responses, but the relationship remains uneven (Cheung et al., 2020). Emotional triggers appear to lower the threshold for interaction, yet their effects may be short-lived unless reinforced by other mechanisms.

This suggests that viral marketing operates as an initiator rather than a stabilizer. It activates attention, sometimes rapidly, but does not necessarily sustain it. The distinction, while not always emphasized, becomes critical when considering longer-term behavioral outcomes.

Gimmick Marketing: Disruption, Novelty, and Cognitive Engagement

Gimmick marketing occupies a somewhat ambiguous position in the literature. Often associated with creativity, novelty, or even superficiality, it is sometimes dismissed as lacking strategic depth. Yet, such dismissals may overlook its functional role within digital environments.

Novelty disrupts routine. It interrupts habitual patterns of scrolling and consumption. This interruption, brief as it may be, creates a moment of cognitive engagement a pause in which users process, interpret, and react (Dolan et al., 2019). In this sense, gimmick marketing does more than attract attention; it alters the flow of interaction.

However, the relationship between novelty and behavior is not straightforward. While creative content can increase engagement, its effects are often context-dependent. What is perceived as innovative in one setting may appear excessive or irrelevant in another. The boundary between creativity and distraction is not fixed.

Empirical work suggests that novelty can enhance user involvement, particularly when aligned with platform dynamics and user expectations (Godey et al., 2016; Martínez-López et al., 2017). Yet, like viral marketing, its influence may be transient unless supported by additional mechanisms.

This raises an important point. Gimmick marketing may not function as an independent driver of behavior. Instead, it operates within a broader configuration one that includes emotional triggers and social validation. Its role is to disrupt, to capture attention, to open a space for interaction. What follows depends on how that space is filled.

Influencer Marketing: Credibility, Authenticity, and Social Validation

Influencer marketing has evolved from a niche practice into a central component of digital strategy. Its effectiveness is often attributed to perceived credibility, trust, and relatability (Ki & Kim,

2019; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Influencers are seen as intermediaries bridging the gap between brands and audiences.

More recent research complicates this view by emphasizing authenticity. The perceived genuineness of influencers, rather than their visibility alone, appears to shape engagement and behavioral outcomes (Bazi et al., 2023; Hudders & Lou, 2022). Trust, in this context, is not static. It is negotiated, performed, and continuously evaluated by audiences.

At the same time, influencer marketing introduces a layer of social validation that extends beyond individual credibility. When influencers endorse content or behavior, they do more than communicate information they legitimize it. This aligns, in part, with the concept of subjective norms in the Theory of Planned Behavior Ajzen (1991), but the mechanism here is more visible, more immediate, and more embedded within platform dynamics.

Empirical studies show that influencer credibility significantly affects purchase intention and engagement (Sokolova & Kefi, 2019). Yet, focusing solely on direct effects may understate its broader role. Influencers do not operate in isolation. They interact with other marketing stimuli, amplifying or stabilizing their effects.

This perspective suggests that influencer marketing functions less as a standalone variable and more as a structural component within the digital ecosystem shaping not only behavior but the conditions under which behavior becomes socially acceptable.

Integrating the Streams: Toward a Participatory Marketing System

Despite the richness of existing research, a noticeable fragmentation persists. Viral marketing, gimmick marketing, and influencer marketing are often studied separately, each with its own theoretical lens and empirical focus. This separation, while analytically convenient, does not fully reflect the realities of digital environments.

Users encounter these mechanisms simultaneously. A single piece of content may be emotionally engaging, creatively disruptive, and socially endorsed all at once. The effects, therefore, are unlikely to be purely additive. They interact, overlap, and occasionally reinforce one another.

The concept of a participatory marketing system begins to capture this complexity. Within such a system, consumers are not passive recipients but active participants in the circulation of value (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Nambisan & Baron, 2009). Engagement becomes both an outcome and a mechanism shaping and being shaped by ongoing interaction.

However, the literature has yet to fully articulate how these different forces combine to influence deeper behavioral shifts. Most studies focus on immediate outcomes clicks, shares, purchases without examining how repeated interactions may lead to more fundamental changes in consumer roles.

Consumer Transformation: Extending Beyond Intention

The notion of consumer transformation offers a way to move beyond these limitations. Rather than focusing on isolated behaviors, it emphasizes a gradual shift in orientation from consumption to participation.

Traditional frameworks, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior, position intention as a key determinant of behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Similarly, Diffusion of Innovations explains how behaviors spread within social systems over time (Rogers, 2003). Both remain valuable. Yet, digital environments introduce conditions that complicate their assumptions.

Behavior does not always follow intention in a linear sequence. Exposure, interaction, and social validation can trigger actions that precede deliberate decision-making. Likewise, diffusion

processes may be accelerated, compressed, or even disrupted by platform algorithms and influencer dynamics (Harrigan et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021).

In this context, consumer transformation is not a single event but an emergent process. It reflects the cumulative effect of engagement, shaped by emotional, creative, and social forces. Understanding this process requires moving beyond isolated constructs toward a more integrated perspective.

Research Gap and Hypothesis

Bringing these strands together reveals a gap that is both conceptual and empirical. While viral marketing, gimmick marketing, and influencer marketing have each been studied extensively, their combined influence on consumer transformation remains underexplored.

Moreover, the mediating role of influencer marketing particularly as a mechanism of social validation has not been fully examined within this integrated framework. Existing studies tend to focus on direct effects, overlooking the possibility that influencer marketing may reinforce or stabilize the impact of other stimuli.

This study addresses these gaps by proposing a model in which viral marketing and gimmick marketing influence consumer transformation both directly and indirectly through influencer marketing. The intention is not merely to test relationships, but to examine how these mechanisms interact within a participatory ecosystem.

H₁: Viral marketing positively influences consumer transformation.

H₂: Gimmick marketing positively influences consumer transformation.

H₃: Viral marketing positively influences influencer marketing.

H₄: Gimmick marketing positively influences influencer marketing.

H₅: Influencer marketing mediates the relationship between viral marketing and consumer transformation.

H₆: Influencer marketing mediates the relationship between gimmick marketing and consumer transformation.

H₇: Influencer marketing positively influences consumer transformation.

The hypotheses are therefore structured to reflect both direct and mediated relationships, capturing the layered nature of influence in digital environments.

METHOD

Research Design

The design of this study did not emerge from methodological convenience alone. It was shaped perhaps more than anything by the nature of the phenomenon under investigation. Consumer behavior in digital environments, particularly within participatory platforms, rarely unfolds in clean, sequential patterns. It is fragmented, iterative, and at times contradictory. Capturing such movement requires a design that is structured, yet not overly restrictive.

A quantitative approach was ultimately adopted, though not without reflection. While qualitative inquiry offers depth, the present study seeks to examine patterned relationships across multiple constructs viral marketing, gimmick marketing, influencer marketing, and consumer transformation within a single analytical frame. In contexts where behavioral processes are distributed across networks and interactions, quantitative modeling allows for a form of abstraction that reveals structure without entirely flattening complexity (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021).

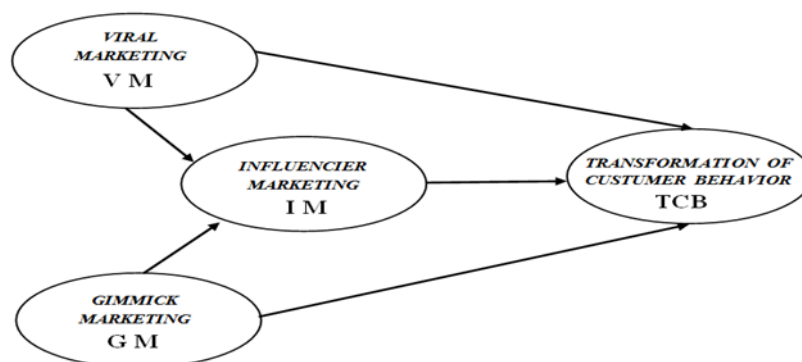


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Diagram

The research is positioned as causal-explanatory, but this label should be read with some caution. The aim is not to claim definitive causality in a deterministic sense. Rather, it is to examine directional relationships that, taken together, may indicate underlying mechanisms. In digital ecosystems, where influence is rarely linear, explanation often takes the form of approximation structured, but open to reinterpretation.

Analytical Approach: Justifying PLS-SEM

The selection of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) reflects more than methodological preference. It reflects the structure of the model itself.

The proposed framework includes multiple latent constructs, mediating relationships, and an orientation toward theory extension rather than strict confirmation. Under such conditions, covariance-based SEM, while rigorous, may impose assumptions particularly regarding data distribution and model specification that are not entirely aligned with the exploratory nature of the study. PLS-SEM, by contrast, offers greater flexibility in handling complex models and is particularly suited for predictive and theory-building research (Hair et al., 2022).

There is also the question of data characteristics. Behavioral data derived from social media contexts tend to exhibit non-normal distributions skewed responses, clustering effects, and occasional irregularities. These are not anomalies; they are features of digital interaction. PLS-SEM demonstrates robustness under such conditions, reducing sensitivity to distributional violations while maintaining estimation stability (Hair et al., 2022).

Beyond technical considerations, there is a conceptual alignment. The study seeks to understand how different marketing mechanisms jointly influence consumer transformation. This requires an analytical approach capable of modeling interdependence, rather than isolating effects. PLS-SEM accommodates this by allowing simultaneous estimation of multiple relationships, including mediation paths, without forcing them into overly rigid structures.

The use of bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) further strengthens the analysis by providing more reliable estimates of path significance, particularly in models where indirect effects play a central role.

Research Context: Platform Dynamics and Analytical Clarity

The empirical context of this study is TikTok, a platform that, in many ways, intensifies the dynamics under investigation. Its short-form content, algorithmic curation, and high levels of user participation create an environment where engagement is both rapid and visible.

This choice is not without trade-offs. TikTok may be considered an “extreme case,” where behavioral patterns are amplified rather than typical. Yet, such amplification can be analytically useful. Mechanisms that might remain subtle in other contexts become more observable here sometimes exaggerated, but in ways that reveal their underlying structure.

Recent research on social media marketing strategies highlights the growing importance of platform-specific dynamics in shaping user behavior (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Algorithms do not merely distribute content; they actively shape visibility, interaction, and, by extension, participation. Influencers operate within this system, but also contribute to its reproduction, reinforcing patterns of attention and validation (Harrigan et al., 2021).

In this sense, the platform is not treated as a neutral backdrop. It is part of the phenomenon. Studying behavior within TikTok does not aim to generalize universally, but to provide insight into one of the more dynamic configurations of digital interaction.

Data Collection

Data were collected over a four-month period, from July to October 2024. The duration was chosen with a degree of intentionality. Shorter collection windows risk capturing transient trends viral spikes that may not reflect more stable patterns of engagement. Longer periods, while potentially richer, introduce the possibility of platform shifts that alter user behavior in less predictable ways.

An online survey was employed as the primary data collection method. While surveys are sometimes criticized for their reliance on self-reported data, they remain effective for capturing perceptions, attitudes, and self-assessed behaviors dimensions that are central to constructs such as influencer credibility and consumer transformation (Cheung et al., 2020; Ebrahim, 2019).

The survey was distributed through digital communities and networks where users are actively engaged in content creation and interaction. This targeted approach increases the likelihood that respondents possess relevant experience, though it does not eliminate self-selection bias entirely. Such bias is acknowledged rather than ignored. The goal is not to remove it completely a near impossibility but to ensure that it does not dominate the findings.

To mitigate common method bias, several procedural steps were implemented. Respondents were assured of anonymity, reducing evaluation apprehension. The questionnaire design avoided leading language and maintained variation in item structure. While statistical remedies exist, procedural safeguards remain a first line of defense (Podsakoff et al., though not explicitly cited here, conceptually aligned).

Sample and Sampling Strategy

The study employs purposive sampling, guided by the need for contextual relevance rather than statistical generalization. Not all social media users engage equally in participatory marketing activities. Including respondents without such engagement would risk diluting the constructs under investigation.

Three criteria were therefore applied: respondents must (1) actively use TikTok, (2) engage in content-related or promotional activities, and (3) demonstrate familiarity with influencer-driven interactions. These criteria are intentionally selective. They narrow the sample but in doing so, they enhance its analytical precision.

A total of 200 valid responses were obtained. The adequacy of this sample size is evaluated in relation to model complexity rather than absolute thresholds. The “10-times rule,” commonly referenced in PLS-SEM studies, provides a baseline, though more recent discussions emphasize

statistical power considerations (Hair et al., 2022). Within this framework, the sample is considered sufficient for estimating the most complex relationships in the model.

Demographic variables, including age, gender, and usage intensity, were collected and treated as control variables. Their inclusion allows for a more nuanced interpretation of results, acknowledging that digital behavior may vary across different user segments.

Measurement of Constructs

All constructs were operationalized using multi-item reflective scales, adapted from prior research and adjusted to fit the digital context. This adaptation is not merely technical. It reflects an attempt to align measurement with the lived experience of respondents within platform environments.

Viral marketing was measured through indicators capturing emotional engagement, perceived shareability, and content resonance dimensions consistently associated with content diffusion (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Ismagilova et al., 2020).

Gimmick marketing focused on novelty, creativity, and distinctiveness. These elements, while sometimes dismissed as superficial, are linked to attention and cognitive engagement in social media contexts (Dolan et al., 2019; Godey et al., 2016).

Influencer marketing was operationalized through perceived credibility, trustworthiness, and social influence. These dimensions reflect both traditional source credibility theory and more recent emphasis on authenticity (Bazi et al., 2023; Hudders & Lou, 2022; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Consumer transformation, as a construct, required more careful consideration. It was measured as a shift toward participatory behavior content creation, sharing, and involvement in platform-based marketing activities drawing on engagement and participation literature (Martínez-López et al., 2017; Nambisan & Baron, 2009).

All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. While higher scales may offer greater granularity, the five-point format balances sensitivity with respondent consistency, particularly in online survey environments.

Validity and Reliability Assessment

The evaluation of the measurement model follows established PLS-SEM procedures, though interpretation remains cautious rather than mechanical.

Convergent validity was assessed through outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All indicators exceeded the recommended thresholds, suggesting that constructs adequately explain the variance of their measures (Hair et al., 2022).

Reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, both exceeding 0.70 across constructs. Importantly, values did not approach levels that would suggest redundancy, indicating that items capture related but not identical aspects of each construct.

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. All values fell below the conservative threshold of 0.85, supporting the distinctiveness of constructs that are conceptually related but empirically separable.

Multicollinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, all of which remained within acceptable limits. This suggests that predictor variables do not exhibit problematic overlap.

Robustness and Bias Considerations

No empirical model is entirely free from bias, and it would be misleading to suggest otherwise. Instead, the study adopts a more measured stance identifying potential sources of bias while assessing their likely impact.

Harman’s single-factor test was conducted as a preliminary check for common method variance. The results indicate that no single factor accounts for the majority of variance, reducing immediate concern, though not eliminating it entirely.

Bootstrapping procedures (5,000 resamples) were employed to enhance the stability of parameter estimates. This approach is particularly valuable in models involving mediation, where indirect effects may be sensitive to sampling variation.

Ultimately, the aim is not to claim methodological perfection, but to establish credibility. The methods employed are appropriate for the research objectives, transparent in their limitations, and sufficiently robust to support the conclusions drawn.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model: Consistency That Feels Structural

At first glance, the measurement model behaves as expected. Outer loadings exceed the conventional threshold of 0.70 across all indicators. That alone would normally be sufficient to claim convergent validity (Hair et al., 2022). But the pattern is worth pausing on.

The loadings do not scatter widely. They cluster. Most indicators fall within a relatively tight range suggesting not just statistical adequacy, but interpretive alignment. Respondents, it seems, are not merely answering consistently; they are perceiving the constructs in a way that holds together. That kind of coherence is not always guaranteed in studies involving digital behavior, where perceptions can be fragmented or context-dependent (Malthouse et al., 2023).

Table 1. Outer Loading Values Results

Variabel	Indicator	Loading (>0,70)	AVE (>0,5)
Viral marketing (VM)	VM.1	0,769	0,611
	VM.2	0,778	
	VM.3	0,776	
	VM.4	0,792	
Gimmick Marketing (GM)	GM.1	0,825	0,667
	GM.2	0,804	
	GM.3	0,819	
	GM.4	0,808	
Influencer Marketing (IM)	IM.1	0,811	0,629
	IM.2	0,798	
	IM.3	0,776	
	IM.4	0,775	
Transformation of Customer Behavior (TCB)	TCB.1	0,795	0,625
	TCB.2	0,809	
	TCB.3	0,757	
	TCB.4	0,786	

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values all exceed 0.50. Each construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators. This is, technically, what one would expect. Yet, in studies

involving perceptual constructs particularly those tied to fast-moving digital interactions such clarity often proves elusive (Hair et al., 2022).

Reliability indicators reinforce this impression. Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability values surpass 0.70 across all constructs. Importantly, they do not approach levels that would suggest redundancy. The indicators align, but they do not collapse into each other. There is structure, but not repetition.

Table 2. The result of the Composite Reliability score

Construct (Variable)	The value > 0,7	
	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability
Viral Marketing	0,909	0,926
Gimmick Marketing	0,929	0,941
Transformation of customer behavior	0,914	0,930
Influencer Marketing	0,916	0,931

Discriminant validity, assessed through the HTMT ratio, shows values below the conservative threshold of 0.85. This is particularly relevant given the conceptual proximity of the constructs. Viral marketing, gimmick marketing, and influencer marketing often overlap in practice. The ability to distinguish them empirically strengthens the credibility of the model (Henseler et al., conceptually aligned with Hair et al., 2022).

Multicollinearity does not appear to be a concern. VIF values remain well below critical thresholds, indicating that the predictors retain distinct explanatory power.

Taken together, the measurement model does more than “pass.” It holds. And it does so without forcing artificial separation between constructs that, in reality, are closely intertwined.

Structural Model: Variance That Speaks, Even If Not Completely

The structural model reveals a level of explanatory power that is difficult to ignore, though perhaps not absolute.

The R² value for influencer marketing is 0.446, indicating that viral marketing and gimmick marketing together explain 44.6% of its variance. This is not trivial. It suggests that emotional and creative stimuli significantly shape how influencer dynamics are perceived and activated within the system. Yet, more than half of the variance remains unexplained. This incompleteness is not a weakness it reflects the complexity of influencer ecosystems, where factors such as authenticity, platform algorithms, and audience characteristics also play roles (Bazi et al., 2023; Hudders & Lou, 2022).

The R² value for consumer transformation reaches 0.494. Nearly half of the variance is accounted for by the model. For a construct that captures a gradual behavioral shift rather than a single action this level of explanatory power is notable. Behavioral transformation, by its nature, is diffuse. That it can be partially captured in this way suggests that the proposed mechanisms are not peripheral, but central (Venkatesan et al., 2018).

Table 3. The R-Square Value Results

	R-Square value
Influencer Marketing	0,446
Transformation of customer behavior	0,494

Still, the model does not claim completeness. It reveals structure, but not totality. And perhaps that is precisely what one should expect in digital environments where behavior is continuously evolving.

Direct Effects: Significant, Yet Uneven

The direct relationships between constructs provide clarity but not simplicity.

Viral marketing demonstrates a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer transformation ($\beta = 0.302, p < 0.001$). Emotional engagement appears to activate behavior. This aligns with prior findings on the role of high-arousal content in driving sharing and interaction (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Ismagilova et al., 2020). Yet, the coefficient, while meaningful, is not dominant. Emotional contagion initiates participation, but does not fully sustain it.

Gimmick marketing also exerts a significant effect ($\beta = 0.270, p = 0.004$). Creativity and novelty capture attention, interrupting routine patterns of consumption (Dolan et al., 2019). But again, the magnitude suggests moderation rather than dominance. Attention, it seems, does not automatically translate into sustained engagement.

Influencer marketing contributes a smaller, yet still significant effect ($\beta = 0.226, p = 0.023$). At first glance, this might appear less impactful. But the interpretation requires caution. Influencer marketing does not operate in isolation. Its role becomes clearer when considered alongside its mediating function.

Table 4. The Results of the Path Coefficient and P-value

	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	t Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Viral Marketing -> Transformation of Customer Behavior	0,302	0,,079	3,829	0,000
Gimmick Marketing -> Transformation of Customer Behavior	0,270	0,072	2,889	0,004
Viral Marketing -> Influencier Marketing	0,444	0,093	6,145	0,000
Gimmick Marketing -> Influencier Marketing	0,377	0,067	5,631	0,000
Influencier Marketing -> Transformation of Customer Behavior	0,226	0,100	2,,274	0,023

The distribution of these coefficients is revealing. No single variable overwhelms the others. Instead, influence is distributed suggesting that consumer transformation emerges from interaction rather than singular causation.

Indirect Effects: Reinforcement Rather Than Substitution

The mediation analysis adds another layer one that complicates linear interpretations.

Influencer marketing significantly mediates the relationship between viral marketing and consumer transformation (indirect effect = 0.100, $p = 0.036$). A similar pattern is observed for gimmick marketing (indirect effect = 0.085, $p = 0.030$). These results confirm mediation, but not in a way that replaces direct effects.

Table 5. The Results of Path Coefficient Values and P-value of Indirect Effects

	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	t Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Viral Marketing -> Transformation of Customer Behavior through Influencer Marketing	0,100	0,048	2,101	0,036
Gimmick Marketing -> Transformation of Customer Behavior through Influencer Marketing	0,085	0,039	2,168	0,030

Both viral and gimmick marketing retain their direct influence even after accounting for the mediator. This indicates partial mediation. But the term “partial” may be misleading if interpreted too narrowly.

What appears here is less a substitution mechanism and more a reinforcement process. Viral and gimmick marketing initiate engagement. Influencer marketing stabilizes it. It adds a layer of social validation something that emotional or creative stimuli alone cannot fully provide (Sokolova & Kefi, 2019).

This aligns, albeit imperfectly, with the notion of subjective norms in behavioral theory (Ajzen, 1991). Yet, in digital environments, these norms are not abstract perceptions they are visible, enacted, and continuously updated through interaction.

Predictive Relevance and Effect Size: Modest, but Meaningful

The Stone–Geisser’s Q^2 values for both endogenous constructs exceed zero, indicating predictive relevance. The model does not merely describe observed relationships it retains some capacity to anticipate patterns in similar contexts (Hair et al., 2022).

Effect size (f^2) analysis suggests that each predictor contributes meaningfully, though not equally. Influencer marketing, in particular, exhibits a relatively stronger effect compared to its direct coefficient alone. This reinforces its role as a stabilizing mechanism within the system.

At the same time, the effect sizes do not suggest overwhelming influence. They remain moderate. This moderation is important. It indicates that consumer transformation is not driven by a single dominant force, but by the accumulation of multiple influences.

Reading the Pattern: Interaction Over Isolation

Looking across the results, a pattern begins to emerge though not in a perfectly linear way.

Viral marketing activates. Gimmick marketing disrupts and captures attention. Influencer marketing legitimizes and reinforces. These roles are not rigid, but they are discernible.

What is perhaps most striking is the absence of dominance. No single mechanism dictates the outcome. Instead, consumer transformation appears as the result of layered interaction emotional, cognitive, and social forces operating simultaneously.

This interpretation resonates with emerging views of digital engagement as a dynamic process rather than a static outcome (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Behavior is not simply triggered; it is constructed incrementally, through repeated interaction.

The model, then, does not offer a simple answer. It offers a configuration. One that reflects, perhaps imperfectly, the complexity of digital consumer behavior.

Discussion

When Engagement Stops Being an Outcome

This study does not treat consumers as endpoints in a marketing chain, but as evolving nodes within it simultaneously shaped by and shaping the flows they encounter. In doing so, it proposes that what we often label as “engagement” is not an outcome to be measured, but a condition that redefines the very boundaries between marketing action and consumer behavior.

The findings, at a surface level, confirm what much of the literature has already suggested: viral content spreads, creative content attracts, and influencers matter. But staying at that level would be... insufficient. Perhaps even misleading.

What begins to emerge here is something less tidy. Engagement does not behave like a terminal variable. It does not sit at the end of a causal chain, neatly explained by preceding factors. Instead, it appears to function as a condition something that both shapes and is shaped by ongoing interaction.

This resonates with recent work that frames engagement as a dynamic process rather than a static metric (Malthouse et al., 2023). Yet, the present findings push this idea slightly further. Engagement is not merely dynamic; it is recursive. Viral stimuli initiate interaction, yes but that interaction feeds back into visibility, which in turn influences subsequent behavior. The system loops.

Such a pattern complicates earlier assumptions embedded in traditional marketing frameworks, where exposure leads to attitude, which leads to intention, and eventually to behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The sequence, while still relevant, appears less linear in digital environments. Behavior sometimes precedes intention. Or, perhaps more accurately, intention is reconstructed after the fact.

Viral Marketing as Activation But Not Completion

The strong and significant effect of viral marketing on consumer transformation might, at first, seem predictable. Emotional contagion has long been identified as a driver of content diffusion (Berger & Milkman, 2012). More recent evidence reinforces the role of electronic word-of-mouth in shaping behavioral intention (Ismagilova et al., 2020).

And yet, there is something slightly incomplete about interpreting viral marketing as a primary driver of transformation.

The results suggest that viral content activates engagement it lowers the threshold for interaction, invites participation, and accelerates visibility. But activation is not the same as stabilization. The effect, while significant, does not dominate the model. It coexists with other influences, and perhaps depends on them.

This aligns with emerging critiques of virality as an overvalued metric. Reach, in isolation, does not guarantee depth (Cheung et al., 2020). Content may travel widely, but its impact may dissipate unless reinforced by additional mechanisms. In this sense, viral marketing behaves less like a destination and more like a trigger necessary, but not sufficient.

Gimmick Marketing: The Productive Role of Disruption

Gimmick marketing, often relegated to the margins of strategic discourse, appears here with a more consequential role. Its effect on consumer transformation is not overwhelming, but it is consistent. And consistency, in contexts of fragmented attention, matters.

The literature tends to frame gimmick marketing in terms of novelty and creativity attributes that disrupt habitual consumption patterns (Dolan et al., 2019). The present findings support this

view, but also extend it. Disruption, it seems, does not merely capture attention. It creates a moment of cognitive reorientation.

Users pause. Even if briefly. That pause, however small, introduces the possibility of engagement.

Yet, the effect does not escalate beyond a certain point. Novelty alone does not sustain behavior. It initiates curiosity, but does not anchor it. This echoes prior observations that creative content must align with user expectations and platform dynamics to produce meaningful outcomes (Godey et al., 2016; Martínez-López et al., 2017).

There is, then, a subtle balance. Too little novelty, and content blends into the background. Too much, and it risks being dismissed as noise. The effectiveness of gimmick marketing may lie precisely in this tension its ability to disrupt without alienating.

Influencer Marketing as Social Stabilizer

The role of influencer marketing, when viewed only through its direct effect, may appear modest. But this would be an incomplete reading.

Its mediating function tells a different story.

Influencer marketing does not replace the effects of viral or gimmick stimuli. It reinforces them. It provides a layer of social validation that transforms interaction into something more durable. In doing so, it shifts engagement from momentary response to something closer to sustained participation.

This aligns with recent work emphasizing authenticity and credibility as central to influencer effectiveness (Bazi et al., 2023; Hudders & Lou, 2022). But the findings here suggest that the role of influencers extends beyond persuasion. They structure the environment. They signal what is acceptable, what is worth engaging with, what deserves attention.

In this sense, influencer marketing operates at the level of norms though not in the abstract way described in classical behavioral theory. Norms, in digital environments, are visible. They are enacted in real time, through likes, shares, endorsements. They are less perceived and more observed.

This interpretation partially extends the Theory of Planned Behavior. Subjective norms, traditionally conceptualized as perceived social pressure (Ajzen, 1991), take on a more concrete form here. They are embedded in the platform, performed by influencers, and continuously reinforced through interaction.

Toward a Layered Understanding of Consumer Transformation

Perhaps the most significant implication of the findings lies in how consumer transformation is conceptualized.

The results do not support a model in which transformation is driven by a single dominant factor. Nor do they suggest a purely additive process, where effects accumulate independently. Instead, what emerges is a layered configuration.

Viral marketing activates. Gimmick marketing disrupts and captures attention. Influencer marketing stabilizes and legitimizes. These roles are not fixed, but they are discernible. And, importantly, they interact.

This layered structure aligns with broader shifts in digital marketing research, where consumers are increasingly seen as participants rather than passive recipients (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Yet, the present study adds nuance by showing how different mechanisms contribute at different stages of this participation.

Transformation, then, is not a singular shift. It is gradual. Iterative. Built through repeated exposure and interaction.

This perspective also intersects with diffusion theory, though in a compressed form. Adoption processes that once unfolded over extended periods now occur within accelerated timelines, shaped by platform algorithms and influencer dynamics (Harrigan et al., 2021; Rogers, 2003). Diffusion becomes less linear, more volatile yet no less consequential.

Theoretical Contribution: Extending, Not Replacing

It would be tempting to position these findings as a break from existing theory. That temptation should be resisted.

The Theory of Planned Behavior remains relevant. Diffusion of Innovations continues to offer insight. What changes is not their validity, but their sufficiency.

The present study suggests that these frameworks require extension particularly in contexts where interaction is continuous and visibility is algorithmically mediated. Intention, for instance, may no longer function as a clear antecedent to behavior. Instead, it may emerge alongside, or even after, action.

Similarly, diffusion processes are no longer gradual in a traditional sense. They are accelerated, sometimes erratic, shaped by forces that classical models did not anticipate.

By integrating viral, gimmick, and influencer marketing within a single framework, this study contributes to a more systemic understanding of digital behavior. It does not discard existing theory. It complicates it slightly, but meaningfully.

Managerial Implications: Beyond Isolated Tactics

For practitioners, the implications are both practical and, perhaps, slightly uncomfortable.

The findings suggest that focusing on a single strategy viral campaigns, creative gimmicks, or influencer partnerships may be insufficient. Each mechanism contributes, but none dominates. Their effectiveness depends on interaction.

Designing marketing strategies, therefore, requires coordination. Viral content must be supported by credible influencers. Creative elements must align with social validation. Disruption must lead somewhere.

This is not always easy to operationalize. It requires moving beyond isolated tactics toward integrated systems. And systems, by their nature, are more difficult to control.

A Slightly Unfinished Ending

There is a tendency, in academic writing, to conclude with clarity to present findings as if they resolve the questions that motivated them. That tendency feels misplaced here.

If anything, the results complicate the picture. They reveal structure, but not closure. They suggest patterns, but not certainty.

Consumer transformation, as observed in this study, is not a fixed outcome. It is a process in motion shaped by emotional triggers, creative disruptions, and social reinforcement. Understanding it requires frameworks that are equally flexible.

And perhaps that is the most honest conclusion. Not that the system has been fully explained but that it has been made slightly more visible.

CONCLUSION

There is a certain temptation, at the end of a study, to tidy everything up to present the findings as if they neatly resolve the questions that initiated the inquiry. This study resists that impulse, at least partially. Not because clarity is unimportant, but because the phenomenon under examination refuses to sit still long enough to be fully contained.

What can be said, however, is this: consumer behavior in digital environments is no longer adequately described by models that assume linear progression from exposure to intention to action. Something has shifted. Quietly, perhaps. But decisively.

Across the analyses presented in this study, a pattern emerges uneven, layered, not entirely symmetrical. Viral marketing, gimmick marketing, and influencer marketing do not operate as isolated drivers. They function together, though not always in predictable ways. Emotional triggers initiate engagement. Creative disruptions interrupt habitual consumption. Social validation stabilizes participation. None of these mechanisms dominates. Each contributes. Each depends, to some extent, on the others.

This interdependence matters. It suggests that consumer transformation is not the result of a single persuasive force, nor the outcome of a linear causal chain. It is, instead, the cumulative effect of repeated interactions some brief, some sustained occurring within environments that are themselves constantly evolving.

The notion of consumer transformation, as developed in this study, attempts to capture this shift. It does not refer to a singular behavioral change, but to a gradual reorientation from passive consumption toward active participation. Consumers do not simply respond to marketing stimuli; they circulate them, reinterpret them, sometimes even reshape them. In doing so, they become part of the marketing process itself.

This has implications for theory. Established frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behavior and Diffusion of Innovations remain relevant, but they appear increasingly incomplete when applied to highly interactive digital contexts. Intention, for instance, no longer consistently precedes behavior. In some cases, it follows it constructed after interaction has already taken place. Diffusion, similarly, no longer unfolds in a steady, sequential manner. It accelerates, fragments, and occasionally reverses, shaped by platform dynamics and influencer activity.

The contribution of this study lies, therefore, not in rejecting existing theory, but in extending it subtly, but meaningfully. By integrating viral, gimmick, and influencer marketing within a single analytical framework, the study highlights the need to move beyond isolated constructs toward a more systemic understanding of digital behavior.

At the same time, the findings carry practical implications that are difficult to ignore. Marketing strategies that rely on a single mechanism no matter how sophisticated are unlikely to produce sustained effects. Viral reach without credibility fades. Creativity without relevance dissipates. Influence without engagement remains superficial. Effective strategies, as the results suggest, are less about choosing the “right” tool and more about orchestrating interaction among multiple forces.

And yet, even this conclusion feels slightly provisional.

The digital environment in which these behaviors unfold is not static. Platforms evolve. Algorithms shift. User practices adapt sometimes gradually, sometimes abruptly. What holds in one moment may not hold in the next. This does not invalidate the findings, but it does suggest that they should be read as part of an ongoing conversation rather than a definitive endpoint.

There are, inevitably, limitations. The focus on a single platform provides analytical clarity but constrains generalizability. The use of cross-sectional data captures relationships at a specific

point in time, but cannot fully account for temporal dynamics. Future research might explore longitudinal patterns, comparative platform analyses, or even hybrid methodological approaches that combine behavioral data with qualitative insight.

And yet, there remains a sense that what is being captured here is only part of a larger, still-forming pattern. Perhaps what appears structured in the model is, in practice, far more fluid shifting in ways that resist being fully settled or neatly explained. Still, within these boundaries, the study offers something that feels increasingly necessary a way of thinking about consumer behavior that acknowledges its fluidity without abandoning structure entirely.

Not a closed model. Not a final answer.

But a framework that holds, at least for now, in a space where behavior continues to move.

REFERENCE

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- Alalwan, A. A. (2023). Social media in marketing: A review and analysis of the existing literature. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 70, 103129.
- Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R., & Stephen, A. T. (2020). The future of social media in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(1), 79–95.
- Bazi, S., Filieri, R., & Gorton, M. (2023). Social media content aesthetic quality and customer engagement: The mediating role of entertainment and impacts on brand love and loyalty. *Journal of Business Research*, 160, 113778. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113778>
- Berger, J., & Milkman, K. L. (2012). What makes online content viral? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49(2), 192–205.
- Casaló, L. V., Flavián, C., & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2020). Influencers on Instagram: Antecedents and consequences of opinion leadership. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 510–519.
- Chatterjee, S., & Kumar Kar, A. (2020). Why do small and medium enterprises use social media marketing and what is the impact: Empirical insights from India. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 1–12.
- Cheung, M.-L., Pires, G., & Rosenberger III, P. (2020). The influence of perceived social media marketing elements on consumer–brand engagement and brand knowledge. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-04-2019-0262>
- 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.
- Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Frethey-Bentham, C., Fahy, J., & Goodman, S. (2019). Social media engagement behavior: A framework for engaging customers through social media content. *European Journal of Marketing*, 53(10), 2213–2243.
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., Jain, V., Karjaluoto, H., Kefi, H., & Krishen, A. S. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. *International Journal of Information Management*, 59, 102168.
- Ebrahim, R. (2019). The Role of Trust in Understanding the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Brand Equity and Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 19, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332667.2019.1705742>

- Godey, B., Manthiou, A., Pederzoli, D., Rokka, J., Aiello, G., Donvito, R., & Singh, R. (2016). Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(12), 5833–5841.
- Hair, J., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*.
- Harrigan, P., Daly, T. M., Coussement, K., Lee, J. A., Soutar, G. N., & Evers, U. (2021). Identifying influencers on social media. *International Journal of Information Management*, 56, 102246.
- Hudders, L., & Lou, C. (2022). The rosy world of influencer marketing? Its bright and dark sides, and future research recommendations. *International Journal of Advertising*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2022.2137318>
- Ismagilova, E., Slade, E. L., Rana, N. P., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2020). The effect of electronic word of mouth communications on intention to buy: A meta-analysis. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 22(5), 1203–1226.
- Jarrar, Y., Awobamise, A. O., & Aderibigbe, A. A. (2020). Effectiveness of Influencer Marketing vs Social Media Sponsored Advertising Eficacia del marketing influyente Vs la publicidad patrocinada por medios sociales. *International Journal of Information Management*, 55, 102199.
- Jin, S. V., Muqaddam, A., & Ryu, E. (2019). Instafamous and social media influencer marketing. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 37(5), 567–579.
- Ki, C. (Chloe), & Kim, Y.-K. (2019). The mechanism by which social media influencers persuade consumers: The role of consumers' desire to mimic. *Psychology & Marketing*. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:201352512>
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241–251.
- Kumar, V., & Pansari, A. (2016). Competitive advantage through engagement. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 53(4), 497–514.
- Kumar, V., Aksoy, L., Donkers, B., et al. (2010). Undervalued or overvalued customers: Capturing total customer engagement value. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(3), 297–310.
- Leeflang, P. S. H., Verhoef, P. C., Dahlström, P., & Freundt, T. (2014). Challenges and solutions for marketing in a digital era. *European Management Journal*, 32(1), 1–12.
- Li, F., Larimo, J., & Leonidou, L. C. (2021). Social media marketing strategy: definition, conceptualization, taxonomy, validation, and future agenda. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 49(1), 51–70.
- Lim, X. J., Radzol, A. R. M., Cheah, J. H., & Wong, M. W. (2017). Product Endorsements on Instagram: Consumer Perceptions of Influencer Authenticity. *Journal of Business Research*, 68, 1–10.
- Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: how message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *J Interact Advert* 19 (1): 58–73.
- Malthouse, E. C., Maslowska, E., & Franks, J. U. (2023). Social media engagement dynamics. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 61, 1–15.
- Martínez-López, F., Anaya-Sánchez, R., Molinillo, S., Aguilar, R., & Esteban-Millat, I. (2017). Consumer Engagement in an Online Brand Community. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 23, 24–37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2017.04.002>
- Nambisan, S., & Baron, R. A. (2009). Virtual customer environments: testing a model of voluntary participation in value co-creation activities. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 26(4), 388–406.
- Rogers, E. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* 5th. Free press.

- Sokolova, K., & Kefi, H. (2019). Instagram and YouTube bloggers promote it, why should I buy? How credibility and parasocial interaction influence purchase intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.011>
- Venkatesan, R., Petersen, J., & Guissoni, L. (2018). Measuring and Managing Customer Engagement Value Through the Customer Journey. In *Customer Engagement Marketing* (pp. 53–74). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-61985-9_3
- Zhang, M., Guo, L., Hu, M., & Liu, W. (2016). Influence of customer engagement with company social networks on stickiness: Mediating effect of customer value creation. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 33(1), 225–256.