

The Influence of a Social Media Influencer on Purchase Intention as Moderated by Consumer Attitude

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Abstract

Companies now adapt to the rising social media trend because of the significant implications of social media influencers (SMIs) as brand endorsers. Scholars recommended examining the principal traits that allow SMIs to influence purchase intention instead of peripheral characteristics (e.g., number of followers). This manuscript uses the social learning theory (SLT) to examine the influence of the advertising effectiveness of an SMI on the consumers' purchase intention towards the fresh poultry brand of a Philippine poultry integrator. Source credibility, source attractiveness, product matchup, and meaning transfer represent advertising effectiveness. Consumer attitude is a proposed moderator on the relationship between advertising effectiveness and purchase intention. Two hundred fifty-one middle-class Filipino mothers participated in the survey conducted in Metro Manila, Philippines. The manuscript proves that source credibility and attractiveness positively influence purchase intention. However, product matchup and the meaning transfer did not positively influence purchase intention. Furthermore, the manuscript proves that consumer attitude significantly moderates the influence of source credibility and source attractiveness on purchase intention. This manuscript offers recommendations as to how the observed company can strengthen the advertising effectiveness of its SMI to elicit greater purchase intention.

Keywords: *Social media influencer, source credibility, source attractiveness, product matchup, meaning transfer, consumer attitude, purchase intention*

Introduction

Social media plays a vital role in the dynamics of social practices. People are increasingly dependent on social media to gather information and buy products (Liu et al., 2020). Buzzwords like "follow" and "subscribe" are used to appeal to an audience in online platforms, where the central figure of influence is called a "vlogger," "Insta-famous," or "YouTube celebrities" (Breves et al., 2019). SMIs are self-made online celebrities with a sizeable number of followers (Shan et al., 2020; Xu (Rinka) & Pratt, 2018). Unlike celebrity endorsers, SMIs use social media platforms to reach audiences (Schouten et al., 2020). By creating beauty, travel, and fashion content, SMIs garner a considerable follower base, making their online presence an emerging profession such as 'travel blogger' or 'food expert' (Schouten et al., 2020). SMIs can positively influence followers' brand awareness and purchase intention (Reinikainen et al., 2020; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020), leading to purchase decisions wherein a follower buys an SMI-endorsed product.

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Companies adapt to the rising influencer marketing trend upon recognizing how SMIs aggressively persuade consumers (Torres et al., 2019; Schouten et al., 2020). Through SMIs, brands can communicate with consumers to influence perceptions and improve product understanding. SMIs also strengthen brand recall and purchase motivations (Xu (Rinka) & Pratt, 2018). By effectively delivering advertising messages to consumers through product reviews, usage instructions, and comparisons, SMIs can persuade consumer brand acceptance, purchasing, and usage (Schouten et al., 2020).

The Fresh Poultry Company (TFPC) is the second-largest poultry integrator in the Philippines that sells poultry products. An overall competitive marketing strategy is critical to the company's long-term success (T. Magbag, personal communication, September 24, 2020). According to its marketing manager, TFPC's competitive branding and advertising strategies need improvement (T. Magbag, personal communication, September 24, 2020). In previous years, the absence of aggressive advertising campaigns led to TFPC's low brand health performance, unable to meet its target sales and market share. While TFPC was active in Facebook and Instagram, it has been more aggressive on social media starting 2018, launching new advertising campaigns with "the SMI" as its new endorser (T. Magbag, personal communication, September 24, 2020). Unlike TFPC's previous celebrity endorser, "the SMI" is believed to relate more closely to the target market, capable of influencing consumer attitude and increasing purchase intent towards the brand (T. Magbag, personal communication, September 24, 2020). Further, "the SMI" matches the brand's personality.

TFPC believes "the SMI" is effective based on viewership metrics. Online advertisements featuring the influencer had a 19.5% view-through rate, four times higher than the 5% industry benchmark. Consumer perceptions also measure advertising effectiveness (T. Magbag, personal communication, September 24, 2020). Cumulatively, the high brand health performance of TFPC in 2019 can be attributed to several other marketing efforts, making it difficult to assess the individual contribution of "the SMI" to TFPC's brand performance on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Despite being a crucial measure of whether it chose the right endorser (T. Magbag, personal communication, September 24, 2020), TFPC currently does not have a separate metric assessing an endorser's influence on its target market's purchase intentions.

Using SLT, this manuscript examines the influence of an SMI's advertising effectiveness on the target market's attitude and purchase intention towards TFPC. Source credibility, source attractiveness, product matchup, and meaning transfer are used as advertising effectiveness metrics, while consumer attitude is used to moderate the relationship between advertising effectiveness and purchase intention.

The manuscript addresses TFPC's marketing issues regarding the advertising effectiveness of its SMI by proposing a specific metric evaluating the SMI's contribution to brand health performance. The manuscript also determines the SMI's advertising effectiveness by measuring the target market's perceptions.

Furthermore, this manuscript addresses several research gaps in the literature. First, despite the prevalence of influencer marketing, literature remains insufficient in providing a holistic explanation of how SMIs influence consumers.

The scope of existing studies focused on peripheral traits that make influencers suitable for brand endorsements (e.g., number of followers) (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

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Limited research discusses the SMIs' principal traits influencing consumer attitude and purchase intention. The manuscript addresses this gap by considering an influencer's credibility, attractiveness, product matchup, and meaning transfer. Second, Lim et al. (2017) recommend using respondent groups (i.e., generation cohorts) other than students to yield more credible findings. This manuscript addresses this research gap by having mothers as respondents. Mothers are good determinants of purchase intention, deciding on food purchases for their families (Chien et al., 2018).

Further, the manuscript follows Lim et al. (2017), disregarding prior consumer experiences that may influence respondent attitudes and purchase intentions, adversely affecting the results. Lastly, Lim et al. (2017) recommend conducting further studies using a specific brand and SMI to eliminate potential biases. The manuscript addresses this gap by examining one brand and SMI in the context of a Philippine company.

Review of Related Literature

Influencer Marketing and the Emergence of SMIs

Influencer marketing emphasizes the use of SMIs in delivering brand messages to consumers (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). With SMIs becoming third-party endorsers (Reinikainen et al., 2020), endorsements play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining a brand's good reputation (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). SMIs develop buzzwords and market themselves as dynamic endorsers compared to traditional celebrities (Schouten et al., 2020). Influencer marketing is also one of the most cost-effective trends in digital marketing (Liu et al., 2020). Further, SMI endorsements prompt favorable brand attitudes, brand perception, and purchase intentions (Reinikainen et al., 2020). However, studies on SMIs as endorsers remain inadequate (Schouten et al., 2020).

Brands acquire SMIs with many online followers (Breves et al., 2019; Reinikainen et al., 2020; Shan et al., 2020). Consumers value recommendations of their favorite SMIs more than traditional celebrity endorsements (Schouten et al., 2020). SMIs are considered more reliable, knowledgeable, convincing, and trustworthy because of their agreeability and capability to establish rapport with consumers (Shan et al., 2020).

Status Quo of Influencer Marketing in the Philippines

There is a growing potential for social media marketing in the Philippines. SMI-generated content is an emerging trend in the country, as 78% of Filipinos favor unique content over traditional advertisements. Interactive content will become more popular. The highest-growing native format will be sponsored content. There will be 57.84 million online users in 2022, from 50.77 in 2016. Facebook is the most used social media platform by 26%, 23% on Messenger, followed by Twitter and Instagram with 13% and 12%, respectively. Filipinos spend around 4.5 hours daily on social media platforms. 86% of women rely on online platforms for purchase decisions. 32% of brand-collaborating SMIs quote Facebook as the best platform, followed by Instagram at 24%. 71% of Filipinos are inclined to purchase SMI-endorsed items. Firms roughly earn \$6.50 for a \$1 investment in influencer marketing.

Source Credibility

Source credibility measures an endorsement's effectiveness (Reinikainen et al., 2020), demonstrated when a reliable endorser influences consumer perceptions (Goldsmith et al., 2000; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Trustworthiness and expertise are indicators of source credibility (Shan et al., 2020). Influencers with particular expertise are more compelling and adept at motivating consumer purchase intention (Weismueller et al., 2020). Moreover, trustworthiness encompasses the endorser's dependability, reliability, and honesty (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). A consumer's acceptance of a brand message is influenced by his/her perceived expertise and trustworthiness (Yuan & Lou, 2020). The endorser's persuasiveness can influence consumer purchasing intentions (Weismueller et al., 2020). Studies on the relationship among these factors confirm the positive influence of source credibility on purchase intentions (Anwar & Jalees, 2017; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H1. Source credibility positively? Influences purchase intention.

Source Attractiveness

Source attractiveness pertains to the endorser's positive physical attributes (Weismueller et al., 2020), crucial in increasing brand message acceptance (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Beyond capturing the attention of more followers, studies prove a significant relationship between source attractiveness and consumer attitude through consumer purchase intentions (Weismueller et al., 2020). Source attractiveness directly influences an endorsement's effectiveness (Yuan & Lou, 2020). Attractive SMIs persuade consumers to support a brand and influence their purchase intentions (Nurhandayani et al., 2019). As consumers associate the endorser's attractiveness to product attributes (Breves et al., 2019), good-looking endorsers can better influence consumer attitudes towards advertised products (McCabe et al., 2015). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H2. Source attractiveness positively? Influences purchase intention.

Product Matchup

Crucial for effective advertising strategies (Lim et al., 2017), product matchup is the positive, significant connection between brand characteristics and the endorser's personality (Anwar & Jalees, 2017). The matchup hypothesis examines the congruence between the brand and the endorser (Torres et al., 2019). A solid matchup develops a positive consumer attitude resulting in higher purchase intentions (Xu (Rinka) & Pratt, 2018). Further, the SMI's product matchup can significantly improve and sustain positive advertising results (Torres et al., 2019). Consumers interpret the advertising message by discerning the relationship between the brand and the endorser. An intense product matchup positively influences consumer attitudes towards purchase intention (Breves et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2017). However, without consumers' proper understanding, advertising messages might be ineffective in reaching their target market. Therefore, it is proposed that:

H3. Product matchup positively? Influences purchase intention.

Meaning Transfer

The meaning transfer mediates the endorsement process where the endorser effectively delivers product meanings (McCracken, 1989). As movements of meaning, from the endorser to the product (Shan et al., 2020), endorsements help develop the consumer's self-image via consumption (Escalas & Bettman, 2017; McCracken, 1989). Further, consumers are inclined to buy a product endorsed by someone considered admirable (Shan et al., 2020), as endorsed products are perceived positively (Peetz et al., 2004). Studies confirm the endorsement's effect on the relationship between meaning transfer and consumer attitude through purchase intentions (McCracken, 1989; Peetz et al., 2004). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H4. Meaning transfer positively? Influences purchase intention.

The Moderation of Consumer Attitude on the Relationship between Advertising Effectiveness and Purchase Intention

Consumer attitude examination is vital for effective marketing strategies. Studies prove the significant relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention (Lim et al., 2017; Ting & de Run, 2015). They encompass both favorable and unfavorable beliefs, consumer attitude moderates the advertising effectiveness on purchase intention towards a product (Chen, 2007).

SMIs can modify consumer preferences and elicit purchase intentions (Laroche & Kim, 1996). Specifically, source credibility is strongly associated with positive consumer attitudes (Briñol et al., 2004) and higher purchase intentions (Harmon et al., 1982). Chan et al. (2013) determined a significant relationship between consumer attitude and credible endorsers through purchase intentions, where positive consumer attitudes towards SMIs' credibility induce stronger purchase intentions. Therefore, it is proposed that:

H5a. Consumer attitude moderates the relationship between source credibility and purchase intention.

The endorser's attractiveness enhances consumer attitudes (Chan et al., 2013). Admirable, good-looking endorsers can be influential brand ambassadors (Atkin et al., 1984). A trustworthy and well-liked endorser arouses positive consumer beliefs, yielding higher purchase intentions. Advertisements featuring an attractive endorser can favorably change attitudes and purchase intentions (Kahle et al., 1985). Chan et al. (2013) affirmed that consumer attitude moderates the influence of SMIs' attractiveness on purchase intentions. Therefore, it is proposed that:

H5b. Consumer attitude moderates the relationship between source attractiveness and purchase intention.

The matchup between the endorser's image and product characteristics is crucial in the endorsement process (Choi & Rifon, 1990). Consumer attitude towards advertisements indirectly contributes to the congruence, moderating the product matchup hypothesis and influencing consumer purchase intention, as validated in prior studies (Debasis, 2016). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H5c. Consumer attitude moderates the relationship between product matchup and purchase intention.

Lastly, endorsers create brand awareness and product engagement (Goldsmith et al., 2000). Endorsers start the meaning transfer process by providing an image of a specific product, instilling positive consumer feelings and purchase intention, and yielding higher purchase intentions as consumers accept the brand message delivered through the endorser (Malik & Sudhakar, 2014). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H5d. Consumer attitude moderates the relationship between meaning transfer and purchase intention.

Research Framework

The Social Learning Theory (SLT)

Albert Bandura (1963) developed the SLT, proposing that behavior is shaped by the relationship between cognitive factors, environmental stimuli, and behavior. SLT suggests social learning has four stages: close interaction, imitation of superiors, understanding of concepts, and role model behavior. As the process involves attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation, SLT extends to cognitive and behavioral frameworks. SLT's independent construct is individual behavior. The dependent constructs are cognitive factors (knowledge, expectations, and attitudes), environmental factors (social norms, community access, and social influence), and behavioral factors (skills, practice, and self-efficacy). Figure 1 presents the SLT framework.

Marketing research uses SLT to explain how socialization agents influence consumer behaviors (Chen et al., 2017b; Martin & Bush, 2015). SLT argues that socialization agents like celebrities, friends, and role models develop a positive consumer attitude through social communication (Chen et al., 2017a; Makgosa, 2010). Utilizing SLT in analyzing consumer behavior (Clark et al.), studies affirmed the celebrity endorsers' influence on consumer behavior (Makgosa, 2010). Similarly, SLT helps examine SMIs' influence on consumer behavior. Through content creation in specific areas, SMIs demonstrate their knowledge and proficiency on social media, "followed by" many affianced consumers. Companies rely on SMIs to initiate market trends and compel their followers to purchase their products. The SLT argues that consumers' purchase intention is positively influenced by the influencer's advertising effectiveness, represented by the SMI's credibility, attractiveness, product match, and meaning transfer. Figure 2 presents this manuscript's conceptual model.

Figure 1
The SLT framework.

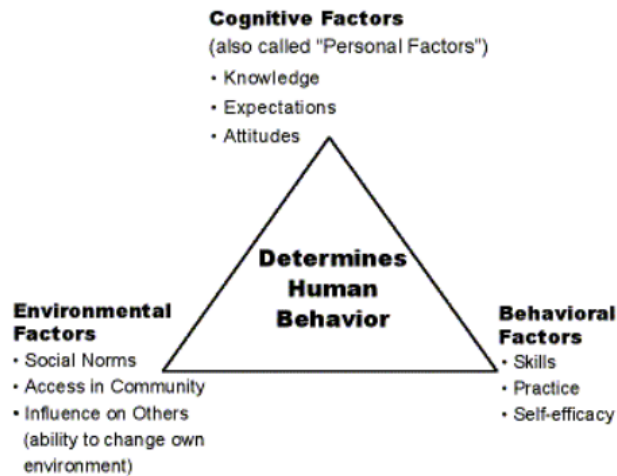
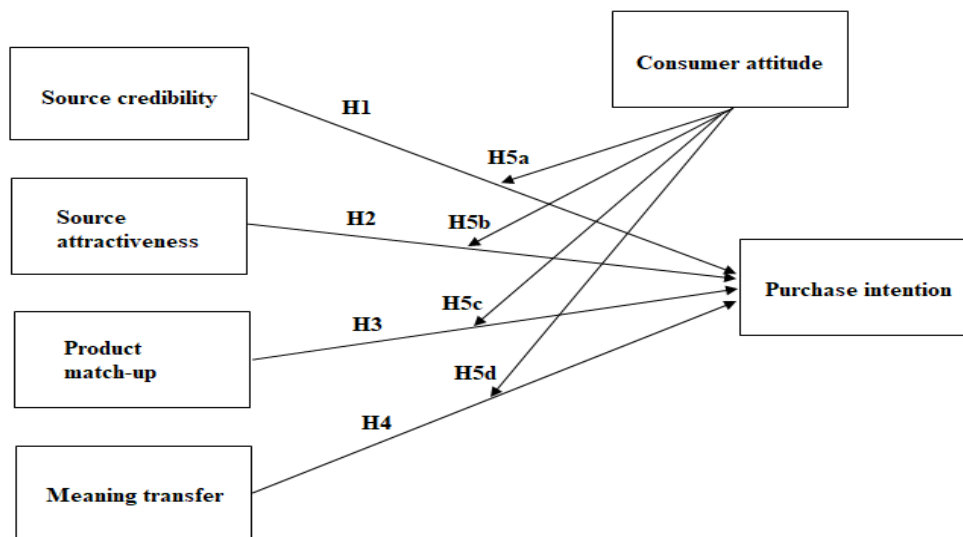


Figure 2
Conceptual model of advertising effectiveness.



This manuscript adopts Lim et al.’s framework (2017), examining the influence of SMIs’ advertising effectiveness on purchase intention. It hypothesizes that consumer attitude moderates the relationship between advertising effectiveness and purchase intention.

Methodology

This manuscript adopts a survey distributed online among middle-class mothers in Metro Manila, Philippines. Purposive quota sampling is used for its sampling method. First, TFPC’s active followers on Facebook and Instagram accounts were asked to answer the survey, most of which are mothers, according to the data from the marketing department. The survey link was posted in both social media accounts of TFPC for two months. Only respondents residing in Metro Manila, earning between Php20,000 and Php100,000 monthly, were considered in the final sample. One hundred three respondents are obtained from this

method. Second, mothers from 18 middle-class villages and subdivisions within Metro Manila were also tapped for the survey through online communication platforms. The same screening criteria applied, determining the final set of qualified respondents for the manuscript. 148 respondents are obtained from this source. The manuscript generated a total of 251 respondents.

The items measuring an influencer's credibility (7 items), attractiveness (6 items), and product matchup (4 items) were adopted from Ohanian (1990), using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. Source credibility is assessed by statements measuring perceived expertise and trustworthiness. Items measuring attractiveness included "The classiness of the SMI can trigger me to buy the chicken products of TFPC." Product matchup questions examined the relationship between the SMI's characteristics and the image of TFPC's chicken products. Items assessing meaning transfer were adopted from Goldsmith et al. (2000), measured by a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. 5 items measuring consumer attitude adopted from Goldsmith et al. (2000) uses a 7-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Lastly, 4 items assessing purchase intention were adopted from Kumar (2010), using the same 7-point Likert scale. Furthermore, the manuscript included open-ended survey questions probing into the respondents' reasons for their ratings in the Likert scale items.

Scale reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha (α). The scale value for all constructs yielded acceptable internal consistency and between "acceptable" and "respectable", with Cronbach's coefficient alpha (α) scores of .84 for source credibility, .69 for source attractiveness, .73 for product matchup, .74 for meaning transfer, .80 for consumer attitude, and .72 for purchase intention. Scale reliability is "acceptable" if its Cronbach's alpha value is 0.6 and "respectable" if its Cronbach's alpha value is 0.7 or higher (Lim et al., 2017).

Table 1: Cronbach's coefficient alpha (α) scores.

Scale Reliability Statistics	
	Cronbach's α
Source credibility	0.840
Source attractiveness	0.691
Product match-up	0.727
Meaning transfer	0.743
Consumer attitude	0.803
Purchase intention	0.716

Multiple regression analysis and moderation analysis are applied in examining the research hypotheses. Multiple linear regression is applied to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the advertising effectiveness constructs and purchase

intention. Moderation analysis is applied to examine if consumer attitude will moderate the hypothesized relationship.

Discussion of Results

Descriptive analysis results

The participants' average age is $M = 41.10$ ($SD = 9.02$). Their average monthly income is $M = 38,596$ ($SD = 14,733$). 80.1% or 201 participants graduated college, 17.9% or 45 participants have master's degrees, and 2.0% or 5 participants have doctoral degrees. 20.7% or 52 participants are housewives, 27.9% or 70 participants are self-employed, 44.2% or 111 participants are corporate employees, while 7.2% or 18 participants have other occupations.

The average scores for the advertising effectiveness constructs are as follows: $M = 3.90$ ($SD = 0.55$) for source credibility, $M = 4.64$ ($SD = 0.34$) for source attractiveness, $M = 4.41$ ($SD = 0.46$) for product match-up, and $M = 4.58$ ($SD = 0.39$) for meaning transfer. The average score for consumer attitude is $M = 6.27$ ($SD = 0.49$). Lastly, the average score for purchase intention is $M = 6.41$ ($SD = 0.44$).

Correlation analysis results

Source credibility and consumer attitude have a moderate degree of correlation, $r(249) = .35$, and were significant ($p < .001$). Source attractiveness and consumer attitude also have a moderate degree of correlation, $r(249) = .32$, and were significant ($p < .001$). Product match-up and consumer attitude have a low degree of correlation, $r(249) = .05$, and were not significant ($p = .42$). Meaning transfer and consumer attitude demonstrate a low degree of correlation, $r(249) = .16$, and were significant ($p = .01$). Source credibility and purchase intention are correlated with a low degree of correlation, $r(249) = .24$, and were significant ($p < .001$). Source attractiveness and purchase intention are moderately correlated, $r(249) = .31$, and were significant ($p < .001$). Product match-up and purchase intention have a low degree of correlation, $r(249) = .02$, and were not significant ($p = .72$). Meaning transfer and purchase intention are correlated with a low degree of correlation, $r(249) = .17$, and were significant ($p = .01$). Lastly, consumer attitude and purchase intention are highly correlated, $r(249) = .63$, and were significant ($p < .001$).

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients.

Mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients											
	Mean	Standard Deviation		Age	Monthly Income	SC	SA	PMU	MT	CA	PI
Age	41.1	9.02	Pearson's <i>r</i>	—							
			p-value	—							
Monthly Income	38596	14733	Pearson's <i>r</i>	0.231 ***	—						
			p-value	< .001	—						
SC	3.90	0.548	Pearson's <i>r</i>	-0.084	-0.052	—					
			p-value	0.213	0.408	—					
SA	4.64	0.336	Pearson's <i>r</i>	-0.152 *	-0.036	0.283 ***	—				
			p-value	0.023	0.573	< .001	—				
PMU	4.41	0.463	Pearson's <i>r</i>	-0.101	-0.114	0.116	0.200 **	—			
			p-value	0.135	0.071	0.066	0.001	—			
MT	4.58	0.385	Pearson's <i>r</i>	-0.139 *	-0.038	0.168 **	0.371 ***	0.416 ***	—		
			p-value	0.039	0.545	0.007	< .001	< .001	—		
CA	6.27	0.494	Pearson's <i>r</i>	-0.118	-0.127 *	0.346 ***	0.321 ***	0.052	0.156 *	—	
			p-value	0.079	0.044	< .001	< .001	0.415	0.013	—	
PI	6.41	0.435	Pearson's <i>r</i>	-0.152 *	-0.057	0.242 ***	0.312 ***	0.023	0.170 **	0.627 ***	—
			p-value	0.023	0.370	< .001	< .001	0.717	0.007	< .001	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Multiple regression analysis results

The linear regression model's findings were significant, $F(1,250) = 162, p < .001, R^2 = 0.394$, demonstrating that around 39.4% of the variance in purchase intention is explained by source credibility, source attractiveness, product match-up, and meaning transfer. Source credibility significantly predicted purchase intention, $B = 0.1327, t(250) = 2.69, p < .01$, demonstrating that a unit increase of source credibility increases the value of purchase intention by 0.1327 units. Source attractiveness significantly predicted purchase intention, $B = 0.3238, t(250) = 3.80, p < .001$, demonstrating that a one-unit increase of source attractiveness increases the value of purchase intention by 0.3238 units. Product match-up and meaning transfer did not significantly predict purchase intention, $B = -0.0763, t(250) = -1.24, p > .05$ and $B = 0.0938, t(250) = 1.20, p > .05$, respectively. Table 3 summarizes the regression model's results.

Table 3: Multiple regression results.

Model Fit Measures					
Model	R ²	Overall Model Test			
		F	df1	df2	p
1	0.394	162	1	250	< .001

Model Coefficients – Purchase Intention				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	4.2995	0.4258	10.10	< .001
SC_Mean	0.1327	0.0493	2.69	0.008
SA_Mean	0.3238	0.0853	3.80	< .001
PMU_Mean	-0.0763	0.0615	-1.24	0.216
MT_Mean	0.0938	0.0780	1.20	0.230

Moderation test results

Two criteria should be established in the test of moderation (Netemeyer et al., 2001). First, source credibility's causal predictor variable should significantly predict purchase intention in the simple effects model (step 1). Second, the interaction model (step 3) should explain a significantly greater variance of purchase intention than the non-interaction model (step 2). If either criterion fails, moderation cannot be supported. Source credibility significantly predicted purchase intention, $B = 0.19$, $t(250) = 3.89$, $p < .001$. Hence, the first criterion was established. A partial F -test examined if the interaction model explained greater variance in purchase intention than the non-interaction model. The partial F -test, $F(1,248) = 6.35$, $p = .012$, with the interaction model explained significantly greater variance than the non-interaction model using an alpha of 0.05. This established the second criterion. Moderation is supported as source credibility predicted purchase intention in the simple effects model (criterion 1), and the interaction model showed a greater variance of purchase intention than the non-interaction model (criterion 2). Table 4 provides the results of all models. Table 5 compares the non-interaction and interaction models. Consumer attitude significantly moderated the influence of source credibility on purchase intention (alpha = 0.05), $B = 0.21$, $t(248) = 2.52$, $p = .012$, demonstrating that when one unit of consumer attitude increases, the slope of purchase intention on source credibility increases by 0.21.

Table 4 Moderation analysis (purchase intention predicted by source credibility moderated by consumer attitude)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Step 1: Simple Effects Model					
(Intercept)	5.67	0.19		29.44	< .001
Source credibility	0.19	0.05	0.24	3.89	< .001
Step 2: Non-Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	2.92	0.28		10.42	< .001
Source credibility	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.50	.615
Consumer attitude	0.54	0.05	0.62	11.75	< .001
Step 3: Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	6.39	0.02		283.35	< .001
Source credibility	-0.01	0.04	-0.01	-0.15	.880
Consumer attitude	0.53	0.05	0.60	11.42	< .001
Source credibility: Consumer attitude	0.21	0.08	0.13	2.52	.012

Table 5 Linear model comparison table between the non-interaction and interaction model

Model	R^2	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Non-interaction	0.39			
Interaction	0.41	6.35	1	.012

Source attractiveness significantly predicted purchase intention, $B = 0.40$, $t(250) = 5.11$, $p < .001$. Hence, the first criterion was established, and the second was verified. The partial *F*-test, $F(1,248) = 8.60$, $p = .004$, showed that the interaction model has significantly greater variance versus the non-interaction model ($\alpha = 0.05$), establishing the second criterion. Moderation is supported as source attractiveness significantly predicted purchase intention in the simple effects model (criterion 1), and the interaction model explained a significantly greater variance of purchase intention (criterion 2). Table 6 provides the results of all models. Table 7 compares the non-interaction and interaction models. Consumer attitude significantly moderated the influence of source attractiveness on purchase intention ($\alpha = 0.05$), $B = 0.37$, $t(248) = 2.93$, $p = .004$, specifying that a one-unit increase of consumer attitude increases the slope of purchase intention on source attractiveness by 0.37.

Table 6 Moderation analysis (purchase intention predicted by source attractiveness moderated by consumer attitude)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Step 1: Simple Effects Model					
(Intercept)	4.56	0.36		12.51	< .001
Source attractiveness	0.40	0.08	0.31	5.11	< .001
Step 2: Non-Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	2.44	0.35		7.00	< .001
Source attractiveness	0.16	0.07	0.12	2.32	.021
Consumer attitude	0.52	0.05	0.59	11.41	< .001
Step 3: Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	6.39	0.02		291.79	< .001
Source attractiveness	0.22	0.07	0.17	3.17	.002
Consumer attitude	0.49	0.05	0.55	10.64	< .001
Source attractiveness: Consumer attitude	0.37	0.13	0.15	2.93	.004

Table 7 Linear model comparison table between the non-interaction and interaction model

Model	R^2	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Non-interaction	0.41			
Interaction	0.43	8.60	1	.004

Product match-up did not significantly predict purchase intention, $B = 0.02$, $t(250) = 0.31$, $p = .756$, failing to establish the first criterion in the simple effects model ($\alpha = 0.05$). Hence, moderation was not supported. Table 8 provides the results of all models. Table 9 compares the non-interaction and interaction models.

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Table 8 Moderation analysis table (purchase intention predicted by product match-up moderated by consumer attitude)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Step 1: Simple Effects Model					
(Intercept)	6.33	0.26		24.00	< .001
Product match-up	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.31	.756
Step 2: Non-Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	3.00	0.33		8.98	< .001
Product match-up	-0.01	0.05	-0.01	-0.23	.816
Consumer attitude	0.55	0.04	0.63	12.69	< .001
Step 3: Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	6.41	0.02		298.54	< .001
Product match-up	-0.01	0.05	-0.01	-0.22	.827
Consumer attitude	0.55	0.04	0.63	12.61	< .001
Product match-up: Consumer attitude	-0.01	0.09	-0.00	-0.10	.924

Table 9 Linear model comparison table between the non-interaction and interaction model

Model	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Non-interaction	0.39			
Interaction	0.39	0.01	1	.924

Meaning transfer significantly predicted purchase intention, $B = 0.19$, $t(250) = 2.65$, $p = .008$, establishing the first criterion. The partial F -test, $F(1,248) = 1.02$, $p = .313$, specified that the interaction model did not show greater variance than the non-interaction model ($\alpha = 0.05$). Hence, the second criterion was not verified, and moderation was not supported. Table 10 provides the results of all models. Table 11 compares the non-interaction and interaction models.

Table 10 Moderation analysis (purchase intention predicted by meaning transfer moderated by consumer attitude)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Step 1: Simple Effects Model					
(Intercept)	5.55	0.33		17.07	< .001
Meaning transfer	0.19	0.07	0.17	2.65	.008
Step 2: Non-Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	2.64	0.35		7.60	< .001
Meaning transfer	0.08	0.06	0.07	1.43	.153
Consumer attitude	0.54	0.04	0.62	12.37	< .001
Step 3: Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	6.41	0.02		296.72	< .001
Meaning transfer	0.08	0.06	0.07	1.38	.169
Consumer attitude	0.53	0.05	0.60	11.72	< .001
Meaning transfer: Consumer attitude	0.12	0.12	0.05	1.01	.313

Table 11 Linear model comparison table between the non-interaction and interaction model

Model	R^2	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Non-interaction	0.40			
Interaction	0.40	1.02	1	.313

Discussion

This manuscript examines the SMI's advertising effectiveness on consumer purchase intention towards TFPC and demonstrates how consumer attitude moderates the relationship between these variables. First, source credibility positively influences purchase intention (H1 supported), affirming earlier studies (Lim et al., 2017; Reinikainen et al., 2020; Weismueller et al., 2020). "The SMI"'s perceived credibility is due to her online popularity, good reputation, and authenticity. Further, consumers relate to her as a mother. These factors influence the consumers' positive brand attitude, increasing their purchase intention.

Source attractiveness also positively influences purchase intention (H2 supported). Consumers find "the SMI" beautiful and expressive, possessing excellent communication skills. Her captivating and enthusiastic aura appeals to consumers, along with her authenticity, wholesomeness, and wit. Aligned with existing research (Torres et al., 2019; Weismueller et al., 2020), findings prove that attractiveness induces a positive brand attitude and increased purchase intention.

Product matchup did not positively influence purchase intention (H3 not supported). The target market expects TFPC's endorser to have cooking expertise "the SMI" did not have. Consumers believe she rarely cooks because of her limited online posts on cooking. Further, some consumers do not associate her with food products.

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Meaning, the transfer did not positively influence purchase intention (H4 not supported). The consumers' inability to relate the symbolism of "the SMI" to the brand yields a less effective brand meaning transfer. More importantly, some consumers do not rely on SMIs. They buy TFPC because of its quality, taste, and variety, depending on personal brand experience and word-of-mouth referrals to discover brand attributes.

Finally, supporting previous research (Briñol et al., 2004; Chan et al., 2013; Lim et al., 2017), consumer attitude moderates the influence of source credibility and attractiveness on purchase intention (H5.a and H5.b supported). "The SMI"'s credibility and attractiveness significantly influence consumers' positive attitude towards the brand, yielding higher purchase intentions. Meanwhile, consumer attitude did not moderate the influence of product matchup and meaning transfer on purchase intention (H5.c and H5. not supported).

Implications of the Study

Using SLT, this manuscript examines the influence of SMIs' advertising effectiveness on consumer behavioral outcomes, focusing on how SMIs' principal traits influence consumer attitude and purchase intentions. The manuscript extends the research on SMIs' advertising effectiveness by using mothers as the respondent group, disregarding prior purchasing experiences that can lead to biases. The manuscript further extends Lim et al.'s (2017) study by using one brand and SMI, preventing potential biases.

The manuscript recommends integrating influencer marketing in TFPC's overall business strategy. Influencer marketing is crucial to the overall strategic plans and programs of a business. Developing and implementing online marketing strategies are investment decisions for enhancing profitability, sustainability, and competitive advantage. The following paragraphs discuss how TFPC can integrate influencer marketing into its corporate strategy.

TFPC should leverage the SMI's credibility and attractiveness to increase the consumers' positive attitudes and purchase intentions. TFPC can create more online advertisements showcasing her as a cook by addressing the lousy product matchup. Additionally, the social media accounts of both TFPC and its SMI should include more cooking-related content advertising the company's food items. TFPC can create an online cooking channel hosted by its SMI, with engaging content like contests where the judges and participants display expertise and enthusiasm in cooking. These proposed advertising strategies can portray the SMI closer to the ideal brand endorser.

Aside from its current SMI, TFPC can also consider other SMIs as brand ambassadors. Its strategic plan should include a yearly "online environmental scanning" of SMIs resonating with its brand image. TFPC must focus its marketing efforts on building a solid fit and meaning transfer between the brand and the SMI/s.

As this manuscript proves that influencer marketing significantly influences consumer purchase intentions, TFPC should streamline its business strategies towards influencer marketing. TFPC should use influencer marketing strategies for other business areas like supply chain and retailing to increase overall performance. For instance, TFPC can partner with food delivery applications (e.g., Grab, Food Panda, etc.). As there is greater reliance on online shopping due to COVID-19, TFPC can efficiently meet consumer demand for poultry products, yield higher revenues.

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Lastly, TFPC needs to re-evaluate its target market based on psychographics. The meaning transfer did not positively influence purchase intention because the target market segments itself into two. The first market is the existing market, relying on a credible, attractive, product-fit endorser to persuade them to purchase TFPC. The second market is the "aspirational market" that no longer relies on endorsers and instead uses personal product experience to discover brand attributes, prioritizing brand quality, taste, and variety. TFPC can develop segmented product lines and segmented advertising strategies to respond to the unique characteristics of both psychographic markets. The SMI can be used for above-the-line (ATL) online advertising for the existing target market, while below-the-line advertising (BTL) can better communicate positive brand attributes to the aspirational market. Overall, TFPC can allocate 80% of its efforts to influencer marketing and 20% to BTL advertising.

Limitations and Areas for Future Research

This manuscript's limitations are opportunities for future research. First, the sample consists only of consumers within Metro Manila, Philippines. Future research should replicate the study in other country regions to better understand the target market. Second, the manuscript only used cross-sectional data. Longitudinal studies can assess an SMI's advertising effectiveness on purchase intention over time as the company continuously improves its online marketing strategies. TFPC can conduct regular advertising effectiveness studies to measure how consumers' perceptions change over time. Lastly, the manuscript focuses on the influence of advertising effectiveness on consumer attitude and purchase intention. Future studies can examine the influence of advertising effectiveness on other marketing funnel elements like actual purchase, sustained interest, and brand loyalty.

Practical Implications on Global Business

The manuscript discusses how companies can use influencer marketing to incite positive consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Companies must determine the SMIs' characteristics positively influencing consumer perceptions and behavior to develop marketing strategies that strengthen the SMIs' advertising effectiveness. Furthermore, companies should examine the implications of influencer marketing on their market segmentation strategies. The manuscript shows that influencer marketing can help a company recognize the need to segment its psychographic markets. Beyond marketing, this finding also has implications on other key business areas, highlighting the importance of recalibrating business strategies such as new product development (e.g., segmented product lines) and product diversification.

This manuscript also proves that influencer marketing is a crucial business strategy. In addition to increasing market competitiveness, influencer marketing also reflects the company's critical investment decisions for other key business areas such as retailing, product development, operations, and supply chain. Given this, companies must consider its integration into their overall business strategy for their overall profitability, sustainability, and competitiveness.

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