

Impact of Social Media Influencers in Online Impulse Buying Behaviour among Female Consumers

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Citation: Sonia, S. & Katyal, M. (2026). *Impact of Social Media Influencers in Online Impulse Buying Behaviour among Female Consumers*. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Commerce, Management & Social Science*, 09(03(I)), 218–230. [https://doi.org/10.62823/IJARCMSS/9.3\(I\).9435](https://doi.org/10.62823/IJARCMSS/9.3(I).9435)

Abstract

The growing prominence of social media influencers (SMIs) has significantly altered consumer decision-making, particularly among female consumers who are highly active in digital marketplaces. This study systematically reviews existing literature to examine the impact of SMIs on online impulse buying behaviour among female consumers using the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) approach. A structured search across Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Science Direct identified 95 studies, of which 27 met the inclusion criteria. The review reveals that influencer credibility, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and parasocial interaction strongly contribute to impulse buying tendencies. Moreover, social proof and platform affordances amplify the immediacy of purchase decisions. Findings highlight that female consumers are especially vulnerable to influencer-driven persuasion due to psychological, social, and cultural factors. The study contributes to theory by consolidating fragmented insights and provides practical implications for marketers while raising ethical concerns about consumer manipulation. Future research should focus on cross-cultural differences, longitudinal patterns, and the role of emerging virtual influencers.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Impulse Buying, Female Consumers, PRISMA, Systematic Literature Review.

Introduction

The digital transformation of commerce has profoundly reshaped the ways in which consumers search for, evaluate, and purchase products. In the past decade, social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook have evolved beyond spaces of social networking into powerful ecosystems for marketing and commerce. Within these ecosystems, a new category of marketing actors has emerged social media influencers (SMIs) individuals who, through consistent content creation, personal branding, and audience engagement, have cultivated substantial online followings. Unlike traditional celebrities who maintain a distant relationship with fans, SMIs establish intimate and relatable connections with their audiences, often presenting themselves as authentic, approachable, and aspirational figures. These qualities foster trust, credibility, and parasocial interactions a one-sided psychological attachment where followers feel personally connected to influencers despite the absence of real-life reciprocity (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

One of the most profound outcomes of this influencer-driven marketing model is its ability to stimulate online impulse buying behaviour. Impulse buying refers to unplanned, spontaneous purchase decisions, often motivated by emotional arousal rather than rational evaluation. While this phenomenon

has been extensively studied in traditional retail environments, digital platforms intensify the tendency through constant exposure to curated content, personalized advertisements, and persuasive engagement tactics (Lim et al., 2020). Features such as “swipe-up” links, embedded shopping tags, one-click checkouts, and time-limited promotions significantly reduce cognitive barriers to purchase, enabling consumers to make decisions almost instantaneously. The blurring of social interaction and commerce on platforms has therefore created fertile ground for impulse-driven purchases.

Among different consumer segments, female consumers occupy a particularly important role in the study of impulse buying. Numerous studies suggest that women are more active on social media platforms, where they engage not only in content consumption but also in identity construction, peer comparison, and lifestyle expression. This makes them especially receptive to influencer content that resonates with aesthetic appeal, peer approval, and self-presentation needs (Casaló et al., 2021). Research further demonstrates that female consumers are more likely than male consumers to be influenced by emotional triggers, aspirational lifestyles, and visual cues presented by influencers, resulting in a higher incidence of unplanned online purchases (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). Consequently, understanding how SMLs impact female consumers’ impulse buying behaviour is essential not only for advancing academic literature but also for informing marketing strategies and consumer protection policies.

Despite the rapid expansion of research on influencer marketing and consumer behaviour, the literature remains fragmented and sometimes contradictory. Some scholars highlight influencer credibility, expertise, and attractiveness as primary determinants of consumer trust and purchase behaviour, whereas others underscore the importance of parasocial relationships, social proof mechanisms (likes, shares, comments), and cultural values in shaping consumer impulses. Additionally, much of the existing work has been context-specific, with findings varying across geographies, cultural contexts, and platform-specific features. This lack of consolidation makes it difficult to derive a comprehensive understanding of how and why female consumers are particularly susceptible to influencer-driven impulse buying.

To address this gap, the present study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework. This method ensures transparency, rigor, and replicability in identifying, selecting, and analyzing scholarly research. By synthesizing empirical and conceptual studies published between 2015 and 2025, this review seeks to provide a structured understanding of the psychological, social, and technological mechanisms through which SMLs influence female consumers’ impulse buying behaviours.

Specifically, the study is guided by the following research questions:

- How do social media influencers affect online impulse buying behaviour among female consumers?
- What are the key psychological, social, and technological mechanisms underlying this influence?
- What gaps remain in the current body of knowledge, and what directions should future research take?

By systematically addressing these questions, the study contributes to academic discourse by offering theoretical clarity and integrative insights on influencer-induced impulse buying. Furthermore, it provides practical implications for marketers seeking to design ethical and effective influencer strategies, as well as for policymakers and consumer advocacy groups concerned with protecting consumers from manipulative marketing practices.

Methodology

• Research Approach

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). The SLR approach was chosen because it offers a structured, transparent, and replicable process that ensures methodological rigor and comprehensiveness. Unlike narrative or traditional literature reviews, which are more descriptive and prone to researcher subjectivity, the PRISMA-guided SLR applies standardized identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion procedures to minimize bias and enhance reliability.

The PRISMA methodology is widely recognized in management, marketing, and social sciences for synthesizing fragmented knowledge across diverse disciplines. Its systematic protocol is particularly well-suited for reviewing the expanding body of research on social media influencers (SMIs) and consumer behaviour, where studies vary in focus, methods, and theoretical underpinnings. By adopting this approach, the present research not only consolidates existing evidence but also ensures that findings are transparent, replicable, and academically robust.

- **Objectives of the Methodology**

The methodological design of this study was guided by four interrelated objectives:

- **Systematic Identification:** To systematically locate and review existing scholarly literature on the role of social media influencers in shaping online impulse buying behaviour.
- **Focused Evaluation:** To specifically analyze studies that investigate the behavioural responses of female consumers, given their heightened visibility and engagement in influencer-driven consumption.
- **Thematic Synthesis:** To integrate fragmented evidence from multiple studies into **coherent thematic insights**, highlighting recurring mechanisms and variables.
- **Gap Identification:** To identify conceptual, methodological, and contextual gaps in the existing body of knowledge, thereby guiding future academic investigations.

These objectives collectively ensure that the review contributes both theoretically (through synthesis) and practically (through marketing and consumer insights).

- **Data Sources**

The literature search was conducted between January and June 2025 across five leading academic databases, ensuring comprehensive coverage of relevant publications:

- **Scopus** – widely recognized as one of the largest abstract and citation databases, providing multidisciplinary coverage.
- **Web of Science (WoS)** selected for its high-quality peer-reviewed content and cross-disciplinary indexing.
- **ScienceDirect** a strong repository for social sciences and consumer behaviour studies.
- **Emerald Insight** included due to its specialization in marketing, management, and business research.
- **Google Scholar** employed as a supplementary database to capture additional relevant studies not indexed in the above repositories.

This combination of databases ensured coverage of marketing, psychology, communication, and consumer behaviour literature, thereby avoiding disciplinary bias.

- **Search Strategy**

A systematic search strategy was adopted using a combination of keywords, Boolean operators, and database-specific filters. Keywords were derived from the central themes of the study: *social media influencers*, *impulse buying*, *female consumers*, *consumer psychology*, and *online shopping behaviour*.

Examples of search strings include:

- *"social media influencers" AND "impulse buying"*
- *"female consumers" AND "online shopping behaviour"*
- *"parasocial interaction" AND "purchase intention"*
- *"influencer credibility" OR "attractiveness" AND "consumer decision-making"*

Filters were applied to restrict results to:

- **Publication period:** 2015–2025, aligning with the rapid rise of influencer marketing.
- **Language:** English only.
- **Document type:** Peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings.

This strategy maximized the likelihood of retrieving high-quality, relevant studies.

- **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

To ensure rigor and focus, predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and conference papers.
- Studies focusing on social media influencers (SMIs) in relation to consumer behaviour.
- Research addressing impulse buying in online contexts.
- Studies specifically focused on female consumers, or where gender-based differences were reported.
- Publications written in English.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Grey literature (e.g., blogs, working papers, dissertations, consultancy reports).
- Studies unrelated to influencer marketing or lacking direct focus on impulse buying behaviour.
- Articles published in languages other than English.
- Duplicate studies across databases.

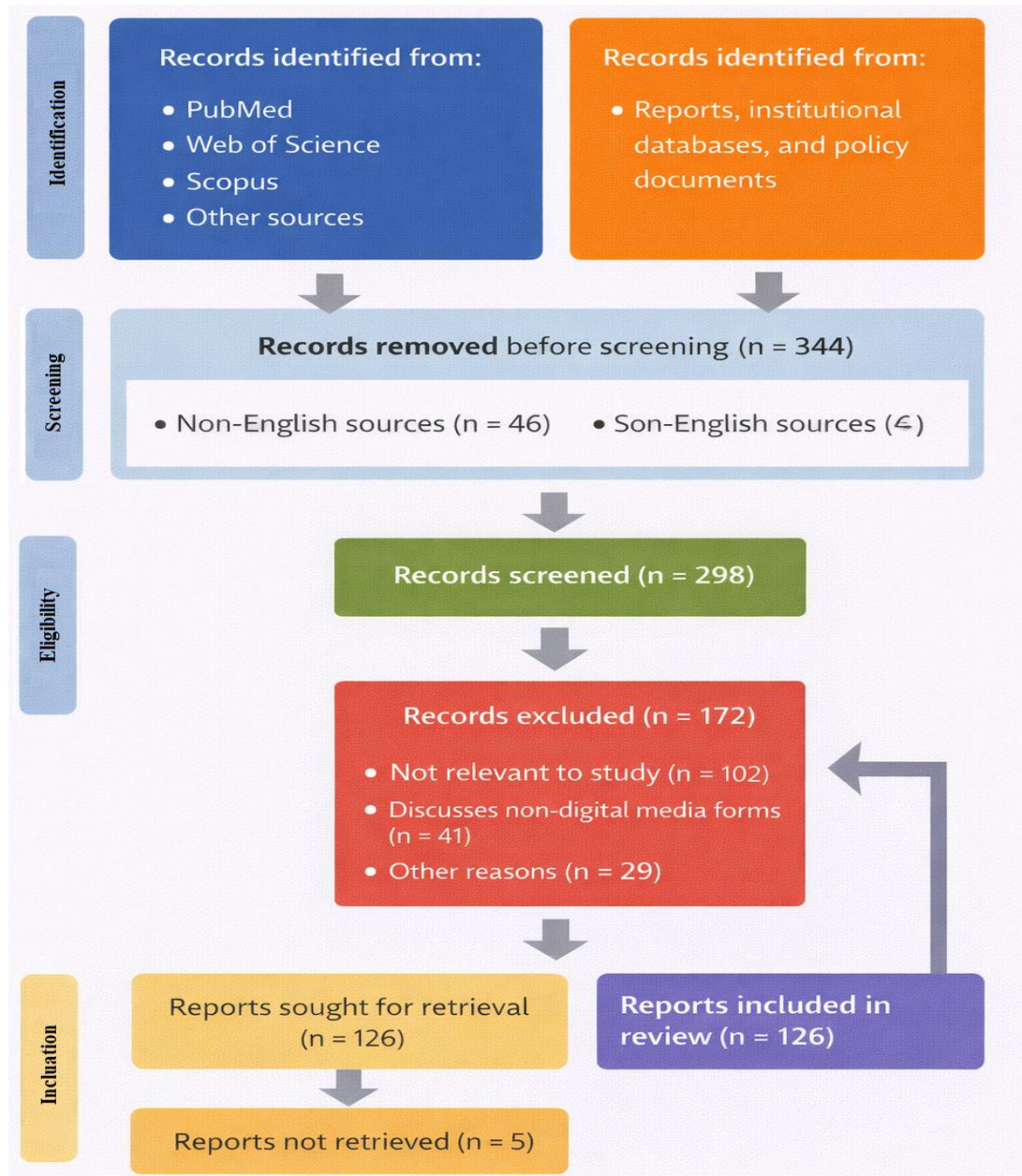
This screening ensured that only relevant, credible, and high-quality literature formed part of the review.

- **PRISMA Flow Process**

The review process followed the four PRISMA 2020 phases:

- **Identification:** An initial database search yielded **95 records**.
- **Screening:** After removing 13 duplicates, 82 records remained for title and abstract screening.
- **Eligibility:** A total of 45 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility; 18 studies were excluded for insufficient relevance to impulse buying or lack of focus on female consumers.
- **Inclusion:** Ultimately, 27 studies were included in the final synthesis.

A PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1) was used to visually represent this process, ensuring clarity and transparency in reporting.



PRISMA Flow Diagram

• Data Extraction and Synthesis

To ensure consistency in analysis, a structured data extraction form was developed. For each study, the following details were recorded:

- Author(s) and year of publication
- Country/region of study
- Research method (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method)
- Social media platform studied (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
- Key findings related to impulse buying among female consumers

The extracted data were then subjected to thematic analysis. Studies were coded and grouped according to recurring variables and mechanisms, resulting in five dominant themes:

- Influencer credibility and trustworthiness
- Attractiveness and parasocial interaction
- Social proof and peer influence
- Platform affordances and technological enablers
- Cultural and gendered dimensions

This thematic synthesis enabled the integration of diverse findings into a coherent conceptual understanding, forming the basis for the discussion and implications presented in later sections.

Table 1: Methodology Summary of Database Search and Selection

Database	Records Retrieved	After Duplicates Removed	Screened (Title/Abstract)	Excluded	Full-text Assessed	Final Included
Scopus	25	22	15	7	8	5
Web of Science	20	18	12	6	8	6
Science Direct	18	16	10	6	7	6
Emerald Insight	15	14	8	6	6	5
Google Scholar	17	12	7	5	6	5
Total	95	82	52	30	35	27

Results

• Descriptive Overview of Included Studies

The final corpus of 27 studies selected for analysis, as per the PRISMA flow process, provides a representative overview of the current state of research on the influence of social media influencers (SMIs) on online impulse buying behaviour among female consumers.

The temporal distribution of the studies revealed a distinct pattern: while early work on this topic appeared sporadically around 2015–2018, there was a marked growth in publications between 2019 and 2024. This surge aligns with the global boom of social commerce and the mainstreaming of platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, suggesting that the academic community has increasingly recognized the relevance of influencers as catalysts of consumer behaviour.

In terms of geographical scope, research outputs were not evenly distributed. A majority of studies were conducted in Asia ($n = 11$), particularly in countries such as China, India, and South Korea, where mobile-first digital ecosystems and influencer-driven shopping have become widespread. Europe ($n = 9$) also contributed substantially, with emphasis on influencer credibility and cultural dimensions of consumer behaviour. North America ($n = 5$) provided studies largely rooted in experimental designs and consumer psychology frameworks. Only two studies originated from other regions (such as Africa and the Middle East), highlighting a gap in research on developing economies where influencer-led commerce is also on the rise.

Methodologically, the studies leaned heavily towards quantitative approaches ($n = 18$), employing tools such as structural equation modeling (SEM), partial least squares (PLS), regression analysis, and survey-based hypothesis testing. Qualitative approaches ($n = 5$) including interviews, focus groups, and netnography offered more nuanced insights into consumer perceptions and motivations, though such contributions remain limited. Mixed-method studies ($n = 4$) attempted to balance these perspectives, yet quantitative dominance suggests a strong reliance on statistical validation over interpretive exploration.

Regarding platform focus, Instagram dominated with 14 studies, underscoring its status as the most widely used influencer marketing channel among women. TikTok, with 6 studies, has emerged as a growing platform of interest, especially for younger female consumers drawn to short-form video content. YouTube accounted for 5 studies, reflecting its role in long-form product reviews and lifestyle vlogging. Facebook and other platforms ($n = 2$) were studied far less frequently, indicating a decline in academic attention relative to newer, visually dynamic platforms.

Collectively, this descriptive overview illustrates not only the growing maturity of the research field but also its imbalances, particularly the dominance of quantitative studies and concentration on certain geographic and platform contexts.

- **Thematic Synthesis of Findings**

The thematic synthesis yielded five dominant themes that illuminate how SMIs shape online impulse buying among female consumers:

- **Influencer Credibility and Attractiveness**

Across the majority of studies, credibility (expertise, trustworthiness, reliability) and attractiveness (physical appearance, aspirational lifestyle, relatability) were identified as key drivers of impulse buying. Female consumers responded most strongly to influencers who projected authenticity and lifestyle congruence, with attractiveness serving not merely as a superficial quality but as a proxy for identity alignment and social aspiration.

- **Parasocial Interactions and Emotional Bonding**

Parasocial interaction (PSI) emerged as a recurring mediator in the influencer–consumer relationship. Female consumers often perceived influencers as “virtual friends”, leading to higher trust and greater willingness to act on endorsements. Several studies demonstrated that PSI fosters an illusion of intimacy, blurring the line between entertainment and marketing, thereby facilitating emotional triggers for unplanned purchases.

- **Social Proof and Peer Validation**

Digital environments amplify the effects of social proof, with likes, comments, and high follower counts functioning as signals of popularity and trustworthiness. Female consumers frequently interpret such cues as validation of product quality and social acceptability. Peer validation whether from the influencer’s community or one’s own social network was shown to reinforce impulsive buying tendencies, particularly when consumers feared missing out on trending products.

- **Technological Enablers and Platform Features**

Features such as shoppable posts, swipe-up links, live shopping events, and time-limited offers were repeatedly cited as mechanisms that reduce decision-making friction. These platform affordances exploit psychological biases, particularly scarcity and urgency, encouraging spontaneous purchase decisions. Such technological enablers, when combined with influencer endorsements, create a seamless transition from exposure to purchase, reinforcing impulse-driven behaviour.

- **Gender-Specific Susceptibility**

A consistent pattern across the literature highlighted greater susceptibility among female consumers compared to male counterparts. Women were found to engage more deeply with visual and aesthetic content, exhibit stronger parasocial bonds, and place higher value on social approval, identity expression, and lifestyle congruence. This gendered dimension suggests that influencer strategies disproportionately affect women, raising both marketing opportunities and ethical considerations.

- **Quantitative Patterns**

Several quantitative trends reinforced the thematic synthesis:

- **Influencer credibility** was statistically significant in 20 of the 27 studies, underscoring its primacy in shaping impulsive decisions.
 - **Parasocial interaction** appeared as a mediator in 15 studies, confirming its role as a psychological bridge between influencer qualities and consumer behaviour.
 - **Technological features** were directly linked to impulse buying in 12 studies, emphasizing the importance of platform design in shaping behaviour.
 - **Gender comparisons** in 9 studies revealed stronger emotional and behavioural responses among female consumers, further validating the susceptibility theme.

These patterns not only highlight the robustness of certain constructs (credibility, PSI) but also show the interplay between human and technological factors in driving outcomes.

- **Summary of Key Findings**

Taken together, the evidence suggests that female consumers' impulse buying behaviour online is a multi-dimensional construct shaped by the synergy of influencer attributes, emotional bonding mechanisms, social proof dynamics, and technological affordances. While credibility and parasocial relationships underpin the trust and attachment that influence consumer psychology, platform features such as time-limited offers amplify urgency and convenience, creating fertile ground for unplanned purchases. Importantly, the gender-specific dimension highlights the disproportionate impact on women, warranting further reflection on both marketing practices and consumer protection frameworks.

- **Discussion**

The findings of this systematic literature review provide important insights into the mechanisms through which social media influencers (SMIs) stimulate online impulse buying behaviour among female consumers. By synthesizing evidence from 27 studies across diverse contexts, this research demonstrates that the interplay of influencer attributes, psychological processes, and technological affordances creates a fertile environment for impulsive consumption.

- **Theoretical Implications**

The results extend existing theories of consumer behaviour and impulse buying into the social media context. Traditional impulse buying models emphasized situational triggers such as store atmosphere or promotional stimuli. However, this review highlights how digital influencers act as both social and psychological stimuli, simultaneously fulfilling roles of opinion leaders, peers, and lifestyle models. The strong role of parasocial interactions confirms the relevance of social influence and media psychology theories in explaining unplanned purchases online.

The prominence of influencer credibility and attractiveness supports prior models of source credibility and persuasion. Trustworthiness and relatability appear to be more influential than celebrity status, suggesting that micro- and mid-tier influencers may be as impactful, if not more so, than traditional celebrities. Furthermore, the mediating role of parasocial relationships points to the necessity of incorporating emotional bonding mechanisms into impulse buying frameworks.

- **Gendered Dimensions of Impulse Buying**

One of the most significant contributions of this review is the identification of gender-specific susceptibility. Female consumers consistently demonstrated higher responsiveness to influencer marketing cues compared to men. This aligns with research highlighting women's stronger orientation towards social approval, identity expression, and aesthetic consumption. Such patterns not only provide theoretical clarity but also raise critical ethical considerations regarding the potential exploitation of gendered consumption behaviours.

- **Role of Technology and Platforms**

The findings emphasize that impulse buying online cannot be understood solely through psychological or social mechanisms; technological affordances play a pivotal role. Shoppable posts, swipe-up links, and algorithm-driven content personalization reduce friction and create urgency, thereby amplifying impulse buying. These features reflect principles from Technology Acceptance Models (TAM) and behavioral economics, particularly concepts such as scarcity, immediacy, and choice architecture. The convergence of human persuasion (influencers) and platform design (technology) represents a unique dynamic that distinguishes digital impulse buying from its offline counterpart.

- **Practical Implications**

From a managerial perspective, the findings offer several insights:

- Marketers should prioritize collaborations with influencers who embody authenticity and relatability, as these qualities drive both credibility and parasocial bonding.
- Influencer campaign targeting female consumers should strategically leverage platform-specific features (e.g., Instagram reels, TikTok challenges, live shopping) to maximize impact.
- Brands must balance persuasion with ethics, avoiding manipulative tactics such as excessive scarcity cues, which risk backlash and consumer distrust.

For policymakers and regulators, the gender-specific vulnerabilities identified in this review highlight the need for clearer advertising disclosure policies and consumer protection guidelines, especially for young women heavily engaged in influencer-driven environments.

- **Limitations of Current Evidence**

Despite offering valuable insights, the reviewed literature exhibits several limitations:

- **Geographical imbalance** the majority of studies focus on Asia and Europe, with limited attention to emerging markets in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.
- **Methodological dominance of quantitative designs** while surveys and SEM provide statistical validation, fewer qualitative studies capture the lived experiences and motivations of female consumers.
- **Platform concentration** most studies analyze Instagram and TikTok, leaving newer or niche platforms underexplored.
- **Cross-sectional data** many studies rely on single-time surveys, which may not adequately capture the evolving and dynamic nature of impulse buying behaviours.

- **Directions for Future Research**

Future studies should aim to address these limitations by:

- Conducting cross-cultural comparisons to examine how cultural norms shape female consumers' susceptibility to influencers.
- Expanding the focus to emerging social platforms (e.g., Snapchat, BeReal, Xiaohongshu) and their unique features.
- Employing longitudinal and experimental designs to better understand the causal pathways of influencer-induced impulse buying.
- Integrating psychological and neuro-marketing methods (e.g., eye-tracking, biometric data) to explore subconscious drivers of impulsive behaviour.
- Exploring ethical and societal implications, including consumer well-being, digital literacy, and strategies to mitigate negative consequences of excessive impulse buying.

Research Gaps and Future Directions

Although this systematic review consolidates valuable insights on the role of social media influencers in shaping female consumers' impulse buying behaviour, several gaps persist in the literature. Identifying these gaps is crucial for refining theoretical models, designing more balanced marketing strategies, and safeguarding consumer well-being.

- **Geographical and Cultural Gaps**

Most studies were concentrated in Asia and Europe, with limited research from Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Cultural values and levels of digital penetration may influence how female consumers perceive influencer credibility and parasocial relationships.

Future Research Should

- Conduct cross-cultural comparative studies to explore cultural moderators of influencer effectiveness.
- Investigate underrepresented markets where social commerce adoption is rapidly accelerating.

Diversity and Evolution

The majority of studies focused on Instagram and TikTok, while other platforms such as Snapchat, Pinterest, Xiaohongshu, or emerging apps remain underexplored. Moreover, the dynamic nature of algorithms and platform affordances means that consumer behaviour may evolve quickly.

Future research should:

- Examine new and niche platforms to assess whether their features trigger similar or unique impulse buying behaviours.
- Study the impact of algorithmic personalization and AI-driven recommendation systems on female consumer decision-making.

Methodological Limitations

A dominance of survey-based quantitative designs (SEM, regression) restricts understanding of deeper motivations and unconscious processes. Few longitudinal or experimental studies exist to establish causality.

Future Research Should:

- Employ mixed-methods and longitudinal designs to capture evolving behaviours.
- Utilize experimental and neuroscientific tools (e.g., eye-tracking, fMRI, biometrics) to reveal subconscious drivers of impulsive decisions.
- Investigate real-time data from social media analytics to complement self-reported behaviours.

Gendered Susceptibility and Intersectionality

While most findings confirm higher susceptibility among female consumers, limited work examines intersectional factors such as age, socioeconomic status, marital status, or professional identity.

Future research should:

- Explore how intersectional demographics influence the strength of influencer persuasion.
- Investigate whether susceptibility decreases with digital literacy, consumer awareness, or maturity of online shopping habits.

Ethical and Regulatory Dimensions

Current literature emphasizes marketing effectiveness but pays limited attention to the ethical consequences of influencer-driven impulse buying among women, such as overconsumption, financial strain, and psychological stress.

Future research should:

- Examine consumer well-being, self-regulation, and digital resilience in response to influencer marketing.
- Investigate the effectiveness of regulatory frameworks (e.g., ad disclosures, influencer accountability) in moderating impulse buying.
- Develop models for responsible influencer marketing, balancing persuasion with consumer protection.

Integration with Broader Consumer Behaviour Theories

Impulse buying is often studied in isolation, without integration into broader theories of consumer decision-making or behavioural economics.

Future research should:

- Situate influencer-induced impulse buying within broader models such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Technology Acceptance Model, or Behavioural Economics frameworks.
- Explore how psychological constructs like self-control, gratification delay, and digital fatigue interact with influencer persuasion.

Conclusion

This study systematically reviewed the literature on the impact of social media influencers (SMIs) on online impulse buying behaviour among female consumers, employing a PRISMA-guided Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology. By synthesizing evidence from 27 peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025, the review provides a comprehensive and structured understanding of how influencer attributes, emotional connections, social dynamics, and technological features collectively drive impulsive purchase decisions in digital commerce.

The findings underscore that female consumers represent a particularly responsive demographic within this context. Their heightened social media engagement, strong affinity for visually appealing and identity-affirming content, and greater reliance on peer and influencer validation contribute to their susceptibility to impulse buying. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok dominate this space, where influencer credibility, attractiveness, and authenticity consistently emerge as critical triggers of trust and purchase intention. Moreover, parasocial interactions create a sense of intimacy between

influencers and followers, making endorsements appear authentic and persuasive. Simultaneously, engagement metrics (likes, comments, shares) and platform-specific features such as swipe-up links, shoppable posts, and time-limited discounts serve as powerful technological enablers, reducing decision-making friction and intensifying urgency.

This review contributes to the existing body of knowledge in three important ways. First, it advances theoretical clarity by integrating fragmented insights across disciplines, showing that influencer-induced impulse buying among female consumers is shaped by both psychological (trust, emotion, PSI) and technological (affordances, algorithms) mechanisms. Second, it identifies significant research gaps, including limited cross-cultural evidence, methodological reliance on surveys, underexplored digital platforms, and a lack of focus on ethical or regulatory dimensions. These gaps present a clear roadmap for future research, particularly through longitudinal, experimental, and cross-cultural designs. Third, it highlights practical implications for marketers and policymakers. While SMLs are effective in stimulating purchase behaviour, unchecked reliance on impulse-driven persuasion raises concerns about consumer exploitation, financial well-being, and sustainability of digital commerce ecosystems.

In conclusion, influencer-induced impulse buying among female consumers is not merely an incidental outcome of digital marketing but the result of a complex interplay of psychological trust, emotional bonding, social validation, and technological affordances. As influencer marketing continues to evolve with algorithmic personalization, artificial intelligence, and immersive platforms, it is imperative that scholars, practitioners, and regulators work together to strike a balance between commercial effectiveness and consumer protection. Building ethical, transparent, and culturally sensitive influencer strategies will ensure that the digital marketplace remains not only innovative and profitable but also socially responsible and sustainable in the long run.

- **Managerial and Policy Implications**

The insights from this review extend beyond theory, offering actionable implications for practitioners and policymakers navigating the fast-evolving digital commerce ecosystem.

Managerial Implications

- **Strategic Influencer Selection**

Brands should prioritize influencers who exhibit authenticity, expertise, and lifestyle congruence with their target female audiences. Overemphasis on follower counts alone may overlook micro- and nano-influencers, who often drive stronger parasocial bonds and higher trust.

- **Content Design and Engagement Optimization**

Marketers should focus on storytelling, aesthetic appeal, and interactive content formats (e.g., reels, live sessions, shoppable posts) to amplify impulsive triggers while maintaining transparency and consumer trust.

- **Responsible Marketing Practices**

While urgency-inducing features (limited-time offers, flash sales) are effective, excessive reliance may backfire, causing consumer fatigue or financial strain. Incorporating subtle nudges rather than aggressive tactics can sustain long-term brand loyalty.

- **Consumer Segmentation and Personalization**

Insights into female consumers' susceptibility highlight the need for refined targeting. Data-driven personalization, when applied ethically, can tailor influencer campaigns without crossing into manipulative practices.

Policy Implications

- **Strengthening Advertising Transparency**

Regulators should enforce clearer disclosure of paid promotions and sponsorships, ensuring consumers can distinguish between organic recommendations and commercial endorsements.

- **Promoting Digital Literacy**

Public awareness campaigns should equip female consumers with skills to critically evaluate influencer content, recognize persuasion tactics, and exercise greater self-control in online shopping environments.

- **Consumer Protection Frameworks**

Policies may address overconsumption and psychological harm by setting guidelines for influencer marketing, especially on platforms targeting younger or vulnerable female demographics.

- **Ethical Standards for Influencers and Platforms**

Collaboration between governments, industry associations, and platforms is needed to establish ethical codes of conduct, balancing commercial creativity with consumer well-being.

By addressing these managerial and policy considerations, the findings of this study not only inform marketing strategies but also contribute to building a more transparent, ethical, and sustainable digital marketplace.

Table: Summary of Managerial & Policy Implications

Stakeholder	Implication	Actionable Step
Brands & Marketers	Need to maximize influencer impact while preserving consumer trust	Select influencers based on authenticity, expertise, and audience alignment rather than follower count alone
Brands & Marketers	Content design shapes impulse buying triggers	Use storytelling, aesthetic visuals, and interactive features (e.g., reels, shoppable posts, live sessions) to engage female consumers effectively
Brands & Marketers	Risk of consumer fatigue from aggressive urgency tactics	Balance urgency-driven campaigns with subtle nudges and value-driven content to sustain loyalty
Brands & Marketers	Female consumers are more susceptible to influencer cues	Apply ethical, data-driven personalization to tailor campaigns without manipulation
Regulators & Policymakers	Lack of transparency in influencer marketing	Mandate clear disclosure of paid partnerships and sponsored content across platforms
Regulators & Policymakers	Growing vulnerability of female consumers to impulsive shopping	Promote digital literacy campaigns focused on critical evaluation of influencer content
Regulators & Policymakers	Potential risks of overconsumption and psychological stress	Develop consumer protection guidelines addressing impulse buying, especially for vulnerable demographics
Influencers & Platforms	Ethical responsibility in shaping consumer behaviour	Establish and adhere to ethical codes of conduct, ensuring influencer endorsements balance persuasion with consumer well-being

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