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## **Bibliometric analysis on influencer marketing**

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### **Senem Hazel Baser**

*Research Asst., Department of Management Information Systems, Aksaray University, Aksaray, Turkiye*  
*E-mail: senemhazelbaser@aksaray.edu.tr*

### **Hulya Bakirtas**

*Prof., Department of Management Information Systems, Aksaray University, Aksaray, Turkiye*  
*E-mail: hbakirtas@aksaray.edu.tr*

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### **Abstract**

Influencers are individuals who typically possess a substantial following and specialize in specific fields such as fashion, beauty, travel, fitness, and technology. Exerting influence in diverse domains, influencers gain the trust of their followers and significantly impact their purchasing decisions. Through social media posts, videos, blog articles, product reviews, or sponsored content, influencers promote brands and provide recommendations to their followers. This study aims to identify the past, current, and future thematic trends in research on influencers and to reveal key trends in article, author, country, and journal performance. The research contributes to the literature by offering insights into future research gaps in the marketing field and providing a comprehensive overview.

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**Keywords:** influencer, influencer marketing, bibliometric analysis, thematic analysis.

**Jel codes:** C38, C50, M30, M31.

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## 1. Introduction

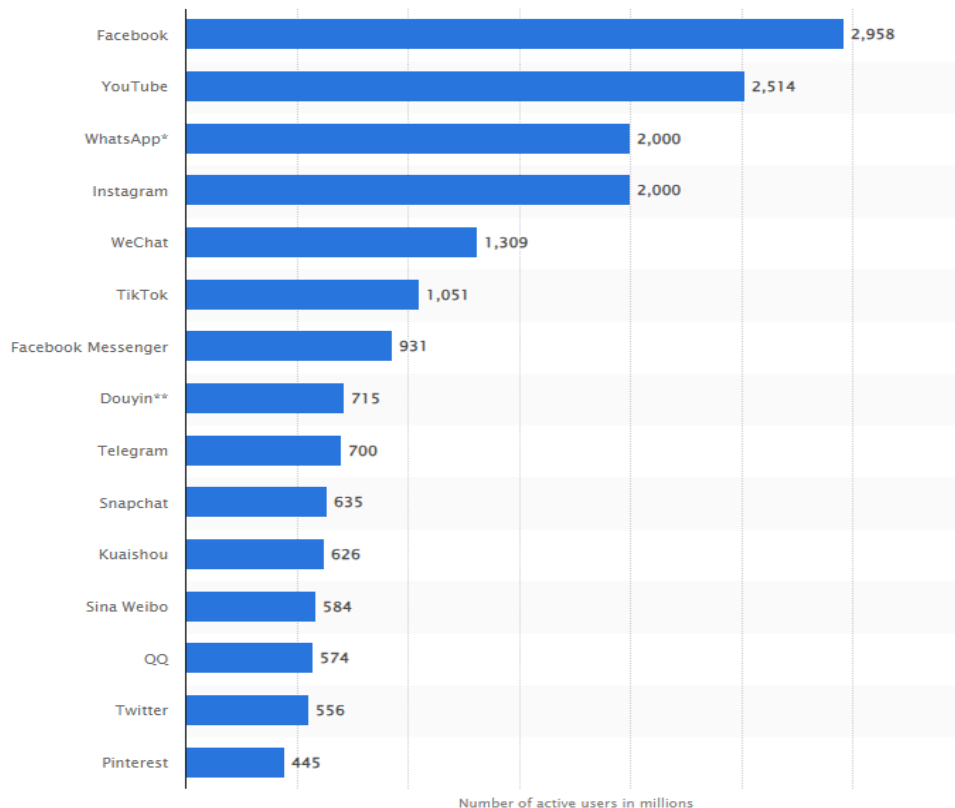
Social media has gained popularity as an effective communication channel in today's digital world. Various social media platforms are utilized to facilitate interaction among a multitude of participants, including businesses, groups, communities, organizations, and consumers. These platforms are organized in diverse streams, such as forums, with the aim of enhancing participant engagement (Dwivedi, Kapoor & Chen, 2015). Revolutionizing the field of marketing, social media platforms provide opportunities to reach customers in new ways, inform and engage them, conduct sales, gather information about customers, and offer services (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).

Consumers are known to frequently use social media platforms as a means of sharing information regarding product news, marketing messages, and consumption experiences (Ho & Ito, 2019). The active engagement of consumers on social media platforms has led businesses to prefer these platforms as a channel for implementing their business strategies. Businesses often collaborate with popular individuals who have a significant impact on people through these channels. This practice is known as influencer marketing. In recent years, the escalating popularity of social media influencers has led to the widespread adoption of influencer marketing (IM) in company strategies (Campbell & Farrell, 2020; Ge & Getzel, 2018; Vrontis, Makrides, Christofi & Thrassou, 2021).

Influencer marketing (IM) has evolved into a significant paradigm in the field of marketing, enhancing businesses' capabilities to reach, inform, engage with customers, and drive sales. Consequently, conducting detailed research on IM is crucial, providing valuable insights for marketers and managers. This study presents a bibliometric analysis of research on IM. While offering a summary of current research in the IM field, this study also provides recommendations for future investigations in the field.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Academics and practitioners in the field of marketing have witnessed a significant transformation in digital, social media, and mobile marketing. This transformation has occurred in parallel with innovations such as the development and widespread consumer adoption of social media platforms (Figure 1). Furthermore, the omnipresence of social media has altered the way consumers share information with each other and interact with brands (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).



**Fig 1.** Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2023

**Source:** Statista, 2023

Businesses are observed to incorporate social media influencers, distinct from traditional celebrities, in their communication and interaction processes with consumers. Because these celebrities have a stronger connection with consumers and are more appealing to them (Müller, Mattke & Maier, 2018; Tran & Strutton, 2014). Emerging celebrities, termed "influencers," provide the opportunity to engage with consumers through social networks, contrasting with traditional celebrities renowned for film, music, and TV shows, as they gain fame through their presence on social media platforms (Khamis, Ang & Welling, 2017). Influencer Marketing (IM), an effective method of interacting with stakeholders on social media platforms, has emerged as a relatively new discipline (Bakker, 2018). While brands often struggle to create engaging social media content, influencers specialize in content creation, generating content that consumers interact with and facilitating its broader dissemination on social media (McCoole, 2018). Influencer marketing involves rewarding individuals who share information about a product or service on social media. Currently, influencer marketing has become highly popular, with many marketers planning to use influencers for promoting their products or increasing their shares in media blends (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Consumers exposed to brand posts from influencers on Instagram perceive the source as more reliable than those exposed to brand posts from traditional celebrities. They also exhibit a more positive attitude towards the endorsed brand and feel a stronger sense of social presence (Jin, Muqaddam & Ryu, 2019). Especially among Generation Z, there is a shift towards using streaming services instead of traditional TV, turning to music applications like Spotify instead of radio, and preferring platforms like Reddit over magazines. These changes have particularly contributed to the rise of mobile advertising platforms such as Instagram or TikTok. Many companies in the fashion, beauty, travel, food, and beverage sectors prefer conducting marketing campaigns by collaborating with influencers on popular platforms like Instagram and TikTok (Haenlein, Anadol, Farnsworth, Hugo, Hunichen & Welte, 2020). The field of IM continues to grow, and it is expected to reach \$21.1 billion in 2023 (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2023).

The IM literature, despite being relatively new, provides a rich source of information. Therefore, it is crucial for future researchers to consider previous studies in the field. This article aims to compile a review of IM articles, using a methodology detailed in the next section, to provide a comprehensive overview of the field and serve as a guiding resource for future research.

### 3. Methodology

Scientific literature review articles are methodological studies that provide an objective and theoretical discussion on a specific subject or theme, obtaining research results through database searches. Generally, there are two main types of review articles in scientific literature: Systematic and narrative literature reviews. These two types of review articles have different characteristics and purposes (Rother, 2007).

A systematic literature review is designed to select, identify, and critically evaluate data using a systematic methodology to answer specific research questions (Pae, 2015). This approach ensures a higher standard in literature reviews and demonstrates to readers that the results are more reliable. This method enhances data reproducibility and study verifiability. A systematic literature review is distinct from narrative review methods. While a narrative review provides current information on a subject or theme, a systematic literature review is designed to answer specific research questions. Therefore, a systematic review employs a more rigorous methodology, yielding more accurate results. A systematic literature review is considered an original study and provides more reliable results due to its rigorous methodological approaches. Consequently, many scientists and researchers lay the foundation for their research by conducting systematic literature reviews (Rother, 2007; Siddaway, Wood & Hedges, 2019).

#### 3.1. Bibliometric Analysis

Bibliometric analysis is a popular method for exploring and analyzing large amounts of scientific data, aiding in the understanding of the development of a field and the emergence of subfields within that domain (Daim, Rueda, Martin & Gerdasri, 2006; Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015). The specific analysis of journals through bibliometric methodologies is currently gaining attention among scientific journals (Gaviria-Marin, Merigo & Popa, 2018). The popularity of bibliometric analysis can be attributed to the development, usability, accessibility, and interdisciplinary dissemination of bibliometric software tools such as Gephi, Leximancer, VOSviewer, and scientific databases like Scopus and Web of Science within the field of information science and business research. Moreover, the significance of bibliometric analysis in business research lies in its ability to process large amounts of scientific data and generate high research impact. There are two main categories of bibliometric analysis: Performance analysis and scientific mapping (Donthu, Kumar, Mukherjee, Pandey & Lim, 2021). Performance analysis evaluates different dimensions, such as articles, authors, universities, and countries, using bibliometric indicators (e.g., h-index, productivity, and citations). On the other hand, bibliometric mapping is used to graphically analyze the structure of a journal's references based on overlaps between keywords and common citations (Forliano, De Bernardi & Yahiaoui, 2021; Gaviria-Marin, Merigo & Popa, 2018).

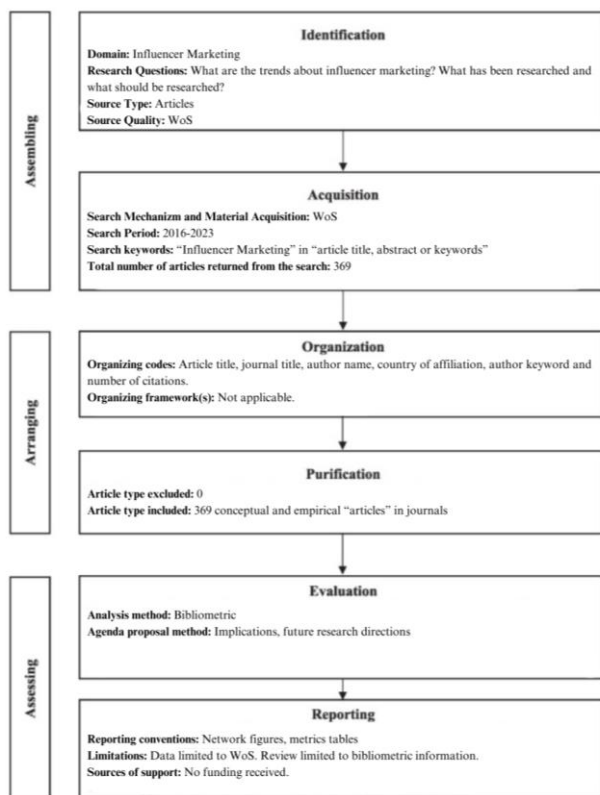
Koehler (2001) in his study emphasizes that researchers in the field of bibliometrics can be categorized into four groups, including: (a) studies focusing on citation analysis, (b) studies oriented towards co-citation analysis, (c) studies related to the productivity of individuals, organizations, or countries, and (d) studies focusing on knowledge products such as books, articles, patents, and similar. Therefore, bibliometrics involves the analysis of publications using statistical methods; measuring the outputs of individuals, institutions, and countries; and determining the connections among them.

### 3.2. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis (TA), widely employed in the analysis of qualitative data, aids researchers in exploring themes, patterns, and meanings within a specific dataset. TA facilitates researchers in understanding, organizing, and interpreting qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Thematic Analysis allows a researcher to precisely identify relationships between concepts and compare them with replicated data (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012; Neuendorf, 2018).

### 3.3. SPAR-4-SLR Protocol

In a special issue published in the International Journal of Consumer Studies, the editors introduced the "Scientific Procedures and Rationale for Systematic Literature Reviews" (SPAR-4-SLR) protocol. This protocol serves as a rigorous review protocol that researchers can rely on to guide and justify their decisions in systematic literature reviews (Paul, Lim, O'Cass, Hao & Bresciani, 2021). Adopting the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, this systematic literature review has utilized it to guide the synthesis, organization, and evaluation of tasks. The stages of the protocol (Paul, Lim, O'Cass, Hao & Bresciani, 2021) are illustrated in Figure 2.



**Fig 2.** SPAR-4-SLR protocol

**Source:** Created by author

## 4. Findings

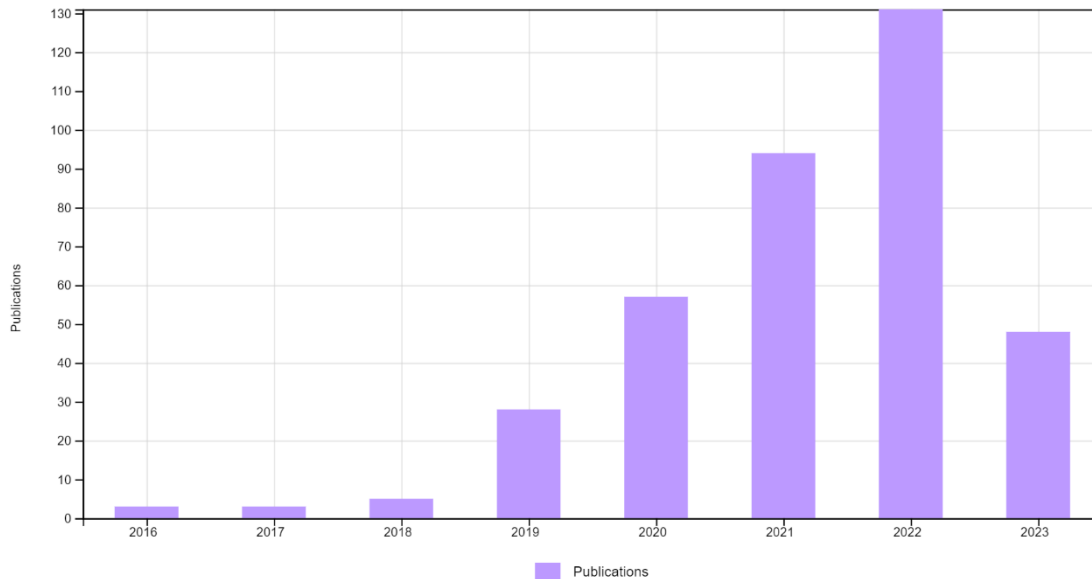
The conclusion of this review is presented in two sections based on the research questions. In the first section, the performance of publications, authors, countries, and journals in the field of Influencer Marketing (IM) has been examined using the results of bibliometric performance analysis. In the second section, the knowledge base and knowledge production of IM have been investigated. In this context, the intellectual structure of IM has been

revealed through analyses of co-citation and keyword co-occurrence using scientific mapping. The findings are reported with figures, tables, and examples.

#### 4.1. Bibliometric Performance

##### 4.1.1. Corpus Performance

The research is based on the analysis of a total of 369 Influencer Marketing (IM) articles published between 2016 and 2023. Fig. 3 illustrates the distribution of articles published on the subject over the years. It can be noted that the number of publications started to increase from 2019, reaching its peak in 2022. Since the data collection process took place in April 2023, it is reasonable to consider the lower number of publications as normal.



**Fig 3.** Number of IM articles published between 2016 and 2023

**Source:** Created by author

##### 4.1.2. Article Performance

The 10 most cited IM articles are given in Table 1. Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders' (2017) study stands out as the most cited influencer marketing research, providing a comprehensive understanding of how the number of followers influences attitudes towards influencers and promoted brands. Furthermore, their work contributes to the literature on word-of-mouth marketing and influencer marketing, with a focus on the concept of thought leadership. Audrezet, De Kerviler, and Moulard's (2020) study identifies two distinct authenticity management strategies, passionate authenticity, and transparent authenticity, by examining social media influencer (SMI)-brand partnerships. The study offers guidance for mutual benefit between SMIs and marketers. Jin, Muqaddam, and Ryu's (2019) research tests the effects of source credibility between Instagram celebrities and traditional celebrities on brand attitude, jealousy, and social presence. The findings reveal that consumers perceive Instagram celebrities as more reliable in brand posts and exhibit a positive attitude towards them. Hughes, Swaminathan, and Brooks' (2019) study examines sponsored blogging strategies, addressing different campaign objectives of social influencers and investigating the impact of blog writers' characteristics and content features on social media interaction. Ki and Kim's (2019) work demonstrates that SMIs appeal to similar consumers and garner followers by identifying specific qualities in their online content.

**Table 1.** Ten most-cited IM articles

No.	Article	Cites	Title
1	De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017)	541	Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude
2	Audrezet, A., De Kerviler, G., & Moulard, J. G. (2020)	193	Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation
3	Jin, S. V., Muqaddam, A., & Ryu, E. (2019)	175	Instafamous and social media influencer marketing
4	Hughes, C., Swaminathan, V., & Brooks, G. (2019)	161	Driving brand engagement through online social influencers: An empirical investigation of sponsored blogging campaigns
5	Ki, C. W. C., & Kim, Y. K. (2019)	133	The mechanism by which social media influencers persuade consumers: The role of consumers' desire to mimic
6	Campbell, C., & Farrell, J. R. (2020)	122	More than meets the eye: The functional components underlying influencer marketing
7	Xiao, M., Wang, R., & Chan-Olmsted, S. (2018)	118	Factors affecting YouTube influencer marketing credibility: A heuristic-systematic model
8	Coates, A. E., Hardman, C. A., Halford, J. C., Christiansen, P., & Boyland, E. J. (2019)	113	Social media influencer marketing and children's food intake: A randomized trial
9	Boerman, S. C. (2020)	108	The effects of the standardized Instagram disclosure for micro-and meso-influencers
10	De Veirman, M., & Hudders, L. (2020)	103	Disclosing sponsored Instagram posts: the role of material connection with the brand and message-sidedness when disclosing covert advertising

**Source:** Created by author

#### 4.1.3. Author Performance

In the literature review conducted on Information Management (IM) through Web of Science (WoS), a total of 200 authors have contributed to the listed studies. The information for the top 25 authors is presented in Table 2, based on the authors with the highest h-index on the WoS platform in the field of IM.

Authoring Productivity Based on H-Index reflects the top five Information Management (IM) authors as Ooi, Halford, Palmatier, Liu, and Soutar. Ooi has a total of 143 publications related to IM, accumulating 8,074 citations. Halford has 249 works in the field of IM, receiving a total of 9,301 citations. Palmatier has 94 publications on IM, with 8,677 citations. Liu, with 106 works on IM, has garnered 4,200 citations. Soutar has contributed to the field with 132 studies, receiving 8,816 citations for his work.

**Table 2:** Most Influential Authors Contributing to IM Based on H-Indexes

No.	Author	h-index	Citation Count	Number of Publications
1	Ooi, Keng-Boon	57	8,074	143
2	Halford, Jason C. G.	55	9,301	249
3	Palmatier, Robert W.	40	8,677	94
4	Liu, Dun	38	4,200	106
5	Soutar, Geoffrey N.	36	8,816	132
6	Boyland, Emma	36	4,376	128
7	Cornwell, T. Bettina	36	4,957	91
8	Gretzel, Ulrike	36	6,470	134
9	Bijmolt, Tammo H. A.	34	4,316	98
10	Casalo, Luis V.	33	4,176	67
11	Li, Jinjie	32	4,218	155
12	Buijzen, Moniek	31	3,511	112
13	Van Reijmersdal, Eva A.	31	2,915	68
14	Jin, Seung-A Annie	30	3,089	62
15	Kumar, Arpan	29	3,330	125
16	Hudders, Liselot	29	2,963	106
17	Balaji, M. S.	29	2,476	63
18	Matthes, Joerg	28	4,484	48
19	Emond, Jennifer A.	28	3,701	110
20	Haenlein, Michael	27	11,380	49
21	Lee, Voon-Hsien	27	2,514	55
22	King, Brian	27	2,865	154
23	Christiansen, Paul	26	2,429	100
24	Chandra, Satish	26	2,524	153
25	Hardman, Charlotte A.	25	2,310	88

**Source:** Created by author

#### 4.1.4. Country Performance

In the literature review conducted on the subject, contributions were identified from a total of 56 countries to the studies available on the Web of Science (WoS) platform. Based on the number of publications, Table 3 provides information on the top 10 countries contributing to the subject with the highest number of articles.

Approximately 27% of the articles published on IM are from the United States. China follows the United States with a percentage of 13%, while Germany ranks third with 9%. The United Kingdom and South Korea are among the top five countries publishing articles on IM, each with a rate of 7%.

**Table 3:** Top 10 Countries with the Highest Number of IM Publications

No.	Country	Number of Publications	Percentage
1	USA	100	27%
2	China	47	13%
3	Germany	32	9%
4	England	27	7%
5	South Korea	24	7%
6	India	23	6%
7	Spain	23	6%
8	Australia	21	6%
9	Netherlands	21	6%
10	Belgium	15	4%

**Source:** Created by author

#### 4.1.5. Journal Performance

A total of 369 IM articles have been published in 174 journals in WoS. It has been determined that among these 174 journals, there are 18 journals that have published at least 5 IM articles. Table 4 presents these 18 journals, ranked by the number of articles related to the subject, along with the number of IM articles published in these journals and the total citation counts these articles have received.



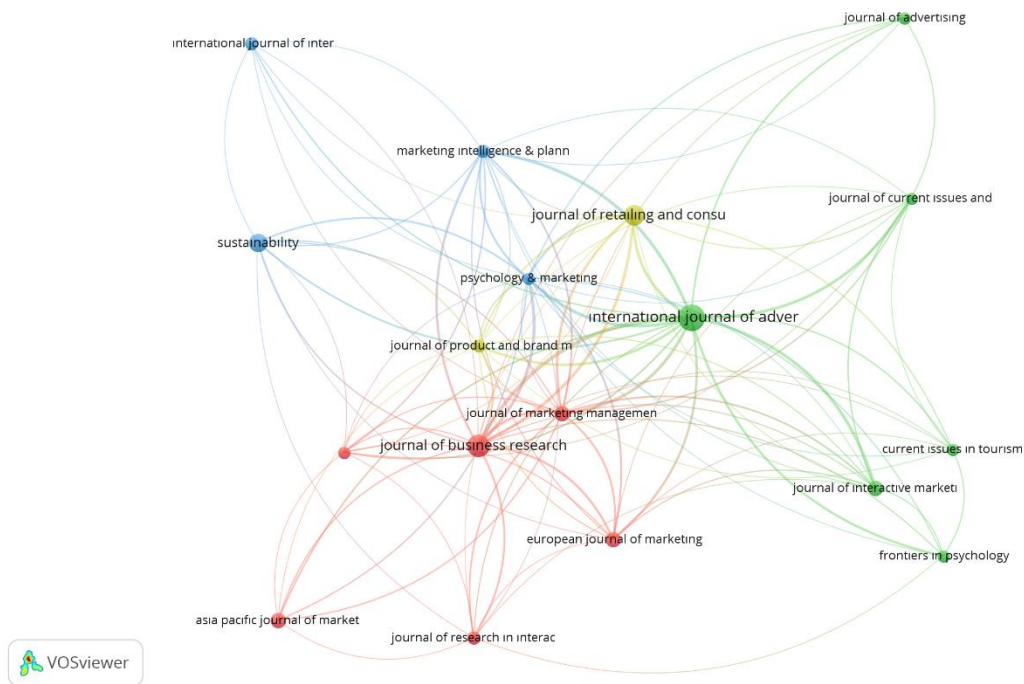
**Table 4.** 18 journals publishing at least 5 IM articles

No.	Journal	Number of Article	h-index	Number of Cited
1	International Journal of Advertising	21	10	827
2	Journal of Business Research	16	8	411
3	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	13	8	376
4	Journal of Marketing Management	7	4	178
5	Journal of Interactive Marketing	7	4	96
6	European Journal of Marketing	7	4	50
7	Asia Pasific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	7	3	13
8	Psychology & Marketing	5	4	225
9	Marketing Intelligence & Planning	6	3	199
10	Journal of Product and Brand Management	6	5	170
11	Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing	6	4	99
12	Sustainability	6	4	67
13	International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising	6	2	11
14	Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising	5	4	130
15	Frontiers in Psychology	5	3	113
16	Current Issues in Tourism	5	4	133
17	Journal of Internet Commerce	5	2	73
18	Journal of Advertising	5	3	34

**Source:** Created by author

The top three most prolific journals in terms of published IM articles are marketing and business journals: International Journal of Advertising (21 articles), Journal of Business Research (16 articles), and Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (13 articles). These same journals also occupy the first three positions in terms of H-index and total citation counts. Although Psychology & Marketing has a relatively lower number of published articles and H-index, it stands out with 225 citations for its 5 articles.

The network structure generated in VosViewer for the journals provided in Table 4 is illustrated in Figure 4. A total of four clusters representing journal contributions have been identified through network analysis. Two clusters, each consisting of six journals, form the largest clusters within the network. One of the largest clusters is the cluster of business and marketing journals (red network), including journals like Journal of Business Research and Journal of Marketing Management. The other major cluster is the cluster of advertising and marketing journals (green network), including journals like International Journal of Advertising and Journal of Interactive Marketing. The third cluster is composed of journals such as Marketing Intelligence & Planning and Sustainability (blue network). The smallest cluster encompasses journals like Journal of Product and Brand Management and Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (yellow network).



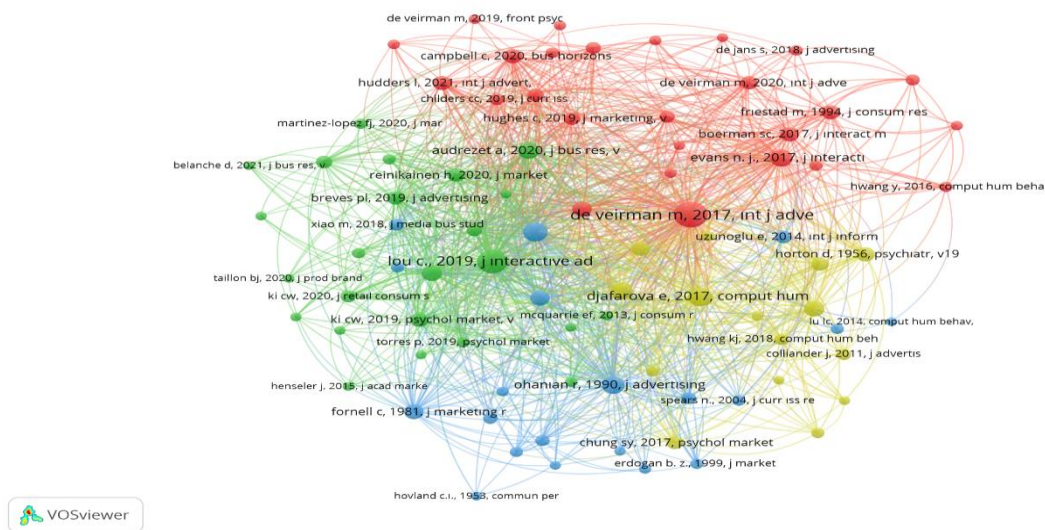
**Fig 4. Journal Network**

**Source:** Created by author

4.2. Intellectual Structure

4.2.1. Knowledge Foundation (Past)

Based on shared citations in the conducted studies, sources with more than 20 citations have been analyzed through network analysis, as illustrated below. According to the analysis, four primary clusters have emerged. The clusters of IM articles revealed through shared citation analysis reflect the history of IM research. Utilizing principal component analysis based on shared citations, four clusters of IM research have been identified as the theoretical foundations for IM articles: Instagram celebrities and sponsored posts, influencer credibility, consumers and influencer followers, and impacted consumer behaviors.



**Fig 5. Articles cited in IM articles**

**Source:** Created by author

#### 4.2.1.1. *Impact of Instagram Celebrities and Sponsored Posts*

The first cluster consists of IM articles related to Instagram celebrities and sponsored posts (red network). There are a total of 26 studies in the red network, and some of these studies are shown in Fig 5. In this cluster, studies such as De Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders (2017), Jin, Muqaddam & Ryu (2019), Campbell & Farrell (2020), Childers, Lemon & Hoy (2019), and Hudders & De Jans (2022) are included. In the study by De Veirman et al. (2017), the impact of Instagram influencers' popularity and the number of accounts they follow on their influence is investigated. Jin et al. (2019) conduct a study on the effects of Instagram celebrities and traditional celebrities on source credibility, brand attitude, jealousy, and social presence. Campbell & Farrell (2020) present a theoretical study explaining the origins and components of influencer marketing. Childers et al. (2019) conduct research on advertising agency employees' experiences with influencer marketing. Hudders and De Jans (2022) explore how the gender of an influencer in influencer marketing affects persuasiveness in sponsored content.

#### 4.2.1.2. *Influencer Credibility*

The second cluster consists of IM articles related to the perceived credibility of influencers (green network). There are a total of 24 studies in the green network, and some of these studies are shown in Fig 5. In this cluster, studies such as Martínez-López, Anaya-Sánchez, Esteban-Millat, Torrez-Meruvia, D'Alessandro & Miles (2020), Reinikainen, Munnukka, Maity & Luoma-Aho (2020), Ki, Cuevas, Chong & Lim (2020), Torres, Augusto & Matos (2019), and Lou & Yuan (2019) are included. Martínez-López et al. (2020) draw conclusions about how perceived brand control and perceived commercial orientation of a shared post affect consumers' trust in influencers. Reinikainen et al. (2020) conduct a study on how communication between the audience and the influencer in influencer marketing affects influencer credibility, brand trust, and purchase intention. The aim of Ki et al.'s (2020) studies is to investigate how emotional attachment to social media influencers and trust in influencers affect the acceptance of influencers' endorsements. Torres et al. (2019) contribute to the literature by examining the impact of the attractiveness of influencers and the fit between an influencer and a brand on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Lou and Yuan (2019) investigate how the informative value of content created by an influencer affects trust in branded posts, considering the influencer's credibility, attractiveness, and similarity to followers, influencing brand awareness and purchase intentions.

#### 4.2.1.3. *Consumers and Influencer Followers*

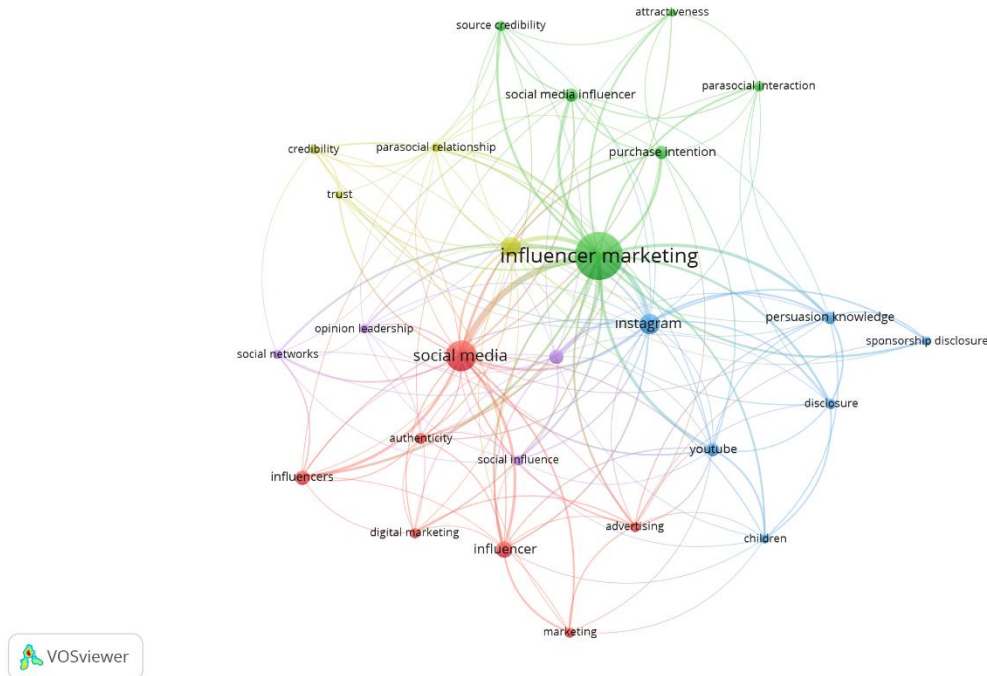
The third cluster consists of studies focusing on influencers' followers (blue network). There are a total of 20 studies in the blue network, and some of these studies are shown in Fig 5. In this cluster, studies such as Xiao, Wang & Chan-Olmsted (2018), Ki & Kim (2019), Ohanian (1990), Schouten, Janssen & Verspaget (2020), and McCracken (1989) are included. Xiao et al. (2018) investigate the factors influencing the perceived credibility of information by followers of YouTube influencers. Ki & Kim (2019) explore the mechanisms through which SMIs persuade consumers to adopt brands. Ohanian (1990) develops a scale to measure the perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness of celebrity endorsers. Schouten et al. (2020) examine the impact of companies choosing social media influencers over traditional celebrity endorsers and investigate the mechanisms underlying this preference. In his study, McCracken (1989) presents an alternative meaning transfer model for celebrity endorsements, suggesting that the effectiveness of celebrities is derived from cultural meanings and discusses how this model influences the understanding of consumer society.

#### 4.2.1.4. *Impacted Consumer Behaviors*

The fourth cluster consists of studies examining how activities carried out by influencers impact consumer behaviors (yellow network). There are a total of 15 studies in the yellow network, and some of these studies are shown in Fig 5. In this cluster, studies such as Sokolova & Perez (2021), Djafarova & Rushworth (2017), Ferchaud, Grzeslo, Orme & LaGroue (2018), Munnukka, Maity, Reinikainen & Luoma-aho (2019), and Colliander & Dahlén (2011) are included. Sokolova & Perez (2021) investigate the motivations, parasocial interaction, and exercise intentions of users following fitness influencers on YouTube and how these factors are related to their intention to exercise. Djafarova & Rushworth (2017) explore the impact of Instagram on source credibility, consumer purchase intention, and social identity. Ferchaud et al. (2018) aim to reveal the relationships between content features, video features, parasocial features among the most subscribed YouTube channels that may lead to the formation of parasocial relationships. Munnukka et al. (2019) examine the impact of viewer engagement on the effectiveness of brand endorsements in vlogs, investigating its effects on parasocial relationships and perceptions of vlogger trustworthiness and brand attitudes. Colliander & Dahlén (2011) compare the effects of brand promotion in social and "traditional" digital media.

#### 4.2.2. Knowledge Production (Current)

To depict the knowledge production in IM research, a keyword co-occurrence analysis has been conducted. The 27 keywords that appear in at least 7 articles are shown in Fig 6. Based on the co-occurrence of keywords, five clusters have emerged, and themes have been identified based on the keywords in these clusters.



**Fig 6.** Keywords used in IM articles

**Source:** Created by author

##### 4.2.2.1. Digital Marketing and Advertising

The first cluster encompasses concepts related to digital marketing and advertising (red network). Upon examining the first cluster related to the most frequently used keywords, it is observed that IM studies emphasize activities such as "marketing" and "digital marketing," including "advertising" activities conducted through "social media," with a focus on "authenticity."

##### 4.2.2.2. Influence of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Intention

The second cluster indicates the publication of IM articles related to the impact of influencer marketing on purchase intention (green network). The co-occurrence of keywords in this cluster highlights the significance placed on the "attractiveness" feature of "influencer marketing" processes in IM studies, emphasizing the establishment of "parasocial interaction" and providing support in terms of "source credibility."

##### 4.2.2.3. Sponsored Posts on Social Networks

The third cluster includes IM articles related to sponsored posts on social networks (blue network). The keywords in this cluster indicate that in IM studies, channels such as "Instagram" and "YouTube" are heavily used by "children." It is observed that in posts where "sponsorship disclosure" is made in the "disclosure" section, influencers have content related to sharing planned posts with "persuasion knowledge" to prevent discomfort among followers.

##### 4.2.2.4. Influencers and Credibility

The fourth cluster represents IM studies related to consumer credibility towards influencers (yellow network). Based on the keywords in this cluster, there are studies on the importance of "credibility" in "social media influencers" being able to instill a sense of "trust" in their followers and establish a "parasocial relationship."

##### 4.2.2.5. Social Networks and Opinion Leadership

The fifth cluster encompasses IM studies related to social networks and opinion leadership (purple network). Based on the keywords in this cluster, there are IM articles addressing the importance of "opinion leadership" in "social media marketing," covering topics related to "social network" and "social influence."

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights for researchers and practitioners in the field of IM by presenting general trends and performance metrics of studies in this area. The information provided can serve as a guide for future research and contribute to further enhancing knowledge production in the field of IM. The study examines publications in the field of IM and the fundamental characteristics of knowledge production in this domain. The analysis results indicate a continuous increase in the number of publications in the field of IM since 2016, with the number of articles reaching 117 in 2022, and this trend seems to continue in 2023. In terms of author, country, and journal performance, the most prolific authors are Ooi, Halford, Palmatier, Liu, and Soutar. Leading countries in terms of publication volume include the United States, China, Germany, the United Kingdom, and South Korea. The examined 369 IM articles were published in 174 journals listed in WoS, with the majority of these journals focusing on business, marketing, and advertising fields.

Bibliometric analysis has also examined the knowledge base and knowledge production in the field of IM. Through the use of citation and keyword co-occurrence analyses, the overall structure of IM in terms of citations and keywords has been revealed. When examining the studies that influence IM articles, these studies have been categorized into four main clusters. The first cluster encompasses research on Instagram celebrities and sponsored posts. The second cluster focuses on the perception of credibility of influencers. In the third cluster, studies related to influencers and their followers are included. The fourth and final cluster investigates the impact of influencers' activities on consumer behaviors. These clusters highlight various aspects such as follower counts, brand trust, influence, communication, follower loyalty, brand awareness, and purchase intention.

27 keywords used in IM research have been grouped into five different themes or topics through co-occurrence analysis. The first theme includes studies focusing on digital marketing and advertising, while the second theme is directed towards research investigating the impact of influencer marketing on purchase intention. The third theme centers around sponsored posts on social networks, while the fourth theme examines the influence of influencers on credibility. The final theme is dedicated to studies related to social networks and the concept of opinion leadership. These themes represent common topics addressed in IM research and the co-occurrence of keywords in these areas.

The existing academic studies on Influencer Marketing (IM) emphasize the significance and impact of this marketing strategy. These studies demonstrate that IM has positive effects on brand awareness, consumer behavior, and sales performance. Furthermore, factors such as influencer selection, content type, social media platforms, and measurement have been identified to play a crucial role in the effectiveness of IM. However, there are still many unexplored topics in the field of IM. One example of these topics is the role of micro-influencers. In addition to large influencers, the influence of micro-influencers (those with smaller follower bases) should be examined. Micro-influencers are considered a segment that focuses on a specific niche and provides more personalized interactions. Research in this area can help understand the impact of micro-influencers and their effects on brands. Additionally, there is a need for studies evaluating the impact of different content types and formats (video, visual, text, etc.) on consumer responses. Understanding which content type is more effective for specific target audiences can assist marketers in better directing their content strategies.

This study was conducted by analyzing articles in the English language listed through a query on the Web of Science (WoS) platform using the key term "influencer marketing." Future research could expand the scope of the analysis by including studies from different platforms and in different languages. Additionally, the study performed a search query within the scope of a single key term. Future research endeavors could enhance the specificity of the analyses by, for example, conducting more focused investigations using specific combinations of terms, such as "Instagram" and "IM," providing more tailored perspectives on the subject matter.

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