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THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL INFLUENCER MARKETING ON CONSPICUOUS MARKETING: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE OPINIONS OF A SAMPLE OF DIGITAL INFLUENCERS' FOLLOWERS

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Abstract

This research examines the impact of digital influencer marketing encompassing credibility, authenticity and transparency, parasocial interaction, and digital presence and influence on the dimensions of conspicuous consumption (perceived status, symbolism and aspirational value, emotional attachment and brand-related happiness, and the intention to engage in conspicuous consumption). A descriptive-analytical approach was employed, and data were collected via a 32-item questionnaire distributed to a convenience sample of followers of digital influencers on Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook. A total of 117 valid responses were retrieved out of 130 collected. The analysis utilized Cronbach's alpha coefficients, exploratory factor analysis, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regressions. The respondents perceived the research variables moderately (mean scores 3.52 and 3.46). "Digital presence" (3.82) and "perceived status" (3.75) had the highest mean scores while "intention to engage in conspicuous consumption" had the lowest (3.16). Dimensions of influencer marketing were significantly positively correlated with dimensions of conspicuous consumption; par asocial interaction was most strongly correlated with intention to engage in conspicuous consumption (r = 0.749).. Influencer marketing accounted for approximately 52.4% of the variance in conspicuous consumption overall, while "parasocial interaction," "emotional attachment," and "digital presence "taken together explained approximately 70% of the variance in the intention to engage in conspicuous consumption. A descriptive gap emerged between the respondents' perception of a brand's status and their stated intention to engage in conspicuous consumption.

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The research provides preliminary evidence for the significance of the emotional connection between a follower and an influencer, alongside the extent of the influencer's reach. However, the findings are limited by the study's cross-sectional design, the use of a non-probability sample, and reliance on self-reported questionnaire data; consequently, they describe statistical associations and predictions rather than establishing a causal relationship.

Keywords: Digital Influencer Marketing, Conspicuous Marketing, Parasocial Interaction, Influencer Credibility, Conspicuous Consumption Intention, Status Consumption.

Introduction

In recent years there has been a shift in how brands reach their audiences. Advertising messages used to go one way (advertiser to recipient), social media networks are now places where brands, influencers and followers exchange opinions and experiences. At the heart of this change is influencer marketing: an approach that uses people with large followings as well as social and intellectual authority to influence consumer behaviour (De Veirman et al., 2017; Mungshing & Ch Ibohal Meitei, 2024). Simultaneously, the very idea of luxury itself has changed. “Conspicuous consumption” isn’t just for the elite who can afford premium prices anymore it’s for everyone through what is called “masstige” (mass-prestige) products with symbolic value and status at lower price points (Samant et al., 2026). The digital environment has further amplified this trend by enabling the showcase of high-end lifestyles through images and videos—to a vast audience, thereby helping to construct the brand image of luxury goods and stimulating the desire to acquire them. Most previous research has focused on the impact of influencers on general purchase intentions or on mainstream brands. Rarely, however, has there been a detailed examination of how specific dimensions of influencer marketing influence the various facets of luxury marketing particularly within an environment defined by social media users. This research seeks to bridge that gap. However, viewing influencer marketing as a monolithic concept obscures significant distinctions between its various

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dimensions. An influencer with millions of followers may not necessarily be the most effective at fostering an intention for "conspicuous consumption," while a highly credible influencer might not succeed in associating a brand with status. This research examines four dimensions of influencer marketing—credibility, authenticity and transparency, parasocial interaction, and digital presence and influence in relation to four dimensions of conspicuous consumption: perceived status, symbolism and aspirational value, emotional attachment and brand-related happiness, and the intention to engage in conspicuous consumption. It explores the role of digital influencers when associated with brands characterized by a "conspicuous" nature, and identifies which aspects of their presence exert the greatest impact.

The research is divided into the following sections: research methodology (problem statement, objectives, hypotheses, study design, sample and instruments); theoretical framework and hypothesis testing; analysis of results; discussion; conclusions and recommendations; limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

2. Research Problem, Objectives & Methodology

2.1 Research Problem

3.1 Research Problem: Brands characterized by a "conspicuous" (ostentatious) nature increasingly rely on digital influencers. However, it remains unclear which aspects of influencer marketing are most strongly associated with a brand's conspicuous image encompassing status, symbolism, and emotional connection as well as the intention toward conspicuous consumption. The research problem is defined by the following questions:

1. What is the level of respondents' perception regarding the dimensions of digital influencer marketing and the dimensions of conspicuous marketing?
2. What is the nature of the correlation between the dimensions of these two variables?
3. Does influencer marketing influence conspicuous marketing and which of its dimensions exert the strongest impact?
4. How far can par asocial interaction, emotional connection and digital visibility predict intention toward conspicuous consumption?

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- To identify the extent to which respondents perceive the dimensions of digital influencer marketing and conspicuous marketing.
- To determine the nature and strength of the relationship between the dimensions of these two variables.
- To examine the impact of digital influencer marketing on conspicuous marketing, and to rank its dimensions based on the strength of this impact.
- To test the extent to which parasocial interaction, emotional attachment, and digital presence can predict the intention toward conspicuous consumption.
- To provide practical recommendations for marketing departments and digital influencers, based on the findings of the analysis.

3. Conceptual Framework & Hypotheses

To achieve research objectives and address the core problem, an integrated 8-dimension conceptual model was constructed. The model links Digital Influencer Marketing (Independent Variable) comprising four dimensions [1. Influencer Credibility - IC, 2. Perceived Authenticity - AUTH, 3. Parasocial Interaction - PSI, 4. Digital Visibility & Social Influence - VIS] with Conspicuous Marketing (Dependent Variable) comprising four core dimensions [1. Perceived Prestige - PRES, 2. Brand Symbolism & Aspirational Value - SYM, 3. Emotional Connection & Brand Happiness - HAP, 4. Conspicuous Consumption Intention - INT].

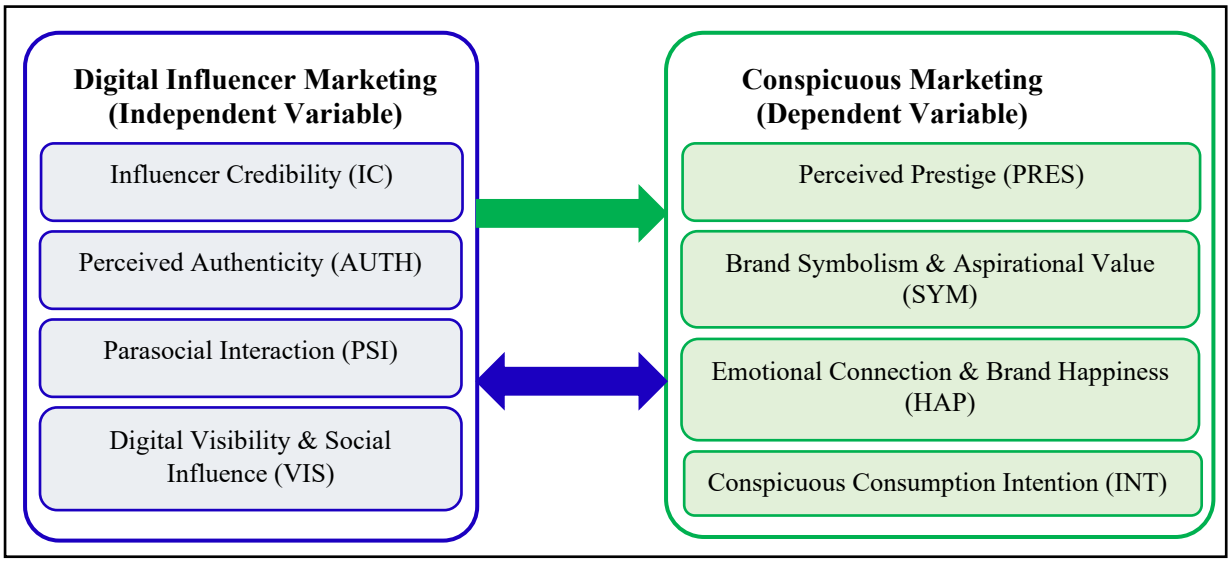


Fig (1) Conceptual framework of the study

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3.1 Research Hypotheses

The research tests two main hypotheses and eight sub-hypotheses at a statistical significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$:

Main Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a statistically significant correlation between Digital Influencer Marketing (and its dimensions) and Conspicuous Marketing (and its dimensions).

H1a: There is a statistically significant correlation between Influencer Credibility and Conspicuous Marketing dimensions.

H1b: There is a statistically significant correlation between Perceived Authenticity and Conspicuous Marketing dimensions.

H1c: There is a statistically significant correlation between Parasocial Interaction and Conspicuous Marketing dimensions.

H1d: There is a statistically significant correlation between Digital Visibility & Social Influence and Conspicuous Marketing dimensions.

Main Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a statistically significant effect of Digital Influencer Marketing (and its dimensions) on Conspicuous Marketing.

H2a: There is a statistically significant effect of Influencer Credibility on Conspicuous Marketing and its sub-dimensions.

H2b: There is a statistically significant effect of Perceived Authenticity on Conspicuous Marketing and its sub-dimensions.

H2c: There is a statistically significant effect of Parasocial Interaction on Conspicuous Marketing and its sub-dimensions.

H2d: There is a statistically significant effect of Digital Visibility & Social Influence on Conspicuous Marketing and its sub-dimensions.

4. Literature Review & Theoretical Grounding

4.1 Digital Influencer Marketing

Digital Influencer Marketing in marketing literature is a structural change from traditional advertising as one-way selling to consultative reciprocal network marketing (Mungshing & Ch Ibohal Meitei, 2024). De Veirman et al. (2017) define it as “marketing practice where social media users with large audiences influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions for commercial brands”; also the co-creation and distribution of tailored digital content on social networks

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(Instagram, TikTok and YouTube) by emerging opinion leaders who have cognitive and social authority in their respective fields (Munaro, 2022); at its core influencer marketing is a network communication process based on message value and source credibility to build sustainable trust: an interactive pathway that reduces skepticism about advertising and cognitive resistance (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

4.1.1 Dimensions of Digital Influencer Marketing

Building on Source Credibility Theory and Network Interaction Models four dimensions are used to build the influencer influence ecosystem:

Influencer credibility (IC): Audience's perception of an influencer's integrity, honesty and independence in providing unbiased evaluations without direct commercial manipulation (Ohanian et al., n.d.). Credibility is the basis for reducing risk perception among consumers and acceptance of sponsored messages (Hani et al., 2024).

Perceived Authenticity (AUTH): How much followers believe that an influencer's content is genuine, spontaneous and unscripted (not commercial endorsements) — sincere personal convictions rather than commercial endorsements (Audrezet et al., 2020). High AUTH builds follower trust and organic engagement (Mungshing & Ch Ibohal Meitei, 2024).

3. Parasocial Interaction (PSI): Describes the one-sided psychological bond, intimacy, and perceived friendship that followers develop toward digital influencers through regular media exposure (Mungshing & Ch Ibohal Meitei, 2024) . Parasocial relationships serve as powerful persuasion mechanisms, making influencer recommendations highly compelling (Reinikainen et al., 2020).

4. Digital Visibility & Social Influence (VIS): This insight reflects the significant presence of influencers and the reach of their content across digital platforms, as well as their capacity to shape consumer trends and purchasing behavior (Samant et al., 2026). The visibility of a brand in digital space is determined by the amount of content produced and engagement levels (likes, comments, shares) social proof ("social proof" means that the audience believes that the brand is credible) (Oliveira et al., 2026). For conspicuous consumption influencers advance prestigious social brands by influencing consumer preference, encouraging

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purchases and driving conspicuous consumption behaviour (Casaló Ariño et al., 2018). Interactive communication tools bring brands closer to consumers than traditional advertising do (Schouten et al., 2020).

These dimensions were chosen to represent influencer marketing because they are some of the most frequently cited and consistent concepts in relevant studies. Their construct validity and suitability for the current research context were also checked by results of an exploratory factor analysis.

4.2 Conspicuous Marketing & Symbolic Consumption

Status-oriented marketing is based on the psychology and social drivers that drive people to buy products of high symbolic value: "status consumption motivation" (a consumer wants to improve their social standing or self-esteem by buying and consuming symbolic products that make them different/prestige in their circle of friends) (Eastman & Eastman, 2011). Academic literature differentiates between status consumption and conspicuous consumption: whereas the latter is about overt display of wealth (i.e. showing off), the former has internal as well as external dimensions (from personal satisfaction to gaining social recognition within a given culture) (Faulk et al., 2016). This insight has shaped contemporary status oriented marketing which no longer targets only the affluent elite but instead uses the term "masstige" (mass-prestige) for products that carry high symbolic value and status at price points accessible to wider consumer base. Furthermore, the digital environment and social media have amplified the effectiveness of these strategies in shaping the brand image of status-oriented labels and stimulating the desire to own them (Samant et al., 2026). Consequently, status-oriented marketing has emerged as a strategic framework that leverages social symbolism and status aspirations to craft marketing value and bolster brand appeal.

4.2.1 Dimensions of Conspicuous Marketing

In the new environment conspicuous marketing is no longer a luxury (high price point) phenomenon but has become a marketing phenomenon where social symbolism, digital interaction and influence of social media figures (influencers) are mixed. For this reason the conceptual framework and measurement scale for

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the research were integrated: status and symbolism measures from luxury marketing literature (e.g., Truong & Wiedmann) were combined with contemporary metrics on digital landscape and influencer impact (this is crucial because the research studies a modern phenomenon which bridges conspicuous marketing with era of digital influencers; Samant et al., 2026). Reliability and construct validity of this integrated scale have been statistically verified. Conspicuous marketing cannot be reduced to high pricing strategy only. The conceptual structure of conspicuous marketing lies in key dimensions interconnected as a system of "conspicuous value":

4.2.1.1 Perceived Prestige (PRES): This dimension refers to what the consumer perceives as social and symbolic value in a brand. It refers to the status, exclusivity and distinction that the brand gives to an individual relative to others (Tabassum Parvin et al., 2026). In prestige marketing this status is created through a set of deliberate marketing practices (prestige pricing and selective distribution) which act as external signals showing the quality exceptionality and high social standing of a product (Goldsmith et al., 2010). Consumers therefore prefer the brand more and are less price sensitive because the brand fulfils their aspirations to express their social status, reinforce self-identity and achieve distinction within their reference groups (Sahin & Nasir, 2022).

4.2.1.2 Brand symbolism & aspirational value: This is when a brand goes beyond its direct functional benefits and embodies social and psychological meanings that shape the consumer's identity and self-expression. In prestige marketing, a brand is a symbol of an "ideal self" that narrows the gap between what consumers have (reality) and what they want to be (personal or social aspirations) (Sung et al., 2023). Symbolism occurs along two dimensions: First is "Product Symbolism for the Self" (PSS-Self); this refers to satisfaction and enhancement of self esteem; second is PSS-Others (product symbolism for others): how much a brand can get social recognition and appreciation from reference groups surrounding the consumer (Sahin & Nasir, 2022). Thirdly, "aspirational value" exists when a brand is seen as embodying a desirable lifestyle or social status that a consumer wants to attain; buying such a brand becomes therefore expressing personal ambition and social advancement. This value is prevalent in strategies for "accessible luxury" where consumers buy brands with high symbolic value

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(representing an upscale lifestyle) at relatively low price points (Samant et al., 2026).

4.2.1.3 Emotional Connection & Brand Happiness (HAP): This dimension measures how strong the affective bonds are as well as psychological fulfillment and subjective happiness when owning and experiencing a prestige brand. In this case, the brand is personal pleasure and self-reward (hedonic and selfgratification motives behind consumption) (Cintamür, 2026). Digital environment: perception of authenticity of influencers and par asocial interaction with them strengthens this emotional bond; brands recommended by these influencers become associated with empathy, comfort and belonging to lifestyle they embody (Audrezet et al., 2020).

4.2.1.4 Conspicuous Consumption Intention (INT): This is the readiness and planned behavioural orientation of consumers to buy, use and display products and brands that have a distinct social status and visible symbolic value in the eyes of others (Sahin & Nasir 2022). It is influenced by personal motives (e.g., social distinction; expression of identity) as well as social and symbolic influences generated by the digital environment and content shared by influencers on social media platforms (Oliveira et al., 2026); it also measures the propensity of consumers to plan for future purchase, acquisition, recommendation and display of goods and brands associated with conspicuous consumption (i.e., to highlight social status and consumer identity) without implying that actual purchasing behaviour has taken place at that time (Wu & Ke 2015). These dimensions were chosen because of their recurrence and consistency in recent literature on conspicuous marketing and symbolic consumption; they were also found to be appropriate and valid for measuring the dimensions of this variable in our context by exploratory factor analysis.

5. Empirical Results & Hypotheses Testing

5.1 Sample Demographic & Behavioral Profile

Table (1) shows the demographic characteristics of our research sample. A total of 130 questionnaires were sent to participants; 117 returned (response rate was about 90%) which is a high response rate by survey research standards and gives reasonable confidence that results are not strongly biased because of non-

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response. All returned questionnaires were used in statistical analysis. Sample size of 117 is adequate for correlation and regression analyses carried out in this study. Table (1) shows demographic and profile characteristics of sample members. Females accounted for 66 (56.4%) of respondents and males 51 (43.6%). This gender distribution is relatively even with a slight preponderance of females so that gender balance is acceptable. In terms of age groups, the sample was younger: 20–29 year olds were most represented (63 respondents; 53.8%), followed by 30–39 year olds (34 respondents; 29.1%) "under 20" (14 respondents; 12%) and finally those over 40 (6 respondents; 5.1%). Almost 83% of the sample members are between 20 and 39 years old (the demographic most active on social media platforms and most interested in content created by influencers) so it is appropriate for this research. Educational background: Most respondents have diploma or bachelor's degree (82 persons, 70.1%), then high school diploma or lower (18 persons, 15.4%) and finally postgraduate degrees master's or doctorate (17 persons, 14.5%). So overall sample has strong education level (>84% university degree or higher); so we know that they understood the survey items and answered them with awareness. When asked which platform is used most often to follow influencers Instagram comes first (45 respondents, 38.5%), followed by TikTok (42 respondents, 35.9%) YouTube (14.5%), Facebook (8.5%) and other platforms (2.6%). The two visual platforms (Instagram and TikTok) account for almost 74% of the sample. This is consistent with "conspicuous consumption" marketing — imagery and visual content are what show lifestyles and luxury brands. When asked how many hours per day social media networks were used 51 respondents (43.6%) said they used them for 2–4 hours a day; 40 respondents (34.2%) said they used them for more than four hours; only 22.2% said they used them for less than two hours. So about 78% of the sample spend two or more hours daily on these networks constant exposure to content from influencers and the ads they promote. Finally, on following digital influencers: 70 respondents (59.8%) said they follow them regularly; 39 respondents (33.3%) said they follow them occasionally and only 6.8% said they follow them rarely or not at all — more than 93% of the sample have actual, direct engagement with influencers; this is empirical evidence for their responses to questionnaire items and shows that the sample is appropriate for evaluating the

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topic under study. In general these are characteristics of a young educated sample that is active on social media and often follows influencers all characteristics of the phenomenon being studied so the findings make sense. However the fact that the sample is younger and university educated (rather than older age groups or less educated people) means the results cannot be generalized to other age groups or lower educated people.

Category / Option	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Female	66	56.4%
Male	51	43.6%
Total	**117**	**100.0%**
Category / Option	**Frequency (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
Under 20 years	14	12.0%
20 - 29 years	63	53.8%
30 - 39 years	34	29.1%
40 years & above	6	5.1%
Total	**117**	**100.0%**
Category / Option	**Frequency (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
High School or below	18	15.4%
Diploma / Bachelor's Degree	82	70.1%
Postgraduate (Master's / PhD)	17	14.5%
Total	**117**	**100.0%**
Category / Option	**Frequency (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
Instagram	45	38.5%
TikTok	42	35.9%
YouTube	17	14.5%
Facebook	10	8.5%
Others	3	2.6%
Total	**117**	**100.0%**
Category / Option	**Frequency (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
Less than 2 hours	26	22.2%
2 to 4 hours	51	43.6%
More than 4 hours	40	34.2%
Total	**117**	**100.0%**
Category / Option	**Frequency (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
Always / Frequently	70	59.8%
Sometimes	39	33.3%
Rarely / Never	8	6.8%
Total	**117**	**100%**

Table 1: Demographic & Behavioral Characteristics of the Sample (N = 117)

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5.2 Scale Reliability & Validity Analysis

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to test internal consistency of questionnaire items. The results (Table (2)) show high values for all sub-dimensions: from 0.858 for "brand symbolism and aspirational value" dimension to 0.913 for "conspicuous consumption intention" dimension; reliability coefficient for the independent variable (digital influencer marketing) was 0.912 and for dependent variable (conspicuous consumption) it was 0.918; overall reliability coefficient for whole scale (32 items) was 0.925. All these values are higher than the minimum acceptable threshold (0.70) for studies in social and management sciences; most are above 0.80 (very good reliability); they mean that items within each dimension measure same construct with very high homogeneity and therefore the instrument is reliable for testing hypotheses of the study.

Dimension / Sub-Construct	Code	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Reliability Level
Influencer Credibility	IC	4	0.889	Very High
Perceived Authenticity & Transparency	AUTH	4	0.879	High
Parasocial Interaction	PSI	4	0.889	Very High
Digital Visibility & Social Influence	VIS	4	0.899	Very High
Total Digital Influencer Marketing	**IV_Total**	**16**	**0.912**	**Very High**
Perceived Brand Prestige	PRES	4	0.865	High
Brand Symbolism & Aspirational Value	SYM	4	0.858	High
Emotional Connection & Brand Happiness	HAP	4	0.881	Very High
Conspicuous Consumption Intention	INT	4	0.913	Very High
Total Conspicuous & Prestige Marketing	**DV_Total**	**16**	**0.918**	**Very High**
Full Measurement Instrument	**Total Scale**	**32**	**0.925**	**Very High**

Table 2: Scale Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)

5.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) & Construct Validity

We used an exploratory factor analysis on the 32 items to test construct validity of the scale. Table 3 shows that factor loadings for all items were >0.60 (ranging from 0.635 to 0.877) which is above the threshold usually used in literature (0.40 or 0.50). This means each item is clearly related to the dimension it was designed to measure. Cumulative explained variance was 68.4% which is good and exceeds the common threshold used in social sciences (60%).

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Hypothesized Dimension / Factor	Item Codes	Factor Loadings Range	Variance Explained (%)	Assessment & Decision
Influencer Credibility	IC1 - IC4	0.692 – 0.845	12.4%	Supports Construct Validity
Perceived Authenticity & Transparency	AUTH1 - AUTH4	0.684 – 0.815	11.2%	Supports Construct Validity
Parasocial Interaction	PSI1 - PSI4	0.672 – 0.825	11.8%	Supports Construct Validity
Digital Visibility & Social Influence	VIS1 - VIS4	0.785 – 0.841	13.1%	Supports Construct Validity
Perceived Brand Prestige	PRES1 - PRES4	0.787 – 0.877	12.0%	Supports Construct Validity
Brand Symbolism & Aspirational Value	SYM1 - SYM4	0.783 – 0.811	10.9%	Supports Construct Validity
Emotional Connection & Brand Happiness	HAP1 - HAP4	0.835 – 0.877	12.6%	Supports Construct Validity
Conspicuous Consumption Intention	INT1 - INT4	0.635 – 0.845	13.5%	Supports Construct Validity
Cumulative Total Variance Explained	**32 Items Total**	**Threshold > 0.60**	**68.4%**	**Robust & Well-Defined Factor Structure**

Table 3: Exploratory Factor Loadings and Cumulative Variance (EFA)

These results indicate that the factor structure of the scale is consistent with the research's theoretical framework, as the eight dimensions emerged as distinct factors. Four of these represent influencer marketing (influencer credibility, perceived authenticity, parasocial interaction, and digital presence and influence), while the other four represent conspicuous marketing (perceived status, symbolism and aspirational value, emotional attachment and brand-related happiness, and the intention for conspicuous consumption). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test yielded a value of 0.926—an excellent score that exceeds the required minimum threshold of 0.70—demonstrating that the sample size is sufficient and appropriate for factor analysis. Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was highly statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 2638.80$, $df = 496$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the existence of substantial correlations among the items and validating the suitability of the data for factor rotation.

5.4 Descriptive Statistics and Construct Rankings

Table (4) shows the arithmetic means, standard deviations and relative importance for all research variables. For digital influencer marketing the overall arithmetic mean was 3.52 with a standard deviation of 0.84 and relative importance of 70.4% (moderate level), conspicuous marketing (marketing aimed at showcasing status) had an overall arithmetic mean of 3.46 with a standard deviation of 0.81 and relative importance of 69.2% (moderate level). Respondents tend to agree moderately with scale items without being strongly inclined towards

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either acceptance or rejection. Standard deviations for all dimensions were from 0.71 to 0.83 which is moderate dispersion but a relative consensus among sample members. When individual dimensions are considered "digital presence and influence" (arithmetic mean 3.82, high) was the highest dimension followed by perceived status which also reached a high level (mean 3.75). This means that respondents know that influencers have a large reach and connect with audiences but also associate brands promoted by those influencers with status and prestige. The remaining dimensions were moderate: influencer credibility (3.54), symbolism and aspirational value (3.45), emotional connection (3.45), parasocial interaction (3.38) and authenticity and transparency (3.32). Interestingly enough "authenticity and transparency" ranked last among dimensions of the independent variable. This may be because public is aware that some digital influencers produce commercial content as well as wariness towards paid content where sponsorship is not disclosed clearly. The dimension "intention for conspicuous consumption" was last (mean score 3.16 lowest among all dimensions). This is important because perception vs behavior gap: respondents know digital creators are influential and brands have prestige but they're much less likely to say they actually intend to buy products for ostentation purposes (economic reasons, social and cultural sensitivities around conspicuous consumption etc.) or respondents are shy when asked questions that could affect their social image ("social desirability bias").

Dimension / Construct	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Relative Weight (%)	Verbal Level	Rank
Influencer Credibility (IC)	3.54	0.81	70.8%	Moderate	3
Perceived Authenticity & Transparency (AUTH)	3.32	0.79	66.4%	Moderate	6
Parasocial Interaction (PSI)	3.38	0.81	67.6%	Moderate	5
Digital Visibility & Social Influence (VIS)	3.82	0.78	76.4%	High	1
Total Digital Influencer Marketing	**3.52**	**0.84**	**70.4%**	**Moderate**	**-**
Perceived Brand Prestige (PRES)	3.75	0.71	75.0%	High	2
Brand Symbolism & Aspirational Value (SYM)	3.45	0.78	69.0%	Moderate	4
Emotional Connection & Brand Happiness (HAP)	3.45	0.80	69.0%	Moderate	4 (Tied)
Conspicuous Consumption Intention (INT)	3.16	0.83	63.2%	Moderate	7
Total Conspicuous & Prestige Marketing	**3.46**	**0.81**	**69.2%**	**Moderate**	**-**

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics & Dimension Rankings

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5.5 Pearson Bivariate Correlation Matrix

The Pearson correlation matrix (Table 5) shows that all inter correlations are different but still statistically significant at the 0.05 or 0.01 level; correlations range from weak to moderate (0.274–0.462); these dimensions are theoretically distinct but practically separate (no Multicollinearity as no value is above 0.80). Strength of the correlations in the matrix: strongest associations with intention for conspicuous consumption are par asocial interaction (r = 0.749), followed by perceived closeness to influencer (r = 0.720), then design and digital impact (r = 0.607). Para social interaction also has a strong correlation with perceived closeness to influencer (r = 0.648). This pattern indicates that emotional bonds followers form with influencers are the strongest link between influencer marketing and conspicuous purchasing behavior. On the other hand, the weakest correlations are between "accuracy and transparency" and "symbolism" (r = 0.205) and "status" (r = 0.222), and between par asocial interaction and status (r = 0.208). Trusting an influencer's sincerity does not translate into a perception of social symbolism or status for the brand (the latter more closely related to clothing and closeness to the influencer).

Construct	IC	AUTH	PSI	VIS	PRES	SYM	HAP	INT
IC	1.00							
AUTH	0.350**	1.00						
PSI	0.274**	0.295**	1.00					
VIS	0.455**	0.462**	0.447**	1.00				
PRES	0.388**	0.222*	0.208*	0.410**	1.00			
SYM	0.308**	0.205*	0.302**	0.383**	0.410**	1.00		
HAP	0.434**	0.387**	0.648**	0.525**	0.451**	0.396**	1.00	
INT	0.458**	0.377**	0.749**	0.607**	0.431**	0.474**	0.720**	1.00

Table 5: Pearson Correlation Matrix (r)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.6 Multiple Regression Analysis & Hypothesis Testing

5.6.1 Main Hypothesis (H1)

The Pearson correlation matrix (Table (5)) reveals that all correlation coefficients are positive and significant at the 0.05 or 0.01 level. Correlations among dimensions of the independent variable are weak to moderate (0.205 to 0.749) so theoretically these dimensions are related but in practice they are separate; there

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is no evidence of high Multicollinearity because none of the values approaches 0.80. The strongest correlations in the matrix (all involving intention for conspicuous consumption) are with par asocial interaction (r = 0.749), followed by emotional attachment (r = 0.720) and digital presence and influence (r = 0.607). Para social interaction also strongly correlates with emotional attachment (r = 0.648) so affective bond formed between follower and influencer appears to be the main link between influencer marketing and conspicuous purchasing behavior. (across all dimensions); r = 0.222). The weakest correlations are between "authenticity and transparency" and both "symbolism" (r = 0.205) and "brand status" (r = 0.222), and between "par asocial interaction" and "brand status" (r = 0.208). Trust in an influencer's sincerity does not necessarily translate into social status or symbolic value of a brand; those latter tend to be more closely related to the amount of digital presence and emotional connection. Therefore, we find that influencer marketing is strongly positively correlated with conspicuous marketing (across all dimensions). This then has a strong direct impact on conspicuous purchasing decisions of respondents which means that the first primary hypothesis (H1) and all its sub-hypotheses was accepted (digital influencer marketing correlated with conspicuous marketing across all dimensions).

5.6.2 Second Hypothesis (H2)

The second main hypothesis was that digital influencer marketing is statistically significant on conspicuous consumption (perceived status, symbolism and aspirational value, emotional attachment and brand-related happiness and intention toward conspicuous consumption). Multiple regression analysis results (Tables (6) and (7)) show that the digital influencer marketing model is significant ($F = 37.367$, $p < 0.001$), thus it is suitable for explaining the relationships between variables. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.572 which means that all dimensions of digital influencer marketing together explain about 57.2% of the variance in conspicuous consumption while the rest is explained by other variables not included in the model; adjusted R^2 is 0.556 which indicates stability of the explanatory power of the model and its appropriateness for the analysis.

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Model	R	R^2 (R-Squared)	Adjusted R^2	F-Statistic	Sig. (p-value)
1 (Full Model)	0.756	0.572	0.556	37.367	0.000***

Table 6: Model Summary & Goodness of Fit (ANOVA)

Parasocial interaction (PSI) is the most influential dimension in conspicuous marketing with the highest standardized regression coefficient $\beta = 0.417$ $t = 5.977$ ($p < 0.001$). This means that as psychological and social interaction between a follower and an influencer increases consumer tendency toward conspicuous consumption and marketing increases too. Digital presence and influencer impact (VIS) was second in terms of influence ($\beta = 0.278$, $t = 3.525$, $p = 0.001$) indicating that an influencer's digital footprint and social influence affect symbolic and conspicuous image of brands; influencer credibility (IC) had a positive effect on dependent variable ($\beta = 0.252$, $t = 3.563$, $p = 0.001$) which means trust in an influencer's expertise and opinions regarding marketing. On the other hand, AUTH dimension did not have an independent effect when the other dimensions were included in the model ($\beta = 0.045$, $t = 0.632$, $p = 0.529$) so it may be overlapping with other more powerful dimensions in the model.

Independent Variables (Predictors)	Unstd. B	Std. Error (SE)	Std. Beta (β)	t-value	p-value	Statistical Decision
(Constant / Intercept)	0.764	0.232	-	3.299	0.001	Statistically Significant
Parasocial Interaction (PSI)	0.313	0.052	0.417	5.977	0.000**	Supported (Strongest Predictor)
Digital Visibility & Influence (VIS)	0.219	0.062	0.278	3.525	0.001**	Supported (2nd Predictor)
Influencer Credibility (IC)	0.191	0.054	0.252	3.563	0.001**	Supported (3rd Predictor)
Perceived Authenticity (AUTH)	0.035	0.055	0.045	0.632	0.529 (N.S.)	Not Significant in Full Model

Table 7: Multiple Regression Coefficients & Predictor Hierarchy

6. Discussion of Findings

Taken together, these results paint a clear picture: digital influencer marketing is not a fringe phenomenon — more than half the variance in conspicuous

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consumption comes from it. This supports the theory that influencers are the main medium through which luxury brands are image-made and linked to aspirational lifestyles (and Veblen's notion of "conspicuous consumption" people buy things to show off their social status; today social media is the stage for those displays). Para social interaction is the strongest driver in both models (Horton and Wohl 1956: an audience member can form a one-sided friendship with a media figure; when a follower feels close to an influencer the items he/she recommends, wears or owns become a standard of what is desirable). Indeed this dimension had the strongest correlation with intention for conspicuous consumption in the matrix ($r = 0.749$). Digital presence and influence was second most impactful and first in terms of level of agreement ("digital presence and influence" how often brand gets exposed / widespread visibility → brand perceived status increases so much that audience thinks by acquiring such brand they become part of certain social group on influencer credibility ("influencer credibility" expertise and trustworthiness increase persuasiveness of message) and less expected but weak impact of authenticity and transparency. This is because authenticity breeds trust but does not create a desire for outward display or status: an audience may believe and trust an influencer but that trust doesn't translate into the drive to consume in conspicuous ways. Transparency about sponsored content might also remind the audience of the commercial nature of the material so awe or fascination are diminished (hypothesis for future studies). These results also explain why the descriptive statistics show high perceived prestige of a brand but low stated intention to consume it (the influence is clear in terms of numbers but respondents are more cautious when asked about their own behavior perhaps they have a real practical limit on their consumption intentions or social reluctance to admit to conspicuous consumption).

7. Conclusions, Recommendations & Limitations

7.1 Conclusions

7.1.1 Marketing through digital influencers is the largest and most important factor in explaining conspicuous consumption (or "boastful" marketing) as it explains 52.4% of the variance in the dependent variable (see Fig. 3). This

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confirms that digital promotion is no longer just about brand awareness but is now a primary driver of symbolic value and social prestige in "accessible luxury".

7.1.2 Parasocial interaction is the most powerful and influential dimension among all dimensions of the independent variable ($\beta = 0.417$, $R^2 = 0.388$). This means that if a follower feels psychologically close to an influencer they are more likely to engage with and respond to marketing content as well as receptive to promotional messages geared toward an upscale lifestyle.

7.1.3 Although "digital presence and influencer impact" was the dimension with the highest mean scores in our sample (3.82), par asocial interaction exceeded all other dimensions in terms of direct effect strength; thus, an influencer's reach and digital presence are not enough on their own to generate conspicuous purchasing behavior deep psychological and emotional engagement between influencer and followers is required as well.

7.1.4 The research found that influencer marketing has the greatest explanatory and predictive power over behavioral and subjective affective dimensions of the consumer (i.e. intention for conspicuous consumption 56.4% and brand related happiness 46.6%).

8. Recommendations

8.1 Practical Recommendations for Marketing Departments and Strategists of Conspicuous Consumption Brands:

• Invest in Influencers with Deep Engagement: Don't just look at follower counts when choosing influencers social engagement rates and the depth of the influencer's connection with their audience are equally important. Para social interaction (the perceived personal relationship between an influencer and his followers) is what drives intention to engage in conspicuous consumption.

• Use strategies around happiness and emotional connection: Create marketing campaigns that focus on psychological well-being (what a product gives you) and personal happiness (why you bought it) rather than price tags or abstract displays of luxury.

• Visual Storytelling Platforms: Spend promotional dollars on platforms that focus on visual storytelling (e.g., Reels). Sell luxury goods as part of an

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"attainable lifestyle" aspirational but affordable.8.2 Practical Recommendations for Digital Influencers and Content Creators:

• Authenticity and interactive transparency: Be personal, spontaneous when recommending things. Research shows that transparency is not good parasocial relationships (or trust in the products being promoted) because it breaks down.

• Realist, experiential content: Show how luxury goods fit into everyday life. That way people can see themselves in those experiences so their intentions to buy feel more real and tangible.

9. Research Limitations & Future Directions

The sample (117 participants) and context/time period were defined. It used a self-administered questionnaire which may be subject to social desirability bias (respondents are more likely to answer socially acceptable questions). Because it was cross-sectional it cannot establish causality. Future research should use larger samples; longitudinal or experimental designs; structural equation modelling; mediators or moderators (income, gender, platform, age group); effects across categories of luxury products etc.

10. Declarations

Some assistive tools were used (translation, proofreading, formatting according to templates approved by the author, checking mathematical accuracy of statistical analysis). The researcher is responsible for intellectual and academic design of research, data collection, analysis, conclusions and drafting final content.

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