

# The Role and Impact of Social Media Influencers

Hani. A. Albadri

TV and Radio Department, Faculty of Media, Middle East University, Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Received: 10 May 2023, Revised: 15 Jun. 2023, Accepted: 20 Jul. 2023.

Published online: 1 Aug. 2023.

**Abstract:** In this paper, we explore the influence of influencers in the digital space and their impact on society. The research involved 375 intentional sampled respondents who are social media followers. The findings revealed that TikTok is the most popular platform for influencers, followed by Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter. Influencers predominantly create entertainment and gaming content, with art and skills, social issues, education, and religion following suit. The study highlights that influencers are crucial in shaping societies by providing attractive and concise information and experiences, fostering development and support among their followers. The author suggests enhancing influencers' skills through workshops and training programs, focusing on positive interactions, humanitarian aspects, and support for affected sectors, particularly therapeutic institutions.

**Keywords:** digital media; social media influencers SMI; society.

## 1. Introduction

The influence of the new media led to fundamental changes in the relationship between the sender and the receiver within the media environment, causing dialectical reflections on traditional media concepts. Many specialists attribute this to the huge amount of media messages pumped out by content makers, attracting audiences and advertisers, after the decline of the audience of traditional media to new media [1]. Suppose the twentieth century was considered the era of mass communication. In that case, the twenty-first century has become the era of social media, where technological variables have dominated the audience. Not only media messages through the old traditional means of press, radio and television, and the collapse of the geographical barriers that separated the Countries, the face of the new communication phenomenon, led to the growing role of influencers that crossed barriers between people, supported by the growing influence and spread of the English language, which facilitated human interaction between peoples [1].

The phenomenon of social networking began in 1997 AD, and Degrees Six was the first of these sites to provide the opportunity to put personal files for users on the site, as well as the ease of commenting on the news on the site, and exchanging messages with the rest of the subscribers, and if Degrees Six is the pioneer of social networking sites While Myspace opened wide doors for this type of site. It has achieved tremendous success since its inception in 2003. Then social networking sites appeared, but the distinguishing feature was the emergence of Facebook, which enabled its users to exchange information among themselves and allow friends to access their files. Personality [2].

Social media is progressively being used as a virtual arena to discuss all types of subjects, including those related to politics. As a result, analyzing online content, for example, to predict election outcomes, has become a popular and challenging field of research. On social media, users spontaneously express themselves on political topics, often motivated by specific events in social life [3].

Influencers began with the emergence of applications and the expansion of the Internet in the communication environment, which contributed to their increase. The more active applications, the greater their pioneers, and the more attracted a wide audience of followers looking for what satisfies their needs in terms of acquiring knowledge and searching for multiple and different satisfactions. Influencers produce knowledge that satisfies the audience's needs using appropriate social media methods, such as TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram [4].

Several research has focused on employing influencers as a tool for business marketing. Some focus on the standpoint of influencers and media professionals, and some focus on the content design influencers use in their posts. And the third part focuses on the appeal of influencers. In this article, the focus is on reviewing the impact of influencers on social networks in society and their reflections on values, cultures, and concepts.

### 1.1. Problem statements

Social media has become an outlet for people all over the world. Some influencers have been able to attract the hearts of

\*Corresponding author e-mail: [hanibadri@gmail.com](mailto:hanibadri@gmail.com)

their followers through content and methods that match their daily lives, often far from artificiality, as people follow the influencer who is close to them and who can communicate with him easily and in shorter ways than those traditional methods in any time they want. Social media influencers (SMIs) are now very well-known by social media followers and advertisers. Social media influencers can be celebrities; However, not all celebrities are influencers [5]. SMI has many different interests, such as entertainment, fashion, food, etc. They share their opinions on their personal blogs, then quickly turn to social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and, more newly, TikTok to attract the attention of their followers [4]. Now the world has gone from text to image to video. Given the diversity of social media audiences, it is very important for marketers to make proper SMI investments in effective platforms.

Social influencers are a new group of independent, outside supporters who make public their attitudes through activism on social media. Typically, social media influencers initiate content promoting certain brands in an effort to attract audiences and gain brand recognition [6].

The cooperation of influencers with international companies and large brands increased their importance, so it was natural for these people to follow many people. The author, through his follow-up to a group of influencers on communication sites for the masses, and his preliminary field survey of the opinions of some of the followers, inferred the existence of differences in their point of view on the influencers' role in the digital environment and their effect in societies. Some of them are opponents, some are hesitant, and some support the idea that they contribute to enhancing knowledge and refining ideas and opinions. This encouraged the researcher to try to identify these opinions through this study, whose problem revolves around finding out the extent of the influence of "influential" digital content makers in societies, which provide different content in form and content and different ways of presentation. Accordingly, the problem was determined by answering a question. The following questions:

1. What are the most platforms through which influencers communicate with the community?
2. What content do influencers publish via social media platforms?
3. What is the influencers' role in the digital era and their impact on society?
4. Are there significant differences in followers' responses about the influencer's role due to: age, years of usage, and educational qualification?

### 1.2. The Importance

Recently, interest in social media influencers has increased, as they have a prominent role in presenting views and opinions and directly influencing people on various issues of concern to society, as they are considered attractive factors for some companies and institutions that provide services to a diverse audience, which helps them to define their targets in the markets and reach them accurately. The author hopes that the results of the article will be of benefit to those interested in community issues, in addition to recommendations that shed light on the role of influencers in the digital environment and their impact on societies. The article can also provide a clear vision for those in charge of managing social media about the influencers' advantages or disadvantages in society so that they can take appropriate measures.

### 1.3. The aims

The article aims to display the most prominent platforms through which social media influencers access society, the content they publish or broadcast, and thus their role and impact on society. The article also aims to discover the significant differences in the followers' responses about the role of social media influencers according to age, years of usage, and educational qualification.

### 1.4. Terminology

*\*Influencers:* The increase in social media influence has increased the number of new applications known as YouTubers, bloggers, or influencers, all of which are names for people who present and create content that has an impact on the audience[7]. Accordingly, influencers can be defined as people who use social media to spread their ideas and opinions through text or video posts or live broadcasts, and they usually have followers who are affected by them, so they change their behavior accordingly, positively, or negatively.

*\*The digital environment:* A set of electronic means, tools and applications that allow the individual to freely publish, transfer and obtain information via the Internet, with the help of some computer programs, and helps to communicate and share between him and others electronically, thus breaking the barriers of time and place[8]. The digital environment is the climate that allows individuals to access each other through applications via the Internet. These applications, through their users, affect individuals, change their behaviors and ideas, and contribute to learning, education, and the acquisition of experiences. Among the most important tools of the digital environment are social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok... etc.

## 2. Literature Review

The two-phase communication flow model is an appropriate theoretical background for the topic. The model suggests that opinion formation is not an individual process but a collective one. Personal communication is the influencing factor in the formation of opinions, and there are individuals within the groups who try to view the mass media and convey its content to the rest of the group members. Most group members get information from direct contact with opinion leaders and not from direct communication. In the end, we find that personal communication plays an essential role in forming and guiding public opinion, and that opinion leaders represent an important element, being the mediator between individuals and the communication media [9].

Opinion leaders are the most prominent influencers in public opinion, who represent the most important variable in the cognitive construction of the theory of information flow, as they receive the message from the means of communication and then transmit it to the public according to their personal vision and interpretation of this message with the intention of producing a specific effect that may agree with or disagree with the message. Indeed, this model appeared when there was no social media and therefore interactive and live broadcasts did not exist. However, with the advent of live broadcasting and instantaneous dialogue, this communication has become like direct personal communication.

The magic bullet theory is another model that can be a theoretical background to the subject, which means that "individuals are affected by the content of the media outlet automatically and directly, and this theory also assumes that the media has a strong and direct influence on the individual and societies similar to the bullet in its impact, but its effect is short-term"[10]. The theory also assumes that the message reaches the members of society in a similar way, that is, that each individual receives it in the same way, meaning that there are no differences between individuals in their interaction with it. It also assumes that the recipient always responds strongly to the message he receives, as individuals receive information from the media directly without the presence of media [11].

Social media is described as "the democratization of information, the transformation of people from content readers into publishers, the shift from a one-way broadcast to a multi-to-one model broadcast, and these are rooted in conversations between influencers and people." [12] (p.37). Hence, producing, creating and distributing any content is also very easy because it does not require people to know any technology of these platforms to eventually become a content creator or influencer as indicated by Labrecque [13].

Social media is increasingly infiltrating the lives of Internet users. The latest figures show that there are expected to be 4.89 billion social media users worldwide in 2023 - an increase of 6.5% from last year. It's also 2.2 billion more than the number of social media users in 2017, which is a whopping 79.1% jump in just five years. The average annual growth rate during this period was 10.2%. Going forward, while the number of social media users continues to increase, the growth rate is expected to stabilize. The average annual growth rate from 2023 to 2027 is expected to be 5%, as shown in the following figure:

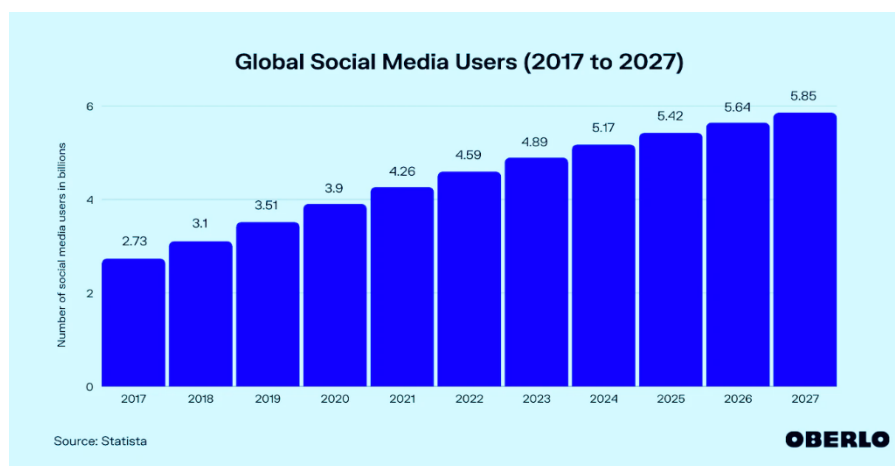


Fig. 1: Global social media users (2017-2027)

Source: [oberlo.com](https://www.oberlo.com)

The phenomenon of influencers has expanded through social media, who have emerged as a military group that occupies a distinct area in society and plays an increasingly important role over time. Despite the criticism directed at social media influencers, it is difficult to discover the secrets of the spread of this phenomenon. It is no secret that influencers have become attractions that are resorted to in most fields, whether humanitarian issues, fashion, advertising, marketing, etc. [14]. Influencers are the new players in the public media space who contribute to the marketing of goods and services,

especially on social networking sites, such as Instagram. Among the influencers are groups of famous artists or star athletes. They can also promote goods for huge sums that may exceed what they get from the clubs they play in. Unlike traditional marketing campaigns, influencers' fees are paid in advance, not after the end of the campaign, and the impact is not limited to commercial products. Rather, it goes beyond it to political, social and environmental activities [15]

An influencer is a content creator primarily on social media platforms to build relationships based on trust and authenticity with his audience and interact online with his like-minded people through different business models with the aim of generating income. The main features of the influencer are [16]:

- Content creation, i.e., the service provided by influencers.
- Commercial intent, driven by direct revenue from brands (monetary and non-monetary), revenue from audience participation or through platform compensation.
- Monetization, ie revenue generation through various business models (including but not limited to influencer marketing).
- Trust and authenticity, ie the audience's trust in the source of influence, and the perceived authenticity and relatability of the content.

An influencer is a person who has an audience that they entertain through a channel and who uses blogs, posts, tweets, and other social media to impact the audience's circumstances. Therefore, social media influencers as a contemporary phenomenon on social media represent endorsement practices by people with a sizable following on social media with the intention of boosting online engagement of the endorsed good or service or Influencers are thought of as content producers with an audience they can trust.

Influencers can spark social impact more than many people think. The influence is getting wider at the local or global levels, with millions of impressionable followers who have a tendency to imitate others. The influence of the influencers in this quantity is as great as the relationship between a huge forest fire and the size of the spark that ignited it. Influencers have high abilities to persuade others, and some of them have close relations with the decision-making authorities. Therefore, everyone who enters the world of influencers is required to employ even a small part of his influence to work in the field of public reform, and for this to be an essential part of his program. Influencers in society also have a role in leading these societies by using the language of dialogue and calm in solving all problems, repelling damage and restoring an atmosphere of trust [17].

The advent of social media has taken the influencer marketing scene to an unprecedented level, with many ordinary people turning into social media influencers. Aw et al revealed that content attributes (that is, status and experience) and interaction strategies (that is, interaction and self-disclosure) positively affect social relationships, then lead to high purchase intent [18].

Social media influencers should be seen as content creators and media entrepreneurs with a significant impact on consumer decisions. However, social media interaction makes quality standards such as "correctness of information" or "professionalism of film/image production" more problematic for influencers as their audience and the public can instantly comment on and rate content and share their opinions with influencers' followers. Social media influencers with the largest audiences fall in the categories of gaming as well as comedy and entertainment. Following at a distance, although quite close to each other, are the categories of food and cooking, fashion, and lifestyle; as well as beauty and cosmetics. Not far behind are news and politics and travel and outdoors. Such data showed that social media celebrity content is not restricted to specific content categories [19].

The content that influencers produce depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of the content. This may be due to users believing that UGC contains more reliable and up-to-date information than other branded sources. If influencers create content that relates to a brand that interests users, it creates stronger relationships with their followers. Therefore, followers begin their relationship with influencers through the content and the platform. In general, social media influencers focus on increasing the number of followers they have and increasing product knowledge among their followers, influencing the purchase intent of their fans. This means that influencers' branded media content has a vital effect on followers' brand awareness and purchasing decisions [20].

Since the information on social media has become accessible, research has begun using the information found on social networks. It has been noted that many news and events are published on micro-blogging sites before being published or broadcast through visual, audio and print news sources. This is due to the rapid flow of information on social networks that can reach millions of people in seconds. In this context, social media can be considered one of the most important sources of information influencing public opinion [21].

Social media influencers (SMIs) comprise different roles, some of which have traditionally been occupied by separate

actors. SMIs can serve the roles of moderator, content distributor, creative content producer, community manager, strategic advisor, and event host. Combining these roles into just one actor opens new opportunities for strategic communication. These roles, as well as other functions that SMI performs for organizations, can also help define the concept of SMI more precisely. Thus, from a strategic communication perspective, social media influencers (SMIs) can be considered external actors who have established many relationships of specific quality with organizational stakeholders and influence them through content generation, content dissemination, interaction, and individual appearance on the social web [22].

Influencers (SMIs) have gotten to be a considerable force within the marketing field, with numerous leading brands choosing to utilize SMI support for their products and brands. The attributes of influencers impact the seen open image of the item within the minds of followers [23]. The increased social media use for a long time has empowered clients to get tremendous amounts of data from different sources. Today's exceptional technological advancements empower social media influencers to construct effective engagements with their supporters. This intelligence impacted, in a way, young people's behaviors, attitudes, and choices [24].

Recent studies on influencers (SMIs) outline their potential in making a difference brands gain consideration and construct credibility with shoppers, especially when brands are reacting to rising buyer desires by locks in with social causes. The writing appears distinctive values connecting influencers and customers [25].

Social media influencers positively and significantly affected the intent to purchase products through social networks and increased purchase intent and a strong personality can create a positive brand image [26]. Most celebrities have curated their content across multiple social media platforms. In the world of fashion, Instagram has become an absolute must along with YouTube (100 per cent of all fashion celebrities run Instagram accounts), Facebook is still a must for gamers (95 per cent of all gaming celebrities run Facebook accounts), and in the fashion world they still hire Snapchat to expand their reach (90 per cent). Traditional locations play second fiddle to both types of influencers [19].

Some characteristics affect the role of social media, such as gender, experience, trustworthiness, credibility, quality, informational value, and attractiveness. It has a medium to high correlation with customer engagement and purchase intent. The credibility of influencers affects purchase intent more than any other attribute [27]. Recent research suggests that dealing with social media influencers can be both beneficial and harmful for expectant and new parents. At present, it is not clear how exposure to benefits or harm affects personal experiences and decision-making [28].

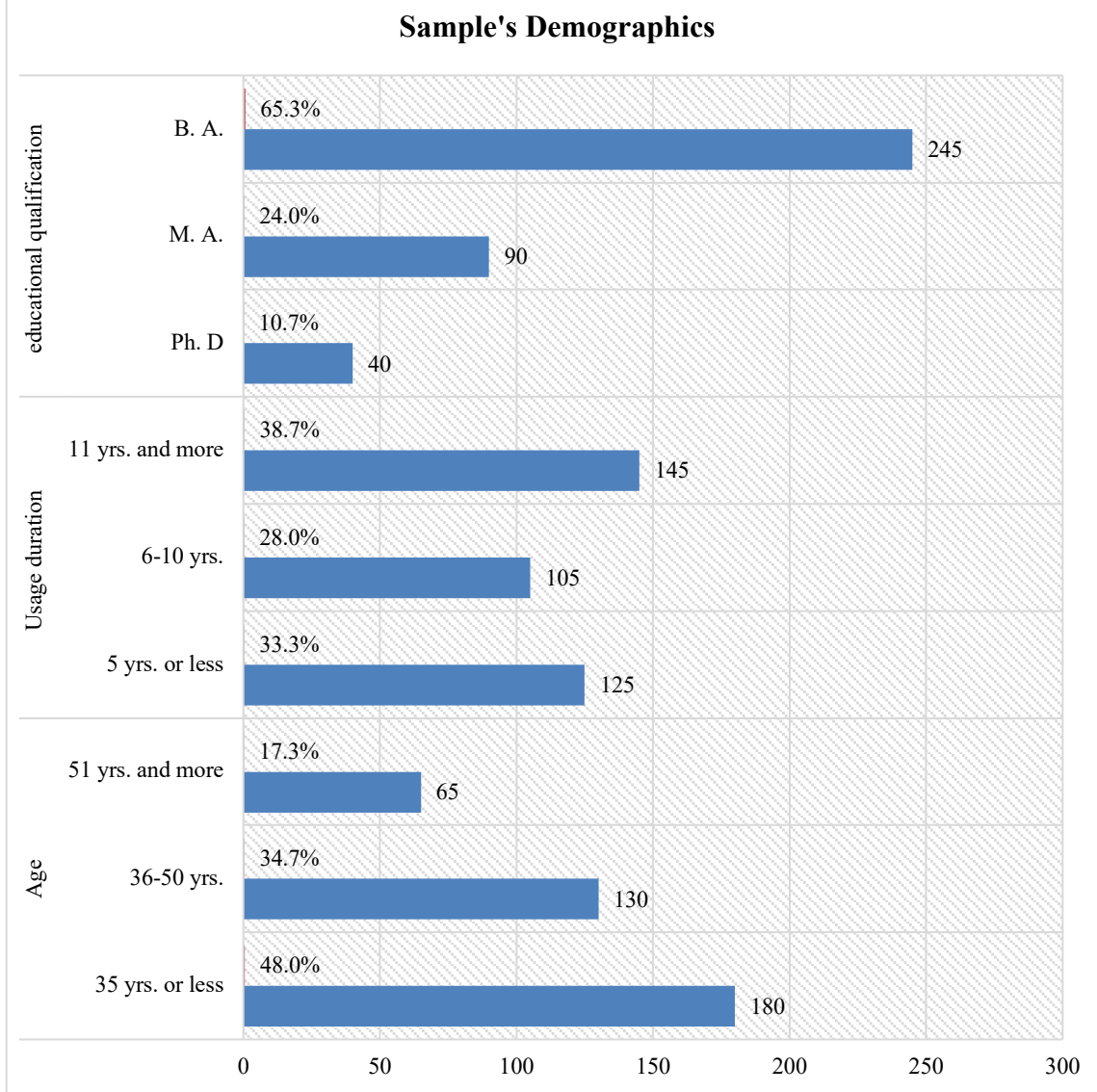
Influencers' communication is persuasive, especially since they use different techniques and strategies to make effective and persuasive arguments. In other words, they are employed in a persuasive speech to obtain benefits, and everyone must use them to achieve success in his persuasive speech. Persuasion techniques are designed to sell a product, idea, concept, or suggestion [29]: 22). Perloff (2017: 8), defines persuasion as: "...a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviours regarding an issue". In other words, persuasion is based on just trying to convince others to change their attitudes on something, but it would be necessary to consider that addressees are always going to be able to decide if they want to have their attitude changed [30].

The increasing prevalence of advertising on social media has led to people distrusting social media influencers. Although most followers prefer an accurate, professional, and honest ad, the influencer's image influences their attitudes [31]. Influencers strongly affect audiences by propagating specific concepts (ideology, consumerism, etc.), which in turn affect recipients' norms, values, and attitudes [32]. Many journalists have emerged in the public sphere as influencers on social media platforms such as Twitter. Studies have shown that they use their digital skills in two directions; the first one as a digital strategy promoted by the media to attract attention and appeal to the public, with the participation of journalists and their comments on daily issues, second to express their opinions and suffering in the context of increasing violence and restrictions on freedom of expression [33].

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Method

The study used a descriptive methodology that focused on discovering information about the characteristics of the phenomenon, people, or events. This article will explore the role of social media influencers and their impact on society. The population is represented by all social media users. The author targeted an intended sample of followers of social networks during the month of April 2023, and the sample consisted of (375) respondents. The following figure shows the sample's demographics:



**Fig. 2:** shows the sample's demographics.

Source: by the author depending on spss analysis

The figure above shows that 48.0% of the sample are from the age group of 35 years or less, followed by the age group from 36 to 50 years at a rate of 34.2%, and finally over 51 years at a rate of 17.8%. Regarding the years of usage in the digital environment, 39.7% for 11 years and over, followed by the category from 6 to 10 years with a rate of 35.6%. Finally, the category of 5 years or less, with a rate of 24.7%. The highest percentage in educational qualification was for individuals holding a bachelor's degree or less, 68.5%. Then the master's degree by 19.2%, and finally the doctoral degree by 12.3%.

### 3.2. Data Collection

The data required for the article were collected through the questionnaire developed for this purpose, in addition to the secondary data obtained from library sources, previous literature, specialized international periodicals, scientific theses, and references related to the role of influencers in the digital environment and their impact on societies.

### 3.3. The validity and reliability

To determine the tool's validity, it was presented to five media professors, who confirmed its integrity and applicability for research purposes. Before being distributed, it had been adjusted based on the reporters' evaluations as well as suggestions. The degree of reliability of the questionnaire was (88.5%) according to the Cronbach alpha stability coefficient, which is a high percentage.

## 4. Results

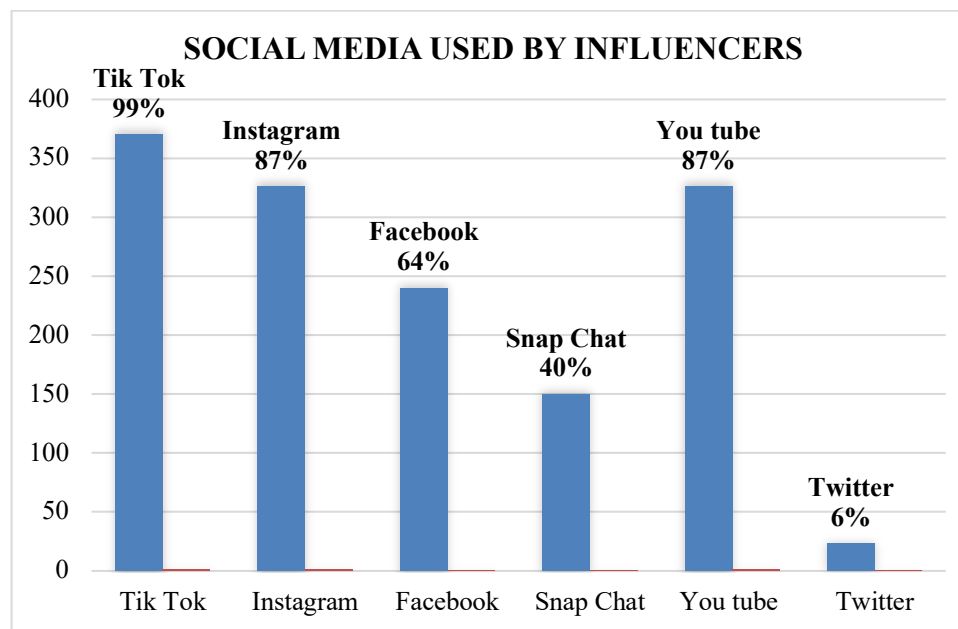
### 4.1. The most platforms used by influencers.

**Table 1:** Sample’s responses about the most platforms used by influencers.

platform	frequency	ratio
Tik Tok	370	98.7%
Instagram	326	86.9%
Facebook	240	64.0%
Snap Chat	150	40.0%
You tube	326	86.9%
Twitter	23	6.1%

Source: by the author depending on spss analysis

The table above shows that Tik Tok is the platform on which influencers appear the most, and it got 98.7% of the sample’s responses, followed by Instagram and YouTube with 86.9% each, then Facebook with 64.0%, then Snapchat with 40.0%, while the last platform was Twitter with 6.1% .



**Fig. 3:** shows most platforms used by influencers source: by the author depending on spss analysis

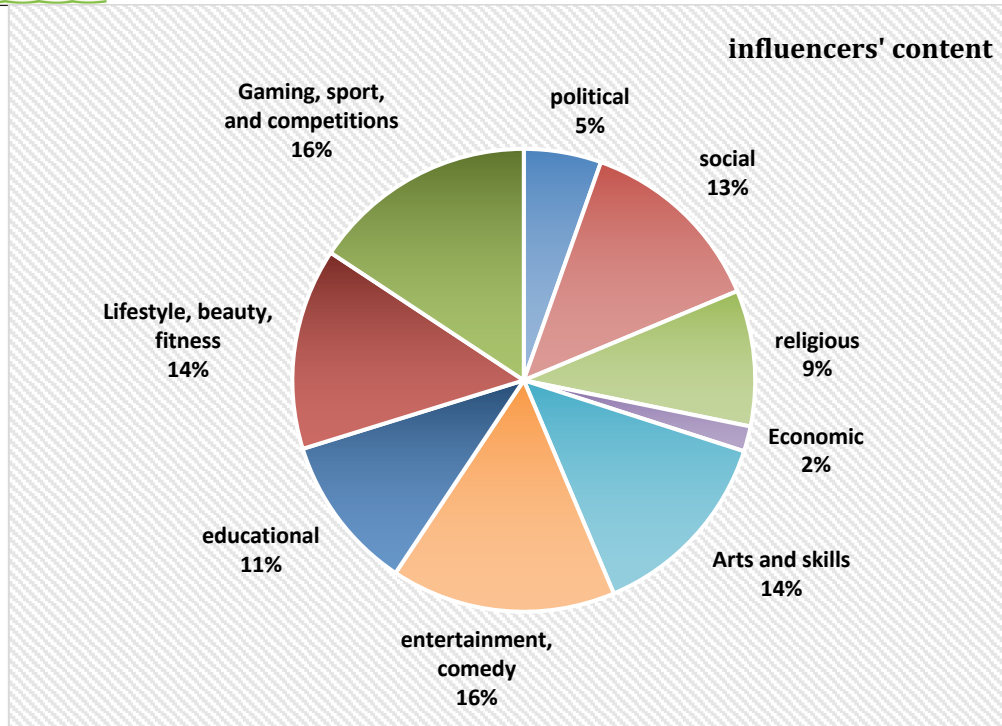
### 4.2. The most content that influencers broadcast via platforms

**Table 2:** Sample’s responses about the most content that influencers broadcast via platforms

content	frequency	ratio
political	123	32.8%
social	302	80.5%
religious	216	57.6%
Economic	40	10.7%
Arts and skills	311	82.9%
entertainment, comedy	357	95.2%
educational	247	65.9%
Lifestyle, beauty, fitness	320	85.3%
Gaming, sport, and competitions	357	95.2%

Source: by the author depending on spss analysis

The table above shows that influencers on social networks focused their content on “entertainment” and “games” 95.2% each, followed by “arts and skills” 82.9%, then “social” content 80.5%. Then came the "educational" content, 65.9%, and the "religious" content, 57.6%. And before the last was the political content at 32.8%, while the lowest was the “economic” content at 10.7%.



**Fig. 4:** shows content that influencers broadcast via platforms source: by the author depending on spss analysis

#### 4.3. The Role and Influencing of social media influencers

**Table 3:** sample's responses about the Role and Influencing of social media influencers

item	mean	Standard deviation	level
Social media influencers (SMIs) promote ethical values and principles and encourage community service.	3.782	0.775	high
SMIs build on an interactive environment that nurtures the acquisition of skills and knowledge in society.	3.775	0.720	high
SMIs play an active and essential role in civic life	3.743	0.785	high
SMIs provide credible content and information.	3.734	0.774	high
SMIs work to gain public opinion by drawing the attention of society to important issues.	3.729	0.801	high
SMIs through their programs create an open environment for information exchange.	3.726	0.785	high
SMIs support humanitarian causes.	3.714	0.796	high
SMIs display their content in proportion to different age groups.	3.593	0.798	middle
SMIs contribute to the development of creativity in society.	3.579	0.785	middle
SMIs support small businesses and healing organizations.	3.527	0.846	middle
Total mean	3.690	0.7865	high

Source: by the author depending on spss analysis

The table above shows that the total mean for the (Role and Influencing of social media influencers) axis is (3.690) at a high level. It is noted that the item "Social media influencers (SMIs) promote ethical values and principles and encourage community service" is the highest, as it has achieved a mean of (3.782), followed by the item "SMIs build on an interactive environment that nurtures the acquisition of skills and knowledge in society" with a mean of (3.775), while the item "SMIs play an active and essential role in civic life" has come third with a mean of (3.743), followed by the item "SMIs provide credible content and information" with a mean of (3.734). The item "SMIs work to gain public opinion by drawing the attention of society to important issues", has come fifth with a mean of (3.527) and a middle level.

#### 4.4. The Statistically significant differences in the sample's responses

To test whether there were statistically significant differences in the responses of the sample individuals according to the different demographic factors, the One-Way Anova test was used, as shown in Table (4):



**Table 4:** The statistically significant differences of the sample's responses according to demographics variables by using one-way Anova analysis

Variable	Source of Variance	sum of squares	degree of freedom	Calculated F value	table value F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	1.510	2	.411	1.52	0.898
	Within Groups	31.440	73			
	total	32.940	75			
Usage duration	Between Groups	.034	2	.529	1.52	1.143
	Within Groups	32.9167	73			
	total	32.950	75			
Educational qualification	Between Groups	4.518	2	.715	1.52	1.009
	Within Groups	28.432	73			
	total	32.950	57			

Source: by the author depending on spss analysis

The data of the above table shows the following:

1- Age: The calculated value of F is (0.898) and its tabular value is (1.52). According to the decision rule, which states that if the calculated F value is less than the tabular value of F, this means accepting the null hypothesis, which states that “there are no significant differences in arithmetic mean of sample's responses about the influencers’ role in the digital environment as to age.” This is confirmed by the level of significance (0.411), which is greater than 5%.

2- Years of presence in the digital environment: The calculated value of F is (1.143) and its tabular value is (1.52). According to the decision rule, which states that if the calculated F value is less than the tabular value of F, this means accepting the null hypothesis, which states that “there are no significant differences in arithmetic mean of sample's responses about the influencers’ role in the digital environment as to years of digital environment usage”. This is confirmed by the level of significance (0.529), which is greater than 5%.

3- Academic qualification: The calculated value of F is (1.009) and its tabular value is (1.52). According to the decision rule, which states that if the calculated F value is less than the tabular value of F, this means accepting the null hypothesis, which states that “there are no significant differences in arithmetic mean of sample's responses about the influencers’ role in the digital environment as to the academic qualification”. This is confirmed by the level of significance (0.715), which is greater than 5%.

## 5. Discussion

The results showed that Tik Tok is the platform on which influencers appear the most, followed by Instagram and YouTube at the same level, then Facebook, then Snapchat, while the last platform is Twitter. Influencers post opinions on their blogs and then use social platforms, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and, more lately, Tik Tok to attract followers [4]. This is consistent with the digitalization and the transition of the world from text to images and then to video clips. A new change has occurred in the digital environment which is audience diversity in social media, it became very essential for marketers to monetize SMIs on effective platforms [34].

Social media also have diversity in their topics. Twitter is a field for critical investigations into information and social movements, including climate change. While Instagram is a fashion and beauty fair, YouTube is a platform or channel for entertainment and comedy. Despite their differences, there is one characteristic, which is the power of influencers to attract audiences.

According to the results, most of the content that is dealt with by influencers on social networks is “games” and “entertainment” content, followed by “art and skills” content, then “social” content, then “educational” and “religious” content. The least of these was “economic” content, and this is what Hudders et al. indicated that SMI has various fields such as fashion, fun, food, etc., followers [4]. Influencers through their posts have also become role models for young people. It appeared that the level of (Role and Influencing of social media influencers) was high. The item "Social media influencers (SMIs) promote ethical values and principles and encourage community service" is the highest, followed by the item "SMIs build on an interactive environment that nurtures the acquisition of skills and knowledge in society" "SMIs play an active and essential role in civic life" came in the third rank, followed by the item "SMIs provide credible content and information", and in the fifth rank was the item "SMIs work to gain public opinion by drawing the attention of society to important issues", and at the level of average importance.

Usually in the economic aspect, influencers focus on increasing the number of followers, increasing knowledge of the product or information among their followers, and influencing the purchase intent of their fans [20]. This is how social

media influencers (SMIs) have become such an essential force for marketing and branding [23]. This means that social media influencers (SMIs) combine different roles such as: moderator, content distributor, creative content producer, community manager, testimonial, and strategic advisor. But these roles, social media influencers (SMIs) can be considered as “external actors who have established a large number of relationships of specific quality to organizational stakeholders and influence them through content production, content distribution, interaction, and personal appearance on the social web [22].

The results also showed that "there are no statistically significant differences in the sample's answers about the role-played by influencers in the digital environment according to the variables of age, years of presence in the digital environment, and educational qualification. Most people are attracted to the influencer's image and role, with some differences due to experience and years of use." And sometimes differences are attributed to gender, experience, and credibility [31], since these characteristics are somewhat part of the influencers' credibility that influences purchase intent and other attitudes in society [27].

## 6. Conclusion

The article aimed to reveal the role of influencers through social media in society. It appeared that TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube lead the rest of the social media platforms in the influential presence of celebrities and influencers during the current time, and that most of the content is entertainment, games and beauty content. It has also been shown that influencers play an important role in societies in making information available and delivering it to followers in a simplified and fast manner with a wide range. The influencer also conveys through SM the successful experiences for the follower to benefit from. It also shows the importance of having influencers in creating an interactive environment that nurtures the acquisition of skills and knowledge in the community, promotes moral values and principles, and encourages community service.

## 7. Recommendations

The author recommends the need to enhance the capabilities of influencers to interact more positively with various groups, focus on humanitarian aspects, support economically affected sectors and therapeutic institutions, stay away from degrading content, and not get involved in making advertisements devoid of credibility.

## Funding

Middle East University provided financial support for the conduct of the research but had no such involvement in the writing in the article.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Middle East University for funding this project.

Also, I would like to thank all managers and journalists for their fruitful discussions and comments that have led to the improvement of this paper.

## Conflict of interest:

The author declares that there is no conflict regarding the publication of this paper.

## References

- [1] S. Hashem, “Social Media Influencers... A Critical View of the Phenomenon,” *trendsresearch*, 2021. <https://trendsresearch.org/ar/insight/> (accessed Apr. 13, 2023).
- [2] A. Al-Sabbagh, “Modern means of communication and technology,” *J. Technol. Sci.*, no. 8, 2010.
- [3] M. Marni, M. Paolanti, C. Morbidoni, E. Frontoni, and A. Teti, “Social media analytics system for action inspection on social networks,” *Soc. Netw. Anal. Min.*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2022, doi: 10.1007/s13278-021-00853-w.
- [4] L. Hudders, S. De Jans, and M. De Veirman, “The commercialization of social media stars: a literature review and conceptual framework on the strategic use of social media influencers,” *Int. J. Advert.*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp. 327–375, 2021, doi: 10.1080/02650487.2020.1836925.
- [5] B. J. Taillon, S. M. Mueller, C. M. Kowalczyk, and D. N. Jones, “Understanding the relationships between social media influencers and their followers: the moderating role of closeness,” *J. Prod. Brand Manag.*, vol. 29,

- [6] R.-H. Lin, C. Jan, and C.-L. Chuang, “Influencer marketing on Instagram,” *Int. J. Innov. Manag.*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 33–41, 2019.
- [7] R. R. Halim, “The role of social influencers in the daily life of Egyptian youth, a field study,” *J. Hum. Lit. Stud.*, vol. 26, no. 01, pp. 556–591, 2022, doi: 10.21608/SHAK.2022.224740.
- [8] R. A. Abdel-Moneim, “Digital environments based on adaptive learning and effectiveness in developing deep understanding skills,” *Sci. J. King Faisal Univ.*, vol. 22, no. 01, pp. 286–293, 2021, doi: <https://doi.org/10.37575/h/edu/1001>.
- [9] I. Makkawi and L. Alsayyed, *Communication and its contemporary theories*, 6th editio. Cairo: The Egyptian Lebanese House, 2006.
- [10] A.-H. A. Salwi and O. bin M. Al-Muhaya, *Theories of Media Influence*. Riyadh: The author, 2011.
- [11] M. M. Hajjab, *Theories of Communication*, 1st editio. Cairo: Dar Al-Fajr, 2010.
- [12] S. O’Donohoe, “Engage! The complete guide for brands and businesses to build, cultivate, and measure success in the new web,” *Int. J. Advert.*, vol. 29, no. 3, pp. 505–507, 2010, doi: 10.2501/S0265048710201300.
- [13] L. I. Labrecque, E. Markos, and G. R. Milne, “Online Personal Branding: Processes, Challenges, and Implications,” *J. Interact. Mark.*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 37–50, 2011, doi: 10.1016/j.intmar.2010.09.002.
- [14] C. E. Thaher, “Social Media Influencers... A Phenomenon whose Source and Fate are Unknown,” *independentarabia*, 2019. <https://www.independentarabia.com/> (accessed Apr. 13, 2023).
- [15] M. Al-Abdullah and A. Shein, *The Dictionary of Modern Concepts of Media and Communication: The Arab Project for Unifying Terminology*, 1st ed. Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabiya, 2014.
- [16] F. Michaelsen and L. Collini, “The impact of influencers on advertising and consumer protection in the Single Market,” *IMCO Committee, Eur. Union*, no. February, 2022.
- [17] T. F. Al-Rasheed, “Influencers and their Role in Community Service,” *tfrasheed*, 2010. <http://www.tfrasheed.org/ara/?p=445> (accessed Apr. 13, 2023).
- [18] E. C. X. Aw, G. W. H. Tan, S. H. W. Chuah, K. B. Ooi, and N. Hajli, “Be my friend! Cultivating parasocial relationships with social media influencers: findings from PLS-SEM and fsQCA,” *Inf. Technol. People*, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 66–94, 2023, doi: 10.1108/ITP-07-2021-0548.
- [19] C. Kolo and F. Haumer, “Social media celebrities as influencers in brand communication: An empirical study on influencer content, its advertising relevance and audience expectations,” *J. Digit. Soc. Media Mark.*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 273–282, 2018.
- [20] S. Yesiloglu, “The rise of influencers and influencer marketing,” in *Influencer Marketing*, 2020, pp. 7–25.
- [21] A. B. Altinel Girgin, “From past to present: Spam detection and identifying opinion leaders in social networks,” *Sigma J. Eng. Nat. Sci. – Sigma Mühendislik ve Fen Bilim. Derg.*, 2022, doi: 10.14744/sigma.2022.00043.
- [22] N. S. Borchers, “Social Media Influencers in Strategic Communication,” *Int. J. Strateg. Commun.*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 255–260, Aug. 2019, doi: 10.1080/1553118X.2019.1634075.
- [23] A. Z. Malik, S. Thapa, and A. K. Paswan, “Social media influencer (SMI) as a human brand – a need fulfillment perspective,” *J. Prod. Brand Manag.*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 173–190, 2023, doi: 10.1108/JPBM-07-2021-3546.
- [24] K. Lajnef, “The effect of social media influencers’ on teenagers Behavior: an empirical study using cognitive map technique,” *Curr. Psychol.*, Jan. 2023, doi: 10.1007/s12144-023-04273-1.
- [25] I. Himelboim and G. J. Golan, “A Social Network Approach to Social Media Influencers on Instagram: The Strength of Being a Nano-Influencer in Cause Communities,” *J. Interact. Advert.*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 1–13, 2023, doi: 10.1080/15252019.2022.2139653.
- [26] Z. A. P. Chandra and Indrawati, “The Effect of Social Media Influencer on Purchase Intention with Brand Image and Customer Engagement as Intervening Variables,” *Qual. - Access to Success*, vol. 24, no. 192, pp. 163–173, 2023, doi: 10.47750/QAS/24.192.19.
- [27] L. Ao, R. Bansal, N. Pruthi, and M. B. Khaskheli, “Impact of Social Media Influencers on Customer Engagement and Purchase Intention: A Meta-Analysis,” *Sustainability*, vol. 15, no. 3, p. 2744, Feb. 2023, doi:

10.3390/su15032744.

- [28] R. M. Chee, T. S. Capper, and O. T. Muurlink, “The impact of social media influencers on pregnancy, birth, and early parenting experiences: A systematic review.,” *Midwifery*, vol. 120, p. 103623, May 2023, doi: 10.1016/j.midw.2023.103623.
- [29] D. Gîfu, M. Teodorescu, and D. Ionescu, “Pragmatical Rules for Success in Persuasion,” *Int. Lett. Soc. Humanist. Sci.*, vol. 37, pp. 18–28, 2014, doi: 10.18052/www.scipress.com/ilshs.37.18.
- [30] R. M. Perloff, *The dynamics of persuasion: Communication and attitudes in the 21st century*. 2017.
- [31] Y. Chen, “Research on the Impact of Opinion Leaders on Social Media Consumption,” in *Proceedings of the 2022 8th International Conference on Humanities and Social Science Research (ICHSSR 2022)*, 2022, vol. 664, doi: 10.2991/assehr.k.220504.121.
- [32] A. A. Yefanov, “Influencer as a special type of public opinion leader,” *Rudn J. Stud. Lit. Journal.*, vol. 27, no. 4, pp. 767–774, 2022, doi: 10.22363/2312-9220-2022-27-4-767-774.
- [33] L. Peres-Neto, “Journalist-Twitterers as Political Influencers in Brazil: Narratives and Disputes Towards a New Intermediary Model,” *Media Commun.*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 28–38, 2022, doi: 10.17645/MAC.V10I3.5363.
- [34] R. Lozano-Blasco, M. Mira-Aladrén., and M. Gil-Lamata, “Social media influence on young people and children: Analysis on Instagram, Twitter and YouTube,” *Comunicar*, vol. 30, no. 74, pp. 117–128, 2023, doi: 10.3916/C74-2023-10.