

SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCER MARKETING IN CROSS BORDER E- COMMERCE

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ABSTRACT

The role of social media and influencer marketing has become crucial in connecting brands with global consumers in the evolving e-commerce landscape. This study investigates the impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior, brand loyalty, and market entry across borders, analyzing over 700 structured survey responses to assess consumer perceptions of influencer marketing in cross-border transactions. Findings reveal that Instagram and YouTube dominate as platforms for cross-border product discovery, particularly in fashion, beauty, and electronics among younger demographics. Influencer credibility is key to building trust and shaping risk perceptions associated with foreign purchases. However, challenges such as logistical issues, product authenticity concerns, and cultural misalignments remain significant barriers. Chi-square analyses confirm a strong correlation between influencer trust and cross-border purchasing behavior. The research emphasizes the importance of selecting influencers aligned with target markets, focusing on cultural relevance, and delivering clear, direct messaging. Strategies like content localization and transparent communication regarding logistics, customs, and return policies are critical for building consumer confidence. This study provides a framework for crafting effective influencer marketing campaigns that optimize engagement and drive conversions in diverse international markets.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Cross-Border E-Commerce, Consumer Behavior, Influencer Credibility, Cultural Alignment.

INTRODUCTION

The digital economy is undergoing unprecedented transformation, as social media has emerged as a high-powered avenue for brand-consumer interactions. This change has happened most profoundly within the realm of e-commerce, as new players like Instagram,

TikTok, and YouTube become indispensable to marketing strategies, gaining access to global audiences with unprecedented ease and precision. In this scenario, influencer marketing has come to the front as brands partner with these social media influencers for gaining increased visibility and credibility along with higher consumer engagement. This is mainly a growing trend within the scope of cross-border e-commerce where brands want to move out of their borders and touch consumers who, across borders, can contribute to an increased sales amount.

The enormous opportunity cross-border e-commerce offers brands is accompanied by the challenge of making things happen. New sources of revenue are opened by virtue of the access businesses now get to a diverse set of consumer bases, but access to foreign markets calls for sensitivity to differences in consumer preferences, regulatory environments, and cultural dynamics. That requires that marketing strategies devised toward these brands must reach globally attractive segments but should fit with the sensibilities and taste of local consumers across their targeted markets.

Clearly, influence marketing is quickly turning into a strategic strength as such influencers have increasingly proven themselves to be influential third parties who mediate relationships between brands and these target customers. This is where using influencers who are in alignment with their values and target audience can be helpful to the brand: they enhance authenticity, build trust, and communicate better across cultural divides. They are well adept at localizing content, adjusting the messages according to the interests and preferences of the unique followers. This ability to communicate culturally relevant messaging makes influencers critical in cross-border campaigns because they allow brands to reach consumers on a more personal level, which is the only way to build credibility in new markets.

Influencer marketing in cross-border e-commerce is, however complex and is influenced by several factors. Brands must carefully select influencers whose image aligns with their values because consumer trust in these personalities significantly influences brand perception. There is also a local-level variation in the rules surrounding influencer marketing, which may pose compliance management hurdles and make it challenging for a brand to ensure ethical partnerships. Risk of damage to brand reputation, especially in cases of misalignment with an influencer, means careful planning and strategic alignment when developing cross-border influencer campaigns.

This study shall examine the effectiveness of influencer marketing in cross-border e-

commerce, specifically identifying how influencers influence consumer behaviour, brand loyalty, and market penetration across various cultural contexts. The research further aims to explore ways for brands to enhance their influence partnerships in order to eliminate entry barriers, increase consumer confidence, and enhance engagement opportunities in international markets. Built upon the foundation of research by way of case studies, consumer surveys, and engagement analytics, this piece identifies best influencer marketing practices for a global campaign in cross-border e-commerce: A framework that may well lead brands to devise a strategy that might meet their respective unique requirements when executing the plan of going global.

By offering knowledge in filling this pressing need for strategic leadership during the digital age with answers to a significant need that emerges when considering the strategy and process by which brands utilize the influences to market their goods during international marketing, the study may be able to provide actionable recommendations to any brand looking to use social influencer marketing power through an international e-commerce plan.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social Media's Impact

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) emphasize that social media has transformed brand-consumer interactions by enhancing brand visibility and facilitating consumer engagement. Through platforms like Instagram and Facebook, brands can communicate with consumers more directly, building community and loyalty. Social media also acts as a valuable space for product recommendations, as consumers frequently rely on these platforms to guide their purchase decisions. The peer influence that occurs on social media is beneficial for brands, as consumers often share their brand experiences with their followers, extending brand visibility.

Influencer Marketing

De Veirman et al. (2017) and Clement (2021) underscore the importance of influencer marketing, particularly among younger audiences who are highly influenced by social endorsements over traditional advertisements. Micro and nano influencers are increasingly valued in marketing because they generally achieve higher engagement rates and foster a sense of relatability and trust within their niche audiences. Unlike larger influencers, these smaller-scale influencers interact closely with their followers, which strengthens the followers' trust and positively influences their purchasing behaviors. Brands leverage this

trust, as followers perceive the influencer's recommendations as more authentic and personal.

Challenges

Huang et al. (2021) highlight that, despite its effectiveness, influencer marketing faces challenges related to cultural diversity and regulatory issues. As brands expand globally, they encounter varying cultural norms and regulatory frameworks, which can hinder the efficacy of a one-size-fits-all marketing approach.

Understanding local consumer preferences is crucial for avoiding cultural missteps and navigating region-specific regulatory landscapes. Without this knowledge, brands risk delivering campaigns that may be misinterpreted or fall short of local expectations, potentially harming their brand reputation.

Localization Strategies

Djafarova and Trofimenko (2019) argue that adapting content to local cultural nuances and partnering with local influencers are key strategies for enhancing brand relatability. By tailoring messages and collaborating with influencers who understand the local culture, brands can create content that resonates more with their target audience. Local influencers help bridge cultural divides by delivering messages that align with the values and interests of their communities, thus fostering a stronger, more authentic connection between the brand and its consumers.

Measuring Effectiveness

Freberg et al. (2020) suggest that to accurately assess the success of influencer marketing campaigns, brands must use a combination of metrics, including engagement rates, reach, and return on investment (ROI). Engagement metrics like likes, shares, and comments indicate the audience's interest, while ROI provides insight into the campaign's financial impact. By combining these metrics, brands can gain a comprehensive view of the campaign's performance and make data-driven adjustments to optimize future campaigns. This multi-faceted approach to measurement helps brands understand how specific influencers, content, and platforms contribute to achieving their marketing goals.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this research on social media and influencer marketing in cross-border e-commerce are as follows:

1. Learn how consumer behavior differs across cultures to create better marketing

strategies.

2. Find the best social media and influencer strategies for each region.
3. Understand legal rules in different countries to ensure safe and compliant marketing.
4. Study how people trust influencers in different cultures and find the right ones for brands.
5. Solve language and logistical problems in international marketing with localization.

HYPOTHESIS

Cross-Border Perception Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H0): Influencer promotion does not significantly affect consumers' trust and perceived risk in purchasing from foreign e-commerce sites.

Alternate Hypothesis (H1): Consumers perceive brands promoted by influencers as more trustworthy, mitigating perceived risks associated with cross-border purchases.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This mixed method research combines quantitative analysis of social media metrics, campaign engagement rates, and consumer surveys with qualitative insights. It aims to understand trends in consumer behaviour, trust, and purchase intent, while exploring cultural nuances, regulatory challenges, and best practices for global influencer campaigns.

Data Collection

Primary Data: A structured Google Forms questionnaire collected insights from consumers on influencer engagement, trust, and purchasing behaviour, including cultural differences, using closed- and open-ended questions.

Secondary Data: Literature reviews and reports provided context on cross-cultural consumer reactions and inconsistencies in global social media marketing.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis: Statistical software analysed survey data using descriptive and inferential statistics to identify key factors influencing consumer trust and purchasing behaviour in different regions. **Qualitative Analysis:** Thematic analysis of open-ended responses identified themes like influencer credibility and cultural influences, uncovering

motivations behind consumer behavior. **Integration:** Quantitative trends and qualitative insights were combined to provide a comprehensive understanding of effective cross-border marketing strategies.

Ethical Considerations

1. **Informed Consent:** Participants were informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights, with consent obtained in advance.
2. **Anonymity and Privacy:** Responses were anonymous, ensuring confidentiality and honest feedback.
3. **Data Security:** Data was securely stored and accessible only to authorized individuals.
4. **Transparency:** Results were reported honestly, with no manipulation or undisclosed conflicts of interest.
5. **Cultural Sensitivity:** The study respected cultural norms and practices, avoiding any offense during data collection across different regions.

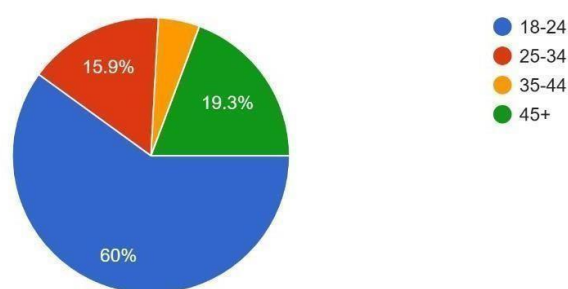
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

For an overall understanding of data analysis and interpretation, there was a requirement for examination of both qualitative and quantitative information collected through the questionnaire. The numerical response would be further analysed by performing statistical tool analysis to have an idea about the trend and the relationship between actions of consumers that usually takes place on a regional scale. At the same time, thematic analysis can unravel some insightful nuances that would describe the perceptions based on consumer perspective with regard to what influence marketing comes up with. Therefore, these results are used for the broad formulation of a wide understanding about adapting the social media strategy so efficiently for cross border e-commerce.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

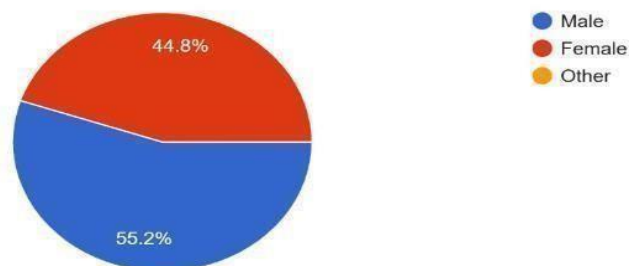
Age Group of Respondents

What is your age?
145 responses



This age profile will be very insightful on who the target audience is for cross-border e-commerce and what strategy the campaign would use with the influencer marketing. The majority of 60% belongs to the 18-24 age group. This is in great alignment with the demographic of social media users, especially in the channels of YouTube and Instagram, which are one of the primary channels used for influencer marketing. The younger demographic is perceived to be more digital by nature, open to purchasing from abroad, and easily influenced by content influencers on social media. 45+ users: This is 19.3% and could reflect a more significant market, as it is assumed that such users are online shopping-experienced and would spend on cross-border transactions. The 25-34 age group of 15.9% is likely young professionals with more buying power and both social media literate and aware of international e-commerce. The smaller 35-44 may suggest an opportunity gap, particularly in reaching the right influencers. This age distribution suggests that the cross-border e-commerce strategies should focus mainly on social media and influencers in the platform of choice among Gen Z and younger millennials, with some attention paid to content targeting mature consumers possibly through other platforms like Facebook or LinkedIn for the 45+ age group.

What is your gender?
145 responses



Gender Distribution

The gender distribution presents a rather balanced split, with 55.2% male and 44.8% female respondents. This would indicate that the cross-border e-commerce platform appeals almost equally to both genders. Therefore, as far as the influencer marketing strategy is concerned, it indicates that there is a requirement for an almost equal split of male and female influencers to reach the target effectively. This slight variation with a higher percentage of males may create a slightly higher propensity for individuals to cross borders to shop, but high percentages of females deserve equal attention towards marketing for them. A balanced

population requires gender-balanced advertising while allowing gender-targeting when specific products tend to attract more towards the male gender or female gender.

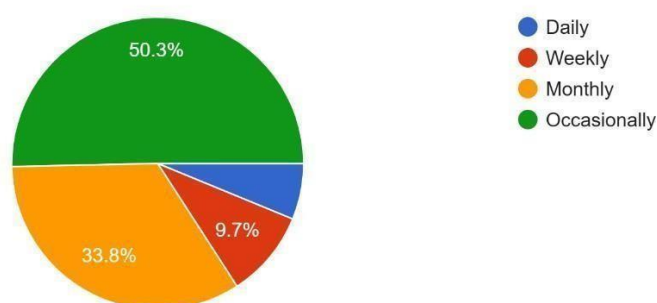
How Often Do You Shop Online?

Online Shopping Frequency

Shopping Frequency	Percentage (%)
Rarely	50.3
Once a month	33.8
weekly	9.7
Daily	Few responses

How often do you shop online?

145 responses

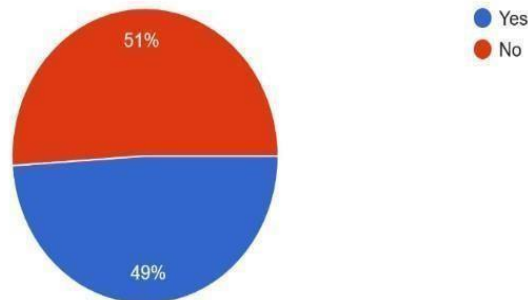


The fact that 50.3% of respondents shop less frequently, and 33.8% shop once a month, 9.7% shop weekly, and few shop daily, indicates the frequency of online shopping and, hence, cross-border e-commerce and influencer marketing are likely to involve more select buyers than frequent buyers for the purchase of their online goods. This pattern would tell that there is need for influencer marketing strategies to generate an engaging value proposition and timely promotions for conversion of infrequent shoppers into more frequent customers. The shopper segment of 33.8% monthly refers to the customer base, and seasonally aimed influencer campaigns could be targeted at chances of cross-border e-commerce.

Have You Purchased Products from International Websites or Brands in the Past

Have you purchased products from international websites or brands in the past year?

145 responses



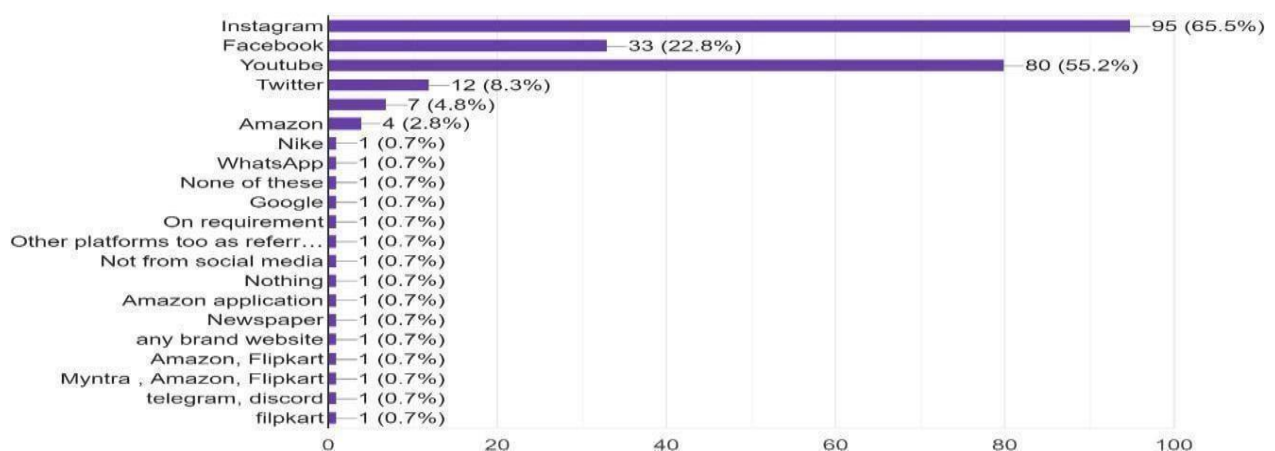
Year?

The data reveals an almost equal split between international online shoppers, with 49% having made cross-border purchases in the past year and 51% who haven't. For influencer marketing in cross-border e-commerce, this presents both a challenge and an opportunity. There is a significant percentage of existing international shoppers (49%) that can be considered a solid foundation for targeted marketing, while the slightly larger segment of non-international shoppers (51%) represents untapped potential. This means that influencer marketing strategies should be along two ways: reinforcing some of the existing benefits international shopping offers to customers on the one hand and alleviating some of the common fears, held by non-adopters on the other end.

Which Social Media Platforms Do You Use The Most For Discovering Products (Select All That Apply)?

Which social media platforms do you use the most for discovering products (select all that apply)?

145 responses



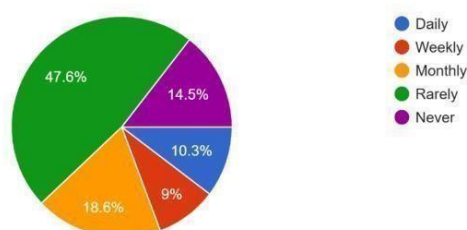
Social Media Platforms For Product Discovery

Platform	Percentage (%)
Instagram	65.5
Youtube	55.2
Facebook	22.8
Twitter	8.3
Others	Below 1

This clearly indicates the hierarchy of social media on which product discovery takes place as follows: Instagram appears to be at 65.5% with 95 respondents, followed by YouTube at 55.2% with 80 respondents, and Facebook at 22.8% with 33 respondents. By and large, Twitter still indicates much lower engagement at 8.3% with 12 respondents, whereas other sites include WhatsApp, Amazon, and a host of others below 1%. This significantly points to the fact that for cross-border e-commerce and influencer marketing purposes, Instagram and YouTube should be the primary channels for advocating for products. The overall leadership also suggests dominance of visual content and story-based marketing while video content and reviews work well on YouTube. This large difference means marketing dollars and influencer collaborations would be better served trying to reach those leadership channels rather than spread widely among multiple channels with extremely minimal engagement.

How Often Do You Follow Influencers On Social Media?

How often do you follow influencers on social media?
145 responses



Influencer Following Frequency

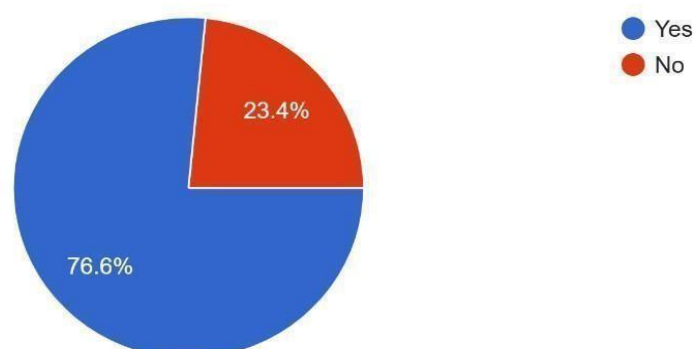
Frequency	Percentage (%)
Rarely	47.6
Monthly	18.6
Never	14.5
Daily	10.3
Weekly	9

The data shows that varied levels of influencer engagements exist, where 47.6% of those surveyed follow influencers rarely and 18.6%, monthly; 14.5% never follow any influencer; 10.3% follow at a daily level; while 9% follow in a weekly pattern. Thus, for cross-border e-commerce strategy, this indicates that although most people actually engage with influencer content (85.5% at some frequency), the engagement is mostly very sporadic. This shows that influencer marketing campaigns must be appealing enough to value for casual followers to spot. Inversely, daily and weekly followers will have to check the level of engagement consistently by maintaining updates on posts with contents to keep these groups interacting with the brand, respectively accounting for 19.3% combined. This reflects a large share of followers that are scant in their appearances but necessary striking and memorable content might attract the attention even with minimum exposure.

Are You Aware Of Influencers Promoting International Or Cross- Border Products/Brand

Are you aware of influencers promoting international or cross-border products/brands?

145 responses



Awareness Of Cross-Border Influencers

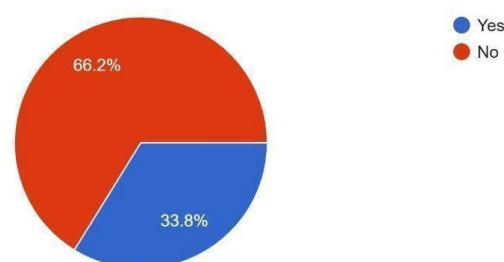
Awareness level	Percentage (%)
Aware	76.6
Not Aware	23.4

The data reflects a high awareness level about cross-border influencer marketing, with 76.6% of the respondents being aware of influencers who market international products/brands, and only 23.4% are not aware of it. At this level of awareness of cross-border e-commerce strategy, it can be established that influencer marketing has indeed entered market consciousness. This means that awareness cannot be the problem; what is required is that awareness converts into actual transactions since preliminary statistics showed that 49% had done a foreign transaction. The awareness versus buying behaviour gap stands at 76.6% of awareness and 49% on actual purchase is where this campaign can tap barriers associated with cross border buying in order to build the same into trust and dissipate frequent concerns that surface around overseas purchases.

Have You Ever Made A Purchase Based On Recommendations From Influencers In A Different Country?

Have you ever made a purchase based on recommendations from influencers in a different country?

145 responses

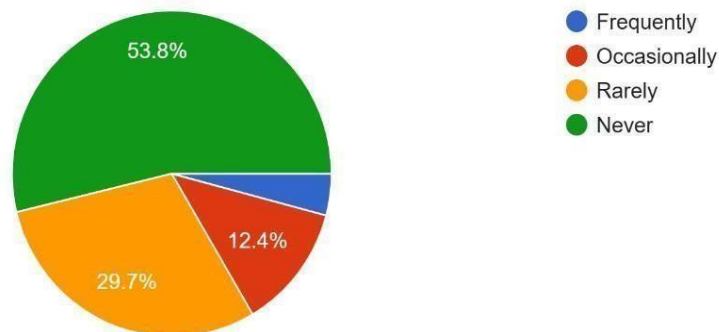


According to the chart, 66.2% of respondents answered they have bought products promoted by cross- border influencers from other countries. Therefore, it means that cross-border influencer marketing has influenced consumer behaviour nowadays and can open up more opportunities for cross-border e- commerce.

Often Do You Make Cross-Border Purchases After Seeing Influencer Promotions?

If yes, how often do you make cross-border purchases after seeing influencer promotions?

145 responses

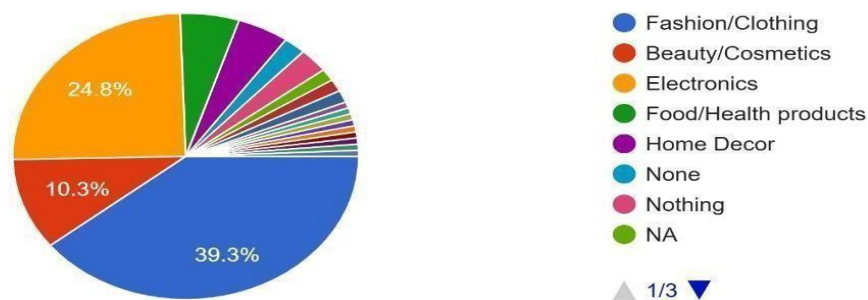


The chart reveals that 58.8% of the respondents often cross border buy after observing influencer promotions. It signifies that influencer marketing can be a useful tool for driving cross-border e-commerce. Still, there is another interesting revelation. 29.7% of respondents do this just occasionally. This means that brands need to keep running consistent and compelling influencer campaigns for the consumers to stay interested in this activity. Of course, 12.4% only seldom purchase cross border products if cross border influencer promotions exist and 0% never do so. This again points to the fact that cross-border purchasing is influenced by more than just influencer marketing. Brand reputation, quality of product, as well as value contribute to such purchases.

What Type Of Products Do You Mostly Purchase Via Cross-Border Influencers?

What type of products do you mostly purchase via cross-border influencers?

145 responses

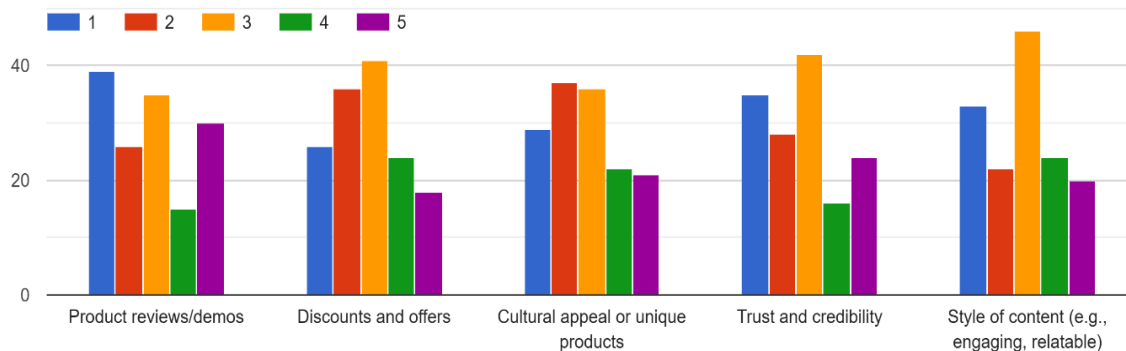


From this graph, fashion/clothing is the most trending product category through cross border influencers, followed by respondents who chose 39.3%. Other product categories include beauty/cosmetics by 24.8% followed by electronics 10.3%. Respondents opting for food/health, home decor and "no/nothing" categories did record a few, significantly very few. In general terms, this graph indicates a trend in marketing using influencer marketing when it cuts across borders since the trends reflect the most bought items were fashion, beauty, or

electronic products. Fashion, electronics, and cosmetics can consider this trend when marketing globally and targeting international buyers.

What Attracts You To Cross-Border Influencers' Content? (Rank The Following From 1 To 5)

What attracts you to cross-border influencers' content? (Rank the following from 1 to 5)



Factors Attracting Consumers To Cross-Border Influencers

Factor	Ranking
Product Reviews/Demos	1
Discounts/Offeres	2
Trust/Credibility	3
Cultural Appeal	4
Engaging Content	5

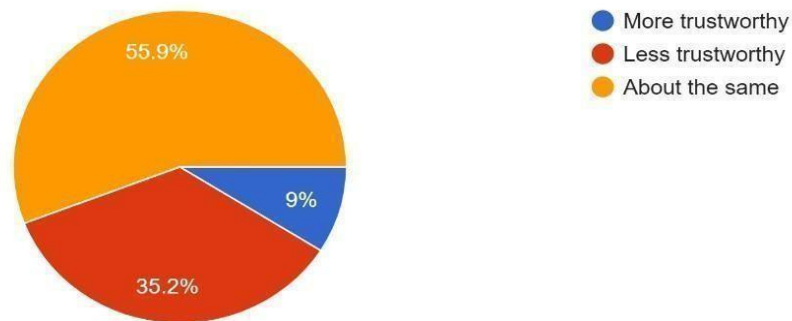
Product reviews/Demos and Discounts/Offeres are the two most crucial factors that compels consumers to view content from cross-border influencers. This indicates that consumers care more about the utility value of information relating to products and the chance of saving when accessing a foreign influencer. There is the aspect of trust and credibility, cultural appeal/unique products, and style of content (engaging, relatable), but that seems to be less prominent. This means that it has to do with creating an atmosphere of trust for your audience, unique value proposition, and engaging content. The brands partnering with cross-border influencers should thus pay attention to providing product information, offering

attractive discounts, and building trust with the audience to effectively harness the influencer marketing opportunity.

Do You Find Cross-Border Influencers More Or Less Trustworthy Than Local Influencers?

Do you find cross-border influencers more or less trustworthy than local influencers?

145 responses



Trustworthiness Of Cross-Border Vs. Local Influencers

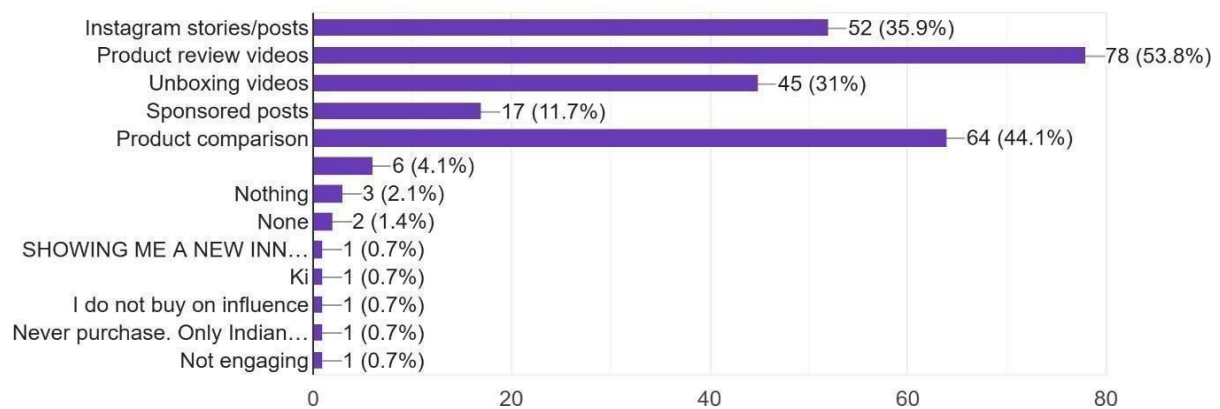
Trust level	Percentage (%)
More Trustworthy	55.9
About the same	35.2
Less Trustworthy	8.9

The chart presents that the majority of the respondents believe cross border influencers are even more or of equal reliability to local ones, reaching 55.9%. It means the general perception of consumers opens up receptivity to suggestions of reliability from foreign influencer brands. However, 35.2 percent of those respondents feel they are not as reliable when compared with local influencers, and trust needs to be established to the audience on crossing these cultural and geographic boundaries. Cross-border influencer partnership brands would want to focus on trust through open, transparent communication; authentic content; and genuine engagement with the audience.

Which Type Of Influencer Content Do You Find Most Effective When Considering A Cross-Border Purchase? (Select All That Apply)

Which type of influencer content do you find most effective when considering a cross-border purchase? (select all that apply)

145 responses



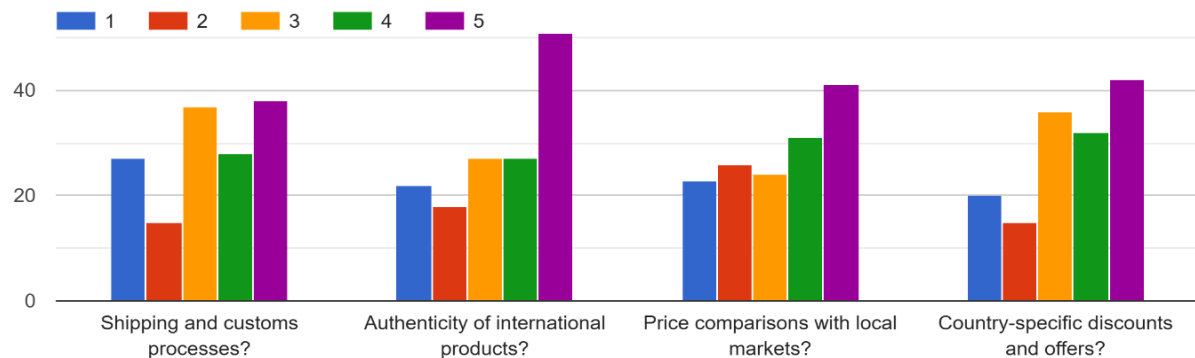
Preferred Influencer Content For Cross Border Purchases

Content Type	Preference
Instagram Stories/Posts	High
Product Review Videos	High
Sponsored Posts	Moderate
Unboxing Videos	Low

Most influencer content used in making cross border purchases is through instagram stories/posts and product review videos. That's the most-used type, meaning that visual content and authentic reviews matter when deciding on a foreign brand. Product comparison videos and sponsored posts are effective but not the most. It implies a need for relevant information and transparent partnership with influencers. Other content types, like an unboxing video and social media, have a minimal influence on cross-border purchasing. It might be the case that content is more comprehensive and detailed when a buyer decides to purchase unknown brands. Cross-border influencers working with the brand should produce content that is visually attractive and informative. For instance, stories in Instagram, reviews of products, or comparison content can be developed.

How Important Is It For The Influencer To Share Information On: (Rate Each From 1 To 5)

How important is it for the influencer to share information on: (Rate each from 1 to 5)

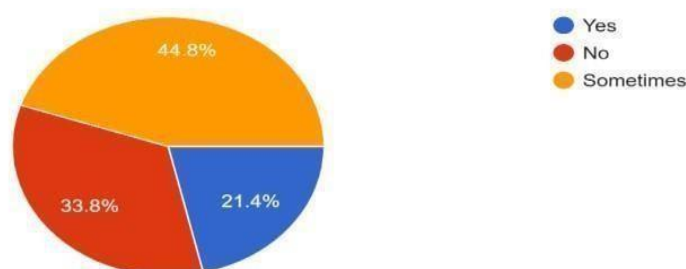


Consumers' requirements about shipping and custom procedures, authenticity of imported products, and discount/offers on country basis indicate that the consumers care much about possible difficulties and gains related to cross-border buying. Cross-border shopping and price comparisons with domestic market are ranked as least important; it simply suggests that consumers consider aspects like product authenticity and comfort in addition to others to buy the product. To a cross-border influencer's brand, shipping costs and customs duties should be known information to the audience, besides knowing the authenticity of the products. Exclusive discounts and promotion can also encourage consumers to make cross-border purchases.

Do You Feel That Cross-Border Influencers Effectively Communicate Potential Issues Such As Shipping Delays, Custom Duties, Or Return Policies?

Do you feel that cross-border influencers effectively communicate potential issues such as shipping delays, custom duties, or return policies?

145 responses

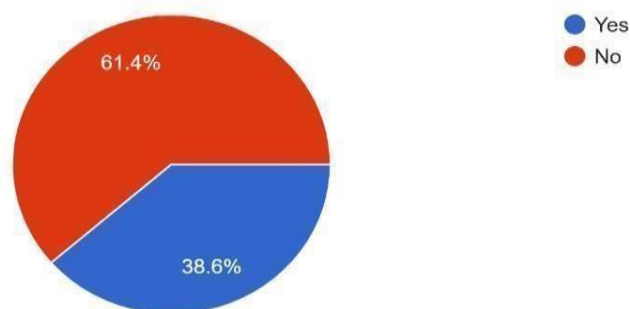


From the chart, it can be seen that 44.8 percent of those interviewed believe that cross-border influencers clearly communicate problems like shipping delays, customs duties, and return policies. This still reveals that consumers appreciate transparency and clear communication from influencers on problems associated with cross-border purchase. However, 33.8% of the

respondents claim that cross-border influencers have failed to communicate these problems. This means that it is necessary for influencers to be more proactive in speaking about the concerns and communicating properly to their audience. Brands should therefore inform the cross-border influencers of the potential problems involved and clearly leave instructions on how shipping, customs, and returns will be handled. This strategy can also facilitate trust among the target audience and reduce dissatisfaction.

Do You Follow Influencers From Specific Countries Because Of Their Cultural Or Regional Expertise?

Do you follow influencers from specific countries because of their cultural or regional expertise?
145 responses



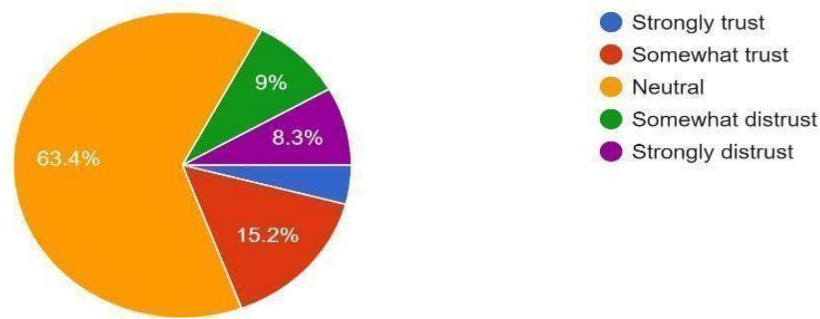
According to the chart, 61.4% of respondents follow influencers from specific countries because of their cultural or regional expertise. This shows that consumers are interested in learning about different cultures and lifestyles through the lens of foreign influencers. Brands partnering with cross-border influencers should use their cultural savvy to create content that is locally relevant to specific target audiences. This can be achieved by using local references and cultural nuances and by partnering with influencers who have a relationship with their audience.

How Do You Rate The Level Of Trust You Place In Cross-Border Influencers When Compared To Traditional Marketing (E.G., Ads, Promotions)?

Trust Level	Percentage (%)
Trust influencers more	63.4%
Neutral	9%
Distrust influencers	15.2%

How do you rate the level of trust you place in cross-border influencers when compared to traditional marketing (e.g., ads, promotions)?

145 responses



This graph states that there is a good percentage of the respondents (63.4%) who semi-trust cross-border influencers as against the traditional marketing. This is because the influence of this influencer on a consumer level is found more authentic and relatable to him or her compared to the normal advertising he or she will get through TV or radio. At the same time, 15.2% of the respondents express a strong distrust of these cross-border influencers, which portrays that consumers tend not to believe the purposes and genuineness behind such an influencer's message. Brands therefore have to connect with credible influencers so that trust can build through them to their target audiences. But then again, 9% are neutral with regard to cross-border influencers, meaning they would only respond to varying degrees based on the influence of the cross-border influencer and situation. There will always be cross-border influencer collaborating brands that require them to concentrate on earning the audience's trust as well as authentic engagement from genuine involvement, valuable information presented that could help shift perception towards an audience faithful.

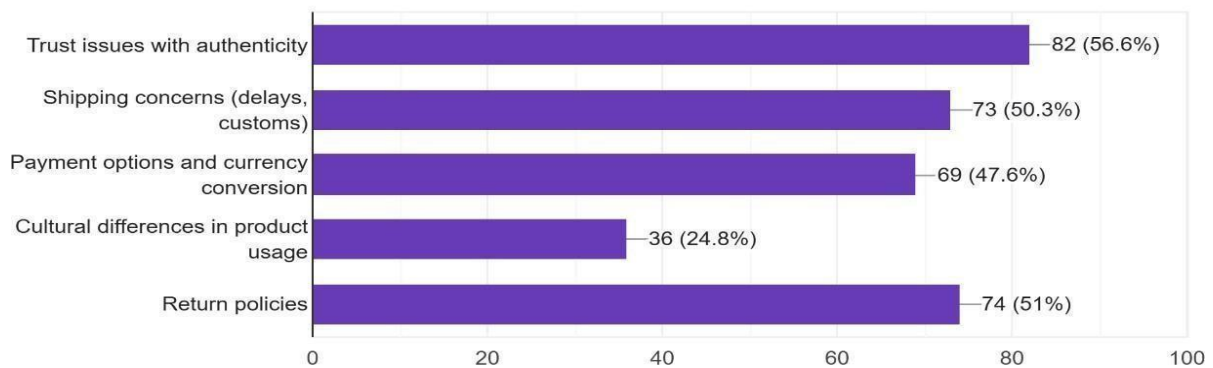
In Your Opinion, What Are The Challenges In Buying Products Recommended By Cross-Border Influencers? (Select All That Apply)

Challenges	Percentage%
Product Authenticity	56.6
Shipping Issues	50
Payment options	50
Return policies	50

From the chart, it is shown that the largest challenge in buying products promoted by cross-

In your opinion, what are the challenges in buying products recommended by cross-border influencers? (Select all that apply)

145 responses

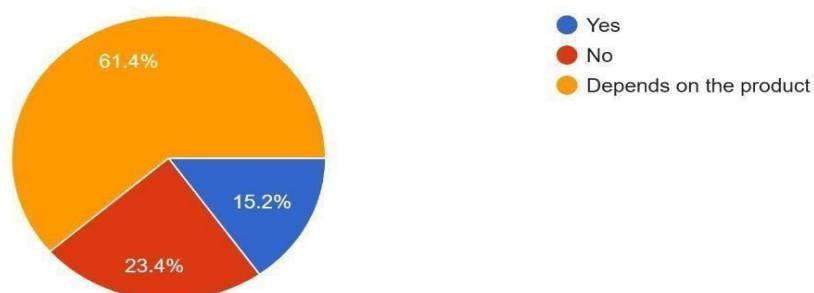


border influencers was trust issues over authenticity since 56.6% of the respondents raised the issue. It implies that consumers are not confident that the products sold are original and that reviews from other countries' influencers are unreliable. Major issues included shipping concerns, payment options, and return policies, in which over 50% of the respondents had major concerns. It indicates a need for effective communication as well as good services regarding these issues. Cultural differences in the usage of products were cited as concerns by 24.8% of respondents. It indicates that the consumers would be hesitant to buy if the product does not have a preference of their particular culture. The partnership between brands and cross-border influencers should rather focus on trusting from open communication, authentic contents, and assured shipping and returns policies. Cultural differences issues may be addressed by letting a clear explanation in the use of the product build trust amongst consumers, some of which may alleviate fear concerning the sales across the borders.

Do Cross-Border Influencers Influence Your Decision-Making More Than Your Local Influencers When It Comes To International Products?

Do cross-border influencers influence your decision-making more than your local influencers when it comes to international products?

145 responses



The chart shows, above all, that 61.4% of the respondents believe cross-border influencers influence their buying decisions more than local influencers do for international products. It shows an appreciation of foreign influencers for their unique views and cultural insights.

23.4% of the respondents responded that the influence of cross-border influencers depends on the product, meaning that for some categories of products, consumers may be more susceptible to foreign influencers' recommendations. 15.2% of the respondents responded that local influencers have a stronger influence on their decisions. This means that cultural familiarity and trust in local influencers play a role in consumer decision-making. Cross-border influencer collaborations for brands will help them make content with the help of the cultural know-how and the distinct perspectives they carry and resonate well with the intended target group. Brands will thus require authentic influencers that their target audience would love to trust, thus providing communication to the target group of international products.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

A chi-square test is a statistical test used to determine whether there is a significant association between two categorical variables. By comparing the observed frequencies of data points with the expected frequencies under the null hypothesis of independence, we can assess whether the variables are related.

In this analysis, we will employ a chi-square test to examine the relationship between the trustworthiness of cross-border influencers and the likelihood of purchasing from international brands.

The sample is multiplied by 5 to draw more accurate results. So, the sample size is N=725

Chi-square: $-\sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$

TABLE FOR OBSERVED FREQUENCY - O_i

Trust Level	Purchased Internationally (Yes)	Purchased Internationally (No)	Total
More Trustworthy	150	50	200
About the same	250	125	375

Less Trustworthy	75	75	150
Total	475	250	725

TABLE FOR EXPECTED FREQUENCY - E_i

Trust Level	Purchased Internationally (Yes)	Purchased Internationally (No)	Total
More Trustworthy	131.03	68.97	200
About the same	256.03	118.97	375
Less Trustworthy	98.97	51.03	150
Total	475	250	725

Degree of freedom = (3-1) *(2-1) = 2 Chi square statistic = 28.56

The table value of chi-square at the degree of freedom 2 and 5% level of significance is 5.991, whereas the computed value is 28.56 which is larger than the tabulated value.

Since (28.56) is much greater than (5.991), we reject the null hypothesis (H₀) and accept the alternate hypothesis (H₁).

From the analysis above of the association between the level of trust and response-Yes or No- the result shows that the Chi-Square statistic of approximately 28.56, highly significant at a significance level of 0.05 compared to the critical value of 5.991, further goes to establish how much more respondents view others as trustworthy in the light of their finding as to whether the person is trustworthy, equally trustworthy, or less trustworthy as highly affecting their response. Based on these findings, trust in general is a critical input for decision-making processes within both interpersonal relationships, organization settings, and public communication, thus the need for building more trust. At all levels, the implications suggest

that there is room for further research into factors of trust and its impact upon attitudes and behaviour.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Demographic Insights & Shopping Patterns
Age and Gender: The 18–24 age group dominated the sample with 60% of the total, mirroring the key target market for platforms like Instagram and YouTube. It would seem that young adults are more likely to be affected by social media marketing in cross-border e-commerce. In terms of gender, it was close to a near 50:50 split, though men slightly edged out women. This is an important aspect since marketers need to cater to both genders in equal measure.

Shopping Frequency: More than half the respondents indicated that they rarely go online to shop; this only consisted of a very minor percentage that goes online to make purchases weekly. In this regard, it provides an opportunity for cross-border influencer marketing to get the lesser frequency shopper online through attractive offers and value propositions.

Awareness and Trust in Cross-Border Influencers

High proportion: 76.6% are of the opinion that influencers promote cross-border products. In that regard, however, their conversion into cross-border purchases remains modest at 49% recently bought cross-border products, so there may be awareness lag, possibly due to a lack of trust in authenticity of the product and its logistics. 66.2% is the percentage of respondents who have ever purchased a product because of recommendations from cross-border influencers. This high percentage depicts the influence that trusted and relatable influencers hold in driving international sales.

Social Media Platforms and Influencer Engagement

Preferred Platforms: Instagram topped with 65.5 percent followed by YouTube at 55.2 percent were preferred in terms of discovery for a product. Higher engagement of these platforms, particularly driven through visual content and storytelling, seems to hint towards greater preference in cross-border marketing activities.

Proper Engagement Rate: The majority of the respondents are following in fitful and monthly or rarely, which means that the influencer has to literally post content that is impactful and memorable for casual followers to be reminded to pay attention.

Product Types and Influencer Posting

Best Seller Categories: The most sold categories included fashion, beauty, and electronics. Fashion led at 39.3%. It is reflective of product categories where the influence of influencers is maximum, particularly for visually perceived products, where influencer reviews or demonstrations can actually make a difference.

Content Effectiveness: The most important content to me, who consumes these products was that relating to the review, demonstration of even offers in discounts. Having aimed for more informed content based on monetary saving, there comes an appeal to influence marketing where it should depict the maximum utility of more and improve the appeal regarding saving through the cost.

Trust and Authenticity: The challenge bordering purchases was the issue of product authenticity as 56.6% of respondents responded. This is an undercurrent of mistrust; therefore, brands need to up their game in terms of communication regarding where it came from, authenticity, and quality assurance in influencer campaigns.

Logistics and Compliance Issues: Shipping, payment options, and return policies were also on top of the list. Good information on such logistics issues in influencer content would reduce friction during the purchasing process.

Consumer Perception and Trust in Influencers

55.9% of respondents held a belief that cross-border influencers were trustworthy or at the same level as domestic influencers, which means people were likely to follow foreign influencer's suggestions. However, 35.2% claimed that they were not, meaning that the cross-border influencers have to create such trust through transparent and real communication.

Discussion

Trust as A Prime Motivator Across Borders:

Trust constitutes a key determinant of the motivations in cross-border consumerism and purchase behaviour. While concerns over the authenticity of the product have been mitigated by trusted influencers, the issues concerning the complexities between the awareness of consumer purchasing decision and the logistics may be easily bridged through collaborations with influencers and brands. This is why it's critical to work with trustworthy influencer marketing who will make consumers feel secure behind their foreign products.

Localized Strategies for Diverse Markets:

Cross-border e-commerce leverages such cultural, regulatory, and consumer behavior differences.

Regional expertise influences can give way to culture-specific insight, and brands can position content in such a way that resonates with local audiences. Localized influencer partnerships enable a brand to deliver culturally relevant messaging, which is the key to authenticity and trust in unfamiliar markets.

Content Optimization on Platforms:

Since discovery is driven most by Instagram and YouTube, content should be optimized to work well on these sites. This can be done using more visual storytelling and product reviews and in engaging formats like Instagram Stories or YouTube demos. The formats of such content work well with consumer preference and leverage the strength of the platform in influencing the decision to buy.

Logistical and Compliance Overcomes

Additionally, influencers should provide clear information about cross-border logistics such as shipping and customs and any return policies. This way, the influencers can easily alleviate the concerns that cross- border shopping might create and reinforce reliability in the brand name.

Demographic and Purchase Behaviour Targeting Approach:

Influence marketing is sensitive among the age group of 18–24 years and niches like fashion, beauty, and electronics. Brands have to develop targeted campaigns that speak to such high-engagement groups through influencer promotions that focus on special products and special offers.

Building and Sustaining Engagement:

Since most of the respondents are not habitual consumers of influencers, brands can amplify the influence that such campaigns create through consistent communication and relevant content. Periodic shoppers may be influenced more by limited-time offers, seasonal deals, and seasonal exclusives to respond positively.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Conclusion

The present research draws attention to the growing importance of social media and influencer marketing in this new cross-border e-commerce environment. Key findings are as follows: Trust in influencers, cultural sensitivity, and transparency in logistics are very critical factors that impact consumer behaviour and willingness to participate in cross-border transactions. Central to product discovery on the platforms are Instagram and YouTube. The engagement levels for cross-border e-commerce purchases among younger consumers and product categories such as fashion, beauty, and electronics were at the highest levels. Importantly, a successful entry and development in international markets depend on selecting influential people with credibility, tailoring content to local preferences, and making shipping and return procedures simple.

In the final analysis, the research emphasizes that influencer marketing is capable of significantly mitigating the perceived risks involved in making cross-border purchases, provided the appropriate trust- building, content localization, and logistical transparency are observed. Brands taking on these measures are likely to form lasting relationships with consumers and achieve higher market penetration across international borders.

Future Work

In future work, this research could be developed along multiple dimensions to better fine-tune influencer marketing for cross-border e-commerce.

1. **Demographic Profiling for Additional Years Beyond the Age 60+** The future should see explorations of behaviour patterns exhibited by the consumers belonging to the older demographics in particular to enhance know-how into cross-border preferences.
2. **Cultural Insight and Barriers Metrics** Finding out at what level those cultural items impact consumer's trustability and engagement into a promotion would help to refine any influencer technique specific for regions. Discovering even more how certain local differences in culture reflect the adequacy of campaigns in involving an influencer marketing mechanism would be pretty helpful also.
3. **Cross-Border Influencer Longitudinal Studies on Developing Trust** It may be established that how trust in cross-border influencers evolves over time. Longitudinal studies make it possible for researchers to understand the changes in the consumer's

trust and behaviours when brands and influencers continuously maintain relationships with their audiences.

4. Comparison by Influencer and Platform: Future research would be interested in comparing the efficiencies of different platforms, for example, the efficiency of TikTok vs. Instagram in a certain region for particular product categories.
5. Impact of Technology on Influencer Marketing and Role of AI in Influencer Marketing: Study of how AI helps find influencers, personalize content through automation, and measure engagement metrics might help the brand optimize their campaign effectiveness.
6. Cross-Border Compliance and Ethical Marketing As the world continues to regulate influencer marketing across borders, there is much research in terms of compliance needs and best practices in different regions that can be conducted. A study of these legal considerations can be quite helpful to brands navigating potential challenges in maintaining cross-border ethical standards in campaigns.

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