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HOW INFLUENCER QUALITIES SHAPE YOUNG CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION: THE MEDIATING ROLES OF PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIP, TRUSTWORTHINESS, AND PERCEIVED EXPERTISE

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Abstract
Background. Social-media influencer marketing has become a primary channel for reaching Generation Z, yet the psychological mechanism that converts influencer qualities into purchase intention and the relative weight of competing mediators remains contested. Objective. Drawing on the theory of persuasion, this study examines how three influencer qualities (mental homophily, physical attractiveness, social attractiveness) shape young consumers' purchase intention through three characterizations (trustworthiness, perceived expertise, and parasocial relationship). Method. Survey data from 159 young social-media users in Pakistan were analysed with partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The reported model was extended with specific indirect-effect estimation (Sobel tests), total effects, structural f^2 effect sizes, and a renewed discriminant-validity assessment. Results. The measurement model met reliability and convergent-validity thresholds (composite reliability .85–.91; AVE .52–.73). The three influencer qualities explained 44–49% of variance in the mediators, and the full model explained 52% of variance in purchase intention. Parasocial relationship was by far the dominant driver of purchase intention (β = .561, f^2 = 0.24, medium), trustworthiness contributed modestly (β = .178), and perceived expertise had no significant effect (β = .046, p = .53; $f^2 \approx 0.00$). Mediation analysis absent from the original study showed that influencer effects on purchase intention flow almost entirely through parasocial relationship: all three parasocial indirect paths were significant, the trustworthiness paths were weak-to-marginal, and every perceived-expertise path was non-significant. Social attractiveness exerted the largest total effect on purchase intention (.266), ahead of physical attractiveness (.186) and mental homophily (.178). A discriminant-validity concern emerged between perceived expertise and parasocial relationship (HTMT = .90 > .85). Conclusion. For young consumers, influencer marketing persuades by building relationship, not by signalling expertise. Brands should prioritise socially attractive, relatable influencers who cultivate genuine parasocial bonds. Theoretically, the findings refine persuasion-based accounts of influencer marketing and caution against treating perceived expertise and parasocial relationship as fully distinct constructs.

1. Introduction

Social-media influencer marketing has moved from a peripheral tactic to a central pillar of consumer engagement. Influencers ordinary users who accumulate audiences by creating and sharing experiential content now function as trusted intermediaries between brands and consumers, frequently outperforming conventional advertising in shaping purchase behaviour (Belanche et al., 2021; Vrontis et al., 2021). The commercial stakes are substantial: global influencer-marketing spend has grown into a multibillion-dollar market, and Generation Z digital natives who treat peer and influencer recommendations as default decision inputs constitutes its most coveted audience (Babu et al., 2024).

What makes influencer marketing persuasive is not merely exposure but the relationship audiences form with the communicator. Unlike one-directional celebrity endorsement, influencers cultivate a sense of intimacy and reciprocity with followers a parasocial relationship (PSR), the one-sided but emotionally real bond first described by Horton and Wohl (1956). Recent evidence consistently identifies PSR as a key conduit through which influencer credibility and attractiveness translate into behavioural intention (Liu, 2025; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Yet the literature still debates how PSR compares with other established persuasion constructs particularly trustworthiness and perceived expertise as a driver of purchase intention, and through which influencer qualities it is formed.

Pakistan offers an instructive and under-researched setting. It has a large, young, rapidly digitising population for whom social platforms are primary sites of consumption and identity. Understanding which influencer qualities move young Pakistani consumers, and through which psychological mechanism, has both theoretical and managerial value in a market where influencer marketing is expanding quickly but is empirically thinly documented.

This study addresses three questions: *(i)* which influencer qualities mental homophily, physical attractiveness, or social attractiveness most strongly build the characterizations that drive purchase intention; *(ii)* which characterization trustworthiness, perceived expertise, or parasocial relationship most strongly converts into purchase intention; and *(iii)* how influencer qualities reach purchase intention indirectly through these mediators. The third question is where the present analysis makes its central contribution. The source study proposed a full set of mediation hypotheses but reported only the measurement model and direct structural paths, leaving the mediating mechanism formally untested. We complete the model by estimating and significance-testing all specific indirect effects, computing total effects, deriving structural effect sizes, and re-examining discriminant validity yielding a sharper, decision-relevant account of how influencer marketing persuades young consumers.

2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

2.1 The theory of persuasion and influencer characterization

The theory of persuasion distinguishes between an influencer's personal attributes (peripheral cues the influencer possesses) and the characterizations followers form about the influencer (central evaluations). Personal attributes homophily, physical attractiveness, and social attractiveness serve as antecedents, while characterizations trustworthiness, perceived expertise, and parasocial relationship mediate their effect on behaviour (Lou & Kim, 2019; Schouten et al., 2020). Source-credibility theory complements this view: persuasion strengthens when communicators are seen as trustworthy and expert (Hovland et al., 1953; Ohanian, 1990), while parasocial theory adds that repeated, intimate exposure builds a relationship that is itself persuasive (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

2.2 Influencer qualities as antecedents of characterization

Mental (attitude) homophily perceived similarity in values and outlook fosters trust and identification because interaction and influence flow more readily between like-minded people. Physical attractiveness operates as a peripheral cue that enhances credibility and draws sustained attention, especially for influencers whom audiences view continuously. Social attractiveness the sense that

an influencer would be likeable as a friend directly seeds the friendship-like dynamic underlying parasocial bonds (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Each quality is therefore hypothesized to build all three characterizations:

H1a Mental homophily → trustworthiness.
H1b Mental homophily → perceived expertise.
H1c Mental homophily → parasocial relationship.
H2a Physical attractiveness → trustworthiness.
H2b Physical attractiveness → perceived expertise.
H2c Physical attractiveness → parasocial relationship.
H3a Social attractiveness → trustworthiness.
H3b Social attractiveness → perceived expertise.
H3c Social attractiveness → parasocial relationship.

2.3 Characterizations as drivers of purchase intention

Trustworthiness has long anchored credibility-based persuasion: followers buy what honest sources recommend. Perceived expertise the influencer's knowledge and competence can lend authority to recommendations. Parasocial relationship, however, may dominate in influencer contexts, because the emotional bond converts attention into action more powerfully than rational source cues (Liu, 2025; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). We therefore test:

H4a Trustworthiness → followers' purchase intention.
H4b Perceived expertise → followers' purchase intention.
H4c Parasocial relationship → followers' purchase intention.

2.4 Mediation Hypotheses

Because the model contains no direct paths from influencer qualities to purchase intention, each quality is expected to influence purchase intention only indirectly, through the characterizations. This yields nine specific mediation hypotheses (H5–H7), which the present study is the first to test for this dataset:

H5a–c Mental homophily → purchase intention, mediated by trustworthiness / perceived expertise / parasocial relationship, respectively.
H6a–c Physical attractiveness → purchase intention, mediated by trustworthiness / perceived expertise / parasocial relationship, respectively.
H7a–c Social attractiveness → purchase intention, mediated by trustworthiness / perceived expertise / parasocial relationship, respectively.

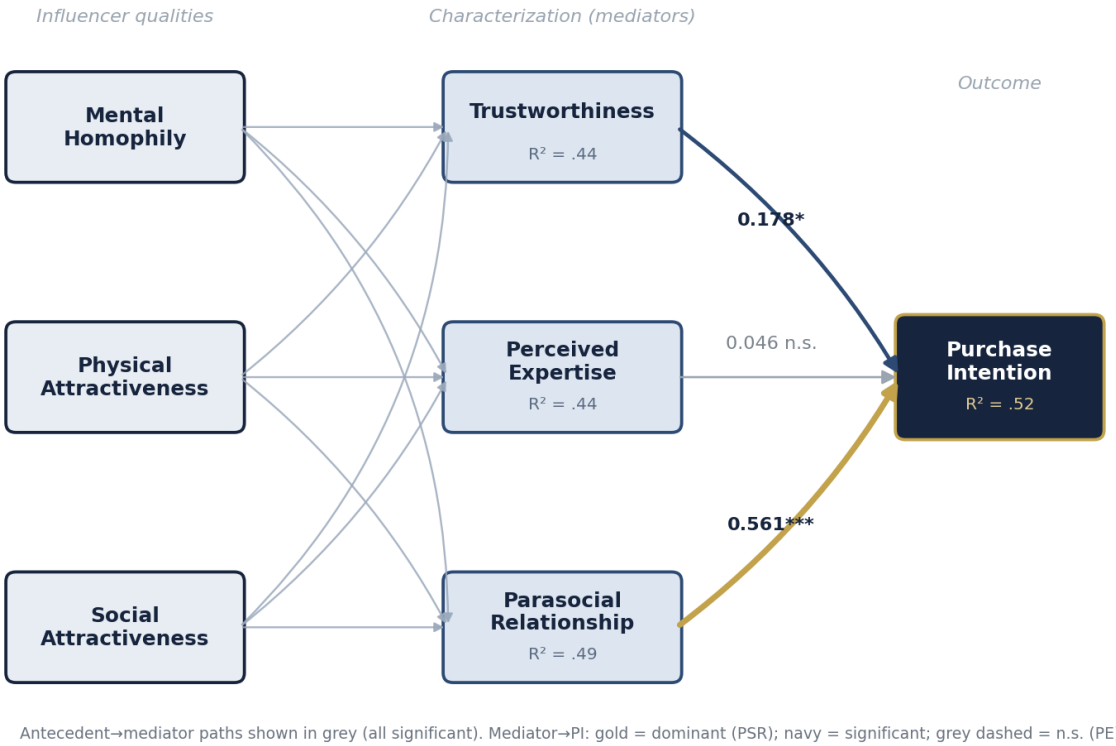

Figure 1. Hypothesized structural model with estimated standardized path coefficients. Antecedent→mediator paths (grey) are all significant; among mediator→purchase-intention paths, parasocial relationship dominates.

3. Methodology

3.1 Design, sample, and procedure

A cross-sectional, explanatory survey design was used. The target population was young social-media users in Karachi who had purchased a product or service after viewing influencer content. Data were collected through an online and on-hand self-administered questionnaire using convenience (non-probability) sampling. Of more than 200 responses, 41 were removed as multivariate outliers, leaving 159 valid cases above the minimum recommended for the model's complexity. Responses used five-point Likert scales; the first section captured demographics (age, gender, education, income).

3.2 Measures

All constructs were measured with established, previously validated scales (Table 1). The model comprised three exogenous constructs (mental homophily, physical attractiveness, social attractiveness), three mediating constructs (trustworthiness, perceived expertise, parasocial relationship), and one endogenous outcome (purchase intention), operationalized with 33 reflective indicators.

Table 1: ***Constructs, sources, and measurement***

Construct (role)	Items	Source scale	Scale
Mental homophily (IV)	4	Lou & Kim (2019)	5-pt
Physical attractiveness (IV)	4	Duran & Kelly (1988)	5-pt
Social attractiveness (IV)	4	Duran & Kelly (1988)	5-pt
Trustworthiness (M)	3	Lou & Kim (2019)	5-pt
Perceived expertise (M)	4	Lou & Kim (2019)	5-pt
Parasocial relationship (M)	9	Rubin & Perse (1987)	5-pt

Purchase intention (DV)	4	Casaló et al. (2017); Yoo & Donthu (2001)	5-pt

Note. IV = exogenous; M = mediator; DV = outcome. One parasocial item was dropped during purification, leaving 9 retained indicators.

3.3 Analytic strategy

The model was estimated with PLS-SEM (a non-parametric, variance-based approach suited to prediction-oriented models and non-normal data) following established guidance (Hair et al., 2022). The measurement model was assessed via indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE); discriminant validity via the Fornell–Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT; Henseler et al., 2015). The structural model was assessed via path coefficients, R^2, and predictive relevance Q^2.

Beyond the originally reported output, four extensions were computed (Table 6). First, *specific indirect effects* for the nine mediation paths were estimated as the product of the constituent path coefficients and tested with the Sobel statistic, $z = ab / \sqrt{(b^2 s\_a^2 + a^2 s\_b^2)}$, using the reported coefficients and standard errors (Nitzl et al., 2016; Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Second, *total effects* of each influencer quality on purchase intention were obtained by summing its indirect paths. Third, *structural f^2 effect sizes* were derived for every path as $f^2 = (R^2\_included - R^2\_excluded)/(1 - R^2\_included)$, with the reduced-model R^2 reconstructed from the reported latent-variable correlation matrix; the reconstruction reproduced the published path coefficients to within rounding, validating the procedure. Fourth, *discriminant validity* was re-examined against the HTMT .85 benchmark.

4. Results

4.1 Measurement model

All retained indicator loadings exceeded the .70 guideline (with one borderline value at .647), and all constructs satisfied internal-consistency and convergent-validity criteria: Cronbach's alpha .76–.88, CR .85–.91 (all > .70), and AVE .52–.73 (all > .50) (Table 2; Figure 2).

Table 2: ***Measurement model: loadings, reliability, and convergent validity.***

Construct	Indicator loadings	α	CR	AVE
Mental homophily	MH1 .729 / MH2 .833 / MH3 .787 / MH4 .717	.767	.851	.590
Physical attractiveness	PA1 .819 / PA2 .793 / PA3 .647 / PA4 .798	.763	.850	.589
Social attractiveness	SA1 .802 / SA2 .768 / SA3 .788 / SA4 .758	.784	.861	.607
Trustworthiness	TW1 .882 / TW2 .840 / TW3 .831	.810	.888	.725
Perceived expertise	PE1 .791 / PE2 .839 / PE3 .806 / PE4 .803	.825	.884	.656
Parasocial relationship	PSR1–PSR10 .655–.758 (9 items)	.883	.906	.518
Purchase intention	PI1 .762 / PI2 .895 / PI3 .874 / PI4 .841	.864	.908	.713

Note. α = Cronbach's alpha; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted. Thresholds: loadings > .70, α/CR > .70, AVE > .50.

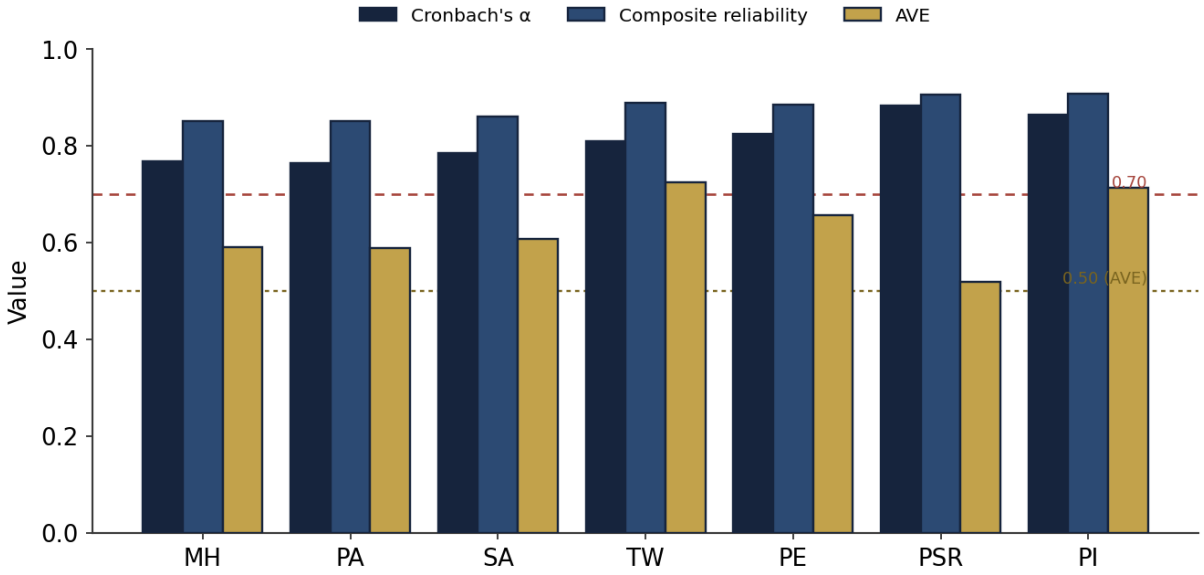

Figure 2. Reliability and convergent validity by construct against the .70 (reliability) and .50 (AVE) thresholds. All constructs clear both.

4.2 Discriminant validity

The Fornell–Larcker criterion was satisfied: each construct's √AVE (diagonal) exceeded its correlations with other constructs (Table 3). Cross-loadings (not reproduced here for brevity) likewise met the criterion. The HTMT matrix, however, revealed one value above the conservative .85 threshold between perceived expertise and parasocial relationship (HTMT = .90; Table 4, Figure 3). This indicates the two constructs may not be empirically distinct in this sample, a point the original analysis did not flag and one that bears directly on the interpretation of the structural results below.

Table 3: ***Fornell–Larcker criterion (√AVE on the diagonal, in bold).***

	MH	PSR	PE	PA	PI	SA	TW
MH	**0.768**						
PSR	0.569	**0.720**					
PE	0.533	0.770	**0.810**				
PA	0.590	0.594	0.551	**0.767**			
PI	0.558	0.705	0.592	0.533	**0.844**		
SA	0.583	0.630	0.607	0.631	0.548	**0.779**	
TW	0.558	0.615	0.630	0.557	0.552	0.589	**0.851**

Table 4: ***Heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT).***

	MH	PSR	PE	PA	PI	SA	TW
MH							
PSR	0.681						
PE	0.663	**0.901**					
PA	0.771	0.712	0.690				
PI	0.682	0.802	0.695	0.653			
SA	0.743	0.756	0.753	0.816	0.665		
TW	0.710	0.723	0.768	0.706	0.657	0.738	

Note. HTMT > .85 (perceived expertise ↔ parasocial relationship = .901, shaded) signals a discriminant-validity concern between these two constructs.

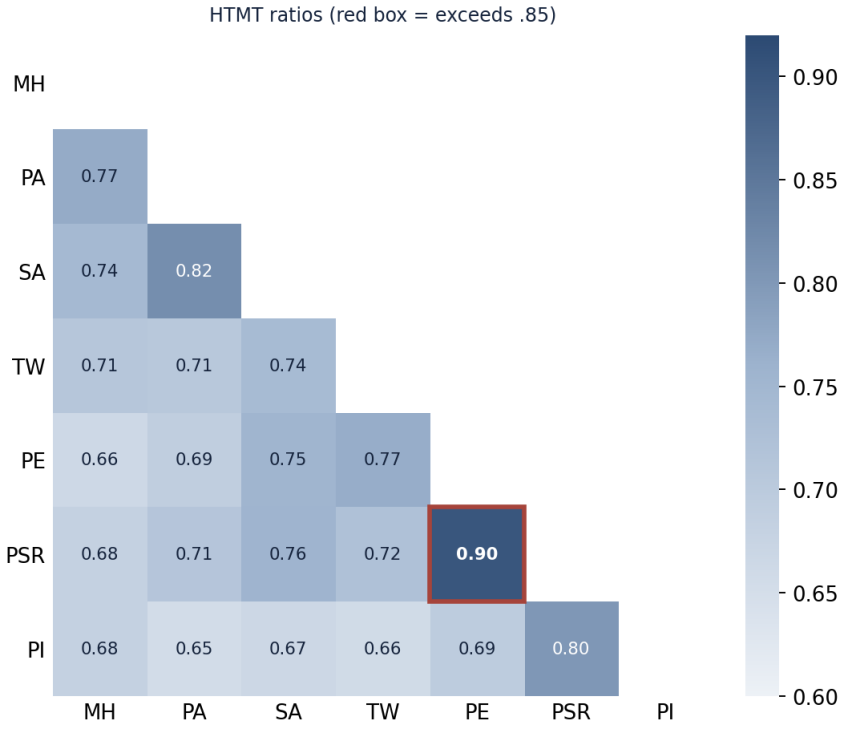

Figure 3. HTMT heatmap. The perceived-expertise ↔ parasocial-relationship cell (red outline) exceeds the .85 benchmark.

4.3 Structural model: direct effects and explanatory power

The model explained substantial variance in all endogenous constructs: R^2 = .44 (trustworthiness), .44 (perceived expertise), .49 (parasocial relationship), and .52 (purchase intention); the reported Q^2 values were positive, indicating predictive relevance (Table 9; Figure 4). All nine antecedent→mediator paths were significant (H1–H3 supported). Among the mediator→purchase-intention paths, *parasocial relationship* was overwhelmingly dominant, β = .561, t = 6.84, p < .001, with a medium structural effect (f^2 = 0.24) the only sizeable effect in the model. *Trustworthiness* contributed modestly, β = .178, p = .009 (f^2 = 0.04), while *perceived expertise* had no significant effect, β = .046, p = .53 ($f^2 \approx 0.00$), so H4b was not supported (Table 5; Figures 5–7).

Table 5: ***Structural model direct paths with effect sizes.***

Path	β	SE	t	p	f^2	Decision
MH → PSR	0.221	0.083	2.678	0.007	0.057	Supported
MH → PE	0.201	0.079	2.590	0.010	0.042	Supported
MH → TW	0.253	0.069	3.695	0.000	0.066	Supported
PA → PSR	0.246	0.062	3.895	0.000	0.062	Supported
PA → PE	0.205	0.077	2.644	0.008	0.039	Supported
PA → TW	0.216	0.078	2.734	0.006	0.043	Supported
SA → PSR	0.348	0.079	4.376	0.000	0.125	Supported
SA → PE	0.362	0.080	4.477	0.000	0.123	Supported
SA → TW	0.305	0.067	4.543	0.000	0.089	Supported
TW → PI	0.178	0.067	2.626	0.009	0.037	Supported
PE → PI	0.046	0.082	0.629	0.529	0.002	Not supported
PSR → PI	0.561	0.081	6.840	0.000	0.244	Supported

Note. f^2 derived from the reported latent-variable correlation matrix. $f^2 \geq .02/.15/.35$ = small/medium/large (Cohen, 1988). Significance at $t > 1.96$, $p < .05$.

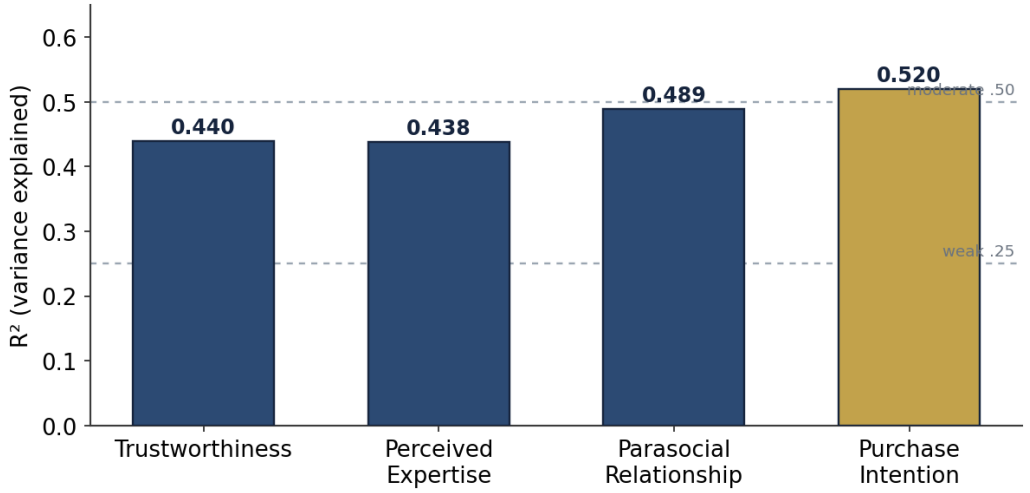

Figure 4. Variance explained (R^2) in each endogenous construct against weak/moderate benchmarks.

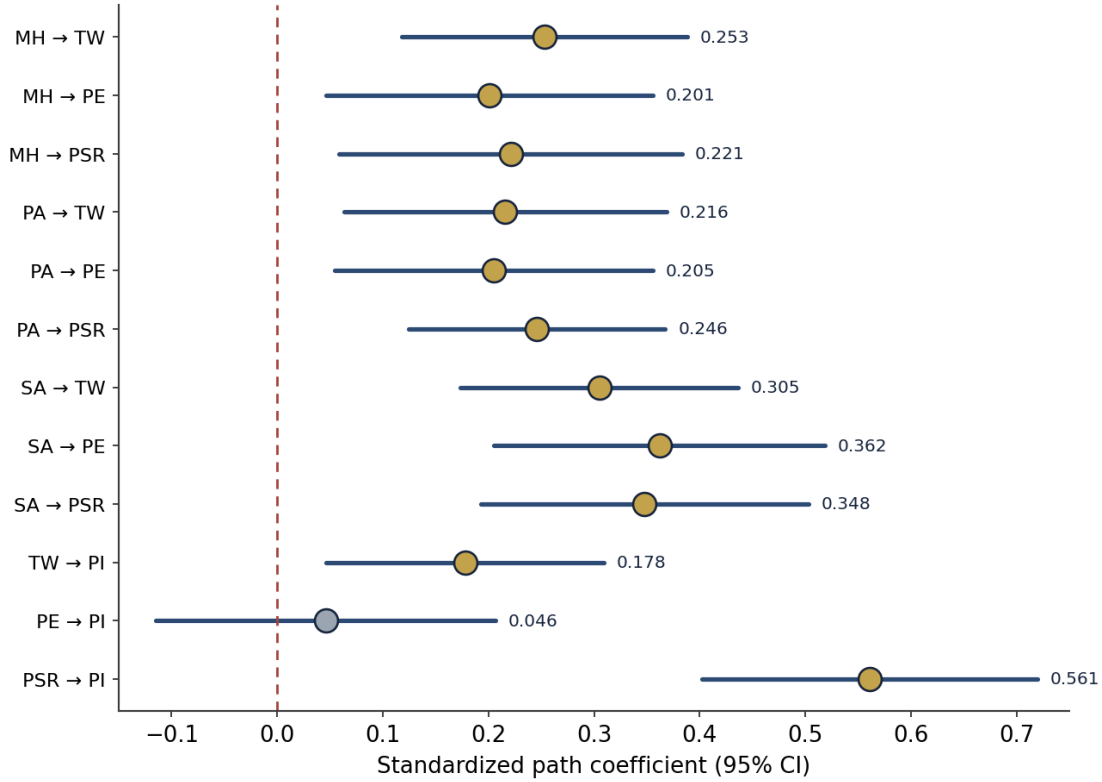

Figure 5. Forest plot of all twelve structural path coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. Only PE → PI crosses zero.

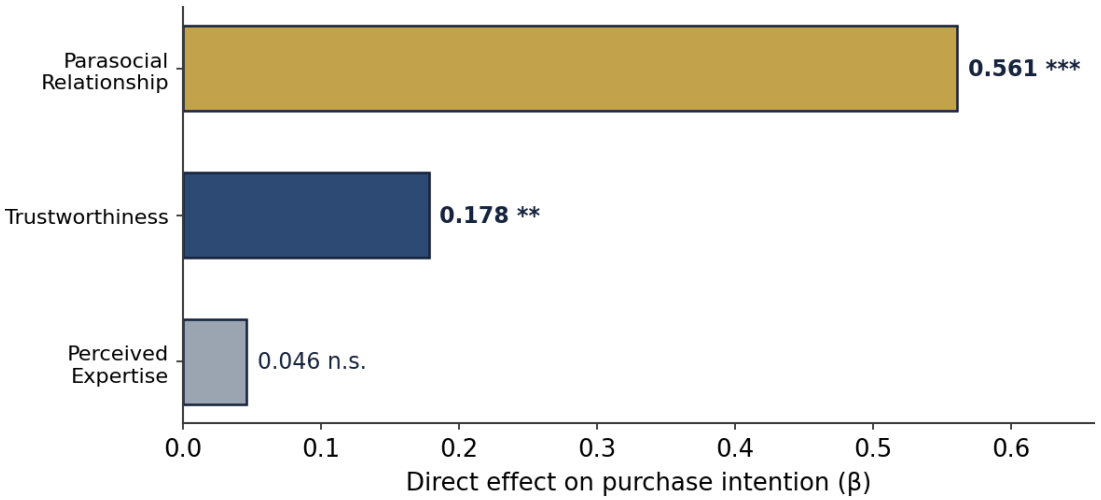

Figure 6. Direct effects of the three characterizations on purchase intention. Parasocial relationship dominates; perceived expertise is non-significant.

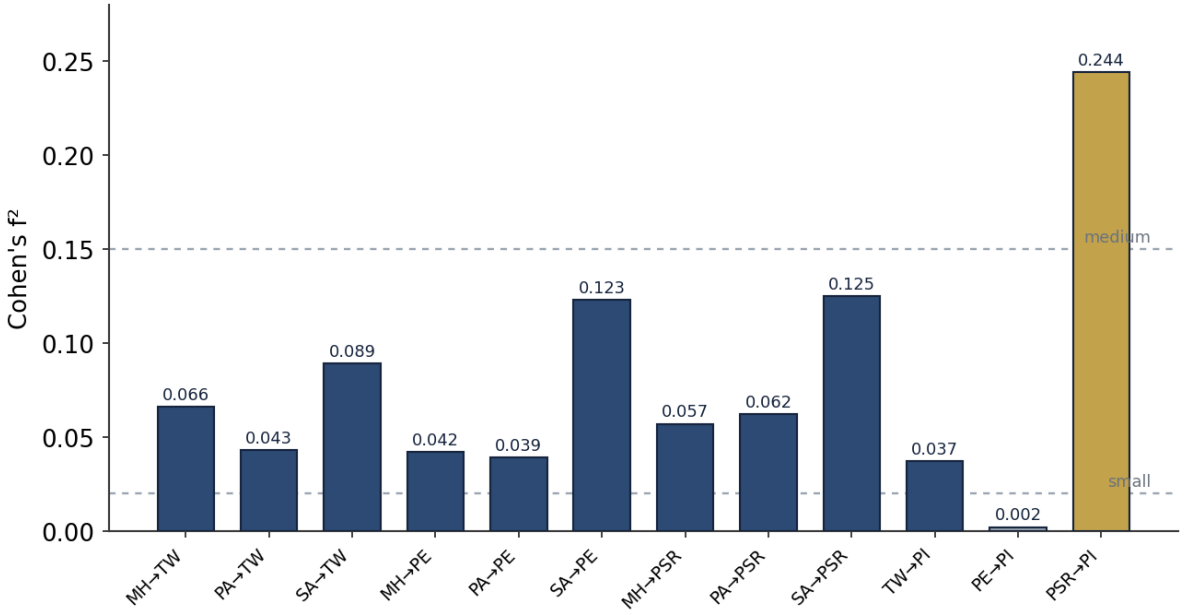

Figure 7. Structural f^2 effect sizes for all paths. Only PSR → PI reaches a medium effect.

4.4 Mediation analysis: specific indirect effects

Because the model specifies no direct antecedent→purchase-intention paths, all influencer-quality effects on purchase intention are indirect. Estimating the nine specific indirect effects (Table 7; Figure 8) reveals a clear mechanism: persuasion flows almost entirely through *parasocial relationship*. Every parasocial path was significant SA→PSR→PI (.195, $p < .001$), PA→PSR→PI (.138, $p < .001$), and MH→PSR→PI (.124, $p = .013$). The *trustworthiness* paths were weak to marginal (.038–.054), and *every perceived-expertise path was non-significant* (all $p \approx .58$), because the PE→PI link is itself null. Consequently H5c, H6c, and H7c (mediation via parasocial relationship) are supported; H5a and H7a (via trustworthiness) are supported and H6a is marginal; and H5b, H6b, and H7b (via perceived expertise) are not supported.

Table 7: *Specific indirect effects with Sobel tests.*

Indirect path	Effect (a×b)	Sobel SE	z	p	Decision
MH → TW → PI	0.045	0.021	2.15	0.031	Supported (H5a)
MH → PE → PI	0.009	0.017	0.55	0.584	Not supported (H5b)
MH → PSR → PI	0.124	0.050	2.49	0.013	Supported (H5c)
PA → TW → PI	0.038	0.020	1.92	0.055	Marginal (H6a)
PA → PE → PI	0.009	0.017	0.55	0.583	Not supported (H6b)
PA → PSR → PI	0.138	0.040	3.44	0.001	Supported (H6c)
SA → TW → PI	0.054	0.024	2.30	0.022	Supported (H7a)
SA → PE → PI	0.017	0.030	0.56	0.578	Not supported (H7b)
SA → PSR → PI	0.195	0.053	3.72	0.000	Supported (H7c)

Note. Indirect effect = product of constituent path coefficients; Sobel SE = $\sqrt{(b^2 s_a^2 + a^2 s_b^2)}$. These mediation tests were absent from the source study.

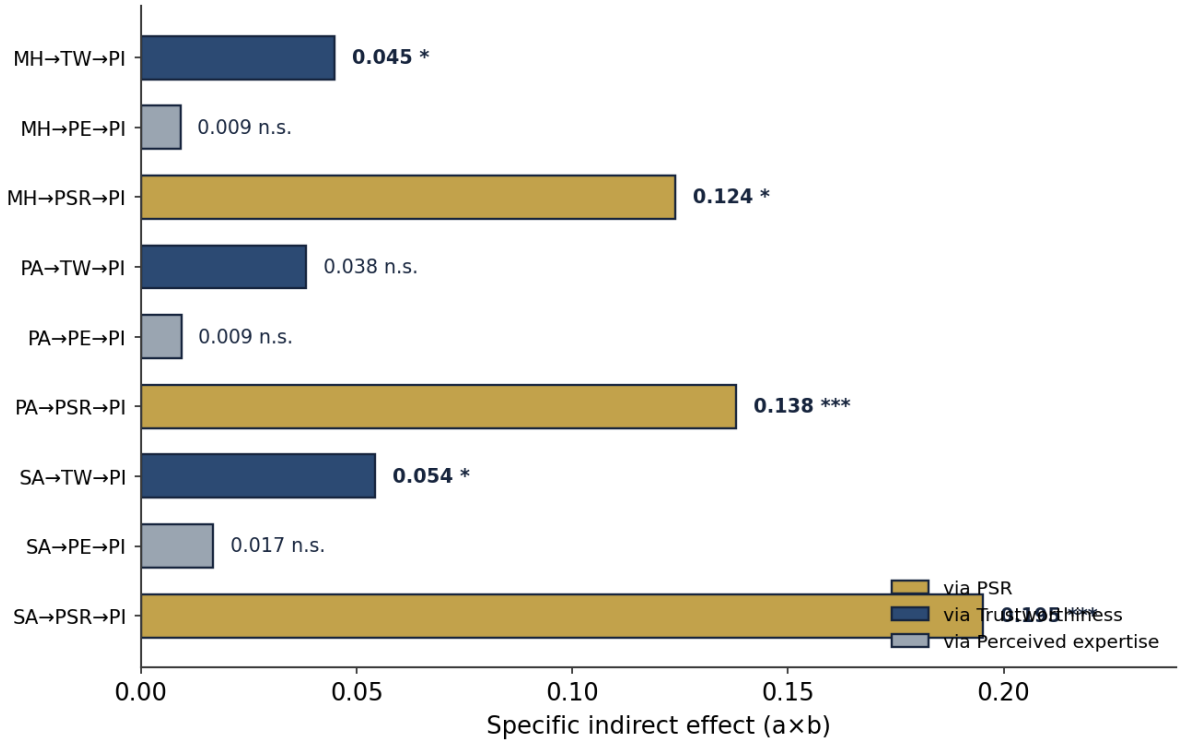

Figure 8. Specific indirect effects coloured by mediating route. The parasocial route (gold) carries the mechanism.

4.5 Total effects and the relative importance of influencer qualities

Summing the indirect routes gives each influencer quality's total effect on purchase intention (Table 8; Figure 9). *Social attractiveness* was the most influential antecedent (total effect = .266, $p < .001$), ahead of *physical attractiveness* (.186, $p < .001$) and *mental homophily* (.178, $p = .002$). For every antecedent, the parasocial route supplied 70–73% of the total effect, underscoring that relationship-building not expertise-signalling is the operative path.

Table 8: *Total (indirect) effects on purchase intention, by antecedent.*

Antecedent	Total effect	SE	z (p)	% via PSR
Social attractiveness	0.266	0.065	4.10 (<.001)	73%
Physical attractiveness	0.186	0.048	3.87 (<.001)	74%
Mental homophily	0.178	0.057	3.15 (.002)	70%

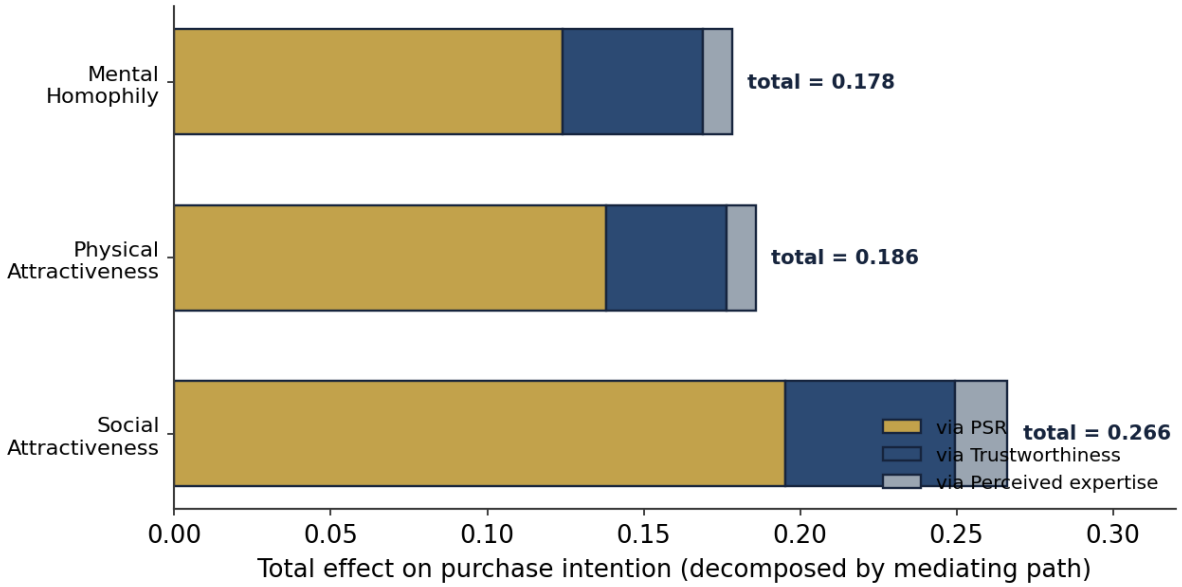

Figure 9. Total effect of each influencer quality on purchase intention, decomposed by mediating path.

4.6 Predictive relevance and hypothesis summary

Table 9: *Coefficient of determination and predictive relevance.*

Endogenous construct	R^2	R^2 adjusted
Trustworthiness	.440	.434
Perceived expertise	.438	.432
Parasocial relationship	.489	.483
Purchase intention	.520	.514

Note. Reported Q^2 values were positive for all endogenous constructs, supporting predictive relevance. $R^2 \geq .25/.50 \approx$ weak/moderate (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 10: *Consolidated hypothesis decisions.*

Hypothesis set	Content	Outcome
H1–H3 (a–c)	Influencer qualities → characterizations (9 paths)	All supported
H4a / H4c	Trustworthiness / parasocial relationship → PI	Supported
H4b	Perceived expertise → PI	Not supported
H5c / H6c / H7c	Mediation via parasocial relationship	Supported
H5a / H7a	Mediation via trustworthiness	Supported
H6a	PA → PI via trustworthiness	Marginal
H5b / H6b / H7b	Mediation via perceived expertise	Not supported

5. Discussion

This study set out to identify how influencer qualities translate into young consumers' purchase intention and, crucially, through which psychological mechanism. The answer is unambiguous: influencer marketing persuades Generation Z by building a relationship, not by signalling expertise. Parasocial relationship was the

dominant and effectively the only substantively important driver of purchase intention, carrying roughly seven-tenths of every influencer quality's total effect. Trustworthiness mattered modestly; perceived expertise did not matter at all.

These results align with and extend the recent influencer-marketing literature, which increasingly positions parasocial bonds as the engine of influence (Babu et al., 2024; Liu, 2025; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). The completed mediation analysis original to this reanalysis shows precisely where the action is: the parasocial route is significant for all three antecedents, whereas the expertise route is uniformly inert. The finding that social attractiveness is the most potent antecedent reinforces the relational reading: an influencer perceived as a likeable potential friend seeds the very bond that converts attention into purchase.

The null effect of perceived expertise deserves careful interpretation, and the discriminant-validity result helps explain it. With an HTMT of .90, perceived expertise and parasocial relationship are not cleanly separable in this sample; their shared variance is largely absorbed by the much stronger parasocial construct in the structural model, leaving expertise with no independent predictive role. Substantively, this suggests that for young consumers in this context, an influencer's perceived knowledge is valued chiefly as an ingredient of relational closeness rather than as a standalone rational cue consistent with peripheral-route persuasion dominating in low-involvement, socially mediated consumption.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

The study makes three theoretical contributions. First, it provides Pakistani evidence that, within the theory of persuasion, the relationship-based characterization (PSR) outweighs the credibility-based characterizations (trustworthiness, expertise) in driving behaviour clarifying a contested ordering in the literature. Second, by completing the mediation tests that the source model only hypothesized, it demonstrates the value of reporting specific indirect and total effects rather than direct paths alone, since the mechanism (route through PSR) is invisible in the direct-effects table. Third, the HTMT finding cautions researchers against assuming perceived expertise and parasocial relationship are discriminable, recommending careful construct specification or formative/second-order treatment in future models.

5.2 Practical Implications

For brands targeting Generation Z in Pakistan and similar markets, the managerial priorities follow directly. Select influencers for social attractiveness and relatability rather than for credentialed expertise, and brief them to cultivate authentic, sustained parasocial engagement personal storytelling, responsiveness, and consistency because that bond, not expert claims, is what moves purchase intention. Campaign metrics should track relationship indicators (audience intimacy, repeat engagement) over expertise signalling. For platforms and policymakers, the strength of parasocial influence on young consumers reinforces the case for media-literacy initiatives that help youth recognize the persuasive nature of these one-sided bonds.

6. Limitations and Future Research

Several caveats apply. The cross-sectional, single-city convenience sample (N = 159) limits causal and generalizing claims; longitudinal or experimental designs and larger probability samples across Pakistani regions are needed. The Sobel test assumes normality of the indirect effect and is more conservative than bootstrap confidence intervals; future work should report bias-corrected bootstrap intervals for the indirect effects. Common-method variance is a risk in single-source self-report designs and should be assessed and mitigated (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The discriminant-validity concern between perceived expertise and parasocial relationship should be resolved through re-specification or improved measurement. Finally, the measurement instrument mixed generic and category-specific purchase-intention items; cleaner, context-matched outcome measures would sharpen estimates.

Future research should (a) replicate with bootstrapped mediation and moderated-mediation (e.g., product involvement, as in recent PLS-SEM work), (b) test the PSR-dominance thesis comparatively across platforms (TikTok, Instagram,

YouTube) and cultures, (c) model influencer type and follower psychological states as moderators of PSR formation, and (d) integrate behavioural-trace data to validate self-reported intention against actual purchase.

7. Conclusion

Among young Pakistani consumers, social-media influencers drive purchase intention principally by forging parasocial relationships. Influencer qualities especially social attractiveness build trust, expertise, and parasocial bonds, but only the parasocial bond translates strongly into intention; perceived expertise, once relationship is accounted for, adds nothing. Completing the mediation analysis the original model left untested makes this mechanism explicit and reframes the managerial takeaway: in influencer marketing for Generation Z, relationship is the product. Reporting indirect and total effects, structural effect sizes, and a candid discriminant-validity check yields a more faithful and more useful picture of how influence actually works.

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Appendix A. Measurement Items

All items used a five-point Likert response (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). "Some social-media influencers" refers to influencers the respondent follows.

Mental homophily (Lou & Kim, 2019)

1. I have a lot in common with some social-media influencers.
2. Some social-media influencers and I are a lot alike.
3. Some social-media influencers think like me.
4. Some social-media influencers share my values.

Physical attractiveness (Duran & Kelly, 1988)

5. I think some social-media influencers are good-looking.
6. Some social-media influencers are somewhat attractive.
7. I relate well to some social-media influencers.
8. I find some social-media influencers very attractive physically.

Social attractiveness (Duran & Kelly, 1988)

9. I think some social-media influencers could be my friend.
10. I would like to have a friendly chat with some social-media influencers.
11. We could establish a personal friendship with each other.
12. Some social-media influencers would be pleasant to be with.

Trustworthiness (Lou & Kim, 2019)

13. I feel some social-media influencers are honest.
14. I consider some social-media influencers trustworthy.
15. I feel some social-media influencers are truthful.

Perceived expertise (Lou & Kim, 2019)

16. I feel some social-media influencers know a lot.
17. Some social-media influencers are competent to make assertions in their area.
18. I consider some social-media influencers experts in their area.
19. Some social-media influencers are sufficiently experienced to make assertions in their area.

Parasocial relationship (Rubin & Perse, 1987)

20. Some social-media influencers make me feel as comfortable as if I were with a friend.
21. I see some social-media influencers as natural, down-to-earth people.
22. I look forward to watching their next video.
23. I would follow their post on another channel.
24. They seem to understand the things I want to know.
25. I would read a story about them in a magazine.
26. I miss them when they are away.
27. I would like to meet them in person.
28. I find some social-media influencers attractive.

Purchase intention (Casaló et al., 2017; Yoo & Donthu, 2001)

29. I will buy products or services recommended by some social-media influencers.
30. It is likely that I will purchase what they recommend in the near future.
31. I intend to purchase their recommendations in the near future.
32. I will definitely purchase their recommendations in the near future.