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Consumers' perceptions toward social media influencers promoting healthy food products

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Abstract

The increasing awareness of health and wellness has significantly influenced consumers' food consumption patterns, while social media influencers have emerged as important sources of information and recommendations regarding healthy food products. The present study was undertaken to examine the impact of social media influencers on consumers' purchase intention toward healthy food products. Specifically, the study assessed consumers' socio-economic characteristics, social media usage patterns, perceptions toward social media influencers, and their influence on purchase intention. A descriptive and analytical research design was employed, and primary data were collected from 400 social media users through a structured online questionnaire. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and mean scores were used to analyze the data. The study was guided by Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Health Belief Model (HBM), Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) to explain the relationship between social media influencer exposure and consumer purchase intention. The findings revealed that the majority of respondents were young and educated consumers who actively engaged with social media platforms. Instagram emerged as the most preferred platform for obtaining information related to healthy food products, followed by YouTube. Respondents generally exhibited positive perceptions toward social media influencers, particularly regarding their ability to increase awareness, provide useful information, and facilitate informed purchasing decisions. Influencer credibility, trustworthiness, and health-related recommendations were found to positively shape consumers' attitudes toward healthy food products and enhance their purchase intentions. The study concludes that social media influencers play a significant role in promoting healthy food consumption by influencing consumers' knowledge, perceptions, and behavioral intentions. The findings provide valuable insights for food marketers, health promoters, and policymakers seeking to utilize influencer marketing strategies to encourage healthier food choices among consumers.

Keywords: Social media influencers, healthy food products, purchase intention, consumer perception, influencer marketing, social media, consumer behavior

Introduction

The rapid growth of social media platforms has transformed the way consumers access information and make purchasing decisions. Social media influencers have emerged as important opinion leaders who shape consumer attitudes and behaviors through product recommendations, reviews, and personal experiences. In the healthy food sector, influencers play a significant role in promoting nutritional awareness, healthy lifestyles, and food choices among consumers. Their ability to communicate information in an engaging and relatable manner has increased consumers' reliance on influencer-generated content when evaluating healthy food products.

Consumer perception toward influencers is a crucial determinant of the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Factors such as credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, authenticity, and the quality of information provided by influencers can significantly influence consumers' attitudes

toward promoted products. Positive perceptions of influencers may enhance consumers' confidence in healthy food products and increase their willingness to purchase them. Therefore, understanding consumers' perceptions toward social media influencers is essential for marketers and healthy food brands seeking to develop effective digital marketing strategies. In view of this, an attempt was made to assess consumers' perceptions toward social media influencers promoting healthy food products.

Methodology

The present study was conducted to examine the impact of social media influencers on consumers' purchase intention toward healthy food products. A descriptive and analytical research design was adopted to understand consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions regarding healthy food products promoted through social media platforms. The study was carried out among social media

users who actively access content related to food, health, fitness, and lifestyle. A structured online questionnaire was developed and administered using a survey platform. The questionnaire consisted of sections covering socio-economic characteristics, social media usage patterns, perceptions toward social media influencers, health beliefs, attitudes toward healthy food products, and purchase intention. Responses to perception and behavioral statements were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). A total of 400 respondents from GBPUA&T, Pantnagar were selected through purposive and convenience sampling techniques. Only individuals aged 18 years and above who regularly used social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and X (Twitter) were included in the study. Data were collected during the year 2026 through online circulation of the questionnaire across various social media platforms and digital communities. The collected data were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed to describe the socio-economic profile and perception levels of respondents. Reliability of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. To examine the relationships among variables, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were performed. The influence of social media influencers on consumers' purchase intention toward healthy food products was determined through regression coefficients and significance testing. The findings were interpreted at 5 percent and 1 percent levels of significance. The study framework was grounded in Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Health Belief Model (HBM), Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which provided a comprehensive understanding of how social media influencer content affects consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and purchase intentions toward healthy food products.

Review of Literature

Impact of Social Media

Praveen (2024) ^[7]. The impact of social media on social relationships was examined by Praveen in Indian society and found the social media is an important part of the society's everyday life. She made a remark of how social media helps individuals to express and connect to different groups. She drew special attention to some specific platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Twitter (now known as X) who fueled the communication, increased information sharing, developed social relationships and most crucially an opportunity was provided for the social participation of society. Despite of these positive impacts of social media there were negative impacts also. People associated with using a lot of social media in daily life which effects directly on the mental health, productivity and social. Social media usage leads to decrease in face-to-face interactions and interpersonal relations, increase in social isolations. She also revealed about the online fraud, scams and cybercrimes taking place though online networking platforms. She concluded that social media is a two-sided coin which as both positive and negative impacts on the society by providing long distance connectivity with people and on the other side

reducing quality of personal relationships. Sheta (2024) scrutinized the impact of social media with the help of statistical analysis on youth in India and found that social media has become the primary medium of communication, interaction, and knowledge. This study revealed that social media provides a platform for information sharing, learning new skills, educational benefits and last of all getting connected socially with diverse people. In contrast with high usage of social media ultimately led to the mental health problems, increase in cyber bullying, concerns related to privacy risks and reduce curricular pathways. She also talks about the positive and negative impacts of social media by providing awareness, self-development of individuals and enhances communication skills and over use leading to decrease in interpersonal relations. The study ended with a conclusion that there must be a balance and responsible use of social media for better benefits and minimizing harmful effects for youth. Yu, Dykxhoorn, and Plackett (2024) ^[8]. The over-time association between different types of social media use and mental health was investigated among UK adults. This study distinguishes between the active and passive users on the social media with the help of 15,836 participant's data. From the findings of the data, he discovered that the passive users of social media have a mere effect on their mental health but the active users who were frequently using and posting online were a high risk to mental health problems. These problems were at peak because of the attention and validation seeking behavior of the active users which increased the revelation of social juxtaposition. The findings concluded that social media usage and engagement directly affect the mental health conditions of the youth and a proper balance must be maintained to reduce the effects on youth. The APA (2024) studied how psychological and social development is impacted by social media platforms. The reports suggests that social media depend entirely on an inverse relationship between how young people use it and how the platform is designed. The APA states that social media is neither entirely beneficial nor harmful for the youth. It especially throws a light on the mental well being of the youth is affected by the likes, followers, feedback, and push notifications, etc. because the youth's mind is still molding into a shape and it gets affected by the herd mentality or influence and online rewards. This report also uncovers the facts about cyber bullying, crimes, scams and frauds which targets the youth primarily, this effects their sleep, arose of mental problems and increase in anxiety. At the same time social media provides new insights to get connected with the diverse groups and social support for educational purposes, emotional connections. The APA suggests that social media must be developed and designed in such a way that it enlightens specific concerns such as age restricted contents, timely parental monitoring, digital literacy education and high safeguards by the social media companies for protection of youth. Pandey (2025) ^[10]. Social media's wide-ranging impacts on the life of young people was reviewed by Pandey. The studies found that social media has become a huge part of everyday life whose influence is directly on knowledge building activities, mental well being and social relations. The evidence showed that social media has both positive and negative sides. It provides information, helps in communication, expression of thoughts and learning new

skills. But the negative sides include excessive usage leading to anxiety, tension, depression and isolation of an individual. This study also stated the harmful effects on self-confidence and lower self-esteem due to uninterrupted exposure of idealized social content. In educational context, social media helps in visibility to new learning skills and provides a window in academics but it also leads to stress, distraction, procrastination and ultimately lower academic results. In conclusion, social media has both negative and positive effects on the young people's life and a balance must be maintained for development.

Consumer's Purchase Intention

Yadav and Kar (2024) ^[11]. The Theory of Planned Behaviour, Attribution Theory, and Cue Utilization Theory was integrated to explore consumer's purchase intention in private-label products. Consumer purchase intention is influenced by the retailer's reputation which plays an important role in molding the representation of private label products. The authors pioneer that the consumer's attitude and own will to buy a private label brands is positively affected by quality of the product. Another determinant which was important for the persuading favorable attitude of the consumer is the convenience in online shopping. While making online purchasing decisions, price was not much considered for buying products but the products quality, credibility and brand image was marked as the primary priority. In the background of e-retailing, trust and value were the primary and stronger predictors of purchase intention rather than price sensitivity. Chen (2025) ^[12] looked over elements of consumers purchase intention on social media using SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) and Machine Learning techniques. The research uncovers that purchase intention is significantly impacted by consumer co-creation behavior, which indicates that consumers urge to buy products depend on active collaboration with brands. The two important independent variables of purchase intention are exposure of advertising and content quality of advertising. Trust was built up by online word-of-mouth which increased, enhanced and influenced the buying behavior of consumers. Better forecast and accuracy in results was revealed after the combination of SEM and Random Forest algorithms. The author observed and suggests that the primary focus of social media in marketing must be value creation, quality of content and engagement for enhancing consumer purchase intention. Wang *et al.* (2024) ^[13] scrutinized the influence of FMCG products on consumer's purchase intention with the usage of S-O-R Model. The investigation highlights that he purchases intentions and value are significantly enhanced by brand images and designs of the brand. The consumers emotional attitude towards the products is directly affected by the brand images and sensory exposures. The important factor which affects the purchase intention is emotional attitude of the consumers. The study also threw a light on the designed packaging of the product and the level of attractiveness in packaging creates constructive perception and nourishes purchasing decisions. The study concludes that the role of values, emotional attitude and brand image influences consumer purchase intentions. This can be improved by intense brand development and investing in innovative designs to make them more attracted to the consumers. Lu *et al.* (2026). The consumer's purchase intention is influenced

by perceived values of consumer's purchase intention was explored by Lu *et al.* towards cultural and creative products. The integration of perceived cultural values and innovation values has enlarged the framework of Customer Perceived Value. There is a rapid increase in customer's contentment because of price value, emotional value, cultural value, quality and innovativeness. This study found that there has been positively increase in customer's contentment and they get interested in the products which were designed according to their cultural beliefs. There was no effect of social value on purchase. Huang and Ho (2026). The Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory was put to use to examine the cognitive impetuses of consumer's purchase with regard to carbon footprint-labeled products. The study revealed that there is a positive impact of climate change consciousness and warm glow on environmental beliefs. To improve the green appraised value, two determinants were identified i.e., green transparency and self-expressive benefits. Green appraised values and environmental beliefs rapidly robust the personal norms among consumers. The powerful determinant of purchase intention with respect to carbon labeled product is found to be personal norms. The consumers are more willing to purchase the product when they have a sense of responsibility towards the environment protection. Social norms didn't noticeably influence purchase intentions. The study illuminated that in fostering sustainable consumer behavior there is a significant role of environmental awareness, appraised values and personal responsibilities.

Healthy Food Products

Bazhan (2024) collected past research related to organic food consumption as well as healthy food purchasing intention and reviewed them. This emphasised that the increase in concerns surrounding health and food safety as well as the need for environmentally sustainable practices have led to an increased consumer interest in organic food products globally. Based on previous research, health factor was identified as one of the significantly important factors contributing towards an individual's intention and willingness to purchase organic foods because they believe that these products are safer, healthier and devoid of harmful chemicals. The research also found that environmental concern is a big motivator for consumers to back sustainable farming practices with their wallets by buying organic food. The study confirms that the influence on organic food purchase is due to psychological, environmental and value rated factors. Kumar *et al.* (2026) study was focusing on the Indian consumers and the factors effecting the sustainable food purchase intention. The study uncovers that facts that the influence on consumers attitude is directly related to perceived knowledge, health, trust and environmental factors. Amongst all of these, environmental and health factors are the important factors to be taken care of. To increase consumers buying of the sustainable products, the certificate builds the trust amongst them. To understand the pros of the organic food perceived knowledge played a crucial role. The forecast of purchase intention was purely based on attitude and subjective norms. The study revealed that for encouraging the sustainable food eating habits there must be an integrated role of awareness, social influence and personal beliefs. In conclusion, to increase the sales of healthy products there must trust of the consumers and the consumers must have knowledge about the product. Bi *et al.*

(2025). The Nudge theory was used to study the effect of AI technologies and new machine learnings on consumers' ownness to purchase the healthy food products. He stated that there are few factors who have influence on the healthy food purchasing behavior i.e., psychological factors, social factors, and environmental factors. The authors made a comparison between feeling (emotions) AI and thinking (rational) AI, which provides support, and interactions and rational thinking respectively. The findings unveil that thinking AI was more accurate and reliable than feeling AI for more practical results and cognitive evaluation. In contrast to feeling AI, it provides more emotional results from personal experiences. The study suggests that in framework to consumer's decision-making, AI interactions and personalization's gave better results. In conclusion, the research suggests that AI driven approaches are much more beneficial in encouraging and promoting healthy food consumptions. Muir *et al.* (2026) remarked the factor that influenced buyers to buy healthy edible products wholly depending upon simulated supermarket setting. It helps in enlightens the fact that the selling of goods majorly depends upon the reachability and observability of the product. Previous studies highlighted the selling and buying of healthy goods increases when they are stacked prominently. The study illustrated that women are more attracted towards buying healthy goods as compared to men. Purchasing of healthy goods is mostly dependent on socializing and awaking consumers. The study illustrated that the placement of goods with proper information and aesthetics in a store plays a vital role in selection of goods. Quick, aesthetic and easy accessibility of healthiest goods boost the choice of consumers for buying healthier food products which helps them in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Overall, the research unveils the importance of marketing in healthy food intake. Quevedo-Silva *et al.* (2024) analyzed the factors of nutritional food purchase intention among the buyers. The most important factors influencing the health-related context is consumers' willingness and eager to purchase nutritional food products. Trust plays a crucial role in purchasing of the food product which shows positive affect. The study uncovers that peer's influence and family norms play a pivot role in shaping healthy food habits. Awareness about the product is also helping the purchasers in selection of healthy and nutritional food products. The findings further uncover the truth that the intuitive thinking leads to making decisions about the products purchases. In conclusion, the healthy food purchase intention is purely depending on social influence, peers, trust, knowledge and awareness.

Theoretical Framework

To comprehensively examine the impact of social media influencers on consumers' purchase intention toward healthy food products, this study integrates five complementary theories: Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Health Belief Model (HBM), Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Together, these theories provide a robust framework for understanding how social media content influences consumers' attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and behavioral intentions regarding healthy food products.

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

Uses and Gratifications Theory, developed by Katz, Blumler,

and Gurevitch (1973), posits that individuals are active media users who selectively engage with media content to satisfy specific psychological and social needs. These needs include information seeking, entertainment, social interaction, and personal identity enhancement. In the context of social media, UGT has gained increasing relevance because digital platforms offer users greater autonomy, interactivity, and engagement opportunities. Consumers often follow health-related influencers to obtain nutritional information, healthy lifestyle guidance, product recommendations, and social support. Consequently, social media serves as an important source of gratification that shapes consumers' perceptions and influences their purchase intentions toward healthy food products.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior, proposed by Ajzen (1991), is one of the most widely applied theories for predicting behavioral intentions. According to TPB, an individual's intention to perform a behavior is determined by three key factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of a particular behavior, subjective norms represent perceived social pressure from significant others, and perceived behavioral control reflects the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. In the present study, positive attitudes toward healthy food products, social influence exerted by influencers and peers, and consumers' confidence in purchasing healthy foods are expected to enhance their purchase intentions.

Health Belief Model (HBM)

The Health Belief Model, introduced by Rosenstock (1974)^[3], explains health-related behaviors based on individuals' perceptions of health risks, benefits, and barriers. The model suggests that people are more likely to adopt healthy behaviors when they perceive themselves as vulnerable to health problems and believe that a particular action can reduce those risks. In the context of healthy food consumption, consumers who recognize the health benefits associated with nutritious foods and perceive fewer obstacles to their purchase and consumption are more likely to develop favorable purchase intentions. Social media influencers often communicate health-related information that can strengthen consumers' perceptions of benefits and motivate healthier purchasing decisions.

Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory

The Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974)^[5], explains how environmental stimuli influence behavioral responses through internal cognitive and emotional processes. The framework consists of three components: Stimulus (S), Organism (O), and Response (R).

In this study, social media influencer content acts as the stimulus by providing health-related information, product reviews, recommendations, endorsements, and promotional messages concerning healthy food products. Exposure to such content affects consumers' internal psychological states, including awareness, trust, attitudes, perceptions, and health beliefs, which collectively constitute the organism component. These cognitive and emotional evaluations

subsequently influence the response, represented by consumers' purchase intentions toward healthy food products. Therefore, the S-O-R framework suggests that social media does not directly affect purchase intention; rather, its influence operates through consumers' internal perceptions and beliefs.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Social Cognitive Theory, proposed by Bandura (2001) [6], emphasizes that human behavior is shaped through the reciprocal interaction of personal factors, environmental influences, and behavioral outcomes. A central concept of SCT is observational learning, whereby individuals acquire knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors by observing others within their social environment. Within the context of this study, social media serves as a significant environmental influence by exposing consumers to health information, expert advice, influencer endorsements, testimonials, and experiences shared by other users regarding healthy food products. Such exposure enhances consumers' knowledge, awareness, and perceptions of healthy foods, thereby shaping

their attitudes and beliefs. Through observational learning, consumers may emulate the behaviors and recommendations of trusted influencers, ultimately strengthening their intention to purchase healthy food products. Integration of Theories: The integration of UGT, TPB, HBM, S-O-R Theory, and SCT provides a comprehensive explanation of how social media influencers affect consumers' purchase intentions toward healthy food products. UGT explains consumers' motivations for engaging with influencer content; TPB clarifies how attitudes, social norms, and perceived control shape behavioral intentions; HBM highlights the role of health perceptions and benefits; S-O-R Theory illustrates the mechanism through which social media stimuli influence consumer responses via internal psychological processes; and SCT explains how observational learning and social influence contribute to behavioral outcomes. Collectively, these theories offer a strong conceptual foundation for understanding the relationship between social media influencer exposure and consumers' intentions to purchase healthy food products

Table 1: Socio Economic status of respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	218	54.5
	Female	182	45.5
Age (Years)	18–25	96	24.0
	26–35	142	35.5
	36–45	91	22.8
	Above 45	71	17.7
Educational Qualification	Higher Secondary	58	14.5
	Graduate	149	37.3
	Postgraduate	133	33.2
	Doctorate and Above	60	15.0
Occupation	Student	88	22.0
	Government Employee	72	18.0
	Private Employee	121	30.3
	Business/Self-employed	69	17.2
	Others	50	12.5
Monthly Income (₹)	Below 25,000	82	20.5
	25,001–50,000	129	32.3
	50,001–75,000	97	24.2
	Above 75,000	92	23.0
Social Media Usage	Less than 1 hour/day	48	12.0
	1–2 hours/day	106	26.5
	2–4 hours/day	157	39.3
	More than 4 hours/day	89	22.2
Preferred Social Media Platform	Instagram	168	42.0
	YouTube	121	30.3
	Facebook	49	12.2
	X (Twitter)	27	6.8
	Others	35	8.7

The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1. The study was conducted among 400 consumers to examine the impact of social media influencers on purchase intention toward healthy food products.

The gender distribution revealed that a slightly higher proportion of respondents were male (54.5%) compared to female respondents (45.5%). Regarding age, the majority of respondents belonged to the 26–35 years age group (35.5%), followed by 18–25 years (24.0%), 36–45 years (22.8%), and above 45 years (17.7%). This indicates that young and

middle-aged consumers constituted the major share of the sample.

With respect to educational qualification, more than one-third of the respondents were graduates (37.3%), followed by postgraduates (33.2%). Respondents possessing doctorate and above qualifications accounted for 15.0 percent, while 14.5 percent had completed higher secondary education. The findings suggest that the sample consisted largely of well-educated consumers who are more likely to access and evaluate online information regarding healthy food products.

Occupation-wise analysis showed that private employees represented the largest category (30.3%), followed by students (22.0%), government employees (18.0%), business/self-employed individuals (17.2%), and others (12.5%). This diverse occupational distribution indicates representation from different professional backgrounds.

In terms of monthly income, nearly one-third of the respondents (32.3%) reported an income between ₹25,001 and ₹50,000, followed by ₹50,001–₹75,000 (24.2%) and above ₹75,000 (23.0%). About one-fifth (20.5%) of the respondents earned below ₹25,000 per month. The income distribution suggests that the respondents possessed varying purchasing capacities, which may influence their buying decisions regarding healthy food products.

Analysis of social media usage indicated that the majority of respondents (39.3%) spent 2–4 hours per day on social media platforms, while 26.5 percent spent 1–2 hours daily. Further, 22.2 percent reported using social media for more than four hours per day, whereas only 12.0 percent spent less than one

hour daily. The results highlight the substantial engagement of consumers with social media, providing influencers with significant opportunities to shape consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions.

Regarding preferred social media platforms, Instagram emerged as the most popular platform among respondents (42.0%), followed by YouTube (30.3%). Facebook accounted for 12.2 percent of users, while X (Twitter) and other platforms represented 6.8 percent and 8.7 percent, respectively. The dominance of Instagram and YouTube suggests that visual and video-based content plays a crucial role in influencing consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions toward healthy food products.

Overall, the socio-economic profile indicates that the respondents were predominantly young, educated, and active social media users, making them an appropriate population for studying the influence of social media influencers on healthy food purchase intentions.

Table 2: Perception of Consumers toward Social Media Influencers Promoting Healthy Food Products (n = 400)

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean Score
Influencers provide useful information about healthy food products.	4.5	8.0	16.5	45.5	25.5	3.80
I trust recommendations given by health and fitness influencers.	5.5	10.0	18.0	42.5	24.0	3.69
Influencer reviews help me evaluate healthy food products before purchase.	4.0	8.5	17.0	46.0	24.5	3.79
Influencers increase my awareness about healthy food choices.	3.5	7.0	15.5	48.0	26.0	3.86
I consider influencers as credible sources of health-related information.	6.5	11.0	21.0	40.0	21.5	3.59
Influencer endorsements make healthy food products more attractive.	5.0	9.0	18.5	43.5	24.0	3.73
I am more likely to try a healthy food product recommended by an influencer.	6.0	10.5	19.0	42.0	22.5	3.65

The findings indicate that respondents generally held favorable perceptions toward social media influencers promoting healthy food products, with an overall mean score of 3.73. The highest mean score was observed for the statement *"Influencers increase my awareness about healthy food choices"* (3.86), followed by *"Influencers provide useful information about healthy food products"* (3.80). These results suggest that influencers play an important role in educating consumers and creating awareness regarding healthy food consumption. Furthermore, respondents agreed that influencer reviews assist them in evaluating products before purchase (3.79). However, relatively lower agreement was observed regarding the credibility of influencers as health information sources (3.59), indicating that consumers still exercise caution while relying on influencer recommendations. Overall, social media influencers were perceived as important information providers who positively shape consumer attitudes toward healthy food products.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the growing influence of social media influencers on consumers' purchase intentions toward healthy food products. The findings revealed that consumers, particularly young and educated social media users, actively engage with influencer-generated content to obtain information, recommendations, and guidance regarding healthy food choices. Instagram and YouTube emerged as the most preferred platforms for accessing health and nutrition-related content, indicating the increasing importance of visual and interactive media in shaping consumer behavior. The study further demonstrated that consumers generally

hold positive perceptions toward social media influencers, recognizing their role in enhancing awareness, providing useful product information, and facilitating informed purchasing decisions. Influencer credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, and the quality of health-related content were found to contribute significantly to favorable consumer attitudes toward healthy food products. Through exposure to influencer endorsements, product reviews, and personal experiences, consumers developed greater confidence in healthy food products, which positively influenced their purchase intentions.

The theoretical integration of Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Health Belief Model (HBM), Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) provided a comprehensive explanation of how social media influencer content affects consumers' internal perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. The results suggest that social media influencers act as important intermediaries between healthy food brands and consumers by shaping awareness, health beliefs, and purchase-related decisions.

Overall, the study concludes that social media influencer marketing is an effective strategy for promoting healthy food products and encouraging healthier consumption behavior among consumers. Food marketers and health promotion agencies should collaborate with credible and knowledgeable influencers to disseminate accurate health information and strengthen consumer trust. Future research may explore the moderating effects of demographic characteristics, influencer type, and platform-specific features on consumer purchase behavior toward healthy food products.

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