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Influencer Marketing: A Citation and Co-citation Analysis within Business and Management Domains

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Abstract: Influencer marketing has emerged as a popular approach businesses use to incorporate social influence into their operations and marketing strategies. It seems to be a useful and cost-effective strategy. It ensures a broad reach to highly engaged audiences and is frequently not interpreted by consumers as advertising. Many companies use influencers on social media to market their products to certain audiences. Carryminati, Khusha Kapila, Bhuvan Bam, and Riaz are famous social media influencers. The purpose of this study is to use bibliometric analysis to compile the body of knowledge on influencer marketing in the business and management area from 2018 to 2024. BiblioShiny software was used to analyze 462 papers that were taken out of the Scopus database. This paper conducts citations and co-citations analysis, identifies recent trends, and offers useful background information on influencer marketing. The results show a notable and quick rise (54.5%) in this sector, indicating a noticeable increase in interest. The USA and Hong Kong emerged as leading nations in terms of total citations (3050) and average article citations (107.7), respectively. Social media, Commerce, Marketing, Consumer behavior, perception, and artificial intelligence are the trending topics of influencer marketing research, where artificial intelligence is the latest trend. Lou C (1650) and Yuan S (1335) are the most influential authors in terms of citation. "Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services" is the top source with maximum citations (1943) and articles (37). Various bibliometric studies have been carried out to explore the concept of influencer marketing in general or other specific domains. There is a scarcity of bibliometric research that assesses the influencer marketing literature within the business and management domain or through citation and co-citation analysis. This study addresses this research gap. These findings will have significant implications that can greatly benefit researchers, decision-makers, and professionals in crafting policies. This bibliometric study concludes with limitations, and recommendations for further study.

Introduction

The advent of social media and the internet's rapid expansion resulted in a new era that combines social media and business. Billions of people use social media platforms, and they have quickly emerged as key technologies. The audience watches several influencers on YouTube, Instagram, and other platforms, spending a lot of time on them (Chen et al., 2024). Influencers greatly impact how customers behave and make decisions

(Mishra and Ashfaq, 2023). So, the business has started to use influencers as part of their marketing strategies to reach the target audience. This led to the emergence of influencer marketing. Influencer marketing is a strategy that leverages social media influencers' popularity, reputation, and influence on market companies' goods or services to prospective customers on social media sites like YouTube and Instagram. Influencers on these social media are becoming an increasingly important part of

businesses' marketing strategies. A company collaborates with positive and inspiring social media influencers(Bansal et al., 2024). Influencer marketing has rapidly grown to a $17.4 billion business by 2023, with over 80% of American businesses utilizing influencers for marketing (Beichert et al., 2024). This approach benefits customer acquisition and sales (Rahul Singh et al., 2023). Consumers who have seen a brand promoted by an influencer are more likely to be aware of it. In fact, 70% of consumers believe that influencer marketing effectively increases brand awareness (Pandey et al., 2023). Authenticity and reliability are crucial factors influencing consumer behavior(Shweta et al., 2024), especially in influencer marketing acceptance because it strengthens the bonds between influencers and their followers. The success of influencer marketing rests on the influencers' competence to provide authentic information that resonates with customers and considers them as reliable people. Even though the business sales and growth have been significantly affected by influencer marketing. Research has concentrated on other outcome variables like content consumption, follow-back, reposting and collaboration. Studies on Influencer marketing have rarely existed in business and management contexts (Beichert et al., 2024)

Previous research has suggested that it is difficult to maintain track of papers produced in any particular subject. As a result, techniques, including bibliometric analysis, scientometrics, and meta-analysis, have been developed (Farooq, 2023). "Bibliometric" is one of the techniques that is most frequently used to assess the literature. Bibliometric analysis was first coined by (Alan Pritchard, 1969) as a process of analyzing and identifying publishing trends across time within a particular study topic using statistical techniques. Since then, it has been a popular scientific approach for comprehending the past evolution of any area of study from a multidisciplinary perspective. While traditional literature review techniques can provide in-depth research, bibliometric methodologies can handle a greater number of studies (hundreds or even thousands). Furthermore, using the bibliometric technique can reduce researcher bias and successfully include the viewpoint of the whole research community(Han et al., 2021). It offers a more thorough understanding of the issues in this field of study. This analysis helps one get a comprehensive grasp of a topic of study by recognizing important authors, appraising worldwide research collaboration, and creating links between the numerous research works (Jain et al., 2023).

In marketing research, bibliometric analysis aids in identifying the frequency of publications, the most cited

and influential publishing source, the authors, the journals, the nations, the institutions, and the current trends of different fields. It ensures that marketing research remains innovative and pertinent to the business's demands by assisting in identifying research gaps and prospects for further investigation (Arash Salehpour, 2022). Numerous types of studies have conducted bibliometric evaluations in various aspects of marketing, such as Green marketing(Omar Zaki and Rosli, 2024; Saleem et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2023), Digital Marketing (Ghorbani et al., 2022; Song, 2023), Industrial marketing management (Martínez-López et al., 2020), bank marketing (Kumar et al., 2022), electronic marketing(Gao et al., 2021), sustainable marketing (Sadriwala et al., 2024), content marketing(Binh Nguyen et al., 2023; Bubphapant and Brandão, 2024). Recently, several bibliometric studies have analysed the research landscape on influencer marketing(Abhishek and Srivastava, 2021; Boateng, 2022; Khurana et al., 2024; Luo and Hussain, 2023; Tanwar et al., 2022). Analysis of these studies was general in terms of subject domain and limited keywords were used to retrieve the data from the Scopus database. Hardly any study on the influence of marketing has analyzed the literature through citation and keyword analysis. Citation and co-citation analysis are powerful techniques of bibliometric analysis. Thus, to fill this research gap, this study aims to conduct a bibliometric analysis of the research published on influencer marketing in the business and management domain through citation and co-citation analysis.

Objective

This study aims to synthesize the body of literature on influencer marketing and identify the publication pattern, most influential authors, documents, publication year, and country through citation and co-citation analysis and the research trend through keyword analysis.

The rest of the paper follows this format. The next section presents a methodological approach that underpinned all of the identification and analysis of the body of existing literature. An in-depth summary of the obtained results follows this. The report continues with final observations, highlighting limitations and potential research issues.

Methodology
Data curation

Scopus has many excellent, peer-reviewed publications (Heradio et al., 2016; Shen and Ho, 2020; Shweta and Arora, 2024). The Scopus database is used to search relevant literature on the subject of "influencer marketing" because of its comprehensiveness, regular

updates, and adaptability to assist bibliometric analysis (Shafi et al., 2024). This database contains many high-quality, peer-reviewed publications (Heradio et al., 2016; Shen and Ho, 2020; Shweta and Arora, 2024). The study selection and literature searches were meticulously conducted to guarantee that pertinent papers were included and that publications that did not advance our research objectives were eliminated. The information was obtained on 13[th]October, 2024 from the Scopus database.

The following keyword string was entered in the search form to retrieve the data from the Scopus database. "social media influencer marketing" OR "social media influencer" OR "YouTube influencer" OR "nano influencer" OR "virtual influencer" OR "Facebook influencer" OR "online influencer" OR "micro-influencer" OR "macro influencer" OR "mega influencer" OR "human influencer" OR "Instagram influencer" OR "video blogger" OR "Snapchat Influencer" OR "vlogger"

OR "blogger" OR "YouTuber" OR "digital influencer" OR "influencer marketing". This string was adopted by (Bansal et al., 2024). Search queries were performed within "Article Title" and refined using boolean operators to ensure that more relevant papers were retrieved. The initial search revealed 1590 documents without filtration.

Data Screening

The results from the previous stage were refined in this step. The study's inclusion criteria limited the search to documents published in the business and management domain, comprising 724 articles. Only final articles published in peer-reviewed journals were included in this analysis. We limited our investigation to English-language articles. Publications published in languages other than English, Review papers, book chapters, newspaper pieces, conference proceedings, editorials, letters, and surveys were not included for further analysis. 482 articles were collected after being refined based on
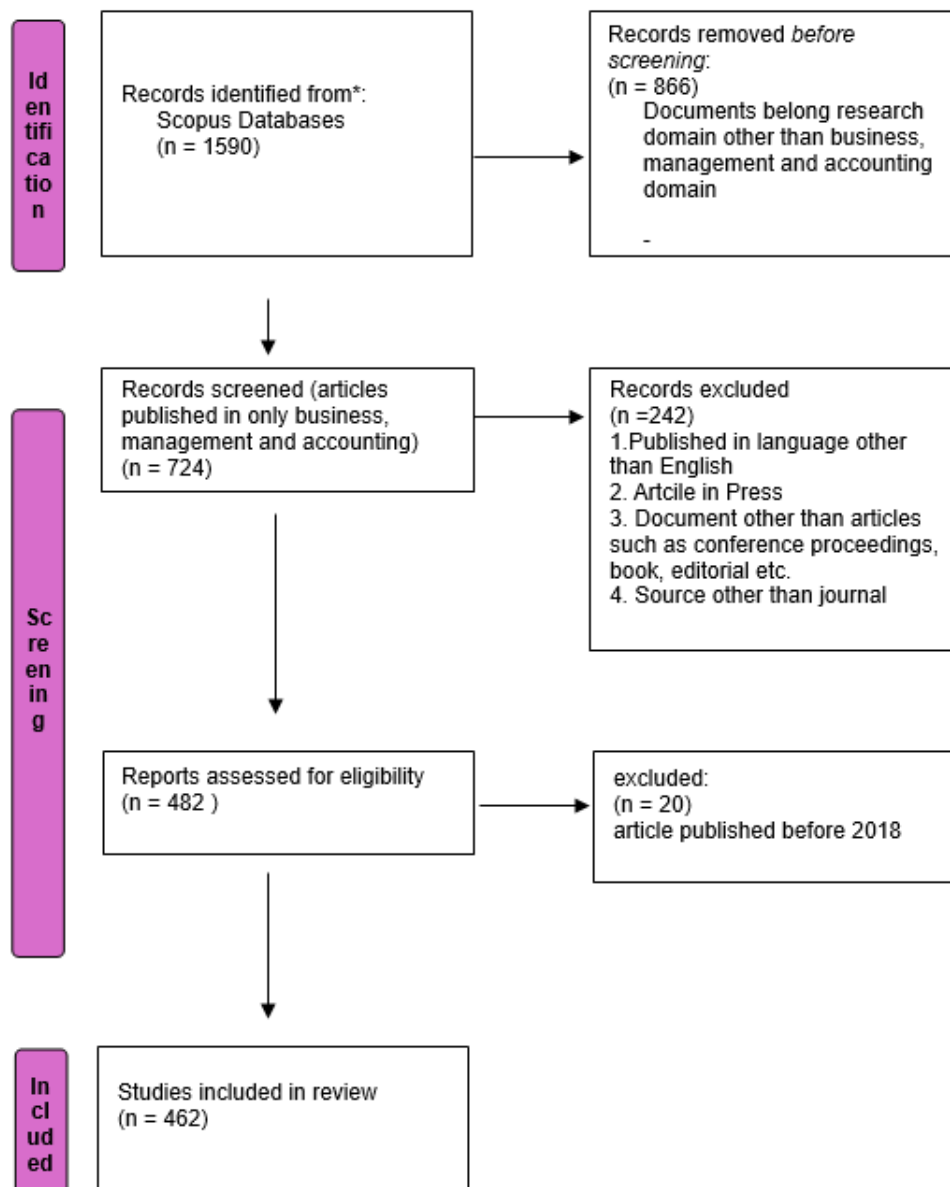

Figure 1. PRISMA framework.

inclusion and exclusion criteria. Further, data was limited to 2018 to 2024. Three articles or fewer were published between 2007 and 2017. For this reason, this analysis includes studies that were published after 2017. Finally, Scopus data of 462 articles were exported in CSV format and further processed for data analysis. Figure 1 detailed the study's flowchart according to PRISMA methodology.

Tools and Techniques for Data Analysis

Bibliometric analysis can be conducted using different tools such as VOSviewer, CiteSpace, SciMAT, CiteNetExplorer, and Bibexcel. R software is used in this study to examine and display the bibliometric information. R studio contains a program called "Bibliometrix" in R package. It supports the loading and conversion of R data. It can also be easily updated and used with other statistical R software. Additionally, automatically gathers metadata about researchers' whole list of scientific publications by connecting to the Scopus API. The study analyzes the biblioshiny as a component of the bibliometrics. It is a web interface that facilitates data importing, data frame conversion, data filtering, analytics, and plotting for sources, authors, documents,tc(Farooq, 2022).

Data Analysis and Results

Descriptive analysis

An extensive summary of the documents that were

retrieved from the Scopus database is shown in Table 1. There are 462 articles published between 2018 and 2024. It suggests that the use of influencer marketing in the business and management domain is a relatively new phenomenon. These articles are written by 1149 authors and published in 157 different reputed journals. The average number of citations received by a document is 39.36. The annual growth rate of publication in this research area is 54.5%, while international co-authorship accounts for 33.77%, indicating the increasing interest of researchers in this field.

Citation Analysis

Based on Production over the years

Table 2 presents the average number of citations per article, which means the total citations per year and the number of documents published each year. Results indicate that articles published in 2019, comprising only 4% of the total documents, have received the highest Average citations per article (207.61) and mean total citations per year (34.60). The following year (2020) comprised 10 % of the total documents and received only 96.3 Average citations per article and 19.26 Mean total citations per year. This implies that 2019 was the most productive year in terms of producing the most relevant articles and getting the highest citations. Figure 2 shows a general upward trend in the annual number of papers published. This study has considered the articles published from 2018 to 2024, spanning 7 years. First

Table 1. Database information.

Description	Results
Timespan	2018:2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	157
Documents	462
Annual Growth Rate %	54.5
Document Average Age	1.69
Average citations per doc	39.36
References	26000
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	324
Author's Keywords (DE)	1239
AUTHORS	
Authors	1149
Authors of single-authored docs	39
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	43
Co-Authors per Doc	2.9
International co-authorships %	33.77
DOCUMENT TYPES	
Article	462

publication related to influencer marketing in the business domain was published in 2007. Three articles or fewer were published between 2007 and 2017. For this reason, this analysis excludes studies published before 2018. Based on the data, the year 2024 had the greatest number of publications (136), accounting for 29 % of all the studied papers. The total number of publications released in 2023 and 2024 has surpassed the total number of publications published before 2023, accounting for 54% of the total papers refer (Table 2). These statistics highlight that this field has recently started gaining popularity and is an emerging topic. It also offers a lot of scope for future research.

publications on influencer marketing in the business and management area. The "Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services" secured the top spot by contributing 36 articles with 1943 total citations, closely followed by the "Journal of Interactive Advertising" with 22 articles and 1831 total citations. Several articles published in these two journals account for 12.55% of all papers in this study. All above-mentioned sources are Scopus-indexed, demonstrating their dedication to producing high-quality research. These respected publications provide valuable information on this topic's most recent and important material.
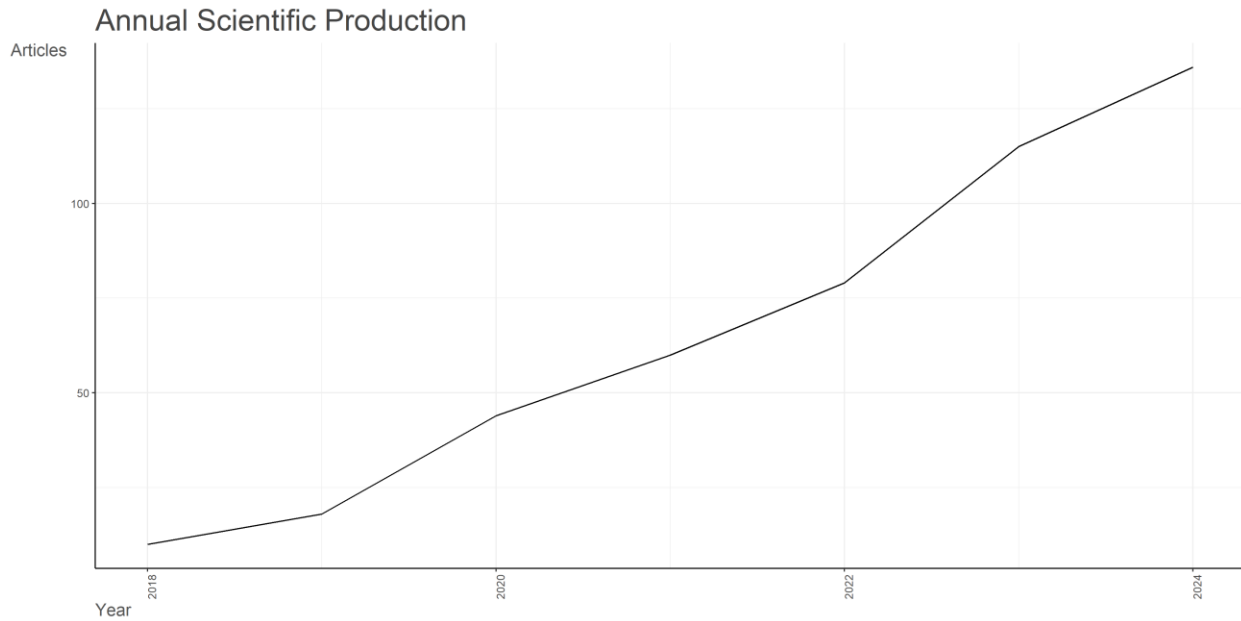

Figure 2. Publication pattern.

Table 2. Year wise publication.

Year	Articles	Percentage	Average citation per article (ACA)	Mean Total citation per year (MTCpy)
2018	10	2%	93.00	13.29
2019	18	4%	207.61	34.60
2020	44	10%	96.30	19.26
2021	60	13%	61.72	15.43
2022	79	17%	40.59	13.53
2023	115	25%	15.03	7.52
2024	136	29%	4.74	4.74

Based on Relevant Sources

A comprehensive bibliometric analysis is necessary to guarantee the study's strength and reliability and accurately identify and utilise the most pertinent sources. In this case, the phrase "most relevant sources" describes a rigorous selection process in which articles from esteemed databases like Scopus were chosen for their direct relevance to the study. Table 3 lists the leading

Based on authors

Table 4 shows the list of the most prolific researchers in this discipline. The author with the most citations is rated first, and so on. "Lou C" is the most prolific author. He has received the highest number of total citations (1650) in this field with 6 publications. Each document has received an average of 275 citations. The second position is secured by Yuan S with 1335 citations and

only 2 publications. Each article published by Yuan S. has received an average citation of approx.668 These Statistics indicate that although "Lou C" has received the highest number of total citations, but "Yuan S" has published more impactful articles. These findings emphasize authors' outstanding production, impact, and influence in this field (Table 4).

Table 3. Most Relevant Sources.

Affiliations	No of Articles	Total Citation
"Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services"	36	1943
"Journal of Interactive Advertising"	22	1831
"Journal of Business Research"	18	1658
"Journal of Marketing Management"	17	1155
"International Journal of Advertising"	17	1010
"Journal of Advertising"	17	784
"Psychology and Marketing"	14	756
"Marketing Intelligence and Planning"	13	590
"International Journal of Information Management"	12	507
"Business Horizons"	12	488

Table 4. Top 10 Authors.

Authors	Tc	Np	G-Index	H-Index
Lou C	1650	6	6	6
Yuan S	1335	2	2	2
Hudders L	784	6	6	6
De Jans S	589	3	3	3
De Veirman M	518	2	2	2
Jin Sv	512	2	2	2
Muqaddam A	512	2	2	2
Ryu E	512	2	2	2
Audrezet A	475	2	2	2
De Kerviler G	442	1	1	1

Based on countries

The top 10 countries that have received the highest citations are presented in Table 5. USA has contributed the most in this field by getting 3050 citations and an average of 47.7. Hong Kong secures the second position with 1508 total citations and 107.7 average citations. Singapore is in 3rd position in terms of total citations (1395), but the average article citation (348.80) is the greatest for this country. A possible reason could be that Singapore has produced very high-quality and impactful publications that entice readers to cite them.

Another explanation could be that Singapore might have published most of its articles in open access, which increases the exposure for readability and citations.

Based on documents

Table 6 offers a compilation of the most notable papers on influencer marketing in the business and management discipline, focussing on total worldwide citations. The work that has received the greatest citations (1117) is the one titled "Influencer Marketing: How Message Value and Credibility Affect Consumer Trust of Branded Content on Social Media", which was published in the prestigious "Journal of Interactive Advertising" in 2019 by (Lou and Yuan, 2019). Another article titled "Instafamous and Social Media Influencer Marketing" from the esteemed "Marketing Intelligence and Planning" authored by (Jin et al., 2019)is the second most cited paper (443). These papers offer knowledge and perspectives that greatly advance the topic of influencer marketing.

Table 5. Most Cited Countries.

Country	TC	Average Articles Citations
Usa	3050	47.70
Hong Kong	1508	107.70
Singapore	1395	348.80
Spain	965	80.40
United Kingdom	949	26.40
China	877	20.40
Korea	830	51.90
India	828	37.60
Australia	791	34.40
France	637	57.90

Co-citation network of publication

A co-citation network connects papers that are often cited together, exposing relationships, key topics, and trends in the field(Loyal and Chen, 2022). The line thickness indicates co-citation counts connected with the article's significance. This network's high density demonstrates the amount of attention digital well-being has received from many scholarly sources. The top 50 publications' citations were utilized to determine the frequency with which other researchers cited several articles. The analysis found frequently referenced article pairs on influencer marketing in the business domain (Lou and Yuan, 2019) and (De Veirman et al., 2017). Their work stands up as one of the most often cited articles with each other as well as with other publications (Figure 3).

Trend Topics

Trend Topics analysis is being included in bibliometric analysis to provide scholars and researchers with dynamic and visually appealing insights to explore developments in their fields of study by using advanced bibliometric approaches to identify and highlight the most popular and pertinent subjects in the academic literature. This approach highlights key topics influencing

Table 6. Most cited documents.

Rank	Title	Journal Name	Year	TC	References
1	"Influencer Marketing: How Message Value and Credibility Affect Consumer Trust of Branded Content on Social Media"	Journal of Interactive Advertising	2019	1117	(Lou and Yuan, 2019)
2	"Instafamous and social media influencer marketing"	Marketing Intelligence and Planning	2019	443	(Jin et al., 2019)
3	"Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation"	Journal of Business Research (	2020	442	(Audrezet et al., 2020)
4	"More than meets the eye: The functional components underlying influencer marketing"	Business Horizons	2020	398	(Campbell and Farrell, 2020)
5	"Measuring social media influencer index- insights from facebook, Twitter and Instagram"	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	2019	349	(Arora et al., 2019)
6	"The impact of social media influencers on travel decisions: the role of trust in consumer decision journey"	Current Issues in Tourism	2022	327	(Pop et al., 2022)
7	"The commercialization of social media stars: a literature review and conceptual framework on the strategic use of social media influencers"	International Journal of Advertising (2021)	2021	326	(Hudders et al., 2021)
8	"The mechanism by which social media influencers persuade consumers: The role of consumers' desire to mimic"	Psychology and Marketing (2019)	2019	325	(Ki and Kim, 2019)
9	Influencer marketing: Social media influencers as human brands attaching to followers and yielding positive marketing results by fulfilling needs"	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	2020	301	(Ki et al., 2020)
10	"The role of digital influencers in brand recommendation: Examining their impact on engagement, expected value and purchase intention"	International Journal of Information Management	2019	286	(Jiménez-Castillo and Sánchez-Fernández, 2019)

Table 7. Trending keywords.

Term	Frequency	Year (Q1)	Year (Median)	Year (Q3)
social media	54	2022	2023	2024
marketing	37	2022	2023	2024
commerce	13	2022	2023	2024
consumption behavior	14	2023	2024	2024
perception	12	2023	2024	2024
artificial intelligence	8	2024	2024	2024

the emerging themes and patterns within a certain field of study. Users may stay up to date on the latest research discourses, reveals emerging areas of interest, and aids researchers in understanding the current

intellectual climate. Social media, Marketing, commerce, Consumer behavior, perception, and artificial intelligence are trend topics depicted in Figure 4 and Table 7. Social media is the most used keyword from 2022-2024. In the domain of influencer marketing, research on artificial intelligence has just begun in 2024. There has never been a study article published in this context previously. These findings indicatethat new and emerging subjects. This emphasizes the significance of more study and conversation in this field.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study has conducted a bibliometric analysis of the literature on influencer marketing in business and management through citation and co-citation analysis. Results indicate that research on influencer marketing in the business and management area has significantly increased over some time. The annual growth rate of publication in this research area is 54.5%. Which peaked at 136 in 2024, clearly revealing that research on influencer marketing in the business sector is becoming
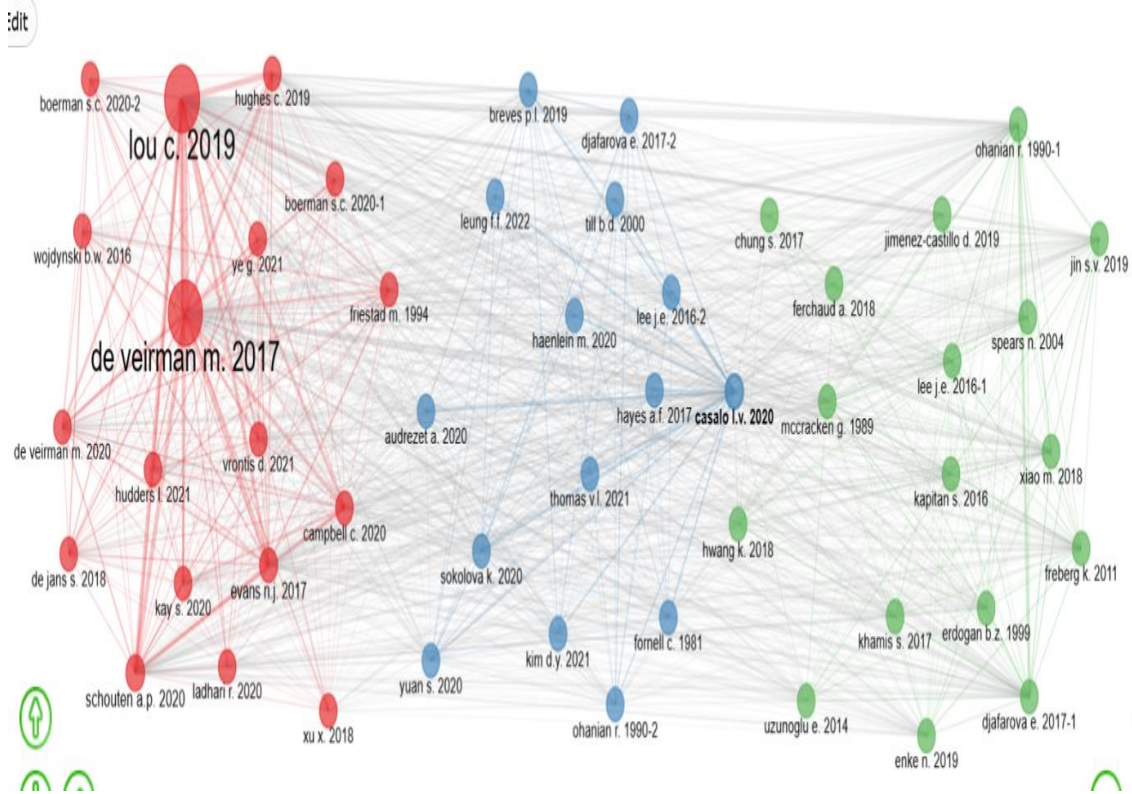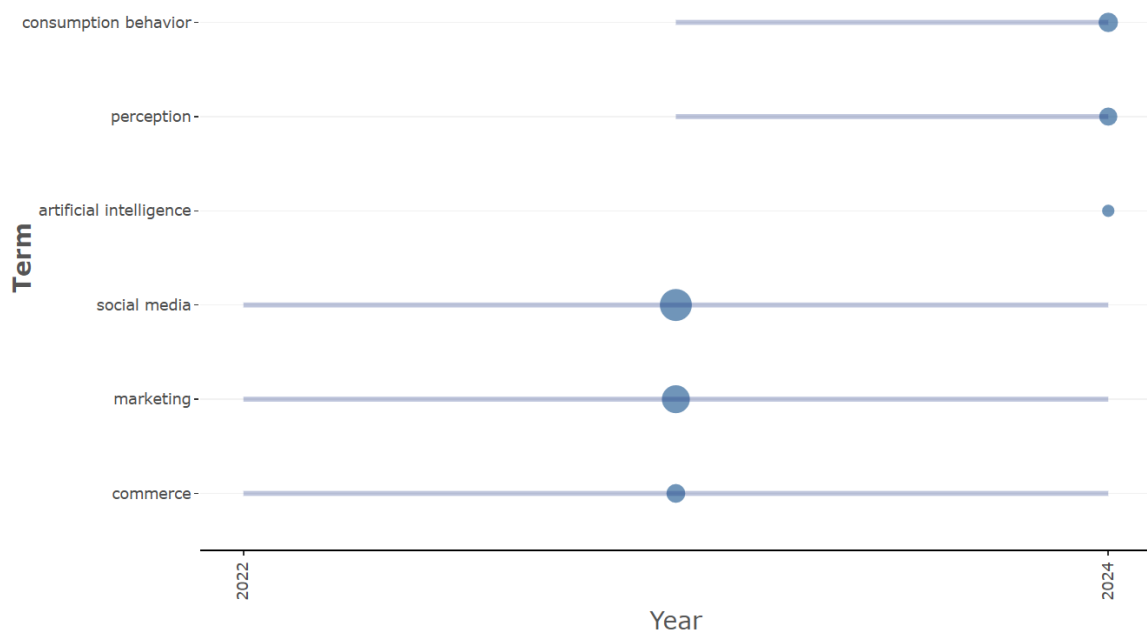

Figure 3. Co-citations analysis.

Figure 4. Trending Keywords.

more and more popular. 2019 was the most productive year in terms of producing the most impactful articles and getting the highest number of citations (207.61), with only 4% of articles taken in this study. The noteworthy growth in scientific production is evidence of the rapid advancement of social media and the growing recognition of influencer marketing as a marketing strategy to increase brand awareness, sales etc. Similar exponential growth trends have been observed in several different sectors, which saw a rise in interdisciplinary collaboration (Castelli and Pepe, 2023; Dahiya et al., 2022; Shweta, 2024). According to an evaluation of the current status of influencer marketing research, several countries have significantly advanced this field. Hong Kong leads in average citations per document (100.7), whereas the United States leads in overall citation effect (3050). The USA is found to be the most influential country in various fields of research, such as Mobile commerce(Hew, 2017), industrial marketing(Valenzuela Fernandez et al., 2019), Artificial Intelligence (Radanliev et al., 2022) etc. These results demonstrate the importance of wealthy nations in defining scientific fields and corroborating previous bibliometric analyses that relate research productivity and impact (De Moya-Anegon et al., 2018; Shafi et al., 2024). Two prominent journals for publishing research on influencer marketing are "The Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services," which has 36 papers and 1943 citations, which is consistent with findings in the context of e-commerce(Simandan, 2023). Particular journals are noteworthy resources that influence the discussion and dissemination of research in this field of study. Prior research has demonstrated how important esteemed journals are for determining the course of investigations and building a robust scientific community, two things that are necessary for progress in certain domains (Mittal and Jora, 2023; Rosenstreich and Wooliscroft, 2012; Waltman and Traag, 2021).

The research environment is greatly impacted by the contributions of prolific writers, who are important participants in the information flow. Authors are crucial to the subject of study since they produce a large amount of work and make important contributions with measurable effects. With the most total citations (1650), "Lou C" is the most prolific author on this subject, but "Yuan S" is the most influential contributor due to his high number of citations per document (668). A diverse array of influencer marketing-related publications would be included in their portfolio, showcasing their significant contributions to the field's advancement. This demonstrates their work's importance in advancing research agendas and encouraging creativity. These results are consistent with other studies that emphasise the author's critical role in information distribution and substantial contribution to the advancement of knowledge in pertinent fields (Alsharif et al., 2022; Amiri et al., 2023; Kumar and Sudhakar, 2024). A paper titled "Influencer Marketing: How Message Value and Credibility Affect Consumer Trust of Branded Content on Social Media" authored by (Lou and Yuan, 2019), has received the maximum number of citations. Emerging themes and patterns within a particular field of study may be explored with the aid of trending keywords, which offer dynamic and aesthetically pleasing insights. Social media, commerce, marketing, consumer behaviour, perception, and artificial intelligence were among the trending keywords that indicated the most popular topics in influencer marketing. The most popular term among these is social media, while the newest trending issue in this area is artificial intelligence. After a thorough review of the relevant literature, the study identified the most pertinent authors, papers, nations, affiliations, sources, and keywords. The finding provides the researcher with a direction for further investigation.

Implications

The results of this study will assist researchers in comprehending the scope and present limits of their field's investigation. Thus, scholars may utilize the findings of this study to draw attention to new and unexplored areas. Furthermore, the identification of the most prominent authors and countries in this field may aid researchers in locating new opportunities for collaboration. Additionally, it provides academics with important details regarding influential research papers that may be considered the foundation of this study area. It helps the future researchers to find relevant information. Future researchers can do empirical research based on our analysis, which may spur empirical advancement in the next study trends. The conclusion of this research may be interesting for practitioners who desire to expand their knowledge. These professionals may utilize the results of renowned research that are included in this investigation. He can assess and compare how different types of influencers and influencer marketing are affecting consumer behaviour and identify the best technique. This will help the marketer formulate more effective marketing strategies and allocate resources cost-effectively to get the maximum results.

Limitations and Future Scope

This study had several shortcomings that might be addressed with more investigation. This study was based on a review of a single database (Scopus), which limited the sectoral coverage of the papers. Future research might benefit further from including a variety of sources, such as WOS, IEEE, PubMed, PsycINFO, or Google. Second, there was not much consideration given to the incorporation of articles from sources other than journals, such as trade magazines, books, and conference proceedings. Third, only publications published between 2018 and 2024 are included in this analysis. Publication patterns revealed that influencer marketing is a new and emerging field in the business and management domain. This suggests that there is a lot of scope to conduct empirical research in this field from a business perspective, such as the impact of influencer marketing on revenue, marketing cost, brand awareness, brand loyalty, etc., bibliometric study on the impact of a specific type of influencer such as food influencer, fashion influencer, travel influencer, Instagram influencer, youtube influencer etc. could also be assessed for further study. Artificial intelligence is the most recent trend topic. Future researchers can explore this area. Scholars can also apply additional mapping, such as intellectual and structural mapping, for a deeper understanding. Lastly, although the study provides a comprehensive overview of the topic of study, it lacks the specific expertise that more in-depth studies, such as systematic reviews or meta-analyses, would be able to give. Despite these limitations, the study offers useful information to researchers in the field, who may consider these limitations when planning further research projects that tackle the potential objectives indicated by the results.

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