

COMILLAS

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS



Faculty of Human and Social Sciences
CIHS

**FROM PERSUASION TO
OVERCONSUMPTION: HOW INFLUENCER
BRANDING SHAPES CONSUMER
BEHAVIOR, ETHICS, AND IDENTITY**

Author: Natasha Mitchell Ferro

Director: Melanie Antonie Gut

Madrid, April 2025

INDEX

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. General context
- 1.2. Purpose and motivation
- 1.3. Research goals

2. STATE OF THE ART

- 2.1. Historical perspective: the evolution of social media
- 2.2. The rise of influencers in digital culture
- 2.3. Current research trends and unexplored areas

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1. **Concept definitions: microcelebrity, internet celebrity, influencer, content creator**
- 3.2. **The psychology of influence: persuasion and manipulation through algorithmic control**
 - 3.2.1. Cialdini's principles of persuasion applied to social media
 - 3.2.2. Paul Lazarsfeld's Two-step flow theory
 - 3.2.3. The influencer economy
- 3.3. **Emotional branding and consumer behavior**
 - 3.3.1. Theory of consumer-brand relationship
 - 3.3.2. Consumer behavior: how buying decisions are shaped by influencers
- 3.4. **Consumption trends**
 - 3.4.1. The social proof theory
 - 3.4.2. What is overconsumption
 - 3.4.3. What is underconsumption

4. METHODOLOGY

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

- 5.1. **Who are the primary audiences of influencers?**
 - 5.1.1. Young people and children as vulnerable targets
 - 5.1.2. Trust shift: why Gen Z prefer influencers for purchasing decisions
 - 5.1.3. Parasitic relationships and the emotional connection with influencers
- 5.2. **Ethical concerns in influencer marketing**
 - 5.2.1. Authentic vs. fake influencers: a spectrum of honesty
 - 5.2.2. The rise of cult-like followings and hyperconsumerism
 - 5.2.3. Fast fashion and health risks: harmful products
- 5.3. **Overconsumption promoted by influencers**
 - 5.3.1. Connection between social media and impulse buying
 - 5.3.2. Role of influencers in promoting fast fashion brands and food waste

5.4. Underconsumption trends

5.4.1. Minimalist influencers and sustainability trends. The emergence of minimalism and sustainability influencers

5.4.2. From food waste to sustainable food practices and reducing waste

6. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANNEX

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis explores how social media influencers shape consumer behavior, ethics, and identity through their personal branding and strategic use of persuasive communication. Drawing on theories of influence, emotional branding, and consumer psychology, the research critically examines the rise of overconsumption driven by algorithmic visibility, as well as the emergence of underconsumption trends advocating for sustainable and intentional lifestyles. The analysis is based on real audiovisual content from TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, assessed through a qualitative lens. The findings highlight the dual role of influencers as both promoters of hyperconsumerism and potential advocates for ethical consumption, revealing the complex dynamics between identity, marketing, and digital influence.

Key words: influencer branding, consumer behavior, emotional branding, overconsumption, underconsumption, parasocial relationships, sustainability, digital marketing, algorithmic visibility, ethical consumption.

RESUMEN

Este Trabajo de Fin de Grado analiza cómo los influencers en redes sociales moldean el comportamiento del consumidor, la ética y la identidad a través de su marca personal y el uso estratégico de técnicas persuasivas. Apoyándose en teorías sobre la influencia, el branding emocional y la psicología del consumidor, la investigación examina críticamente la promoción del sobreconsumo impulsado por la visibilidad algorítmica, así como el auge de tendencias de infraconsumo que promueven estilos de vida sostenibles e intencionados. El análisis se basa en contenido audiovisual real de TikTok, Instagram y YouTube, desde una perspectiva cualitativa. Los resultados muestran el doble papel de los influencers como impulsores del hiperconsumismo y como posibles agentes de cambio hacia un consumo más consciente y ético, revelando la complejidad de las dinámicas entre identidad, marketing e influencia digital.

Palabras clave: marca personal de influencers, comportamiento del consumidor, branding emocional, sobreconsumo, infraconsumo, relaciones parasociales, sostenibilidad, marketing digital, visibilidad algorítmica, consumo ético.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. General context

The theme of this bachelor's thesis revolves around the idea of the influence of social media influencers on consumer behavior and societal trends. While the concept of "influencer influence" may seem redundant, it is central to the understanding of this analysis, as influencers have become key agents in shaping public opinion, purchasing habits, and how the audience reacts based on these digital platforms. In this mass media context, the purpose is to examine how influencers have impacted the modern society, particularly in terms of the usage of their personal image as marketing and branding, consumer psychology, and economic trends, evoking for both academic and social debate. This impact entails influencing people's mental wellness and shifting consumer behavior. That is why, this paper is highly relevant for research within the fields of marketing, social media behavior, digital communication, and behavioral economics. Professionally, this research may provide valuable insights for those dedicated to branding, advertising, and consumer psychology. As a matter of fact, the influencer marketing industry has experienced exponential growth, since by the end of 2023, it had already reached up to \$21.1B, according to Influencer Marketing Hub. Moreover, this conducted study has set the expectation to grow to approximately \$22.2B by 2025. This data makes their relevance and key role in branding and the public's portrayal of products and services obvious. Moreover, studies carried out by Empower have shown that 49% of consumers make regular purchases based on influencer recommendations. On the other hand, as an additional statistic from the Influencer Marketing Hub, the impact on marketing trends will be shifted by 60% of brands planning to increase their expenditure on influencer marketing. As Seth Godin (2018) stated in the digital publishing platform Medium, "*People do not buy products, they buy better versions of themselves.*" It should be highlighted that this affirmation reflects a fundamental reality about the human psychology. The restless pursuit of perfection and self-improvement, sometimes through social validation. We as humans, are never content with what we have, always longing for more, always wanting to be more attractive, have the clothes from the latest trends, to acquire all new products, and so on. In an era dominated by constant digital evolution, consumers are not only buying goods but also striving to align themselves to idolized lifestyles with aspirational personalities and emerging and ephemeral trends. The need for paying greater attention to our purchasing habits is essential to make better choices about which people we let ourselves get influenced by. Questioning the necessity or sustainability of our consumption patterns is a

motivational option towards fostering a more mindful and responsible approach to consumerism.

1.2. Purpose and motivation

The interest in this topic rose from curiosity and concern regarding the direction in which society is headed, often guided and misled by massive social media platforms. Over the past few years, after prolonged evaluation of the content that young audiences have been commonly exposed to and consumed, one of the conclusions that could arise refers to the conception that many of those referred to as *influencers*, whether it is a feature appointed by the public, or themselves, frequently do not exhibit as positive an influence as they claim and encourage their audiences to believe. This realization has prompted conducting thorough research into how influencers shape consumer behavior, particularly due to the susceptibility of consumers to falling into the dynamics that influencers have seduced them to follow. Moreover, these dynamics frequently lead individuals to adopt consumption patterns favorable primarily to corporate interest.

Additionally, understanding the complexities of today's world has awakened a special interest in me. This is why, after noticing the artificial reality that has been constructed by influencers, often trying to sell to the audience, a fake product, has intensified interest in the role branding plays within marketing. In essence, influencers are not mere content creators; they are their own personal brands, strategically shaping their image to maximize engagement and sales through their image. Personally, I believe it ought to be highlighted how fascinating it is the study of how human psychology fuels an almost obsessive desire to acquire materialistic possessions, goods such as makeup, or fashion items, simply because these objects are marked as symbols of status or self-improvement.

1.3. Research goals

In the current times of digital influence, social media influencers have become pivotal in shaping consumer behaviors and societal customs. This research on branding and marketing has the three forthcoming aims, which seek to envision and throw some light on the reasons why certain behaviors can be seen in the consuming society exposed to content creators.

1. Analyze the role of social media influencers and how they promote sustainable or irresponsible purchasing habits.
2. Examine the impact of mass media platforms, specifically TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram.

3. Evaluate ethical issues concerning influencer practices, focusing on their effects on indirectly or directly manipulating society's mental health.

On top of that, the distinction between responsible and irresponsible consumer behavior should be highlighted. It has been proven that influencers have the power to encourage certain consumption shifts in their audiences. Taking this into account, a discussion is needed on how influencers leverage their platforms to perpetuate more conscious and responsible buying patterns. There can be relevant findings on how addressing these psychological and societal implications are key elements in contemporary marketing practices. Likewise, through the achievement of these aforementioned goals, there are deeper personal impacts with broader societal consequences, such as shifts in social norms, lifestyle choices, and perceptions of self-worth. This idea leads to the need to analyze this research's findings to get closer to achieving an explanation for these consequences.

Regarding the structure of this bachelor's thesis, it is organized into a coherent set of chapters that follow a logical progression to analyze the role of influencers in shaping consumer behavior, digital personal branding and societal trends from a marketing-related perspective. There is a convergence of both theoretical and empirical aspects that takes into consideration economic, ethical and psychological implications of influencer culture in the digital platforms of TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. To begin with, the first chapter is the **Introduction**, representing the general context of the study, outlining the motivation for conducting this research, the academic relevance of the topic, and specific research goals to achieve conducting this study. It represents a starting point to the main themes of influencer personal branding, triggered consumer behaviors and other forms of social influence.

Subsequently, the second chapter constitutes the **State of the Art**. This section counts with an extension of the previous context, going in depth of existing academic literature, demonstrating whether it is or not a well-studied topic, and the findings of research related to social media evolution, digital consumerism and marketing psychology. It covers historical evolution of social media, the rise of influencers in digital culture, and lastly, the current research trends and unexplored areas for further investigation.

In chapter three, **Theoretical Framework**, defines key concepts and theories to establish the theoretical foundations of this research. It presents definitions such as microcelebrity, influencer dynamics with further explanations, along with theories from reputable academic authors. For instance, Cialidni's principles of persuasion, and Lazarsfeld's Two-Step Flow

model, among others. This chapter is essential to provide the on right intellectual context at an academic-level

The fourth chapter, **Methodology**, details the qualitative methods used for research. There is an explanation on the criteria for the content selection and the study cases, to apply the theoretical framework. It is mandatory to follow the proper methodology to interpret the digital material sourced from TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. In the Methodology, lies the justification of the reason behind choosing specific audiovisual content and comments. Through this way, the rest of the chapters are in line to achieve the objectives aforementioned.

Chapter five, **Analysis and Discussion**, is considered to be the central part of the investigation. Indicates the real cases to apply the theory, divided into four main pillars:

1. Who are the primary audiences of influencers? Raises the concern about young people and children, or people from the Generation Z, being the main objective audience that can become vulnerable targets. Including the parasitic relationships that these individuals can face after long exposure to digital trends and persuasive language used by internet celebrities.
2. Ethical concerns in influencer marketing. A comparison through the selection of specific posts and digital practices to aim an identification of the fake against more real and authentic influencers. Moreover, hyperconsumerism that it is often linked to these accounts will be addressed.
3. Overconsumption promoted by influencers. The main focus of this analysis is the connection of social media with consumption trends; overconsumption being possibly the most harmful. This trend with a negative-connotation is directly promoted by influencers and brand collaborations. That is why, it will be analyzed what role do influencers play in such context.
4. Underconsumption trends. On the counterpart, there are influencers promoting minimalism and sustainability; advocating for healthier habits. In the same way as the previous point, it is analyzed the impact and visibility of brand collaborations with these sustainable influencers.

Continuing with chapter six, last but not least is **Conclusions and proposals**. It serves as a synthesis of the main findings of the research and knowledge acquired throughout the bachelor's thesis. The relevant insights are mentioned along the limitations found, and possible future actions to take into consideration, and to encourage more ethical and mindful digital usage practices.

The penultimate section of this paper is the **Bibliography**, a list of all academic references, publications, and materials cited throughout the work to develop the theoretical line. These resources have been used for inspiration to redact the topics taking part in the research.

Lastly, the **Annex** will include in detail the links necessary to watch the referred audiovisual content from the Social media platforms of TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram. This section lists the usernames, platforms, name, and date of the publications used for the analysis. The purpose of this section is to enable the reader to access original sources directly.

2. STATE OF THE ART

Before diving deeply into the State of the art, it should be highlighted that the academic relevance of this paper lies in its potential contribution to the marketing, consumer psychology, and branding fields. By applying the theoretical and practical knowledge I have gained as a Global Communication student, it is intended to provide a critical perspective on the branding strategies that dominate digital spaces via influencer profiles. Exploring and analyzing this complex intersection between influencer culture, sophisticated marketing tactics, and the mental and behavioral shifts they cause among consumers, is crucial for comprehending branding dynamics in this increasingly globalized and digitally interconnected era. Beyond that, examining these aspects provides valuable insights for future marketing strategies, ethical considerations in digital advertising, and the responsible management of influencer-driven content.

Not to mention, that to link this to an international relations framework, it could lead to potential policy implications with ethical considerations, in order to inform of recommendations regarding digital marketing practices.

Moving on, to make a reference to the rise of influencers as a cultural and economic factor, the state of the art of this research project aims to focus on the reshaping of digital communication, personal branding and consumer behavior, promoted partially by influencers. These content creators can be referred to as *microcelebrities*, since their description does not fall exactly into the common thought conception of a “famous person”. Influencers are people who, at first sight, can seem natural or appear to have an ideal life that the audience can aspire to have or that they admire. Social media has been the bridge for these individuals to evolve their role in influencer culture and monetize their online fame. The following section examines the historical evolution of social media and the rise of influencers in digital culture,

which will be recognized as the foundation for understanding the future direction of this research paper.

2.1. Historical perspective: the evolution of social media

To start with, it is crucial to examine the historical evolution of social media services and their significance in shaping digital interactions in the emergence of influencers. As it has been stated in the book *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*, by Henry Jenkins, Ford & Green (2018), the spreadability of media content is rooted in participatory culture. Their perspective helps to understand how the evolution of social networks has evolved from passive content consumption, meaning these audiences consuming advertising without interacting, or not being object to creating their own product promotions, to more interactive environments, where platform users actively shift narratives and trends. It has been due to this novel and dynamic space that influencers have been enabled to develop engaged audiences, and seek a mutual benefit from it.

On the other hand, Fuchs' (2014) perception of social media's structural transformations has established a critical analysis on how platform algorithms, commercialization, and corporate control have provided a favorable context for the rise of influencer culture. This author refers to platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, and their political and economic implications in social media evolution. This is given the fact that these channels are designed to promote visibility and monetization, from which influencer culture can thrive.

Both of these authors' positions illustrate that the phenomenon of influencer culture is not something isolated, but rather a consequence of broader media transformations that have allowed regular people to participate in leveraging digital tools for personal branding and audience engagement. Following this line, it is worth recognizing the increasing relevance of social media in the population's daily life. It has paralleled a significant growth in academic interest surrounding its social, political, and economic dimensions. Since the mid-2010s, this growth has developed hand in hand with increased research on digital culture has expanded considerably, paying particular attention to the rising of influencer marketing as a field of study across disciplines such as communication, marketing, media studies, and sociology. Academics with a presence in the influencer-related fields have developed deeper ideas at the same time as the exponential popularity of platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok have become more publicly known. These are spaces that have given a whole new

meaning to the nature of visibility and self-expression. As more people participate in digitally, new lines of inquiry have been opened around online identities, algorithmic curation, and the commercialization of everyday life, offering a rich foundation for subsequent research into influencer culture.

2.2. The rise of influencers in digital culture

In contrast to the previously indicated point, the subsequent section examines and places the focus on the rise of influencers, and how it is directly related to microcelebrities as the root to digital influence. There are fundamental insights into internet celebrities, microcelebrity practices, and the meanings that lead to online fame. An ethnographic analysis is given regarding this matter, which highlights the ability of microcelebrities to engage in *strategic intimacy* to give away a sense of closeness with their viewers. Methods such as livestreaming or the oversharing of their personal lives online provoke a blurring of the line of boundaries between the influencer and the follower. Abidin identifies this form of self-representation as *affective labor*, where an emotional connection's function is both commercial purposes at the same time of being authentic to a certain extent. Visibility is the primary asset influencers rely on to acquire some kind of currency, turning this aspect into digital popularity, aimed to achieve lucrative brand collaborations and business opportunities. Almost as an immediate outcome, these profitable opportunities lead to a greater reach for increasing the number of followers. After these suggested characteristics, the main proposition can be referred to as influencers not only being a way of entertainment, but equally people who become self-made entrepreneurs who develop in a competitive and highly versatile digital system, where authenticity, engagement, and continuous character development are the key to success (Abidin, 2018).

Alongside Abidin, other influential scholars have also helped shape the academic discussion around influencer culture. Marwick (2013) analyzed the rise of personal branding and self-presentation strategies in social media environments, while Khamis, Ang, and Welling (2017) placed their focus on the professional development of microcelebrities as lucrative identities. Other publications have equally contributed to establish the proper academic field of influencer research by releasing numerous studies. These demonstrate that influencer culture is not only viewed as a trend but also as a subject of sustained interest with ongoing theoretical and empirical contributions. The next chapter, the Theoretical framework, will be founded on such conceptual lines to explore the main topics and approaches relevant to the analysis of this phenomenon.

2.3. Current research trends and unexplored areas

Moving on to the last point of the state of the art, while the study of influencer culture has gained increasing academic attention in recent years, there are still areas that remain underexplored or in the early stages of investigation. Recent projects have begun to examine how digital visibility is shaped by algorithmic systems, highlighting the unequal dynamics of exposure and platform power (Cotter, 2019; Fuchs, 2014). A topic that will be further explained under the section 3.2 of the Theoretical framework. Simultaneously, research into cancel culture has positioned online audiences as moral gatekeepers, shaping influencer reputations through public criticism and social media backlash (Jaafar & Herna, 2023). Another growing investigation line pays attention to the psychological and emotional distress faced by both content creators and their followers. This aspect especially affects the authenticity pressures and mental health consequences (Abidin, 2018; Marwick, 2013). Additionally, studies on consumer-brand relationships (Fournier, 1998; 2012) have investigated how users develop emotional attachments to the brands and internet personalities they follow, reinforcing the impact influencers have on consumer behavior. Concepts such as brand love (Albert, 2008) and consumer-brand intimacy emphasize the emotional implications of such interactions, often persuading followers toward more intense connection and loyalty. These behaviors intersect with deeper concerns around materialism and the closely related overconsumption (Scott, 2014; Frick, 2020), especially in online dynamics where the line between lifestyle inspiration and commercial promotion is increasingly blurred.

Additional studies have shown that social media platforms typically amplify persuasive techniques that align with social validation, similar to the theory described of social proof and regulatory behavior. This theory is adapted from legal compliance models, to present it from the influencer theory lens, which reflects on how people regularly mimic others' behavior when being uncertain, including consumption contexts. Moreover, Martin Eisend (2006), put forward his work on two-sided advertising, detailing the possibility to counteract some of the persuasive manipulation seen in influencer content with a more balanced and honest presentation of the information transmitted. Likewise, Rowley (2008) draws attention to how digital content itself becomes both the medium and the message in online environments, reinforcing how value is constructed through content, and not through the product's inherent feature. This notion is central to understand influencers' persuasive

ecosystems. During this same period, literature against overconsumption and therefore, promoting sustainable lifestyles (Zavestoski, 2002; Black & Cherrier, 2010; Jackson, 2005; Alexander & Ussher, 2012) provides an alternative perspective to examine the critical response to hyperconsumerism promoted by influencers, and the growing apology for a greater conscious over digital practices.

In the same way, it is mandatory to acknowledge that criticism on influencer behavior is not exclusive to academic environments. On the proper social media platforms, several content creators have emerged as vocal critics of specific influencer practices. For instance, the YouTube profiles of Hanna Alonzo and Zoeunlimited belong to two creators whose videos actively critique the lack of honesty, manipulative persuasion tactics, and the promotion of non-beneficial or unrealistic lifestyles by other influencers. Their negative reviews will be analyzed under the 5.2.1 point, as part of the ethical discussion on digital influence and the internal questioning that emerges within the same online ecosystem.

Although this takes part of promising progress in the field, there are still remaining gaps in the area of the ethical implications of consequences of this influence, particularly regarding child exposure on social media and long-term effects of platform-driven branding. This study aims to contribute to these observations by integrating behavioral and psychological dimensions of influencer practices, offering a broader understanding of their impact on contemporary digital culture.

In summary, this second chapter has reviewed the academic landscape surrounding the study of influencers and digital culture. The rise of social media platforms has introduced numerous ways to refer to this digital situation, approached by researches through the concepts of microcelebrity, strategic intimacy, and platform governance. Moreover, unresolved issues and emerging trends have been identified, issues that are likely to shape future understandings of the psychological implications associated with digital and influencer culture. These reflections lay the foundation for the next chapter, which explores the theoretical framework used for inspiration in the making of this investigation project.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Concept definitions: microcelebrity, internet celebrity, influencer, content creator

To begin this third chapter, which defines the theoretical framework of this paper, it is relevant to clarify four key concepts around the definition of digital personalities that emerge on social media platforms. Although the most typically used term in both academic discourse and in popular speech is *influencer*, there is an overlap in other types of role categories, such as microcelebrity, internet celebrity, and content creator.

Those individuals who engage in producing content and engage with audiences online have been given numerous labels, where distinctions can be named. For instance, microcelebrities are frequently the type to dedicate themselves to a specific niche, who cultivate their personality and online visibility around a specific self-branding strategy, which makes the person seem accessible and intimate with their followers, while being authentic under permanent updating (Senft, 2008) (Jerslev, 2016). Afterward, internet celebrities gain greater recognition by becoming virally famous (Abidin, 2018). Thereafter, influencers are individuals who attract attention to their lifestyle or product shown online and their social capital to *influence* and shift popular opinion, promote consumer action into purchasing decisions (Khamis, 2017; Abidin, 2018), usually through collaborations with brands. On the other hand, content creators keep consistent with their original postings through audiovisual skills. Commercial promotion is not necessarily engaged with, nor do they intend to persuade or induce their viewers into buying specific products (Arriagada, 2021; Cotter, 2019). These last two roles, content creator and influencer, coincide in practice, but allowing a distinction allows a more nuanced inspection of the ways to make profit as a social media personality, involving audience dynamics.

Establishing these concepts puts into perspective the diversity of the different variations that can be given within social media platforms. Furthermore, taking into consideration that most of these concepts overlap among the different personalities in social media. That is why, for the purposes of this bachelor's thesis, these four different concepts will be referred to indistinctively unless further clarification is needed for a specific case. Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that due to the aim of this analysis study, influencer, and content creator will be named the most. It is important to note the persuasive tone specifically on *influencer* since one of the objectives of this research paper is to examine how deep the influence of these individuals is on common consumers.

Table 1. Comparative table on social media personalities.

Personality	Characteristics	Main goal
Microcelebrity	Specific niche (small-medium audience), seem accessible, keep being authentic.	Personal branding development, recognition, fame.
Internet celebrity	Achieving widespread fame through online platforms.	Bigger recognition through becoming viral, exposure.
Influencer	Making their followers trust on them to lead their purchase decisions, more follower engagement.	Promote their lifestyle, influence and make monetizing profit.
Content creator	Producing original content, not necessarily intending to influence nor to be persuasive.	Producing creative content.

Source: Own elaboration

3.2. The psychology of influence and algorithmic control

When the topic of this paper was decided, the first questions thought were: how does the viewer's mind work, in order for them to be subject to media exposed to their minds, and influenced by internet celebrities? How can these personalities influence so greatly into a consumer's buying patterns so greatly? The answer to these questions is hoped to be found within the chapters of this study.

It is a fact that since the term *internet celebrity* came into frequent use, academics, and common platform users have been noticing how social media shapes perceived reality and the authenticity that content creators intend to portray. Due to this fact, both concepts have been redefined, turning influencers into "real" alternatives to the old understanding of celebrities, since they seem more open about their personal life, more reachable to their followers, genuine honesty, and unfiltered. However, as brands recognized their marketing value, authenticity began to mix with sales strategies. Content creators started exchanging their time and presence for sponsored trips, product samples, or paid content by the brand, so they would get a display on their profile. This behavior from both the brand's side and the internet celebrities began to blur the boundaries between personal opinion and commercial intent, taking into account the untruthful comments that influencers have made, aiming to boost sales. This transformation has triggered ethical tensions questioning whether if the content published is sincere, or thoroughly designed to sell? Followers often engage emotionally, not always aware of the persuasive techniques at play. These dynamics are directly related to the notion of digital influence, referring to a person's opinion or lifestyle being shaped by their amount of online spending on social media platforms; which leads as

subsequently to the concept of online social influence, which is built through trust, perceived expertise and trust, that the follower gives.

With these ideas expressed, this section explores key psychological frameworks and how this influence works. Beginning with Cialdini's principles of persuasion applied to social media followed by Paul Lazarsfeld's Two-Step flow theory, explaining the influencer marketing framework, and the role of content marketing in shaping consumer behavior.

Taking into account the psychological and sociological aspects, the study center of this subsection is the impact on the audiences' mental health due to harmful exposure to the influencer's sphere and the cancellation culture that influencers might face. In the past decades, the psychological and sociological consequences on both creators and their viewers have become increasingly visible. It is known that content creators are partially forced to portray themselves as mostly emotionally cheerful, while appearing both authentic and exemplary. On the other hand, the audiences who consume their content internalize carefully selected portrayals of success, accomplishment of beauty standards, and perfect, entirely productive lifestyles, are often left with a sensation of inadequacy within their own lives, falling for comparison anxiety, and emotional fatigue. To mention once again Abidin (2018), the concept of *performative intimacy* is relevant to position the illusion of affinity between influencer and viewer, as a result of well-thought branding strategy that the content creator follows. By building this emotional connection, the viewer provides loyalty and almost a feeling of veneration towards the persona. Nevertheless, there is a paradox in this digital authenticity. For both influencers and followers, the incongruence between the "reality" shown and what is actually happening offline, behind the cameras, can leave an emotional strain. Followers might feel insufficient for not reaching the same lifestyle they aspire to have, while the creators may experience imposter syndrome or anxiety from maintaining the content illusion when that is not necessarily the case.

On top of that, content creators turn their identity into a constant performance that is non-stop judged by audiences, algorithms, and even sometimes, other influencers (Marwick, 2013). When a given situation makes a celebrity seem to be violating ethical norms or social conceptions, such content creator can be subject to the *cancel culture* (Jaafar, 2023, p.383), a term defined by Jaafar and Herna as "a cultural tool to advocate for social justice by attracting all kinds of support for those who are judged to have said or done something unacceptable or very problematic". Being "canceled" can backlash and result in individuals or corporations becoming collectively boycotted, or openly hated. This phenomenon can be

attributed to online communities, who act as juries and judge the actions of influencers or corporations, by answering with unfollowing, mass criticism, and public shaming.

To illustrate an example of this *cancel culture* setting can be shown through the case of Wren Eleanor, a 4-year-old toddler who had over 17 million followers on TikTok. This little girl was extensively featured on the platform by her mother. The account, which could initially seem wholesome, reached widespread concern after some users started noticing very inappropriate comments on the child's posts, along with a noticeably disproportionate engagement on how many saves some specific videos had. Videos in which the context placed the toddler in vulnerable settings, such as getting dressed or bathing. The public's response to these actions was to create the viral hashtag #SaveWren, with thousands of viewers demanding the mother to remove the content. Although the mother resisted at first and defended her content, she deleted numerous videos and made her daughter's account private in the end. Wren Eleanor is not the only child who has been overexposed to the immeasurable digital era; many other families have unnecessarily shared the private lives of their children on social media platforms. Gaining consciousness of such cases, it is made evident that there are darker dimensions of celebrity visibility, especially linked to child consent and platform accountability. Even content that can seem harmless, can be weaponized by algorithms and content creators, and misused by viewers. It should be reflected as well, on the benefit from cancel culture to not only punish misconduct in some way, but to act accordingly to express ethical concerns about exploitation and safety in digital spaces.

To sum up this segment of the chapter, Khamis (2017) further argues that influencer branding involves constant emotional care, given the identity labor that creators are vulnerable to. Moral judgment and external pressures are significant components of the influencer's positioning in social media. This volatile and fragile environment forces celebrities to maintain the balance between transparency and self-protection, always subject to criticism (Jenkins, 2018).

All these perspectives demonstrate that content creator culture extends further from the first notion of marketing; it includes emotional and ethical phenomenon where mental health and identity develops and are interconnected.

Taking such aspects into account, there should be an additional comprehension on how power works through algorithms. While influencer culture may appear user-driven, social media platforms play an extremely crucial role in deciding who gets how much

visibility, and who remains hidden, making it obvious that there are some obscured parts associated with the algorithm from these platforms. Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok are not neutral in this visibility decision; but in fact, they govern the space based on algorithms, that dictate the flow of attention and exposure, and consequently, who gets to climb up in the digital fame phenomenon. To deepen this matter of visibility through the algorithm, the PhD Kelley Cotter (Cotter, 2019) explores this dynamic in her concept of the “visibility game”, where influencers must adapt their strategies without ceasing, in order to achieve a favorable position and exposure in social media platforms. Certain ways to attain the algorithm’s recognition, tend to be basing the posts on the current trends, presenting an aesthetic profile, use of hashtags, and publishing at specific times. These strategies are the ones that influencers follow to remain favored in the recommendation systems such as Instagram’s *Explore* page. It is given similarly with TikTok’s “For You” feed, powered by a highly optimized AI model, that acts as a filtering tool to provide content to rising influencers to viral fame, but also through extreme personalization of the content, for a better user experience, aligning with the topics of their linking. Moreover, the content that coincides better with the algorithm’s implicit preferences is more likely to show up in these types of exposure systems. These systems, are neither transparent nor highly accessible, since they behave more like uncertainty boxes that reward certain aesthetics, some demographics over others, and trends, making it obvious that there is a power imbalance between the platform and which users get exhibited more.

Beyond that, Fuchs (2014) emphasizes the reinforcement of capitalist logics through algorithmic control. From this point of view, content creators are simultaneously workers in digital economies shaped by corporate interests. Referring once again to Abidin (2018), it complements Fuchs' idea by solidifying that favorable conditions through *strategic intimacy* are often adapted to algorithmic demands. Influencers are constantly responding to it with consistency, being original, and developing deeper emotional connections; satisfying both their followers and the platform metrics determining visibility.

Furthermore, Marwick (2013) and Khamis (2017) further contribute to the perception of visibility as a way of *cultural capital*, closely tied to personal branding and perceived authenticity. However, it can be unevenly distributed as has been mentioned before. Algorithmic biases and practices like *shadowbanning*, which is given when the content is hidden without notice, might raise concerns about possible discrimination. These moderation policies are rarely disclosed, making it complicated to be sure which content creators are being silenced.

It is also worth noting that influencers' participation in social media is limited by the algorithms, while users try to be as creative as possible. This tension between agency and control is central to interpreting the rise and vulnerability of influencers in today's digital landscape (Jenkins, 2018).

3.2.1. Cialdini's Principles of Persuasion Applied to Social Media

Cialdini's six principles of persuasion, seen from a social media perspective, offer a powerful statement to understand where the exerted influence is rooted in. According to this author's book *The Psychology of Persuasion* (2009), there are psychological shortcuts that people make use of when making decisions. On social platforms such as Instagram or YouTube, internet celebrities pull these persuasive triggers into everyday content. Often almost subliminally and strategically, shaping consumer behavior without any obvious advertising, unless it is seen under a critical eye. The key principles and how they appear in the influencer context can be found in a list:

1. **Reciprocity:** Influencers offer free value. This can be tips, discount codes, tutorials, emotional storytelling... For instance, a follower receiving a meal plan "for free", may feel more inclined to buy the listed products in the description box or be more willing to support the brand.
2. **Commitment and consistency:** Once a user becomes an account follower, they are more likely to keep up with the influencer's profile activity, and remain consistently supportive. This can provoke repeated purchases or buying solely because it has been recommended by the influencer, without a second thought on its quality as a product; or result in idolizing or adopting the influencer's lifestyle and values over time.
3. **Social proof:** There are metrics created by these social media platforms, specifically to measure the public's engagement: comments, likes, reposts, times saved, shares... Influencers make use of social proof by telling their audience that the product is the best they have ever tried or purchased it in the past and never changed to other brands. Using trending products and showcasing community support by expressing "everybody is using this" is how they acquire social proof for selling the product.
4. **Authority:** Going back to a definition before mentioned, in this case, microcelebrities are the ones who could apply to this principle. Since microcelebrities's target is usually a small niche, such as fashion, fitness, or makeup. Although they have no formal credentials, their "authority" is based on the consistency of their posts that are

dedicated to this niche, collaborations with reputable brands, or early access to exclusive products, which affirms their knowledge and credibility.

5. **Liking:** Becoming likable is key to building a parasocial relationship that will be easier to persuade. There is this one-sided connection when followers feel emotionally close to their content creators. Their trust is earned when vulnerability, aesthetic appeals, and good personality are shown. The recommendations made by these influencers may be considered more trustworthy.
6. **Scarcity:** Urgency is the biggest trigger of action. The stronger emphasis the influencer makes on the exclusivity, time-limited discounts or products, or “last chance” products, the more likely is the possibility of the follower purchasing the good or service; creating a fear of missing out, a fear known as *FOMO* in the current social media slang vocabulary trends.

These 6 principles are techniques used conjunctively by influencers, prompting impulsive decisions. Most of these principles can be combined and used in a single post. This persuasive power lies in how seamlessly these techniques are integrated into lifestyle content. Audiences may not perceive these as marketing, which is why they become so effective and successful. Even if it creates ethical concerns, they are showing better results in purchases than traditional ads; since there is a feeling of being spontaneous and personal coming from the influencer. While not in every case, in most instances the shown product is pre-negotiated, branded, and has an agreed marketing objective. For this reason, influencers are now obliged to specify when it is a paid partnership, often through subtle or minimally visible labels in small fonts.

In what follows, an explicative table regarding the six Cialdini’s Principles is included.

Table 2. Cialdini’s Principles in influencer marketing explained

Principle	Definition	Influencer application
Reciprocity	People feeling forced to return favors.	Sharing tips, discount codes, or emotional content, making followers feel more willing to support the brand.
Commitment & consistency	The aim to remain consistent with previous actions or commitments.	Followers who engage in the content are more likely to keep supporting the influencer, leading to possible repeated purchases or trying to follow their lifestyle.

Social proof	People follow external behaviors.	Likes, comments, shares and other forms of community support show extra validation for the product. Influencers shape their language to reinforce desirability.
Authority	Followers are more likely to align with those perceived as “credible experts”.	Microcelebrities gain authority by consistently belonging to a nice, collaborating with trusted brands, or gaining exclusive access before the public.
Liking	Users are more persuaded by those they like or feel emotionally connected to.	Parasocial relationships are developed by portrayed aesthetics and vulnerability from influencers. Their recommendations feel sincere.
Scarcity	Higher value is given to products considered rare or limited.	Influencers make use of special wording like “last chance” or “limited time only” to trigger FOMO, leading to impulsive purchases.

Source: Own elaboration

3.2.2. Paul Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz’s Two-step flow theory

The idea of conceiving media influence flows in a direct, linear way from sender to passive receiver has been left behind a considerable time ago. Two of the most remarkable pioneers were Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz, introducing the Two-Step Flow Theory, in their seminal work *Personal Influence* (1955). According to this theory, information and persuasive messages do not flow directly from media to the public, but rather through opinion leaders, who are socially influential individuals who interpret media content and transmit it to others in their circle.

In today’s digital era, influencers have taken up this role as opinion leaders. They consume a product or a service, interpret and reshape the information, this going from brand messages to lifestyle trends, and distribute it in a form that aligns emotionally with their followers. Differentiating themselves from traditional opinion leaders, who were often community figures or niche experts, today’s influencers merge relatability, aspirational aesthetics, and algorithmic visibility, allowing them to exert influence at scale. To illustrate this conception through an example, when a beauty influencer reviews a skincare product, they are not simply sharing their opinion, they are actively intending to shape the audience’s perception to provoke certain purchasing behavior. The act of framing the message through a trusted relatability increases its persuasive impact, making influencers and other microcelebrities an essential part of brand strategies.

To deepen in this sector, the Two-Step Flow Theory aligns as well with Abidin's (2018) view of influencers as "intermediaries of taste" and with Marwick (2013), who studies the different personalities across social media, cultivating their influencing status through strategic self-branding and meticulously tailored engagement with their audience. These dynamics add a more contemporary layer to Lazarsfeld and Katz's model, as algorithmic visibility (Cotter, 2019) now plays a critical role in determining which opinion leaders rise to more exposure.

Essentially, this theory is greatly relevant, although longstanding, still far from being obsolete, being remarkable in its contemporary application. This said, influencers not only deliver the message, but they transform the brand's perception by selling it emotionally, aesthetically, and socially conscious.

3.2.3. The influencer economy

Before jumping into the next chapter of this paper, it is important to reflect on the marketing-related structure that sustains the digital influence phenomenon. The influencer marketing framework is not merely built on aesthetics, personality, or relatability, but built on monetized engagement, where attention becomes a form of currency and trust is systematically leveraged for commercial purposes. As Gavilanes Gómez (2024) states, influencer marketing requires a clear conceptual framework to guide strategies and performance evaluation. There is a need to understand influencer actions not as isolated content, but as part of a measurable system with objectives for monetization. This lies the foundation for the economic logic to explore. It is a fact that influencers earn from content views or likes. Nevertheless, they further monetize their reach by affiliate links and personalized discount codes, which are embedded into posts, stories, or video descriptions. These tools are more than marketing gadgets; they are tracking mechanisms that register consumer behavior and convert follower interactions into direct profit (Markerly, 2022a). When a user clicks on an affiliate link and completes a purchase, the influencer receives a percentage of the sale. As noted by the marketing platform Markerly (2022a), links function as unique URLs designed to give back a commission to the influencer. Similarly, custom discount codes could appear as mere recommendations, often sold as a way to help the followers "save money", but the underlying purpose being to track sales and generate commission-based income (Grin, n.d.). This model rules an environment in which the follower is unknowingly participating in a commercial exchange. The process feels natural and spontaneous, although it is carefully planned. The follower becomes a statistic number

and a contributor to increasing the influencer's income. As Markerly (2022b) points out, this monetization strategy is "invisible by design", taking advantage of the emotions between content creator and audience. This aspect connects with Rowley's (2008) ideas on digital content marketing, where she explains that value in digital environments is subject to the context. In the influencer economy, digital content is a persuasive tool, counting with an emotional dimension.

Furthermore, this emotional connection to achieve a commercial can raise potential ethical concerns. Followers, often becoming buyers of these recommended products, do not always notice the commercial layer behind influencer content. As mentioned before, the line between a genuine recommendation and an advertisement is not always clear, especially when influencers are not truly transparent regarding whether it is a paid partnership or not. Although most platforms now require indicating that the content is sponsored or as part of an ad, these disclaimers are usually carried out by influencers in small fonts, at the bottom of the posts, or hidden within stories. This means it is technically visible but rarely actually detected.

The influencer economy functions as a system where trust and personal connection are used to promote sales. The purchases achieved by influencers are earned by the user's trust and their ability to interact with their content. It is due to this fact that social media users should gain consciousness over understanding this relationship between the influencer and the brand is mostly designed to monetize attention, emotion, and behavior.

3.3. Emotional branding and consumer behavior

The relationship between consumers and brand is in today's world, shaped by emotional alignment with the brand, symbolic meaning, and identities that consumers build through the products they choose to acquire. Nowadays, marketing and advertising has become a challenge to see who can seem more aspirational, relatable, and intimate towards their consumers. In this section, the focus will be on the importance of understanding the emotional relationship that provokes certain consumer behaviors. In the subsequent segment, the theory of consumer-brand relationship will take into account the arguments developed by Fourier (1998, 2012), and what this research means to redefining the brand attachment that includes an interpersonal relationship with the buyer. The analysis is fully developed by other authors like Albert (et al., 2008), who examine brand love as a consequence of the consumers' emotional dimensions that drive their connection to the brand or the product.

Moreover, as part of the theoretical foundation, it will be discussed the way in which influencers persuade and shape consumer behavior. Influencers also take on the role of advisors to their followers, guiding their buying decisions both through emotionally persuasive language and visual aesthetics. The end of this section reflects on the rapid evolution of digital platforms, where brand desire is now communicated through specific language, reinforcing the consumer identity.

3.3.1. Theory of consumer-brand relationship

As Seth Godin (2012) expressed in his book *All Marketers Are Liars* (2012), people don't want what you sell; they want how your product makes them feel. After reading various of his books, Seth Godin is widely recognized as one of the world's best marketers. This quote illustrates clearly the emotional implications in the truth of branding: consumption is no longer satisfying a need anymore; it has deep psychological roots. People purchase goods not for their utility but for the emotions they evoke, for how aligned it is to their values, and for the extent to which that product brings them closer to the version of themselves they aspire to achieve. Influencers have understood that these emotions are the key to success, and so they carefully craft their content to persuade, seduce and reinforce this desire. Susan Fournier has explored this said emotional relationship between consumers and brands. Her publication from 1998, frames this that the relationship consumers hold with their brand is actually very similar to interpersonal ones, since it involves trust, commitment, and feeling of belonging. These connections can be long-lasting, depending on the brand's presence in the consumer's life (Fournier, 1998). Years later, Fournier (2022) expands her investigation on how brands respond to such connections and how they try to meet consumer expectations. As an addition, Albert et al. (2008) introduce the concept of *brand love*, a deep bond that consumers develop toward certain brands. Some of the elements in this dynamic are attachment, and sometimes even self-expression, implying that brand relationships are not always fully rational. This means that buyers might perceive certain brands as part of their identity and feel dependent on the feelings of confidence, belonging, or validation. In such a context, brand relationships are mediated by logos and creative ads. Nevertheless, one of the most critical parts of a brand is its digital figures, individuals who act as trusted emotional advisors. Internet celebrities create these parasocial connections; therefore, when they recommend a product, the emotional credibility they have developed transmits the value of the product directly into the followers' sentiment, being convinced to buy. The psychologists

Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl (1956) referred to this dynamic as a *parasocial interaction*, a one-sided emotional relationship formed by audiences with internet celebrities who portray themselves as familiar and close, despite lacking actual reciprocity. Abidin (2018) cites Horton and Wohl in *Internet Celebrity* (p.8), describing these “parasocial relations” as the effect produced when influencers create the illusion of direct interaction as a potential result. Later on (p.9), there is a reference to Rojek (2016), noting how followers experience first-order intimacy through curated daily content, where the experience happens firsthand, and second-order intimacy, when they internalize the connection as real. This artificial stimulus is activated by language techniques that the influencer uses, as if they were directly talking to a friend, controlling their voice tone to sound more intimate. This possibility of “mutual recognition” becomes a powerful hook, making followers more willing to accept their recommendations as trustworthy and to embrace them.

Furthermore, one of the most effective ways for influencers to build this parasocial connection and act as trusted figures is through specific, engaging language. Emotionally loaded phrases that trigger urgency, desire, or validation. Typical expressions commonly used on social media platforms include “*It’s a must-have!*”, “*These are my essentials*”, “*I can’t live without it*” are carefully crafted to create some psychological reaction. Other phrases, such as “*This changed my life*” and “*You need this product in your routine,*” promote the feeling back mentioned in chapter 3.2.1, fear of missing out (FOMO), and other emotions creating the necessity. These statements carry social implications, framing the product as a solution for both satisfying a need and fulfilling social needs. This sentimentally driven language used by the influencer strengthens the consumer-brand relationship while reducing critical engagement at the same time. Therefore, it can be concluded that influencer marketing equals emotional branding that shapes the consumers’ feelings and behavior.

As internet platforms evolve, these relationships become closer and persuasive. In a short period of time, social media has given a new shape to how people connect with brands. The emotional relationships have become an essential part of the companies’ strategy. This opens the next thread of discussion regarding what types of consumer behavior these strategies provoke, especially when it comes to overconsumption patterns. Such considerations build the line of thought for the following section, which explores consumption trends triggered and promoted by social media. Online environments, specifically those driven by algorithmic content and influencer culture, create and encourage

certain patterns of overconsumption rather than more mindful or sustainable consumption (Frick et al., 2020). Such strategies carried out by companies through social media are key to examining why these trends develop.

3.4. Consumption trends

Considering that the previous dimension stated related to emotion and the relation between consumers and brands, this section of the chapter will be dedicated to the mechanisms of social influence and their impact on modern consumption patterns in a more elaborated way. Focusing on the social proof theory, it should be acknowledged that it originally applies to legal compliance. Still, it is relevant to apply to the studied case of influencers shaping consumer preferences. In this context, social validation often dictates both the perceived desirability of a product and the level of consumer trust (Eisend, 2006). Furthermore, this section will examine whether certain consumption patterns are more driven by emotional impulses or rational choice. Special attention should be given to emotionally-driven purchases, particularly among consumers who are pushed by influencers to be impulsive, and therefore, become buyers more likely to engage in overconsumption (Frick et al., 2020; Jackson, 2005). In contrast, the contrary phenomenon to be examined is underconsumption. This refers to consumers who intentionally restrict themselves and avoid impulsive purchases in favor of a more value-driven and intentional lifestyle (Alexander & Ussher, 2012; Black & Cherrier, 2010).

3.4.1. The social proof theory

The social proof theory is related to the social validation given in digital environments, where visibility is quantifiable and public. This theory applies originally in the context of legal behavior. Nevertheless, it was implemented in this investigation to explain how individuals comply with rules based on the observed behavior of others. Roy (2021), explains in *Theory of Social Proof and Legal Compliance: A Socio-Cognitive Explanation for Regulatory (Non)Compliance* that individuals are more likely to adopt certain behaviors when it is socially validated, especially in situations marked by uncertainty or lack of expertise. In internet celebrity environments, it applies to when followers base their purchase decisions not only on the recommendation given, but also on how the product is perceived by the number of likes, shares, reposts or positive comments. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube involve likes, comments, and other engagement metrics that give credibility to the creators, as well as desirability to the products or lifestyles promoted. This

visibility-centered on trust builds the perception of “everybody else is buying it / doing it”. The influencer becomes a social validator, fortifying the idea that a product is worth it because others seem to equally agree. In the same way, the content creators make use of emotionally compelling messages. Common phrases such as “*It’s a must!*”, “*I need this in my everyday routine*”, “*These are my essentials*”... are examples that strongly appeal to the user’s emotions, evoking urgency and desire, a need. This psychological effect of need bypasses rational evaluation, leading the consumer to perceive the product as something essential rather than satisfying an actual, meaningful purpose.

The core of modern consumer behavior theories stems from the contract between these emotional triggers and judgment reasoning. In two-sided advertising, the emotional appeals are more persuasive when paired with minimal rational justifications. Influencers often choose this strategy to build their curated language with rational claims, like affirming limited availability, or expert approval (Eisend, 2006). This added “logic” draws the consumer to a buying willingness. This induces the subsequent result: a hybrid form of consumption that joins emotional desire with selective reasoning. The rational person notices a discount code, or a due date for the purchase, but it is the emotional tone that leads to hitting the buy button. Referring once again to Seth Godin, consumers purchase not only the product, but the feeling they associate with it. Based on this, it should be taken into account that it is usually the consumption linked to emotions and fueled by social proof the ones that are related to excessive purchasing habits.

3.4.2. What is overconsumption

Today’s population is surrounded by things that are not really a need. Sometimes, these things are bought out of desire, but also because there is a quiet voice in the back of one’s consciousness that repeats and pressures to have more, especially the items that everyone talks about and prizes. In the age of digital influence, consumption has become less about utility and more about identity connected to a lifestyle projection. It becomes more about what the product says about the person. The constant exposure to curated content makes it increasingly difficult to distinguish between genuine necessity and socially conditioned desired. Elaborating further on this idea, overconsumption is a pattern of expenditure that exceeds individual needs, often driven by social validation, extreme desire, or identity performance, which is to say, buying too excessively for the wrong reasons. This behavior is accelerated by influencers, where the products recommended are more promoted as essential components of a desired lifestyle rather than as fully functional. Scott, Martin,

and Schouten (2014) defend that marketing has evolved into a system that actively promotes new materialism. Influencers normalize and glamorize consumption by embodying the lifestyle their audience aspires to. The relevance of the product is heavily limited to what it represents. Furthermore, there are some psychological and structural barriers to sustainable consumption. In fact, the current system is designed for exponential growth through diving into consumer anxieties, aspirations, and insecurities. In digital spaces, these anxieties are stimulated by constant exposure to curated content and algorithmically amplified trends (Jackson, 2005). Frick et al. (2020) examine this dynamic in their study on the impact of online environments on consumption behavior. Digital platforms have been found to tend to promote overconsumption rather than sufficiency, especially with personalized advertising and other types of algorithmic repetition. Like this, consumption also transforms into a way of staying up-to-date.

In this sphere, it can be affirmed that overconsumption is a systemically induced behavior, normalized, and made to feel necessary. Influencer marketing plays a key role in masking commercial intent with emotional connection. Overconsumption is the result of people purchasing with no intention and automatically, which has negative effects on sustainability, mental and financial well-being. Regardless, the exploration of this pattern has brought attention to the opposite effect: underconsumption.

3.4.3. What is underconsumption

Overconsumption is often driven by emotional impulse, social validation, and algorithmic repetition. On the other hand, underconsumption reflects an intentional shift away from that vicious cycle. It reflects on the voluntary limitation of consumption by choice. The motive behind this election frequently lies in ethical, environmental, or psychological reasons. There is the existence of a voluntary simplicity movement, in which the underconsumption involved emerges with the intention to experience more authenticity, more clarity, redefining what is *enough*. It is proven that individuals following this form of lifestyle prioritize their well-being, environmental sustainability, and other personal values over the wasteful accumulation of goods (Alexander & Ussher, 2012). This perspective aligns with the premise of Zavestoski (2002), who analyzes the social-psychological foundations of anti-consumption attitudes. Underconsumption also expresses a way of critique of the consumerist culture, a resistance to the idea that identity is built materialistically. Zavestoski agrees that these individuals show a greater alignment with their personal beliefs. Moreover, Black & Cherrier (2010) contribute to the cause by exploring anti-consumption as a daily

practice, following the motivations mentioned above. This way of thinking entails another living standards, different from the ones rejected, with small and consistent acts.

In contrast to the emotional urgency linked to influencer culture, underconsumption is slower, raising questions such as “*Do I really need this?*”. The intention is about being mindful and sustainable. Moreover, this seek for more reflective spending is often initiated by the user rather than imposed by the digital platform. Users follow accounts related to minimalist content or sustainability-focused influencers, aligning with their values rather than passively absorbing trends.

It should be taken into account that although underconsumption does not dominate the digital landscape like the latter does, it has enough impact to promote zero-waste habits and other minimalist trends like digital detox. However, this also raises a fundamental question: can underconsumption itself become yet another trend marketed by the same systems it attempts to resist? When influencers adopt this identity as part of their personal brand, it risks provoking two outcomes:

1. These influencers are following the minimalism trend to stay visible through the algorithm. The moment it stops being appealing to the public eye, they will follow whatever next movement will provide the most exposure. In other words, marketed overconsumption disguised as restraint.
2. These influencers are, in fact, promoting this lifestyle because of valid reasons, concerning sustainability and better habits. They intend to widespread the positive effect that underconsumption might have on other users.

These doubts are meant to prove whether underconsumption represents a genuine cultural shift or simply another marketable aesthetic.

For further comprehension, the table below provides a visual summary of both concepts.

Table 3. Overconsumption vs. Underconsumption

Characteristics	Overconsumption	Underconsumption
Definition	Buying impulsively or habitually.	Intentional limitation of consumption.
Motive	Social pressure, desire for visibility.	Sustainable values, mental clarity.
Consumption	Fast, repetitive, lack of	Slow and reflective.

mode	rationality.	
Emotional scope	Urgent and reactive to latest trends.	Calm and mindful.
Social influence	Amplified by the algorithm and influencers.	Chosen influence, initiated by followers, questioning trends promoted on social media.
Impact	Waste, stress, overspending.	Simplicity and well-being.
Example	Hauls, “must-haves”, viral short-lasting trends.	Zero-waste tips, digital detox, minimalism.

Source: Own elaboration

4. METHODOLOGY

This bachelor’s thesis employs qualitative methodology for conducting the research. It is based on case studies and documented analysis. This procedure has been chosen as the most effective one to critically examine how digital personalities function within social media platforms and condition consumer behavior, including its mental health consequences. For ensuring originality and objectivity on this investigation, the focus will be on researching real and accurate digital content from the social media platforms YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram. These channels are directly connected to influencer culture that gains most visibility. Building on this, the online materials to be analyzed will consist primarily of audiovisual posts, such as Reels, and other short-form videos such as TikToks, YouTube segments, and Instagram stories. Moreover, relevant content as captions and comments when needed for context. These publications have been selected due to their relevance in illustrating examples and their relevance to the main topics discussed in the third chapter, theoretical framework, including but not limited to persuasion and manipulation in section 3.2, emotional branding in 3.3, and consumption patterns in 3.4. Special attention has been given to content that demonstrates the persuasive landscape and shows emotionally charged language, either reinforcing or challenging consumerist principles.

Making use of this method, a rigorous application of the theories taken into consideration is possible. For instance, the Two-Step Flow Theory, the concept of parasocial relationships, and Cialdini’s principles of persuasion; along with the definitions provided. To apply this theoretical framework, paired with real digital interactions, is the adequate context for enabling a proper and meaningful interpretation for to what extent influencers affect their audiences. In this manner, the first three chapters serve as a progression for the upcoming

one, the fifth, *Analysis and Discussion*, representing the core of this research paper. Cohesion is ensured among chapters to examine the observed outcomes. Equally important, these meanings facilitate the evaluation of algorithmic visibility, ethical concerns, and identity embodiment.

These aspects are an essential component for understanding the branding of internet celebrities in digital communities. It also helps to shed light on the overconsumption and underconsumption patterns formed by the curated tone, messaging, and branding strategies involving the selected content. All audiovisual content used is listed in the Annex, counting with links, content creator usernames, the platform, and date of publication, with a short description. This transparency allows the reader to refer to the sources, should it be desired.

To conclude this Methodology chapter, analyzing real content allows for a grounded interpretation of how influence based on personal branding operates today. Having direct digital material available ensures that the research remains both critically reflective while being contextually relevant. On top of that, it should be acknowledged that this methodology provides broader implications regarding the meaningful patterns that could be paired with certain social and psychological responses. The insights that appear below in the following sections will have a meaning in the understanding of communicative strategies, psychological tools, and the ethical dimensions involved that define the influencer's *influence* in contemporary society.

This bachelor's thesis has incorporated the use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and others, in a form to complementary support certain academic tasks. The use of IA has been used for the reformulation of specific sections, organization of the index and complex ideas, and optimization of academic writing. The utilization purpose has been solely ethical and responsible, without substituting the author's original critical thinking. The content included in the case study analysis and final conclusions has been developed independently, based on cited academic bibliography. This incorporation aligns with the academic integrity guidelines established for this research's purposes.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Who are the primary audiences of influencers?

In the contemporary landscape of digital social media platforms, influencers have redefined audience segmentation by particularly capturing the attention of the younger

demographics. This section addresses three crucial aspects: to begin with, the vulnerability of children and other young followers when getting involved in social media platforms; after that, the foundational causes behind Generation Z's growing preference for recommendations given by influencers over traditional celebrities; and lastly, the emergence of parasocial relationships that impact a broad range of users. It is most noticeable among the young audiences, who spend significant hours immersed in social media contexts. In the next three subsections, the exposure to curated content will be explored, and how it shifts consumption patterns. In the same way, how it influences the identity and emotional development, and the perceptions of influencers' authenticity. As it has been presented before in the theoretical framework, cases such as the Wren Eleanor controversy are an example of the complexity involved in the exposure of minors to digital influence and the ethical challenges this entails.

5.1.1. Young adolescents and children as vulnerable targets

Children and adolescents represent one of the most likely to impress audiences, and this implies they are also the most at risk in the influencer systems. Due to their developing cognitive structures and limited literacy regarding the working of advertising, children under the age of 12 often do not have the capacity yet to discern between the intent behind sponsored content paired with entertainment. This lack of cognitive capacity makes it difficult for them to detect the persuasive intent behind this commercial material. Packer et al. (2022) prove through a meta-analysis that young audiences lack reasoning capability when confronted with advertising, making them vulnerable to the noticeable influencer content. What is more, the influencer marketing framework deliberately benefit from these cognitive vulnerabilities by disguising their sponsors within authentic content. This specific audience is targeted by selling products through personal recommendations through apparent trust. Such environments pose challenges to children regarding engaging with social media material they consume through critical evaluation (De Veirman et al., 2019). Beyond the inability to distinguish, there is another reason why children could be perceived as a vulnerable target, and it is related to parental practices that promote and frequently even force their exposure. Many parents actively share their children's personal images and videos through digital platforms. This constant public documentation can lead the minors to emotional stress, as their private lives become widely viewed, and curated by demanding parents. Moreover, the excessive exposure of minors in these applications carries additional risks, notably by attracting the attention of predators who benefit from the lack of safeguarding measures. Regardless of whether the parents regulate their children's social online participation or not,

this viral potential of apparently harmless content magnifies the dangers of children's exposure.

On the other hand, young adolescents are susceptible to a different yet equally concerning vulnerability. Often struggling to comprehend that the images they see on social media might not represent real bodies and could be the effect of digitally altered ideals. This context can lead to body dissatisfaction and the development of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), especially taking into account the development stage of adolescents who are experiencing natural events changing their own bodies. At times, the discomfort triggers them to undergo cosmetic procedures to meet unrealistic beauty standards imposed by social media and the internet celebrities they follow. Particularly, adolescent girls may experience the consequences of body dysmorphia through frustration with their bodies and their image, sometimes resulting in surgical procedures such as rhinoplasty, which can eventually end in regret. This phenomenon highlights the possible negative effects of edited and curated social media on the self-perception and mental health of these individuals.

Paradoxically, many of these internet celebrities that young people try to emulate have similar body image issues. Some public figures have expressed the same concerns regarding body dysmorphia, even when they are perceived as the ideal body and face. This paradox reveals a pattern in social media contexts, in which unrealistic beauty standards actually affect not only adolescents but also other demographics.

5.1.2. Trust shift: why Gen Z prefer influencers for purchasing decisions

In past times, people considered “influential” were the celebrities who appeared on digital platforms, such as television, through advertisements, or were exposed in public spaces on billboards. Today, however, anyone could become an influencer. It could be a friend, a neighbor, a work partner, or even oneself, without the need to become a famous actor or descendant of a wealthy family. Now, the possibility of becoming famous is within reach for whoever with a stable internet connection and a social media account. Under this public visibility, an audience can be reached, as long as the content creator seems accessible, sincere, and relatable, along with the other not-so-authentic traits discussed in previous chapters.

This shift is the consequence of how trust is built in recent generations. Generation Z is more likely to rely on those who seem more emotionally accessible, rather than institutionally validated. In this context, transparency is the quality that this audience seeks to

follow content creators, a dynamic that aligns with the parasocial relationships explored in the theoretical framework (Abidin, 2018; Horton & Wohl, 1956). Moreover, the personal narrative influencers use when recommending a product, the young audience overlooks that it is in fact advertising. Gen Z often follows content that is communicated through aesthetic storytelling. Emotional branding allows Gen Z to feel like their consumption patterns are the result of personal choice, rather than a response to marketing (Fournier, 1998; Albert et al., 2008). As an outcome, purchasing behavior becomes affect-driven and less reflective.

Social media platforms amplify this dynamic through engagement and personalization prioritized by algorithms. According to Cotter (2019), influencers stay present in users' main feeds through aligning their content with the platform's demands. Being continuously exposed increases familiarity and reinforces the illusion of authenticity, a key factor behind why followers place more trust in influencers than in traditional celebrities. Lazarsfeld & Katz (1955) explained through the Two-Step Flow Theory that influencers curate their content by filtering and reframing emotionally in ways that resonate with what their audiences expect and desire. Today, this emotional meditation exceeds beyond information and takes part into the identity construction, shaping not only how followers consume, but how they see themselves. The transition from admiration to attachment states a deeper change in the role that influencers play in daily life. What begins as inspiration to acquire new products, gradually evolves into emotional dependency, where the influencer's lifestyle is internalized. The possible consequences of this imbalanced dynamic will be discussed in the next section on regard of parasitic relationships and emotional connection with influencers.

5.1.3. Parasitic relationships and the emotional connection with influencers

The emotional connection that followers build with influencers often excess admiration and reaches a more complex form of attachment. The follower invests emotionally in the internet celebrity, while the celebrity is only vaguely aware of the latter's existence. There is a bigger conscious of the followers as a group, since not all of them have the opportunity to become directly noticed. In the social media context, scholars call this phenomenon parasocial relationships, which are emotional bonds that are perceived as personal, but remain largely one-sided. Horton and Wohl (1956) defined that parasocial relationships arise when followers feel in an intimate, reciprocal relationship with a media persona, even though not so many real interactions exists. An example of a possible way for

the audience to feel acknowledged is when the content creator reacts to messages in the comment section, or on Instagram when creates a “question and answers” box and only replies to some of them. This is still not a direct way to establish a communication thread with the influencer, but it could be referred as a possible way to interact.

Crystal Abidin reinforces this idea in her work *Internet Celebrity* (Abidin, 2018). In influencer culture, social media has reshaped the conditions for this illusion of intimacy. What is more, it is explained how influencers actively promote parasocial relations through strategic self-disclosure, while followers feel emotionally close, despite the absence of actual mutual engagement. The defining characteristic of social media consists of the added possibility of being acknowledged through likes, comments or Direct Messages (DMs), which enhances the illusion of reciprocity, even though the relationship remains asymmetrical (Abidin, 2018, p.8). This idea leads to what Abidin calls first and second order intimacy. First-order intimacy refers to the direct consumption of content: daily vlogs, personal stories, behind-the-scenes posts that promote closeness. Second-order intimacy is given when followers internalize the personality of the influencer and create affective perceptions of their personality, values, and lifestyle. This fictional bond is often intensified by using language and visual appeal that acts as interpersonal interaction, in which the influencer interacts with the camera as if talking to a friend, or sharing life updates as if in a private conversation. This type of behavior, when repeated in the long term, can lead to a parasitic emotional structure, where the follower not only trusts but *needs* the influencer to maintain this sense of belonging. As previously discussed in section 3.3.1 of the theoretical framework, these emotional contexts make a finer line between personal identity and external influence, creating an affective branding that extends beyond commercial logic. The audience begins to portray the influencer as part of their internal wellbeing landscape, since the account they follow represents a validation for their lifestyle, choices, aspirations, even if the connection is entirely mediated and curated.

This characteristic is especially recognizable among younger adolescents, who are still developing their identities and sometimes seek a certain social status. While these parasitic relationships are not inherently harmful and may offer comfort or a sense of belonging, they entail possible psychological risks. The risk arises when the content creator begins to replace roles typically filled by real-life figures such as friends or family members. In such instances, emotional dependence can distort expectations and decrease critical

thinking. It ought to be taken into account that the influencer is not passive in this environment. They benefit from their audience's loyalty by monetizing trust through affiliate links, brand deals, or sponsored content. As emotional involvement increases, followers tend to reduce their evaluative thinking, which obviates the persuasive impact, although there is no intention to harm. This merging of emotional loyalty with commercial strategy makes parasocial relationships key to realizing the extension of influencer marketing.

5.2. Ethical concerns in influencer marketing

5.2.1. Authentic vs. fake influencers: a spectrum of honesty

While it may be tempting to categorize influencers into two groups like good versus bad, honest versus dishonest, or real versus fake, the reality is far more complex. The influencer landscape functions along a spectrum, where ethical and authentic behavior often exists in shades of gray rather than absolute truths. There are, in fact, creators whose practices advocate for transparency and conscious content, and others engage in practices that involve ethical concerns. The tension exists within the nuances that shape influencers' content. It is noteworthy, that part of this critique no longer comes solely from academic voices or traditional media, but also from within the ecosystem itself, a self-critique from within.

In recent years, numerous content creators have begun to call out the problematic aspects of influencer culture from their own platforms. These critiques emerge on Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, above all, frequently from influencers who have experience in working with brands and promoted affiliated discount links. This questioning leads to reflection and growing awareness among influencers themselves of the contradictions in their media business. The critiques vary from concerns over the lack of honesty and transparency to the encouragement of unrealistic routines, toxic body standards, and the romanticization of excessive consumption. This critique from the inside illustrates contradictions at the very core of influencer culture. In the past chapter three, the theoretical framework, influencer visibility is built mostly on algorithmic favor, emotional closeness, and monetized trust (discount codes and personal links). When influencers upload heavily curated and often surgically enhanced images as authentic, they provoke comparison, frustration, and insecurity in their followers (Marwick, 2013; Abidin, 2018). Many responsible content creators are now openly questioning their system by calling out overconsumption, deception, and unrealizable standards.

While section 5.1.3 focused on adolescents' vulnerability, this issue of lack of transparency affects all audiences. Influencers often deny having had gone through cosmetic procedures, only to later admit to it in different videos, creating confusion and questioning the authenticity of the rest of the uploaded content. Although no person is forced to disclose personal treatments or give explanations, those who profit from the appearance and market it as natural, particularly after they have been asked about it, or have different statements on different videos, should have a self-imposed responsibility to be honest. Young women are the most affected in this contradiction, since many of them turn to surgery to emulate filtered features. TikTok creators like Evey Aminey (2024) and Alexa Gantz (2024) have publicly regretted their rhinoplasties, expressing a desire to be able to reverse the procedures to their original noses. These two people reflect the damage of longing for a specific appearance that is, in truth, altered and misrepresented. Visuals reinforce this altered appearance. Carefully selected angles, lighting, and filters are paired with discourses that frame success as effortless, attributing it to luck or a brief, easy-to-replicate process, suggesting that such outcomes are universally attainable, provided by minimal effort. As affirmed in section 3.3, this framed language and visuals increase legitimacy and reduce critical awareness at the same time. Although this mentioned dishonesty might seem difficult to notice, it is documented. For example, the YouTube content creator Hannah Alonzo (2024, 2025) has two videos for "*Calling Out Influencers for Lying*", exposing substantial contradictions in some influencers' claims. Her channel, dedicated to this type of content, illustrates how content creators fluctuate in denial and confession, confusing viewers and reinforcing the idea of a performed identity. Ultimately, the honesty spectrum in influencer branding exposes a major dilemma. Some push for transparency, but many darken the truth while monetizing parasocial relations. Followers, notable the most impressionable ones, are left vulnerable to unrealistic standards, that are disguised as authenticity.

5.2.2. The rise of cult-like followings and hyperconsumism

Some internet celebrities cultivate communities that go beyond admiration, developing a kind of digital cult, based on loyalty and uncritical devotion. Not only do the followers increase their chances of buying a recommended product, but also they adopt their lifestyle as part of their identity. In this consumption dynamic, products are framed as "essential" by satisfying a non-existent need prior to seeing their post. Often using language that reinforces compulsive buying patterns through emotionally charged frames around the advertisement. Abidin's (2018) and Fournier's (1998) ideas discuss this behavior rooted in

parasocial intimacy and emotional branding, where the influencer's atmosphere becomes aspirational, and their suggestions are unquestioned.

5.2.3. Fast fashion and health risks: harmful products

Fast fashion will be examined more in depth in the next section, 5.3, nevertheless, it is important to analyze how many influencers actively promote fast fashion brands (Shein being one of the most recognizable brands), without addressing or gaining consciousness of the potential risks related to the clothing they support. Aside from the well-known environmental and labor concerns, the fast fashion phenomenon poses direct dangers to consumers through the use of toxic substances and poor material quality. As Anguelov (2025) and Niinnimäki et al. (2020) underscore that items often contain heavy metals, phthalates, and formaldehyde, dangerous chemical components that cause skin irritation, allergic reactions, and long-term exposure risks. Influencers, through haul videos and rapid "try-on's content, normalize these risks by focusing on affordability, appearance, and viral appeal according to the latest trends. Moreover, this clothing's origins are not always clearly disclosed. The accelerated production model behind fast fashion platforms like Shein, overlooks transparency and sacrifices quality for profit and volume (Hobson, 2013; Fang, 2023). There are other investigations on how Gen Z consumers begin to disengage from such brands only after being conscious of the environmental and health complications, which is a gap that influencer marketing rarely targets (Zimand-Sheiner & Lassitsa, 2024). The absence of commentary and inaction of some individuals is part of this type of influencers who continue promoting products that are visually appealing, low-cost products, so they purchase in immense quantities for hauls. Fast fashion brands are chosen for prioritizing engagement over social and environmental responsibility. Ekström (2014) and Davenport (2024) argue, this short-term consumption that is driven by image and trends, entails deeper and more concerning consequences than thought, regarding the well-being of the audiences who consume it.

5.3. Overconsumption promoted by influencers

Consumerism has been elevated to a new level. Although it has been long embedded in marketing strategies, influencer culture has given it a more creative and equally successful shift. Influencers advertise products, but they promote lifestyles grounded in constant acquisition. This overconsumption is framed not as excess, but as self-expression, routine, or even empowerment. Social media platforms amplify this message through curated content, where hauls, must-haves, and "a day in my life" posts normalize purchasing new products as

part of daily living. As Ekström (2014) and Fang (2023) argue that users mimic buying behaviors to feel socially validated. Influencers' audiences fall into the overconsumption cycle due to being constantly encouraged to follow their internet celebrities' lifestyle and purchasing patterns. This dynamic affects all users. Nevertheless, commercial campaigns such as Black Friday, Christmas, Valentine's Day, or "back-to-school" seasons. The effect of these occasions becomes annual rituals, and the perfect excuse for buying. Influencers make use of these special events to frame their product deals. With discount codes, countdowns, and "gift guides," turning social media is turning into an urgency-driven marketplace.

5.3.1. Connection between social media and impulse buying

The connection between influencer content and impulse buying is well-documented across both academic literature and social media. Influencers capitalize on emotional appeal, time-limited deals, and algorithmic visibility to trigger unexpected purchases. Cialini's principles of scarcity (expressions such as "limited discount", "online only" or "special edition"), and authority ("I have been using this for months", "this is me before and after using it") are widely used to lower critical thinking and speed up decision-making (Cialdini, 2009). Fick et al. (2020) confirm that social media environments are specifically structured to promote overconsumption, especially in categories like fashion and beauty. Constant and endless scrolling, visually appealing packaging, and curated backgrounds make the users less reflective, turning casual browsing into immediate action. Some articles refer to how affiliate systems promote this call for immediate purchasing by financially incentivizing influencers to create urgency and repetition. The more natural the product looks through relatable narratives that look integrated into daily life practices, the more effective the persuasion is (Empower, 2024; Markerly, 2022). Influencers regularly engineer consumption patterns to incite an impulsive routine, rarely questioning the actual utility or necessity of the products.

5.3.2. Role of influencers in promoting fast fashion brands and food waste

Social media algorithms play a crucial role in amplifying influencer content, particularly, videos that promote excessive buying, not only of clothes but also food. The viral nature of this type of content reinforces a culture of overconsumption, where the products advertised satisfy a desire that is disconnected from the actual need or use. Most fast fashion and "food entertainment" become performances rather than practical activities, reinforcing unsustainable behavior under the guise of digital engagement. In the case of fast

fashion, influencers collaborate with brands such as Shein, Temu, or AliExpress, despite the current widespread environmental awareness and other concerns related to mass consumption and production, such as ethical and health matters. These partnerships often fail to acknowledge the publicly proven risks of wearing synthetic fibers, hazardous chemicals used as dyes, which leave residues in clothing. The content creator Dave Disci, for example, posted on Instagram a reel, critically addressing the presence of harmful chemicals in clothing sold by these platforms (Shein, Temu...). He refers to reports from mainstream media and academic studies to sustain his arguments (Disci, 2025). Similarly, Ally Viamalama (2025) posted a video describing the negative environmental consequences associated with Shein's operations, paying special attention to pollution, unsustainable materials, and labor violations. On the other hand, Gabriela Romańska (2025) also warns against the widespread use of acrylic in sweaters from Zara, highlighting the risks of the synthetic fibers that irritate the skin and cause high pollution.

However, not all brand collaborations contribute to hazardous companies. While influencer deals with names like Shein have often bad connotations due to their contribution to overproduction and unethical labor practices, other brands such as CIRCUCO are exclusively focused on circular, vegan, and conscious fashion, which can be understood as a step closer to ethical consumption. One of the influencers who promotes more conscious practices is Irene Nortes, who has collaborated with CIRCUCO, to advocate for slow fashion. Irene Nortes is an example of how some influencers advocate for slow fashion, sustainable alternatives. It is proof that content creators can also educate their audience to more environmentally conscious purposes. Overconsumption is not limited only to fashion and make-up. Influencers frequently produce food-related content, producing meals with no nutritional purpose but high visual shock value. Scott Hentzepeter has gained significant attention for rage-baiting food videos. Rage-baiting is an audience response that some content creators actively seek, in which the users (not necessarily their followers) get extremely frustrated or disappointed with the content they are watching. As an outcome, people leave numerous negative comments, which in the end, simply feed the algorithm into thinking it is what people want to see, and therefore, promotes it more on the main pages of the platform. In one of his videos, Scott Hentzepeter mixes sardines, crackers, peas, and Red Bull with his bare hands and consumes it. In another, he drains noodles into a toilet before eating them (Hentzepeter, 2025). Although in this case, food is not technically wasted, the intent is not nourishment, but provocation. What is concerning, is that both these videos have 1.2 million likes, and the

latter has 115 thousand likes. These reels trivialize food and normalize consumption as spectacle. Likewise, influencer Sthefanny Oliveira (2025) follows a similar unreflective narrative, such as pouring out large amounts of Coca-Cola into various containers only to discard it immediately. This kind of visual content contributes to a troubling disconnect between consumption and purpose. Even when food is eaten, and only used as entertainment, it undermines values of sustainability and respect (Ekström, 2014; Davenport, 2024). It promotes behavior where waste is visually appealing, and emotions like disgust or rage become key in capturing attention.

These trends are part of a wider social dynamic where influencers take part in promoting consumerism on a bigger scale. Fashion trends promoted on TikTok, such as the “office Siren” aesthetic characterized by very short skirts, blazers, and heels, gained viral popularity. In one widely reported case, a woman was terminated from her employment due to her showing up to work dressed in that style, raising debate over how far influencer-driven trends should rule real-life behavior (Friesen, 2025). Despite this, there are channels that promote alternative and minimalistic practices. YouTube channel *Living Minimal* advocate for reduced materialism and conscious consumption, suggesting an opposite narrative to overconsumption. Though less promoted by the algorithm, these platforms demonstrate that social media can also support deeper thought regarding purchases and sustainable practices, only in the case of users who are willing to surpass the most visible trends.

5.4. Underconsumption trends

Overconsumption dominates most of the current social media platforms. In influencer culture, there is a shift toward digital narratives that promote intentional living, sustainability, and reduced materialism. These underconsumption trends reflect a deeper cultural transformation where consumption is no longer framed as a sign of success, but as a responsibility. As Jackson (2005) argues, motivating sustainable consumption is more about setting limits to purchasing habits. There is a need for a transformation of the definition of satisfaction, well-being, and personal identity. Influencers who internalize this approach are key in questioning overconsumption and encourage sustainability. While their content may not receive the same algorithmic attention as more visually excessive trends, these creators have equally loyal followings by promoting value-driven lifestyles. Their accounts represent a counterbalance to the culture of accumulation, giving more importance to reduced materialism and sustainable practices.

5.4.1. Minimalist influencers and sustainability trends.

Minimalist influencers reject the idea that more products are equal to social status. Slow fashion, decluttered aesthetics, and personal well-being over brand accumulation are examples of what they prioritize on their social media accounts. These creators often frame their message within principles of anti-consumption (Zavestoski, 2002), intentional simplicity (Alexander & Ussher, 2012), and emotional well-being through reduced material dependency (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Lloyd, 2023). Rather than highlighting constant new products, they focus on longevity, quality, and conscious purchases.

An example of this evolution is the Instagram account Carnivore Aurelius, which has declared his personal commitment to constructing a wardrobe composed only of natural fabrics such as cotton, wool, linen, and silk. He rejects synthetic garments for their environmental and health consequences. Moreover, Irene Nortes, as aforementioned, has brand collaborations with ethical fashion companies such as CIRCU. She promotes sustainable fashion cycles, buying second-hand clothing, transparency regarding clothing production, and slow consumption. These partnerships prioritize ethical buying, the durability of the product, and circular design to promote less negative environmental and health implications. Content creator Ellie, also refers to this trend by critically analyzing companies such as Zara and H&M, highlighting their use of synthetic materials and harmful chemicals. Her posts regularly pay attention to alternatives and encourage audiences to question popular purchasing patterns. These content creators demonstrate that underconsumption is achievable through everyday choices. This growing wave of minimalist content is significant not only for its message, but for how it reclaims digital space for more lifestyles that are aspirational as well, without being driven by overconsumption.

5.4.2. From food waste to sustainable food practices and reducing waste

A growing trend of food-focused influencers promotes sustainable eating by reframing food as a resource, not only content. Their platforms highlight care, intention, and waste reduction through everyday choices. Justine Doiron exemplifies this in her posts about “*No longer buying groceries*” series, where she cooks only without shopping for further groceries to avoid waste (Doiron, 2025). Although this is not explicitly minimalism, it still encourages a thoughtful approach to food rooted in relatability. Carleigh Bodrug posts for the same niche with her “*Scrappy Cooking*” series, turning scraps and leftovers into nutritious, plant-based meals. (Bodrug, 2025). Both creators promote a perspective of using food for

sufficiency, not spectacle. They also share apps like *Too Good To Go*, batch cooking, and zero-waste recipes, shifting the focus from performance to purpose. The value is on ingredients and minimizing waste. Sustainability-centered brand partnerships are becoming more common nowadays. Sustainable companies also seek collaborations with influencers whose lifestyles reflect environmental values. This position regarding sustainable content stands a major contrast with food waste and rage-baiting content explored earlier.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

This bachelor's thesis has explored how influencers shape consumer behavior, identity, and ethics through personal branding, persuasive techniques, and emotional appeal. While many advocate for overconsumption and a curated lifestyle driven by algorithmic visibility, others advocate for sustainability and mindful practices. This study does not portray all influencers negatively. It is not a condemnation of influencer culture, the aim is to highlight the need for conscious engagement with it. In today's digital landscape, marketing carries hidden messages. As followers, people must learn to rationalize what is being sold to us and why, and how it affects our decisions and values. Influencers are more than entertainers, they are powerful mediators of identity and consumption. There is a responsibility to reflect on the influence on users' lives. This awareness leads to a more selective approach to the content on social media. The audience should choose wisely, whose messages align with transparency, ethics, and authenticity.

To conclude, this bachelor's thesis encourages a more critical, balanced perspective. Not all influence is harmful. It can also educate and inspire. The key is in how the population responds to it. By selecting who to trust and let the influence in, supporting responsible accounts and becoming aware of the own consumption habits, there is a possibility to take an active role in shaping a more thoughtful and ethical digital culture.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abidin, C. (2018). *Internet Celebrity: Understanding Fame Online*. Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Albert, N., Merunka, D., & Vallette-Florence, P. (2008, February). When consumers love their brands: Exploring the concept and its dimensions. *Journal of Business Research*, 61(10), 1062 - 1075.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2007.09.014>
- Alexander, S., & Ussher, S. (2012, April 23). The Voluntary Simplicity Movement: A multi-national survey analysis in theoretical context. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 12(1), 66-68.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540512444019>
- Alexander, S., & Ussher, S. (2012, April 23). The Voluntary Simplicity Movement: A multi-national survey analysis in theoretical context. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 12(1), 66-86.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540512444019>
- Anguelov, N. (2015). *The Dirty Side of the Garment Industry: Fast Fashion and Its Negative Impact on Environment and Society*. Taylor & Francis.
- Black, I. R., & Cherrier, H. (2010, November). Anti-Consumption as Part of Living a Sustainable Lifestyle: Daily Practices, Contextual Motivations and Subjective Values. *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 9(6), 437–453. 10.1002/cb.337
- Cialdini, R. B., & Cialdini, R. B. (2009). *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. HarperCollins e-books.
- Cotter, K. (2019, April Volume 21, Issue 4, Pages 895-913). Playing the visibility game: How digital influencers and algorithms negotiate influence on Instagram. *New Media & Society*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818815684>
- The curse of the new. How the accelerating pursuit of the new is driving hyper-consumption. (2014).
In K. M. Ekström (Ed.), *Waste Management and Sustainable Consumption: Reflections on Consumer Waste*. Routledge.
- Davenport, S. (2024, June). *Overconsumption in the Clothing Industry*. Exploration of Ways Clothing Production Can Be More Sustainable.
<https://omeka-wou.s3.amazonaws.com/original/d608e7d103f756f4edb807016b1f0379325da945.pdf>

- De Veirman, M., Hudders, L., & Nelson, M. R. (2019, December). What Is Influencer Marketing and How Does It Target Children? A Review and Direction for Future Research. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02685
- Eisend, M. (2006, June). Two-sided advertising: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23(2), 187-198. 10.1016/j.ijresmar.2005.11.001
- Ekström, K. M. (Ed.). (2014). *Waste Management and Sustainable Consumption: Reflections on Consumer Waste*. Routledge.
- Ekström, K. M. (Ed.). (2014). *Waste Management and Sustainable Consumption: Reflections on Consumer Waste*. Routledge.
- Empower. (2024, June 10). *Influenced: How persuasion powers purchasing decisions*.
<https://www.empower.com/the-currency/life/influenced-how-persuasion-powers-purchasing-decisions-news>
- Fang, B. (2023, October 13). Environmental and Human Impacts of Fast Fashion. *Communications in Humanities Research*, 15, 166-171. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7064/15/20230660>
- Fick, V., Matthies, E., Thøgersen, J., & Santarius, T. (2020, August 25). Do online environments promote sufficiency or overconsumption? Online advertisement and social media effects on clothing, digital devices, and air travel consumption. *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 20(2), 288-308. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1855>
- Fournier, S. (1998, February). Consumers and Their Brands: Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24(4), 343 - 73.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24098988_Consumers_and_Their_Brands_Developing_Relationship_Theory_in_Consumer_Research
- Fournier, S., Breazeale, M., & Fetscherin, M. (Eds.). (2012). *Consumer-Brand Relationships: Theory and Practice*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Fuchs, C. (2014). *Social Media: A Critical Introduction*. SAGE Publications.
- Gavilanes Gómez, N. (2024). Construction of a conceptual framework on Influencer Marketing based on a literature review. *Revista Tecnológica ciencia y educación Edwards Deming*, 8-2, 50-58. <https://www.revista-edwardsdeming.com/index.php/es/article/view/134>

- Godin, S. (2012). *All Marketers are Liars*. Portfolio.
- Godin, S. (2018, november 7). What Your Dog Knows About Marketing. *Medium*.
<https://sethgodinwrites.medium.com/what-your-dog-knows-about-marketing-97cb61c5bc9c>
- Gupta, M., Jassi, A., & Krebs, G. (2023, August). The association between social media use and body dysmorphic symptoms in young people. *Frontiers in psychology*, *14*(1231801).
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1231801>
- Hobson, J. (2013, July). To die for? The health and safety of fast fashion. *Occupational medicine*, *63*(5), 317-319. <https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqt079>
- Influencer Discount Codes: How They Work & When to Use Them. (n.d.). *GRIN*.
<https://grin.co/blog/influencer-discount-codes-how-and-when-to-use-them/>
- Influencer Marketing Hub & Viral nation. (2024). *The State of Influencer Marketing - 2024*.
https://influencermarketinghub.com/ebooks/Influencer_Marketing_Benchmark_Report_2024.pdf
- Influencer Marketing Report May 2024*. (2024, June 26). Influencer Marketing Hub.
<https://influencermarketinghub.com/may-influencer-marketing-report/>
- Jaafar, G. B., & Herna, H. (2024). *The Impact of Media in Cancel Culture Phenomenon*. Jurnal Komunikasi Ikatan Sarjana Komunikasi Indonesia.
<https://www.jurnal-iski.or.id/index.php/jkiski/article/view/893>
- Jackson, T. (2005, January). Motivating Sustainable Consumption. *Sustainable Development Research Network*.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242600751_Motivating_Sustainable_Consumption
- Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2018). *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*. NYU Press.
- Jerslev, A. (2016). In The Time of the Microcelebrity Celebification and the YouTuber Zoella. *International Journal of Communication*, *10*, 5233-5251.
<http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/5078/1822>
- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1955). *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications*. Transaction Publishers.

- Khamis, S., Ang, L., & Welling, R. (2017). *Self-branding, 'micro-celebrity' and the rise of Social Media Influencers*. *Celebrity Studies*, 8 (2), 191-208
- Lloyd, K., & Pennington, W. (2020, February 16). Towards a Theory of Minimalism and Wellbeing. *International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology*, 5, 121-136.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s41042-020-00030-y>
- Lloyd, K. Low-Consumption Lifestyles and Well-Being. (2023). In R. Brinkmann (Ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Sustainability*. Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-01949-4_96
- Markerly. (2022, June 28). Do Influencers Make Money From Discount Codes? *Markerly - Content Marketing*. <https://markerly.com/pulse/do-influencers-make-money-from-discount-codes/>
- Marwick, A. E. (2013). *Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity, and Branding in the Social Media Age*. Yale University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vkzxr>
- Meza, A. (2022, August). Caso Eleanor Wren: ¿publicar imágenes de niños en redes sociales? *France24*. <https://f24.my/8o52>
- Niinimäki, K., Peters, G., Dahlbo, H., Perry, P., Rissanen, T., & Gwilt, A. (2020, April 7). The environmental price of fast fashion. *Nature Reviews. Earth and Environment*, 1, 189–200.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s43017-020-0039-9>
- Packer, J., Croker, H., Goddings, A.-L., Boyland, E. J., Stansfield, C., Russel, S. J., & Viner, R. M. (2022, December 1). Advertising and Young People's Critical Reasoning Abilities: Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *Pediatrics*, 150(6). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2022-057780>
- Rojek, C. (2016). *Presumed Intimacy: Parasocial Interaction in Media, Society and Celebrity Culture*. Polity Press.
- Rowley, J. (2008). Understanding digital content marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 24(5-6), 517 - 540. <https://doi.org/10.1362/026725708X325977>
- Roy, S. (2021, March 17). Theory of Social Proof and Legal Compliance: A Socio-Cognitive Explanation for Regulatory (Non) Compliance. *German Law Journal*, 22(2), 238-255.
[doi:10.1017/glj.2021.5](https://doi.org/10.1017/glj.2021.5)

- Santora, J. (2024, December 13). *35 Influencer Marketing Statistics Shaping 2024*. Influencer Marketing Hub. <https://influencermarketinghub.com/influencer-marketing-statistics/>
- Scott, K., Martin, D. M., & Schouten, J. (2014, August). Marketing and the New Materialism. *Journal of Macromarketing*, *34*(3), 282-290. 10.1177/0276146714532471
- Senft, T. M. (2008). *Camgirls: Celebrity and Community in the Age of Social Networks*. Lang.
- Sharma, B. C. (2025, March 20). Exploring the Influence of Eco-Conscious Influencers on Promoting Sustainable Products. *Current Trends in Technology and Science*, *13*(5), 1-6. <https://ctts.in/index.php/ctts/article/view/5>
- Simončič, K. (2021, September 21). Fast Fashion: A Case of Social Harm and State-Corporate Crime. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, *60*(3), 343-369. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hojo.12435>
- Stanev, V. (2017). ADVERTISING IN THE AGE OF HYPER CONSUMPTION. *Trakia Journal of Sciences*, *14*(1), 186-190. doi:10.15547/tjs.2017.s.01.034
- Understanding Influencer Codes and Affiliate Links – Markerly Pulse. (2022, March 2). *Markerly*. <https://markerly.com/pulse/influencer-codes-affiliate-links/>
- Zavestoski, S. (2002, January 17). The social–psychological bases of anticonsumption attitudes. *Psychology & Marketing*, *19*(2). <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.10007>
- Zimand-Sheiner, D., & Lissitsa, S. (2024, November). Generation Z - factors predicting decline in purchase intentions after receiving negative environmental information: Fast fashion brand SHEIN as a case study. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *81*(103999). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.103999>

ANNEX

TIKTOK

Alexa Gantz [@alexagantz]. (2024, February 6) Replying to @Kate #turkey #istabul #rhinoplasty #ethniconosejobrecovery [Video]. TikTok <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZNd2p8Csy/> Last access: November 2024

ULTIMATE [@ultimatebykomi]. (2024, August 6) He really has annoyed me! @samaraleilani #plasticsurgeonfail #fyp #badtoworse Plastic surgeon ruined my nose for \$21,000 [Video]. TikTok <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZNd2p8NwB/> Last access: January 2025

90°**Madison Beer**°90 [@beermadison]. (2024, August 18) This is your sight to see that celebrities have insecurities too!! no one is perfect, please keep eating normally and as... [Video]. TikTok <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZNd2pDGmA/> Last access: April 2025

Evey Aminey [@eveyaminey0]. (2024, November 13) Never cried so hard 😞 #turkey #istabul #rhinoplasty #ethniconosejobrecovery [Video]. TikTok <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZNd2pkXTE/> Last access: January 2025

YOUTUBE

Zoeunlimited. (2023, June 18) *how to love: tiktok edition* [Video]. YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciQqWhxrmOI> Last access: April 2025

Hannah Alonzo. (2024, April 22) *“RAGE BAITING” AND WHY INFLUENCERS ARE INTENTIONALLY MAKING YOU MAD | Influencer Insanity Ep 5* [Video]. YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4jsSuxhooM> Last access: April 2025

Sam Shan Shops. (2024, August 30) *Mini Travel Essentials Restock* ✈️🌟 #restockasmr #restocking #asmrrestock #miniproducts [Shorts]. YouTube <https://youtube.com/shorts/TIFBrik5exQ?si=4FCKgX5nfu4HJ9Ly> Last access: March 2025

Hannah Alonzo. (2024, October 7) *INFLUENCERS DISTORTING “SELF CARE” TO PUSH OVERCONSUMPTION & CONSUMERISM | Influencer Insanity Ep 11* [Video]. YouTube <https://youtu.be/sRk5RX-vLBw?si=5AvuqdBHM1i7nbbG> Last access: April 2025

Susannah Friesen. (2024, December 21) *5 Things Influencers Have Brainwashed Us Into Thinking Are Normal (But They Aren't) | PART 1* [Video]. YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugBp4tzhHjU> Last access: April 2025

Susannah Friesen. (2025, January 10) *5 Things Influencers Have Brainwashed Us Into Thinking Are Normal (But They Aren't) | PART 2* [Video]. YouTube <https://youtu.be/-1vrSmYc0k?si=AsUFJzpDTUAKuLSZ> Last access: April 2025

Susannah Friesen. (2025, February 21) *Amazon “Must-Haves” Influencers Are Getting OUT OF HAND!* [Video]. YouTube <https://youtu.be/-RrJDSrQh5A?si=1hYzxIcwWq5zAhKY> Last access: April 2025

Hannah Alonzo. (2025, February 24) *90 MINUTES OF CALLING OUT INFLUENCERS FOR LYING & BEING FAKE | Influencer Insanity Ep 16* [Video]. YouTube <https://youtu.be/xgY17eLAR3Q?si=MmypxaFisHVpSPs7> Last access: April 2025

Hannah Alonzo. (2025, March 25) *CATCHING INFLUENCERS LYING ABOUT THEIR LIFESTYLE, IT'S ALL FAKE! | Influencer Insanity Ep 4* [Video]. YouTube <https://youtu.be/xgY17eLAR3Q?si=MmypxaFisHVpSPs7> Last access: April 2025

Susannah Friesen. (2025, March 28) *TikTok's 'Office Siren' Trend is Ending Careers | GIRL LOST HER \$200K JOB OVER THIS!* [Video]. YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciQqWhxrmQI> Last access: April 2025

Hannah Alonzo. (2025, April 7) *TIKTOK'S PERFECT DADS & HUSBANDS: DARK SIDE OF THE "PRINCE CHARMING EFFECT" | Influencer Insanity 18* [Video]. YouTube <https://youtu.be/gctY8SBqcg4?si=VwE5kaOjGR0b3HT0> Last access: April 2025

Shawna Ripari. (2025, April 20) *TikTok promueve compras imprudentes en SheIn antes de que se impongan aranceles* [Video]. YouTube <https://youtu.be/HUmS1nmp0kU?si=cq7uZeRx3jjLymj2> Last access: April 2025

INSTAGRAM

Scott Hentzepeter [@scottsreality_ig]. (2024, March 29). *My grandma taught me this handy hack* 🍷👉 [Reels]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHyDjf5zERi/?igsh=MWIwajlocDdhNXJsbg==> Last access: April 2025

Scott Hentzepeter [@scottsreality_ig]. (2024, May 8). *This tasted better than I expected* [Reels]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/C6uSw3OIi1C/?igsh=MTVzMzh2a2pkdnN6MO==> Last access: April 2025

Sthefanny Oliveira [@sthefannyoliveiratv]. (2024, June 27). *Tablecloth pull trick* [Reels]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/C8uB8wgi1Ml/?igsh=NzM4YzJicmJpcXly> Last access: April 2025

Arcazecansee [@arcazecansee]. (2024, July 18). *Best Fabrics To Wear* 🧥🚫 #clothes #health #fabric [Reels]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/C9kpw4vOlJi/?igsh=MTV2eWR1am9leXIyZw%3D%3D> Last access: April 2025

Dave Disci [@dave.disci]. (2024, September 21). *In this eye-opening video, we dive into the alarming findings surrounding popular online retailers Shein, Temu, and AliExpress. Recent inspections have revealed that many products sold by these brands, particularly shoes and jewelry...* [Reels]. Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DAK4sxauia7/?igsh=NmRlZjRjM2l2MGVp> Last access: April 2025

Ally Viamalama [@ally_viamalama]. (2024, October 16). *Has oído eso de que SHEIN es la peor marca que existen estos momentos? Por qué se dice esto?* [Reels]. Instagram.

https://www.instagram.com/reel/DBL9k_KoUJn/?igsh=MWljMzAybnlibXR0cg%3D%3D Last access: April 2025

Gabriela Romańska [@gabriela.romanska]. (2024, October 19). *Why Acrylic Sweaters Don't Work* 🙄 [Reels]. Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DBUHNQmovdg/?igsh=MnZpanVxdnc0ZXlm> Last access: April 2025

Carnivore Aurelius [@carnivoreaurelius]. (2025, January 26). *Stop wearing plastic garbage Linen, silk, cotton, wool, alpaca >>>* [Reels]. Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DFTEl7muVhm/?igsh=dWNwMjJyemJmMm5j> Last access: March 2025

Justine Doiron [@justine_snacks]. (2025, February 11). *No longer buying groceries - we'll see how this goes.* [Reels]. Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DF8A0MMpDyZ/?igsh=dHJqYWcxZXdoamts> Last access: April 2025

Justine Doiron [@justine_snacks]. (2025, March 13). *Carrot Cake Crepe Cake! Part 9 of not buying any more groceries, and my best way to use up the last...* [Reels]. Instagram.

https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHJRvv_pie_/?igsh=bGd3YzYlZDgwZWlv Last access: April 2025

Carleigh Bodrug [@plantyou]. (n.d.). *Posts* [Instagram profile]. Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DF0uQGeRiXA/?igsh=MXhzbG43MmEwcDFhdA==> Last access: April 2025

Irene Nortes [@irene.nortes]. (n.d.). *Posts* [Reels]. Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/irene.nortes?igsh=MXN3bTkyaWZjemhrZg==> Last access: April 2025