

Authentic Influence: Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosures on Purchase Intention Among Gen Z Social Media Users

Adrien Tatlongmaria¹, Lorrenz Escosura², Eboaju Onyekachukwu Wisdom³, Dr. Catherine de Jesus⁴

University of Perpetual Help System, City of Biñan, Laguna, Philippines-63

Email address: c0400188@uphsl.edu.ph, c25-3213-914@uphsl.edu.ph, c24-0039-992@uphsl.edu.ph, cdejesus.catherine@uphsl.edu.ph

Abstract— Background: Influencer marketing has transformed advertising by emphasizing peer-driven recommendations, with Generation Z demonstrating heightened sensitivity to authenticity and to disclosure tags such as #ad and #sponsored. Although global research on this phenomenon is extensive, empirical evidence regarding Filipino Gen Z students' responses to transparency disclosures remains limited, highlighting a notable research gap in the local context. **Purpose:** This study addresses this gap by investigating how influencer transparency disclosures influence the purchase intentions of Gen Z social media users at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna (UPHSL), thereby contributing novel insights into Philippine digital consumer behavior. **Methods:** A quantitative, descriptive-correlational approach was utilized, surveying 200 UPHSL students (84% aged 18–21; 52.5% TikTok users) with a validated 30-item questionnaire adapted from established literature. The study assessed perceived honesty, ethical practice, credibility, and purchase intention. Data analysis included Pearson's r for correlations, ANOVA for group differences, and weighted means for descriptive statistics. The instrument's reliability and validity were established within the local context. **Results:** Respondents expressed indecision regarding the honesty (mean = 2.99) and credibility (mean = 3.26) of disclosures, but agreed on their ethical value (mean = 3.54). Perceived credibility exhibited a moderate, significant correlation with purchase intention ($r = 0.519$, $p < 0.01$). No significant differences in purchase intention were observed by age, sex, or social media platform. **Conclusion:** Transparency disclosures establish a professional standard for Gen Z, encouraging critical evaluation rather than immediate trust. These findings emphasize the centrality of credibility and indicate that effective influencer marketing should integrate transparency with authentic engagement.

Keywords— Influencer Marketing, Transparency Disclosures, Generation Z, Purchase Intention, Social Media Ethics.

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, marketing has undergone a significant transformation, with influencer marketing projected to exceed \$24 billion globally by 2025 (Ross, 2025). Social media influencers now serve as critical intermediaries between brands and consumers, particularly for Generation Z, who demonstrate high levels of online activity and advertising literacy (Babu et al., 2024). In the Philippines, Generation Z has some of the highest social media usage rates globally, with over 80% engaging daily on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and

Facebook (DataReportal, 2024; We Are Social, 2024; Statista, 2024).

This expansion has prompted increased regulation, with governments and consumer protection organizations mandating transparency disclosures such as #ad and #sponsored to promote honesty and prevent deception in marketing (Federal Trade Commission, 2023; ASEAN, 2021). International research demonstrates both positive and negative effects of these disclosures on trust and purchase intention; however, limited studies address their impact in Southeast Asia and the Philippines (Singco et al., 2021, pp. 1-7). Despite the prominence of influencer marketing in the Philippines, most existing research focuses on Western or broader Asian contexts, leaving a gap in understanding the local Gen Z experience (Balatero, 2025).

Generation Z places a high value on authenticity and transparency, yet remains inherently skeptical. Consequently, disclosure tags may either enhance or diminish trust, depending on contextual factors (Balatero, 2026, pp. 1-10). Several studies support the Persuasion Knowledge Model, which posits that awareness of advertising prompts young consumers to engage in more critical evaluation and, at times, resistance to marketing efforts. Conversely, other research indicates that clear sponsorship disclosures can foster long-term trust and strengthen the relationship between influencers and their followers (Lim & Zhang, 2022, pp. 313-335).

Despite extensive global research, limited data exist regarding the effects of transparency disclosures on Filipino Gen Z's perceptions of honesty, ethics, and credibility, as well as the influence of these perceptions on purchase intention. No major study has systematically examined these relationships within a local academic context using robust quantitative methods. (Balatero, 2025) This study addresses this gap by investigating the impact of influencer transparency disclosures on purchase intention among Gen Z social media users at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna (UPHSL).

This study draws on the Persuasion Knowledge Model and Source Credibility Theory, with the principal arguments substantiated by recent peer-reviewed research. The findings are intended to guide digital marketers, content creators, and policymakers in achieving an effective balance between authenticity and transparency when engaging with Generation

Z, recognized as one of the world's most active youth demographics. (Babu et al., 2024)

Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in the Persuasion Knowledge Model and Source Credibility Theory. It posits that when influencers are perceived as honest, ethical, and credible, their transparency disclosures can influence the purchase intentions of Generation Z social media users. The conceptual framework treats transparency disclosures as cues that prompt consumers to critically evaluate influencer endorsements. The study examines the following hypotheses: H1: Transparency disclosure affects purchase intention; H2: Perceived honesty is associated with purchase intention; H3: Ethical practice is associated with purchase intention; H4: Credibility is associated with purchase intention; and H5: Demographic factors such as age, sex, or platform preference may moderate these effects. These hypotheses aim to elucidate how professional standards and authenticity shape Generation Z's online purchasing behavior.

The visual conceptual framework diagram illustrating these relationships should be placed immediately after this paragraph, typically as:

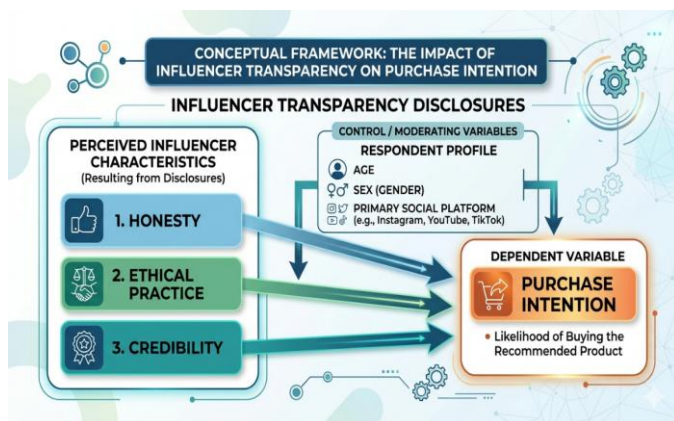


Figure 1. This allows readers to see at a glance how the key variables and hypothesized connections are structured within the study. (Sample et al., 2020, pp. 405-421)

Purpose of the Study

This study examines the impact of influencer transparency disclosures on the purchase intention of Generation Z social media users at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna (UPHSL).

1. What is the respondents' profile in terms of:
 - a. Age;
 - b. Sex, and
 - c. Primary social media platform used?
2. What is the level of perceived impact of influencer transparency disclosure among Gen Z users in terms of:
 - a. Honesty;
 - b. Ethical practice; and
 - c. Credibility of disclosure?
3. What is the level of purchase intention among Gen Z social media users after exposure to influencer transparency disclosures?

4. Is there a significant difference in respondents' perceived impact of influencer transparency disclosure across groups defined by their profile variables?
5. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' level of purchase intention when they are grouped according to their profile variables?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the perceived impact of influencer transparency disclosures and the level of purchase intention among Generation Z social media users?

Importance of the Study

This research provides digital marketers with practical insights for balancing commercial objectives with the ethical standards necessary to maintain Generation Z's trust. It also assists content creators in establishing genuine influence that complies with legal requirements and aligns with audience expectations. For academic researchers, the study contributes local data on digital marketing ethics and consumer psychology within the Philippine context (Angeles et al., 2024).

II. METHODS

The researchers used purposive sampling to choose undergraduate students at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna (UPHSL) who are active on social media. This method ensured participants had real experience with influencer marketing and transparency disclosures, thereby making the data more relevant. The final group included 200 students, meeting the recommended minimum of 10 participants per survey item for correlational studies. (Lund, 2025) A power analysis (power = 0.80, $\alpha = 0.05$) indicated that this was sufficient to detect medium effects. To join, students had to be enrolled at UPHSL, aged 18–25, and active on at least one major social media platform, such as TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook. Those outside the age range, not from UPHSL, or not active on social media, were excluded.

The survey instrument was a 30-item questionnaire adapted from previously validated measures in influencer marketing literature, with items modified for cultural and contextual relevance to Filipino Gen Z social media users (Boyd et al., 2024). The instrument underwent content validation by three academic experts in digital marketing and communication (Haro-Zea et al., 2024, p. 128). A pilot test involving 15 students was conducted to assess item clarity and face validity; however, the small pilot sample is acknowledged as a limitation and was not used to draw conclusions about the instrument's reliability (Burns & Harrison, 1979). Full reliability and validity assessments were performed using the main study sample, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients reported for each construct as follows: Honesty ($\alpha = .87$), Ethical Practice ($\alpha = .91$), Credibility ($\alpha = .89$), and Purchase Intention ($\alpha = .93$).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows that most respondents (84.0%) are aged 18–21, with nearly equal numbers of female (51.0%) and male (49.0%) participants. TikTok is the top platform (52.5%),

followed by Instagram (27.0%), showing Gen Z's preference for short-form video content.

TABLE 1. Profile of the Customers

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age-		
18-21	168	84.0
22-25	11	5.5
26-29	21	10.5
Sex		
Male	98	49.0
Female	102	51.0
Primary Social Media Platform Used		
TikTok	105	52.5
Instagram	54	27.0
Facebook	27	13.5
YouTube	14	7.0
Total Number of Respondents = 200		

The majority of respondents were aged 18–21 and had been exposed to digital influencers throughout their formative years. Their engagement with platforms such as YouTube and Facebook reflects a broader shift toward short, engaging video content as a primary source of information (Saquin et al., 2024). Recent research indicates that Filipino Generation Z consumers frequently rely on their relationships with influencers when making purchasing decisions (Balatero, 2026; Balatero, 2025, pp. 1732-1798). The nearly equal representation of male and female respondents enables analysis of potential differences in the effects of transparency disclosures across gender, offering a comprehensive view of digital habits among UPHSL students (Singco et al., 2023).

Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure

TABLE 2. Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure in terms of Honesty

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. I believe the influencer is being truthful about their experience with a product, even if it is a paid ad.	2.98	Undecided	3
2. I trust that the influencer's positive review is genuine despite the presence of a disclosure tag.	2.90	Undecided	4
3. I feel the influencer is not hiding any information about the nature of their partnership with the brand.	2.78	Undecided	5
4. I believe the influencer shares both the advantages and limitations of the product honestly.	3.17	Undecided	1
5. I think the influencer would still recommend the product even without being paid for it.	3.11	Undecided	2
Average Weighted Mean	2.99	Undecided	

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20 = Agree; 2.61-3.40 = Undecided; 1.81-2.60 = Disagree; 1.00-1.80 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 shows a weighted mean of 2.99 for honesty, which means respondents were undecided. The data suggest that Gen Z is skeptical about influencer disclosures and questions why influencers have commercial partnerships (Desiderio, 2024).

This undecided response is at the heart of the Persuasion Knowledge Model. When Gen Z sees an #ad or #sponsored tag, they become more cautious and question the influencer's motives. For them, a disclosure tag alone does not mean the message is completely honest. Honesty is shown when influencers talk about both the strengths and weaknesses of a product. (Duffek et al., 2025, pp. 1-20) This aligns with research showing that consumers see only positive reviews as biased when money is involved. (Woolley & Sharif, 2021, pp. 601-617)

TABLE 3. Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure in terms of Ethical Practice

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
I view influencers who use clear disclosures as professionals with high integrity.	3.56	Agree	3
Using #ad or #sponsored makes me feel the influencer is being ethical and transparent with their audience.	3.26	Undecided	5
I believe influencers who disclose sponsorships respect their followers' right to make informed decisions.	3.55	Agree	4
I think influencers who properly label paid content are more responsible than those who do not.	3.63	Agree	2
I feel that transparent disclosures reflect an influencer's commitment to ethical content creation.	3.71	Agree	1
Average Weighted Mean	3.54	Agree	

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20 = Agree; 2.61-3.40 = Undecided; 1.81-2.60 = Disagree; 1.00-1.80 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows that ethical practice had the highest score (mean = 3.54, Agree). The results suggest that transparency disclosures are viewed as a professional and ethical responsibility, thereby improving influencers' reputations even when they do not fully demonstrate honesty or credibility (Sesar et al., 2022).

The transition from "Undecided" regarding honesty to "Agree" on ethical practice represents a significant finding. While Generation Z may question influencers' sincerity, they show considerable respect for transparency. The use of disclosures is perceived as a professional standard and as recognition of followers' rights to informed decision-making (FTC, 2023; ASEAN Guidelines on E-Commerce, 2025). This suggests that ethical transparency functions as a "reputation shield" for content creators (Garg & Bakshi, 2024). Although transparency may not fully convince all consumers of an influencer's honesty, it affirms the influencer's professional integrity, a critical benchmark for brand engagement among Filipino youth (Garg & Bakshi, 2024).

TABLE 4. Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure in terms of Credibility Disclosure

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
I find influencers' transparency disclosures (#ad, #sponsored) believable and credible.	3.16	Undecided	5
The use of disclosure tags makes me more confident in the influencer's content.	3.24	Undecided	4
I believe that influencers who disclose paid partnerships are more credible than those who do not.	3.27	Undecided	2.5
Seeing a disclosure tag does not reduce my trust in the influencer's recommendation.	3.27	Undecided	2.5
I consider an influencer more trustworthy when they are upfront about their brand deals.	3.36	Undecided	1
Average Weighted Mean	3.26	Undecided	

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20 = Agree; 2.61-3.40 = Undecided; 1.81-2.60 = Disagree; 1.00-1.80 = Strongly Disagree

Table 4 shows a mean of 3.26 (Undecided) for credibility. Respondents are not fully convinced that disclosure tags alone make content more reliable or trustworthy. This supports the idea that credibility requires more than just following rules and must be shown through consistent, authentic influencer behavior (Waltenrath, 2024).

These results are based on Source Credibility Theory, which holds that trust is necessary for people to accept a message. The data show that Gen Z sees disclosure tags as necessary but not sufficient for credibility. Being open about a brand deal is the first step to building trust, but it does not, by itself, make the information reliable. (Liu & Zheng, 2024) UPHSL students tend to trust but also verify, seeing disclosure as a legal step that requires stronger evidence from the content to be truly credible. (Bertaglia et al., 2024)

TABLE 5. Summary Table of the Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Honesty	2.99	Undecided	3
Ethical Practice	3.54	Agree	1
Credibility of Disclosure	3.26	Undecided	2
Average Weighted Mean	3.26	Undecided	

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20 = Agree; 2.61-3.40 = Undecided; 1.81-2.60 = Disagree; 1.00-1.80 = Strongly Disagree

Table 5 shows that Ethical Practice (mean = 3.54, Agree) is rated highest, followed by Credibility (mean = 3.26, Undecided) and Honesty (mean = 2.99, Undecided). Overall, influencer transparency is seen as an ethical standard, but it does not guarantee real trust or honesty (Authenticity, ethics, and transparency in virtual influencer marketing: A cross-cultural analysis of consumer trust and engagement: A systematic literature review, 2025).

This summary shows that Generation Z understands the ethical side of marketing more easily than the idea of honesty. They see that creators should disclose ads, but still find it hard

to view a disclosed ad as a true recommendation. This means transparency does not remove skepticism, but helps manage it. (Sabina & Marsasi, 2024) For marketers, using #ad is enough to be seen as ethical, but being seen as honest needs content that feels natural and real, even with a disclosure. (Waltenrath, 2024)

Respondents' Level of Purchase Intention After Exposure to Influencer Transparency Disclosures

TABLE 6. Respondents' Level of Purchase Intention After Exposure to Influencer Transparency Disclosures

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. I will click the link or visit the brand's profile to learn more about the product.	3.64	Likely	6
2. I will search for third-party reviews (e.g., YouTube or blogs) for a product seen in a sponsored post.	3.84	Likely	4
3. I will compare the disclosed product with similar products from other brands before deciding.	3.90	Likely	3
4. I will look up the brand's official website to verify the product's claims.	3.97	Likely	2
5. I will read the comments section of the sponsored post to check other consumers' opinions.	4.13	Likely	1
6. I will purchase the product because the influencer was honest about the sponsorship.	3.29	Neutral	12
7. I will prioritize buying a product from a transparent influencer over one who hides their ads.	3.77	Likely	5
8. I am willing to pay the full price of a product recommended by a transparent influencer.	3.55	Likely	7
9. I will add the product to my cart or wishlist after seeing a disclosed sponsored post.	3.42	Likely	10
10. I will complete a purchase of a product endorsed by an influencer who uses proper disclosures.	3.51	Likely	8
11. I will follow the brand's social media account after seeing a transparent influencer post about it.	3.27	Neutral	13
12. I will share or repost the influencer's disclosed sponsored content to my own followers.	3.11	Neutral	15
13. I will engage (like, comment, or react) with the brand's page after seeing a transparent influencer promotion.	3.20	Neutral	14
14. I will recommend the product to my friends or family after seeing a transparent influencer endorse it.	3.36	Neutral	11
15. I will leave a review or feedback for a product I purchased through a transparent influencer's recommendation.	3.48	Likely	9
Average Weighted Mean	3.56		

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = Very Likely; 3.41-4.20 = Likely; 2.61-3.40 = Neutral; 1.81-2.60 = Unlikely; 1.00-1.80 = Very Unlikely

Table 6 shows that the average purchase intention is 3.56 (Likely). The data suggest that transparency disclosures encourage Gen Z to do their own research, such as reading comments and checking claims, before deciding to buy, rather than making an immediate purchase (Babu et al., 2024).

The fact that many respondents read comments and check official websites shows that transparency disclosures make Generation Z investigate before buying. (Angeles et al., 2024) The disclosure tag signals to them that they should do their own research, and they are willing to buy (mean = 3.56) only after checking influencer claims against other reviews and sources. This finding points out a gap in current research, which often treats purchase intention as a single step. For Generation Z, it is a process with several stages of checking information and claims, starting with seeing a transparency disclosure. (Sesar et al., 2024, pp. 158-172)

Difference in the Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure When the Respondents Are Grouped According to Profile Variables

TABLE 7. Difference in the Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure When the Respondents Are Grouped According to Profile Variables

Indicators	Mean	Statistical Test	p-value	Interpretation
Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure in terms of Honesty				
Age	X ₁ (18-21) = 2.9536 X ₂ (22-25) = 3.2727 X ₃ (26-29) = 3.1048	F = 0.903	0.407	Not Significant
Sex	X ₁ (Male) = 3.2020 X ₂ (Female) = 2.7804	T = 3.512	0.001	Significant
Primary Social Media Platform Used	X ₁ (TikTok) = 3.0324 X ₂ (Instagram) = 2.9333 X ₃ (Facebook) = 3.0000 X ₄ (YouTube) = 2.8286	F = 0.315	0.814	Not Significant
Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure in terms of Ethical Practice				
Age	X ₁ (18-21) = 3.5345 X ₂ (22-25) = 3.5636 X ₃ (26-29) = 3.5714	F = 0.026	0.975	Not Significant
Sex	X ₁ (Male) = 3.5888 X ₂ (Female) = 3.4922	T = 0.876	0.382	Not Significant
Primary Social Media Platform Used	X ₁ (TikTok) = 3.5905 X ₂ (Instagram) = 3.5852 X ₃ (Facebook) = 3.4074 X ₄ (YouTube) = 3.2429	F = 1.126	0.340	Not Significant
Perceived Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure in terms of Credibility of Disclosure				
Age	X ₁ (18-21) = 3.2345 X ₂ (22-25) = 3.4000 X ₃ (26-29) = 3.4000	F = 0.490	0.614	Not Significant
Sex	X ₁ (Male) = 3.3714 X ₂ (Female) = 3.1549	T = 1.780	0.077	Not Significant
Primary Social Media Platform Used	X ₁ (TikTok) = 3.2990 X ₂ (Instagram) = 3.2778 X ₃ (Facebook) = 3.2889 X ₄ (YouTube) = 2.8571	F = 1.103	0.349	Not Significant

0.05 level of significance

Table 7 shows differences in perceived impact among groups. There are no significant differences by age or platform, but male respondents report a higher impact of transparency disclosures on honesty than female respondents ($p = 0.001$). For ethical practice and credibility, there are no significant group differences. This means perceptions are mostly the same, except for gender differences in honesty (Singco et al., 2021).

For the impact of influencer transparency disclosure on ethical practice, when respondents are grouped by age, sex, and primary social media platform, the p-values were 0.975, 0.382, and 0.340, all of which are above the 0.05 significance level. These showed that there is no significant difference in the impact of influencer transparency disclosure on ethical practice across age, sex, and primary social media platform groups. The impact of influencer transparency disclosure is the same across respondents' ages, genders, and primary social media platforms. (Galle et al., 2026)

Regarding the impact of influencer transparency disclosure on credibility, when respondents are grouped by age, sex, and primary social media platform, the p-values were 0.614, 0.077, and 0.349, all of which exceed the 0.05 level of significance. These showed that there is no significant difference in the impact of influencer transparency disclosure on credibility across age, sex, and primary social media platform groups. The impact of influencer transparency disclosure on credibility is the same across respondents' ages, genders, and primary social media platforms.

The substantial proportion of respondents who read comments and consult official websites indicates that transparency disclosures prompt Generation Z to conduct further investigation before purchasing (Babu et al., 2024). They interpret the disclosure tag as a cue to conduct independent research and to express willingness to purchase (mean = 3.56) only after verifying the influencer's claims through additional reviews and sources. This observation underscores a gap in current research, which frequently conceptualizes purchase intention as a single-step process. For Generation Z, purchase intention involves multiple stages of information verification, initiated by the presence of a transparency disclosure (Babu et al., 2024).

Difference in the Level of Purchase Intention When the Respondents Are Grouped According to Profile Variables

TABLE 8. Difference in the Level of Purchase Intention When the Respondents Are Grouped According to Profile Variables

Indicator s	Mean	Statistical Test	p-value	Interpretation
Age	X ₁ (18-21) = 3.5142 X ₂ (22-25) = 3.9927 X ₃ (26-29) = 3.7019	F = 2.096	0.126	Not Significant
Sex	X ₁ (Male) = 3.4923 X ₂ (Female) = 3.6254	T = 1.138	0.256	Not Significant
Primary Social Media Platform Used	X ₁ (TikTok) = 3.6391 X ₂ (Instagram) = 3.5085 X ₃ (Facebook) = 3.4841 X ₄ (YouTube) = 3.3143	F = 0.877	0.454	Not Significant

0.05 level of significance

Table 8 shows there are no significant differences in purchase intention by age, sex, or main social media platform (all $p > 0.05$). This means Gen Z's intent to buy after seeing influencer disclosures stays about the same across different groups.

As shown in the table, the p-values for the differences in respondents' purchase intention across age, sex, and primary social media platform were 0.126, 0.256, and 0.454, all above the 0.05 significance level. These results showed no significant differences in respondents' purchase intention across age, sex, and primary social media platform groups. The respondents' purchase intention is the same regardless of age, sex, or primary social media platform. (Lavitoria, 2024, pp. 1-10)

Relationship between the Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure and Respondents' Level of Purchase Intention

TABLE 9. Relationship between the Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure and Respondents' Level of Purchase Intention

Variables	Pearson r	p value	Interpretation
Impact of Influencer Transparency Disclosure in terms of			
Honesty	0.339	0.000	Significant
Ethical Practice	0.430	0.000	Significant
Credibility of Disclosure	0.519	0.000	Significant

0.01 level of significance

Table 9 shows that the perceived credibility of disclosure is moderately and significantly associated with purchase intention ($r = 0.519$, $p < 0.01$). Ethical practice ($r = 0.430$) and honesty ($r = 0.339$) also have weaker but still important links. This means credibility is the strongest factor affecting Gen Z's purchase intention, supporting the Source Credibility Theory.

This important relationship is supported by the Source Credibility Theory, which holds that trust and validity are key drivers of online purchase intention. Research shows that while a tag like #ad may first make consumers skeptical, it can also help build trust and improve the influencer's professional image. Studies also find that when influencers are seen as authentic and transparent, followers are more likely to trust their recommendations and make purchases. (Chen et al., 2024)

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study advances digital marketing theory by providing empirical evidence on how transparency disclosures shape Gen Z's purchase intentions. The results reveal a behavioral shift among Gen Z from impulsive purchases to a more verification-based approach, underlining that credibility, not just compliance with disclosure standards, is essential for influencing purchase decisions. (Babu et al., 2024) While tags like #ad and #sponsored fulfill ethical and legal requirements, they alone do not build trust or drive purchase intent. (Liu & Zheng, 2024) Instead, Gen Z uses such disclosures as prompts to independently verify influencers' claims, supporting the Persuasion Knowledge Model and reinforcing Source Credibility Theory as the dominant theoretical lens. (Babu et al., 2024)

Theoretically, this research clarifies that perceived credibility has the strongest influence on purchase intention among Filipino Gen Z social media users ($r = 0.519$, $p < 0.01$),

more so than honesty or ethical practice. This advances academic understanding of digital marketing by emphasizing the critical role of credibility over simple transparency. (Liu & Zheng, 2024) In practice, the findings recommend that marketers and influencers prioritize authentic, credible engagement such as two-sided messaging and transparent communication rather than relying solely on regulatory compliance. Brands should cultivate influencer partnerships that foster both positive and negative product discussions to build trust with Gen Z audiences. (Garg & Bakshi, 2024)

Policy implications include stricter, clearer enforcement of disclosure standards and the expansion of media literacy programs that empower young consumers to evaluate influencer content critically (Federal Trade Commission, 2023; ASEAN, 2021). Regulators should set and enforce uniform disclosure rules and support educational efforts that help Gen Z discern genuine recommendations from paid promotions (Sesar et al., 2023, pp. 158-172).

In summary, this study provides a framework for future research and policy by demonstrating the important role of transparency disclosures in Gen Z's consumer behavior, advancing both academic theory and industry best practices (Angeles et al., 2024).

Recommendation

This study finds that Generation Z views transparency disclosures as a professional standard rather than proof of honesty, and uses them as signals to verify information before buying. To address this, influencers should use two-sided messaging by sharing both the positive and negative sides of products or services to increase perceived honesty, since Gen Z respondents were undecided about honesty (mean = 2.99). Brands and influencers should build credibility through consistent, genuine behavior, not just by following disclosure rules, because credibility was the strongest factor for purchase intention ($r = 0.519$, $p < 0.01$). Transparency disclosures should be paired with interactive content, such as TikTok campaigns and Instagram Reels, to boost engagement, as Gen Z values authenticity and participation. Regulators and educators should strengthen media literacy programs to help young consumers critically assess influencer endorsements, as most Gen Z respondents reported researching claims before making a purchase (mean purchase intention = 3.56). Policy-makers should enforce clear, standardized disclosure rules to ensure professional integrity and protect consumers, as ethical practice was valued (mean = 3.54) but did not, on its own, guarantee trust. Future research should also compare disclosure effects across Southeast Asian countries and study how AI-generated influencers and transparency practices affect Gen Z's purchase intentions in different settings. These recommendations are based on the study's data and themes, ensuring actions align with the needs and behaviors of Filipino Gen Z social media users.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Angeles, R. J., Clemente, C. A., Malimban, R. L., & Santos, J. E. (2024). The role of influencer-generated contents to the cognition and emotional attachment among Generation Z consumers in Manila, Philippines. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Applied Business and*

- Education Research, 5(10), 3864–3880. <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.05.10.05>
- [2]. ASEAN. (2021). ASEAN guidelines on consumer protection in e-commerce. <https://asean.org/book/asean-guidelines-on-consumer-protection-in-e-commerce/>
 - [3]. Babu, E., Joseph, N. M., & Aboobaker, N. (2024). Unveiling the impact of influencer attributes on purchase intention of Gen Z: The moderating role of parasocial interaction. *Global Business Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09721509241280996>
 - [4]. Balatero, M. V. (2025). Social media influencer attributes' impact on Generation Z Filipino consumers' perceived parasocial relationships and purchasing behavior. *Iloata International Journal of Management*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.61194/ijim.v7i1.1968>
 - [5]. Bertaglia, T., Goanta, C., Spanakis, G., & Iamnitchi, A. (2024). Influencer self-disclosure practices on Instagram: A multi-country longitudinal study. *arXiv preprint*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2407.09202>
 - [6]. Bradley, M. T., & Brand, A. (2013). Alpha values as a function of sample size, effect size, and power: Accuracy over inference. *Psychological Reports*, 112(3), 835–844. <https://doi.org/10.2466/03.49.PR0.112.3.835-844>
 - [7]. Chen, Y., Qin, Z., Yan, Y., & Huang, Y. (2024). The power of influencers: How does influencer marketing shape consumers' purchase intentions? *Sustainability*, 16(13), Article 5471. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16135471>
 - [8]. DataReportal. (2024). Digital 2024: The Philippines. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-philippines>
 - [9]. Duffek, B., Eisingerich, A. B., Merlo, O., & Lee, G. (2025). Authenticity in influencer marketing: How can influencers and brands work together to build and maintain influencer authenticity? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 53(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429251319786>
 - [10]. Federal Trade Commission. (2023). Disclosures 101 for social media influencers. <https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/disclosures-101-social-media-influencers>
 - [11]. Galle, C., Lau, V., & Dost, F. (2026). Beyond youth: The optimal age for influencer credibility and marketing success. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-025-01134-0>
 - [12]. Garg, M., & Bakshi, A. (2024). Exploring the impact of beauty vloggers' credible attributes, parasocial interaction, and trust on consumer purchase intention in influencer marketing. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11, Article 27609. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02760-9>
 - [13]. Haro-Zea, K. L., Osuna, Ó. O., Saavedra, R. A., & Millones-Liza, D. Y. (2023). Design, adaptation, and validation of a digital marketing instrument in SMEs. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 12(3), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2024-0155>
 - [14]. Lavitoria, A. J. (2024). Influence of TikTok promotional content on the purchase intention of Generation Z consumers in Paniqui, Tarlac. *The Review of Contemporary Scientific and Academic Studies*, 4(5), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.55454/rcsas.4.05.2024.003>
 - [15]. Lim, Y. X., & Zhang, W. (2022). Examining the impact of source-product congruence and sponsorship disclosure on the communicative effectiveness of Instagram influencers. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 39(2), 313–335. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2021.09.006>
 - [16]. Liu, X., & Zheng, X. (2024). The persuasive power of social media influencers in brand credibility and purchase intention. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11, Article 25121. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02512-1>
 - [17]. Saquin, A. H., Tiol, V. D., Vizmanos, J. D., & Orong, M. Y. (2024). The effectiveness of short-form video ads on purchase intention and purchasing behavior among Gen Z in the Philippines. *International Journal of Applied Science and Research*, 7(6), 157–164. <https://doi.org/10.56293/IJASR.2024.6219>
 - [18]. Sesar, V., Hunjet, A., & Martinčević, I. (2023). Generation Z purchase intentions: Does sponsorship disclosure matter? *Business Systems Research Journal*, 14(2), 158–172. <https://doi.org/10.2478/bsrj-2023-0017>
 - [19]. Sesar, V., Martinčević, I., & Boguszewicz-Kreft, M. (2022). Relationship between advertising disclosure, influencer credibility and purchase intention. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 15(7), Article 2076. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm15070276>
 - [20]. Singco, M. Y., Lopez, I. D., & Cabauatan, R. R. (2021). The effect of influencer marketing on purchase intentions and brand attitude of consumers in the Philippines. *International Journal of Research in Engineering*, 4(4), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.22214/ijresm.2021.04.04.01>
 - [21]. Singco, M. Y., Lopez, I. D., & Cabauatan, R. R. (2023). The effect of influencer marketing on purchase intentions and brand attitude of consumers in the Philippines. *International Journal of Research in Engineering*, 6, Article 10248097. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10248097>
 - [22]. Statista. (2024). Social media usage in the Philippines. <https://www.statista.com/topics/7899/social-media-usage-in-the-philippines/>
 - [23]. Waltenrath, A. (2024). Consumers' ambiguous perceptions of advertising disclosures in influencer marketing: Disentangling the effects on current and future social media engagement. *Electronic Markets*, 34, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-023-00679-8>
 - [24]. We Are Social. (2024). Digital 2024: The Philippines. <https://wearesocial.com/ph/blog/2024/02/digital-2024-philippines/>
 - [25]. Wright, P., Friestad, M., & Boush, D. M. (2005). The development of marketplace persuasion knowledge in children, adolescents, and young adults. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 24(2), 222–233. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.2005.24.2.222>